

Episode 192 - Special Edition - Chapter 16 of A Few Days In Athens

Post by “Cassius” of September 12, 2023 at 6:47 PM

Welcome to Episode 192 of Lucretius Today. This is a podcast dedicated to the poet Lucretius, who wrote "On The Nature of Things," the only complete presentation of Epicurean philosophy left to us from the ancient world. Each week we walk you through the Epicurean texts, and we discuss how Epicurean philosophy can apply to you today. If you find the Epicurean worldview attractive, we invite you to join us in the study of Epicurus at EpicureanFriends.com, where you will find a discussion thread for each of our podcast episodes and many other topics.

This week most of our podcasters are unavailable, so to prevent there being a gap in our release schedule, we are releasing this week a special reading of Frances Wright's Chapter 16, her concluding address (as a fictional statement by Epicurus) about the damage that arises from supernatural religion.

This episode comes with a caution: Frances Wright does not seem to agree with Epicurus' view of the benefits of thinking about how we are not alone in the universe, and how we benefit from the thought that there are indeed natural beings -- living deathless and painless but not supernatural lives -- not here, but far out in space. Epicurus states clearly in the letter to Menoecus that non-supernatural beings do exist somewhere in the universe, but Frances Wright downplays this, and she instead focuses her attention almost exclusively on Epicurus' rejection of supernatural gods.

Most of the divergence I am describing can be reconciled, but everyone should read Epicurus and Lucretius and Philodemus for themselves to find out what the ancient Epicureans had to say about non-supernatural gods.

The main thrust of what Wright says about the damage that arises from supernatural religion seems entirely consistent with Epicurus' own views, and I hope this chapter spurs you to further reading yourself from the ancient Epicurean sources.

<https://www.spreaker.com/episode/56846941>

Post by “Cassius” of September 17, 2023 at 8:42 AM

Due to schedule conflicts with two of our podcasters, this week our podcast may instead feature a special recording on an alternate topic. We will return back to "One Ends" the following week.

Post by "Cassius" of September 18, 2023 at 7:58 PM

Episode 192 of the Lucretius Today Podcast is now available! Most of our regular podcasters were away this week, so Cassius fills in with a reading of Chapter 16 of Frances Wright's - A Few Days In Athens. This Chapter is devoted to a fictional presentation of a speech given by Epicurus on the subject of the evils of supernatural religion. We'll be back next week to resume our series of episodes on Cicero's "On Ends."

<https://www.spreaker.com/episode/56846941>

Post by "Cassius" of September 18, 2023 at 8:03 PM

There's a lot in this Chapter 16 that people might want to discuss. I felt compelled to put in the caveat that Frances Wright doesn't seem to be entirely following Epicurus on the nature of the "real gods," but I don't think that should overshadow what I think was a brilliant job of denouncing supernatural religion. This is really a powerful presentation and I hope my amateurish version will inspire some of the real "voices" here to consider recording their own versions. The writing in Chapter 16 pretty much stands on its own, and it deserves a lot more attention and one of the best full-bore arguments against supernatural religion anywhere.

Post by "Cassius" of September 19, 2023 at 1:11 PM

Youtube link:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KsM-G7e5bc0>