

Key Citations On Prudence

Post by “Cassius” of October 4, 2023 at 12:04 PM

1. **[Epicurus' Letter to Menoecus](#)**: Of all this the beginning and the greatest good is prudence. Wherefore prudence is a more precious thing even than philosophy: for from prudence are sprung all the other virtues, and it teaches us that it is not possible to live pleasantly without living prudently and honorably and justly, (nor, again, to live a life of prudence, honor, and justice) without living pleasantly. For the virtues are by nature bound up with the pleasant life, and the pleasant life is inseparable from them.
2. **Cicero's Torquatus in On Ends Book 1 - XII**: For as the chief annoyances to human life proceed from ignorance of what things are good and what bad, and as by reason of that mistake men are often deprived of the greatest pleasures, and tortured by the most bitter grief of mind, we have need to exercise wisdom, which, by removing groundless alarms and vain desires, and by banishing the rashness of all erroneous [pg 114] opinions, offers herself to us as the surest guide to pleasure. For it is wisdom alone which expels sorrow from our minds, and prevents our shuddering with fear: she is the instructress who enables us to live in tranquility, by extinguishing in us all vehemence of desire. For desires are insatiable, and ruin not only individuals but entire families, and often overturn the whole state. From desires arise hatred, dissensions, quarrels, seditions, wars. Nor is it only out of doors that these passions vent themselves, nor is it only against others that they run with blind violence; but they are often shut up, as it were, in the mind, and throw that into confusion with their disagreements.
3. **Cicero's Torquatus in On Ends Book 1 XIV**. But if we see that the whole life of man is into disorder by error and ignorance; and that wisdom is the only thing which can relieve us from the sway of the passions and the fear of danger, and which can teach us to bear the injuries of fortune itself with moderation, and which shows us all the ways which lead to tranquility and peace; what reason is there that we should hesitate to say that wisdom is to be sought for the sake of pleasure, and that folly is to be avoided on account of its annoyances?