

Welcome Mellreh!

Post by "Cassius" of October 14, 2024 at 7:11 PM

Welcome [MellrehTheHermit](#)

There is one last step to complete your registration:

All new registrants must post a response to this message here in this welcome thread (we do this in order to minimize spam registrations).

You must post your response within 72 hours, or your account will be subject to deletion.

Please say "Hello" by introducing yourself, tell us what prompted your interest in Epicureanism and which particular aspects of Epicureanism most interest you, and/or post a question.

This forum is the place for students of Epicurus to coordinate their studies and work together to promote the philosophy of Epicurus. Please remember that all posting here is subject to our [Community Standards / Rules of the Forum](#) our [Not Neo-Epicurean, But Epicurean](#) and our [Posting Policy](#) statements and [associated posts](#).

Please understand that the leaders of this forum are well aware that many fans of Epicurus may have sincerely-held views of what Epicurus taught that are incompatible with the purposes and standards of this forum. This forum is dedicated exclusively to the study and support of people who are committed to classical Epicurean views. As a result, this forum is not for people who seek to mix and match some Epicurean views with positions that are inherently inconsistent with the core teachings of Epicurus.

All of us who are here have arrived at our respect for Epicurus after long journeys through other philosophies, and we do not demand of others what we were not able to do ourselves. Epicurean philosophy is very different from other viewpoints, and it takes time to understand how deep those differences really are. That's why we have membership levels here at the forum which allow for new participants to discuss and develop their own learning, but it's also why we have standards that will lead in some cases to arguments being limited, and even participants being removed, when the purposes of the community require it. Epicurean philosophy is not inherently democratic, or committed to unlimited free speech, or devoted to any other form of organization other than the pursuit by our community of happy living through the principles of Epicurean philosophy.

One way you can be most assured of your time here being productive is to tell us a little about yourself and personal your background in reading Epicurean texts. It would also be helpful if

you could tell us how you found this forum, and any particular areas of interest that you have which would help us make sure that your questions and thoughts are addressed.

Please check out our [Getting Started](#) page.

We have found over the years that there are a number of key texts and references which most all serious students of Epicurus will want to read and evaluate for themselves. Those include the following.

["Epicurus and His Philosophy"](#) by Norman DeWitt

[The Biography of Epicurus by Diogenes Laertius](#). This includes the surviving letters of Epicurus, including those to [Herodotus](#), [Pythocles](#), and [Menoceus](#).

["On The Nature of Things"](#) - by Lucretius (a poetic abridgement of Epicurus' "On Nature"

["Epicurus on Pleasure"](#) - By Boris [Nikolsky](#)

The chapters on Epicurus in [Gosling and Taylor's "The Greeks On Pleasure."](#)

[Cicero's "On Ends" - Torquatus Section](#)

[Cicero's "On The Nature of the Gods" - Velleius Section](#)

The Inscription of Diogenes of Oinoanda - [Martin Ferguson Smith translation](#)

[A Few Days In Athens" - Frances Wright](#)

Lucian Core Texts on Epicurus: (1) [Alexander the Oracle-Monger](#), (2) [Hermotimus](#)

[Philodemus "On Methods of Inference"](#) (De Lacy version, including his appendix on relationship of Epicurean canon to Aristotle and other Greeks)

"The Greeks on Pleasure" -Gosling & Taylor Sections on Epicurus, especially the [section on katastematic and kinetic pleasure](#) which explains why ultimately this distinction was not of great significance to Epicurus.

It is by no means essential or required that you have read these texts before participating in the forum, but your understanding of Epicurus will be much enhanced the more of these you have read. Feel free to join in on one or more of our conversation threads under various topics found throughout the forum, where you can to ask questions or to add in any of your insights as you study the Epicurean philosophy.

And time has also indicated to us that if you can find the time to read one book which will best explain [classical Epicurean philosophy](#), as opposed to most modern "eclectic" interpretations of Epicurus, that book is Norman DeWitt's Epicurus And His Philosophy.

(If you have any questions regarding the usage of the forum or finding info, please post any questions in this thread).

Welcome to the forum!

Not Neo-Epicurean, But Epicurean

1. Not "flourishing," "human potential," "self-actualization," or "meaningfulness," but happiness grounded in the feeling of pleasure.
2. Not "absence of pain" as a full statement of the goal of life, but "the Feelings are two, pleasure and pain" and "Pleasure is the beginning and the end of a happy life."
3. Not virtue for the sake of virtue, but virtue as instrumental for the attainment of pleasure.
4. Not "the greatest good for the greatest number," but "Every desire must be confronted with this question: What will happen to me if the object of my desire is accomplished and what if it is not?"
5. Not "humanism," "transhumanism," "individualism," "collectivism," "egoism," "altruism," "social progress," "Marxism," "democracy," "tyranny," or any "one size fits all" political ideal of any kind, but social structure based on friendship which "is formed and maintained by means of a community of life among those who have reached the fullness of pleasure."
6. Not "hard determinism," but "some things happen from necessity, some from chance, and others through our own choice."
7. Not "supernaturalism," but "materialism."
8. Not "supernatural gods," or "life after death," but confidence in a fully material universe and "for those men for whom wisdom is possible, and who do seek it, such men may truly live as gods."
9. Not only "short term hedonism," but "it is to continuous pleasures that I invite you."
10. Not "rationalism," but "all reason is dependent upon sensations."
11. Not fearful of death nor careless of losing life, but valuing life for the opportunity of pleasure it brings.

Our Posting Policy At EpicureanFriends.com:

"No Partisan Politics," "No Supernatural Religion," and "No Absolute Virtue"

This forum is dedicated to promoting the philosophy of Epicurus, and not to any partisan political positions whether "left," "right," or "center." The task of rediscovering Epicurean philosophy requires that such discussions be held elsewhere. Posts violating this rule are subject to removal.



Epicurean philosophy firmly rejects the viewpoint that there are any supernatural forces or absolute virtues or Platonic ideals of any kind. Argument which is based on supernatural claims, or "absolute" virtues or ideals of any kind, are in violation of this rule and subject to removal.

**Nothing can be created
from nothing.**

**Nature has no gods over
her.**

**Do not assign to the
gods anything that is
inconsistent with
incorruption and
blessedness.**

Death is nothing to us.

**There is no necessity to
live under the control of
necessity.**



**He who says “Nothing
can be known” knows
nothing.**

All sensations are “true.”

**Virtue is not absolute or
an end in itself - all good
and evil consists in
sensation.**

**Pleasure is the guide of
life.**

**By “Pleasure” we mean
all experience that is not
painful.**

**Life is desirable, but unlimited time contains no greater
pleasure than limited time.**

Post by “MellrehTheHermit” of October 14, 2024 at 7:32 PM

Hello!

I'm an 18-year-old Brazilian, I love studying ancient philosophy, and eventually I came to especially admire Epicureanism after seeing the unfilled holes in Stoicism (my favorite old philosophy).

I just bring some doubts and contestations about Epicurus' philosophy. We must remember that philosophy is the love and search for truth, and not an inflexible and unquestioning religion.

Considering the materialist and empiricist characteristic of Epicureanism, how did Epicurus manage to arrive at the certainty that "[nothing can be created from nothing](#)". Indeed, his argument makes sense, but has this been empirically observed to be raised as a universal and indubitable certainty?

Considering the argument that all things need a cause in order to exist, this opens up an opportunity for the existence of a creator, or creators. How did Epicurus, empirically or rationally, come to the conclusion that their interference in our lives is unlikely? How did he come to the conclusion that the gods he mentions in the letter to Meneceus are blessed and only relate to their fellow men?

Finally, notice that I didn't even touch on the subject of death! 🤔

Sorry for the english, i used a translator.

Hugs and all the best! 😊

Post by “Cassius” of October 14, 2024 at 8:10 PM

Welcome to the forum. Here are a few initial comments:

Q1 - Considering the materialist and empiricist characteristic of Epicureanism, how did Epicurus manage to arrive at the certainty that "[nothing can be created from nothing](#)". Indeed, his argument makes sense, but has this been empirically observed to be raised as a universal and indubitable certainty?

A1 - The short answer would be combine both observation and logic. First he trusted his observations that nothing that he experienced, or that reliably reported to him, established that anything ever comes from totally nothing. He also added a series of deductive questions and answers about how things would be different if things DID come from nothing, and likewise observe that those things do not happen. The longest list of these is in Book 1 of Lucretius, with some being included in the Letter to Herodotus. I understand that you are using a translator so "universal and indubitable certainty" may be overly broad, but it's also true that Epicurus used a 'reasonable' standard of proof and did not accept logical absolutes as required for holding something confidently to be true.

Q2 - Considering the argument that all things need a cause in order to exist, this opens up an opportunity for the existence of a creator, or creators. How did Epicurus, empirically or rationally, come to the conclusion that their interference in our lives is unlikely? How did he

come to the conclusion that the gods he mentions in the letter to Menoeceus are blessed and only relate to their fellow men?

Your questions of course touch on why Epicurus was very different from the Stoics, and why the Stoics denounced Epicurus, because Epicurus rejected all contents that there is anything above or outside nature, or that nature was created by supernatural gods, and at root Stoicism is a "supernatural-based" outlook on nature and how to live.

A2 I don't think that Epicurus accepted that "all things need a cause in order to exist." There is no reason to accept the possibility that the particles have not existed eternally, and there are sound logical reasons for believing the opposite, again as listed in Book 1 of Lucretius and the Letter to Herodotus.

As to the interference of the gods, Epicurus held that any gods that exist would logically be completely happy and deathless in themselves, and they would accordingly have no reason to be interested in making trouble for enemies or rewarding friends, because making trouble or rewarding friends is a characteristic of beings who would not be complete within themselves.

Post by “Martin” of October 15, 2024 at 7:14 AM

Welcome Mellreh!