

The Religion of Nature - as supported by Lucretius' De Rerum Natura

Post by “Kalosyni” of June 12, 2025 at 12:03 PM

This thread is to consider whether or not Nature could be the main focus of "religion" or "spirituality" for Epicureans.

I will add here some references from De Rerum Natura.

Post by “Kalosyni” of June 12, 2025 at 1:16 PM

Quote

[01] MOTHER of Rome, Delight of Men and Gods, Sweet Venus; who with vital power does fill the sea bearing the ships, the fruitful Earth, all things beneath the rolling signs of Heaven; for it is by Thee that creatures of every kind conceive, rise into life, and view the Sun's bright beams. Thee, Goddess, Thee the winds avoid; the clouds fly Thee and Thy approach. With various art the Earth, for Thee, affords her sweetest flowers; for Thee the sea's rough waves put on their smiles, and the smooth sky shines with diffused light. For when the buxom Spring leads on the year, and genial gales of western winds blow fresh, unlocked from Winter's cold, the airy birds first feel Thee, Goddess, and express thy power. Thy active flame strikes through their very souls. And then the savage beasts, with wanton play, frisk over the cheerful fields, and swim the rapid streams. So pleased with thy sweetness, so transported by thy soft charms, all living Nature strives, with sharp desire, to follow Thee, her Guide, where Thou art pleased to lead. In short, Thy power, inspiring every breast with tender love, drives every creature on with eager heat, in seas, in mountains, in swiftest floods, in leafy forests, and in verdant plains, to propagate their kind from age to age.

[21] Since Thou, alone, doest govern Nature's laws, and nothing, without Thee, can rise to light, without Thee nothing can look gay or lovely; I beg Thee a companion to my lays, which now I sing of Nature, and I devote to my dear Memmius, whom Thou art ever pleased, sweet Goddess, to adorn with every grace. For him, kind Deity, inspire my song, and give immortal beauty to my verse.

In this opening passage, it seems that Venus is above Nature, but could we also see it as Venus is the personification of Nature?

Also we see the phrase "which now I sing of Nature" - which casts Nature as something to celebrate and extol - and this could have an aspect of the "spiritual".

Post by “Kalosyni” of June 16, 2025 at 11:42 AM

Perhaps it ought to be phrased: "The Spirituality of Nature" rather than "religion" (because I am taking notice of what Lucretius wrote at the start of Book 4 in *De Rerum Natura* regarding "religion").

One would guess that back in time people were much more in tune with "Nature" -- much more sensitive toward it. Although most people thought that the causes of things came from gods/goddesses.

For modern times, my idea is that the "spirituality of Nature" would be a kind of "return to sensing Nature" and as a way of increasing good health and pleasure.

We understand the causes of things through science, but modern civilization has brought us a feeling of being distant from Nature -- even though we are still in the midst of it!

Post by “Patrikios” of June 22, 2025 at 10:44 AM

[Quote from Kalosyni](#)

For modern times, my idea is that the "spirituality of Nature" would be a kind of "return to sensing Nature" and as a way of increasing good health and pleasure.

Thank you, [Kalosyni](#) .

I like to think of **‘Divine Nature’** as being the guide to good health and pleasure.

Post by “Godfrey” of June 23, 2025 at 12:36 AM

This comes to mind from Lucretius book V: 1198-1203 ish:

It is no piety to show oneself

Bowing with veiled head towards a stone,

Nor to be seen frequenting every altar,

Nor to fall prostrate on the ground, with palms outspread 1200

Before the shrines of gods, nor deluge altars

With streams of blood from beasts, vow piled on vow.

True piety is for a man to have the power

To contemplate the world with quiet mind.