

Welcome Tony Fox

Post by "Cassius" of November 19, 2025 at 8:55 PM

Welcome [Tony Fox](#)

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 24 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 and associated Terms of Use](#). Please be sure to read that document to understand our ground rules.

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 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 most other philosophies, 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 of truth and happy living through pleasure as explained in the principles of Epicurean philosophy.

One way you can be assured of your time here will be productive is to tell us a little about yourself and 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 already have.

You can also check out our [Getting Started](#) page for ideas on how to use this website.

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 "Cassius" of November 19, 2025 at 8:56 PM

Tony has emailed me -- Welcome!

Post by "Cassius" of November 19, 2025 at 9:33 PM

Brief info on Tony is that he was raised catholic and came across Epicureanism when studying history. He's read and studied his letter to menoeceus, his texts on physics and 'on the nature of things', as well as his last wish. He's particular interested in Epicurus' ideas on death, justice, the myths and pleasure

Post by “Tony Fox” of November 19, 2025 at 9:46 PM

Hello nice to be here,

I was raised catholic but I could never get around the contradictions of the christians. The problem of evil was always painful for me. Later I discovered there was this 'epicurean paradox' explaining the issue.

Later I discovered this was a groundless attribution by lactantious, a christian. It turns out the text could instead originate from Carneades, a sceptic.

So I wondered what Epicurus really taught. So far I read and studied his letter to menoeceus, his physics, his last will, and 'on the nature of things' by Titus Lucretius. I love his ideas on death, the myths and justice, and his physics.

Glad to be here, and I'm looking forward to talking in this garden.

I intend to read, learn, and share all the wisdom we need to live well,

Tony Fox

Post by “Cassius” of November 20, 2025 at 2:13 AM

Of course Epicurus likely would have agreed with the conclusion and at least some of the reasoning, but his primary approach on gods was significantly different.

The riddle is based on pointing out contradictions in someone else's argument which certainly can be effective as far as it goes, but it still leaves you hanging on what the truth really is, as

you are pointing out as to "the problem of evil."

I think you are right to sense that a physics argument is more important, and Epicurus also combines it with an argument based on how the human mind works.

Those are positive assertions you can verify for yourself whether they make sense to you or not. Pointing out contradictions in someone else's argument is helpful for debunking false claims, but Epicurus was not content with debunking alone.

We want a position on what is true, not just on how many millions of arguments are wrong.

It's sort of ironic but the position that there is a truth out there that can be found is a point of commonality between Stoics and Epicureans. They simply disagree profoundly on what that truth is.

Post by "Tony Fox" of November 20, 2025 at 5:00 AM

It would seem so, I never thought of that commonality!

Rather than leaving it with the paradox or living as an atheist, I want to seek out the truth, (not live my truth in particular).

Post by "Martin" of November 20, 2025 at 5:10 AM

Welcome Tony Fox!

Post by "Kalosyni" of November 20, 2025 at 8:33 AM

Welcome to the forum [Tony Fox](#) 😊

You might like this video overview by Cassius (if you haven't already seen it)...

<https://m.youtube.com/watch?v=6iXCI88Z64U&t>

Post by “Tony Fox” of November 20, 2025 at 4:49 PM

I'm very pleased to hear about the lecrutius podcast. It's a fascinating text.

I'm from the netherlands, an extremely secular country compared to the world, it's culturally abrahamic however. Most believe in primordial spiritual virtues, and think Epicurus was a hedonist. Still, moderation and discussion are considered virtues here, and there is some folkish epicureanish wisdom to be found. I'd love to hear where everyone is from! 😎

Post by “Cassius” of November 20, 2025 at 5:18 PM

Most of us are continental USA but Northern Europe is in a strong second place. Welcome aboard!

Post by “Tony Fox” of November 24, 2025 at 9:57 AM

Letter to menoeceus

"The things that most people say about the gods are based on false assumption, not a firm grasp of the facts, because they say that the greatest goods and the greatest harms come from the gods."

Some myths affirm the immortality of the gods, but not their blissfulness. For example, in the myths, zeus gets enraged by prometheus for he stole the fire. In response he would have punished humanity by sending pandora.

The firm grasp of the facts, the basic understanding of the concepts, epicurus held about the gods, contradicts the myths. For in all the myths, the gods are troubled, and the heavens are unstable. In later religion, his view could be applied. A god could not concern himself with humanity, nor act as judge or saviour. He could not be wrathful, nor could he become himself human, as the christians believe. Indeed, if jesus christ was a god, he could not have suffered and died on the cross.

These myths relate to human affairs, but they would be alien to the immortal and blissful gods.

"because they say that the greatest goods and the greatest harms come from the gods."

All harms and goods are perceived through the senses. It is not the gods that make us taste bread or feel rain pour down our shoulders. Clearly we sense bread itself, and rain itself, this is what we feel, and is not the result of a creative mind.

If a green fire were to wreak havoc on California and the scientists had no explanation for this, I could blame all the gods having to do with fire, Ra, Gibil, Agni, Pele, Xiuhtecuhtli, Svarog, Nyamhe, Ogun, Zhurang, Jowangsin, Amaterasu, Odqan, Arski Tenger, Turgmum, Utar, Alaz, Aed, Caca, Huracán, Tohil, Jocaruitz, Haashch'ééshzhiní, Caricaueri', Manqu, Qhapaq, Ti'iti'i, Ngá Mánúwa and Aahitúoa. Clearly it's impossible to say who of the gods interfered, clearly, this isn't very useful. We can't sense what gods were or were not involved, but what we sense is the green fire, and multiple natural causes are possible.

"For since they are at home with what is best about themselves, they accept that which is similar and consider alien that which is different."

I have a question about this phrase. What is meant with 'the best'? Are the gods sometimes more blissful than usual? Else they could not have a 'best'. If the gods are blissful, do they still have degrees of pleasure?

Post by "Cassius" of November 24, 2025 at 10:07 AM

[Quote from Tony Fox](#)

"For since they are at home with what is best about themselves, they accept that which is similar and consider alien that which is different."

You seem to be using a translation I don't normally see but is it not clear that this statement refers to the false opinions of the masses, not to the gods themselves?

The main surviving text which would give much basis at all to speculate about this would be the Velleius section of "On the Nature of the Gods" and I'd put that question in the category of things that would not be essential to the central conclusions to be drawn from anticipations -- and therefore hazardous to conjecture about. So I'd put all this in the section that starts and not put a lot of significance on the the answer to that question:

"If we sought to attain nothing else beside piety in worshipping the gods and freedom from superstition, what has been said had sufficed; since the exalted nature of the gods, being both eternal and supremely blessed, would receive man's pious worship (for what is highest commands the reverence that is its due); and furthermore all fear of the divine Power or divine anger would have been banished (since it is understood that anger and favor alike are excluded from the nature of a being at once blessed and immortal, and that these being eliminated we are menaced by no fears in regard to the powers above). But the mind strives to strengthen this belief by trying to discover the form of god, the mode of his activity, and the operation of his intelligence.

[EpicureanFriends Side-By-Side Velleius On Divinity](#)

Post by "Tony Fox" of November 24, 2025 at 11:41 AM

This translation comes from Peter Saint-Andre. Do you have a clearer translation? I want to thoroughly understand the first point stated by Epicurus.

[Letter to Menoikos, by Epicurus](#)

Post by "Cassius" of November 24, 2025 at 12:17 PM

Check the three that are on the side by side version here

[EpicureanFriends Side-By-Side Diogenes Laertius Ten](#)

Post by "Tony Fox" of November 24, 2025 at 1:54 PM

This text has made the meaning of that last sentence a lot clearer, thanks!