

Overview Of The Philosophy Of Epicurus

- I. ▫ Orientation- Beginning The Study of Epicurean Philosophy
 1. ▫ **The Historical Background of Epicurean Philosophy**
 - A. ▫ **At the outset this must be emphasized: At one and the same time Epicurus was both the most revered and most reviled of all founders of Greco-Roman philosophical schools.**
 - (1) ▫ For seven hundred years Epicurus was very popular throughout the Greco-Roman world; his images were displayed, his handbooks memorized and carried by students, and on the twentieth of every month his followers assembled in his name.
 - (2) ▫ Throughout the same period Epicurus' enemies ceaselessly reviled him, he was attacked by Platonists, Stoics, and Christians, and his name was an abomination to the Jews.
 - B. ▫ **Epicurus employed teaching devices which are important in understanding his philosophy.**
 - (1) ▫ Setting The 'Attitude' or (diathesis, Greek). This device stresses at the very beginning the attitude to take toward the subject, just as the first of the Principal doctrines set for the attitude to take toward gods, death, pleasure, and pain.
 - (2) ▫ Start With An 'Outline' or the 'Synoptic View.' This means starting with the 'big picture' before proceeding to detailed discussion of the finer points, so that the fine points are kept in perspective. Epicurus' teachings were therefore presented in order from the general to the particular:
 - a. ▫ **The Progression in Physics:**
 1. ▫ The first principles of Physics were presented as the Twelve Elementary Principles
 2. ▫ The "First Epitome" of Physics was the Letter to Herodotus
 3. ▫ The "Second Epitome" of Physics is what we have today as the material adapted into poem form in Lucretius "On The Nature of Things"
 4. ▫ The Full presentation of Physics was the Thirty-Seven Books on Nature.
 - b. ▫ (Note: Compare in Ethics: Ethical passages of 40 Doctrines > Letter to Menoeceus > Longer Works Now Lost. Compare in Canonics: Epistemological passages of 40 Doctrines > Epistemological passages in "On the Nature of Things" > the "Celestial Book" on Canonics now lost.)
 2. ▫ **Warning: View The Literature On Epicurus With Great Care**
 - A. ▫ Little remains of the trustworthy texts other than a small amount of original material from Epicurus, supplemented by the poem of Lucretius. The secondary literature is mostly hostile and cannot be received uncritically. Most modern scholars prefer to "hunt with the pack" and take the secondary literature at face value. This results in the greatly distorted picture of Epicurus dominant today.
 - B. ▫ In separating out the false material it is useful to employ another device used by Epicurus: that of contrasting and opposing "True Opinions" against "False Opinions."
 3. ▫ **True and False Opinions About Epicurus**
 - A. ▫ **Epicurus' Place In Greek Philosophy:**
 - (1) ▫ True: Epicurus came immediately after Plato (idealism; absolutism) and Pyrrho (the skeptic). Platonism and Skepticism were among Epicurus' chief abominations.
 - (2) ▫ False: Epicurus taught in response to Stoicism. (False because Epicurean philosophy was fully developed before Zeno began teaching Stoicism.)
 - B. ▫ **Epicurus' Attitude Toward Learning:**
 - (1) ▫ True: Epicurus was well educated and a trained thinker
 - (2) ▫ False: Epicurus was an ignoramus and an enemy of all culture.
 - C. ▫ **Epicurus' Goal For Himself And His Work:**
 - (1) ▫ True: Epicurus was not only a philosopher but a moral reformer rebelling against his teachers.
 - (2) ▫ False: Epicurus was nothing more than a copycat who was ungrateful to his teachers.
 - D. ▫ **Epicurus' Place in Greek Scientific Thought:**
 - (1) ▫ True: Epicurus was returning to the Ionian tradition of thought which had been interrupted by Socrates and Plato. Epicurus was an Anti-Platonist and a penetrating critic of Platonism.
 - (2) ▫ False: Epicurean scientific thought simply copied Democritus.
 - E. ▫ **Epicurus' Role As a Systematizer:**
 - (1) ▫ True: As with Herbert Spencer or Auguste Comte, Epicurus was attempting a synthesis and critique of all prior philosophical thought.
 - (2) ▫ False: Epicurus was a sloppy and unorganized thinker whose system-building is not worth attention.
 - F. ▫ **Epicurus' Dogmatism:**

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- (1) ☐ True: Epicurus' strength was that he promulgated a dogmatic philosophy, actuated by a passion for inquiry to find certainty, and a detestation of skepticism, which he imputed even to Plato.
- (2) ☐ False: Epicurus' demerit was that he promulgated a dogmatic philosophy, because he renounced inquiry.
- G. ☐ **Epicurus' View of Truth:**
 - (1) ☐ True: Epicurus exalted Nature as the norm of truth, revolting against Plato, who had preached "reason" as the norm and considered "Reason" to have a divine existence of its own. Epicurus studied and taught the nature and use of sensations, and the role in determining that which we consider to be true.
 - (2) ☐ False: Epicurus was an empiricist in the modern sense, declaring sensation to be the only source of knowledge and all sensations to be "true."
- H. ☐ **Epicurus' Method For Determining Truth:**
 - (1) ☐ True: Epicurus taught reasoning chiefly by deduction. For example, atoms cannot be observed directly; their existence and properties must be determined by deduction, and the principles thereby deduced serve as standards for assessing truth. In this Epicurus was adopting the procedures of Euclid and partying company with both Plato and the Ionian scientists.
 - (2) ☐ False: Epicurus taught reasoning mainly by induction
- I. ☐ **Epicurus' As A Man of Action**
 - (1) ☐ True: Epicurus was the first missionary philosophy. Epicurus was by disposition combative and he was by natural gifts a leader, organizer, and campaigner.
 - (2) ☐ False: Epicurus was effeminate and a moral invalid; a passivist who taught retirement from and non-engagement with the world.
- J. ☐ **Epicurus' View of Self-Interest**
 - (1) ☐ True: Epicureanism was the first world philosophy, acceptable to both Greek and barbarian. Epicurus taught that we should make friends wherever possible.
 - (2) ☐ False: Epicurus was a totally egoistic hedonist ruled solely by a narrow view of his own self-interest.
- K. ☐ **Epicurus Is Of Little Relevance to the Development of Christianity**
 - (1) ☐ True: Epicurus reoriented emphasis from political virtues to social virtues, and developed a wider viewpoint applicable to all humanity.
 - (2) ☐ False: Epicurus was an enemy of all religion and there is no trace of his influence in the "New Testament."
4. ☐ **The Cultural Context of Epicurus**
 - A. ☐ Born in 341 BC, seven years after death of Plato and seven years before Alexander crossed Hellespont to conquer Persia.
 - B. ☐ Platonism was dominant in higher education.
 - C. ☐ When Epicurus arrived in Athens the Cynics were in revolt against conventional philosophy.
 - D. ☐ Epicurus owes debt to the later Aristotle in that Epicurus focused on organic life instead of inorganic, leading to setting Nature as furnishing the norm rather than hypostatized Reason as taught by Plato.
 - E. ☐ Chief negative influences of the time were Platonism and oratory, both of which were focused on the political.
 - F. ☐ Epicurus declared war on the whole system of Platonic education. More than half of Principle Doctrines are direct contradictions of Platonism.
 - G. ☐ It is a major mistake to consider Stoicism to be the primary antagonist of Epicureans - this ignores that Stoicism was developed after Epicurean philosophy: the main enemy of Epicurus was Platonism.
5. ☐ **Epicurus Was A Man of Erudition**
 - A. ☐ Some detractors of Epicurus claim he was an ignoramus and enemy of all culture. This is absurd.
 - B. ☐ Epicurus was precocious as a child and challenged his teachers on the origin of the universe.
 - C. ☐ Epicurus no doubt received Platonic schooling in geometry, dialectic, and rhetoric.
 - D. ☐ Epicurus shows great familiarity with Platonic texts and more than half of his doctrines are rejections of Platonic positions.
 - E. ☐ Epicurus declared dialectic a superfluity but criticized Plato with acumen and wrote against the Megarians, the contemporary experts in logic.
 - F. ☐ Epicurus rejected geometry as relevant to ethics but adopted the procedures of Euclid in his own textbooks. Epicurus refuted mathematicians' claims that matter is infinitely divisible.
 - G. ☐ Epicurus was clearly familiar with Aristotle and adopted many of his findings.
6. ☐ **Epicurus Was A Moral Reformer**
 - A. ☐ Epicurus is criticized as ungrateful to his teachers and influences, but this is because he was a moral reformer, and reformers feel themselves absolved from debts of gratitude to those they are rebelling against.

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- B.
 - The attitude of Epicurus might be compared to St. Paul, because Epicurus was delivering new truth that did not come from other men – but not in a “divinely revealed” way as claimed by religious imposters.
- 7.
 - Epicurus Was A Man of Science
 - A.
 - In role of natural scientist he became – in particular - the antagonist of Plato.
 - B.
 - Prior to Epicurus there had been two major currents in Greek Philosophy:
 - (1)
 - The first was that of the Aegean Greeks/Ionians, who were observational and speculative. These were interested in studying change in nature, and devoted to discovering what unchanging something underlay all changing things. This study led to the development of atomic theory – the universe as made up of divisible bodies that were themselves composed of indivisible atoms as the ultimate structure of universe. This is the line which includes Democritus and Epicurus.
 - (2)
 - The later line was that of the Greeks in Italy – these were mathematical and contemplative rather than observational and speculative. These “Italian” schools were “addicted to the sitting posture” – they were not interested in physical change or natural processes, and instead focused on contemplation of ‘forms’ and geometry. This is the line which includes Pythagoras and Plato, who developed this into “absolute reason contemplating absolute truth.”
 - C.
 - The key error of the Platonic line arose from their attempt to transfer the precise concepts of geometry to ethics and politics, just as modern thinkers attempt to transfer the concepts of biological evolution to history and sociology.
 - (1)
 - Especially enticing as a mistake is to make improper use of “definition.” Definition is the creation of geometricians – created by defining straight lines, equilateral triangles, and other regular figures.
 - (2)
 - Plato sought to transfer this process to ethics: If straight lines and equilateral triangles can be defined, why not justice, piety, temperance, and other virtues?
 - (3)
 - The problem with this process is that it is reasoning by analogy, and reasoning by analogy is one of the trickiest of logical procedures: it holds good only between sets of true similars – and virtues and triangles are not true similars!
 - (4)
 - It does not follow that just because equilateral triangles can be precisely defined that justice can be precisely defined.
 - D.
 - The Deceptiveness of Analogy does not prevent it from flourishing, especially when combined with the method of analysis by question and answer: dialectic, which is the “dramatization of logic.”
 - E.
 - The Platonists then fell for another huge error: The quest for a definition of a virtue, such as “justice” presumes the existence of the thing to be defined! If equilateral triangles did not exist, they could not be defined. But if we assume that “justice” can be defined, then we assume that “justice” exists just as equilateral triangles exist – and this is not necessarily so.
 - (1)
 - The Platonic “theory of ideas” arose from the view of an “idea” as something having a shape or form with independent existence, and it is false to assume that justice or other virtues have an independent existence.
 - (2)
 - Epicurus rejected this theory of ideas. Starting with a materialist view of the universe he denied the possibility of any eternal existences except atoms and space. Once “ideas” of this nature are rejected, we have no use for the tools by which ideas are constructed; we have no use for “dramatized logic” – we depend on science verified through sensation.
 - F.
 - The Platonists inherited from Pythagoras the belief in rebirth/transmigration of souls, and the view that the body is a tomb or prison-house for the soul, which blurred our reason and prevented perfection of knowledge. Epicurus rejected all of this as skepticism.
 - G.
 - The Platonists emphasized application of geometry to astronomy. Epicurus observed that Plato as assuming the validity of sensation in the study of astronomy, by denying the validity of sensation in the study of things here on Earth, and this was a glaring inconsistency.
 - H.
 - The Platonists argued that circular motion was the only perfect and eternal motion and was therefore identifiable with reason itself, which meant reason was identifiable with the Divine nature, and planets/stars were declared to be gods. Epicurus held this to be absurd, not the least of which reasons was that it was absurd to consider gods to be hurtling balls of fire.
- 8.
 - Epicurus as Philosopher
 - A.
 - The most preposterous criticism of Epicurus is that he was a dullard or charlatan. In truth Epicurus was among the greatest synthesizers of philosophy.
 - (1)
 - Epicurus saw error in separating phenomena from matter: he saw how ridiculous it was to allege, like Plato, that “horseness” was a real existence, but that horses were mere apparitions.
 - (2)
 - Epicurus saw error in thinking that justice could exist apart from conduct.

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- (3) ▫ Epicurus saw error in thinking color has existence apart from arrangements and motions of atoms comprising the thing that we see as having color.
- (4) ▫ Epicurus saw that “some form of religion” is indispensable (while excluding divine government of universe, regimentation, political enforcement, forced belief)
- 9. ▫ **The First Dogmatic Philosophy**
 - A. ▫ Moral reform requires dogmatism, and requires more than speculative thinking. Philosophy must be useful for happiness and this is impossible without faith, and faith is impossible without certainty – therefore philosophy must be dogmatic: “The wise man will not be a doubter but will dogmatize.”
 - B. ▫ Dogmatism is the reaction to skepticism. The man who denies the possibility of knowledge is challenging others to declare that knowledge is possible. Epicurus took up this challenge and fought against it in Pyrrho, Plato, Aristotle, and even Democritus.
 - C. ▫ Epicurus was alerted to the challenge of skepticism by his teacher Nausiphanes, who admired the placidity of Pyrrho but rebelled against his skepticism.
 - D. ▫ Nausiphanes erected a criterion of truth he called the Tripod, which was so named because it stands on three legs.
 - E. ▫ Epicurus took the Tripod and elaborated it into his own Canon of Truth, composed of:
 - (1) ▫ The Sensations – The evidence furnished by the five senses.
 - (2) ▫ The Anticipations – The evidence furnished by innate ideas (such as in field of justice) which exist in advance of and anticipate experience.
 - (3) ▫ The Feelings - Pleasure and pain – Nature’s educators – her “Go” and “Stop” signals.
 - F. ▫ Epicurus is criticized for supposedly discouraging inquiry, but it should be recognized that (like Plato) Epicurus distinguished between people of different levels of education. However Epicurus saw no need for deception, and insisted his teachings were for all men, with simply differences in level of detail as set by their own capacities and opportunities.
 - G. ▫ Epicureans were not limited in any way and free to pursue their own tastes and talents, just as Lucretius pursued poetry, Polyenus was an expert in geometry, and Asclepiades was an expert physician. Epicurus himself was an expert researcher into natural science.
- 10. ▫ **The New Order of Nature**
 - A. ▫ Especially important in the Epicurean canon is that “Reason” is not included as a criterion of truth.
 - B. ▫ The Sensations, Anticipations, and Feelings are the only direct contact between man and his physical and social environment. Because they are direct contacts, they acquire a priority over reason and elevate Nature over Reason as affording a norm of truth.
 - C. ▫ The Platonists followed the “Italian” Greek school model of Arithmetic to Geometry to Astronomy to find an inflexible Celestial order of nature.
 - D. ▫ The Ionians followed the model of studying nature chiefly here on Earth, taking reason for granted as a faculty and applying it to observe inorganic, and then organic, nature, leading to the conclusion that Nature does nothing at random – a Terrestrial order of Nature.
 - E. ▫ Epicurus followed the Ionian pattern and extended the Aristotelian model, concluding that Nature provides the norm rather than Reason as argued by Plato.
 - F. ▫ This difference in perspective between the Terrestrial Order and the alleged Celestial Order led to the distinctly different philosophical directions of great importance, for example:
 - (1) ▫ In the interpretation of “Living according to Nature”:
 - a. ▫ The Platonists and Stoics argued that living according to Nature meant imitation of inflexible celestial order by a rigid and unemotional morality.
 - b. ▫ Epicurus argued that living according to Nature meant living in accord with the laws of our being, centrally including the emotions as a normal, integral, and guiding part, undeserving of suspicion or distrust.
 - (2) ▫ In the interpretation of “Justice”:
 - a. ▫ The Platonists require a definition of justice and they invoke dialectic as the tool and (for example) devote ten books of the Republic to the quest. In the background of their analysis are the mathematics of ration and the musical notion of harmony. After great examination they eventually conclude that justice is a harmony of the three parts of the soul: (1) reason, (2) passion, and (3) desire, and that “justice” in the state is a harmony of the constituent classes.

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- b.
 - Epicurus, in contrast, looked to the feelings as the criterion, and observed that “injustice” hurts as an injury, and “justice” promotes happiness feels pleasant. In this analysis “justice” is the agreement among people not to injure or be injured. This comes directly from Nature and no dialectic is needed to discover it – only observation. The sense that allows us to translate justice into a pleasant feeling and injustice into an unpleasant feeling is innate – it is an Anticipation or Prolepsis that exists in advance of and anticipates experience. Even certain animals, including elephants, have such an innate capacity.
- G.
 - Plato was complicating philosophy for the sake of the few who find self-gratification in complexity; Epicurus simplified philosophy for the sake of the many who wished to live by it.
- H.
 - Epicurus analyzed human nature just as Aristotle analyzed plants and animals, and in so doing Epicurus:
 - (1)
 - Categorized man’s direct contacts with nature into Sensations, Anticipations, and Feelings;
 - (2)
 - Categorized desires into natural and necessary, natural but not necessary, and neither natural nor necessary.
 - (3)
 - Categorized the causes of injury inflicted by men as caused by (1) hatred, (2) envy, or (3) contempt.
- I.
 - The Canon was attacked, but the Stoics adopted the idea of the prolepsis/anticipations, and this view appeared commonplace to Cicero.
 - (1)
 - The reliance on the sensations was attacked by misrepresenting that Epicurus held all sensations to be true. (The fallacy of this is apparent – would Epicurus have contended that our vision informs us no more correctly about a cow at twenty paces than at half a mile?)
 - (2)
 - The Canon was misrepresented to be a substitute for logic. This is false because the function of ancient logic was to score debating points against opponents; the Canon is an individual test requiring no opponents. This the way a modern scientific researcher approaches his work – through hypothesis, putting it to test, and observing (through the senses) the reaction.
- 11.
 - **Epicurus as an Educator**
 - A.
 - Epicurus took over textbook form from Euclid. Plato had embraced geometry but employed artistic prose for his proofs. Epicurus rejected geometry, but embraced the bald and clear style of Euclid in composing his proofs.
 - B.
 - Epicurus looked to Nature as the teacher which revealed the true meaning of words and the right kind of style: the sole requisite of writing is clarity. Epicurus denied that Nature was either a dialectician or a rhetorician or a poet.
 - C.
 - Epicurus encouraged memorization of the fundamental axioms as an aid to applying them properly.
 - D.
 - The Epicurean method stresses deductive reasoning from first principles. The Twelve Elementary Principles were stated and demonstrated as theorems, and each theorem became a major premise for the deduction of further theorems, which were then confirmed by the evidence of the Sensations, which operate as a criteria.
 - E.
 - Epicurus was NOT an empiricist: the status of Sensations is that of a witness in court limited to confirming the truth (or falsity) of given proposition.
 - F.
 - The Epicurean method of teaching is preserved to a significant extent in Philodemus, “On Frankness of Speech” recovered from Herculaneum
- 12.
 - **The First Missionary Philosophy**
 - A.
 - Epicureanism was the first and only real missionary philosophy produced by Greeks.
 - B.
 - Plato had founded his Academy despite the absence of any (known) model for a school.
 - C.
 - The model the Greeks were most familiar with was the city-state, and this model was pursued by Pythagoras.
 - D.
 - The Cynics had escaped the political obsession of Plato and similar Greeks. So did Epicurus.
 - E.
 - Epicurus believed a certain modicum of governmental control was necessary but rejected doctrine of Plato and others that the state stood in the place of a parent.
 - F.
 - A closer model probably in Epicurus’ mind was the example of Aristotle, whose school was more of a research institution and less of a one-man enterprise than Plato’s Academy. Epicurus had with himself three colleagues from the beginning, and those left in Lampsacus continued to study and write separately.
 - G.
 - Most likely model for Epicurus was the Hippocratic medical fraternity. Epicurus saw his mission as extending to all mankind, not just within a certain political limit.
 - H.
 - If philosophy is to heal maladies of soul, must be divorced from politics...healing was for all people, regardless of political affiliation
 - I.
 - Every Epicurean convert was a missionary. Philosophy should begin at home and be disseminated from the home. Thus the philosophical movement was independent of schools and tutors.
 - J.
 - Epicurus is falsely denounced as effeminate and moral invalidism, but the truth is that Epicurus had a crusading spirit that endowed Epicureanism with a tenacity unequalled by rival creeds, leading it to flourish for almost seven centuries, in contrast to Stoicism which was in vogue for a much shorter time.
- 13.
 - **The First World Philosophy**

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- A. ☐ Epicureanism is for all people and not limited to any political system.
- B. ☐ System of pamphlets and handbooks made Epicureanism readily transportable.
- C. ☐ Epicurus is misclassified as "egoistic hedonist" – when Epicurus embarked on a campaign to "awake the world to the blessedness of the happy life" his philosophy became a "higher hedonism."
- 14. ☐ **Predecessor Of Christianity**
 - A. ☐ Spirit, procedures and certain doctrines were adopted by Christianity
 - B. ☐ Both sects (Christianity and Epicureanism):
 - C. ☐ Appealed to lower and middle classes;
 - D. ☐ Held meetings in private houses;
 - E. ☐ Held ceremonies to performed in memory of their founders;
 - F. ☐ Carried small images of their founders.
- 15. ☐ **The World Perceived Two Faces of Epicurean Philosophy**
 - A. ☐ **The Repellent Side:**
 - (1) ☐ Rejection of immortality and judgment after death
 - (2) ☐ "Hedonism"
 - (3) ☐ "Apolitical stance"
 - B. ☐ **The Attractive Side**
 - (1) ☐ Ethical creed of love / friendship
 - (2) ☐ The kindly social virtues than make for peace and good companionship.
 - C. ☐ Epicureanism won numerous followers but many enemies, especially among scholars, and the candid student should be warned repeatedly against their tendency to malign and misrepresent true Epicurean philosophy.
- 16. ☐ **Survival**
 - A. ☐ Epicurean philosophy continues under different names in many places.
 - B. ☐ In friendly terms in some parts of Christianity and mixed philosophies
 - C. ☐ In unfriendly terms in Jewish, Christian, and Opposing School literature
 - D. ☐ In political teachings such as Locke and Jefferson.
- II. ☐ **Outline - Epicurean Doctrine From Global View To Particulars**
 - 1. ☐ **Nature: There Are No Supernatural Gods; The Universe Operates on Natural Principles Which Derive from The Properties And Combinations Of the Atoms**
 - A. ☐ **N1. Nothing comes from nothing and nothing goes to nothing.**
 - (1) ☐ Therefore the universe as a whole has existed eternally.
 - a. ☐ EP 1. Matter is uncreateable.
 - b. ☐ EP 2. Matter is indestructible.
 - (2) ☐ Therefore the universe was not created at any single point in time, neither by a god nor by any other single event.
 - B. ☐ **N2. Everything in the universe is composed of combinations of elementary matter and void.**
 - (1) ☐ Therefore nothing else exists - no Religious "heaven" or "hell," no Spiritual or other dimension, no Platonic "ideals," no Aristotelian "essences." Nothing exists except elementary matter, void, and their combinations.
 - a. ☐ EP 3. The universe consists of solid bodies and void.
 - b. ☐ EP 4. Solid bodies are either compounds or simple.
 - C. ☐ **N3. The amount of elementary matter and void in the universe is unlimited in extent.**
 - (1) ☐ Therefore the universe as a whole is unlimited in extent.
 - (2) ☐ Therefore the universe as a whole has no center and no edge.
 - (3) ☐ Therefore the earth is not uniquely positioned at the center of the universe.
 - a. ☐ EP 5. The multitude of atoms is infinite.
 - b. ☐ EP 6. The void is infinite in extent.
 - D. ☐ **N4. The elementary matter is always in motion.**
 - (1) ☐ Therefore the universe is constantly changing.
 - a. ☐ EP 7. The atoms are always in motion.
 - E. ☐ **N5. The elementary matter moves through the void at a uniform speed, but vibrates in compounds due to collisions.**
 - (1) ☐ Therefore the change in the universe is not chaotic, but subject to laws of motion.
 - a. ☐ EP 8. The speed of atomic motion is uniform.

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- b. ▫ EP 9. Motion is linear in space, vibratory in compounds.
- F. ▫ N6. The elementary matter is capable of swerving from its path at no fixed place or time.
 - (1) ▫ Therefore not everything in the universe is predetermined from the beginning of time.
 - a. ▫ Lucretius Book 2 - I'd have you know that while these particles come mostly down, straight down of their own weight through void, at times- no one knows when or where - they swerve a little, not much, but just enough for us to say they change direction. Were this not the case, all things would fall straight down, like drops of rain, through utter void, no birth-shock would emerge out of collision, nothing be created. ... If cause forever follows after cause In infinite, undeviating sequence and a new motion always has to come out of an old one, by fixed law; if atoms do not, by swerving, cause new moves which break the laws of fate; if cause forever follows, in infinite sequence, cause - where would we get this free will that we have, wrested from fate, by which we go ahead, each one of us, wherever our pleasures urge? Don't we also swerve at no fixed time or place, but as our purpose directs us? There's no doubt each man's will initiates action, and this prompting stirs our limbs to movement. When the gates fly open, no racehorse breaks as quickly as he wants to, for the whole body of matter must be aroused, inspired to follow what the mind desires. So, you can see, motion begins with will of heart or mind, and from that will moves on through all the framework.
- G. ▫ N7. The elementary matter has varying weights, shapes, and sizes, but the number of these variations not infinite, only innumerable.
 - (1) ▫ Therefore the properties of elementary matter and the combinations formed by elementary matter and void are not unlimited, but limited by the properties of the elementary matter and its combinations.
 - a. ▫ EP 11. Atoms are characterized by three qualities: weight, shape and size.
 - b. ▫ EP 12. The number of the different shapes is not infinite, merely innumerable.
- H. ▫ N8. Combinations of elementary matter and void are not by nature eternal but are created and destroyed.
 - (1) ▫ Therefore while the universe as a whole is eternal, the combinations of elementary matter and void are not eternal.
- I. ▫ N9. To the extent that "perfect" combinations of elementary matter and void exist, such perfect things (including perfect beings) neither cause nor receive trouble, because causing and receiving trouble are characteristics only of things which are weak.
 - (1) ▫ Therefore to the extent that any life forms, or any combinations of elementary matter and void, have developed the capacity to live without end, they neither cause change to us nor or are they changed by any actions we may take.
 - a. ▫ PD 1. The blessed and immortal nature knows no trouble itself nor causes trouble to any other, so that it is never constrained by anger or favour. For all such things exist only in the weak.
- J. ▫ N10. Nature never creates only a single instance of any kind of thing.
 - (1) ▫ Therefore life exists throughout the universe, as the Earth cannot possibly be the only place where life exists.
 - a. ▫ Lucretius Book 2 - "Furthermore, adding up all the sum, you'll never find one single thing completely different from all the rest, alone, apart, unique, sole product, single specimen of its kind. Look at the animals: is this not true of mountain-ranging species, and of men, of the silent schools of fish, of flying things? Likewise you must admit that earth, sun, moon, ocean, and all the rest, are not unique, but beyond reckoning or estimate.
- K. ▫ N11. In the Universe as a whole, every thing has its match and counterpart. This principle of uniform distribution is known as "isonomia."
 - (1) ▫ Therefore, for example, there are as many "immortal" beings as "mortal" beings in the universe.
 - (2) ▫ Therefore, for example, if the causes which bring about destruction of bodies are beyond count, the causes which bring about the coming together of bodies are also beyond count.
 - a. ▫ Cicero's On the Nature of the Gods - Moreover there is the supremely potent principle of infinity, which claims the closest and most careful study; we must understand that it has in the sum of things everything has its exact match and counterpart. This property is termed by Epicurus isonomia, or the principle of uniform distribution. From this principle it follows that if the whole number of mortals be so many, there must exist no less a number of immortals, and if the causes of destruction are beyond count, the causes of conservation also are bound to be infinite.
- 2. ▫ Knowledge: Knowledge Is Possible; The Faculties Given Us By Nature (And Not "Reason") Are How We Measure Truth
 - A. ▫ K1. Knowledge Of Things That Are Relevant To Us Is Attainable If We Pursue That Knowledge In Ways Consistent With The Nature Of The Universe

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- (1)
 - Therefore we must not pursue knowledge in ways that are contrary to the facts of nature, and of these erroneous methods of pursuing nature there are three primary errors:
 - a.
 - It is an error to think that knowledge must be based on "forms" or "models" or "ideals" that are held to exist in another reality. This error leads to the belief that the things we experience around us originate from and are to be understood according to those nonexistent "forms." (Plato and others)
 - b.
 - It is an error to think that knowledge must be based on "essences" that are held to exist as a part within the things we experience around us. This error leads to the belief that the things we experience around us originate and are to be understood according to these nonexistent "essences." (Aristotle and others)
 - c.
 - It is an error to think that knowledge must be based on divine revelation or by reference to "gods" or "prime movers" who create all things according to their divine will. This error leads to the belief that the things around us originated and are to be understood according to religion. (Judaism, Christianity, and others)
 - (2)
 - Therefore we must pursue knowledge by studying the facts of nature, which means that we must remember that we ourselves, as well as the subject of our knowledge, and our means of considering that knowledge, derive from (1) the eternal properties of the elementary matter, and (2) the temporary qualities of the bodies that are formed by the combinations of elementary matter and void.
 - (3)
 - Therefore our pursuit of knowledge must be based only on the faculties of observation that Nature has brought into existence through the movement of the elementary matter and the bodies that they form.
- B.
 - **K2. The Faculties of Observation Provided By Nature Are The Tools By Which We Measure Truth. These are collectively referred to as the Epicurean "Canon of Truth."**
 - (1)
 - The Faculty of Seeing is an inborn capacity which allows us "to see," producing something that we call "a sight." An example of the field in which this faculty operates is that of "seeing the sun." The faculty of sight reports to our minds exactly what it perceives without error or added opinion. But when we speak of "the act of seeing" we are generally including also the thing seen, or "a sight." It is important to keep in mind the difference between "the faculty of seeing" and "a sight." What our mind concludes about the significance of what it perceives as seen -- that is, about its total effect on ourselves, about the nature of the object, and about the conditions of observation which exist when we perceive any particular "sight" -- is an evaluative process that is subject to error. The necessity of considering these factors does not negate the value of the faculty of sight, but requires that we work to understand each experience of seeing so as to accurately understand its significance.
 - (2)
 - The Faculty of Hearing is an inborn capacity which allows us "to hear," producing something that we call "a sound." An example of the field in which this faculty operates is that of "hearing a song." The faculty of hearing reports to our minds exactly what it perceives without error or added opinion. But when we speak of "the act of hearing" we are generally including also the thing heard, or "a sound." It is important to keep in mind the difference between "the faculty of hearing" and "a sound." What our mind concludes about the significance of what it perceives as heard -- that is, about its total effect on ourselves, about the nature of the object, and about the conditions of observation which exist when we perceive any particular "sound" -- is an evaluative process that is subject to error. The necessity of considering these factors does not negate the value of the faculty of hearing, but requires that we work to understand each experience of hearing so as to accurately understand its significance.
 - (3)
 - The Faculty of Touching is an inborn capacity which allows us "to touch," producing something that we call "a touch." An example of the field in which this faculty operates is that of "touching a statue." The faculty of touch reports to our minds exactly what it perceives without error or added opinion. But when we speak of "the act of touching" we are generally including also the thing touched, or "a touch." It is important to keep in mind the difference between "the faculty of touching" and "a touch." What our mind concludes about the significance of what it perceives as touched -- that is, about its total effect on ourselves, about the nature of the object, and about the conditions of observation which exist when we perceive any particular "touch" -- is an evaluative process that is subject to error. The necessity of considering these factors does not negate the value of the faculty of touch, but requires that we work to understand each experience of touching so as to accurately understand its significance.

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- (4) ▫ The Faculty of Tasting is an inborn capacity which allows us "to taste," producing something that we call "a taste." An example of the field in which this faculty operates is that of "tasting a fig." The faculty of taste reports to our minds exactly what it perceives without error or added opinion. But when we speak of "the act of tasting" we are generally including also the thing seen, or "a taste." It is important to keep in mind the difference between "the faculty of tasting" and "a taste." What our mind concludes about the significance of what it perceives as tasted -- that is, about its total effect on ourselves, about the nature of the object, and about the conditions of observation which exist when we perceive any particular "taste" -- is an evaluative process that is subject to error. The necessity of considering these factors does not negate the value of the faculty of tasting, but requires that we work to understand each experience of tasting so as to accurately understand its significance.
- (5) ▫ The Faculty of Smelling is an inborn capacity which allows us "to smell," producing something that we call "an odor" or "a smell." An example of the field in which this faculty operates is that of "smelling a flower." The faculty of smelling reports to our minds exactly what it perceives without error or added opinion. But when we speak of "the act of smelling" we are generally including also the thing smelled, or "a smell." It is important to keep in mind the difference between "the faculty of smelling" and "a smell." What our mind concludes about the significance of what it perceives as smelled -- that is, about its total effect on ourselves, about the nature of the object, and about the conditions of observation which exist when we perceive any particular "smell" -- is an evaluative process that is subject to error. The necessity of considering these factors does not negate the value of the faculty of smell, but requires that we work to understand each experience of smelling so as to accurately understand its significance.
- (6) ▫ The Faculty of Anticipations is an inborn capacity which allows us "to anticipate" an abstract relationship, producing something that we call "an anticipation." An example of the field in which this faculty operates is that of "classifying justice." The faculty of anticipation reports to our minds exactly what it perceives without error or added opinion. But when we speak of "the act of anticipating" we are generally including also the abstraction perceived, or "an anticipation." It is important to keep in mind the difference between "the faculty of anticipations" and "an anticipation." What our mind concludes about the significance of what it perceives as anticipated -- that is, about its total effect on ourselves, about the nature of the abstract relationship, and about the conditions of observation which exist when we perceive any particular "anticipation" -- is an evaluative process that is subject to error. The necessity of considering these factors does not negate the value of the faculty of anticipation, but requires that we work to understand each experience of anticipating so as to accurately understand its significance.
- (7) ▫ The Faculty of "Feelings" or "Passions" is a collective name given in Epicurean Philosophy to the Faculty of Pleasure and Pain - the inborn capacity which allows us to experience Pleasure and Pain. This faculty operates in conjunction with each of the other faculties listed above, and concerns not only physical objects but also mental thoughts. This faculty operates in all fields of perception and conception of which men are capable, from the most simple experience of tasting or touching to the most complicated experience of mental consideration of the most complicated or exalted emotions and abstractions. This is the only faculty given to living beings by Nature for the direct experience of anything - from the most simple to the most complex - as desirable or undesirable. It is because the Faculty of Pleasure is our only natural faculty for experiencing that which is desirable in life that Lucretius refers to "Divine Pleasure, Guide of Life." But the great mistake of many philosophers is to condemn pleasure and extol pain. This mistake occurs even though no one rejects, dislikes or avoids pleasure in itself, simply because it is pleasure. This mistake occurs because those who do not pursue pleasure rationally encounter consequences that are extremely painful. Another reason for this mistake is that people fail to understand that mental pleasure and pain is often much more important in life and intense than physical pleasure and pain. It is therefore very important to keep in mind that the Faculty of Pleasure and Pain must be considered and employed wisely, using using the same framework as the other faculties:

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- a. ▫ The "Faculty of Pleasure" allows us "to experience as pleasing," producing something that we call "a pleasure." The faculty of pleasure reports to our minds exactly what it perceives without error or added opinion. But when we speak of "the act of experiencing pleasure" we are generally including also the thing perceived as pleasing, or "a pleasure." It is important to keep in mind the difference between "the faculty of pleasure" and "a pleasure." What our mind concludes about the significance of what it perceives as pleasing -- that is, about its total effect on ourselves, about the nature of whatever we find to be pleasing, and about the conditions of observation which exist when we perceive any particular "pleasure" -- is an evaluative process that is subject to error. The necessity of considering these factors does not negate the value of the faculty of Pleasure, but requires that we work to understand each experience of pleasure so as to accurately understand its significance.
 - b. ▫ The "Faculty of Pain" allows us "to experience as painful," producing something that we call "a pain." The faculty of pain reports to our minds exactly what it perceives without error or added opinion. But when we speak of "the act of experiencing pain" we are generally including also the thing perceived as painful, or "a pain." It is important to keep in mind the difference between "the faculty of experiencing pain" and "a pain." What our mind concludes about the significance of what it perceives as painful -- that is, about its total effect on ourselves, about the nature of whatever we find to be painful, and about the conditions of observation which exist when we perceive any particular "pain" -- is an evaluative process that is subject to error. The necessity of considering these factors does not negate the value of the faculty of Pain, but requires that we work to understand each experience of pain so as to accurately understand its significance.
- C. ▫ **K3. We Must Apply The Proper Standard of "Certainty" In Applying the Canon of Truth.**
- (1) ▫ Therefore we do not seek to understand everything equally well, nor do we expect to understand that which is not possible for us to understand. We seek only to have firm convictions about those things which are necessary for our peace of mind.
 - a. ▫ Letter to Pythocles: In the first place, remember that, like everything else, knowledge of celestial phenomena, whether taken along with other things or in isolation, has no other end in view than peace of mind and firm convictions. We do not seek to wrest by force what is impossible, nor to understand all matters equally well, nor make our treatment always as clear as when we discuss human life or explain the principles of physics in general—for instance, that the whole of being consists of bodies and intangible nature, or that the ultimate elements of things are indivisible, or any other proposition which admits only one explanation of the phenomena to be possible.
- D. ▫ **K4. "Reason" and "logic" are not faculties of observation. Properly understood, "reason" and "logic" are only the names we give to the important process of accurately comparing, contrasting, analogizing, and evaluating the data obtained by our faculties of observation.**
- (1) ▫ Therefore there is an important but subordinate role for "reason" and "logic" in classifying conclusions about what is "true" and "false."
 - a. ▫ PD 16. In but few things chance hinders a wise man, but the greatest and most important matters reason has ordained and throughout the whole period of life does and will ordain.
 - b. ▫ Diogenes Laertius - Biography of Epicurus: Every sensation, he says, is devoid of reason and incapable of memory; for neither is it self-caused nor, regarded as having an external cause, can it add anything thereto or take anything therefrom. Nor is there anything which can refute sensations or convict them of error: one sensation cannot convict another and kindred sensation, for they are equally valid; nor can one sensation refute another which is not kindred but heterogeneous, for the objects which the two senses judge are not the same; nor again can reason refute them, for reason is wholly dependent on sensation; nor can one sense refute another, since we pay equal heed to all. And the reality of separate perceptions guarantees the truth of our senses. But seeing and hearing are just as real as feeling pain. Hence it is from plain facts that we must start when we draw inferences about the unknown. For all our notions are derived from perceptions, either by actual contact or by analogy, or resemblance, or composition, with some slight aid from reasoning.

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- c.
 - Cicero's **On Ends**: Logic, on which your [Stoic] school lays such stress, he [Epicurus] held to be of no effect either as a guide to conduct or as an aid to thought. Natural Philosophy he deemed all-important. This science explains to us the meaning of terms, the nature of predication, and the law of consistency and contradiction; secondly, a thorough knowledge of the facts of nature relieves us of the burden of superstition, frees us from fear of death, and shields us against the disturbing effects of ignorance, which is often in itself a cause of terrifying apprehensions; lastly, to learn what nature's real requirements are improves the moral character also. Besides, it is only by firmly grasping a well-established scientific system, observing the Rule or Canon that has fallen as it were from heaven so that all men may know it—only by making that Canon the test of all our judgments, that we can hope always to stand fast in our belief, unshaken by the eloquence of any man. On the other hand, without a full understanding of the world of nature it is impossible to maintain the truth of our sense-perceptions. Further, every mental presentation has its origin in sensation: so that no certain knowledge will be possible, unless all sensations are true, as the theory of Epicurus teaches that they are. Those who deny the validity of sensation and say that nothing can be perceived, having excluded the evidence of the senses, are unable even to expound their own argument. Besides, by abolishing knowledge and science they abolish all possibility of rational life and action. Thus Natural Philosophy supplies courage to face the fear of death; resolution to resist the terrors of religion; peace of mind, for it removes all ignorance of the mysteries of nature; self-control, for it explains the nature of the desires and distinguishes their different kinds; and, as I showed just now, the Canon or Criterion of Knowledge, which Epicurus also established, gives a method of discerning truth from falsehood.
- (2)
 - Therefore the assertions of reason must constantly be tested against the data obtained from our faculties of observations:
 - a.
 - Assertions of "reason" and "logic" should be concluded to be "true" when clear available evidence supports the conclusion, and no clear evidence contradicts the conclusion.
 - b.
 - Assertions of "reason" and "logic" should be concluded to be "false" when clear available evidence contradicts the conclusion, and no clear evidence supports the conclusion.
 - c.
 - Assertions of "reason" and "logic" which are not based on data from our faculties of observation, or on which the data from our faculties of observations is unclear, must not be considered "true," but considered "speculative" at best, and we must "wait" for additional evidence before concluding that the assertion is either true or false.
- 3.
 - **Ethics: There Are No Supernatural Gods Influencing Human Affairs; The Individual Does Not Exist Before Birth Or After Death; The Guide Of Life Is Pleasure Rather Than Virtue; There Are No Absolute Standards of Good, Evil, or Justice**
 - A.
 - **E1. Men need not be concerned about "gods" - supernatural beings do not exist, and any higher beings which are "perfect" are not concerned with men.**
 - (1)
 - Therefore it is false to believe that gods favor and reward their friends and disfavor and punish their enemies.
 - (2)
 - Therefore it is foolish to ask the gods to do things for us that we can do for ourselves.
 - a.
 - **PD 1. The blessed and immortal nature knows no trouble itself nor causes trouble to any other, so that it is never constrained by anger or favour. For all such things exist only in the weak.**
 - B.
 - **E2. Men cease to exist at death and thereafter experience no sensations whatsoever.**
 - (1)
 - Therefore there is no reward or punishment after death
 - (2)
 - Therefore all the pleasure that we want to experience must be experienced in life.
 - a.
 - **PD 2. Death is nothing to us, for that which is dissolved is without sensation; and that which lacks sensation is nothing to us.**
 - C.
 - **E3. Pleasurable living is the ultimate goal of life set by nature. The highest degree of pleasurable living possible to us (the "limit of pleasure") is attained by filling our experience with pleasures and expelling all pains. But men who lack knowledge of the nature of the universe are troubled by fear of supernatural forces, and men who are not independent of other men fear their enemies. Men by nature are troubled by these concerns, so they must study of nature and pursue independence. It is not possible to live to the limit of pleasure unless we study nature and attain the power to live safely and apart from our enemies.**
 - (1)
 - Therefore knowledge is indispensable for happy living, but knowledge is not an end in itself.
 - a.
 - **PD 11. If we were not troubled by our suspicions of the phenomena of the sky and about death, fearing that it concerns us, and also by our failure to grasp the limits of pains and desires, we should have no need of natural science.**

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- b.
 - PD 12. A man cannot dispel his fear about the most important matters if he does not know what is the nature of the universe but suspects the truth of some mythical story. So that without natural science it is not possible to attain our pleasures unalloyed.
 - PD13. There is no profit in securing protection in relation to men, if things above and things beneath the earth and indeed all in the boundless universe remain matters of suspicion.
 - PD 14. The most unalloyed source of protection from men, which is secured to some extent by a certain force of expulsion, is in fact the immunity which results from a quiet life and the retirement from the world.
- D.
 - E4. The pursuit of pleasure as the guide of life does not lead is not endless and is not in vain, because there is no goal higher than seeking the limit of mental and physical pleasure possible to you as an individual. You can experience that goal by filling your experience with pleasures and expelling all pains. Even if you are not able to expel every pain, pleasurable living is possible to most men because pain that is strong is generally short, and pain that is long is generally mild.
 - (1)
 - Therefore pleasurable living is the goal of life.
 - (2)
 - Therefore the escape from pain is not the goal of life, because the only means of total escape from pain is death, and the experience of pleasure, which is the goal of life, is only possible to the living.
 - a.
 - PD 3. The limit of quantity in pleasures is the removal of all that is painful. Wherever pleasure is present, as long as it is there, there is neither pain of body nor of mind, nor of both at once.
 - PD 4. Pain does not last continuously in the flesh, but the acutest pain is there for a very short time, and even that which just exceeds the pleasure in the flesh does not continue for many days at once. But chronic illnesses permit a predominance of pleasure over pain in the flesh.
- E.
 - E5. It is possible for us to attain the limit of pleasure (the maximum pleasure possible to us) if we pursue pleasure intelligently.
 - (1)
 - Therefore we must not think that we can increase our limit of pleasure past the limit which we experience when we are living most pleurably and also experiencing as little pain as possible
 - a.
 - PD 18. The pleasure in the flesh is not increased, when once the pain due to want is removed, but is only varied: and the limit as regards pleasure in the mind is begotten by the reasoned understanding of these very pleasures and of the emotions akin to them, which used to cause the greatest fear to the mind.
 - (2)
 - Therefore we must not regret that we cannot live forever, because the limit of pleasure is not measured by the time available to us, but by our capacity to live as pleurably as possible while also experiencing as little pain as possible, and the mind is capable of understanding this and eliminating the fear of death and regret that we are not immortal.
 - a.
 - PD 19. Infinite time contains no greater pleasure than limited time, if one measures by reason the limits of pleasure.
 - PD 20. The flesh perceives the limits of pleasure as unlimited, and unlimited time is required to supply it. But the mind, having attained a reasoned understanding of the ultimate good of the flesh and its limits and having dissipated the fears concerning the time to come, supplies us with the complete life, and we have no further need of infinite time: but neither does the mind shun pleasure, nor, when circumstances begin to bring about the departure from life, does it approach its end as though it fell short in any way of the best life.
 - (3)
 - Therefore we must learn also that it is not necessary to compete with others in seeking pleasure, as it is easy to live a complete life without comparing ourselves with other men.
 - a.
 - PD 21. He who has learned the limits of life knows that that which removes the pain due to want and makes the whole of life complete is easy to obtain, so that there is no need of actions which involve competition.
 - (4)
 - Therefore we must also learn to analyze our desires so as to pursue those which bring the most pleasure with the least accompanying pain.
 - a.
 - PD 29. Among desires some are natural (and necessary, some natural) but not necessary, and others neither natural nor necessary, but due to idle imagination.
 - PD 30. Wherever in the case of desires which are physical, but do not lead to a sense of pain, if they are not fulfilled, the effort is intense, such pleasures are due to idle imagination, and it is not owing to their own nature that they fail to be dispelled, but owing to the empty imaginings of the man.
 - (5)
 - Therefore we must learn that it is as great an error to live too simply as it is to live too extravagantly, as the goal of life is pleasant living, and different circumstances will require and allow different levels of simplicity and luxury.

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- a. ▫ VS. 63. Frugality too has a limit, and the man who disregards it is like him who errs through excess.
- F. ▫ E6. In pursuing pleasure we must remember that no pleasure is bad in itself, but some pleasures frequently bring more pain than the pleasure justifies.
 - (1) ▫ Therefore in ALL actions we choose to pursue we must ask: "What will be the result if I pursue this and what will be the result if I do not?"
 - a. ▫ PD 8. No pleasure is a bad thing in itself: but the means which produce some pleasures bring with them disturbances many times greater than the pleasures.
 - (2) ▫ Therefore we must remember that it is not the faculty of pleasure that is to blame when some men pursue actions we consider to be evil, it is the unintelligent or malicious mind of the individual that employs the faculty of pleasure in a way likely to bring more pain to him than pleasure.
 - a. ▫ PD 10. If the things that produce the pleasures of profligates could dispel the fears of the mind about the phenomena of the sky and death and its pains, and also teach the limits of desires (and of pains), we should never have cause to blame them: for they would be filling themselves full with pleasures from every source and never have pain of body or mind, which is the evil of life.
- G. ▫ E7. In pursuing pleasure we must remember that no single pleasure can be pursued to the point where it consumes our lives, because if it did so there would never be any room for any other pleasures.
 - (1) ▫ Therefore do not seek to pursue one pleasure to the exclusion of all others.
 - a. ▫ PD 9. If every pleasure could be intensified so that it lasted and influenced the whole organism or the most essential parts of our nature, pleasures would never differ from one another.
 - b. ▫ PD 15. The wealth demanded by nature is both limited and easily procured; that demanded by idle imaginings stretches on to infinity.
- H. ▫ E8. Protecting yourself from other men is something that is naturally to be desired, and any action necessary to achieve this is justifiable. But fame and power frequently do not achieve this result for us, and those who pursue fame and power frequently do so in vain.
 - (1) ▫ Therefore pursuit of fame and power can be justified in particular circumstances, but frequently the results do not justify the effort.
 - a. ▫ PD 6. To secure protection from men anything is a natural good by which you may be able to attain this end.
 - b. ▫ PD 7. Some men wished to become famous and conspicuous, thinking that they would thus win for themselves safety from other men. Wherefore if the life of such men is safe, they have obtained the good which nature craves; but if it is not safe, they do not possess that for which they strove at first by the instinct of nature.
- I. ▫ E9. "Virtue" is not the goal of life, but simply the name we give to the necessary tools by which pleasurable living can be attained. It is not possible to live pleasurable without these tools, nor is it possible to employ these tools properly without living pleasurable.
 - (1) ▫ Therefore it is essential to see that "virtue" is an empty word when divorced from the goal of pleasurable living, as other philosophers attempt to do.
 - a. ▫ PD 5. 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. And the man who does not possess the pleasant life, is not living prudently and honorably and justly, [and the man who does not possess the virtuous life], cannot possibly live pleasantly.
- J. ▫ E10. The only way to dismiss superstition and other fears from life is to live intelligently, and therefore confidently, and this requires that we study nature and employ the faculties of observation given us by Nature (the Epicurean Canon of Truth).
 - (1) ▫ Therefore we must always keep our minds clearly focused on the goal of pleasurable living.
 - a. ▫ PD 22. We must consider both the real purpose and all the evidence of direct perception, to which we always refer the conclusions of opinion; otherwise, all will be full of doubt and confusion.
 - (2) ▫ Therefore we must never allow ourselves to repress our faculties of observation, including our faculties of anticipations and our faculty of pain and pleasure, because if we abandon these we have no ability to judge what is true and what is false.
 - a. ▫ PD 23. If you fight against all sensations, you will have no standard by which to judge even those of them which you say are false.

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- b.
 - PD 24. If you reject any single sensation and fail to distinguish between the conclusion of opinion as to the appearance awaiting confirmation and that which is actually given by the sensation or feeling, or each intuitive apprehension of the mind, you will confound all other sensations as well with the same groundless opinion, so that you will reject every standard of judgment. And if among the mental images created by your opinion you affirm both that which awaits confirmation and that which does not, you will not escape error, since you will have preserved the whole cause of doubt in every judgment between what is right and what is wrong.
 - PD 25. If on each occasion, instead of referring your actions to the end of nature, you turn to some other nearer standard when you are making a choice or an avoidance, your actions will not be consistent with your principles.
- K.
 - E11. It is possible for men to live wisely and pursue pleasure intelligently, for men are free agents and their actions are not wholly determined by outside forces.
 - (1)
 - Therefore we should reject both those who teach determinist views that men are nothing more than pawns of outside forces, and those who teach that men are playthings of chance.
 - a.
 - Letter to Menoceus: Fate, which some introduce as sovereign over all things, he scorns, affirming rather that some things happen of necessity, others by chance, others through our own agency. For he sees that necessity destroys responsibility and that chance is inconstant; whereas our own actions are autonomous, and it is to them that praise and blame naturally attach. It were better, indeed, to accept the legends of the gods than to bow beneath that yoke of destiny which the natural philosophers have imposed. The one holds out some faint hope that we may escape if we honor the gods, while the necessity of the naturalists is deaf to all entreaties. Nor does he hold chance to be a god, as the world in general does, for in the acts of a god there is no disorder; nor to be a cause, though an uncertain one, for he believes that no good or evil is dispensed by chance to men so as to make life blessed, though it supplies the starting-point of great good and great evil. He believes that the misfortune of the wise is better than the prosperity of the fool. It is better, in short, that what is well judged in action should not owe its successful issue to the aid of chance.
- L.
 - E12. If we live wisely we will see that our most important tool of happiness and security is friendship.
 - (1)
 - Therefore we will cultivate and protect our friends.
 - a.
 - PD 27. Of all the things which wisdom acquires to produce the blessedness of the complete life, far the greatest is the possession of friendship.
 - PD 28. The same conviction which has given us confidence that there is nothing terrible that lasts forever or even for long, has also seen the protection of friendship most fully completed in the limited evils of this life.
- M.
 - E13. As with any other virtue, "Justice" is not the goal of life, but justice is essential to happy living because the just man is the most free from trouble, and the unjust is the most full of trouble.
 - (1)
 - Therefore we should seek arrangement with other men that are just.
 - a.
 - PD 17. The just man is most free from trouble, the unjust most full of trouble.
- N.
 - E14. The ONLY true foundation of Justice is mutually advantageous agreement among intelligent beings to neither do or receive harm from each other.
 - (1)
 - Therefore we should pursue agreements with other men that are mutually advantageous.
 - a.
 - PD 31. The justice which arises from nature is a pledge of mutual advantage to restrain men from harming one another and save them from being harmed.
- O.
 - E15. There is no such thing as absolute or universal justice or injustice.
 - (1)
 - Therefore what some men label "injustice" is never evil in and of itself, no matter how intensely we may dislike the activity. The penalty of injustice is only the pain that it brings to the men who are unjust.
 - a.
 - PD 32. For all living things which have not been able to make compacts not to harm one another or be harmed, nothing ever is either just or unjust; and likewise too for all tribes of men which have been unable or unwilling to make compacts not to harm or be harmed.
 - PD 33. Justice never is anything in itself, but in the dealings of men with one another in any place whatever and at any time it is a kind of compact not to harm or be harmed.
 - PD 34. Injustice is not an evil in itself, but only in consequence of the fear which attaches to the apprehension of being unable to escape those appointed to punish such actions.
 - PD 35. It is not possible for one who acts in secret contravention of the terms of the compact not to harm or be harmed, to be confident that he will escape detection, even if at present he escapes a thousand times. For up to the time of death it cannot be certain that he will indeed escape.

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- P. ▫ E16. Because justice is founded on mutually advantageous agreements, relationships which change over time so as to no longer be mutually advantageous are no longer to be considered just.
- (1) ▫ Therefore human relationships must constantly be reexamined and reconstituted to fit circumstances in order for them to be labeled "just" or "unjust."
- a. ▫ PD 36. In its general aspect justice is the same for all, for it is a kind of mutual advantage in the dealings of men with one another: but with reference to the individual peculiarities of a country or any other circumstances the same thing does not turn out to be just for all.
- b. ▫ PD 37. Among actions which are sanctioned as just by law, that which is proved on examination to be of advantage in the requirements of men's dealings with one another, has the guarantee of justice, whether it is the same for all or not. But if a man makes a law and it does not turn out to lead to advantage in men's dealings with each other, then it no longer has the essential nature of justice. And even if the advantage in the matter of justice shifts from one side to the other, but for a while accords with the general concept, it is nonetheless just for that period in the eyes of those who do not confound themselves with empty sounds but look to the actual facts.
- c. ▫ PD 38. Where, provided the circumstances have not been altered, actions which were considered just, have been shown not to accord with the general concept in actual practice, then they are not just. But where, when circumstances have changed, the same actions which were sanctioned as just no longer lead to advantage, there they were just at the time when they were of advantage for the dealings of fellow-citizens with one another, but subsequently they are no longer just, when no longer of advantage.
- Q. ▫ E17. The man who pursues happy living most intelligently will live among friends, and he will refrain from mixing with, and expel from his life, all those who are not his friends, or who are his enemies.
- (1) ▫ Therefore happy living requires us to constantly examine our circumstances and take action to pursue friendly relationships and separate ourselves from unfriendly relationships.
- a. ▫ PD 39. The man who has best ordered the element of disquiet arising from external circumstances has made those things that he could akin to himself and the rest at least not alien; but with all to which he could not do even this, he has refrained from mixing, and has expelled from his life all which it was of advantage to treat thus.
- b. ▫ PD 40. As many as possess the power to procure complete immunity from their neighbours, these also live most pleasantly with one another, since they have the most certain pledge of security, and after they have enjoyed the fullest intimacy, they do not lament the previous departure of a dead friend, as though he were to be pitied.

III. ▫ Narrative - The Epicurean Worldview Assembled From the Ancient Texts

1. ▫ At a time when human life - before the eye of all - lay foully prostrate upon the Earth, crushed down under the weight of Religion, which showed its head from the quarters of heaven with hideous aspect, glowering down upon men, it was a man of Hellas who was the first to venture to lift up his mortal eyes, and stand up to Religion, face to face.
- A. ▫ Lucretius Book I [Bailey]: "When the life of man lay foul to see and grovelling upon the earth, crushed by the weight of religion, which showed her face from the realms of heaven, lowering upon mortals with dreadful mien, 'twas a man of Greece who dared first to raise his mortal eyes to meet her, and first to stand forth to meet her: him neither the stories of the gods nor thunderbolts checked, nor the sky with its revengeful roar, but all the more spurred the eager daring of his mind to yearn to be the first to burst through the close-set bolts upon the doors of nature. And so it was that the lively force of his mind won its way, and he passed on far beyond the fiery walls of the world, and in mind and spirit traversed the boundless whole; whence in victory he brings us tidings what can come to be and what cannot, yea and in what way each thing has its power limited, and its deepset boundary-stone. And so religion in revenge is cast beneath men's feet and trampled, and victory raises us to heaven."
2. ▫ This man could not be discouraged by stories of gods, nor by thunderbolts, nor by the threatening roar of heaven. These served only to spur him on, filling him with courage and the desire to be the first among men to burst the bars holding fast the gates of Nature.

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- A.
 - Lucretius Book I [Bailey]: "When the life of man lay foul to see and grovelling upon the earth, crushed by the weight of religion, which showed her face from the realms of heaven, lowering upon mortals with dreadful mien, 'twas a man of Greece who dared first to raise his mortal eyes to meet her, and first to stand forth to meet her: him neither the stories of the gods nor thunderbolts checked, nor the sky with its revengeful roar, but all the more spurred the eager daring of his mind to yearn to be the first to burst through the close-set bolts upon the doors of nature. And so it was that the lively force of his mind won its way, and he passed on far beyond the fiery walls of the world, and in mind and spirit traversed the boundless whole; whence in victory he brings us tidings what can come to be and what cannot, yea and in what way each thing has its power limited, and its deepset boundary-stone. And so religion in revenge is cast beneath men's feet and trampled, and victory raises us to heaven."
3.
 - Thus the living force of his soul won the day. On he passed, far beyond the flaming walls of the world, traversing the immeasurable universe through mind and spirit.
 - A.
 - Lucretius Book I [Bailey]: "When the life of man lay foul to see and grovelling upon the earth, crushed by the weight of religion, which showed her face from the realms of heaven, lowering upon mortals with dreadful mien, 'twas a man of Greece who dared first to raise his mortal eyes to meet her, and first to stand forth to meet her: him neither the stories of the gods nor thunderbolts checked, nor the sky with its revengeful roar, but all the more spurred the eager daring of his mind to yearn to be the first to burst through the close-set bolts upon the doors of nature. And so it was that the lively force of his mind won its way, and he passed on far beyond the fiery walls of the world, and in mind and spirit traversed the boundless whole; whence in victory he brings us tidings what can come to be and what cannot, yea and in what way each thing has its power limited, and its deepset boundary-stone. And so religion in revenge is cast beneath men's feet and trampled, and victory raises us to heaven."
4.
 - And from there, he returned again to us - a conqueror - to relate those things that can be, and those that can not, and to tell us on what principle each thing has its powers defined, its boundary-mark set deep.
 - A.
 - Lucretius Book I [Bailey]: "When the life of man lay foul to see and grovelling upon the earth, crushed by the weight of religion, which showed her face from the realms of heaven, lowering upon mortals with dreadful mien, 'twas a man of Greece who dared first to raise his mortal eyes to meet her, and first to stand forth to meet her: him neither the stories of the gods nor thunderbolts checked, nor the sky with its revengeful roar, but all the more spurred the eager daring of his mind to yearn to be the first to burst through the close-set bolts upon the doors of nature. And so it was that the lively force of his mind won its way, and he passed on far beyond the fiery walls of the world, and in mind and spirit traversed the boundless whole; whence in victory he brings us tidings what can come to be and what cannot, yea and in what way each thing has its power limited, and its deepset boundary-stone. And so religion in revenge is cast beneath men's feet and trampled, and victory raises us to heaven."
5.
 - By his victory, the terror of religion is trampled underfoot, and we, in turn, are lifted to the stars.
 - A.
 - Lucretius Book I [Bailey]: "When the life of man lay foul to see and grovelling upon the earth, crushed by the weight of religion, which showed her face from the realms of heaven, lowering upon mortals with dreadful mien, 'twas a man of Greece who dared first to raise his mortal eyes to meet her, and first to stand forth to meet her: him neither the stories of the gods nor thunderbolts checked, nor the sky with its revengeful roar, but all the more spurred the eager daring of his mind to yearn to be the first to burst through the close-set bolts upon the doors of nature. And so it was that the lively force of his mind won its way, and he passed on far beyond the fiery walls of the world, and in mind and spirit traversed the boundless whole; whence in victory he brings us tidings what can come to be and what cannot, yea and in what way each thing has its power limited, and its deepset boundary-stone. And so religion in revenge is cast beneath men's feet and trampled, and victory raises us to heaven."
6.
 - This man of Hellas then saw that mortals had attained those things which their needs required, that their lives had been established in safety, and that they abounded in wealth and honor and fame, and were proud of the good names of their children.
 - A.
 - Lucretius Book VI
7.
 - Yet he also saw that not one, for all that, had a heart that was less anguished, but all lived with tortured minds, without respite, and raging with complaints.
 - A.
 - Lucretius Book VI
8.
 - And then he understood that it was the vessel - a false view of life - that wrought the disease, corrupting and tainting all that was gathered within it, and he saw that this vessel was so leaky and full of holes that it could never be filled.
 - A.
 - Lucretius Book VI

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9. ☐ So with words of truth he purged the heart of man, setting limits to desires and fears, explaining the truth about the highest good toward which we all should strive, and pointing out the path whereby we may work toward that goal on a straight course.
A. ☐ Lucretius Book VI
10. ☐ He explained the nature of evil in mortal affairs, and how these evils come to pass by chance, or by force of Nature, rather than by the will of the gods.
A. ☐ Lucretius Book VI
11. ☐ And he showed from what gates we must march forth to combat each one, proving to us that it is mostly in vain that men toss their hearts in gloomy billows of care.
A. ☐ Lucretius Book VI
12. ☐ For just as children tremble and fear everything in the dark, so do we - even in the light - dread things that are not a bit more to be feared than the imagination of children.
A. ☐ Lucretius Book VI
13. ☐ These terrors and darkneses of mind must be dispelled, but not by gleaming shafts of daylight. Terrors such as these can only be scattered by study of the laws of Nature.
A. ☐ Lucretius Book VI
14. ☐ And so he taught us to grasp the principles of things above, the principles by which the sun and moon go on their courses, and the forces by which every thing on Earth proceeds.
A. ☐ Lucretius Book I
15. ☐ And he taught that above all we must find out by keen reasoning the nature of the soul and of the mind, and the nature of those things that frighten us when we are under the influence of disease, or buried in sleep, or when we seem to see or hear those who are long dead, and whose bones the Earth holds in its embrace.
A. ☐ Lucretius Book I
16. ☐ And he taught us that unless, at the very first, we have confidence in our senses as to those things which are clear and apparent to us, there will be nothing to which we can appeal when we seek to prove, by reasoning of the mind, anything about those things which are hidden.
A. ☐ Lucretius Book I
17. ☐ Thus the wise man will hold firmly to that which is true, and he will not be a mere skeptic.
A. ☐ Diogenes Laertius, Book X
18. ☐ Yet there are some men who will claim that nothing at all can be known. As for these, they know not whether even their own claim can be known, since they admit that they know nothing.
A. ☐ Lucretius, Book IV
19. ☐ We therefore decline to argue with men who place their head where their feet should be. And yet, even if we granted their claim that they know nothing, we would still ask these questions:
A. ☐ Lucretius, Book IV
20. ☐ Since they have never yet seen any truth in any thing, how do they know what "knowing" and "not knowing" are? What is it that has produced in them this knowledge of the true and the false? What is it that has proved to them the difference between the doubtful and the certain?
A. ☐ Lucretius, Book IV
21. ☐ That which is able to refute the false must by nature be provable with a higher certainty to be true. And what can fairly be accounted of higher certainty than sensation?
A. ☐ Lucretius, Book IV
22. ☐ Can reasoning alone contradict the senses, when reasoning itself is wholly founded on the senses? If the senses are not true, all reasoning is rendered false as well.
A. ☐ Lucretius, Book IV
23. ☐ So if by reasoning you are unable to explain why a thing close at hand appears square, but at a distance appears round, it is far better for you to state that you do not know the reason, rather than to let slip from your grasp your confidence in sensing those things that are clear.
A. ☐ Lucretius, Book IV
24. ☐ For if you lose your confidence in your senses, you will ruin the groundwork and foundation on which all of your life and existence rest.
A. ☐ Lucretius, Book IV
25. ☐ Not only would reason collapse, but life itself would fall to the ground, were you to lose confidence in your senses and fail to use them to shun those pitfalls in life which must be avoided.

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- A. ☐ Lucretius, Book IV
26. ☐ Just as when you erect a building, if your ruler is crooked, your square is untrue, and your level is sloped, then your construction will be faulty, without symmetry, and leaning, with its parts disposed to fall - all ruined by the first erroneous measurements.
- A. ☐ Lucretius, Book IV
27. ☐ So too will all your efforts at reasoning about things be distorted and false if the sensations on which your reasoning is based are unreliable.
- A. ☐ Lucretius, Book IV
28. ☐ Therefore, as we reason, we must grasp firmly the ideas which we attach to words, so that we may thereafter be able to refer to those words with confidence, and not leave everything uncertain, or go on explaining to infinity with words devoid of meaning.
- A. ☐ Epicurus' Letter to Herodotus
29. ☐ Thus while we direct our greatest and highest interests by reason throughout our whole life, we do not rely either on dialectical reason or logic as our ultimate Canon of Truth.
- A. ☐ Epicurus Doctrine 16, Epicurus' Letter to Herodotus, Diogenes Laertius
30. ☐ Instead, the faculties which constitute our Canon of Truth are our senses, our preconceptions, and our feelings of pleasure and pain, for it is by means of these that we test those things which are true, and we determine which are obscure and need confirmation.
- A. ☐ Epicurus' Letter to Herodotus
31. ☐ For only when those things which are clear to us are understood is it time to consider those things which are obscure.
- A. ☐ Epicurus' Letter to Herodotus
32. ☐ Now, apply your mind, for a new question struggles earnestly to gain your ears, a new aspect of things is about to display itself.
- A. ☐ Lucretius, Book II
33. ☐ Do not be dismayed by the novelty of my words: weigh these matters with keen judgment, and if they seem to you to be true, embrace them, or if they be false, gird yourself to battle them.
- A. ☐ Lucretius Book II
34. ☐ Just as dogs discover by smell the lair of a wild beast that is covered over with leaves, you, by yourself alone, must learn to see one thing after another, and find your way into dark corners to draw forth the truth.
- A. ☐ Lucretius Book I
35. ☐ Think carefully on these things, and then, one step after another, the true path will grow clear. Not even the darkest night will rob you of the road, for each step will light the torch for the next.
- A. ☐ Lucretius Book I
36. ☐ So we begin the study of Nature with this first observation: nothing is created out of that which does not exist. For if it were, everything would be created out of everything, with no need of seeds.
- A. ☐ Epicurus' Letter to Herodotus
37. ☐ But if this were so, men might be born out of the sea, fish out of the earth, and birds might burst forth out of the sky. Nor would the same fruits keep constant to trees, but would change; any tree might bear any fruit.
- A. ☐ Lucretius Book I
38. ☐ But in fact we see that this is not so, because things are all produced from fixed seeds, each thing is born and goes forth into the borders of light composed of its own combination of elements; and for this reason all things cannot be gotten out of all things, because in particular things resides a distinct power.
- A. ☐ Lucretius Book I
39. ☐ And from these distinct powers of particular elements, all kinds of herbage and corn and joyous trees even now spring in plenty out of the earth, each after its own fashion, and all preserve their distinctive differences according to a fixed law of nature.
- A. ☐ Lucretius Book V
40. ☐ Again, why do we see the rose put forth in spring, corn in the season of heat, vines yielding at the call of autumn? If things came from nothing, they would rise up suddenly at uncertain periods and unsuitable times of the year, nor would time be required for the growth of things if they could increase out of nothing.
- A. ☐ Lucretius Book I
41. ☐ Little babies would at once grow into men, and trees in a moment would rise and spring out of the ground. But we see that none of these events ever come to pass, since all things grow step by step as is natural.
- A. ☐ Lucretius Book I

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42. ☐ We must also observe that in course of time Nature dissolves every thing back into its first bodies, but does not totally annihilate anything.
A. ☐ Lucretius Book I
43. ☐ For if that which disappears were totally destroyed, all things would have long since perished, since that into which they were dissolved would not exist.
A. ☐ Epicurus' Letter to Herodotus
44. ☐ If the elements were themselves mortal, things in a moment would be snatched away to destruction from before our eyes; since no force would be needed to produce disruption among its parts and undo their fastenings.
A. ☐ Lucretius Book I
45. ☐ But in fact, all things consist of imperishable elements, and nature allows the destruction of nothing to be seen until a force is encountered sufficient to dash things to pieces by a blow, or to pierce through the void places within them and break them up.
A. ☐ Lucretius Book I
46. ☐ If time, through age, utterly destroys all things, eating up all their matter, out of what does Venus bring back into the light of life the race of living things, each after its kind? Out of what does Earth give them nourishment, furnishing each one with food?
A. ☐ Lucretius Book I
47. ☐ Out of what do the fountains and rivers keep full the sea? Out of what does ether feed the stars? For infinite time gone by would have eaten up all things if they were formed of mortal bodies.
A. ☐ Lucretius Book I
48. ☐ Now if those bodies of which the sum of things is composed have existed for an infinite period of time, they no doubt have imperishable bodies, and cannot therefore return to nothing.
A. ☐ Epicurus' Letter to Herodotus
49. ☐ And so in its elements the universe always was such as it is now, and always will be the same. There is nothing new into which the universe can change, for there is nothing new outside the universe which could come into it and bring about change.
A. ☐ Epicurus' Letter to Herodotus
50. ☐ It is also true that everything in the universe is composed of bodies and space. As to bodies, the sense experience of all men perceives their existence. As to imperceptible space, we must reason from that to which the senses do testify.
A. ☐ Epicurus' Letter to Herodotus
51. ☐ And if that which we call space did not exist, bodies would have nowhere to be, and nothing through which to move. But we see that bodies do exist, and that they do move, so we know that space exists.
A. ☐ Epicurus' Letter to Herodotus
52. ☐ Besides bodies and space, nothing can even be thought of, either by conception or by analogy, so nothing can exist other than those things which are properties or qualities of bodies and space.
A. ☐ Epicurus' Letter to Herodotus
53. ☐ A property of a thing is that which can in no case be separated without utter destruction accompanying the severance, such as the weight of a stone, the heat of fire, or the fluidity of water.
A. ☐ Lucretius Book I
54. ☐ A quality of a thing is a relationship such as slavery or liberty, poverty or riches, and war or peace - which may come and go while the nature of the thing remains unharmed.
A. ☐ Lucretius Book I
55. ☐ Besides properties and qualities of bodies and space, no third nature can be considered to exist, neither can any third nature be perceived by our senses or grasped by the reasoning mind.
A. ☐ Lucretius Book I
56. ☐ But some men say that there exist, in another reality, a third nature which they call patterns, from which all things have been constructed by a divine creator.
A. ☐ Plato Timaeus 29
57. ☐ But no third nature can exist, only combinations of bodies and space. Such things as "Helen taken by Paris," or "Troy subdued in war," are not patterns which exist forever, but events in the lives of those who lived long ago, and these have now been irrevocably swept away by time.
A. ☐ Lucretius Book I
58. ☐ As we turn our attention to the sum total of all the bodies and space that exist, we conclude that the universe as a whole is boundless.

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- A. ▫ Epicurus' Letter to Herodotus
59. ▫ For that which is bounded has an extreme point, and the extreme point is seen against something else. So because the universe as a whole has no extreme point, it has no limit, and as it has no limit, it must be boundless.
- A. ▫ Epicurus' Letter to Herodotus
60. ▫ And in this boundless universe there are limitless numbers of worlds, some of which are like our own, and among such worlds there are living creatures and plants such as we see in this world.
- A. ▫ Epicurus' Letter to Herodotus
61. ▫ For in the sum of all that exists there is no one thing which is begotten by itself alone, sole instance of its kind, but a thing always belongs to some class of which there are many others.
- A. ▫ Lucretius Book I
62. ▫ And if there is so great a store of seeds that the whole can never be counted, and if the same force and nature abide in them as we see here in our own world, then we must admit that in other parts of space there are other Earths, other kinds of wild beasts, and other races of men.
- A. ▫ Lucretius Book II
63. ▫ And there are also "gods," and the knowledge of them is manifest; but these "gods" are not such as the multitude believe, because men do not steadfastly maintain the notions they form respecting them.
- A. ▫ Epicurus' Letter to Menoecus
64. ▫ It is not the man who denies the gods worshiped by the multitude who is impious, but he who affirms of the gods what the multitude believes about them. For the beliefs of the multitude about the gods are not true preconceptions, but false assumptions.
- A. ▫ Epicurus' Letter to Menoecus
65. ▫ And among these false assumptions are the view that the gods cause evil to happen to the wicked and blessings to happen to the good, and that the gods favor and take pleasure in some men and reject others.
- A. ▫ Epicurus' Letter to Menoecus
66. ▫ So we must understand that when we see in the sky revolutions and eclipses, and risings and settings, these take place without the command of any being who enjoys immortality and perfect bliss.
- A. ▫ Epicurus' Letter to Herodotus
67. ▫ For troubles and anxieties, and feelings of anger and partiality, do not accord with divinity, but imply weakness and fear and dependence upon one's neighbors.
- A. ▫ Epicurus' Letter to Herodotus
68. ▫ Thus we must always hold fast to the majesty which attaches to such notions as bliss and immortality, lest we generate opinions inconsistent with this majesty.
- A. ▫ Epicurus' Letter to Herodotus
69. ▫ For such error and inconsistency will produce the worst disturbances in our minds. Hence where we find phenomena invariably recurring, this recurrence must be ascribed to the original interception and conglomeration of atoms whereby the world was formed.
- A. ▫ Epicurus' Letter to Herodotus
70. ▫ So let the regularity of the orbits be explained in the same way as ordinary incidents within our own experience. The divine nature must not on any account be used to explain this, but must be kept free from all tasks and in perfect bliss.
- A. ▫ Epicurus' Letter to Pythocles
71. ▫ Unless this is done, the study of celestial phenomena will be in vain, as indeed it has been in vain for those who have fallen into the folly of supposing that these events can happen only in one way, and who reject all other possible explanations.
- A. ▫ Epicurus' Letter to Pythocles
72. ▫ For in this way many men are carried into the realm of the unintelligible, and are unable to take a comprehensive view of those facts which are clues to the rest.
- A. ▫ Epicurus' Letter to Pythocles
73. ▫ To assign a single cause for these effects which we see in the sky, when the facts suggest several causes, is madness and a strange inconsistency.
- A. ▫ Epicurus' Letter to Pythocles
74. ▫ Yet this is done by some, who assign meaningless causes for the movement of stars whenever they persist in saddling the divinity with burdensome tasks.
- A. ▫ Epicurus' Letter to Pythocles

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75. ☐ To lay down as assured a single explanation of these phenomena is worthy only of those who seek to dazzle the multitude with marvels.
A. ☐ Epicurus' Letter to Pythocles
76. ☐ Such are those men who, straying widely from true reason, are famous for obscurity, more among the frivolous than among those earnest men who seek the truth.
A. ☐ Epicurus' Letter to Pythocles
77. ☐ For fools admire things which they perceive to be concealed under involved language, and they believe those things which tickle the ear and are varnished over with finely sounding phrases.
A. ☐ Epicurus' Letter to Pythocles
78. ☐ Some men who oppose us assert that Nature cannot without the providence of the gods vary the seasons of the year, bring forth crops, or do all those other things which Divine Pleasure, the Guide of Life, prompts men and other living things to do, escorting us in person, and enticing us by her guidance, so that neither mankind nor any race of living things may come to an end.
A. ☐ Lucretius Book II
79. ☐ Likewise there are those who seek to foretell the weather from the behavior of certain animals, which is mere coincidence.
A. ☐ Epicurus' Letter to Pythocles
80. ☐ For animals offer no necessary reason why a storm should be produced, and no divine being sits aloft, observing when these animals go out, and afterwards fulfilling the signs which they have given.
A. ☐ Epicurus' Letter to Pythocles
81. ☐ Such folly as this would not occur to the most ordinary being of the slightest enlightenment, much less to a divinity who enjoys perfect blissfulness.
A. ☐ Epicurus' Letter to Pythocles
82. ☐ But do not be afraid that, in following true reason, you are entering on unholy ground, or treading the path of sin.
A. ☐ Lucretius Book I
83. ☐ For on the contrary it is Religion that has given birth to the most sinful and unholy deeds. So great are the evil deeds which religion can prompt!
A. ☐ Lucretius Book I
84. ☐ And so those men are wrong who claim that fear of the gods is necessary to keep men from doing evil.
A. ☐ Diogenes of Oinoanda
85. ☐ For wrong-doers, who do not fear the penalty of law, are likewise not afraid either of true gods, or of the gods of Plato and Socrates, otherwise they would not do wrong.
A. ☐ Diogenes of Oinoanda
86. ☐ And so we see that those nations which are the most superstitious [Jews and Egyptians] are often the vilest of peoples.
A. ☐ Diogenes of Oinoanda
87. ☐ So be aware that the priests, by means of terrorizing threats, will seek to cause you to fall away from true reason.
A. ☐ Lucretius Book I
88. ☐ How many dreams they lay out for you, to upset the calculations of your life, and confound all your future plans with fear!
A. ☐ Lucretius Book I
89. ☐ These tales are spun for a reason. The priests know that men, so long as they fear everlasting pain after death, have no means of resisting the threats of religion.
A. ☐ Lucretius Book I
90. ☐ Therefore you must come to understand that death is nothing to us, for good and evil require the capacity for sensation, and death is the end of all sensation.
A. ☐ Epicurus' Letter to Menoecus
91. ☐ A correct understanding that death is nothing to us allows us to enjoy life, not by adding to life a limitless time, but by taking away the yearning after immortality.
A. ☐ Epicurus' Letter to Menoecus
92. ☐ For life has no terrors for him who has thoroughly understood that there are no terrors in ceasing to live.
A. ☐ Epicurus' Letter to Menoecus
93. ☐ Foolish then is the man who says that he fears death, not because it will pain him when it comes, but because it pains him to think of it now. But it makes no sense to fear that which can cause no pain when it is present.
A. ☐ Epicurus' Letter to Menoecus

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94. ☐ Death, therefore, which some say is the most awful of evils, is nothing to us, seeing that, when we are alive, death has not yet come, and, when death has come, we no longer exist.
A. ☐ Epicurus' Letter to Menoeceus
95. ☐ And so while we live, let neither the young be slow to seek wisdom, nor the old weary in the search of it. For no age is too early or too late for the health of the soul.
A. ☐ Epicurus' Letter to Menoeceus
96. ☐ And to say that the season for studying philosophy has not yet come, or that it is past and gone, is like saying that the season for happiness has not yet come, or that it is now no more.
A. ☐ Epicurus' Letter to Menoeceus
97. ☐ But some men argue that happiness is not the goal of life, and that there is some particular final and ultimate good, an End to which all other things are means, while not itself a means to anything else.
A. ☐ Torquatus, from Cicero's On Ends
98. ☐ But we that it is Pleasure which is our first and kindred good, the alpha and omega of a blessed life, and that all Pleasure is good.
A. ☐ Epicurus' Letter to Menoeceus
99. ☐ And so the "greatest good" is that which brings about unsurpassable joy, such as the bare escape from some dreadful calamity.
A. ☐ Fragment from Plutarch
100. ☐ And this is the nature of 'the good,' if one apprehends it rightly, and stands by his finding, and does not go on walking round and round, harping uselessly on the meaning of 'good.'
A. ☐ Fragment from Plutarch
101. ☐ And by this we mean that pleasurable living is the ultimate end prescribed by Nature. If you do not on every occasion refer each of your actions to this end, but instead of this you turn to some other end, your actions will not be consistent with your goal.
A. ☐ Epicurus' Principal Doctrine 25
102. ☐ For we see that every animal, as soon as it is born, seeks for pleasure, and delights in pleasure, while it recoils from pain, and so far as possible avoids it. This every young animal does as long as it remains unperverted, at the prompting of Nature's own unbiased and honest verdict.
A. ☐ Torquatus, from Cicero's On Ends
103. ☐ It is pleasure that fills the sea with ships and the lands with corn, and by pleasure is every kind of living thing conceived, rising up to behold the light of the sun.
A. ☐ Lucretius Book I
104. ☐ And in the pleasure of spring the birds take flight, the wild herds bound over green pastures and swim the rapid rivers, each in turn following the charms of pleasure with desire leading them on to continue their races.
A. ☐ Lucretius Book I
105. ☐ The proof that pleasure is our guide of life is more luminous than daylight itself. Our evidence is derived entirely from Nature's sources, and rests firmly for confirmation on the unbiased and unimpeachable evidence of the senses.
A. ☐ Torquatus, from Cicero's On Ends
106. ☐ Lispering babies, even dumb animals, prompted by Nature's teaching, can almost find the voice to proclaim to us that there is no welfare but pleasure, no hardship but pain, and their judgment in these matters is neither sophistic nor biased.
A. ☐ Torquatus, from Cicero's On Ends
107. ☐ Thus there is no necessity for argument or discussion to prove that pleasure is desirable and pain is to be avoided. These facts are perceived by the senses, in the same way that we perceive that fire is hot, snow is white, and honey is sweet.
A. ☐ Torquatus, from Cicero's On Ends
108. ☐ If we were to strip a man of all sensation, nothing would remain of his life. It therefore follows that Nature herself, through these faculties of sensation, is the judge of that which is in accord with or contrary to nature.
A. ☐ Torquatus, from Cicero's On Ends
109. ☐ And what faculty does Nature grant for perception and judgment of that which is to be desired and avoided besides pleasure and pain?
A. ☐ Torquatus, from Cicero's On Ends
110. ☐ None of this needs to be proved by elaborate argument: it is enough merely to draw attention to it.
A. ☐ Torquatus, from Cicero's On Ends

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111. ☐ For there is a difference between formal syllogistic proof of a thing and a mere notice or reminder. Syllogistic reasoning is appropriate for abstract and hidden matters, but mere observation is all that is necessary to establish facts which are obvious and evident.
A. ☐ Torquatus, from Cicero's On Ends
112. ☐ Nevertheless, some men use syllogistic reasoning to argue that pleasurable living is not the goal of life. They argue that "the good" is something with a certain limit beyond which nothing is higher, but that pleasure cannot be the good because it has no limit.
A. ☐ Aristotle, Nichomachean Ethics, Book X
113. ☐ To these men we say that pleasure does have a limit, for a man's life is like a vessel, and a man's limit of pleasure is reached when his vessel is filled with pleasure, and all pain which accompanies that pleasure is removed.
A. ☐ Principal Doctrines 3, 18, 19, 20, Lucretius Book VI
114. ☐ For when the pain of want is removed, bodily pleasure does not increase, and only varies.
A. ☐ Epicurus' Principal Doctrine 18
115. ☐ Mental pleasure also has a limit, and this limit is reached when we reflect on the limits of the bodily pleasures, and the limits on the fears that cause the mind the greatest alarms.
A. ☐ Epicurus' Principal Doctrine 18
116. ☐ For although the body itself knows no limits to the time required to fulfill its pleasures, the mind, intellectually grasping the goal and the limits of the flesh is capable of banishing all terror of the future, and of procuring a life that is complete in the knowledge that we have no need of unlimited time.
A. ☐ Epicurus' Principal Doctrine 20
117. ☐ This is because the mind can grasp that if we measure the limits of pleasure through reason, unlimited time can afford no purer pleasure than limited time.
A. ☐ Principal Doctrines 3, 18, 19, 20
118. ☐ But it is impossible for someone to dispel the pain of fear about the most important matters in life if he does not understand the nature of the universe, and if he gives credence to myths.
A. ☐ Vatican Saying 49
119. ☐ So for those who do not study nature, there can be no enjoyment of pure pleasure.
A. ☐ Vatican Saying 49
120. ☐ Other men argue that pleasure cannot be "the good" because the pleasant life is more desirable when Virtue is added.
A. ☐ Aristotle, Nichomachean Ethics, Book X
121. ☐ These men say that if the addition of Virtue is better, then pleasure is not the good; for the good cannot become more desirable by the addition of anything to it.
A. ☐ Aristotle, Nichomachean Ethics, Book X
122. ☐ But those who place the Good in Virtue are beguiled by the glamour of a name, and do not understand the true demands of Nature. If they will simply listen to Epicurus, they will be delivered from the grossest error.
A. ☐ Torquatus, from Cicero's On Ends
123. ☐ These men speak grandly about the transcendent beauty of the virtues; but were they not productive of pleasure, who would deem them either praiseworthy or desirable?
A. ☐ Torquatus, from Cicero's On Ends
124. ☐ We esteem the art of medicine not for its interest as a science, but for its conduciveness to health; the art of navigation is commended for its practical and not its scientific value, because it conveys the rules for sailing a ship with success.
A. ☐ Torquatus, from Cicero's On Ends
125. ☐ So also Wisdom, which must be considered as the art of living, if it effected no result would not be desired. But as it is, wisdom is desired, because it is the artificer that procures and produces pleasure.
A. ☐ Torquatus, from Cicero's On Ends
126. ☐ We must therefore act to pursue those things which bring happiness, since, if that be present, we have everything, and, if that be absent, all our actions are directed towards attaining it.
A. ☐ Epicurus' Letter to Menoecus
127. ☐ If the point at issue here involved only the means of obtaining happiness, and our enemies wanted to say "the virtues" - which would actually be true - we would simply agree without more ado.
A. ☐ Diogenes of Oinoanda
128. ☐ But the issue is not "what is the means of happiness," but "what is happiness itself and what is the ultimate goal of our nature."
A. ☐ Diogenes of Oinoanda

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129. ☐ To this we say both now and always, shouting out loudly to all Greeks and non-Greeks, that Pleasure is the end of the best way of life, while the virtues, which are messed about by our enemies and transferred from the place of the means to that of the end, are in no way the end in themselves, but the means to the end.
A. ☐ Diogenes of Oinoanda
130. ☐ But a great error has arisen among men in the mistaken idea of condemning pleasure and praising pain.
A. ☐ Torquatus, from Cicero's On Ends
131. ☐ For no one rejects, dislikes or avoids pleasure itself, because it is pleasure, but because those who do not know how to pursue pleasure rationally encounter consequences that are extremely painful.
A. ☐ Torquatus, from Cicero's On Ends
132. ☐ Nor again is there anyone who loves or pursues or desires pain itself, because it is pain, but because they see that circumstances occur in which toil and pain can procure some great pleasure.
A. ☐ Torquatus, from Cicero's On Ends
133. ☐ For example, who among us ever undertakes laborious physical exercise except to obtain some advantage?
A. ☐ Torquatus, from Cicero's On Ends
134. ☐ But who has any right to find fault with a man who chooses to enjoy pleasures that have no annoying consequences, or one who avoids a pain that produces no resulting pleasure?
A. ☐ Torquatus, from Cicero's On Ends
135. ☐ On the other hand, we denounce with righteous indignation men who are so beguiled and demoralized by the charms of the pleasure of the moment that they cannot foresee the pain and trouble that are bound to follow.
A. ☐ Torquatus, from Cicero's On Ends
136. ☐ Equal blame belongs to those who fail in their undertakings through weakness of will, which is the same as saying that they shrink from toil and pain.
A. ☐ Torquatus, from Cicero's On Ends
137. ☐ But in a free hour, when our power of choice is unlimited, and nothing prevents our being able to do what we like best, every pleasure is to be welcomed and every pain avoided.
A. ☐ Torquatus, from Cicero's On Ends
138. ☐ In certain emergencies, or owing to the claims of ordinary life, it will frequently occur that pleasures have to be postponed and annoyances accepted.
A. ☐ Torquatus, from Cicero's On Ends
139. ☐ The wise man always holds in these matters to this principle of selection: he rejects some pleasures to secure other and greater pleasures, and he endures some pain to avoid other and worse pains.
A. ☐ Torquatus, from Cicero's On Ends
140. ☐ And so question each of your desires, and ask: "What will happen to me if that which this desire seeks is achieved, and what if it is not?"
A. ☐ Vatican Saying 71
141. ☐ All pleasure is good, because it is naturally pleasing to us, but not all pleasure should be chosen. And in the same way all pain is evil, and yet not all pain is to be shunned.
A. ☐ Torquatus, from Cicero's On Ends
142. ☐ It is by measuring one against another, and by looking at the conveniences and inconveniences, that all these matters must be judged.
A. ☐ Torquatus, from Cicero's On Ends
143. ☐ When we say, then, that pleasure is the end and aim, we do not mean the pleasures of the prodigal, who indulges in an unbroken succession of drinking-bouts, revelry, sexual lust, and the delicacies of a luxurious table, as we are understood to do by some through ignorance, prejudice, or willful misrepresentation.
A. ☐ Epicurus' Letter to Menoecus
144. ☐ Instead, we say that a pleasant life is produced by those thoughts and actions which we choose and avoid after we reason soberly, and after we banish those beliefs through which the greatest tumults take possession of the soul.
A. ☐ Epicurus' Letter to Menoecus
145. ☐ And we also say that mental pleasures and pains can be much more intense than those of the body; since the body can feel only what is present to it at the moment, whereas the mind is also aware of the past and of the future.
A. ☐ Torquatus, from Cicero's On Ends
146. ☐ Thus intense mental pleasure or distress contributes more to our happiness or misery than a bodily pleasure or pain of equal duration.
A. ☐ Torquatus, from Cicero's On Ends

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147. ☐ This being the theory of Pleasure that we hold, why need we be afraid of not being able to reconcile it with the glorious exploits of our ancestors? We confidently assert that if they had a motive for the dangers that they braved in battle, that motive was not a love of virtue in and for itself.
A. ☐ Torquatus, from Cicero's On Ends
148. ☐ For when our ancestors braved great dangers before the eyes of their armies, they earned for themselves both the safety of their fellow citizens as well as honor and esteem, the strongest guarantees of security in life.
A. ☐ Torquatus, from Cicero's On Ends
149. ☐ And so we must act for ourselves to determine what to choose and avoid, and therefore the wise man scorns Fate, which some introduce as sovereign over all things.
A. ☐ Epicurus' Letter to Menoecus
150. ☐ The wise man affirms that some things happen by necessity, others happen by chance, and others happen through our own agency.
A. ☐ Epicurus' Letter to Menoecus
151. ☐ For the wise man sees that necessity destroys responsibility, and that chance is inconstant, but our own actions are autonomous, and it is to our own actions that praise and blame naturally attach.
A. ☐ Epicurus' Letter to Menoecus
152. ☐ It would be better to accept the legends of the gods than to bow beneath the yoke of destiny which determinist philosophers have imposed.
A. ☐ Epicurus' Letter to Menoecus
153. ☐ The legends of the gods at least hold out some faint hope that we may escape punishment, if we honor them, but the necessity of the determinist philosophers is deaf to all entreaties.
A. ☐ Epicurus' Letter to Menoecus
154. ☐ Necessity is an evil; but there is no necessity for continuing to live with necessity, and if life is unendurable, we may serenely quit life's theater when the play has ceased to please us.
A. ☐ Vatican Saying 9, Torquatus, from Cicero's On Ends
155. ☐ On the other hand, the man who has many good reasons for ending his own life is of very small account.
A. ☐ Vatican Saying 38
156. ☐ And this is because life is desirable, and those who say that it would be better never to have been born are the most foolish. For such men could easily depart from life if they truly believed what they were saying.
A. ☐ Epicurus' Letter to Menoecus
157. ☐ As for us, we say that even as men choose of food not merely and simply the larger portion, but the more pleasant, so the wise seek to enjoy the time which is most pleasant, and not merely that which is longest.
A. ☐ Epicurus' Letter to Menoecus
158. ☐ And we also say that the wise man does not hold Fortune to be a god, as the world in general does, for in the action of a god there is no disorder.
A. ☐ Epicurus' Letter to Menoecus
159. ☐ The misfortune of the wise is better than the prosperity of the fool, and it is better that what we judge to be good action not owe its success to the aid of chance.
A. ☐ Epicurus' Letter to Menoecus
160. ☐ And that is why we regard independence of outward things to be a great good, not so that we in all cases will have little, but so that we will be content with little if we do not have much.
A. ☐ Torquatus, from Cicero's On Ends
161. ☐ This is because we are honestly persuaded that we have the sweetest enjoyment of luxury when we are least in need of it.
A. ☐ Torquatus, from Cicero's On Ends
162. ☐ To habituate oneself to a simple and inexpensive diet supplies all that is needed for health, and enables a man to meet the necessary requirements of life without shrinking.
A. ☐ Torquatus, from Cicero's On Ends
163. ☐ This places us in a better condition to enjoy those times when we approach luxury, and renders us fearless of fortune.
A. ☐ Torquatus, from Cicero's On Ends
164. ☐ But there is also a limit in simple living, and he who fails to understand this falls into an error as great as that of the man who gives way to extravagance.
A. ☐ Vatican Saying 63

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165. ☐ And likewise, to those men who say that emotion is to be avoided or repressed as a danger to the good life, we say that the wise man feels his emotions more deeply than do other men, and this is no hindrance to his wisdom.
A. ☐ Diogenes Laertius, Book X
166. ☐ As we decide what it is we should choose and avoid, we must avoid the error of those men who spend their whole lives furnishing for themselves the things they think are proper to life, without realizing that each man at birth was poured a mortal brew to drink.
A. ☐ Vatican Saying 30
167. ☐ For every man passes out of life as if he had just been born, and the same span of time is both the beginning and the end of his greatest good.
A. ☐ Vatican Saying 60, 42
168. ☐ So remember that you have been born once and cannot be born a second time, and for all eternity you shall no longer exist.
A. ☐ Vatican Saying 44
169. ☐ You are not in control of tomorrow, so do not postpone your happiness, and waste your life by delaying, for each one of us dies without enjoying excess time.
A. ☐ Vatican Saying 14
170. ☐ But we should be grateful to Nature, because she has made the necessities of life easy to acquire, and she has made those things that are difficult to acquire unnecessary.
A. ☐ Usener Fragment 469
171. ☐ When misfortune comes, we should find solace in the happy memory of what has been, and in the knowledge that what has been cannot be undone. For the man who forgets his past blessings on that day becomes old.
A. ☐ Vatican Saying 19, 55
172. ☐ Remember also that of all the means which wisdom acquires to ensure happiness throughout the whole of life, by far the most important is friendship.
A. ☐ Epicurus' Principal Doctrine 27
173. ☐ For friendship dances around the world, bidding us all to awaken to the recognition of happiness.
A. ☐ Vatican Saying 52
174. ☐ So at one and the same time we must philosophize, laugh, and manage our household and other business, while never ceasing to proclaim the words of true philosophy.
A. ☐ Vatican Saying 41
175. ☐ And as we proclaim this true philosophy, it is preferable to seem to speak in oracles that are of advantage to all men, even though no men understand us, rather than conform to popular opinion and thereby gain the constant praise that comes from the many.
A. ☐ Vatican Saying 29
176. ☐ So we must free ourselves from the prison of public education and politics, and hoist our sail and flee that which passes as culture.
A. ☐ Vatican Saying 58, Usener Fragment to Pythocles
177. ☐ For the soul neither rids itself of disturbance, nor gains a worthwhile joy, through possession of great wealth, nor by the honor and admiration bestowed by the crowd, nor through any of the other things sought by unlimited desire.
A. ☐ Vatican Saying 81
178. ☐ The study of nature does not create men who are fond of boasting and chattering, or who show off the culture that impresses the many, but rather men who are strong and self-sufficient, and who take pride in their own personal qualities, not in those that depend on external circumstances.
A. ☐ Vatican Saying 45
179. ☐ And the greatest fruit of this self-sufficiency is freedom.
A. ☐ Vatican Saying 77
180. ☐ But in contrast to freedom, some men say that there is a single true law which applies universally to all men, and is unchanging and everlasting, and that this single law summons all to duty by its commands and averts all from wrong-doing by its prohibitions.
A. ☐ Cicero, The Republic
181. ☐ These men say that it is a sin to try to alter or repeal this law, and there should not be different laws at Rome and at Athens, or now and in the future, but one eternal and unchangeable law for all nations and all times.
A. ☐ Cicero, The Republic

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182. ☐ To these men of a single law, we say that there never was such a thing as absolute justice, but only agreements made in mutual dealings among particular men, at various times and places, to provide against infliction or suffering of harm.
A. ☐ Epicurus' Principal Doctrine 33
183. ☐ And while we also say that justice is the same for all, as it is something found mutually beneficial in the dealings of men, justice differs in how it applies to particular places and circumstances, and the same thing is not necessarily just for everyone.
A. ☐ Epicurus' Principal Doctrine 36
184. ☐ Whether a law is just depends on whether it is mutually advantageous, and this varies according to circumstances. A law ceases to be just when it is no longer advantageous for the mutual dealings of the citizens involved.
A. ☐ Epicurus' Principal Doctrine 37
185. ☐ Thus the man who best knows how to meet external threats makes into one family all the creatures he can; and those he can not, he at any rate does not treat as aliens.
A. ☐ Epicurus' Principal Doctrine 39
186. ☐ Where he finds even this impossible, he avoids all dealings, and, so far as is advantageous, excludes them from his life.
A. ☐ Epicurus' Principal Doctrine 39
187. ☐ Yet some men indulge, without limit, their avarice, ambition, and love of power, to the extent that they must be restrained, rather than reformed. Therefore any means of obtaining protection from other men is a natural good.
A. ☐ Epicurus' Principal Doctrine 6
188. ☐ Those who possess the power to defend themselves against threats by their neighbors, being thus in possession of the surest guarantee of security, live the most pleasant life with one another.
A. ☐ Epicurus' Principal Doctrine 40
189. ☐ And so let us remember that the most excellent and desirable life consists of living in the continuous enjoyment of numerous and vivid pleasures, of both body and mind, undisturbed either by the presence or by the prospect of pain.
A. ☐ Torquatus, from Cicero's On Ends
190. ☐ To achieve this, we must possess a strength of mind that is proof against all fear of death or of pain. We must know that death means complete unconsciousness. And we must know that pain is generally light, if long, and short, if strong.
A. ☐ Torquatus, from Cicero's On Ends
191. ☐ And we must have no dread of any supernatural power; nor must we ever allow the pleasures of the past to fade away, but we must constantly renew their enjoyment in our recollection.
A. ☐ Torquatus, from Cicero's On Ends
192. ☐ Keep in mind all these things you have been taught, and you will escape far away from myth. Devote yourself to the study of first principles of Nature, and of infinity, and of the standards of choice and avoidance, and of the feelings of pleasure and pain, and of the highest goal for which we choose between them.
A. ☐ Epicurus' Letter to Menoecus
193. ☐ For if you exercise yourself in these precepts, day and night, both by yourself, and with one who is like-minded, then never will you be disturbed. You will live as a god among men, for men lose all semblance of mortality when they live in the midst of immortal blessings.
A. ☐ Epicurus' Letter to Menoecus
194. ☐ And then, when we do reach the end of our lives, we will say that we have anticipated you, Fortune, and entrenched ourselves against all your secret attacks.
A. ☐ Vatican Saying 47
195. ☐ And we will not give ourselves up as captives, to you or to any other circumstance, but when it is time for us to go, spitting contempt on life and on those who vainly cling to it, we will leave life - crying aloud in a glorious song of triumph - that we have lived well.
A. ☐ Vatican Saying 47

About This Outline

- ☐ This outline was last revised by Cassius Amicus on 4/22/18 8:53a m. The latest version can always be found at <http://newepicurean.com/overview/>
- ☐ The "Orientation" Section is based on Chapter 1 of Norman DeWitt's "Epicurus And His Philosophy"