**Epicureans and Stoics**

**Letter to Menoeceus- Epicurus**

Aim of life is happiness

* Happiness depends on ridding oneself of fears
* Basis for removal of fear is science.

Philosophy- secures the health of the soul; provides guidelines to keep ourselves from the source of unhappiness.

-frees us from fears and anxieties

-can provide directions for minimizing pleasures

Guidelines:

* *Not to have false beliefs*; believe in the immortality and blessedness of god.
* Impious man is not he who denies the gods of the many, but he who attaches to the gods the beliefs of the many.
* Thoughts about gods should be derived from the senses. (unlike the many)
* Do not think gods wicked (or having passions like man)
* *Death is nothing to us.*
* Good and evil consists in sensation – death is deprivation of sensation.
* Mortality enjoyable—no craving for immortality.

35- ***of desires***- first avoid pain and fear – pleasure beginning and end of blessed life.

* some necessary; for happiness/ for repose of body/ for life
* some merely natural
* some imaginary XXIX-XXX

We do not choose every pleasure- sometimes greater discomfort accrues.

Grow accustomed to simple needs.

Not reveling, but sobering reason.

*Prudence-* beginning and greatest goods

Virtues- bound up with pleasant life- inseparable

Chance- not important because good and evil not given by chance but only opportunity for great good and great evil.

Fear of nature- resolved through natural science X-XII

Friendship- greatest blessedness that wisdom acquires. How does wisdom acquire friendship?

***Justice*:**

* Made by compact XXXII
* Injustice not an evil itself XXXIV
* Justice relative XXVI
* Justice essentially involves human advantage XXXVII
* Security (cf. Hobbes) XL

***On the Happy Life*- Seneca**

Stoics- universal appeal

41- need to find aim and path for happy life

* Do not follow the path of the majority- the well worn path most deceptive
* Live according to reason not imitation
* By rabble I mean no less the servants of the courts as the servants of the kitchen
* In contrast to the Epicurean emphasis of sensation- In rating a man I do not rely upon eyesight- there is a better surer light to distinguish true from false.
* Flatterers not friends.

Happy live according to nature: “Not to stray from nature and to mould ourselves according to her law and pattern – this is true wisdom.” 43

The happy life is a life that is in harmony with its own nature; and it can be attained only in one way”

* Sound mind
* Courageous and energetic
* Capable of every fortitude – careful of bodily concerns without anxiety.
* Attention to life’s advantages but much love for none – not a slave to fortune.

43- The happy man is he who recognizes no good and evil other than a good and evil mind.

44-man who becomes superior to pleasure, will also be superior pain. Pleasures and pains are the most capricious and tyrannical of masters.

The relation of happiness/freedom/reason:

* “Happy man is one who is freed from both fear and desire because of the gift of reason.
* Happy life – founded on correct and trustworthy judgment.
* Happy man content with present lot. “Happy man is content with present lot, no matter what it is, and is reconciled to his circumstances; the happy man is he who allows reason to fix the value of every condition of existence.

45 why pleasant and virtuous life not the same.

To live happily is to live according to nature.

*Externals*- “Let a man not be corrupted by external things…”

Free- harmonious, not divided:

46- The highest good is harmony of the soul, for where concord and unity are, there must the virtues be.”

Pleasure is neither the cause nor the reward of virtue, but its by-product.

Highest good lies in the choice of it, and the very attitude of a mind made perfect.

Critique and praise of Epicureans:

* Leads to wickedness-
* makes virtue of vice in its transmission ground for scandal
* incites evil hopes.

50- Pleasurable and honourable – cannot be combined – the honourable can have no part that is not honorable.

Those who need the help of fortune, and this is the depth of servitude.

51—This is the sacred obligation by which we are bound – to submit to the human lot, and not to be disquieted by those things which we have no power to avoid.

“We have been born under a monarchy, to obey god is freedom.”

The promise of virtue

What of stull having the need of fortune? “loosened chains”

Is it possible to combine virtue and pleasure?