

PRACTICAL FRAGMENTS OF THE FIRST PHILOSOPHERS

The Seven Wise Men of Greece (second half of 7th century B. C. to beginning of 6th)

Four of the Seven were universally agreed upon: Thales of Miletus (the first philosopher), Pittacus of Mytilene (who said *it is difficult to be good*), Bias of Priene (who said *the many are bad while few are good*) and Solon of Athens. The earliest list of seven is that given by Plato in the *Protagoras*, 343A-B, which adds Cleobulus of Lindus, Myson of Chen, and Chilon of Sparta. The following words at Delphi are attributed to them:

Know thyself

Nothing too much.

HERACLITUS OF EPHEBUS (prime about 500 B. C.)

It belongs to all men to know themselves and to be moderate
(Heraclitus, DK 116)

I have sought out myself. (Heraclitus, DK 101)

Moderation is the greatest virtue and wisdom is to speak the truth, and to act, according to nature, giving ear thereto.
(Heraclitus, DK 112)

In Priene was born Bias, son of Teutamios, who has more reason than the rest. (Heraclitus, DK 39)

The best men choose one thing rather than all else: everlasting fame [glory] among mortal men. The many are satisfied like beasts. (Heraclitus, DK 29)

The shortest way to honor [glory] is to become good. (Heraclitus, DK 135)

Character for man is a daemon. (Heraclitus, DK 119)

Gods and men honour those slain in war. (Heraclitus, DK 24)

Souls of men slain in war are purer than those who die of disease. (Heraclitus, DK 136)

Honours enslave gods and men. (Heraclitus, DK 132)

If happiness were in the pleasures of the body, we would call oxen happy when they find vetch to eat. (Heraclitus, DK 4)

Asses prefer sweepings to gold. (Heraclitus, DK 9)

Pigs wash themselves in mud, birds in dust or ashes (Heraclitus, DK 37)

Do not delight in filth. (Heraclitus, DK 13)

A man, when he gets drunk, is led stumbling [staggering] along by a beardless boy, not knowing where he is going, having the soul wet. (Heraclitus, DK 117)

The dry soul is wisest and best. (Heraclitus, DK 118)

It is not better for men to obtain as much as they wish. (Heraclitus, DK 110)

Disease makes health pleasant and good; hunger, satisfaction; weariness [toil, labor], rest. (Heraclitus, DK 111)

It is hard to fight against anger; whatever it wishes, it buys at the expense of the soul. (Heraclitus, DK 85)

It is not proper to be so a jester that you yourself appear laughable. (Heraclitus, DK 130)

One should quench [put out] arrogance [insolence] rather than a conflagration. (Heraclitus, DK 43)

Bad men are the adversaries of the true. (Heraclitus, DK 133)

May wealth not fail you, men of Ephesus, so that you may be convicted of being wicked. (Heraclitus, DK 125a)

Conceit [opinion forming] is the interruption [a hindrance] of progress. (Heraclitus, DK 131)

What understanding or mind is in them? They believe the poets of the people and take the crowd as their teacher, not knowing that "the many are bad while few are good." (The quote is attributed to Bias of Priênê.) (Heraclitus, DK 104)

It would be right for all the Ephesians above age to strangle themselves and leave the city to beardless lads; for they cast out Hermodorus, the best man among them, saying "Let no man among us be the best; if there is one, let it be elsewhere and among others." (Heraclitus, DK 121)

One man is ten thousand to me if he be the best. (Heraclitus, DK 49)

Law is also to obey the counsel of one. (Heraclitus, DK 33)

The people should fight for the law as if for their city-wall. (Heraclitus, DK 44)

Those who speak with understanding must be strong in what is common to all, as much as a city is strong in its law, and much more strongly. For all human laws are fed by one divine law which governs as far as it wishes and is enough for all and is left over and above all. (Heraclitus, DK 114)

One's lot in life [one's fortune] is a child playing a game of draughts; the kingdom belongs to a child. (Heraclitus, DK 52)

EMPEDOCLES (prime about 450 B. C.)

Happy is he who has acquired the wealth of divine thoughts, but wretched the man in whom dwells dark [doubtful] opinions about the gods. (Empedocles, DK 132)

But that which is lawful for all is ordered far-stretching through the wide-ruling air and through the boundless light. (Empedocles, DK 135)

Will ye not cease from this harsh-sounding slaughter? Do you not see that you are devouring one another with careless mind? (Empedocles, DK 136)

The father, changing form, having lifted up the beloved son, slaughters him offering a blind prayer. But they are troubled, sacrificing one who begs for mercy. But he, on the other hand, not hearing the one shouting, slaughters him in his halls and prepares the evil feast. Likewise son takes father, and children their mother, and tearing out the life, eat their own flesh. (Empedocles, DK 137)

DEMOCRITUS OF ABDERA (fl. 420 B.C.)

ETHICAL FRAGMENTS

Good things scarcely come to those seeking, but bad things even to those not seeking. (Democritus, DK 108)

Learning with labours makes beautiful things, but ugly things are reaped by themselves without labours. (Democritus, DK 182)

For men, bad things come out of what is good, if one does not know how to guide and drive easily good things. It is not right to place such things among the bad, but in the good. It is possible also to use what is good for what is bad if one strongly wishes to do so. (Democritus, DK 173)

From the same from which good things come to us, we also partake of bad things, or else we can avoid the bad things. For example, deep water is useful for many purposes, and yet again bad; for there is danger of being drowned. A way out has been found: to teach swimming. (Democritus, DK 172)

But the gods give to men all good things, both in the past and now. They do not, however, bestow things which are bad, harmful or useless, either in the past or now. But men themselves fall into these through blindness of mind and lack of sense. (Democritus, DK 175)

For the foolish, not reason but misfortune becomes the teacher. (Democritus, DK 76)

Those without understanding are shaped by the tricks of fortune, but those who know these things by the wiles of wisdom. (Democritus, DK 197)

Those without understanding, suffering misfortune, learn sense. (Democritus, DK 54)

Education is an ornament for the fortunate, but a refuge for the unfortunate. (Democritus, DK 180)

Men have made up a phantom of fortune as an excuse for their own lack of counsel. For chance rarely conflicts with foresight, and most things in life can be set right by a quickly grasping sharp-sightedness. (Democritus, DK 119)

Fortune is munificent but uncertain. Nature, however, is sufficient in itself. Therefore it is victorious, by its lesser and sure means, over the greater promise of hope. (Democritus, DK 176)

The man who wishes to have serenity of spirit should not engage in many activities, either private or public, nor choose activities beyond his ability and nature. He must guard against this, so that when good fortune strikes him and leads him on to excess by means of seeming, he must put it aside, and not fasten upon things beyond his powers. A moderate amount is safer than a huge one. (Democritus, DK 3)

The hopes of right-thinking men are easy to reach, but those of men without understanding are impossible. (Democritus, DK 58)

The hopes of the educated are better than the wealth of the unlearned. (Democritus, DK 185)

The hopes of those without understanding are unreasonable. (Democritus, DK 292)

It is unreasonableness not to submit to the necessary things in life. (Democritus, DK 289)

The man using exhortation and reasonable persuasion leads better to virtue than he who uses law and force. For the man who is prevented by law from wrongdoing will likely do wrong in secret, whereas the man led towards what is right by persuasion is not likely to do something out of tune either secretly or openly. Therefore the man who acts rightly with understanding and knowledge becomes at the same time brave and judges rightly. (Democritus, DK 181)

Reason is far stronger than gold in persuasion. (Democritus, DK 51)

Many not learning reason live according to reason. (Democritus, DK 53)

Happiness

Happiness and unhappiness belong to the soul. (Democritus, DK 170)

Happiness does not dwell in flocks of cattle or in gold. The soul is the dwelling-place of the daemon. (Democritus, DK 171)

Men find happiness neither by means of the body nor through possessions, but through uprightness and fullness of understanding. (Democritus, DK 40)

Goods of the Soul, Goods of the Body, and Outside Goods

He who chooses the goods of the soul chooses things more divine, but he who chooses those of the body, chooses human things. (Democritus, DK 37)

The beauty of the body is animalistic if understanding is not present. (Democritus, DK 105)

The wrongdoer is more wretched than the man wronged. (Democritus, DK 45)

It is fitting that men should take more account of the soul than of the body; for perfection of soul corrects the badness of the body, but strength of the body without reason does nothing to make the soul better. (Democritus, DK 187 or 36)

It belongs to a divine understanding to be always thinking over something beautiful. (Democritus, DK 112)

The good things of youth are strength and beauty, but the flower of old age is moderation. (Democritus, DK 294)

The old man has been young; but the young man cannot know if he will reach old age. Further, the perfect good is better than the future and uncertain good. (Democritus, DK 295)

Pleasure

The measure of the useful and the useless is pleasure and lack of pleasure. (Democritus, DK 188)

Pleasure and absence of pleasure are the measure of what is useful and what is useless. (Democritus, DK 4)

Accept no pleasure that is not useful. (Democritus, DK 74)

Good and true are the same for all men; but the pleasant differs for different men. (Democritus, DK 69)

Pigs revel in rubbish. (Democritus, DK 147)

The best way for a man to lead his life is to have been as cheerful as possible and to have suffered as little as possible. This could happen if one did not make his pleasures in mortal things. (Democritus, DK 189)

Those without understanding live without enjoyment of life. (Democritus, DK 200)

Those without understanding yearn for long life without pleasure in long life. (Democritus, DK 201)

If one oversteps the due measure, the most pleasurable things become most unpleasant. (Democritus, DK 233)

Moderation multiplies pleasures, and makes pleasure still greater. (Democritus, DK 211)

All who make their pleasures from the stomach, overstepping due measure in foods or drinks or sexual pleasures, have pleasures that are but brief and short-lived, so long as they are eating and drinking, but pains that are many. For this desire is always present for the same things, and when people get what they desire, the pleasure passes quickly, and they have nothing good for themselves except a brief enjoyment; and then again they have need for the same things. (Democritus, DK 235)

Men get pleasure from scratching themselves: they feel an enjoyment like that of lovemaking. (Democritus, DK 127)

Men ask in their prayers for health from the gods, but do not know that the power to attain this lies in themselves; and by doing the opposite through lack of control, they themselves become the betrayers of health to their desires. (Democritus, DK 234)

Untimely pleasures bring forth unpleasantness. (Democritus, DK 71)

Of pleasures, those that come most rarely please the most. (Democritus, DK 232)

The great pleasures come from looking at noble works. (Democritus, DK 194)

One should not choose every pleasure, but only that concerned with the beautiful [the noble]. (Democritus, DK 207)

They think divine things with their mind. (Democritus, DK 129)

The reason itself accustomed to take its pleasures from itself. (Democritus, DK 146)

All labours are pleasanter than rest, when men attain that for which they labour, or know that they will attain it. But likewise labour is annoying and distressing in failure. (Democritus, DK 243)

Cheerfulness [or tranquillity] comes to be in men through moderation of pleasure and due proportion of life. Things that are in defect or in excess like to change and cause great disturbance in the soul. Souls which are moved by great differences are neither cheerful nor stable. Therefore one must keep one's mind on what is possible and be satisfied with what one has, little remembering things envied and admired, and not dwelling on them in thought. Rather must you consider the lives of those suffering much, reflecting on what they undergo so much, so that what is present and belongs to you may seem great and enviable, and you may no longer suffer in your soul by desiring more. For he who admires those who have, and who are called happy by other men, and who dwells on them in his mind every hour, is always forced to undertake something new and attempt, through his desire, doing something irreparable among those things which the laws prohibit. Hence one must not seek the latter, but must be content with the former, comparing one's own life with that of those passing through worse things, and must consider oneself blessed, keeping in mind what they suffer, in doing and living better than they. If you keep to this way of thinking, you will live more serenely, and will expel those not small curses in life, envy, jealousy and ill-will. (Democritus, DK 191)

The envious man torments himself like an enemy. (Democritus, DK 88)

Some men, not knowing the dissolution of mortal nature, but conscious of evil-doing in life, distress the time of life with disturbances and fears, fabricating false myths about the time after the end of life. (Democritus, DK 297)

They are without understanding who hate life and yet wish to live through fear of Hades. (Democritus, DK 199)

Those without understanding cannot please anyone in the whole of life. (Democritus, DK 204)

Those without understanding long for life because they fear death. (Democritus, DK 205)

Those without understanding, fearing death, want to live to be old. (Democritus, DK 206)

Old age is a complete mutilation. It has all and lacks in all. (Democritus, DK 296)

Good and Bad Deeds

If any man gives ear to my maxims with understanding, he will do many things worthy of a good man, and not do many bad things. (Democritus, DK 35)

To praise noble deeds is noble; for to do so over bad deeds is the work of a base and deceiving man. (Democritus, DK 63)

One must either be good, or imitate a good man. (Democritus, DK 39)

It is a grievous thing to imitate the bad, and not even wish to imitate the good. (Democritus, DK 79)

Those naturally suited for noble deeds know and emulate them. (Democritus, DK 56)

One should emulate the deeds and actions of virtue, not the words. (Democritus, DK 55)

Speech is the shadow of action. (Democritus, DK 145)

The false and the seeming-good are those who do all in word, not in deed. (Democritus, DK 82)

Many doing the most shameful things practise the best words. (Democritus, DK 53a)

Neither can fine speech hide base action, nor can good action be disfigured by slander. (Democritus, DK 177)

The cheerful man, who is led toward works that are just and lawful, rejoices by day and by night, and is strong and free from care. But the man who takes no heed of justice, and does not do what he ought, to him all such things displeasing when he remembers any of them, and he is afraid and reproaches himself. (Democritus, DK 174)

They alone are dear to the gods to whom wrongdoing is hateful. (Democritus, DK 217)

Good is not to avoid wrongdoing, but not to wish it. (Democritus, DK 62)

Refrain from bad deeds not through fear but through duty. (Democritus, DK 41)

To yield to the law, the ruler, and the wiser man is moderate [wellordered]. (Democritus, DK 47)

It is better to deliberate before action than to repent afterwards. (Democritus, DK 66)

To be always thinking of doing makes actions unfinished. (Democritus, DK 81)

It is better to censure one's own faults than those of others. (Democritus, DK 60)

It is shameful to be so busy over the affairs of others that one does not know one's own. (Democritus, DK 80)

The man who does shameful deeds must first feel shame himself. (Democritus, DK 84)

One must not respect the other men more than one's self; nor must one be more ready to do wrong if no one will know than if all men will know. One must respect oneself especially and lay down as the law for the soul, to do nothing unfit. (Democritus, DK 264)

Neither say nor do what is base, even when you are alone. Learn to feel shame by yourself much more than before others. (Democritus, DK 244)

One must avoid even speech about bad deeds. (Democritus, DK 190)

It is a great thing in misfortune to think of what one ought [to do]. (Democritus, DK 42)

It is noble to prevent the wrongdoer; but if one cannot, one should not join him in wrongdoing. (Democritus, DK 38)

To live badly is not to live badly, but to spend a long time dying. (Democritus, DK 160)

Repentance over shameful deeds is the saving of life. (Democritus, DK 43)

The cause of wrong-doing is ignorance of the better. (Democritus, DK 83)

The Virtues

The worthy and the unworthy man *are to be known* not only from what they do, but also from what they wish. (Democritus, DK 68)

Right love is to desire without insolence the fair. (Democritus, DK 73)

It is easy to praise and blame what one should not, but both belong to a corrupt character. (Democritus, DK 192)

When bad men find fault, the good man takes no account. (Democritus, DK 48)

Honours are worth much to right-thinking men, who understand why they are being honoured. (Democritus, DK 95)

In all things, the equal is fair, overshooting and falling short not so it seems to me. (Democritus, DK 102)

Those whose character is well-ordered have also a well-ordered life. (Democritus, DK 61)

Nobility of birth in cattle depends on the health of the body, but in that of men on the good disposition of character. (Democritus, DK 57)

More men become good through practice than by nature. (Democritus, DK 242)

Nature and teaching are similar; for teaching transforms the man, and in transforming him, makes a [second] nature. (Democritus, DK 33)

Continuous association with base men increases a disposition to wickedness [badness]. (Democritus, DK 184)

Toils undertaken willingly make the endurance of those done unwillingly easier. (Democritus, DK 240)

Continuous labor becomes easier by being accustomed to it. (Democritus, DK 241)

There is an understanding in the young, and a lack of understanding in the old. For time does not teach foresight, but early bringing up and nature. (Democritus, DK 183)

Medicine heals diseases of the body, but wisdom frees the soul of passions. (Democritus, DK 31)

Courage makes difficulties small. (Democritus, DK 213)

Forgetfulness of one's own ills breeds boldness. (Democritus, DK 196)

Boldness is the beginning of action, but Fortune is the lord of the end. (Democritus, DK 269)

Men, fleeing death, pursue it. (Democritus, DK 203)

To desire without measure belongs to a child, not to a man.
(Democritus, DK 70)

Violent desires for one thing blind the soul to all others.
(Democritus, DK 72)

For self-sufficiency in food, a little night never comes.
(Democritus, DK 209)

The animal needing something knows how much it needs, the man does not. (Democritus, DK 198)

The brave man is not only he who is stronger than the enemy, but he who is stronger than pleasures. Some men are masters of cities, but are enslaved to women. (Democritus, DK 214)

If the body brought a suit against the soul, for all the pains it had endured throughout this life, and the body suffered, and I were to be judge of the accusation, I would vote in condemnation of the soul, in that it had partly ruined the body by its neglect and dissolved it with drunkenness, and partly destroyed it and torn it in pieces with its love of pleasure - as if, when a tool or a vessel were in bad condition, I blamed the man who was using it carelessly. (Democritus, DK 159)

Sleep in the daytime signifies disturbance of the body or distress of the soul or laziness, or lack of education (Democritus, DK 212)

Fame and wealth without understanding are not safe possessions. (Democritus, DK 77)

The employment of money with understanding is useful towards being liberal and the common good, but without understanding, it is a common means. (Democritus, DK 282)

Thrift and fasting are useful; so too is expenditure at the right time. But to know this belongs to a good man. (Democritus, DK 229)

To procure money is not without use, but if it comes from wrong-doing, nothing is worse. (Democritus, DK 78)

Wealth derived from evil doing makes the disgrace more evident.
(Democritus, DK 218)

Evil gains bring loss of virtue. (Democritus, DK 220)

The hope of evil gain is the beginning of damage[loss].
(Democritus, DK 221)

The generous man is not the one looking for a return, but the one choosing to do good. (Democritus, DK 96)

Little favours at the right time are greatest to those receiving.
(Democritus, DK 94)

When you do a favour, first examine the one receiving, lest being false, he give back evil for good. (Democritus, DK 93)

Accept favours foreseeing that you will have to give back greater gifts for them. (Democritus, DK 92)

Luck supplies an extravagant table, but foresight a sufficient one. (Democritus, DK 210)

The things which the body needs are easily available to all without toil or hardship. But the things which require toil and hardship and distress life, are not desired by the body, but by the bad-disposition of the mind. (Democritus, DK 223)

One should realize that human life is weak and brief and mixed with many cares and hardships, in order that one may care only for moderate possessions, and that hardship may be measured by necessities. (Democritus, DK 285)

Living abroad one's life teaches self-sufficiency; for bread and bed are the sweetest cures for hunger and fatigue. (Democritus, DK 246)

He is fortunate who is cheerful with moderate possessions, but unfortunate who is melancholy with great possessions.
(Democritus, DK 286)

If your desires are not for much, little will seem much to you; for small desire makes poverty equivalent to wealth. (Democritus, DK. 284)

The desire for wealth, unless limited by satisfaction, is far harder to bear than extreme poverty; for greater desires make greater needs [lacks]. (Democritus, DK 219)

Poverty and wealth are names for lack and satiety; so that he who lacks is not wealthy, and he who does not lack is not poor. (Democritus, DK 283)

Those who yearn for what is absent, but neglect what is present being more profitable than what has gone, are without understanding. (Democritus, DK 202)

The reasonable man is he who is not saddened by what he has not, but enjoys what he has. (Democritus, DK 231)

The desire for more loses what one has, having become like the dog in Aesop. (Democritus, DK 224)

Misers have the fate of the bee; they work as if they were going to live for ever. (Democritus, DK 227)

The children of misers, if they are reared in ignorance, are like those dancers who leap between swords: if they miss, in their leap downwards, a single place where they must plant their feet, they are destroyed. But it is hard to alight upon the one spot, because only the space for the feet is left. So too with the children of misers: if they miss the paternal character of carefulness and thrift, they are apt to be destroyed. (Democritus, DK 228)

To bear poverty well belongs to a sensible man. (Democritus, DK 291)

It is greatness of soul to bear mildly offence. (Democritus, DK 46)

It is hard to fight anger; but to control it belongs to a reasonable man. (Democritus, DK 236)

Drive back well the anger continuing in thy breast, and take care not to disturb thy soul, and do not let all things come always to the tongue. (Democritus, DK 298a)

Cast forth unmastered grief from your benumbed soul by reason. (Democritus, DK 290)

One should tell the truth, not speak at length. (Democritus, DK 44 or 225)

The life without festival is a long road without an inn. (Democritus, DK 230)

Justice is to do what should be done; injustice is to fail to do what should be done, and to put it aside. (Democritus, DK 256)

The cheerful man, who is impelled toward works that are just and lawful, rejoices by day and by night, and is strong and free from care. But the man who neglects justice, and does not do what he ought, finds all such things disagreeable when he remembers any of them, and he is afraid and torments himself. (Democritus, DK 174)

The glory of justice is confidence of judgment and imperturbability, but the end of injustice is the fear of misfortune. (Democritus, DK 215)

The man completely enslaved to wealth can never be just. (Democritus, DK 50)

Bad men, when they escape, do not keep the oaths which they make in time of necessity. (Democritus, DK 239)

It is the work of foresight to guard against a threatened injustice, but it is the mark of insensibility not to avenge it when it has happened. (Democritus, DK 193)

Imperturbable wisdom is worth everything. (Democritus, DK 216)

Friendship

Life is not worthwhile for the one who has not even one good friend. (Democritus, DK 99)

It is fitting, being men, not to laugh at the misfortunes of others, but to lament them. (Democritus, DK 107a)

Those to whom their neighbours' misfortunes give pleasure do not understand that the things of fortune are common to all; and also they lack cause for their own joy. (Democritus, DK 293)

All relatives are not friends, but those agreeing about the useful. (Democritus, DK 107)

The enmity of relatives is much worse than that of strangers. (Democritus, DK 90)

The man who loves nobody is, it seems to me, loved by no one. (Democritus, DK 103)

Many who seem to be friends are not so, and those who do not seem so, are. (Democritus, DK 97)

In prosperity it is easy to find a friend, in adversity nothing is so difficult. (Democritus, DK 106)

Many avoid their friends when they fall from wealth to poverty. (Democritus, DK 101)

An enemy is not he who injures, but he who wishes to do so. (Democritus, DK 89)

The friendship of one who understands is better than that of all who do not understand. (Democritus, DK 98)

Animals flock together with animals of the same kind, as doves with doves, and cranes with cranes, and similarly with the rest of the animals. So it is with inanimate things, as one can see it is with sifted seeds and with the pebbles on the beaches. In the former, through the circulation of the sieve, beans are separated and ranged with beans, barley-grains with barley, and wheat with wheat; in the latter, with the motion of the wave, oval pebbles are driven to the same place as oval, and round to round,

as if the likeness in these things had a sort of power over them which had brought them together. (Democritus, DK 164)

Like thinking makes friendship. (Democritus, DK 186)

Those loving to find fault are not well-fitted for friendship. (Democritus, DK 109)

The man whose tested friends do not stay long with him is hard to turn. (Democritus, DK 100)

An old man is pleasant if wily and his speech serious. (Democritus, DK 104)

It is better to be praised by another than by oneself. (Democritus, DK 114)

Those who praise men without understanding do great harm. (Democritus, DK 113)

If you do not understand the praise, believe that you are being flattered. (Democritus, DK 115)

Fear practises flattery, but it has no good will. (Democritus, DK 268)

DOMESTIC FRAGMENTS

Disease of the home and of the life comes about in the same way as that of the body. (Democritus, DK 288)

It is better for those without understanding to be ruled than to rule. (Democritus, DK 75)

Rule belongs by nature to the stronger [better]. (Democritus, DK 267)

It is hard to be ruled by one's inferior. (Democritus, DK 49)

To be ruled by a woman is the ultimate outrage for a man. (Democritus, DK 111)

A woman is far sharper than a man in bad counsel. (Democritus, DK 273)

A woman must not practise argument: this is dreadful. (Democritus, DK 110)

Speaking little is adornment for a woman. Simplicity of ornament is also beautiful. (Democritus, DK 274)

I do not think that one should have children. I observe in the possession of children many and great risks and also many griefs, a harvest is rare, and even then thin and weak. (Democritus, DK 276)

The rearing of children is perilous. One gains success full of anguish and care, failure means grief beyond all others. (Democritus, DK 275)

Whoever needs to have children should, it seems to me, make them from his friends. He will thus obtain a child such as he wishes, for he can select the kind he wants. And the one that seems to be fit will be most apt to follow according to his nature. And this differs so much as that here it is possible to take the child out of many who is according to one's mind; but if one begets a child from himself, the risks are many; for it is necessary to accept whoever is generated. (Democritus, DK 277)

For men, it is one of the necessities of life to have children, arising from nature and ancient institution. It is clear in the other animals too: they all have offspring by nature, not for the sake of any advantage. And when they are born, the parents work hard and bring up each as best they can and are very fearful for them while they are small; and if they suffer something, the parents are grieved. But for man it has now become an established custom that there should be also some enjoyment from the offspring. (Democritus, DK 278)

The moderation of the father is the greatest instruction for the children. (Democritus, DK 208)

If children are allowed not to work, they will learn neither letters nor music nor gymnastic, nor what is above all virtue, to feel shame. For shame especially is apt to come from these. (Democritus, DK 179)

Idleness is the worst of all to teach youth; for this is what breeds those pleasures from which badness comes. (Democritus, DK 178)

It is possible without spending much of one's own money to educate one's children, and to throw around their property and their persons a wall and a safeguard. (Democritus, DK 280)

The excessive accumulation of wealth for one's children is an excuse for covetousness, which thus displays its own way. (Democritus, DK 222)

One should, as far as possible, divide out one's property among one's children, at the same time watching over them to see that they do nothing ruinous when they have it in their hands. At the same time, they thus become much more thrifty over money, and more eager to acquire it and compete with one another. Payments made in a communal establishment do not irk so much as those in a private one, nor does the income please but much less. (Democritus, DK 279)

The man who is fortunate in a son-in-law finds a son; the man unfortunate, loses his daughter also. (Democritus, DK 272)

Use slaves as parts of the body: each to his own function. (Democritus, DK 270)

POLITICAL FRAGMENTS

Learn the political art which is the greatest, and pursue its toils, from which great and brilliant things come to be for men. (Democritus, DK 157)

One must hold that what concerns the city is the greatest matter among the rest; how it may be well run; neither pursuing

disputes contrary to right, nor giving a power to oneself contrary to the common good. The well-run city is the greatest direction, and in this all things are contained; when this is saved, all is saved; when this is destroyed, all is destroyed. (Democritus, DK 252)

Communal distress is harder than that of individuals; for there remains no hope of aid. (Democritus, DK 287)

The greatest deeds and wars between cities are achieved by means of oneness of mind: there is no other way. (Democritus, DK 250)

When the powerful undertake to give to those not having, and to help them, and show kindness to them, herein at last is pity, and not being alone, and becoming companions[friends], and aiding one another, and oneness of mind among citizens; and other goods things such as no man could recount. (Democritus, DK 255)

In a shared fish, there are no bones. (Democritus, DK 151)

All love of strife is without understanding; for in considering the harm of one's enemy, one does not see what is useful to oneself. (Democritus, DK 237)

Civil war is bad to both parties; for there is like destruction both to the conquerors and the conquered. (Democritus, DK 249)

The laws would not hinder prevent each man from living according to his own authority, if one individual did not harm another; for ill-will makes the beginning of strife. (Democritus, DK 245)

The law wishes to benefit the life of men; and it is able to do so, when they themselves wish to undergo it well; for it shows to those persuaded to obey it, their own virtue. (Democritus, DK 248)

It is necessary to punish wrong-doers so far as possible, and not neglect it. To do such is just and good, but to not do so is unjust and bad. (Democritus, DK 261)

Those who do what is deserving of exile or imprisonment or are worthy of some other punishment, must be condemned and not let off. Whoever contrary to the law acquits a man, judging according to profit or pleasure, does wrong, and this is bound to be on his conscience. (Democritus, DK 262)

One must kill all those harming contrary to justice. The man who does this has the greater share of cheerfulness and justice and courage and shares a greater part of property in every ordered society. (Democritus, DK 258)

With animals, the rule for killing them and not killing is thus: any that do wrong and wish to do so may be killed with impunity, and it conduces to well-being to do so rather than not. (Democritus, DK 257)

Just as has been written regarding beasts and snakes which are hostile to man, so it seems to me it is necessary to do with regard to human beings: one should, according to the laws of our fathers, kill an enemy of the city in every ordered society, in which a law does not forbid it. But there are prohibitions in every State: sacred customs and treaties and oaths. (Democritus, DK 259)

The one killing a highway robber and plunderer shall be exempt from penalty, whether he do it by his own hand, or by urging, or by vote. (Democritus, DK 260)

There is no way under the present constitution by which magistrates can be prevented from wrong-doing, even if they are altogether good. For it is not likely for anyone else than for oneself, that he will become the same in different circumstances. Whence It is necessary that such things be ordered so that the one doing no wrong, and convicting wrong-doers, shall not fall under the power of the latter; rather, something, a law or some other means, must defend the one doing what is just. (Democritus, DK 266)

To good men, it is not advantageous that, neglecting their own affairs, they do other things; for their private affairs suffer. But if a man neglects public affairs, he becomes ill spoken of, even if he steals nothing and does no wrong. And if he is not negligent and does wrong, he is liable not only to be ill-spoken of

but also to suffer something. To make mistakes is inevitable, but it is not easy for men to forgive. (Democritus, DK 253)

Men remember mistakes more than things done well. This is just; for as the one who returning deposit does not deserve praise, but the one not returning is ill-spoken of and suffers whereas those who do not do so deserve blame and punishment, so with the ruler: he was elected not to make mistakes but to do things well. (Democritus, DK 265)

It is necessary to be on one's guard against the bad man, lest he seize his opportunity. (Democritus, DK 87)

When the bad enter upon office, the more unworthy they are, the more they become careless, and are filled with folly and rashness. (Democritus, DK 254)

He has the greatest share of justice and virtue who awards the greatest offices to the most deserving. (Democritus, DK 263)

Rule belongs by nature to the stronger [better]. (Democritus, DK 267)

It is hard to be ruled by an inferior. (Democritus, DK 49)

The man measuring himself against the stronger [better] ends in disgrace. (Democritus, DK 238)

Poverty in democracy is as much to be preferred to so-called prosperity under an oligarchy of a few powerful families, as freedom to slavery. (Democritus, DK 251)

Freedom of speech is characteristic of freedom; but the danger is in discerning the right occasion. (Democritus, DK 226)

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