Eta Sigma Phi
Fifty-third Annual Greek Translation Contest (2002)
Intermediate

To be written as an examination, under supervision, within a maximum of two hours. No lexicon or other help is permitted. Please write in ink on every other line of the paper provided. The only identification on the contest paper should be your pen name. **Translate the passage into clear, idiomatic English.**

Epicurus writes in this epistle to his friend that the thoughtful man does not fear death, since it is nothing. Epicurus *ad Menoeceum* 2.

Συνέθιζε δὲ ἐν τῷ νομίζειν μηδὲν πρὸς ἡμᾶς εἶναι τὸν θάνατον· ἐπεὶ πᾶν ἀγαθὸν καὶ κακὸν ἐν αἰσθήσει· στέρησις δέ ἐστιν αἰσθήσεως ὁ θάνατος. ὅθεν γνῶσις ὀρθὴ τοῦ μηθὲν εἶναι πρὸς ἡμᾶς τὸν θάνατον ἀπολαυστὸν ποιεῖ τὸ τῆς ζωῆς θνητόν, οὐκ ἄπειρον προστιθεῖσα χρόνον ἀλλὰ τὸν τῆς ἀθανασίας ἀφελομένη πόθον. οὐθὲν γάρ ἐστιν ἐν τῷ ζῆν δεινὸν τῷ κατειληφότι γνησίως τὸ μηδὲν ὑπάρχειν ἐν τῷ μὴ ζῆν δεινόν. ὥστε μάταιος ὁ λέγων δεδιέναι τὸν θάνατον οὐχ ὅτι λυπήσει παρών, ἀλλ' ὅτι λυπεῖ μέλλων. ὃ γὰρ παρὸν οὐκ ἐνοχλεῖ, προσδοκώμενον κενῶς λυπεῖ. τὸ φρικωδέστατον οὖν τῶν κακῶν ὁ θάνατος οὐθὲν πρὸς ἡμᾶς, ἐπειδήπερ ὅταν μὲν ἡμεῖς ὦμεν, ὁ θάνατος οὐ πάρεστιν, ὅταν δὲ ὁ θάνατος παρῇ, τόθ' ἡμεῖς οὐκ ἐσμέν. οὔτε οὖν πρὸς τοὺς ζῶντάς ἐστιν οὔτε πρὸς τοὺς τετελευτηκότας, ἐπειδήπερ περὶ οὓς μὲν οὐκ ἔστιν, οἳ δ' οὐκέτι εἰσίν. Ἀλλ' οἱ πολλοὶ τὸν θάνατον ὁτὲ μὲν ὡς μέγιστον τῶν κακῶν φεύγουσιν, ὁτὲ δὲ ὡς ἀνάπαυσιν τῶν ἐν τῷ ζῆν κακῶν αἱροῦνται. ὁ δὲ σοφὸς οὔτε παραιτεῖται τὸ ζῆν οὔτε φοβεῖται τὸ μὴ ζῆν· οὔτε γὰρ αὐτῷ προσίσταται τὸ ζῆν οὔτε δοξάζεται κακόν εἶναί τι τὸ μὴ ζῆν.

Notes and vocabulary
Συνέθιζε...ἐν "grow accustomed to..."
αἰσθήσις, εως, ἡ "sense-perception, sensation"; στερήσις, εως, ἡ "deprivation, loss"
μάταιος, α, ον "vain, empty, idle; rash, foolish"
ὁ λέγων δεδιέναι ... Note that λέγειν plus active infinitive here means "tell (a person) to ..."
οὐχ ὅτι λυπήσει παρών, ἀλλ' ὅτι λυπεῖ μέλλων Note: make "death" the subject of each of the two verbs and the two participles in this clause. λυπεῖν "to cause pain"
κενῶς adv. derived from κένος, -α, -ον "empty, vacant, hollow"
φρικώδης, ες, "attended with shivering, that causes shuddering or horror"