

PHILOSOPHY 1600 HONORS - PHILOSOPHY OF RELIGION

Exercise 2: Morality and the Bible

Due Date: Monday, September 15

Proportion of Final Grade: 5%

This exercise has two objectives. First, and as was noted in the previous exercise, many people find it somewhat difficult, initially, to approach religious writings in a critical fashion. The present exercise is designed to give you additional practice in doing that.

Secondly, each of us is faced with an important choice with regard to how he or she should approach the task of deciding what moral beliefs to accept, of determining what values should guide his or her life. Very different answers have been advanced on this matter. Thus, on the one hand, most philosophers feel that what is crucial is the dispassionate consideration of alternative views, and the critical evaluation of arguments for and against the various alternatives. But many other people feel that such an approach is at best unnecessary, and quite possibly ill-advised. For they believe that the Bible - or some other scripture, such as the Koran - is an unerring source of moral truths. A second objective of the present exercise, accordingly, is to encourage you to grapple with this issue in a serious way.

Instructions

1. Carefully read the selections from the Bible that are listed below.
2. In doing so, try to find passages where moral beliefs are expressed - either explicitly or implicitly - that satisfy the following three conditions:
 - (1) The vast majority of people today would hold that the moral beliefs in question are mistaken;
 - (2) Most present-day Christians and Jews would also think that the moral claims in question are mistaken;
 - (3) The beliefs are really moral ones - rather than, for example, ones that make agricultural recommendations.
3. List the 20 passages that, in your judgement, best satisfy the above conditions.
4. In each case, you should both give the location of each passage, and describe very briefly, in your own words, exactly what the moral belief in question is.

Readings: *Exodus*, chapters 20-3; *Leviticus*, chapters 18-20, *Deuteronomy*, chapters 21-2; *Matthew*, chapter 5, verses 27-32; chapter 15, verses 19-20; chapter 19, verses 3-12; *Mark*, chapter 10, verses 2-12; *Ephesians*, chapter 5, verses 21-33; *Romans*, chapter 1, verses 18-32.

1. Chapter _____ Verse _____

2. Chapter _____ Verse _____

3. Chapter _____ Verse _____

4. Chapter _____ Verse _____

5. Chapter _____ Verse _____

6. Chapter _____ Verse _____

7. Chapter _____ Verse _____

8. Chapter _____ Verse _____

9. Chapter _____ Verse _____

10. Chapter _____ Verse _____

11. Chapter _____ Verse _____

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13. Chapter _____ Verse _____

14. Chapter _____ Verse _____

15. Chapter _____ Verse _____

16. Chapter _____ Verse _____

17. Chapter _____ Verse _____

18. Chapter _____ Verse _____

19. Chapter _____ Verse _____

20. Chapter _____ Verse _____
