

CHRISTIANITY VERSUS ANIMAL RIGHTS

Christianity has a terrible record in relation to animal rights. The religion does not even consider animal suffering when trying to work out how an all-good God might allow evil to happen.

People make out that animals only kill other animals, especially more vulnerable ones, for food and survival. That is nonsense. Survival implies desperation so why are cats not eating other cats? The urge to use the defenceless for food is there underneath it all and is stronger than the need for food as such. It's about domination and then nourishment. Cats torture mice for they are bored. And a dog that enters another dog's territory will be attacked. Animals torture and kill for its own sake even as they scavenge for food. We indulge mostly on animal flesh - usually the animal dies a terrible death - just for indulgence.

Despite the huge suffering that animals undergo in the name of research, the Bible has said nothing about the worth of animals. No laws banning animal cruelty exist in the Bible. The Bible God commands us to subdue the animal world - a word that means "to trample on" or "bring into bondage" The Bible God only advises care for animals when you need them. He or it never mentions caring for an animal for its own sake. No reward from God is mentioned if you care for animals.

The Bible God through Paul denies that animals matter in 1 Corinthians 9

7 Who serves as a soldier at his own expense? Who plants a vineyard and does not eat its grapes? Who tends a flock and does not drink the milk?

8 Do I say this merely on human authority? Doesn't the Law say the same thing?

9 For it is written in the Law of Moses: "Do not muzzle an ox while it is treading out the grain." Is it about oxen that God is concerned?

10 Surely he says this for us, doesn't he? Yes

We slay and hurt animals for food and clothing and fun and virtually anything.

In the past, aristocrats believed they should act with nobility towards commoners.

Some say that we must avoid causing needless harm to animals not because they are like us but because they are not. That makes the issue to be one about human duty and not animal rights. It does not counsel us to treat say a chimp the same way as a cat or a cat the same as a budgie or a budgie the same as a goldfish. The more "primitive" the animal the lower down the scale it goes. So if you have to choose between killing a budgie or a goldfish then kill the goldfish.

Animals cannot value justice or love like we do. They have no concept of justice at all. It is because we have those concepts of justice and love that our needs come first.

Somebody wrote, "It is an expression of human self-loathing, a deep misanthrope that would ultimately subvert human rights and be inimicable to human thriving" in the name of pretending that animals have equal rights with us and we with them. I like that point for animal liberationists for the most part are likable kindly people but that does not change the fact that they are resisting their misanthropism. After all they will win no friends for their cause if they give in to it. They are as bad as those who value God most and people less than God.

The religion of Jainism says that since food always involves the loss of life - plant or animal - that we should eat to live and not to eat for pleasure. Good point Jainism! And it shows the boast of Christianity which is that it is the holiest religion of all is nonsense. When a Jain is dying, he or she may refuse food on the basis that he or she is saving life by doing so and dying anyway and wants to reach a state of pure unselfish self-control. This is not euthanasia for it is not about ending your misery by death.

It is impossible to deny that our treatment of animals is evil. Killing an animal even painlessly is using a conscious being for our benefit. It is taking away its happiness and its opportunity to be happy. It implies that we cannot object if some alien being comes along and eats us on the grounds that it is a being better than us. The atheist may eat meat and even kill animals. That is evil. But the atheist does not make the situation worse by acting as if God approves of his behaviour. Religion deepens vice.

Not surprisingly after what we read about how God wanted the people of Amalek treated in the Bible, he wanted them to be subjected to a blood fest of genocide - the Bible opposes the rights of animals. A Bible that wants people treated like dirt will allow worse for animals.

Jesus said that a human being is worth more than a sparrow. That does not assert that the human life and the life of the sparrow are unequal in value but the human being could be worth more in the sense that the sparrow will not live as long and so the human comes first. Jesus did miracles in which a huge catch of fish was made - resulting in great loss of life.

The demons are the first to say Jesus is God's son so he lets them say it when he could stop them in the first place. Jesus reportedly put demons into pigs which tormented the pigs so that they went and drowned themselves and thus is leaving the demons free again to look for a new home and pigs are dead in the process! He was no true enemy of the demons! He was of the animals!

He ate meat though the animals had been cruelly put to death. So much for the perfect man! I would consider a vegetarian to be a better person than Jesus. Compassion is strongest in vegetarians. Buddhism says that each person must see that personal identity is an illusion so that he or she can engage in unselfish acts without interference by the ego or selfish side of human nature. Buddhism insists that seeing yourself as a person is the root of selfishness and hard heartedness. If it is right, Jesus made the problem worse for he even went as far as to say we have souls or spirits and our sense of personhood is no illusion. As the founder of a religion, he is to blame for all the selfish things that religion has done and thus is no better than evil incarnate.

It is easily forgotten that when the Bible and even the nasty apostles of Jesus in the book of Acts command that God's children should not eat blood or eat meat with blood in it that it is asking that animals for eating be killed as cruelly as possible by making them bleed to death until nothing is left. You cannot kill an animal and get the blood out after for the blood will not run out well. This killing is now illegal though its being moral and a divine duty is still recognised by conservative Jews. What kind of God or Jesus would become incarnate in a society that was so brutal? Christians must ask themselves that.

When a mad ox killed anybody it had to be stoned to death even though its owner could have kept it in (Exodus 21:32). Obviously the ox is being punished for killing because the Law could have punished the owner so that he would not dream of being careless with it again. The only time the Bible seems to defend animal rights is when it says a wise man is good to his animals (Proverbs 12:10). But it is not said that this ought to be done for the animal's sake but when the man is called wise it means that it is best for him and therefore wise to look after his animals. And Deuteronomy 22:6,7 permits nest robbing whether for eggs or the little birds provided the mother bird is allowed to live. The reason is that there will always be enough birds to go around. It would be kinder and smarter to allow only the removal of eggs.

God commanded that animals be slain as sacrifices to him. The animals throat was cut and it died horribly.

To this Christians might say that there was no kinder way to dispatch them. So it is a necessary evil. People killing animals for food is one thing. It being a necessary evil would mean that they do nothing to make the killing seem good and noble. This would mean that killing in sacrifice is wrong for such killing is worship and to be praised and is a celebration. If it is a necessary evil to kill animals, it is not a necessary evil to kill them in sacrifice. The Bible teaching that sacrifice is only right if you have a pure heart is outrageously hypocritical.

Jesus attended Temple worship though the centre of it and the purpose of it was sacrifice. He told people to use the Temple. He upheld the validity of the bloodsoaked Old Testament. It spent a lot of time pornifying animal sacrifice and blood and the ritual was horrific and sick. You have little about justice to your neighbour but loads about how to murder animals in the name of faith and keep the priests eating the sacrifices well fed.

The way the Law commands animal sacrifice implies that humans and animals are equal in value. The punishment for sin was death and the animal had to die in the place of the sinner. That makes the sacrifices murder as far as intention goes. Yet animals have no rights. They are things. If you can kill an animal – take its precious life from it – its hard to see why you can't be cruel to it. It is better to suffer and live than not to live at all.

It is generally taken for granted that animals are not personal beings. Those who say that animals are impersonal hold that this is so because they do not have free will. But even persons do not have free will all the time assuming they have it at all. Take drunks, for example. Religion has refused to admit the possibility that animals are personal for it refuses to care about them properly. It forbids abortion in case embryos are persons and then it allows worse to happen to grown animals which have a better claim to personhood than a month old human foetus! Scientists have shown that the adult pig is at the same mental and conscious level as a child of two or three.

When an unintelligent or retarded human being can be a person an animal can as well. We don't know if animals are persons therefore it is wrong to be cruel to them. When an animal is about to kill a human the human's life comes first for we are more sure that they have a right to life than we are animals and even if animals are known to be persons the human

being can live the longest so the animal has to be regrettably sacrificed for its life is shorter and far more under threat than our own. We must not prefer animals to humans.

The meat of the more intelligent animals should only be eaten when there is nothing else to eat. The less intelligent animals should only be eaten when it is necessary for the health and life of the supreme animal, humankind. And those who don't know that they are alive should be eaten without any such limitations. But no avoidable suffering should ever be inflicted on an animal. Peter Singer agrees with my conclusion that unless animals are eaten when there is a necessity that it is wrong and infers that animals are just there to be used as objects which is wrong for they can be happy and so should be (page 134, Practical Ethics).

Humanism should be supported by animal-lovers.

Nobody seeing how much animals suffer needs to be informed that all animals get from religion is a load of superficial sympathy.

The clergy do not mind much if cats and dogs are fed with garbage and put to sleep in a draughty old box.

The clergy would sit down with a battered old prayer book before they would protest about the cruel treatment of animals in meat processing plants and factory farms. The workers at such places are welcomed to their devilish communion table. And most people buy the meat so they are as sick. If they did not buy such dens of cruelty would not exist. And of course the wonderful clergy who preach against the abuse of animals buy loads. They say it is a very serious sin to be cruel to animals. You will not go to Heaven if you do it. What about themselves?

They should be protesting and barring the monsters from their communion table. But they get their thrills from being thought to be special. Popularity, no matter how little it is, is their deity.

And money is too.

The clergy would accept expensive gifts from the congregation instead of raising money to help animals.

They act as if animals are nothing but some kind of machines without consciousness or feelings. They advocate love of other people as yourself but not animals. If animals know they are alive and can suffer then they are to be valued and protected. The clergy cannot really accept this. Then why don't they forbid people to be attached to their pets? Why don't they say that it isn't right to love your dog for that means loving her as something like a person. If she were your radio you would not care about her in the way you do so you do love her like a person. It is certain that the Christian religion in particular is only going to make the abuse of animals far worse.

Some of the clergy support blood sports in which the animals are hunted and tortured to death. There is no need for such sports. If nature is red in blood and claw that does not mean we ought to or may make things worse. They know that. But their trouble is that if they believe that all things were ordered by an all-good God they cannot state that we may not be cruel when nature is.

The Bible God requires that animals be bled cruelly for it was forbidden to eat blood. It demanded cruel sacrifices of animals to God. Killing animals for food is bad enough unless it is necessary but killing them for sacrifice is criminal. No true Christian can care about animal rights.

The Christian view that animals have a few rights is a modern one. In the past religion often went further than that to give them at most one or no rights at all.

The attitude towards animals implies that since animals cannot reason or talk we have the right to abuse them and use them. That is snobbery. Snobbery lies behind racism and homophobia and when one is snobbish with animals one can easily progress to start picking on people as well. If animals can suffer then they should not be hurt. The attitude religion had in the past ought to warn us about the qualities of people who are drawn to it now. After all, if a religion was composed of hypocrites in a previous century then it is not a good religion no matter what face it wears now.

The Jews held that it was unclean to eat certain animals. They forbade it. The animals would have been happy about that if they knew. But Jesus, if the Church is to be believed, comes along and abolishes the prohibitions and thus gives the popularity of cruelly slaying animals for food a huge boost.

An atheist tolerating the evil of hurting animals for food is bad enough. But at least he is not invoking the sanction of God. It is one thing to be bad but to claim that an all-good being, a God of infinite love, approves of your evil is horrendous. If a Christian eating meat is worse than an atheist doing it then true respect for animal rights requires opposing and

discouraging belief in God.

The Christian Church teaches that animals do not have immortal souls. The idea is that they have souls that die with them or no souls at all. Either way the question is not considered important. The main point is they do not have souls that make them equal to people or as important as people. Jesus made it clear that Heaven is a feast and a wedding but it is so joyous simply because we are delivered from harm and the harm sin does and from sin itself. The ultimate cause of all evil is sin so to summarise - Heaven is bliss for sin is eradicated. The bliss happens by default when sin is extinguished. Some say the default is just being numb so God gives you the gift of bliss. Sin is not there to block the gift. This teaching is contradicted by those who say that Heaven is about happiness so if you love your dog or cat it will have to be there! This suggests that God cannot make you happy unless he restores your dog or cat! It makes God obligated to do so! So it is a sin to complain about Heaven unless your pet rat is there! Jesus said that earthly family ties end at death and if you lose a family member you will gain countless ones in her or his place in Heaven. This explains how mothers can be happy there while knowing their child is roasting in Hell or on the way to matching Satan in evil. He said that whoever puts parent or child before him is not worthy of him.

It is down to schools and Christian parents that children and others are in a religion they cannot want to believe in but they go along with it anyway.

CATECHISM OF THE CATHOLIC CHURCH, Veritas, Dublin, 1995

CORRECTION AND DISCIPLINE OF CHILDREN, John R Rice, Murfreesboro, Tennessee, 1946

EUTHANASIA, MERCY KILLING OR MURDER? Dom Peter Flood, Faith Pamphlets, Surrey, 1973

GOSSIP GOSSIP GOSSIP Jean E Laird, Liguori, Missouri, 1980

HUMAN RIGHTS, Michael Bertram Crowe Veritas Dublin 1978

PRACTICAL ETHICS, Peter Singer, Cambridge University Press, England, 1994

WHAT BELONGS TO ANOTHER Richard H Brennan SJ, Irish Messenger Publications, Dublin, 1983