

LESSON TEN: A DEIST-FRIENDLY MORAL SYSTEM (PART ONE)

An explanation: Lessons Ten through Fifteen were adapted from a short book I wrote called *Morality that Makes Sense to Me*. Deism does not promote any specific moral system. However, a Deist's moral system must be based on reason, because a Deist strives to base all of his or her beliefs on reason. The morality contained in these lessons is just such a system. You can have your child read the questions while you read the answers. In any case, at the end, you should ask your child if she or he has any questions or comments.

Q1: What are good and evil?

A1: Good is being and doing what is best for everyone, and evil is not being and doing what is best for everyone.

Q2: What is best for everyone?

A2: What is best for everyone is, usually, maximizing pleasure and minimizing suffering for the greatest number of creatures.

Q3: Why did you just use the word "usually"?

A3: The rule is that maximizing pleasure and minimizing suffering for the greatest number of creatures is best for everyone, but there are exceptions.

Q4: Why are there exceptions?

A4: Some creatures are more valuable than others, sometimes pleasure is not worth the sacrifice, and sometimes suffering is worth the sacrifice.

Q5: What creatures are more valuable than others?

A5: Humans are more valuable than animals, and animals are more valuable than plants.

Q6: Why are humans more valuable than animals?

A6: From a non-human (that is an objective) perspective, humans are more valuable than animals because they are more intelligent than animals. From a human (that is from a subjective) perspective, humans are more valuable because we are humans.¹ Creatures have an obligation to value their species more than other species.

Q7: Why do creatures have an obligation to value their species more than other species?

A7: God² made creatures compete against each other for limited resources and made them (or at least the vast majority of them) want to survive and reproduce. Therefore, the competition for resources, survival, and reproduction is the will of God and, thus, must be good. Valuing one's species helps one's species compete for resources, survive, and reproduce. So it is a good thing to do. One is obliged to do what is good.

Q8: Why are animals more valuable than plants?

A8: The objective reason that animals are more valuable than plants is that they are more intelligent than plants. The subjective reason is that animals are more like humans than plants are.

Q9: What is intelligence?

A9: Intelligence is the ability to learn and understand.

Q10: What does valuable mean?

A10: Valuable means having one or more desirable qualities.

¹ I am assuming that everyone who reads this is human. If you are not human, your species should be the most valuable species to you because it is your species. It should even be more valuable to you than humanity.

² I am a Deist, so I believe that God created the universe. But even if God does not exist, I want people to follow the moral system I am promoting here. Therefore, if you are an Agnostic or Atheist, please mentally replace the word "God" with the word "Nature." God is the supreme being who supposedly created the universe. Nature is the universe and the way the universe works. Nature surely exists even if you believe God does not.