

Different religions, different animal ethics?

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Sections

- 1. Religions and animals
- 2. Conceptual clarification
- 3. Some moral consequences

Hindu traditions

- Hierarchy of living beings
- *Ahimsa* (non-violence)

Buddhist traditions

- To overcome suffering and free oneself from the cycle of death and rebirth
- Hierarchical view of beings
- Reincarnation

Jain traditions

- Vegetarianism
- Universal non-violence, the highest moral duty
- *Jiva* present everywhere

Jewish traditions

- “I am establishing my covenant with you [Noah] and your descendants after you, and with every living creature that is with you, the birds, the domestic animals, and every animal of the earth with you, as many as came out of the ark.” (Genesis 9:9)
- “Let them [humans] have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the birds of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the wild animals of the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps upon the earth.” (Genesis 1:26)

Christian traditions

- “The creation itself will be set free from its bondage to decay and will obtain the freedom of the glory of the children of God [...]” (*Romans* 8: 21).
- The human person is “the only creature on earth that God has willed for its own sake” (Vat. II, *Gaudium et Spes*, § 23).
- “Our insistence that each human being is an image of God should not make us overlook the fact that each creature has its own purpose. None is superfluous” (*Laudato Si*, § 84).

Islamic traditions

- “And the grazing livestock He has created for you; in them is warmth and [numerous] benefits, and from them you eat.” (Surah 16:5)
- “It is Allah who made for you the grazing animals upon which you ride, and some of them you eat.” (Surah 40:79)
- “There is no creature on [or within] the earth or bird that flies with its wings except [that they are] communities like you.” (Surah 6:38)

Conceptual clarification

- Interdependence of all creatures

- Animality – Humanity – Divinity

Moral implications

- Prudence
- Temperance
- Justice
- Fortitude

Conclusion

- Human superiority in terms of caring for creation
- Animal care is an obligation – both moral and religious