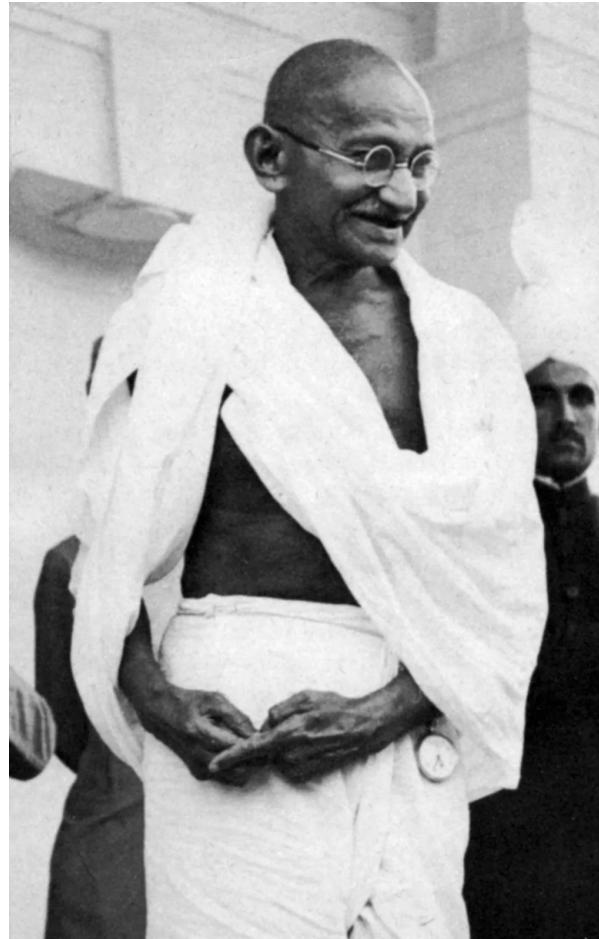


DIVINE COMMAND THEORY

GANDHI



...



■ ■ ■



...

The talk of the whole city of Ahmedabad is the destruction of 60 dogs on his mill premises at the instance of Seth. Many a humanitarian heart is considerably agitated over the incident. When Hinduism forbids the taking of the life of any living being, when it declares it to be a sin, do you think it right to kill rabid dogs for the reason that they would bite human beings and by biting other dogs make them also rabid? Is it not the man who actually destroys the dogs as is also the man at whose instance he does so both sinners?

We hope you will express your views in the matter and set the whole controversy at rest and prevent humanitarianism from being endangered by the shocks given to it by distinguished men like the Seth.

...

*I have since thought over the matter and feel that my reply
was quite proper.*

*Imperfect, erring, mortals as we are, there is no course open
to us but the destruction of rabid dogs. At times we may lie
faced with the unavoidable duty of killing a man who is
found in the act of killing people.*

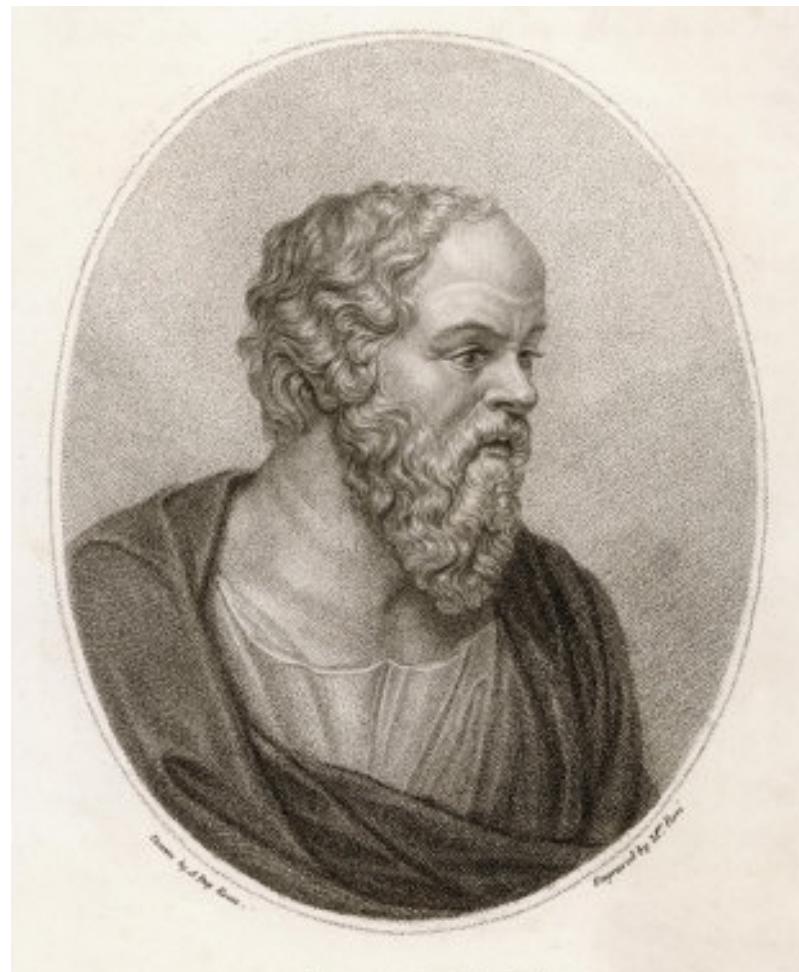
...

There can be no two opinions on the fact that Hinduism regards killing a living being as sinful. I think all religions are agreed on the principle. There is generally no difficulty in determining a principle. The difficulty comes in when one proceeds to put it into practice. A principle is the expression of perfection, and as imperfect beings like us cannot practise perfection, we devise every moment limits of its compromise in practice. So Hinduism has laid down that killing for sacrifice is no himsa (violence). This is only a half-truth. Violence will be violence for all time, and all violence is sinful. But what is inevitable is not regarded as a sin, so much so that the science of daily practice has not only declared the inevitable violence involved in killing for sacrifice as permissible but even regarded it as meritorious.

ATHENS



SOCRATES



PRINCIPAL QUESTION

What is Piety

OR

What is good? / What is Virtue?

DEFINITION 1

Piety is charging my father with negligence.

DEFINITION 2

Piety is what pleases the Gods.

DEFINITION 3 (DIVINE COMMANDMENT THEORY)

Piety is what pleases all the Gods.

OR

Piety is what pleases God

EUTHYPHRO'S DILEMMA

The point which I should first wish to understand is whether the pious or holy is beloved by the gods because it is holy, or holy because it is beloved of the gods?

EUTHYPHRO'S DILEMMA (REPHRASED)

*Is something virtuous/good because God loves it, or is it
virtuous/good, therefore God loves it?*

OR

*Is something virtuous/good because of God's
commandments, or does God's commandments make it
virtuous/good?*

TWO POSSIBILITIES

1. Something is virtuous or good *therefore* God loves it.
2. Something is virtuous or good *because* God loves it.

DIVINE PERFECTION ARGUMENT

If the Divine command theory is true, then a morally perfect God could not have created a flawless morality.

A morally perfect God cannot issue such commands, because that would make him morally imperfect.

Therefore, the Divine command theory is false.

READINGS

1. Chapter 1: Russ Shafer-Landau, *Living Ethics*.
2. Plato, *Euthyphro*.