

James Rachels: Egoism & Moral Scepticism

Review Questions:

1. **According to Rachels. Why wouldn't we hurt others, and why should we help others. How can the egoist reply?**

The answer is we should be moral or ethical. We must never hurt others and must always help because it is what we believe that is moral, that is ethical. Most of us think that doing good to others, there will always be a good thing that will happen to you, like karma. However, the true reason for doing good to others is not expecting a benefit from those good actions.

2. **State the argument for saying that ethical egoism is inconsistent. Why doesn't Rachels accept this argument?**

The argument saying that ethical egoism is inconsistent is that, it is impossible to maintain the doctrine of ethical egoism because every time we try there is always a discrepancy.

3. **What three commonplace confusions does Rachels detect the thesis of psychological egoism?**

The three commonplace confusions that Rachels detect in the thesis of psychological egoism are; Selfishness and Self-interest; Actions are done mainly because of self-interest; and incorrect assumptions about others is always opposing the interest of others.

4. **Rachels discusses two arguments for psychological. What are these arguments, and how does he reply to them?**

Rachels discussed two arguments for psychological which are the following; identifying one's action as selfish or unselfish; and the unselfish actions are the source of self-satisfaction and unselfish actions depends on the level of analysis. For Rachels, these two arguments are not true because self-interest, mostly known as the source of selfishness, may vary and may not harm others.

5. **Distinguish between psychological egoism and ethical egoism.**

Psychological Egoism is a view that does not use a normative view. It believes that they only do things because of what they want something good in return. While the Ethical Egoism, it is very much different from Psychological Egoism because it uses a normative view. Unlike Psychological Egoism, Ethical Egoism does not care if they receive something in return, they act on their own.

6. **Explain the legend of Gyges. What questions about morality are raised by the story?**

The legend of Gyges is almost the same story of the "Lord of the Rings" Trilogy. It is about a ring that gives its owner a power of invisibility. It was owned by Gyges, a shepherd. Having the power of invisibility, he seduced the Queen and killed the King to have the King's power. The story shows that having a certain power can change a good man into someone else. Most people let themselves to be eaten and controlled by their powers.

Discussion Questions

1. **Has Rachels answered the question raised by Glaucon, namely, “Why be moral?” If so what exactly is his answer.**

Yes, “Why be moral?” that was asked by Glaucon was answered by Rachels in which he said that a person should not harm each other and should give a helping hand to others. A person should not be selfish for them not to harm others.

2. **Are genuine egoists rare, as Rachels claims? Is it a fact that most people care about others, even people they don’t know?**

It is rare to find Genuine Egoist because most people do care about others even if they don’t know. There is always sympathy towards others.

3. **Suppose we define ethical altruism as the view that one should always act for the benefits of others and never in one’s own interest, Is such a view immoral or not?**

In my opinion, Ethical Altruism is cannot be considered as immoral or moral because every person has its own self-interest in which it may not give a negative effect to others.