

A Brief Look at the Commonalities of Three Divine Religions in Belief

Ali Kasaei*

Abstract: *In this article some of the commonalities of Islam, Judaism, and Christianity have been summarized based on their holy books: The Quran, Torah and Gospels.*

The author has documented his arguments by referring to the holy books and has divided the commonalities into 3 parts:

Beliefs, religious practice

In this article, the first groups of commonalities have been presented; the rest will be presented in two separate articles in the next issues.

Key words: *Christians, eschatology, Gospels, Heaven, Hell, Jews, Muslims, polytheism, Qibblah, the hereafter, Theology, Torah*

* B.S. in Library Science

** Translator: Mina Oskoueï

The Holy Quran, Gospels and Torah, contain quite a few number of common orders (commands), regardless of all the incompatibilities the latter have with the original Gospel, and Torah.

This resemblance shows their Divine aspect and the existence of common points among Muslims, Christians and Jews.

These common commands, present in all religious books, are a divine charter necessary for all believers (of different religions) to accept and follow. They can also be regarded not only as a factor to unify most of the faithful of the world but also as a starting point for dialogue. Thus Muslims, Jews and Christians, on the basis of these peace-bringing and unifying commands, can expand the realm of their beliefs, highlight God's commands brought by the holy prophets, especially the last one, Muhammad (p.b.u.h.) and thoroughly recognize the true religions of God.

Therefore, the commonalities of the Quran, Torah and Gospels can lead us to sound and constructive dialogue among religions and is a good starting point in solving the disagreements between the believers of these faiths. In fact these commonalities are laws which should be accepted and practiced by all faithful regardless of their religion and no excuse may be accepted from them by ignoring these commands. In other words, at least concerning these common points, these Divine commands are undeniable for each and every human being.

The aim of this article is to introduce these common commands and invite believers of these religions to put their

religious beliefs into practice and to invite them to speak about and discuss their religious beliefs.

The present article is a brief look at the Quran, Gospels and the Torah. The Gospels of Matthew, Mark, Luke and John and the books of Leviticus and Deuteronomy from the Old Testament will be reviewed. The common commands of the Quran and Bible can be classified into 3 parts: **First belief, second Ahkam (Religious Practices) and third morality**

In this part we will work on the first.

1-beliefs

In this part, three subjects are more obvious:

Theology, Message , and Eschatology.

1.1. Theology

*B*elieve in God, worshipping Him and following His commands which are brought to us by the prophets are some of the teachings of the holy books. In this regard, these common aspects can be found:

1-1-1. Believe in God

*M*any of the verses of Quran, Torah, and Gospel invite human beings to have faith in God and mention its great outcomes. The Quran advises the believers to obtain true faith and in the Gospels, faith is known as a reason of making wondrous services.¹

¹ The Qur'an (2:4,286), (3:85), (4:63); Gospel of Matthew (17:20); Gospel of Mark (9:23), (11:22); Gospel of Luke (17:5); Gospel of John (14:1).

1-1-2. Oneness of God, Monotheism

To believe in God's Oneness and non-existence of another god are emphasized in verses of the Quran and parts of the Gospels and Torah.¹

1-1-3. Worshiping God

In this realm, Quran specifies worship only to God and orders human beings to worship but Him. In quite a few verses, He emphasizes that He is the One who should be worshipped only. Torah has also commanded worship of God. In this regard, the Gospels talk about insincere worship and its forbiddance.²

1-1-4. Direction of Worship (Qibblah)

According to the Quran and Gospels, God is omnipresent and wherever we face, we are in front of Him. The direction of Qibblah has not remained the same and turned from Baitul-Muqaddas to Masjid al-Haram (Mecca).³

1-1-5. Avoiding Worship of Others Except God

Various verses of Quran and some verses of Torah forbid mankind from worshipping except God,

¹ The Qur'an, (2:163), (4:171), (5:73), (16:51), (112:1); Gospel of Mark (12:28,29); Leviticus (19:4,14,37), Deuteronomy (4:35), (29:5,6).

² The Qur'an, (1:2), (2:5,21,152), (3:191), (29:56); Gospel of Matthew (4:10), (6:5,6); Deuteronomy (13:4).

³ The Qur'an (2:115,144,149,150); Gospel of John (4:21-24).

especially the idols. Making idols and polytheism is also discouraged.

Quran's verses, while forbidding worship of idols, describe them as being useless and unable to give sustenance. The Torah forbids all from going towards idols, making them, worshipping them and prostrating before them.¹

1-1-6. Refraining from Blasphemy and Apostasy

*T*he precondition of belief in God and His worship is avoiding blasphemy. In Quranic verses and other holy books', an extreme and harsh punishment is determined for disbelievers.

Avoiding disbelief is also a common advice and apostates will be harshly punished.²

1-1-7. Following the Commands and Laws of God

*T*he Quran orders all the believers to follow God's laws and commands, to judge on the basis of God's laws, accept no one but God as the authority and not follow the majority in their false beliefs. In the Torah it has been ordered to follow God and the Gospels talk about yearning God's kingdom.³

¹ The Qur'an (41:14), (3:64), (29:17), (21:71), (4:16), (5:8), (21:66), (26:1); Leviticus (19:4), (25:35,36), (5:8), (12:2,3), (26:1); Deuteronomy (17:2-5), (4:16), (5:8).

² The Qur'an (2:152,217),(14:10),(5:54); Leviticus (24:17).

³ The Qur'an (3:32), (4:59), (5:44), (6:10, 57,102,155), (7:3), (42:15), (15:8); Gospel of Matthew (5:19),(6:10); Leviticus (19:19).

1-1-8. Returning to God

*A*nother common advice is returning and repenting to God. The Quran talks about a real return's characteristics.¹

1-1-9. Fear of God

*A*nother common point is to fear God and not others.²

1-1-10. Loving God

*I*n this regard, Quran advises us to love God and to grasp The Divine Rope. The Gospels advise people to love God more than anything else with the heart, soul, and mind.³

1-1-11. Brotherhood on the Basis of Faith and Belief in God

*F*aith and believe in God is so important that brotherhood among human beings formed on that basis.

Quran regards the believers as brothers. And in the Gospels Jesus counted those who accepted God's teachings as his brothers, sisters and mother.¹

¹ The Qur'an (2:54,106), (3:90), (4:17,18), (24:31), (66:8); Gospel of Matthew (4:17).

² The Qur'an (2:150); Gospel of Matthew (10:28); Leviticus (19:14); Deuteronomy (14:23).

³ The Qur'an (3:31), (22:78); Gospel of Matthew (6:33); Gospel of Mark (12:30), (22:37); Deuteronomy (13:3).

1-1-12. God's Unique Power

*A*nother common point mentioned in the Divine books is to consider the God's unique power in man's life. The Quran and Gospels know the source of the believers' power "God", and it is He who is leading them in fighting with foes and enemies.²

1-1-13. Sufficiency of God's Help and Assistance

*T*he Quran knows God as the best and the only sufficient Helper. The Gospels recognize Him as a Being Who meets all needs of the faithfuls.³

1-1-14. God in the Lookout

*I*n the Quran and Gospels, it is said that God is watchful. He will come out when not expected and will punish the cruel and tyrants.⁴

1-1-15. God's Justice

*B*eing just is one of God's attributes. He created the world and human beings on the basis of justice and orders humans to be just in their life.⁵

1-2. The Holy Prophet and the Message

*B*elieve in Holy prophets from Adam to the last Prophet has been mentioned in all holy books. In the

¹ The Qur'an (49:10); Gospel of Mark (3:35).

² The Qur'an (8:17); Gospel of Matthew (10:20).

³ The Qur'an (4:45), (25:31); Gospel of Matthew (6:33).

⁴ The Qur'an (89:14); Gospel of Matthew (24:50,51).

⁵ The Qur'an (4:58), (16:90), (42:15), (82:7); Gospel of Luke (11:24).

Quran, believe in the holy Books is regarded as a sign of pious people. Some common points between the Quran and the other holy books in this realm are:

1-2-1. Prophethood or Belief in the Prophets

Believing that prophets have been sent by God to bring His messages to mankind has been mentioned in the Quran and the holy books.

Previous prophets are mentioned in the Quran and the holy books, and believing in them and the messages they have brought has been ordered.¹

1-2-2. Obeying the Prophets

A necessity of faith in the prophets is to follow them and accept their orders. This is common in all religions.²

1-2-3. Presage of the Prophethood of the Last Prophet

In Quran, it is said that Jesus presaged the coming of the holy prophet, Muhammad (p.b.u.h.).

In the Gospels, this presage is also quoted from Jesus.³

1-2-4. The Prophet's Signs

The holy Prophets brought signs to prove their prophethood. Reviving the dead, curing incurable diseases like blindness, paralysis, and leprosy; giving

¹ The Qur'an (2:4,5), (3:84), (4:163,164), (33:40); Gospel of Matthew (15:24), (20:40).

² The Qur'an (3:22), (4:59); Gospel of Matthew (10:38).

³ The Qur'an (61:6); Gospel of Matthew (23:39); Gospel of John (15:26), (16:7-13), (14:16).

abundance to small amounts of food, stopping the winds, walking on water, reading and bringing the Quran without prior teaching or training, and other extraordinary works.¹

1-2-5. Loving the Prophets

*A*dvising people to love the prophets is another common point of the Quran and the holy books. The Quran clarifies that the prophets must be dearer to the faithful than themselves.

The Gospels say that followers of Jesus must love the Prophets more than their parents, spouse, children, brothers and sisters, and even themselves and should be ready to sacrifice themselves for the prophets.²

1-2-6. Reporting the Killing of the Prophets by the Infidels

*T*he Quran and Gospels report the torments and murder of the holy prophets by the infidels and criticizes them for it. They and declare hard punishments for the killers of the prophets.³

1-2-7.The Prophet and War

*T*he Prophet fights with all those who suppress others and corrupt the society. This fight is “holy” and called

¹ The Qur'an (2:23), (10:38), (17:1), (23:37-39), (24:26), (30:2-5); Gospel of Matthew (4:23,24), (8:28), (9:18-22,27-30), (15:29-38), (16:21-28), (23:37-42), (24).

² The Qur'an (33:6);Gospel of Matthew (10:37-39),(16:25);Gospel of Luke (14:26)

³ The Qur'an (2:61), (3:21,112); Gospel of Mark (10:34); Gospel of Luke (11:47, 48).

“Jihad”. It is obligatory for all faithful to take part in it.

Fighting with disbelievers, tyrants and oppressors and separating believers from non-believers is also common between religions which can frequently be seen in the speech and action of the holy prophets.¹

1-2-8. The Character of the Holy Prophets

*A*ccording to the holy books, prophets are human beings and they are messengers of God. God has no children; Jesus is a messenger of God and not His son just like Ezra.

God was not born; He doesn't give birth, and is not visible like man. One of Jesus' miracles is that God created him with no father; just as God created Adam and Eve with no mother and father. God is powerful over all things.

Jesus, in the Gospels, repeatedly calls himself a son of Adam and God is mentioned as a heavenly father for all mankind. In the Gospels, wherever Jesus is called God's son, it is quoted from the sayings of people wondering about his extraordinary miracles.²

1-3. Eschatology

*I*n the Divine books, returning to God in doomsday, the existence of reward and penalty in the hereafter the happening of the Day of Doom has been frequently

¹ The Qur'an (2:216), (4:74,76), (48:29); Gospel of Matthew (10:34).

² The Qur'an (4:153),(7:143),(9:111), (48:30), (17:11), (18:110), (42:11), (112:3,4); Gospel of Matthew (5:45,48), (6:1), (4), (9), (8:20), (9:6), (10:40-42), (15:24), (27:53-55); Gospel of Mark (14:21), (22), (41), (15:20-22); Gospel of Luke (17:22), (24), (26), (30), (18:8), (31), (19:10); Gospel of John (1:33-35); Deuteronomy (18:15).

emphasized. The following common points exist among the holy books regarding eschatology:

1-3-1.The Hereafter

The Quran greatly describes the hereafter and calls it the “day of retribution,” the Last Day”, “the day of Resurrection”, “the day of separation”, “the day of calculating [the deeds]”, “the day of Gathering”, “ the Day secrets are Revealed “, etc. Among these names, the most frequently repeated are “the Last day” and “the day of Resurrection”. The Gospels speak about “the day of Judgment” where a frightening Judgment awaits the sinners.¹

1-3-2.Separation

One of the characteristics of the hereafter is separation. In that day, all mankind will be revived and the good will be separated from the bad people.²

1-3-3.Hell

In the Quran and other holy books, Hell is mentioned as a place where sinful people, disbelievers and hypocrites, will be tortured.

In the Quran, Hell is pictured as a hideous place: place of torment and fire. Its firewood is the sinners themselves. The Gospels refer to Hell as being a dark place, full of fire, cries

¹ The Qur'an (1:4), (2:8,113), (37:21), (38:16), (64:9), (86:9); Gospel of Luke (11:44), (14:14).

² The Qur'an (37:21), (78:17); Gospel of Matthew (25:32).

and torture. It is cited that the sins of eyes, hands, foot and other parts of the body will draw mankind towards it.¹

1-3-4.Heaven

*J*ust as hell is for the sinful, heaven is a reward for the pious. Considering heaven, there are many descriptions in the Quran. For example, heaven is the place of righteous believers who do not withhold from dedicating their property and their lives for the sake of God, those who are patient, obey God and His prophet. Heaven is replete with fruits and delicious foods. The Gospels says that whoever lives his life as God wishes will go to heaven and in response to being hungry, poor, and being insulted Going to heaven will be their reward.²

1-3-5. God's Path

*T*he unity of God's path and the difficulty of traveling (staying) on it, which needs patience and tolerance, its good end, and vice versa the various ways of Satan with its bad ends are some of the realities which can be conferred from the Quran and Gospels.

The Quran invites all to follow God's path, and avoid division and following other ways. The Gospels talk of the narrowness of the way used to reach God and the wideness of the way which ends at Hell.³

¹ The Qur'an (2:24), (3:197), (9:68), (23:76), (65:25); Gospel of Matthew (8:12), (5:22), (18:8,9).

² The Qur'an (4:124), (9:111), (48:17), (76:12); Gospel of Matthew (7:21), (16:26) ; Gospel of Luke (6:20-23), (14:14).

³ The Qur'an (6:153), (23:76); Gospel of Matthew (7:13).

1-3-6. Provisions for the Hereafter

All good deeds of mankind, regardless of what it is, can be a provision for the hereafter. The Quran and Gospels commonly advise us to gather provisions for the other world. The Quran says that human beings can gather provisions before and after death by their deeds. The Gospels say that do not hide treasures for you in the earth for they will perish, but save them in sky.¹

1-3-7. The Eternal Life in the Hereafter

The Quran and Gospel both inform us of eternal life in the hereafter which is an ever-lasting reward for the righteous and an ever-lasting torture in hell for the bad and evil.²

¹ The Qur'an (2:110), (73:20), (75:13), (78:40), (82:5); Gospel of Matthew (6:19-21); Gospel of Luke (12:21).

² The Qur'an (2:25), (29:64); Gospel of Mark (10:30,31).