



**The Relationship between Judaism, Christianity and Islamic Religions**

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## **The Relationship between Judaism, Christianity and Islamic Religions**

Despite the difference in doctrines, the Jews, Christians, and Muslims have, in one way or another, related in accordance to their faith and beliefs. The three monotheistic religions are known for their high regard for their disparities despite the similarities they manifest. It is not only a matter that concerns the religions themselves but also the society, given the world is slowly changing and more people have begun to question the existence of each religion in essence. While the similarities may be subtle, the extent of reach is relatively wide. For that cause, the standing of these religions needs some inspection.

Noteworthy, there are common features in the religions, such as the tenacious adherence by certain groups, which may also pose the question regarding not only lack of choice but also the need to be considered one. While religion is entirely a choice, the doctrines practiced in each are what make one a believer: a Jewish, a Christian, or a Muslim. The Survival of each religion lies heavily on the practices that are fundamental to each person who belongs. These concepts presented by each religion are the core definition of each and, therefore, the major cause of the discrepancies. The paper herein assesses the historical background of each of these three religions and places each into context. An intensive understanding of the notions in which each religion is rooted is required to make a concrete understanding of their disagreements.

### **Historical Relationship**

Christianity, Judaism, and Islam are three common religions across the globe. These religions are sometimes regarded as the Abrahamic religions (Cragg, 2016). This is because they are attributed to have begun from the faith of Abraham. The first to ever exist was Judaism, one from which the other two are said to have emerged. Judaism around the 2000CE. The group of believers, called Jews, relied on the Tanakh to pass doctrines to their followers. Later, Christians



emerged from the Jews following their belief that Jesus, the Son of God, had been sent. The New Testament was formed, which was then compiled together with the Tanakh to form what is now referred to as the Holy Bible. Islam also emerged shortly after. It was based on the holy book Quran. The three religions considerably differ, but their existence also portrays certain similarities which cannot be merely shoved as non-related.

The first true semblance portrayed by the three religions is their monotheistic nature. The religions share a belief in the existence of one God, a relationship that is said to must have been agreed on by the leaders of the religions. According to Massey & Massey-Gillespie (1993), the oldest creeds show that each religion believes in one God. The purpose of a creed was to show the community the concepts that governed their existence and provide a distinguishing power from the other communities in their vicinity. The Jewish doctrine is found in the book of Deuteronomy 6:4: "Hear, O Israel, God our Lord is One."

On the other hand, the Christians have their creed directed in three directions: they point out the triple existence of God through the Trinity: God the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. John 17:3 states, "And this is life eternal: that they might know Thee, the only God, and Jesus Christ [the anointed one (Christos)] whom Thou hast sent." It is on the basis of this creed that Christians distinguished themselves from the other religions.

Islam came up with their creed in which they had to justify their faith while also stating their disagreement with the Christian community in the Shahada: "I witness that there is no god (or: nothing divine), but God (Allah) and that Muhammad is his prophet." The historical similarities that the religions display provides a chance to classify them as a unified unit, despite the attempts to homogenize each by itself while alienating the others based on doctrines.

### **Differences in the Religions**



The basis of a religion is its fundamental concepts that are prescribed for every devotee to follow. According to Arkoun (1989), the religions differ subtly despite the similar reverence for one God. As aforementioned, the three religions are based on the belief that there exists only one God, who, in his all being, is the creator of the earth. However, their notion of this same God differs. In the Christian community, there is one God who is three in one. The notion is founded on the scripture that portrays God as having three forms: The Holy Spirit, the Son, and the Father (Mathew 28:19). In the Islam religion, however, only Allah exists, who is not a trinity at any point of faith (Quran 112:1). The Muslims believe that God is monotheistic and, as such, cannot exist as Christians consider God to exist in three forms.

This marks one point of disagreement despite the settlement that there exists only one God. In the Judaism concept, the belief in the Tanakh, which is now referred to as the Old Testament, the Christian's Holy Bible only depicts the existence of one God who is referred to as Yahweh or Jehovah (Deuteronomy 6:4). Consequently, each of the three religions constitutes a set of concepts regarding God, so it is a point of both disagreement and agreement among the three.

Still based on the nature of God, in the three religions, the position of Jesus Christ stands out as a point of disagreement. In the Christian docket of faith, Jesus Christ is one of the three in one God. He is the Son of God through whom salvation is given unto believers. In the Nicene Creed, he is the true God born from a true God (Peters, 1990). Considerably, Christians highly believe that it is only through Jesus that one is able to reach God the Father, and the Son is the same as the Father. In the Islamic religion, however, Isa (Jesus) is a prophet of the Lord. As Christians ascribe, he was born of the Virgin Mary but still does not qualify to be considered divine (Quran 5:17). In this construct, the relationship between Christians and Islam is



highlighted. However, it still remains an issue of debate based on the minor differing opinion.

In the Jewish outline, Jesus is but an ordinary person who is neither the Messiah nor a divine being (Swartz & Peters, 1984). Likewise, the different yet similar concept seems to unite Muslims and Jews whose opinions of Jesus are closely related though still quite despaired. According to Maybaum (1976), there seems to have been a dialog between the leaders of the monotheistic religions based on the relationships displayed by their basis of the formulation.

Based on the religion's overview of the nature of God, while there seems to be a certain level of disparity, the relationship is evident enough to support the claim regarding dialoguing a way through the establishment of the different religions. Otherwise, their faith might as well have been quite unrelated.

### **Current Relationship**

The idea of religion has constantly been changing in Judaism, Christianity, and Islam. The idea retains that one definitely has to belong, and belonging follows a set of doctrines (Al-Faruqi, 1998). However, it is also understandable that these doctrines have become more relaxed with time. Inasmuch as they are the foundation, contextual religion has deterred the strictness to a certain level. For instance, circumstances in modern society are not in any way comparable to the times when the religions were started, and hence, teachings logically should address matters as they are today. Due to such demands, it is the duty of religious leaders and teachers to provide their interpretation such that the teachings are applicable today.

Another issue today is the concept of one's religious identity. It has been that one's religious identity is socially given. Therefore, all that one has to do is to fully submit to the doctrines that the believers ascribe to (Cragg, 2016). However, this has changed drastically in recent years. Believers now feel the need to self-identify and to follow only what they also find



agreeable with the person they identify themselves with.

Obviously, it is now a quest for self-identity both individually and within the community. Today, religious identity is a part of a larger scope of one's self-identity. The two must meet at some point. The notion of social role has been done away with, especially in cases where it contrasts one's personal outlook on certain matters (Cragg, 2016). For instance, the holy war that some members of the Islam community engage in cannot be partaken by some members due to their personal beliefs regarding fellow human beings. Today, more people are merely called a Jew, a Christian, or a Muslim due to social constructs, but such tags do not define the person.

### **Conclusion**

Today, changes have been observed as relations are no longer rigidly based on the concepts learned out of Christianity, Judaism, or Islam as a religion. Instead, believers rely more on their identity to govern their relationship with others and identify who may or may not be from the same religious construct as they. While religious leaders may put their best efforts towards ensuring a certain level of homogeneity, the individual being always comes first as far as personal relations go. Noteworthy, even the more rigid religions, such as Islam and Judaism, have shown to a large extent that the influence of personal views on religion is slowly cropping out in the society, and the religious norms, however rigid, cannot influence this in any way. What stands out is that religion may, in actuality, be a way to separate people who are no longer looking towards religious differences to co-exist in humanity as one people.



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