



JUDAISM - CHRISTIANITY - ISLAM

THREE RELIGIONS - ONE FAITH

Similarities

Appeal

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Introduction

The majority of today's global population – including traditional believers – is forced into line by the ruling political and economic system which leads the age-old battle against God under the banner of the “New Trinity”. This “New Trinity”, consisting of the theory of evolution, the hysteria about climate change and gender ideology, calls upon science and it can not be denied that all three contain certain truths. They are, however, far removed from the absolute truth. Yet these partial truths are skilfully exploited to distract from the falsehoods hiding behind them and to fight against the faith in God under the guise of science. Due to advanced technological means, this new religion, with its ultimate goal of producing a “godlessly happy” human being intended to become his own designer, is even more systematically and successfully enforced than the Nazi's racial ideology long ago. Apparently most leaders of the three monotheistic religions respect this anti-religion more than they do God. How else can it be explained that the United Nations passes resolutions which enable the killing of millions of unborn children, the abolition of the family and the relativisation or reversal of all moral values?

The hysteria surrounding acid rain and the lack of crude oil, once initiated by the Club of Rome and then preserved by the terrifying reports about swine flu and bird flu, flickered again in the hype surrounding the eco warriors “truancy” and found its climax in the “Corona crisis”. Man is ingeniously being distracted from the question where his journey is actually taking him. While he believes he enjoys ever greater freedom, he unwittingly becomes ever more dependent. Destroyed nature and alienated, stressed individuals leading meaningless lives, who seek their salvation in the fitness and wellness religion as well as the most varied spiritual practices offered by life coaches who are mushrooming everywhere – those are the prominent characteristics of the modern progress-oriented society and the underdeveloped nations are busily trying to emulate them.

God is increasingly disappearing from the life of the “advanced”, modern individual. In view of the situation, the three religions going back to their mutual patriarch Abraham - Judaism, Christianity and Islam - should collaborate and do everything within their power to help people to establish a relationship with God, regardless of their origin. For the sake of this common end, they should leave the traditional discords behind which have caused so much suffering throughout history and instead concentrate on that which connects them. All three have contributed something vital to the belief in God: Judaism the personality and uniqueness of God who subsequently invited us to be his children as our “Abba” in the Christian faith and Islam revealed God’s beauty in the Koran thus effecting a deep bond of the faithful individual to his God exemplary for all religious beliefs. “Shalom” and “Islam” share the same roots and testify that Judaism and Islam are supposed to be religions of peace. And so is Christianity as Jesus is peace incarnate. Therefore, if the three religions want to be credible, they also have to practise peace in real life, which means that everyone’s freedom must be respected, particularly since God himself respects it. Furthermore, all three religions “subconsciously” have more in common than has been apparent from their behaviour towards each other throughout history. We must become conscious of those commonalities and step towards each other. We have to finally stop interpreting our sacred texts against each other and allow God’s spirit to enter us so we can become brothers.

Service

The term *service* has experienced a profound change over the course of time. Originally it was understood as directing one's life towards internal and external deeds, words and thoughts that were considered to be godly and as such service had a fundamental meaning for the lives of the faithful. The mature believer continuously strove to consciously live in God's presence and to gladly and with all his trust satisfy his instructions and expectations. Over the centuries the term *service* was increasingly reduced to external, limited forms and is presently predominantly conceived as a weekly gathering of religious communities and the performance of certain rituals by their leaders. Nowadays the original meaning of the word is still mostly comprehended by Muslims as well as some few Jewish and Christian communities. And yet service is the most important aspect which connects the three religions, makes them seem similar despite the differences and diversity and renders them near identical in its effect.

The basis of any service is:

Faith – Surrender

The first and highest commandment of each of the three religions is to acknowledge God's existence, recognise His omnipotence and follow His orders. This may occur out of fear, out of love or in the hope of being rewarded, depending on the believer's or a community's maturity. To recognise God's Will and His actions, the faithful are urged to read their respective Holy Scriptures, to contemplate them and have them interpreted by knowledgeable Church leaders.

The next common element or the second basis of service is:

Prayer – Worship

All three religions exclusively permit the worship of the One God: *"Thou shalt fear the LORD thy God; Him shalt thou serve, and to Him shalt thou cleave and swear by His name. He is thy praise, and He is*

thy God, who hath done for thee these great and fearsome things which thine eyes have seen.” (Deuteronomy 10:20-21)

“Worship the Lord your God, and serve only Him.” (Matthew 4:10)

“He is the Living (One): There is no god but He: Call upon Him, giving Him sincere devotion. Praise be to Allah, Lord of the Worlds!”
(Surah 40:65)

The prayers are also more or less identically structured in all three religions and consist of the following elements: praise and honour, intercession and supplication, attestation of gratitude and love.

In addition, all religions also know individual and communal prayer, silent and audible prayer as well as recitations and hymns. In view of this the question is not if everyone is praying to the same God, but rather why they do not realise that they are all praying to the same God. The third basis of practised faith is:

Fasting - Penance

Fasting bears witness to the believer's willingness to make sacrifices. A sacrifice can be made for others or for oneself; this can be the compulsory performance of one's duty, a voluntary sacrifice or a sign of atonement. As soon as an individual is prepared to do penance this testifies that he is sinful and weak. And whoever realises that he is sinful and weak has already taken a major step on his journey towards God. Fasting is therefore also always connected to self-awareness and repentance and includes asking for God's forgiveness and that of one's neighbours. None of the three religions can exist without these elements; they constitute the most important components of peaceful, human coexistence.

The third element on which faith is based is:

Pilgrimage – Reflection

Each of the three religions more or less commands or recommends the pilgrimage to holy sites, to reflect and to participate in spiritual retreats in order to strengthen the faith or to re-stimulate it. The frequency of the pilgrimages differs from religion to religion; thus Jewish people visit Jerusalem several times a year, Muslims take

the hajj to Mecca at least once in their lifetime while Christians are free to elect how often they make the pilgrimage to a site of their own choice or which pilgrims' path to take (Camino de Santiago, the Stations of the Cross). Pilgrimages represent a kind of excursion away from the daily grind to get closer to God and closer to oneself. Their objective is met if one has subsequently become a better Jew, Christian or Muslim.

And finally the fifth element, the most far-reaching obligation:

Charity - Solidarity

The faithful individual already has to fight his selfishness by devoting a certain amount of time to prayer, raising sums of money for pilgrimages and by renouncing gastronomical pleasures when fasting; now the fifth cornerstone of service, and for many the hardest challenge to the ego, is the giving of alms. The extent to which one is successful in voluntarily making charitable donations is proportional to one's rise on the path to loving God and one's neighbours. It is a kind of test of the faith. Prayer must be more than mere lip-service, fasting must not be an end unto itself; both have to result in pure brotherly love.

"And if thy brother be waxed poor and hath fallen into ruin with thee, then thou shalt relieve him, yea, though he be a stranger or a sojourner, that he may live with thee." (Leviticus 25:35)

"There was a certain rich man, which was clothed in purple and fine linen, and fared sumptuously every day: And there was a certain beggar named Lazarus, which was laid at his gate, full of sores. And desiring to be fed with the crumbs which fell from the rich man's table: moreover the dogs catorments, and seeth Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom."me and licked his sores. And it came to pass, that the beggar died, and was carried by the angels into Abraham's bosom: the rich man also died, and was buried; And in hell he lift up his eyes, being in torments, and seeth Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom." (Luke 16:19-23)

"So likewise, whosoever he be of you that forsaketh not all that he hath, he cannot be my disciple." (Luke 14:33)

“What good is it, my brothers and sisters, if someone claims to have faith but has no deeds? Can such faith save them? Suppose a brother or a sister is without clothes and daily food. If one of you says to them, ‘Go in peace; keep warm and well fed,’ but does nothing about their physical needs, what good is it? In the same way, faith by itself, if it is not accompanied by action, is dead.” (James 2:14-17)

“Righteousness is not that you turn your faces toward the east or the west, but [true] righteousness is [in] one who believes in Allah, the Last Day, the angels, the Book, and the prophets and gives wealth, in spite of love for it, to relatives, orphans, the needy, the traveler, those who ask [for help], and for freeing slaves; [and who] establishes prayer and gives zakah; [those who] fulfill their promise when they promise; and [those who] are patient in poverty and hardship and during battle. Those are the ones who have been true, and it is those who are the righteous.” (Surah 2:177)

It is unnecessary to point out that we, the believers of all three religions, including their denominations, from the least of the faithful to the highest-ranking leaders, are not only similar but also the same in the fulfilment and non-fulfilment respectively of the above listed obligations. Otherwise the world would not look the way it does today.

Rituals

Veneration of Saints

The Orthodox and Catholic Churches recognise the official “Veneration of the Saints”. This earned them much criticism from the Jews, the Muslims and the Protestant Churches. While all adherents of Christianity initially understood themselves to be “Saints”, the term was later used with reference to extraordinarily virtuous, chaste and heroic individuals. Eventually only the

occasional deceased was termed holy after their life had been deemed saintly following meticulous examination by elect members of the clergy. These were officially “canonised” and thus allowed to be invoked by the faithful. One reveres the Saints by studying their history, by celebrating the anniversary of their death, by pleading for their help as a mediator to the Lord and by endeavouring to emulate them. In some places and at some points in time this veneration escalated to an objectionable extent and amounted to worship which understandably drew criticism from within their own ranks as well as from other religions. However, one has to honestly admit that such excesses are increasingly rare and the official Churches in question are doing all in their power to put an end to them. Although the Protestant Church does not endorse the veneration of Saints in the Orthodox and Catholic sense, it also close to revere certain individuals such as Luther, Augustine, Calvin, Zwingli etc. as Saints. Jews and Muslims strictly reject the veneration of Saints, at least officially and publicly. But there are also numerous exceptions. In Judaism many famous personalities are invoked and revered as advocates and helpers in emergencies, be it due to their exceptional merits, important written works, extraordinary character or their martyrdom. Certain occasions are marked by pilgrimages to their graves. One calls to them pleading for intercession in all kinds of conceivable situations and hardships. Many are of the opinion that veneration such as this has been copied from the Christians; others, however, suspect that the Christians adopted it from the Jews. Whatever may be the case, one thing is undeniable: in the search of effective help in emergencies ordinary believers of all three religions follow their own hopes and convictions.

To prevent the veneration of Saints degenerating into worship and thus a kind of polytheism, Islam officially strictly forbids it. Furthermore, Islam does not allow any intermediaries between the Lord and mankind. Nonetheless, tradition and popular belief in some areas tell a different story. Devout visits to the graves of Islamic “Saints” are common in Turkey and also in Egypt. Sheikh Hammad proclaimed in a Friday Sermon that it is not polytheism to visit

the grave of Zeinab, the Prophet's granddaughter, and to touch her shrine. Quite the opposite. He stated that this would create a special bond with the Lord. In this fashion, Islam too frequently compromises as the human heart is designed in a way that it believes in the effect of intercession by notable, meritorious deceased individuals. This is by no means false adoration but rather the humble awareness of one's own unworthiness to speak directly to the Lord.

The Wearing of Religious Symbols

Who does not know them: necklaces, bracelets, pendants, rings, medallions, rosary beads, prayer beads, the Star of David, menorahs, crescent moons, crosses, swords, fishes...? Right across the three religions many believers wear such objects on their person or carry them. They are symbols showing the wearer's religious identity. Many wear them with pride, thus demonstrating their religious affiliation, some use them as protection against evil forces, others believe they bring them closer to God and others again wear them simply as an adornment.

It can not be denied that these symbols have a distinctly greater significance for the adherents of all three religions than, for instance, piercings or tattoos. Interestingly, the Star of David, the cross and the crescent moon appear ever more frequently together on buildings and banners in Israel. And it is lovely to see how all kinds of symbols of the three religions are offered side by side in Jerusalem's old quarter, be it by Jewish, Christian or Muslim shops and vendors. They do, after all, share the same hopes, the same weaknesses and behaviours.

Commemoration of the Dead

Each of the three religions treats death with the utmost seriousness and respect. On the one hand there is the grief, but on the other there

is also much confidence as the belief in life after death is deeply anchored in all three of them. Grief in the face of death is recognised, permitted and even in a sense institutionalised in the Jewish, Christian and Muslim faiths. As far as life after death is concerned, some talk of the “future world”, others of the “afterworld” and others again of “eternity”. They all, however, agree on one point, specifically that the good go to paradise while the sinners, those who feel no remorse what so ever, go to hell. In this respect every bereavement provides a good opportunity to think about one’s own demise. It is often said that death is a good teacher. The best, one could say.

This may be one of the reasons that death, burial and grief are increasingly suppressed and tabooed in public life in the secularised world. Individuals are lulled into a false sense of security of living forever; nothing is meant to remind them of their mortality. They are meant to do and not do whatever they want.

During bereavements people become closer; are connected by grief. It would be wonderful if this connectedness experienced among common believers as well as among dignitaries would extend beyond the religious boundaries to all areas of life.

Water

Water plays an important part in all three religions. Not as a foodstuff and also not as a means of physical hygiene. Water is an indispensable element of religious life. Water enables one to pray. It seals the forgiveness of sins and achieves ritual purity. One is immersed in water, doused in water, sprinkled with it, bathes in it, washes with it. Regardless of it being the Jewish Mikvah, the Muslim Wuḍū or the Christian baptism, water is the tangible element that enables people to pray, get closer to their spouses and call themselves Christian. Water is being blessed. Water is used to bless people, buildings and objects. Water is irreplaceable in all three religions; it is one and the same water bestowed by God which absolves the faithful of various religions from their sins. Yet sadly there is one thing it can

not achieve and that is to endow them with mutual love and understanding. Here mankind itself has to become active.

Schisms

Each of the three monotheistic religions has its own origins through which it exists and develops. These are the Holy Scriptures: the Torah, the Gospels and the Koran. Their respective leaders claim to be in possession of the revelation of God's truth while denying that either of the others owns it. Such behaviour is somewhat understandable; believers who are convinced they follow the one true religion do not only have greater self esteem, they are also rather more willing to make sacrifices and easier to control. So far so good. One should subsequently assume that the individual religious communities remained consolidated and united throughout turbulent times. But unfortunately this was not the case. Each of them divided into three further communities. In the beginning everyone agreed. Then came the first dissatisfied church members who disliked something. They persuaded some of the believers over to their side and established a new "authentic" community. Here too some of the adherents split who then mostly drafted a slight variation of the religious practice and reinterpreted the Holy Scriptures accordingly.

Thus each of the religions now has three denominations as well as countless smaller faith communities. Within the Jewish faith they are mostly called *(Ultra-)Orthodox, Traditional and Liberal (Progressive)*, the Christians are divided into *Orthodox, Catholic and Protestants (Lutherans)* while the Muslims are divided into *Shiites, Sunnites and Alevi*. Of the many small communities, only a few are indiscriminately mentioned here, for example the Chabad movement, the Breslov branch, the Baptists, the Methodists, the Alawites, the Bahá'í.

Causes of the Schisms

Similarities regarding the causes of the schisms are also evident in all three religions. These can be attributed to the same three common denominators:

- 1 - Different interpretations of the Holy Scriptures
- 2 - Claiming sole spiritual leadership and authority
- 3 - The fight for power and territories

The Roots of the Schisms

Why did the original unity of the three religions become lost? We have listed the causes, but the roots are far deeper: man did not understand God's message. Man set down religious rules and dogmata in a faith that provides nothing tangible and nothing verifiable and forced them upon the believers. This inevitably led to discord and disagreements.

Instead of making the preaching of the scriptures the main concern, of demanding only the observance of the necessary minimum of rules and otherwise practising tolerance and letting each believer practise his faith according to his respective interpretation, it came to schisms, mutual anathema and religious wars. If one is already estranged and divided within one's own religion, it is not surprising that one views the other religions' Holy Scriptures with suspicion and declares them to be false. Subsequently nobody realises that all three Holy Scriptures state the same: love God above everything else and your neighbour as you do yourself!

There are frequent attempts to overcome the schisms and re-establish unity. Here all three religions are tempted to negotiate theological compromises to satisfy everybody, which is, of course, doomed to failure from the start.

Authority

When the founders of the three monotheistic religions were called by God, He bestowed them with His mission as well as the required authority. God worked miracles through them to legitimise them before mankind and to show that they acted on His behalf. It is, however, in man's nature to revolt against any kind of authority, particularly so when conflicts of interest come into play. We do not like somebody telling us what we can and can not do. Thus not only the Israelites complained about Moses, even his closest relatives Aaron and Miriam did. Jesus' adversaries were the priests and scribes. Mohammed had to flee Mecca because of his enemies and in Medina antagonism towards him steadily increased.

Authority is a type of power and as such it is appealing. Many try to participate in it, generally in order to abuse it. Thus Korah wanted to be Moses' equal. Simon the Sorcerer lusted after the power Jesus bestowed on his Apostles. Even the Apostles themselves were not immune to abusing power and wanted to make fire rain from heaven. Musaylimah, a contemporary of the Prophet Mohammed, wanted to divide the world between them. Only the founders of religions called by God Himself, whose humility was repeatedly certified, were not prone to the temptations of power. Jesus expressly stated: *"He who wants to be first, must become everyone's servant."*

The founders of religions later also transferred their God-given authority to others to further the spread of His teachings. Thus Moses elected *"diligent men from all of Israel and appointed them as leaders of the people"*, Jesus sent out his disciples to preach the Gospel and Mohammed had his companions of whom he said they were like stars in the sky. Regardless of whom one followed, one was always guided. In the beginnings this was therefore a kind of support. Over the course of time, as the number of adherents grew and demands constantly increased, yet the original teachings were threatening to become distorted, administrative bodies and positions with varying degrees of power were introduced. Thus more or less

distinct, traditionally male dominated hierarchical structures emerged in the three religions even where they did not officially exist.

While the founders' authority had been a purely moral, God-given power, this now became increasingly secularised and abused. It was no longer about God's cause, which now rather served as a pretext to further very personal interests resulting in power struggles, religio-political murders, anathemas, mutilations and many more excesses which greatly damaged the original teachings. In Judaism the office of High Priest became hereditary and politically influential. Under Roman rule High Priests were appointed by the emperor. In this way Judaism's highest office increasingly became a pawn to be used for political and financial interests. Christianity was just as bad, if not worse. Lavishly attired dignitaries were primarily concerned with developing and maintaining power. And to this end they used any means available. There was no longer a trace of the original, God-given authority. Self-aggrandisement and conceit prevailed instead. Conflicts about his succession also erupted among the Muslims after the Prophet's death, resulting in segregation and secession of the early Islamic community. An interesting phenomenon can be observed in all three monotheistic religions: while religious dignitaries work "from above to below" whereby (with the exception of the Ayatollahs) they hide behind various committees so they do not have to take personal responsibility, God works "from below to above" by constantly calling on simple, humble, devout individuals in times of crisis, endowing them with authority and kindling a spiritual renaissance among the believers with their aid. Here all three religions primarily focus on two goals. On the one hand they aim to strengthen and internalise the individual faith so that every believer lives consciously as God's creation, fills his life with joy and devotion and gratefully praises Him, on the other hand this faith is meant to be expressed through enhanced service to the community, particularly the poor and oppressed. Thus God elected many charismatic personalities such as St Francis of Assisi, Catherine of Siena, Israel ben Eliezer, Menachem Mendel Schneerson, Muhammad Abduh, Ali Shariati and many others over the course of history.

Mystical Currents

“There is, however, the unspeakable: the mystic.” (Ludwig Wittgenstein)
All three monotheistic religions have spiritual currents which we generally describe as mystical. Friedrich Weinreb, a Jewish Mystic, believes that the mystical has a connection to what is hidden inside everyone; this refers to the part of us we do not know ourselves; that which is concealed and we can only guess at.

Each of the three religions started with a mystic core experience where the respective chosen one was entrusted with a mission. The experience must have been so intensive and distinct that those elected had no choice but to follow God’s call and wholeheartedly and without reservation accept His leadership. The concept of man portrayed in the Jewish, Christian and Islamic Holy Scriptures bears witness to the fact that man was created to have a personal relationship with God and that he can only find his true and deepest fulfilment in God. Blaise Pascal expressed this truth with the words: *“There is a God-shaped vacuum in every heart. Nothing less than God can fill this vacuum.”*

To fill that void, countless believers over the centuries endeavoured to get closer to the God of their religion, to establish a relationship with Him. The search of personally experiencing the divine has certainly never ceased. Today there are more and more believers who are no longer satisfied with accepting the doctrines as truth and fulfilling religious commandments because it is not about knowledge but about being. About the experience. They want to “taste” and “savour” God as it is written in the Psalm: *“O taste and see that the LORD is good.”* One calls them Mystics, Cabbalists, Hasidim, Sufis, Dervishes, and although they belong to different religions and have different cultures, they are united by the same longing: the longing for oneness, the Ground of Being, the ultima ratio, the ultimate truth, the answer to all questions. *“Fervently urged towards the goal by love”* - in the words of St John of the Cross – they enter the mystic path in the hope of the Creator revealing himself to them.

The Mystic's Path

This is a very personal path and differs from individual to individual. However, every Mystic, regardless of the religious origins, walks it purposefully; mystic piety is not the loss of reality but connected to the heart, the mind and the liberation of will. In all three religions the path or way symbolises the gradual transformation of the searcher from an egocentric to a truly loving person. Man is egocentric by nature. This is augmented by the limited perception through the five senses which is rather conducive to his egotism. To rid oneself of egotism is essential for everyone on the mystic path.

"The ego helps man to reach a certain spiritual level. But as soon as he has reached that level it will only damage his spirituality. Because the ego purifies the impure who are far removed from God, but it also defiles the pure who have already reached a certain closeness to God." (Rabbi Israel Baal Schem Tov)

"Only he who no longer attributes anything to himself, he who perceives himself as nothing, can be elevated to the divine by God. Complete devotion and self-sacrifice result in the highest self-realisation." (HP Olaf Schulze)

"He who destroys idols is a hero; and the idol of every man is the ego." (Ibn al Arabi)

The Master

However, this is not easy and therefore an aspiring Mystic looks for a suitable master: *Rabbi*, *Tzadik* (Hassidic Judaism), *Abba* (Desert Fathers), *spiritual father*, *starets* (Orthodox Christianity), *murshid* (Sufism), *Sheikh* (Islamic orders). They do not concern themselves with the imparting of knowledge but with the profound transformation of their disciples' personality, of their self-image and worldview. The aspiring Mystic has to be reborn and his master is his companion and helper in the process. Therefore an extremely intensive, personal bond exists between master and disciple.

The Steps

The path of the Mystic occurs in stages which are usually called steps. Thus the Christian Mystic Teresa of Avila talks about the Seven Steps to Perfect Peace, the first three being the preparation for experiencing God, but the following four the experience itself. In eastern Christendom the steps are depicted as a ladder while in Sufism they appear as “stations” (maqam) on the mystical path. Farīd ud-Dīn Attār, a 12th Century Islamic Mystic, on the other hand, describes them as seven valleys.

The Jewish Kabala also knows various levels and “higher worlds”. The Jewish, Christian and Muslim practice begins at the lowest stage, in the sensory realm. At this stage, the area of religion, he integrates himself into and adheres to the earthly religious life with all its moral rules, communicates through religious rites and strives for moral purification.

Al-Ghazālī stated that the observance of Islamic laws is imperative in order to achieve higher goals. J. Immanuel Schochet says:

“The secrets of the Kabala will not be revealed to those who do not conduct their lives strictly as instructed by the Torah.”

Baal Schem Tov taught that one should fulfil all rules and rituals with joy and sincerity as every deed performed genuinely and from the heart is important in the cosmic as well as the microcosmic respect. Teresa of Avila also calls prayer the gateway to one’s *inner mansion* where one reaches God.

Self-Knowledge

Before the student can enter the world of intelligibility, he has to know himself.

“If you want to get closer to God, begin your search by examining your own base instincts and by curbing your desires. To search for God with your intellect before your character has been purified is the wrong path.” (Rabbi Abraham Weinberg von Slonim)

“Thus we are urged to conduct a thorough and fearless moral inventory of ourselves.” (Rabbi Ben A.)

“He who wants to reach God’s innermost regions has to explore his own innermost motivations first as no one can know God who does not know himself first.” (Meister Eckhart, Sermon 15)

“It is absurd to think we could enter the Kingdom of Heaven before examining our own soul; without knowing ourselves and reflecting on the wretchedness of our nature.” (Teresa of Avila)

“The key to knowing God is knowing oneself.”

(Al-Ghazâlî, The Alchemy of Happiness)

And God’s messenger Mohammed says in a hadith: *“He who knows his true nature knows his Lord.”*

Humility

Reflecting upon the wretchedness of one’s own nature is not, however, intended to drive the Mystic to despair. Quite the opposite, in fact. It is meant to free him from the arrogance of his own greatness and importance by making him humble. With a humble attitude he does not compare himself to others, neither does he consider himself to be exalted, great or important, nor is he disappointed by his shortcomings. He accepts his limitations, does the best he can and confidently entrusts the rest to God. In all three religions humility is a virtue the Mystic absolutely has to acquire as man can do his utmost to do everything right and yet keep making mistakes. But now he has to humbly accept his defeats instead of getting annoyed about them, well-knowing that he does have to strive but that only God can make his deeds come to fruition. God does not accept us despite, but because of our weaknesses. According to Johannes Tauler this is the fertiliser promoting the growth of our humility.

“Just like a proud, tall tree that bears beautiful fruit started to grow with a seed disintegrating in the ground, spiritual growth starts with complete humility by recognising that any pride without God is

merely misplaced arrogance.” (Rabbi Naftali Silberberg)

“Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you in due time.” (Peter 5:6)

“Truly prosperous are the believers who are filled with humility in their prayers.” (Surah 23:1-2)

“We can not conquer pride. We simply have to pray to the Almighty to render our hearts humble before him.” (Rabbi Israel Baal Schem Tov)

Letting Go

The heart must become free of everything; it must be uncommitted and must not attach itself to objects or people and only be filled with a loving yearning for God. Thus the highest aim of the Mevlevi Order is: *“...to become empty of everything that does not conform to God so God’s breath can flow through man and make his soul flourish.”* Hereby one has to regard positive as well as negative feelings with indifference.

“A free man is he who is not wounded by the insults of others.”
(Jalāl ad-Dīn Rūmī)

The otherwise so desirable characteristic of wisdom is also obstructive to the Mystic in so far as he relies on it. Rabi Nachman of Breslov said: *“Only he who rids himself of wisdom, who struggles to attain this silence and ‘knows the melody’ can escape being separated from God.”* Angelus Silesius came straight to the point with respect to letting go when he said: *“He who does not die before he dies rots before he dies.”*

Resources

The Word of God as written in the Holy Scriptures is the food on the Mystic’s journey. Those simple words conceal divine secrets. According to Professor Dr Hossein Nasr:

“First of all it is important to mention that every word and every letter of the Koran does not only have an outward but a hidden meaning in its original Arabic language as well. This also includes number symbolism, similar to gematria, i.e. the interpretation of words with the aid of numbers in the way Judaism connects it to the mystical tradition of the Kabbalah and the Hasidic movement. The Koran has several levels of inner meaning. Some talk about seven levels. According to the Sufis the highest of them is only known to God. When Ta’wil – spiritual hermeneutics – reveals the inner meaning of the Holy Scriptures, it leads to their origin. Thus the inner becomes the outer and manifests. Metaphysically speaking the inner meaning and the origin therefore portray the same reality.”

Jalāl ad-Dīn Rūmī, the Sufi Master, expressed this approximately like this: *“The words of the Koran are simple, yet the gateway of understanding leads to another, hidden meaning. But this is not the last to quench the thirst for knowledge. There is a third meaning with a fourth inside it only revealed to God. Sevenfold meaning slumbers hidden in Allah’s noble words. One builds onto the other until the final revelation. Do not cling to outwardly appearances and examine the inner meaning to discover the key to the soul.”*

The Torah also simultaneously contains obvious and hidden meaning. The Zohar, the Holy Book of the Kabbalah, contains the following about the Torah: *“She reveals her face to him from her secret palace and waves to him before instantly returning to her palace to hide. All who are there do not see this. Only he does and his soul yearns for her. Therefore the Torah is also revealed and hidden and lovingly approaches whom she loves and awakens the love in him. Come and see. This is the way of the Torah.”*

Friedrich Weinreb describes this without the use of a metaphor:

“It requires a love of the Holy Scripture that is not satisfied with what lies on the surface but explores its depths to arrive at the essence of its message. And in the essence of the message one will ultimately recognise God. Once one approaches the text with that feeling, it comes alive. This creates a lively dialogue between the reader and listener and the word on the subject of God as tangible beingness.”

The same does, of course, also apply to the Christians' Holy Scripture. It also presents an "outer" and an "inner" meaning where the inner meaning can only be perceived by spiritual individuals as per the principle: "Quidquid recipitur ad modum recipientis recipitur."

Wilhelm of St-Thierry: *"We are not only beginning to understand the inner meaning and the power of God's secrets and means of grace, we are also, in a manner of speaking, perceptually touching them, which can only occur through experienced reading."*

Beyond this, Mystics also employ other resources such as constant remembrance of God (Kavvanah in Judaism, the Dhikr by the Heart in Islam, the Heart Prayer in Christianity), asceticism, music and dance, etc.

Baal Schem Tov says the following with regards to dance:

"The Hasidim are moved by the melody emanating from every living creature of God's creation. Should this seem mad in the eyes of those with less sensitive ears, should they therefore stop dancing?"

Whirling Dervishes are equally unaffected by their critics' opinions.

"Contrary to popular belief, the Semazen's (the dancer's) objective is not to experience ecstasy but to whirl in harmony with nature, with the smallest cells and the stars in the sky and thereby bear witness to the Creator's sublimeness and existence. When the Dervish whirls from right to left, he symbolically embraces all of mankind with love. His right hand with its palm open stretches towards heaven to receive God's bounty while his left hand, on which his eyes are focussed, points to the ground, thereby passing on God's gifts. Mind, heart and body become one and represent man's spiritual path. Whirling towards the truth, he grows through love, transcends his ego, finds the truth and attains perfection. Then he returns from his spiritual journey able to love and to serve creation with all its creatures without differentiating between faith, class or race."

(Dr Celaleddin Celebi)

The Christian Holy Scriptures also mention dance in several places: Miriam led the circle dance at the Israelites' Exodus from Egypt. David danced in front of the Ark of the Covenant. In the parable

people danced to celebrate the return of the lost son. In mediaeval mysticism we encounter the motif of the dancing Christ. St Basil talked of the bliss when copying the dance of the Angels on earth. And the Christian Mystic Mechthild of Magdeburg said: *I dance, Lord, when you lead me.*” Sadly, over the years, the importance of the physical in man’s spiritual life and its conscious inclusion in prayer gradually became lost in Christendom.

There is, however, a growing number of theologians who do not view dancing as a mere secular entertainment but share Paul Tillich’s opinion that dance provides an opportunity “.... to portray the Christian hope of a new reality and make it partially tangible.”

“Dance can become an expression of the Divine Spirit’s presence.”
(Theologian Helga Kuhlmann)

Mystical Experiences

Every Mystic pursues his very individual path and has his own very personal experiences. These do not only depend on his inner disposition but also on the time and culture in which he lives. And while God works in and through the Mystic, these experiences ultimately also depend on the task to which he was called by God. Nonetheless, mystical experiences inside all three religions display many common features. Thus Mystics call the human heart the place where God will be revealed.

“I searched in temples, churches and mosques. But I found the divine in my heart.” (Jalāl ad-Dīn Rūmī)

“The mind can not receive God, but there is a place for God deep in your heart.” (Menachem Mendel Schneerson)

“Stop, where are you going? Heaven is inside you.” (Angelus Silesius)

“Strive to close the eyes of the body and open those of the soul and look into your own heart.” (Teresa of Avila)

“God watches over our hearts because they are the vessels for his most precious jewels and the treasure chambers of the true

knowledge of God.” (Abū ‘Abd Allāh Muḥammad ibn ‘Alī al-Ḥakīm al-Tirmidhī)

According to the Mystics their experiences are not the work of man but a gift of God’s grace.

“When God finds man thus turned to Him in complete devotion and his soul receptive, He floods his open and calm soul with His divine light so that he becomes one with Him.” (Johannes Tauler)

“The Kabbalah is not exclusively dedicated to intellectual pursuit but to mystical devotion. Without divine inspiration access to the mysteries is denied.” (Menachem Mendel)

“In the beginning I erred in four respects. I wholeheartedly endeavoured to think of God, to know Him, to love Him, to find Him. When I arrived, I saw that He had thought of me before I had reminded Him, that His knowledge of me had preceded my knowledge of Him, that He had loved me before I had loved Him and that He had searched for me before I had searched for Him.”

(Bāyazīd Bisṭāmī, 9th Century Sufi Mystic)

All Mystics are overwhelmed by God’s greatness and majesty. Symeon the new Theologian stated:

“He who has been enlightened by the light of the Holy Spirit can not endure this vision of Him but falls with his face to the ground and screams in great fear and with amazement because he has seen something beyond all of nature, all thought and all he can imagine.”

After his mystical experience in the Chapel of St Nicholas, Thomas Aquinas said: *“... everything I have written seems like nothing compared to what I have seen and what has been revealed to me.”*

The Dutch visionary Hadewijch wrote in one of her didactic letters: *“Whatever man believes about God and how he understands Him and somehow depicts Him, that is not God.”* She therefore describes God as *“the nothing”* into which *“the something”*, the individual, has to be absorbed.

“Praise and adoration are the only appropriate responses to God’s greatness.” (Salomo ibn Gawirol)

“Admitting that one is powerless to truly know God is the last realisation of the honest.” (Al-Ghazālī)

A further experience is that of unity and completeness. Mystics are granted a knowledge of reality which transcends all brokenness and every division. Thus Ibn al-‘Arabī talks about the unity of all being; That God has created the world as a unified whole so that it will praise and recognise the highest Creator.

“God, the origin of everything, is One... He is not visible. Incomparably and irrevocably He surpasses the entire visible world.”

(Symeon the new Theologian)

“There is great unity in God and his creation is also a whole... Nothing in all of creation shall be used for anything but the service to God...” (Friedrich Weinreb)

“A Jewish Mystic also experiences moments where heaven opens for him and he suddenly clearly sees how all the pieces fit together and result in the one simple entirety.” (Tzvi Freemann)

“In the days when I was in contact with this world I was blessed with the Divine. I was linked to Him by a single knot and formed a single unit with Him.” (Rabbi Shimon bar Yochai)

All mystical experiences depict a liberating concept of man and God. The average person is stuck in his thought patterns and identifies with his body, his feelings and his thoughts. The Mystic, on the other hand, knows that this is merely a part of him; that man is in reality filled with joy, with love, and that even the most painful experiences have a reason.

“By recognising the eternal in us the temporal loses its oppressiveness. The now holds eternity and eternity holds the now. And the hills dance with joy, the hidden plays and sings.”

(Friedrich Weinreb)

“He who moves into God is filled with joy in everything he does and does not do.” (Master Eckhart)

“Sufism is the joy in ones heart in times of tribulation.”

(Jalāl ad-Dīn Rūmī)

All Mystics talk about a supernatural light in which the Mystic receives miraculous knowledge. Symeon the new Theologian calls it the total immersion in the divine sea of light whereby the whole world disappears and the intellect *“cloaked in divine darkness and*

divine light” becomes immobile and “*moves in God without moving*”.

“A serene person is suddenly transported to God’s Kingdom where there is pure light and all is taught and seen in a single moment. He who stays within will talk about it all his life.”

(Sebastian Franck, Protestant Mystic)

“The light which revealed itself to her there is so different from the worldly light that she could not possibly imagine it and other things she saw even if she tried her entire life.” (Teresa of Avila)

“While one climbs from one level to the next on the ladder of prayer to visit the “higher worlds” the view from above is magnificent. The material world below nearly a joke by comparison. It is insignificant and wretched in the mighty divine light of the higher worlds. At the peak of meditation the soul experiences a spiritual ecstasy of such power that it wants to vanish and leave its earthly vessel.”

(Dovid Dubov)

“The epiphany originating from the Kabbalah ignites the fire of the soul and makes it glow with the new realisation of a more profound and more sublime reality.” (J. Immanuel Schochet)

“This did not occur through organised proof or systematic speech but through the light Almighty God shone into my heart, the light which is the key to most realisation. Therefore he who believes that the revelation of the truth only depends on written arguments has limited God’s immense compassion.” (Al-Ghazālī)

Mystics are transported to a “dimension” where any physical logic is suspended. According to Friedrich Weinreb: *“Space then ceases to exist and yet it exists but is overseable and time stops being chronological where you always have to wait for the next moment and the past is over, forgotten, decayed. Time becomes transparent and clear and is no longer endless for you.”*

“As long as you concentrate on time and space you do not comprehend God and eternity.” (Angelus Silesius)

For Al-Ghazālī space relates to the body the way time relates to the movements of the body. Both are only ratios of what emerged with the world.

The central point of mystical literature is the experience of absolute love. Once the Mystic's heart has been liberated from his ego, it is taken over by God's absolute love. This love is indescribable; it is a love which makes one whole, which heals and regenerates.

"The Kabbalists who have reached the higher realms tell us that He is absolute love." (Bnei Baruch Kabbalah)

"Love is the fire that cleanses and unites the mind, the will and the emotions, that makes man at one with himself by making him one with God so that he becomes a servant of the union of the separate; thus man enters God's kingdom and can see Him. And just that means to be blissful." (Joseph Ratzinger)

"Whatever I thought the price of love fell silent when love itself began." (Jalāl ad-Dīn Rūmī)

"And were you to climb to the highest heaven, you would not profit. And were you even to climb God's throne and pressed forward to the core of the earth, you would not profit – if the door to your heart is not open." These words by Rūmī are reminiscent of the Apostle Paul's hymn to love.

"He who is united with God says of himself: 'Everything I do has only one objective – God's love. All prowess of my soul, of my body, memory, mind and will, the inner and the outer senses, sensual and spiritual desires – all these function through love and in love. Everything I do is driven by love and in everything I suffer I find the rapture of love.'" (St John of the Cross, Spiritual Canticle)

"Therefore nobody shall serve his Creator in the expectation of paradise but out of pure love to Him and His bidding."

(Jehuda-Ha-Chassid, The Book of the Pious)

"God can only be known through love." (Qadiriyya Lore)

"O Lord what you want to give me of the world, give it to your enemies; and what you want to give me of heaven, give it to your friends because you are all I need!"

The last part of this sentence by the Sufi Master Rābi‘a al-‘Adawiyya evokes the words of the Christian Mystic Teresa of Avila:

"Solo Dio basta!"

The Societal Dimensions of Mysticism

Mysticism is generally discounted as eccentricity, madness or unworldliness. Yet Mystics are alert, unconventional individuals who share the sensitivities of their time and even suffer from them, but are above them. They live in the world without being corrupted by it. The skills a Mystic has attained are not meant to achieve a state of ecstasy; they are meant to serve mankind and thus God. The experience of transcendence does by no means lead to an avoidance of the world to be replaced by a purely private inwardness. Quite the opposite. The love of God and responsibility towards the world are united in the Mystic. The famous Kabbalist Rabbi Yehuda Ashlag wanted to “... *make the foundations of the Kabbalah the historical impetus of his generation*”. (Dov Sodan in his essay *Three Meetings and Between*)

Teresa of Avila became a great reformer despite the political and ecclesiastical resistance she encountered. Mystics such as the former UN Secretary General Dag Hammarskjöld or the Civil Rights Activist Martin Luther King risked their lives in the fight against social injustice. And the words of the Islamic Mystic Jalāl ad-Dīn Rūmī: “*Let the heaven be reflected on earth so that earth may become heaven!*” testify that the fate of this world is indeed close to his heart; these words are the same as those his Christian fellow humans daily remember when they say in the Lord’s Prayer “*Your kingdom come!*”, the same as their fellow Jewish brothers and sisters who strive to heal the world (*Tikun Olam*).

Mystics of all three religions have learned that what a religion teaches has an awareness-raising purpose but that this is not ultimately significant; what is significant is the actual transformation of the individual into a loving human being, thereby getting closer to God. The Mystics’ message is deeply humanistic and universal. It proclaims the profound unity in the core of all monotheistic religions. Mystics do not reject the dogmas of orthodoxy, they just relativise them. “*Beyond right and wrong is a place where we shall meet,*” the Mystic Jalāl ad-Dīn Rūmī affirmed. As soon as the Mystic gets

relatively close to divinity something happens that overcomes all religions' differentiations: the Mystic realises that all forms of faith are different layers of the whole and therefore inextricably linked to each other. We have all been created in God's image and yet we are all unique and different. If God had wanted everyone to be the same, He would have made us so. If one disregards the differences by trying to impose one's own religious ideas on others, one disregards the holy will of God.

For this reason Mystics are of the opinion that everyone should be free to choose their own faith. Friedrich Weinreb says, for instance: *"Stay true to your origins, your religious rite. Your longing will show you the way."* Considered from this point of view, mysticism practically lends itself to act as a bridge between the divergent religions without casting doubt on their uniqueness. At the same time mysticism could provide a barrier against the intolerance of religious fundamentalism. Mysticism and religious institutions are still removed from each other; religious institutions regard mysticism with distrust as the teachings play a far bigger role in Judaism as well as Christianity and Islam than the religious experience. This is also partly connected to the fact that any experience can only be comprehended by those who had it themselves, particularly mystical experiences, as there are no appropriate words to describe the experience. Nevertheless there is an increasing need among people, not only among the faithful, of personal spiritual experience that should give them support and stability and give their life meaning. Karl Rahner may possibly have been right that the pious of tomorrow will be a mystic or he will not exist.

Traditions

Every generation builds onto the knowledge and skills of the previous one. Just like there are traditions in every trade and every human craft, there are also the most varied traditions in all three

religions. It was passed on how to observe God's commandments, how to celebrate various feasts and so were the appropriate rites and prayers as well as the imperative conduct of the responsible religious leaders. Furthermore there are interpretations of difficult passages in the Holy Scriptures and numerous stories about Moses, Jesus and Mohammed. In the beginning these were handed down by word of mouth and later also in written form. Here the apostolic letters, the Hadith and the Talmud - even though it was written much later – have to be mentioned as the most well-known examples.

The faithful were in constant need of endorsement as well new instruction, especially since there were continuous drastic changes in their living conditions. For the Jews such a drastic change was the banishment from Israel, for the Christians the establishment of the State Church as well as the later schisms and for the Muslims the various schisms, conquests and law schools. Thus new commandments and prohibitions were added, the consequences of their non-compliance defined, the prerequisites for the banishment from the respective community and even for the loss of eternal life stipulated. Tales of all manner of malpractices or wickedness by those of a different faith were also passed on. They were denied the right to eternal and frequently also their earthly life. Only too often the interests of the religious leaders, their pursuit of power, wealth or glory, played a major part. But one also tried to comprehend the nature of God, listed his attributes and developed various theologies. Like everything man does, the negative is also included as subsequent generations at some stage started to attach a relevance to what had been passed on which equalled the importance of God's words. Thus one religious treatise followed the next while man became ever further removed from the essence, the origin. God's actual will, as revealed in the original source, was more and more pushed into the background thus obscuring or even denying the faithful access to God and His plan for their lives. Up to now little has changed in this respect. In the religious practice of all three religions what has been passed on is almost more important than God's Word as revealed in the Holy Scriptures. In contrast to

the trades, where tradition is meant to ensure that the product stays the same, when it comes to religious traditions, one can not help feeling that in real life belonging to one's respective religious community is more paramount than God's command to love Him and one's neighbour.

The Holy Scriptures

Each of the three monotheistic religions has its own collection of Holy Scriptures. These documents – the Torah, the Gospels and the Koran – are of vital importance to everyone's faith, be he a Jew, a Christian or a Muslim. They were given to man by God through someone He called on and none of the three religions contain anything significant that was not revealed by the men God elected and sent: *Moses, Jesus, Mohammed*. Each of the three religions bears witness to its revelatory and his destiny.

Moses was empowered by God to act as his representative before Aaron and the Pharaoh and before the tribe of Israel as its saviour from their enslavement in Egypt.

"Then the LORD said to Moses: 'See, I have made you like God to Pharaoh, and your brother Aaron will be your prophet.'" (Exodus 7:1)

"So now, go. I am sending you to Pharaoh to bring my people the Israelites out of Egypt." (Exodus 3:10)

Jesus was declared to be the Son of God at his baptism in the Jordan and later at the transfiguration on Mount Tabor:

"And a voice from heaven said, 'This is my Son, whom I love, with him I am well pleased.'" (Matthew 3:17)

"A voice came from the cloud saying, 'This is my Son, whom I have chosen; listen to him.'" (Luke 9:35)

Mohammed was God's chosen messenger:

"Thus have We sent you to a community before which [other] communities have passed on so you might recite to them that which

We revealed to you, while they disbelieve in the Most Merciful. Say, "He is my Lord; there is no deity except Him. Upon Him I rely, and to Him is my return." (Surah 13:30)

"Muhammad is not the father of [any] one of your men, but [he is] the Messenger of Allah and last of the prophets. And ever is Allah, of all things, Knowing." (Surah 33:40)

Through the Holy Scriptures God wants to show mankind the way to salvation and each of these three scriptures contains sufficient guidelines which could lead to salvation when the believer adheres to them; but only all three of them combined facilitate a deeper insight into God's love and man's nature. How sad, even wretched is it therefore when the faithful are forbidden by their spiritual leaders to own the others' Holy Scriptures, never mind study them.

It would be extremely sensible to invite all believers to acquaint themselves with the other Holy Scriptures.

The truly humble and well-meaning faithful would thus lose their prejudices and subliminal fear of the alien Deposit of Faith, learn to treasure their own religion more and to live it more intensively and to meet the believers of different religions as brothers, with veneration and benevolence. They would realise that we basically all received the same message from the same Father as the Koran confirms in various passages:

"Whether they are the ones who believe (in the Arabian Prophet), or whether they are Jews, Christians or Sabians – all who believe in Allah and the Last Day, and do righteous deeds – their reward is surely secure with their Lord; they need have no fear, nor shall they grieve." (Surah 2:62)

"And do not argue with the People of the Scripture except in a way that is best, except for those who commit injustice among them, and say, 'We believe in that which has been revealed to us and revealed to you. And our God and your God is one; and we are Muslims [in submission] to Him.'" (Surah 29:46)

In Surah 48:29, which praises Mohammed's followers' merits, the Koran draws parallels to the Torah and the Gospels:

“...That is their description in the Torah. And their description in the Gospel is as a plant which produces its offshoots and strengthens them so they grow firm and stand upon their stalks, delighting the sowers -...”

Anything which seems incomprehensible, contradictory or segregating in the scriptures was only of limited validity as it was only intended for a certain period, certain generations and/or nations. What man has to essentially do in order to attain salvation, however, is identical in all three scriptures. This is a fact we want to show in this work because it is the only thing that matters.

The One-God Faith

is documented in the Jewish, Christian and Islamic scriptures and is also professed by those Christians who attribute a divine nature to Jesus.

“Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD is one. Love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength.” (Deuteronomy 6:4-5)

“Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God is One Lord.” (Mark 12:29)

“Allah witnesses that there is no deity except Him, and [so do] the angels and those of knowledge - [that He is] maintaining [creation] in justice. There is no deity except Him, the Exalted in Might, the Wise.” (Surah 3:18)

Prayer

The need for prayer is stressed in all three Holy Scriptures. Thus we read in David's Psalm: *“Evening, morning and noon I cry out in distress, and he hears my voice.”* (Psalm 55:17)

Several passages in the Gospels testify that Jesus himself prayed and also instructed his disciples in prayer: *“But when you pray, go into your room, close the door and pray to your Father, who is unseen. Then your Father, who sees what is done in secret, will reward you.”* (Matthew 6:6)

The Koran also repeatedly emphasises the importance of prayer:

“O you who have believed, remember Allah with much remembrance.

And exalt Him morning and afternoon. It is He who confers blessing upon you, and His angels [ask Him to do so] that He may bring you out from darknesses into the light. And ever is He, to the believers, Merciful.” (Surah 33:41-43)

Obedience to God

In all three Holy Scriptures man is continuously urged to choose the good by obeying God and adhering to His commandments. It is not as if God commands and forbids at a whim. He does it out of love for mankind and to provide man with a structure, a support in life, so he can obtain everlasting life.

In the Book of Deuteronomy (30:15-16) we read: *“See, I set before you today life and prosperity, death and destruction. For I command you today to love the LORD your God, to walk in obedience to him, and to keep his commands, decrees and laws; then you will live and increase, and the LORD your God will bless you in the land you are entering to possess.”*

Only unquestioning obedience prevents any divergence from the right path. The tribe of Israel encountered hardships every time it did not obey God’s rules. *“Then the children of Israel did evil in the sight of the LORD. So the LORD delivered them into the hand of Midian for seven years.”* (Judges 6:1)

The Gospels also frequently testify to Jesus’ obedience. *“Father, if you are willing, take this cup from me; yet not my will, but yours be done.”* (Luke 22:42)

And the Koran says the same in this regard. *“O you who have believed, obey Allah and His Messenger and do not turn from him while you hear [his order].”* (Surah 8:20)

The word *Islam* itself contains devotion, submission, deference and the thus resulting peace.

True Riches

“Do not hold back offerings from your granaries or your vats.”

(Exodus 22:29)

“Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moths and

vermin destroy, and where thieves break in and steal. But store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where moths and vermin do not destroy, and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.” (Matthew 6:19-21)

“And whatever thing you [people] have been given - it is [only for] the enjoyment of worldly life and its adornment. And what is with Allah is better and more lasting; so will you not use reason?”
(Surah 28:60)

The Commandment to Love Your Neighbour

The importance of brotherly love is also stressed in all three Holy Scriptures. It is connected to an abiding sense of the dignity and value of each single person and the answer to God’s liberating and saving hand; it is therefore not just an emotion or voluntary additional service but the duty of each believer.

“When a foreigner resides among you in your land, do not mistreat them, The foreigner residing among you must be treated as your native-born. Love them as yourself, for you were foreigners in Egypt. I am the LORD your God.” (Leviticus 19:33-34)

“If any of your fellow Israelites become poor and are unable to support themselves among you, help them as you would a foreigner and stranger, so they can continue to live among you.” (Leviticus 25: 35)

“Jesus replied: ‘Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.’ This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: ‘Love your neighbor as yourself.’” (Matthew 22:37-39)

“Then the King will say to those on his right, ‘Come, you who are blessed by my Father; take your inheritance, the kingdom prepared for you since the creation of the world. For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you invited me in, I needed clothes and you clothed me, I was sick and you looked after me, I was in prison and you came to visit me.’” (Matthew 25:34-36)

“Righteousness is not that you turn your faces toward the east or the west, but [true] righteousness is [in] one who believes in Allah,

the Last Day, the angels, the Book, and the prophets and gives wealth, in spite of love for it, to relatives, orphans, the needy, the traveler, those who ask [for help], and for freeing slaves; [and who] establishes prayer and gives zakah; [those who] fulfill their promise when they promise; and [those who] are patient in poverty and hardship and during battle. Those are the ones who have been true, and it is those who are the righteous.” (Surah 2:177)

“So give the relative his right, as well as the needy and the traveler. That is best for those who desire the countenance of Allah, and it is they who will be the successful.” (Surah 30:38)

Study of the Holy Scriptures

In order to obey God’s Word, believers are asked to read from the Holy Scriptures on a daily basis.

“And these words, which I command thee this day, shall be in thine heart: And thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up. And thou shalt bind them for a sign upon thine hand, and they shall be as frontlets between thine eyes. And thou shalt write them upon the posts of thy house, and on thy gates.” (Deuteronomy 6:6-9)

“If you remain in me and my words remain in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you.” (John 15:7)

“Recite in the name of your Lord who created.” (Surah 96:1)

“Indeed, upon Us is its collection [in your heart] and [to make possible] its recitation. So when We have recited it [through Gabriel], then follow its recitation.” (Surah 75:17-18)

The Forgiveness of Sins

All three Holy Scriptures agree that we are all sinners before God and God alone can absolve us from our sins, provided we are willing to admit to them and rue them and abandon our sinful ways. Because God is merciful and prepared to forgive us, we are also urged to forgive our fellow human beings.

“He shall burn all the fat on the altar as he burned the fat of

the fellowship offering. In this way the priest will make atonement for the leader's sin, and he will be forgiven." (Leviticus 4:26)

"For if you forgive other people when they sin against you, your heavenly Father will also forgive you." (Matthew 6:14)

"And to Allah belongs the dominion of the heavens and the earth. He forgives whom He wills and punishes whom He wills. And ever is Allah Forgiving and Merciful." (Surah 48:14)

Having emphasised the congruencies of the Holy Scriptures' most important commandments in all three religions, we would now like to point out some more parallels.

The Creation of the World.

All three Holy Scriptures testify that God is the creator of the world.

"In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth." (Genesis 1:1)

"You foolish people! Did not the one who made the outside make the inside also?" (Luke 11:40)

"Indeed, your Lord is Allah, who created the heavens and earth in six days and then established Himself above the Throne. He covers the night with the day, [another night] chasing it rapidly; and [He created] the sun, the moon, and the stars, subjected by His command. Unquestionably, His is the creation and the command; blessed is Allah, Lord of the worlds." (Surah 7:54)

The Creation of Man

"So God created mankind in his own image, in the image of God he created them; male and female he created them." (Genesis 1:27)

"Haven't you read," he replied, "that at the beginning the Creator made them male and female?" (Matthew 19:4)

"We have certainly created man in the best of stature..." (Surah 95:4).

Noah

"This is the account of Noah and his family. Noah was a righteous man, blameless among the people of his time, and he walked faithfully with God." (Genesis 6:9)

“As it was in the days of Noah, so it will be at the coming of the Son of Man.” (Matthew 24:37)

“And We had certainly sent Noah to his people, [saying], Indeed, I am to you a clear warner...” (Surah 11:25)

Abraham

“After these things the word of the LORD came unto Abram in a vision, saying, Fear not, Abram: I am thy shield, and thy exceeding great reward.” (Genesis 15:1)

“Your father Abraham rejoiced at the thought of seeing my day; he saw it and was glad.” (John 8:56)

“Indeed, Abraham was a [comprehensive] leader, devoutly obedient to Allah, inclining toward truth, and he was not of those who associate others with Allah.” (Surah 16:120)

Moses

“And God said to Moses, I am Yahweh - the LORD.” (Exodus 6:2)

“If they do not listen to Moses and the Prophets, they will not be convinced even if someone rises from the dead.” (Luke 16:31)

“We recite to you from the news of Moses and Pharaoh in truth for a people who believe.” (Surah 28:3)

The more intensively we study the Holy Scriptures, the more deeply we explore them, the more we discover identical statements until it becomes obvious that all three – the Torah, the Gospels and the Koran - stem from the same inspirational source; that one and the same author is behind them.

And this is the ONE to whom we deeply bow and whom we kneel before, regardless of calling him Adonai, God or Allah. We feel tiny and small, very small, but all the more protected, safe and comforted.

Note

The quotations from the Holy Scriptures were obtained from:

“The Bible”, New International Version and from <https://quran.com>.

Appeal

In today's society, man, who was conceived and created in God's image, is increasingly being reduced to an anonymous little wheel functioning as productively as possible in the globalised overall system. Every small detail is regulated by law so that the individual no longer has any scope of discretion and practically has to abandon any form of reason. Our current society evokes the picture of a polluted pond with dead fish floating on its surface. Those "dead fish" are living human beings who, consciously or unconsciously, serve the originator of evil, the murderer from the beginning, the liar and father of lies. Just like Amalek once marched against Israel, the pig farmers from the Decapolis marched against Jesus and the people of Mecca against Mohammed, this misanthrope, assisted by his henchmen, now attacks morals, decency, common sense, man's spiritual salvation and his life. And just like Amalek's annihilation had been decreed by God from the beginning, the end of today's "Amalek" is also already sealed. Therefore the comparison to "dead fish". The fate as well as the end of "Amalek" is God's concern. We, the members of the three great religions, however, are assigned the task of saving our children, to safeguard them from the threatening corruption, until the Lord has destroyed "Amalek".

Therefore this appeal to all believers and their leaders.

Mankind, its faith and its joys have already survived many attacks by evil including the French Revolution, the reign of Hitler and Stalin's dictatorship. Today the Western World is threatened by the worst excesses of those epochs, but they are so skilfully worded that the majority either does not understand them or perceives them as harmless. So the killing of babies in the womb as well as the sick and elderly on their sickbed is insidiously being promoted. The objective is to exterminate the traditional family as envisaged by God, or at least make it the exception, to rear hermaphrodites, to embroil countries with high population growth in wars.

In this way it is planned to decimate the world's population and only let the elect survive with newly stipulated characteristics of the "Arian" race. To this end one has to silence the critics, secularise the believers, substitute the true faith with "scientific" fairytales which brand the different minded as radicals and extremists who threaten public safety and, if needs be, incarcerate them in prisons or psychiatric institutions, take their children away and entrust them to government services to be re-educated.

All of this has happened before and has caused horrific damage. But man has not learned from any of this and thus the evil powers find enough people to exploit for their objectives in each new generation; the only thing that is new is that their attacks have now assumed global proportions.

Those who are mainly responsible are easily identifiable:

- among the business magnates and captains of finance of some global corporations;
- among the former and current heads of government of the most powerful "democratic" western nations;
- among the western media which were brought into line;
- among most non-government organisations which push their members like waterless clouds to all newsworthy events to be photographed by the media and to be portrayed as the "overwhelming majority" which represents the politically correct and therefore "only right" opinion;
- among most of the international research, science, democracy, peace and equality institutions whose task it is to provide a scientific-religious basis for the whole global nonsense, be it with falsified facts, bogus figures or calculations;

We must now ask ourselves how we can fight this.

The answer is simple: We can fight this the same way our ancestors once fought the Jacobins, the Nazis and the Stalinists by:

- completely boycotting the media in order to escape the insidious indoctrination and bankrupt the media moguls;
- passive resistance against blasphemous and misanthropic implementation of laws:

- as a physician you must not conduct abortions, as a woman you must not have the child in your womb murdered, as a nurse you must not assist with abortions;
- you must not translate your homosexuality into practices that simulate a sexual act or feign a marriage;
- you must not help the elderly and the sick to die prematurely;
- as a scientist you must not conduct experiments on human embryos;
- you must not slander anyone or spread lies about him;
- boycotting elections if there is no party which expressly supports the above named objectives;
- strengthening the institution of the family, renewing the love between husband and wife, siring many children, spending much time with your children, teaching them everything and instructing them to remain silent towards the outside world and government power so they maintain their morals, decency and humanity without attracting attention or even running the risk of being taken away from their parents by “Amalek’s” moral police and consigned to state care;
- praying, fasting, reading the Holy Scriptures on a daily basis thus summoning strength, courage and steadfastness;
- connecting with adherents of the other two religions, praying together and supporting each other.

So when the time has come when the Lord gets even with “Amalek”, step out of your apartments and houses, out of your anonymity, and say: - Here we are, Lord! Send us out!

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