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Abrahamic Faiths

by

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Disbelief of Ahl ul Kitab in the Messengers of Allah

What is the relationship between Islaam and the previous scriptures and revelations? Does Islaam acknowledge them and if so to what degree; does Islaam reject them and if so to what degree? Are the people of the previous religions believers, will they win Paradise or are they unbelievers and will be condemned to Hell? These are questions which Muslims misunderstand and as a result a lot of debate and argumentation revolves around these issues. Let us investigate this.

We know that in the second soorah, al-Baqarah, Allah subhaanahu wa ta`aalaa summarizes the characteristics of those people who will benefit from the Qur'aan. Allah subhaanahu wa ta`aalaa says: "Alif Laam Meem. Dhaalikal Kitaabu laa rayba feehi hudal-lil muttaqeen." [2:1-2] "This is a book, there is no doubt regarding it, it is a guidance for those people who have taqwaa, those people who fear Allah."

Then Allah describes them and among His descriptions that He mentions about them is that they believe what is revealed to them and what was revealed before them. So they believe in the revelation which came to the Prophet Muhammad sallAllahu `alaihi wa sallam as they believe in the revelation which came before Prophet Muhammad sallAllahu `alaihi wa sallam, being the revelation given to the Prophets, like the Gospel to `Eesaa ibn Maryam, like the Tauraah to the Prophet Moosa `alaihi salaam, like the Zaboor or the Psalms which was given to Daawood `alaihi salaam.

And likewise we find in the final verses of soorat al-Baqarah also a description of the matters of belief, where Allah subhaanahu wa ta`aalaa says that the believers and the Messenger, all of them believe in Allah and His Angels and His Scriputres and His Messengers; they make no distinction between them [see 2:285]. Meaning that they do not believe in some of them and disbelieve in others, like the Jews.

The Jews believe in the Prophets of Allah subhaanahu wa ta`aalaa mentioned in their Tauraah, but they disbelieve in Jesus. They disbelieve that Jesus is son of Mary, they dont accept him as Messiah. In fact, they strove to crucify him, even though they didn't crucify

him and killed him, as Allah tells us in the Qur'aan, but they tried to. And so therefore they are His enemies and that is why before the Day of Judgement when `Eesaa comes down he will fight them and their king, the Antichrist. And also the Jews disbelieve in the Prophet Muhamad sallAllahu `alaihi wa sallam and they fought him. So they distinguish between the messengers. And the Christians, even though they believe in the Prophets and they believe in `Eesaa, they denied the prophet Muhammad sallAllahu `alaihi wa sallam.

But as far as our Ummah, we do not distinguish between the Messengers, in the sense that we believe in them all. And likewise we believe in all the revelations sent by Allah subhaanahu wa ta`aalaa to His Prophets. We believe in this. So therefore our faith is a comprehensive faith. Indeed, we believe in the Messengers who were not mentioned to us in the Qur'aan. As Allah subhaanahu wa ta`aalaa mentions a number of Messengers in soorat an-Nisaaa', the fourth soorah [see 4:163], and then He says "Messengers which we have sent, giving glad tidings and warning" [see 4:165] and He subhaanahu wa ta`aalaa also says "some of them We have mentioned to you and some of them We did not mention to you" [see 4:164].

Changing of Allah's Religion by Ahl ul Kitab

At the same time, Allah condemns the religious groups which are still available, the Jews and the Christians, for changing the Book and He mentions that they have corrupted the Book and that they write some things with their own hand, they pen some things and say this is from Allah but it is not from Allah [see Aal `Imraan 3:78: *"And indeed, there is among them a party who alter the Scripture with their tongues so you may think it is from the Scripture, but it is not from the Scripture. And they say, 'This is from Allah', but it is not from Allah. And they speak untruth about Allah while they know."* Aal `Imraan (3):78]

And likewise He condemns them for changing the religion of Allah and for innovating like Allah subhaanahu wa ta`aalaa in soorat al-Hadeed [see 57:27: *"Then We sent following their footsteps [i.e. traditions] Our messengers and followed [them] with Jesus, the son of Mary, and gave him the Gospel. And We placed in the hearts of those who followed him compassion and mercy and monasticism, which they innovated; We did not prescribe it for them except [that they did so] seeking the approval of Allah. But they did not observe it with due observance. So We gave the ones who believed among them their reward, but many of them are defiantly disobedient."*] condemns the Christians for inventing ar-

rahbaaniyya or to be like a monk, not to get married, and to live a life away from women, marriage and alike.

And likewise, Allah subhaanahu wa ta`aalaa condemns them for raising `Eesaa ibn Maryam to a status above his by claiming that he is son of Allah [see at-Taubah 9:30: *"The Jews say, 'Ezra is the son of Allah'; and the Christians say, 'The Messiah is the son of Allah.' That is their statement from their mouths; they imitate the saying of those who disbelieved [before them]. May Allah destroy them; how they are deluded?"*]

The Qur'aan says they have disbelieved those who say the Messiah is the son of Allah [see Al-Maa'idah 5:17: *"They have certainly disbelieved who say that Allah is Christ, the son of Mary. Say, 'Then who could prevent Allah at all if He intended to destroy Christ, the son of Mary, or his mother or everyone on the earth?' And to Allah belongs the dominion of the heavens and the earth and whatever is between them. He creates what He wills, and Allah is over all things competent."* and Al-Maa'idah 5:72: *"They have certainly disbelieved who say, 'Allah is the Messiah, the son of Mary' while the Messiah has said, 'O Children of Israel, worship Allah, my Lord and your Lord.' Indeed, he who associates others with Allah - Allah has forbidden him Paradise, and his refuge is the Fire. And there are not for the wrongdoers any helpers.*]

And Allah subhaanahu wa ta`aalaa says that they have disbelieved those who say that Allah is one of a trinity [see Al-Maa'idah 5:73: *"They have certainly disbelieved who say, 'Allah is the third of three.' And there is no god except one God. And if they do not desist from what they are saying, there will surely afflict the disbelievers among them a painful punishment."*].

And Allah subhaanahu wa ta`aalaa condemns them, saying that they have taken their rabbis and their priests as lords besides Allah and they have taken the Messiah the son of Mary also as a lord besides Allah and they were commanded only to worship Allah alone. This is a verse in soorat at-Taubah, the ninth soorah of the Qur'aan [see At-Taubah 9:31: *"They have taken their scholars and monks as lords besides Allah (i.e. by their obedience to them rather than to what Allah revealed), and [also] the Messiah, the son of Mary (i.e. by their worship of him in conjunction with Allah). And they were not commanded except to worship one God; there is no deity except Him. Exalted is He above whatever they associate with him."*]

And the Prophet sallAllahu `alaihi wa sallam explained how they took their rabbis and priests besides Allah as lords in the sense that they obeyed them in what they knew was

forbidden by Allah subhaanahu wa ta`aalaa. In other words, these rabbis and monks and priests would forbid something which was made lawful to them by Allah subhaanahu wa ta`aalaa and they would obey them in that. Or they would make to them something lawful which was forbidden by Allah and they would obey them in that [as reported by Ahmad, at-Tirmidhee and Ibn Jareer], like for instance with the Christians and the issue of multi-marriages, having more than one wife. The Christians have forbidden this even though Allah has made it lawful for them. And, in fact, they find in their books the Prophets are mentioned having more than one wife. And likewise the Christians have made for themselves lawful to eat the flesh of swine, pig's meat, pork, and this is something which has been forbidden by the laws of Allah. So they by them obeying them in these matters they have taken them as lords besides Allah.

Ahl ul Kitab Are Disbelievers & Abraham Was a Muslim

The problem is as I said, is that an argument has appeared or an idea which is I believe very much popular in the United States, saying that the Jews and Christians are believers and we are all from the Abrahamic faith. And this is a very dangerous concept. Indeed, it can lead a person to disbelieve in Islaam. And that is because whoever claims that a non-believer is a believer or says that the non-believers' religion is true or doubts concerning the non-believer, whether he is a non-believer, he has left Islaam, by the consensus of the scholars.

So those people who say that the Christians and Jews are believers or who doubts concerning the disbelief of the Christians and Jews, they have said a statement which takes them outside of the fold of Islaam. And if they were brought in front of an Islamic court and the proofs were established against them, to the degree where they would have no excuse for themselves, in other words, verses from the Qur'aan were repeated to them, the statements of the Prophet sallallaahu `alaihi wa sallam were repeated to them, so there was no chance of misunderstanding, no chance of confusion, they would be given a chance to repent.

And then, in an Islaamic state, if they did not recant that belief within three days they would be executed as an apostate. And, the apostate when he is executed, it is not like the execution of a murderer. See, when a murderer - a Muslim who may commit a murder - is executed, he is still a Muslim, his family still inherits from his wealth, he is still buried in an

Islaamic graveyard, we still make Salaatul-Janaza upon him, because he is a Muslim. Yes, he committed a sin and that sin necessitates that the murderer is killed. That is, if the family of the killed does not forgive him or doesn't accept the blood money as a recompense for the murder, but if they insist that al-Qisaas or equality is charged upon him, that person is executed for committing murder. But at the same time that person is still a Muslim. But when a person dies as an apostate, he has reverted out of Islaam, so therefore he dies as if he was a Jew or a Christian. And he will not win Allaah's Paradise because these are matters that throw you out of Islaam just like there are matters which nullify your ablution, your wudoo' . A person makes wudoo' - he is in a state of purity. He does something from the nullifiers of wudoo', those things which negate the state of purity, he is no longer in that state of purity, he has to repeat his wudoo. And likewise when someone nullifies his testimony of faith, he has to repeat his testimony of faith to come back into religion and he has to deny what he previously said which took him out of the religion and free himself from that.

This concept of the Abrahamic faiths was raised and we can look at the Qur'aan and we find a very clear verse concerning this, that shows that these people who say that the Jews and Christians and Muslims all share the Abrahamic faith are liars and that they do not read the Qur'aan themselves. What is the proof? Allaah said in the Qur'aan, "Verily Abraham was neither a Jew nor a Christian, but he was a Haneef and a Muslim and he was not from the mushriks" [see Aal `Imraan 3:67].

What does this verse mean? The Jews claimed that the Abraham was the first Jew, so therefore Allaah negates this. So Abraham was not a Jew. And the Christians claim that Abraham was a Christian in the sense that they believe that he believed in trinity, that his act of sacrifice of his son who they say is Ishaq even though it is the Prophet Ismaa'eel `alaihis salaam, they say that was a sign of the coming if the sacrifice of the son of god which was to come in `Eesaa son of Maryam - this is a lie which they have invented.

And Allaah negates that Abraham was a Christian. And then Allaah subhaanahu wa ta`aalaa tells us that Ibraaheem was a Haneef. The word "haneef" in Arabic means to swerve, so in this case Ibraaheem, he swerved from the false beliefs that his people were upon to the true faith of tauheed. And then Allaah subhaanahu wa ta`aalaa says that he was a Muslim. And the Muslim is the one who submits to Allaah in tauheed and in obedience to Him. And then Allaah says he is not from the pagans. and this is important because you might imagine that during the time of the Prophet sallallaahu `alaihi wa sallam there were certain tribes which were the descendants of the Prophet Abraham,

among which is the tribe of Quraish. And the tribe of Quraish being descendants of the Prophet Abraham `alaihi salaam and also being the ones who lived by the Ka`bah felt that they had some sort of special quality, and Allaah subhaanahu wa ta`aalaa refuted that to them saying that "Abraham was not from the pagans" so you people from Quraish and Makkah who are his descendants know that Abraham was not on your religion. And that even though you might be the blood descendants of Ibraaheem `alaihi salaam, Ibraaheem was a Muslim, he was upon the religion of Muhammad sallallaahu `alaihi wa sallam whom you are fighting. And so, therefore, Allaah subhaanahu wa ta`aalaa explains to them that Abraham was not from the pagans. And that is why Allaah subhaanahu wa ta`aalaa then says that the closest of mankind to Ibrahim are those who followed him and this Prophet and the believers, meaning us, the Muslims [see Aal `Imraan 3:68: "*Lo! those of mankind who have the best claim to Abraham are those who followed him, and this Prophet and those who believe (with him); and Allah is the Protecting Guardian of the believers.*"]. We are closest to Abraham.

Likewise, when Allaah subhaanahu wa ta`aalaa tells us in the Quran that the Jews and Christians say, "Be a Jew or a Christian you'll be guided" [see Al-Baqarah 2:135: "*And they say: Be Jews or Christians, then ye will be rightly guided. Say (unto them, O Muhammad): Nay, but (we follow) the religion of Abraham, the upright, and he was not of the idolaters.*"], in other words, Jews say be Jews and you'll be guided and Christians say be Christians and you'll be guided. What was the response from Allaah subhaanahu wa ta`aalaa? Allaah told the Prophet Muhammad sallallaahu `alaihi wa sallam to say, "Nay we are following the religion of Abraham who was a Haneef and who was not from the pagans" [see Al-Baqarah 2:135]. In other words, if they say be Jew or Christian and Allaah says, no, we follow the religion of Abraham, this means the religion of Abraham is different than Judaism and Christianity.

If I say to you for instance, let's say we have three pieces of fruit in front of you: grapefruit, orange and apple. And I say take the grapefruit or orange and you say, no, I want the apple. That means that apple is different from the grapefruit and orange. So when the Christians and the Jews said to Muslims be Jews and Christians and you'll be guided and the verse came down saying, no, follow the religion of Abraham, it shows that the religion of Abraham is different than the religion of the Jews and the Christians. And likewise Allaah subhaanahu wa ta`aalaa, as we said in the verse before, said "Abraham was neither a Jew or Christian", so therefore this claim that the Jews and Christians are from this thing called the Abrahamic faith and the Jews and Christians and Muslims have

therefore some special bond that should draw us together to work to fix the environment (i.e. specifically because of that 'bond'), or whatever they want us to do, is a false call.

Belief in the Prophet Muhammad is Required

Indeed, the Prophet sallallaahu `alaihi wa sallam told us in a hadeth in Saheeh Muslim, as reported by Abu Huraira, there is not a single Jew or Christian from this Ummah, meaning from those people the Prophet sallallaahu `alaihi wa sallam was sent to and, as we all know, the Prophet sallallaahu `alaihi wa sallam was sent to all of humanity and indeed the jinns from his time until the last day because there is no Prophet after him.

This is all the Prophet's sallallaahu `alaihi wa sallam Ummah. Every single human being whether he is an Arab or a non-Arab, whether he is black or white, indeed the jinns who are not human beings, are another species that Allaah created, we are all part of the ummah of the Prophet Muhammad sallallaahu `alaihi wa sallam in the sense we are ummah of his da`wah, who he should give da`wah to...

Those who accept the call, those who say "laa ilaaha ill Allaah Muhammadur-Rasoolullaah" are the ummah of response. So when the title of the conference says "one Ummah", it doesn't mean unifying the ummah of the da`wah, it means unifying the ummah who responded to the call. But in this hadeeth the Prophet sallallaahu `alaihi wa sallam is talking about which ummah? Ummah of da`wah, and that is why he said in the hadeeth, "there is not a single Jew or Christian from this ummah." Jews and Christians haven't responded to the call; that is why they are Jews and Christians.

What did the Prophet sallallaahu `alaihi wa sallam say? "Who hears about me and does not believe in what I have been sent with, except he will be from the inhabitants of the Hellfire." This is a very strong hadeeth because it shows that these Jews and Christians even if you were to imagine that they were upon the true religion that Allaah sent to the Prophet Moses and upon the true religion that Allaah sent to the Prophet `Eesaa, `alayhimas salam, that they had in their hands the true copy of Torah or the true copy of Injeel (Gospel), they would not enter in the Paradise if they heard about Muhammad sallallaahu `alaihi wa sallam until they believe in him because he is their Prophet.

So therefore a Christian who comes and says, well, I don't believe in trinity and I recognize the Gospel has been perverted, but I don't want to believe in Muhammad, will that benefit him anything? No, it won't benefit him anything.

And likewise the Jew who says I believe in Jesus that he was truly the Messiah and I recognize that the Old and the New Testament have been corrupted and I only worship One God, I don't make shirk. Will that benefit him anything, if he has heard about the Prophet Muhammad sallallaahu `alaihi wa sallam? No, because as we mentioned in the beginning, faith must be in all the Messengers and faith must be in all the Scriptures.

Look what the Prophet sallallaahu `alaihi wa sallam said, "if he heard about me", meaning that Jew or Christian who is upon his true religion and has never heard of the Prophet Muhammad sallallaahu `alaihi wa sallam, Allaah is not going to hold a person responsible for what he cannot be capable of, but those Jews and Christians who heard about the prophet Muhammad sallallaahu `alaihi wa sallam and remained upon these perverted religions, they are perverted by their own hands. Because when Allaah sent it down from the Heavens it was pure. It will not be accepted of him and they'll be inhabitants in the Hellfire.

So this a very serious hadeeth and that is why the Prophet sallallaahu `alaihi wa sallam was commanded to fight all of mankind, as reported in the hadeeth of Saheeh al-Bukhaaree and Saheeh Muslim, until they testify that there is none worthy of worship but Allaah, and they believe in what he came with. And the Prophet Muhammad sallallaahu `alaihi wa sallam described his message saying that he was sent before the hands of the hour with a sword in his hand [as reported in Musnad Ahmad and others, upon Ibn `Umar]. A sword in his hand why? To worship Allaah alone. And Allaah subhaanahu wa ta`aalaa gave him his sustenance from the shadow cast by his spear [as reported in the same hadeeth].

In other words, when the disbeliever see him this is by his spear, they run and they leave their possessions and this is his, for the Prophet sallallaahu `alaihi wa sallam to distribute. This is known as al-fai' in the Islaamic terminology, what they have left behind. And likewise that whoever goes against his command will be humiliated and the hadeeth continues and whoever resembles people is from them [the same hadeeth].

So the point is that part of our faith is that Jews and Christians are disbelievers and that is why Allaah subhaanahu wa ta`aalaa says in soorat at-Taubah, the ninth soorah, "Fight those [this verse is directedy basically against the Christians] of the People of the Scripture

who do not believe in Allaah and the Last Day and do not forbid what Allaah has forbidden and they do not follow the true religion from those given of the scripture, until they give jizya [i.e. until they are willing to submit to the Islaamic state] and they are in a state of humiliation" [see At-Tauba 9:29: "*Fight against such of those who have been given the Scripture as believe not in Allah nor the Last Day, and forbid not that which Allah hath forbidden by His messenger, and follow not the Religion of Truth, until they pay the tribute readily, being brought low.*"].

What does this verse mean?

Allaah says fight those who do not believe in Allaah, in the sense that they do no longer believe in Allaah's tauheed and no one can say now that the Christian believes in Allaah's tauheed when he says there is a trinity. How can he believe in Allaah's tauheed? And Allaah in the Quran has said, they have disbelieved because they said the Messiah is a son of Allaah and they have disbelieved because they said Allaah is one of three so they don't believe in Allaah.

Christians' Disbelief With Regards to the Hereafter

What about belief in the Last Day, do the Christians believe in the Last Day? No. Why don't they believe in the Last Day? Because they believe the resurrection will be the resurrection only of the spirits. They don't believe that this body, this flesh, these bones, and flesh, and blood, and so forth will actually be in Paradise. They think only your soul will be in Paradise. And that is why they reject what Muslims say when we say in Paradise people will eat and drink and have sexual relations. They deny that because they consider this to be something intolerable.

And that is why those Muslim translators of the Qur'aan who tried to translate the meanings of the Qur'aan and who were trying to make Islaam palatable to Christians so they would like it. Like Yusuf Ali in his translation, whenever he came to the verses describing the punishment of the Hellfire or describing the blessings of Paradise, he says this is just not really real, this is a figurative thing. People will not actually going to be eating and drinking in Paradise, people will not going to be enjoying...why? Because he knows that Christians do not accept this, so in order to make it easy for them he decided to change the meanings of the Qur'aan.

Christians' Changing of Allah's Laws

And they do not forbid what Allah has made forbidden. Do the Christians follow Allah's Sharee`ah? Do they forbid what Allah told them to forbid in their Tauraah, in the book that, which is mentioned even in their gospel, that `Eesaa has said that he didn't come to go away with Tauraah, but he has come to observe it and uphold it. Do the Christians observe the law of Torah? No. Do they abstain from what Allah has forbidden? No. They eat pork, they have made marriage of more than one woman forbidden for them, they do not circumcise themselves, even though this is a covenant, the token between God and Abraham, as mentioned in Genesis. The laws of Allah subhaanahu wa ta`aalaa, like stoning the one who commits the adultery, killing the homosexuals...do they apply this now? You see this in Christian lands, applying Allah's laws, killing the murderer?

Likewise, they have made lawful for themselves, adultery is now lawful in Christian countries. It is no longer a crime. And also the acts of homosexuals are lawful in Christian countries.

And likewise do they follow the true religion of Islaam? Allah says in the Qur'aan in soorat Aali-`Imraan: "Innad-deena `indAllahil Islaam." The true religion with Allah is Islaam [3:19]. And He says: "And whoever seeks a religion other than Islaam it will not be accepted of him and in the Hereafter he will be of the losers" [3:85]. Do the Christians follow the true religion? Are they Muslims? No. That's why they call themselves Christians. Were they to be Muslims, why would they call themselves Christians? So therefore when Allah subhaanahu wa ta`aalaa says these four qualities which apply upon them completely, he says from those who have disbelieved or from those who have been given the book, this is them.

Clarifying Misconceptions

Now we come to the verse that all these people who speak about the Abrahamic faiths try to use always. Where Allah subhaanahu wa ta`aalaa says in the Qur'aan that, "the believers and the Jews and the Christians and the Sabians, those of them who believe in Allah and the Last Day, and do righteous deeds, there will be no fear for them nor will they grieve" [2:62, 5:69]. They try to use this verse, but let us consider this verse because we believe in the whole Qur'aan. What does Allah subhaanahu wa ta`aalaa say? Allah says

those who believe, meaning those of this ummah, who believe, who have eemaan. And then Allah subhaanahu wa ta`aalaa says those of the Yahood, "alladheena haadoo" (the Jews, we might translate, even though it doesn't mean the same thing), and Allah says Nasaara (which we might translate as the Christians even though it means more closely people from Nazaraeth, the Nazarens, but it is used also in the Qur'aan to mean the Christians in general, so we can use the term Christians and the Sabians, and these are the people who had no Scripture or who were before the law of Moses like the followers of the Prophet Ismaa'eel, Ishaq... Allah says those of them who believe in Allah and in the Last Day. We have seen now that they do not believe in Allah and the Last Day.

"And they do righteous deeds..." And they do not do righteous deeds, because a righteous deed is a deed that has what conditions to it? What makes a deed righteous? Ikhlaas and [that the deed be] according to the Sunnah. They don't have ikhlaas because they have shirk and their deeds are not according to the Sunnah because they have made a religion of their own making. It is not even following the sunnah of their Prophets. When they go and celebrate Christmass, is this the religion of `Eesaa ibn Maryam, and when they go to a church and they make a cross on themselves, is this the religion of `Eesaa ibn Maryam? When they face the East, is this the religion of `Eesaa ibn Maryam, or the religion of Moses? Nothing from the religions of those Prophets. So therefore they don't even follow the sunnah of their Prophets.

So this therefore is not applicable upon the Christians and the Jews that we see today. And one might ask then what did Allah mean by this verse? The verse is truth. Allah is meaning by this verse those Jews who lived in the time of Moses and those Christians who lived in the time of `Eesaa ibn Maryam and those Sabians who lived in the time before the revelation of the law of Moses, from the followers of the Prophets Abraham, Ismaa'eel, Ishaq, and Yoosuf...whoever amongst them believed in Allah, in other words, was not a hypocrite, and believed in the Last Day and did good deeds, he will have nothing to fear in the Hereafter nor will he grieve when he leaves this world and goes to the next world. And we know this by gathering all the verses from the Qur'aan and all the ahadeeth of the Prophet sallallaahu `alaihi wa sallam. This is the way of the believers, we believe in the whole book, we are not like the Jews and the Christians who believe in a part of the Book and disbelieve in a part of the book, but rather we believe in all of the Revelation.

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