

Common ground essay example

[Experience](#), [Belief](#)



Shared Themes in Judeo/Christian and Islamic Beliefs

Shared Themes in Judeo/Christian and Islamic Beliefs

Judeo-Christianity and Islamic religions share various religious aspects of beliefs and moral values. Christianity is a religion that started and spread to the whole world. Jesus Christ is the genesis of Christianity while Islamic religion was founded by Prophet Mohammad. Their basic tenets grew from their shared creation stories. These religions are closely related in various ways. First, they share beliefs about the existence of God and that God controls their lives in many ways. (Qur'an 59: 23-24). They also share moral values that concerns what is expected of human beings. This paper aims to examine some of the beliefs that these religions hold.

Creation of the World

Judeo-Christian and Islamic creation stories are similar. They both hold the belief the world never existed and that it came into being when God created it. The earth, light, water, plants and animals were created in six days and God took the seventh day, God created His most valuable creature, man. Man was made in God's own image and likeness. God made Adam from dust, created Eve from Adam's ribs and placed these two creatures in the Garden of Eden. God gave them clear instructions that they were to eat all the fruits in the garden except fruit from the tree of knowledge. A serpent, having been planning all along to compete with God took that opportunity to deceive Adam and Eve. The serpent was a manifestation of the devil, which had been competing with God. The Satan deceived Eve, who in turn convinced Adam to taste this forbidden fruit. They both acquired the

knowledge and soon realized that they were naked. When God realized they that they had sinned, He sent them away from the garden and that they were to live in hardships die and Eve was to feel a lot of pain during child birth. Besides, God commanded them to obey Him, failure to which they would face consequences at the end of the world. (Genesis 1-2)

The End of the World

The Abrahamic religion believes that God will bring the world to an end at His own will and time. The three religions have different interpretations of end time. However, they all hold the belief that those who good before God will be rewarded at end time. God will judge human beings and their deeds will determine their rewards or punishment. Those who practice evil will be sent to hell while the pure at heart will inherit the kingdom of God (Hodgson & King, 1994, p. 328). It is also worth noting that the dead will resurrect at the end of the world. The main difference between Christian beliefs and those of Judaism and Islamic is that Christians believe the world will come to an end when Jesus Christ comes back (Hodgson & King, 1994, p. 338). All three religions believed that man should fully submit to God.

The Afterlife

The belief in Jesus as the son of God differentiates Christian afterlife stories from those of Jews and Muslim. The other stories about afterlife are similar in all the three religions. They all believe that God will judge everybody according to their deeds while still living. Muslims and Christians who obey God and respected nature will be awarded by being allowed to live with God in heaven (Hanson, 1997, p. 370). However, those who are evil will have

their souls suffering to pay for the evils they committed while still living. With all these similarities in beliefs, there are areas that they differ in. Muslims' stories state that after one dies, the soul and body are united death (Esposito, 2002, p. 28), while Christians believe that the soul is completely separated from the body and that there is no union of the soul and the body (Hanson, 1997, p. 370). Fundamentalist Christians extend their belief to include the reunion of the body and the spirit after the Apocalypse (Hodgson & King, 1994, p. 338). The Judaism is more concerned about the current life than the eternal life.

Human behavior.

In Judeo-Christian and Islamic beliefs, humans are the only creatures with ability to think and act rationally. Since they can think and act, God chose to impose laws on them to control their behavior. It is because of the ability to think that God gave them power and authority over other creatures. Their actions of sinning against God made Him to impose the rules, with which they have to follow, failure which they face the consequences (Hanson, 1997, p. 363). This means that human beings have the duty to choose from good deeds and evil (Christian beliefs, 2012, paras. 4 & 5; Yaran, 2007, p. 36). Have has set out some behaviors that human beings should follow. Human beings should treat each other as they would wish to be treated and that they should uphold moral values like honesty, faithfulness, humility patience and hospitality. All these values are practiced in the three religions.

Moral codes

Moral codes are the expected behavior in the society. God expects human beings to uphold morality. Moreover, each religion has beliefs that they derive from their respective holy books. The Ten Commandments are the key pillars in the three religions. However, these laws are expressed differently in each religion. Muslims have a special code of rules called Shari'a that clearly set out the behavior of (Elias, 1999, p. 48). Besides, each religion has traditions that have changed with time.

Duty

The Abrahamic religions teach the need for people to be responsible and to perform their duties as human beings. One of the major duties of human beings is to know God and serve Him (Yaran, 2007, p. 22). Human beings also have a duty to care for each other and show a spirit of forgiveness, love and generosity. These duties are advocated for in all the religions. The holy books encourage the followers to perform their duties well. They are urged to show concern to the poor and those who suffer in various ways.

In conclusion, from the above research, it is clear that there are differences in the three religions. However, the main theme in the beliefs is peaceful coexistence and service to God. The stories about the end of the world all show that human beings who do the wishes of God will be rewarded while evil doers will face God's wrath on the day of the end. To make sure people know what they need to do to please God, each religion has similar tenets, moral codes, and sets of good and bad behaviors. It is the believer's responsibility to know these laws and to follow them, for which they will receive their reward (or punishment) in the afterlife.

The differences between Judeo/Christian beliefs are far less important than their similarities. The stories discussed here illustrate how close the Abrahamic religions really are to each other. The world would be a better place if people of these faiths only realized how much they have in common.

References

Creation stories. (n. d.). Retrieved from http://www.innovationslearning.co.uk/subjects/re/information/creation/creation_home.htm

Christian beliefs about human nature. (2012). Retrieved from <http://www.religionfacts.com/christianity/beliefs/human.htm>

De Lange, N. (2000). An introduction to Judaism. Cambridge, UK.

Elias, J. J. (1999). Islam. London: Routledge.

Esposito: J. L. (2002). What everyone needs to know about Islam. New York: Oxford University Press.

Hanson, B. C. (1997). Introduction to Christian theology. Minneapolis: Fortress Press.

Hodgson, P. C., & King, R. H. (1994). Christian theology: An introduction to its traditions and tasks. Minneapolis: Fortress Press.

Kohler, K. (1918). Jewish theology: Systematically and historically considered. New York: Macmillan.

Ramsey, P. (1950). Basic Christian ethics. New York: Scribner.

What is Muslim moral code? (2013). Retrieved from http://wiki.answers.com/Q/What_is_Muslim_moral_code

Yaran, C. S. (2007). Understanding Islam. Edinburgh: Dunedin Academic Press.