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## Interfaith Dialogue: Ethical Commonalties in Judaism, Christianity, and Islam

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### Abstract

Dialogue means conversation, encounter, sharing, and mutual respect between individuals and groups. Interfaith dialogue attempts to promote cultural and religious understanding. The purpose of interfaith dialogue is to bring people to understand each other better way and to gain insights from others' viewpoints. Morality is a key part of religion and culture. Ethical behavior is based on moral beliefs and values held in society. Ethical principles and values serve as a guide to developing strong moral society. These rules help to distinguish right from wrong. The study aims to discuss how Judaism, Christianity, and Islam view major virtues and sins in common. Moreover, it highlights how commonalties among these religions strengthen the interfaith dialogue. This is qualitative research and data is gathered from primary and secondary sources. Primary sources include the Qur'an, the Torah, and the Injeel whereas secondary sources include books, articles, and online sources. The main commonalties in Abrahamic religions are the unity of God, Abraham as their father, scriptures, and pilgrimage. Common sins in Abrahamic Religions are adultery, murder, badmouthing, consuming *Riba* (interest), dishonesty, eying on the property, wife and wealth of the neighbor, intoxication or liquor, disobedience or misbehaving with parents, misusing God's name, worshiping someone other than God, theft or robbery, not being considerate towards the poor, the oppressed and the orphans, false allegations, false evidence, hiding the truth and working against justice, persecuting the innocent, idolatry, grabbing property and

women of other people. Eating non-kosher or haram/forbidden foods and animals, idolatry, harming or damaging someone in any way other than justified self-defense, incest, immorality, Slander; badmouthing even when true, mockery, eating without saying a blessing, taking bribes, ignoring any of the festivals or fasts, Skipping one of the daily prayer services. Common virtues in Abrahamic Religions are: worshiping one God/Allah/Jehovah, respecting and obeying parents, caring for the poor/weak and the orphans, doing charity (*zakat*), and being truthful.

**Keywords:** Islam, Christianity, Judaism, Commonalities, Sin, Virtue, Inter-faith Dialogue

## Introduction

Judaism, Christianity, and Islam are three major world religions and are known to be the religions that were given by God to the world through His Prophets (A.S). The followers of these three religions are also commonly called *Ahl-e-Kitab* or people of The Book. In Judaism, morality is the application of the Torah's 613 rules to the best of one's ability in daily life. Christianity believes God sent his son, Jesus (A.S) to save humankind from their sins. Christian morality is the application of the Ten Commandments and eight beatitudes in their public and private life. Christians' morality affects them in everyday life. The Beatitudes and Ten Commandments help Christians to be less selfish and think more about others. It also encourages people to attend mass and confessions in an attempt to make them better people. In Islam, the Abrahamic religion that believes in God's or Allah's last Prophet Muhammad (PBUH), the moral rules and principles are faith guided and are from the Holy books Qur'an and Hadith. Judaism's, Christianity's, and Islam's ideas of morality are to help their followers to be better people in the world and help them to live a better life.

Dialogue means conversation, encounter, sharing, and mutual respect between individuals and groups. Interfaith dialogue attempts to promote cultural and religious understanding. The purpose of interfaith dialogue is to bring people to understand each other better way and to gain insights from others' viewpoints. It is believed that relationships can be further enhanced if similarities are highlighted. A similarity to beliefs, principles, attitudes, values, and interests among religions may help an individual to get along well and be comfortable with others. The Abrahamic religions have more similarities than differences. Exposure to the teachings, values, and systems of other religions is a way to be familiar with them. If one can predict others' behavior and be familiar with others' religions, he/she becomes more comfortable in relation with him/her. The present study

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develops interfaith harmony by exploring moral commonalities in Abrahamic religions.

## Literature Review

There has been much written about the different aspects of Jewish, Christian, and Islamic ethical values. The present study finds similarities and differences in those values. James M. Gustafson narrates that the book has discussed issues related to faith, unbelief, moral and ethical life, and education on moral and ethical responsibility. The role of theologians as Prophets, protectors, preservers, and participants. Also, the ethical discontent, the importance of Scriptures on Christian ethical grounds, the interlink of the Gospel to the moral life, the spiritual along with moral life, the relationship between historical interpretation, human beings in the ray of Christian faith and social sciences, the connection between natural and empirical sciences and philosophy of ethics, the normativity of human beings and the basic problems and issues in the fields of medical science and genetic engineering have been discussed at length.<sup>1</sup>

Elliot N. Dorff & Louis E. Newman (eds.) is of the view that the essays in this book discuss applied ethics and central themes and elaborated further based on Jewish ethics.<sup>2</sup> George Fadlo Hourani explains his view that this book is a collection of essays by Professor Hourani based on Islamic ethical values in the earlier formative as well as historical periods of Islamic history. The essays show that ethics was at the core of Islam and theoretical and philosophical Thought supported the construction of Islamic Thought about ethics.<sup>3</sup>

Kieran Cronin has discussed how the Christian viewpoint can fruitfully contribute to the language, terminology, and jargon of rights. He analyses the complications which are involved in using the language from Christian moral literature, jurisprudence, and moral philosophy. The writer has discussed discursive and imaginative aspects of meta-ethics.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>James M. Gustafson, *Theology and Christian Ethics*. (Pilgrim Pr; First Edition (June 1, 1974).

<sup>2</sup>Elliot N. Dorff & Louis E. Newman (eds.), *Contemporary Jewish Ethics and Morality: A Reader*. (Oxford University Press; 1st edition (March 30, 1995).

<sup>3</sup>George Fadlo Hourani, *Reason and Tradition in Islamic Ethics*. (Cambridge University Press, 2007).

<sup>4</sup>Cronin, Kieran. *Rights and Christian Ethics*. (CUP Archive, 1992).

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David Novak in his ten essays has analyzed the common features of Jewish and Christian Ethics. He calls it Judio-Christian Ethics.<sup>5</sup> James Patrick Mackey discusses that power and ethics are contrary to each other in human behavior and power imposes its will whereas ethics encourages a response from humans which is free of pressures. The writer has avoided contraries and presented a philosophy of power that liberates human creativity.<sup>6</sup>

E. Clinton Gardner discusses that the issues of justice and Christian ethics are the foundations of debate on problems related to justice in modern societies. The writer as a theologian has discussed issues of interaction between religion and law and their efforts for achieving justice in society. The book gives importance to traditional roots of justice in historical traditions of goodness and the ideas of covenant and the virtue of God. Also, the relationship between traditional as well as fundamental religious teachings and law has been discussed in supplementary chapters.<sup>7</sup>

Gillian Rice says that in a situation of expanding business on a global level, the managers of the business need to have more knowledge of foreign cultures and particularly of ethics to do business in other cultures across the borders. The book has two purposes: firstly, to introduce an Islamic perspective on business, and secondly to introduce Islamic ethics to the West to stimulate Western investors to do business in Muslim countries. Thus, the book is a good initiative to begin a debate on the relationships between ethics and business.<sup>8</sup>

Robin Gill has discussed the issue of the contribution of Christian ethics in today's pluralistic Western societies. The conflict between the theological and secular healthcare systems has also been discussed. The writer has discussed healing stories in the four Gospels and the core virtues found in the Gospels. These virtues are compassion, care, faith, and humility. These virtues, according to Robin Gill, the writer, may bring about more

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<sup>5</sup>David Novak, *Jewish Social Ethics*. (Oxford University Press; First American edition (November 12, 1992).

<sup>6</sup>James Patrick Mackey, *Power and Christian Ethics (New Studies in Christian Ethics)*. (Cambridge University Press (November 3, 2005).

<sup>7</sup>E. Clinton Gardner, *Justice and Christian Ethics*. (Cambridge University Press (January 26, 1996).

<sup>8</sup>Gillian Rice, *Islamic ethics and the implications for business*. *Journal of business ethics* 18, no. 4 (1999).

depth to an interpretation that is wholly secular of the healthcare ethical grounds.<sup>9</sup>

Aasim I. Padela says that modern medical practice is becoming diverse and pluralistic. That is why more and more cultural awareness is given to medical students and doctors in medical schools and colleges and seminars in hospitals. The medical literature is being incorporated with more and more medical constructs of specific populations with increased interests. The paper provides an overview of Islamic Medical Ethics. The paper has begun with the basic meaning of Islamic Medicinal Ethical Values and then the potential reader is informed about the horizon of Islamic Medicinal Literature and then building up ethical character according to writings about Law in Islam. Next, the writer has discussed biomedical issues like abortion, relations between patient-doctor, life-saving care and not to forget euthanasia according to the Islamic perspective. The writer hopes that the views in this article will help medical professionals as well as ethicists to understand Islamic perspectives on medical ethics and patient care<sup>10</sup>. The present study will find out similarities and differences to fulfill the literature gap for the development of interfaith dialogue.

## Research Method

This is qualitative research. The data includes books, articles, and online sources. The study is an in-depth analysis of Jewish, Christian and Muslim revealed sources to find out the similarities and differences in ethical approaches of Abrahamic religions. The objective is to strengthen interfaith dialogue.

## Jewish Ethics

According to the Torah, the Ten Commandments are the most important source and establishment of Jewish morals and profound quality. Most common moralities in Judaism include worshiping only God, no idol worshiping, mercy to those who are weak, respect for Sabbath day, no work on Sabbath for self, animals/cattle and servant, respect for father and mother, no murder, respect for human life, no adultery, no stealing/robbery, no false witness against anyone, not being greedy or having lust for another man's wife, servants and property, financial dishonesty of any kind and eating non-kosher food. Byron L. Sherwin discusses the Jewish literature on ethics after

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<sup>9</sup>Robin Gill, *Religion and the Environment*. (SAGE Journal, 2006).

<sup>10</sup>Padela, Aasim I. *Islamic Medical Ethics: A Primer*. (Bioethics 21, no. 3 (2007)).

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the Holocaust and suggests that Jewish scholars must devote themselves to the advancement of Judaism<sup>11</sup>.

Sexual immorality can bring extreme destruction to people, families, and societies, staying faithful to your wife, restricting yourself to your wife, and not being trapped by the beauty of an adulterous, characterless woman or another man's wife; are qualities of a good, decent, wise, gentle and pious woman in the book of Proverbs; core ethical teachings of Judaism; equity, uniformity under the watchful eye of the law, cherishing graciousness, social government assistance, and the standards of harmony and political opportunity; Respect for Freedom of others and even outsiders; arrogance and pride despise by God; doing Justice.<sup>12</sup> [ According to Ronald Green the virtue of humility is very central to Jewish morality.<sup>13</sup>

Jews are told to tell no lies, no false witness, no hiding the truth, no support to the stupid and cruel for injustice, no following the crowd in doing injustice and cruelty, not to speak against justice, no opposition or working against a poor man when he seeks justice for himself, return the strayed ox of your enemy, help your enemy's donkey when it is fallen under heavy burden, not depriving the poor of justice in a case, never support a false matter, no killing of poor and the truthful person, because God does not tolerate cruelty, no accepting of gifts because gifts take away the wisdom of the wise and stop the truthful from speaking justice, no oppression and persecution of strangers because Israelis have lived in enemy lands as strangers and were also slaves in Egypt and were oppressed and homeless, you shall cultivate your lands for six years and in seventh one, the lands will be left uncultivated to that the lands can have rest and the poor can gather from the land and whatever is left by the poor is eaten by the birds and the animals and your ox and donkeys and other animals and your servants can rest and be refreshed and the poor and the strangers of your land can enjoy the fruits of your land. The Torah tells the man to "love your neighbor as yourself."<sup>14</sup>

God also says that his instructions should be carefully listened to and acted upon faithfully. God does not want Jews to hear or speak of any other

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<sup>11</sup>Byron L. Sherwin, *In Partnership with God: Contemporary Jewish Law and Ethics*. (Syracuse University Press, 1990).

<sup>12</sup>Exodus Chapter 23 (An important summary of Jewish ethics)

<sup>13</sup>Ronald Green, *Guiding Principles of Jewish Ethics*. (Cambridge University Press, 1973): 367-80.

<sup>14</sup>Leviticus 19:18

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God. Jews are instructed by God to celebrate feasts every year because they were freed from the slavery of Egypt. Every Jew is instructed to present part of fruits and crops to God. The sacrifice of the animals shall be presented to God without blood and fat, this means eating blood is not allowed and the meat of the animal that is sacrificed will be distributed and will not be saved till the next day. An infant child will not be rebuked or shown anger. God promised Jews to cut their enemies if they follow his instructions. God stopped Jews to worship idols and told them to break all such idols. God said if Jews worship only God then he will bless their bread and water (a symbol of prosperity) and remove all the sickness from the Jewish people. No sickness will affect the youth or no poverty or drought will come to the lands of the Jews. God promised that the enemies of the Jews will be driven out of the lands.<sup>15</sup>

### **Christian Ethics**

The main virtues that a Christian must have and practice in life are; respect for humans because they are created in God's image; moral formation of children from early childhood; love, even your enemies; forty inspiring the Bible verses about love; we must love fellow human beings because God is love; any individual who doesn't cherish doesn't know God, love of a husband for his wife; confidence with goodness, and ideals with information, brotherly affection, and love; humility, gentleness, patience bearing one another with love. James Patrick Mackey discusses that power and ethics are contrary to each other in human behavior and power imposes its will whereas ethics encourages a response from humans which is free of pressures. The writer has avoided contraries and presented a philosophy of power that liberates human creativity<sup>16</sup>.

Christian ethics is a form of the divine-command position. An ethical duty is something we ought to do. It is a divine prescription. Of course, the ethical imperatives that God gives are in accord with his unchangeable moral character. That is, God will do what is right by his moral attributes. "Be holy, because I am holy"<sup>17</sup>. "Be perfect, therefore, as your heavenly father is

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<sup>15</sup>Exodus 23; 1-33 has been summarized here in this para.

<sup>16</sup>James Patrick Mackey, *Power and Christian Ethics (New Studies in Christian Ethics)*. (Cambridge University Press (November 3, 2005).

<sup>17</sup>Lev. 11:45

perfect" Jesus said to his disciples<sup>18</sup>. God can't lie"<sup>19</sup>. So, we should not lie. In brief, Christian ethics is based on God's will, but God never wills anything contrary to his unchanging moral character.

Christianity teaches integrity that gives security; ponder over things which are valid, decent, excellent, deserving of recognition; Honesty in weighing and measurement; qualities of a good woman trustworthy, good, hardworking, cares for family and servants; excellent wife crown to her husband, bad one rottenness of his bones; great spouse more valuable than gems; an amazing wife who can discover? She is more valuable than gems; being trustworthy is important; don't judge others; generosity; same standards for others. Jesus A.S motivated that do not to take revenge and; to trust God in times of crisis; forgiveness; forgiving others is required before asking for forgiveness from God.

Around fifty biblical verses are about forgiveness; organic products (favors) of the essence of God are love, tolerance, consideration, goodness, reliability; faithfulness, a devout person significant for getting regard; a pious poor man is better than a proud and unwise rich man; goodness will reward; no swearing only truthfulness; repenting and accepting Jesus A.S brings forgiveness and holy spirit; loving and worshiping God and loving people around you. Pleasing God is more important than human worldly masters; becoming like Jesus; fraud and eating up wages of labor should not be usurped; healing powers of Jesus A.S; resolving issues through dialogue; Holy books for teaching good to humans; followers of Christ chosen people; following Jesus Christ (A.S) makes humanity accomplices in the realm of God; followers of Christ should be sacred like Christ (A.S) God is prepared to pardon on the off chance that we atone; hardworking with sincerity; patience; let them offer wonder to the ruler, and pronounce his commendation in the coastlands; whoever is delayed to outrage has an incredible agreement.

William Schweizer has analyzed the issues related to power, and moral and ethical identity along with ethical and moral standards while creating a theory based on human responsibility from the point of view of a theologian. The issue of Christian commitment to moral responsibility has been emphasized<sup>20</sup>.

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<sup>18</sup>Matt. 5:48

<sup>19</sup>Heb. 6:18

<sup>20</sup>William Schweizer, *Responsibility and Christian Ethics*. (Cambridge University Press (March 1, 2010).

According to his teachings, he who has a hurried attitude magnifies imprudence; a person turns out to be new in Christ (A.S); following Christ will bring us enduring on account of this world; A conviction that God is all-powerful; in vain will be inconceivable with God." endurance in after Christ is significant; welcoming the individuals who are feeble in confidence and staying away from contention with them; concerning the person who is frail in confidence, welcome him, yet not to fight about conclusions; Controlling desire for ladies; don't give your solidarity to ladies, your approaches to the individuals who annihilate lords; time and space no issue for God. Suffering is a must for adherents of Christ (A.S); for this, you have been called, because Christ additionally languished over you, leaving you a model, so you may continue in his means; be eager for profound development; preparation for happening to Jesus A.S is must; religious training ought to be offered gradually to individuals who acknowledge Jesus A.S; wise managing, honesty, equity, and value; to offer reasonability to the basic, information and carefulness to the young; wise people ought to be local area pioneers; solid confidence, love, and immovability should increment with developing age; more established men are to be calm leaning, noble, self-controlled, sound in confidence, in adoration, and faithfulness; beware of individuals with the counterfeit appearance of Godliness yet void of character; do not return evil with malevolent, just do great consequently of insidiousness; see that nobody compensates anybody evil for evil. Serving parents was very important for Jesus A.S; this was the plan of life and manifesto of Jesus A.S. He A.S. announced his program of brief life and very brief preaching. He A.S. had an earthly of 33 years only. He A.S. served his parents for 30 years and did his preaching and miracles and other great works for 3 years only; controlling anger, no revenge, and no use of violence; when Jesus A.S was being insulted and crucified, he refrained from using power, taking revenge or expressing his anger against those who were insulting and torturing him. He was the Prophet of God, but tolerating everything he taught us that we must not take revenge, we must not express anger and we must not use force against those who insult us. Try not to look for retribution or maintain a longstanding animosity toward anybody among your kin, yet love your neighbor as yourself. Humbleness is another very important virtue of Christianity and it is called the virtue of virtues. The most important discoveries of St. Augustine were the importance of humility, which is not only a virtue but also a blessing of God but opposed to it is the

sin of pride. God's grace will be extended to those who are humble before him.<sup>21</sup>

Jesus A.S. wanted cleanliness of inner self, the purification of heart, mind, and soul; it is not necessarily the case that he was unconcerned with outward demonstrations, or how men behaved toward each other but since rabbis, Pharisees, and priests of Jews were so sinful and were focusing on physical cleanliness and were not paying any intention to their inner cleanliness. So, Jesus Christ (A.S) criticized them and said that they were like white-washed graves which contain a lot of mess and rotten bones; Solid analysis against strict pioneers; despite what might be expected, his most stinging words are coordinated toward those; Jesus A.S put forward a reasonable example of the requests of the God-focused life; Jesus A.S had sensible information both of human sin and of the conceivable outcomes of the recovered life; courage; love respect; hope; peace; liberation enduring humankind; toward the start of his service, Jesus A.S went to the gathering place and read out the expressions of Prophet Isaiah that the soul of the ruler has arrived because he has blessed me to lecture uplifting news to poor people. He has sent me to announce delivery to the hostages and recuperating of sight to the visually impaired, to set at freedom the individuals who are abused, and to declare the adequate year of the ruler.

These are the central matters of educating Jesus Christ A.S; confidence truth, loyalty, custom, precept, supplication, disclosure, understanding of the sacred text; administration responsibility, mindfulness, concern, inclusion, compassion, almsgiving; boldness penance, abstinence, grit, restriction, discipline, tolerance, moderation. The worth is portrayed by strength and certainty.

Seven deadly sins list and meanings; lust; gluttony; voracity; sloth; wrath; envy; pride; prostitution; cowardliness; faithlessness, indecent behavior; killers/murderers of innocent people, sexually immoral, users of evil spirits/sorcerers, idol worshippers; liars; disobedience, rebellion against God; telling lies is following devil; [child sacrifice](#); sex with creatures; incest; magic and divination; blasphemy; [worship of false Gods](#); [legal corruption](#); the scales of justice; [Homosexuality](#); [social injustice](#); major sins according to St. Paul; fornicators, nor worshipers of another god, nor philanderers, nor delicate, nor victimizers know you not that the indecent will not acquire the realm of God? Be not misled; neither fornicators, nor misguided worshipers, nor miscreants, nor womanly, nor victimizers of themselves with humanity.

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<sup>21</sup>Prov. 3;34

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McDonald emphasizes interpreting texts of the Bible about Christian ethics to fulfill the demands of the modern age. The writer has done an interdisciplinary study to address the problem of interpreting biblical texts<sup>22</sup>.

Christian virtues according to the Bible; respect humans because they are created in God's Image; moral formation of children from early childhood; love, even your enemies; forty inspiring the Bible verses about love; we must love fellow human beings because God is love; love even your Enemies. James M. Gustafson narrates that the book has discussed issues related to faith, unbelief, moral and ethical life, and education on moral and ethical responsibility. The role of theologians is as prophets, protectors, preservers, and participants. Also, the ethical discontent, the importance of Scriptures on Christian ethical grounds, the interlink of the Gospel to the moral life, the spiritual along with moral life, the relationship between historical interpretation, human beings in the ray of Christian faith and social sciences, the connection between natural and empirical sciences and philosophy of ethics, the norms of human beings and the basic problems and issues in the fields of medical science and genetic engineering have been discussed at length<sup>23</sup>.

Biblical teachings say regarding marriage and of a husband for his wife; the book of scriptures sections about affection and care for poor people; faith with virtue, and virtue with knowledge, self-control, endurance, faithfulness, brotherly affection, and love; humility, gentleness, patience bearing one another with love; integrity gives security; contemplate things which are valid, respectable, just, unadulterated, dazzling, commendable, fantastic, deserving of applause; honesty in weighing and measurement; qualities of a good woman trustworthy, goodness, hardworking, entrepreneurial, wise, care for family, active, cares for family and servants; excellent wife crown to her husband, bad one rottenness of his bones; Good wife more precious than jewels. Moreover, being trustworthy is important; don't judge others; generosity; same standards for others; do not take revenge; trust God in time of crisis; forgiveness; forgiving others is required before asking for forgiveness from God; a book of scriptures verses about forgiveness. Kind Heartedness; Perfection in Character & Merciful; Serving Parents was very Important for Jesus A.S; Controlling anger, no revenge, no use of Violence Humbleness/Humility; Jesus Wanted Cleanliness Of Inner-

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<sup>22</sup>James Ian Hamilton McDonald, *Biblical Interpretation and Christian Ethics*. (Cambridge University Press, 1993).

<sup>23</sup>James M. Gustafson, *Theology and Christian Ethics*. (Pilgrim Pr; First Edition (June 1, 1974).

self, The Purification Of Heart, Mind, And Soul; Courage; Hope; Peace; Liberate suffering humanity. The Gospel advises, "Whatever you wish that men would do to you, do so to them."<sup>24</sup>

## Islamic Ethics

The principal wellsprings of Islamic morals are the heavenly Qur'an and Sunnah, for example, expressions and activities of the blessed prophet (PBUH). Virtuous and pious people are most favorite of Allah; respectful, gentle, serving, merciful, and obedient to parents; spending one's wealth in Allah's way is the righteous way; ladies' privileges are equivalent to men's rights. There should be friendship and a close relationship of trust and sincerity with your wife; Muslims are brothers so fellow Muslims should bring peace between two Muslim brothers. Moreover, the Prophethood of Muhammad (PBUH) and unity among Muslims, the reward for truthful men and women, and fulfilling promises are important. Furthermore, honesty in measuring and weighing is important, forgiving others is good, humbleness, permission to enter a house, love just God, be neither miserly nor wasteful in one's expenditure. Islam urges the care for stranded youngsters, keeping one's promises, charity, slandering and defaming very bad, courtesy, debts, ordering the good, and forbidding the evil. Trade should be fair and usury is a sin, absolution and kindness, freedom of belief, gratefulness to Allah Almighty, humbleness/humility, justice.

Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) through his narrations promoted knowledge, learning, mutual consultation, persistence and perseverance, purification of the soul, rationality, reasoning reflection, thinking and pondering over mysteries of Allah, and repentance. Truthfulness, unity, and peace are encouraged by the Qur'an, reward for pious and believer men and women, rights of women regarding marriage and divorce, and the daughter's right to life. Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) asked Allah for the best ethics for himself; the best way to preach Islam (*Tabligh*) is by presenting examples through good deeds and actions. Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) fulfilled promises and refrained from telling lies. He (PBUH) also offered significance to counsel; directions were given during fights. He (PBUH) was a modest, loving, caring, kind-hearted, truthful, courageous and brave person. He (PBUH) was very generous, protector, and supporter of the needy, poor, orphans, and widows.

Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) encouraged people to work. He PBUH said "Not one of you is a believer until he loves for his brother what he loves

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<sup>24</sup>Matthew 7:12

for himself.”<sup>25</sup> Islam minimizes the feelings of selfishness and motivates him to care for others as a human does for himself. Allah Says, “Verily in the messenger of Allah you have a good example for anyone whose hope is in Allah and the Last Day and (who) remembers Allah often.”<sup>26</sup> Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) presented a complete example as the best teacher, human, father, husband, spiritual, judicial, political and army leader. Thus, to be a good man it is essential to follow the example of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (PBUH). In pre-Islamic Arabic history, there was a custom to bury the daughters alive. Allah stopped this evil. The Qur’an says, “Slay not your children, fearing a fall to poverty, we shall provide for them and you. Lo! The slaying of them is a great sin”.<sup>27</sup>

The focus of the Qur’anic message is on promoting virtue and avoiding sin. Through this, humans develop excellent character and conduct which is ideal for a Muslim. The Qur’an Says, “Lo! the noblest of you, in the sight of Allah, is the best in conduct”.<sup>28</sup>

Najma Mohamed says that in an era when movements about religion and ecology are at their peak, the voice of Muslims who are concerned about the environment, earth, and its people are also being added to these movements. The writer says that the Islamic position in debates on Eco-Theology is not well-represented; this book encourages how faith could be ethically practiced and run as an automobile to bring about change in society. The article has synthesized Islamic ecological ethics from sacred texts and traditions<sup>29</sup>.

Holy Qur’an urges us to do good for the weaker sections of society. For poor people, the system of *Zakat* and charity is introduced by the Holy Prophet Muhammad (PBUH). The Qur’an says “And whatever thing you spend (in His cause), He will compensate it, and He is the best provider.”<sup>30</sup> Islam is a religion of peace and harmony and dislikes the fight and quarrels between people and in the society. The Qur’an says, “And if two parties of believers fall to fighting, then make peace between them. And if one party of them doeth wrong to the other, fight ye that which doeth

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<sup>25</sup>Bukhari, Muhammad ibn Ismail, al-Jam-e-Sahih, Vol.1, Book 2, No.15.

<sup>26</sup>Al-Qur’an, Al-Ahzab 33: 21

<sup>27</sup>Al-Qur’an, Al-Hujurat 18: 31

<sup>28</sup>Al-Qur’an, Al-Hujrat 49: 13

<sup>29</sup>Mohamed, Najma. *Islamic Education, Eco-Ethics and Community*. (Studies in Philosophy and Education, 2014).

<sup>30</sup>Al-Qur’an, Al-Saba 34: 39

wrong till it returns unto the ordinance of Allah; then, if it returns, make peace between them justly, and act equitably. Lo! Allah loves the equitable”.<sup>31</sup> At another place, the Qur’an says, “And feed with food the needy wretch, the orphan, and the prisoner, for love of Him”.<sup>32</sup>

M. Ashraf Adeel is about some of the salient features of traditional Greek and Islamic Thought about ethics and tries to evolve a contemporary viewpoint about the issues related to ethics. The writer says that Greek philosophical ethics, particularly Platonic and Aristotelian philosophy has played a major and very significant role in forming and developing the minds and Thoughts of Islamic philosophers<sup>33</sup>.

Mariam Al-Attar has critiqued some Islamic viewpoints about genetically modified foods. According to the writer food ethical values is a rising branch of Islamic bioethics. The article gravely interprets the writings of authors who penned down for and against the use of genetically modified foods according to the Islamic perspective. The writer has revealed both theological and epistemological perspectives<sup>34</sup>.

There is no superiority of a man over another man for cast and creed. All are equal in the eye of Allah. Allah Says, “O mankind, fear your Lord, who created you from one soul and created from it its mate and dispersed from both of them many men and women. And fear Allah, through whom you ask one another, and the wombs. Indeed, Allah is ever, over you, an Observer”.<sup>35</sup> Moreover Qur’an Says, “and keep the covenant. Lo! of the covenant it will be asked”<sup>36</sup>. For the development of a just society, truth and commitment are necessary, so Allah directs us to fulfill the commitments and prohibit cheating and corruption. The Prophet Muhammad PBUH said that the most appropriate method to teach Islam (*Tabligh*) is to present examples through doing good deeds and actions in life. Prophets warned his believers that they should not preach what they do not do in their personal lives.<sup>37</sup>

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<sup>31</sup>Al-Qur’an, Al-Hujurat 49: 9

<sup>32</sup>Al-Qur’an, At-Tariq 86: 8

<sup>33</sup>M. Ashraf Adeel, *Moderation in Greek and Islamic Traditions and a Virtue Ethics of the Qur’an*. (American Journal of Islamic Social Sciences, 2015).

<sup>34</sup>Mariam Al-Attar, *Food Ethics: A Critique of Some Islamic Perspectives on Genetically Modified Food*. (Zygon®, 2017).

<sup>35</sup>Al-Qur’an, An-Nisa 4: 1

<sup>36</sup>Al-Qur’an, Al-Kahf 18: 34

<sup>37</sup>Al-Qur’an, As-Saff 61:2

Allah introduces Himself as merciful and forgiving. He says, “Who restrain anger and who pardon the mankind”<sup>38</sup>. Allah wants the same mercifulness and kindness in humans about each other. The word Islam originates from the root “slm” which means peace. So promotion of peace between God and humans between humans is the universal message of Islam. The Qur’an says “O ye who believe! Enter not houses other than your own without first announcing your presence and invoking peace upon the folk thereof. That is better for you, that ye may be heedful”<sup>39</sup>.

The methodology of the Qur’an is to direct people for good by mentioning its reward and to prohibit people from wrongdoings by the punishment of hell. Allah Says, “And those who believe and do good works: such are rightful owners of the Garden. They will abide therein”<sup>40</sup>. Every Islamic teaching has a cause behind it which is good and just for humanity. God prohibits adultery because it damages the family system. The Qur’an says, “O Prophet! When ye (men) put away women, put them away for their (legal) period and reckon the period, and keep your duty to Allah, your Lord.”<sup>41</sup>

The Qur’an is the last Holy book of God which summarizes all the teachings of previous Prophets A. S. The main objective of religion is to promote good ethical values in humanity. Holy books of God point out the evils in society and direct from avoiding them. Similarly, these books build a society on the base of virtues and the welfare of humanity to create a peaceful and harmonize society. Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) also said that on the Day of Judgment the high ethics of a believer will be the heaviest in the *Mizan (Scale)*. This saying of the Prophet PBUH shows the importance of high ethics for the forgiveness of a believer on the Day of Judgment by Allah.<sup>42</sup>

## Conclusion

Judaism, Christianity, and Islam comprise the Abrahamic traditions. At root, monotheism, a belief in one God, serves as the foundation of these particular faiths. As such, they share remarkable similarities regarding their respective ethics and morality. Often, their moral tenets are indistinguishable from one

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<sup>38</sup>Al-Qur’an, Al-Imran 3: 134

<sup>39</sup>Al-Qur’an, An-Nur 24: 28

<sup>40</sup>Al-Qur’an, Al-Baqarah 2: 82

<sup>41</sup>Al-Qur’an, Al-Talaq 65: 1

<sup>42</sup>Tirmidhi, Muhammad ibn Isa, Jami Al-Tirmidhi, 16, 62

another. These three traditions place great emphasis on justice, equality, and compassion as guiding principles for their adherents. All three faiths require charity and the proper, respectful treatment of those in need. In Judaism, feeding the poor is considered a *mitzvah*, a good deed, which is considered an obligatory duty. In Christianity, Jesus A.S' example of helping those in need is evident throughout the four Gospels and provides an example for Christians to follow. In Islam, the *Zakat*, or alms, tax requires Muslims to pay a portion of their wealth to those less fortunate than themselves. Acts of selflessness are in keeping with the tenets of Judaism, Christianity, and Islam. Compassion draws one closer to God, according to all three traditions. As such, the golden rule, found in all three faiths, exemplifies this belief. The Abrahamic faiths place a strong emphasis on justice, as well. Fairness and equality are major themes in the sacred texts of all three religions. For example, while some view the maxim of an 'eye for an eye as condoning violence in the Torah and the Qur'an, the verse, in fact, curbs violence. According to noted scholar Huston Smith, rather than allowing for unmitigated retribution for any harm, it limits it to the recompense of equal value. Also, Christianity and Islam add that God favors forgiveness the most rather than seeking vengeance. All three faiths adhere to strict monotheism, a belief in only one, supreme God. Monotheism serves an ethical purpose, as well. Ideally, this principle unifies belief to a singular entity. Accordingly, the Abrahamic traditions view all creation to manifest from the same God. As a result, principles of compassion and justice extend to all living things based on this unifying principle. To develop the process of interfaith dialogue, commonalities in Abrahamic religions should be made part of the school and college curriculums and thinking must be promoted among children that Jews, Christians, and Muslims are children of Abraham so they must live in peace and harmony and work mutually to promote peace as well as prosperity across the boundaries. Verses and sayings and doings related to peace, harmony, and tolerance of the founders of all three religions should be highlighted and promoted to educate the followers of these religions. Most of the ethical codes and morals of all three religions are common.



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