

THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN ALLAH AND GOD: A CONCEPTUAL ANALYSIS

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Abstract

The concept of God and Allah has been the problem of in pluralism in Nigeria where there is multiplicity of religions and each claiming superiority. However the two prominent world religions have made enmity of each other. Though the religions are from same source yet different in concepts. That God is Allah and Allah is not God vice versa. All these are investigated and commented upon. It is not proper to make categorical statement as we have left everyone to make or take a position on what, how and the situation that will determine one's position in the acceptability or otherwise of the concept. They do agree and disagree. A difference that is antagonistic must be avoided but must stimulate true dialogue.

Introduction

Religion is a very controversial topic to discuss especially between Islam and Christianity. Devout followers of both faiths have claimed supremacy over the other which is why throughout history; many scholars and experts have tried to elucidate the difference between God and Allah.

First is the analysis of each name which reveals a difference in meaning based from their language of origin. God is said to be rooted from the lebrn word Yahweh (Jehovah) which means the call upon or invoke, the lord.

Allah, on the other hand is rooted from the Arabic "al" which means "the" and "ilah" which means deity or god. But despite clear variation, both names basically refer to a very powerful being that can be called upon for help.

The next point to be analyzed is their behavior as recorded in accounts found in the Bible and Koran. God proclaims salvation through in conditional faith by his followers and through the sacrifice of his son Jesus. Allah promises deliverance to followers who do good deeds as outlined ion their holy book Koran.

Christians Worship Three Incantations of God

God that is known as the Holy Trinity, the father the son and the Holy Spirit.

Muslims know only one Supreme Being and that is Allah. There is also a big difference is how God and Allah see those who sin. God can forgive those who sin against him while Allah is a bit strict and wants those who sin to be punished accordingly.

God also allowed his prophets to perform miraculous arts on his behalf as a form of persuasion for Skeptics. The Muslims prophet Muhammad wasn't required by Allah to the same. But perhaps the most critical aspect in which these two deities differ from each other is how their followers can gain entry into heaven or paradise.

God does not allow sinners into his fold unless they repent and wash their sins through the blood of Jesus. Allah determines entrance into paradise through the gravity of a person's sin. Minor offenses are treated highly but big sin means internal damnations.

There are other points where both religions meet and veer away from each other. But no matter what their differences are, both deities play vital role in the moral values of the society and civilization as a whole.

Point (1): the word God has a different meaning with Allah “God” means to invoke or call upon while Yahweh means deity or god.

Point (2): God promises salvation to those who believe in him while Allah wants his followers to do good deeds to save their souls.

Point (3): God has three representations, the father, the son and the Holy Spirit while Allah is the lone God every Muslim must worship.

Point (4): God preaches forgiveness against sin while Allah wants his followers who sin be punished.

Point (5): God shows his presence through miracles while Allah doesn't.

Point (6): God will only allow sinners in heaven when they repent and pray through Jesus. Allah allows those with Minor sins to enter paradise or when they perform religions duties and die in the course of such action.

Christian-Muslim Encounter

Christianity and Muslim have been in contact for over fourteen centuries. As a religion which began after the time of Chris, and therefore after the New Testament had been completed, Islam has always presented a theological challenge to Christians especially in relation to Muhammad's status as prophet and the Qu'an's status as revelation.

The History of Christian- Muslim

The history of Christian-Muslim encounter is highly complying. Christians have viewed Islam in a variety of ways. For example, the attitudes of Muslim in Europe and North-America, living unit very recently at a distance from Muslims, have differed from those of Christians who lived historically amidst or in proximity to Muslims in Africa.

The experience particularly of Christians living within the Muslim world has varied wildly from time to time and from place to place. There are examples of harmonious, fruitful exchange as well as of conflict.

The former include situations where Christians and Muslims have collaborated in struggling

towards shared political goals from example, in the Indonesian independence movement and in the cause of early Arab nationalism.

In many instances however, political, economic and theological factors have complained to polarize Muslims and Christians into mutually antagonistic communities.

False images of the other developed in both communities which have resulted in fear and misunderstanding.

Consequently, Christians and Muslims have often inherited ideas, images and stereotypes, mostly negative, which marked their mutual perceptions.

Christians have often (but not always) perceived Islam as a political, economic and theological threat and have painted Islam in negative hue, in contrast to their own positive self-image. Many Muslims likewise have been included to regard Christianity and Christendom often identified with each other and with the West as engaged in an ongoing crusade against the Muslim word the mass media continue with few exceptions, to perpetuate such image.

In the process of rethinking their approach to Islam, many Christians accept that much that has passed for objective scholarship in past years was not free of bias and untruth more recently true more recently still, during the lost twenty-five years, dialogue between Christians and Muslim such as that initiated by the world council of churches and the viaticum as well as Muslims organizations both international and national levels, has seen the begging of a new understanding based on a reciprocate willingness to listen and learn from each other.

Dialogue is not only conversation (dialogue of ideas) but is also an encounter between people (dialogue of life) if depends on mutual trust, demands respect for the identity and integrity of the other, and requires a willingness to question one's own self-understanding as an openness to understand others on their own terms (Jaja).

Dialogue is primarily an encounter of commitments. The word conferred on world

conference or word mission and evangelism (Sam Antorio, Pura 28,1989) expressed our Christian commitment in this way: dialogue has its own place and integrity and in neither opposed to nor incompatible with witness and proclamation. We do not water down our commitment if we engage in dialogue; as a matter of fact dialogue between people of different faith is spurious unless it proceeds from the acceptance and expression of faith commitment. In dialogue we are invited to listen in openness to the possibility that the God we know in Jesus Christ may encounter us also in the lives of our neighbors of other faiths.

There are Muslims who have expressed reservations about dialogue seeing it as a convert from of Christian neo-imperialism or as intellectual colonialism. Also there are Christians who consider dialogue with Muslims as marked by naïve romanticism, which fails to confront the perceived threat of Islamic fanaticism.

Although such criticisms may be understandable, seen from particular current or historical situations they are not justifiable as generalizations.

Understanding Islam and Muslims

Christian's view of Islam have been shaped, transmitted and perpetuated since the seventh century, sometimes through polemical and apologetic literature. Islam, is viewed by some direct encounter but also, especially for those who do not interact routinely with Muslims, through polemical and literature Islam, is the viewed by some Christians as inherently intolerant, violent menacing.

This view tends to disregard the fact that Islam has been and remains a dynamic tradition which inspires and nurtures the lives of hundreds of millions of Muslim.

Christians also tends to assume that Islam is monolithic the same is morocco and in Malaysia. In fact, both historical and contemporary Islam, present considerable diversity in theological philosophical and legal schools of thoughts. In addition, the rich texture of popular piety results in a religious community which is as far from

homogenous. Histories, political structures, minority/majority composition of religious communities are cell factors which need to be considered as part of any attempt to understand Islam's in any given context.

However, whilst Islam is more uniform than Christianity, there are strong common convictions affirmed by all Muslim's. Islamic belief takes its cue from the fundamental conviction that God is source of all life and everything that exists. Traditionally, Muslim's call God 99 beautiful names, which describes God particularly qualities and attributes.

Belief in God's oneness results in Islam rejection of any concept of plurality in God and in fierce opposition to honoring as divine anyone or anything order as God. God sovereignty implies God's absolute lordship over creation as well as God's omnipotence and Omniscience God's sovereignty embraces everything. That God is just means that God desires the human being whom God has appointed his steward (Khulifah) on earth to know and to God's will because God is merciful God has ensured, by sending a succession of messengers that all people know God's will. This Islam teaches that from the begging of history, God has revealed god's will to humanity.

The Islamic Message is addressed to all Human Beings

Islam's calls all people to recognize the Qur' an as God's final revelation and to acknowledge the significance of the Muhammad's life as an exemplary source of guidance (see Q 33.21). from the earliest times, faithful Muslims have endeavored to present the accounts of the words and deeds of their prophet (Hadith) Busing their views on the Qur'an statement that God has never left any people without a prophet, many Muslims recognize a certain validity for other religions. Normally, Muslims consider it more desirable for people to be Muslims, but they affirm the Quran dictum that there shall be no compulsion on religion matters (Q2:256) and that people of faith should compete with one a n other in God's word trusting that in the end of the merciful and just God will tell us the truth about that which have been

differing (Q5:48) the Quran also affirms that Christians and Jews worship the same God whom Muslims worship (e.g. Q29:46). In fact there are many explicit references in the Quran to Jews and Christians who with the sabeerns are called people of the book” some reference pass negative judgments but several form the basis of traditional Islamic view that people of the book do not need to embrace Islam.

There are many points of convergences between Christians and Islamic belief both understand God as creator and sustainer, as just and merciful, as God who reveals his word and he will call people to account for their stewardship over creation both communities of faith stress the centrality of prayer, and the share common values and ideas such as the search for justice in society, providing the people in need, love for ones neighbor and living together in peace both Muslims and Christians often fail to recognize these points of convergence because they tend to see themselves in terms of the ideal and the other in terms of the actual.

Given these and other differences, it is essential for the containing improvement for relations that both Christians and Muslims make greater efforts to learn more about each other faith.

The Issues in Christians- Muslims Relation

In what follows we choose, out of a complexity to corners, some issues which are particularly importance and which are of particular importance in which should be discussed frankly by Christians and Muslims as they lives together as neighbors. In some cases, one group is in numerical minorities.

It would be a mistake, however, to view the relationship among groups solely on the basis of their numerical strength. Other factors, such as access to political power, economic resources or social influence, affect the positive or negative interaction between the various groups in some countries, a minority may dominate the political system, while another many control the economic field. There are countries where a minority group is made up of new comers, strangers, guest workers or foreign residents this status has strong

repercussion on their relationship to the host society. in some other countries the original inhabitants have been reduced to minority of the natives.

We cannot here deal with the many situating in which Christian and Muslim live together, each of which requires detailed analysis and invite dialogue in its own right. We can however offer consideration on some of the issues which many raise when Christians and Muslims live in close proximity to each other.

There are situation where national unity and communal stability are in grave danger. Different groups fear that their interests or right are being violated or threatened by the other. Such rivalries or contradiction are often portrayed as being based on religious differences. Religious sentiments are easily used as a tool to assort identify and mobilize people in the search for political power.

In many secularized societies where Christianity has historically shaped the collective identity and remains culturally influential, Muslims are confronted with the choice between integration and self-assertion. Many strongly affirm their human rights against all forms of racism and xenophobia, and call for a greater participation in public life and seek, at the same time, recognition of their particularities as individuals and communities.

In a number of countries where Muslims constitute a majority, there are political movements, religious leaders and intellectuals who call for Islamic law (sharria) seen as a criticism of government legitimacy.

These meet with opposition from some Christians and Muslims who, as citizens objects to a rigid political model which they deem restrictive of civil right and hindering society from coping with modern challenges. This call generates fear among many Christiana who cannot accept being put in the position of aliens or second class citizens in their own nations Christians often complain that the sharia, even when it protects the freedom of the Christian worship and practices

and guarantees their right they have their own personal law, leads inevitably to their marginalization.

The advocates of sharia implementation and its opponents, however, do not form monolithic group dialogue among them is possible. There are misunderstanding, uncertainties and divergences on both sides in this context, major questions are being discussed and call for further examination among such issues is

1. The relationships between principle or aims (maqarid) of the sharia and its applications or prescriptions.
2. The historical character of legal systems.
3. The interpretation of sharia precepts from the standpoint of the community's need (darwra) or interest (muslaha).
4. In the context of religious pluralism, whether rooted in a long history, or experienced in more recent time, interfaith marriages can provide opportunities for inter-religious understanding, they can also raise many difficulties, not the least of which is the question of the religious upbringing of children.

There are however, difference among Christians and Muslim in their views on marriage, its legal implication and how it affects parent-child relations. Muslim affirm that Quadratic principles protect women, ensure their freedom and respect them as marital partners yet Christians especially women, are critical of traditional practices as well as what they see as discriminatively regulation in Islamic personal law, such as in the cases of divorce and child custody.

Christians and Muslim in dialogue are left with three challenges. They are:

1. Reaffirming the personal and family values promoted by their various religions
2. Developing a common consciousness of the promises and limitations of inter-religious marriages and
3. Committing their communities, families and couples brought together in inter-religious marriages to cooperate with each other in

addressing pastorally the social and legal complexities experienced in specific situation

Difference Between Allah of the Muslim and God of the Christians in their Godhead.

Dr.Labib: first of all I have to say that we cannot know god by our own intellectual powers. In fact, what mankind tried to imagine god with their mind, according to (Romans chapter 1) we see that they created deities for themselves. And what kind of deities do they worshiped, the sun, they worshiped the cow, the frog, the fly.

The human mind was totally blinded by Satan and because of that, mankind created many deities that are not at all the true god. Now to know the true god, god must reveal Himself to us. How did he reveal Himself to us? He revealed himself to us through a medium, the Holy Bible, and the Holy Quran. And I want say here is very clear and explained words, if you don't know the bible the inspiration of the bible, the truthfulness of the bible, you are in trouble my dear friend. Because the bible is the only book, and I repeat, it is the only book that will tell you about the true god.

The only book you have to go and get yourself a bible and read it yourself, and try to discover god, the true God on the pages of the bible.

Conclusion

Now, what kind of God do we have? Allah in Islam is an absolute deity of oneness. But god in Christianity is a prime-god. Which one is a true God?

Well for god to be "self-sufficient, he must be a prime God why do I say that? For God to practice his attributes, he must be a prime God. He is a loving God, a talking God, as well as a healing God.

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