

PROPHETHOOD IN ABRAHAMIC TRADITIONS: A Comparative Analysis

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ABSTRACT

Abrahamic Religions—Judaism, Christianity, and Islam—are all prophetic religions. These religions share a common lineage of prophets with shared prophets. Prophets are the medium of communication between the divine and humanity. Although the faiths share the same lineage of prophets, starting with Adam, the description of the prophetic institution varies significantly in terms of the prophetic mission, authority, and finality. The paper aims to explore the prophetic mission of the Abrahamic religions, the link connecting them on a common platform, and the differences in the understanding of the prophethood in the three faiths. A systematic comparative framework is needed to explore shared roots and distinctive developments. The paper examines the concept of prophethood in the three faiths. It utilizes primary texts alongside secondary scholarship to identify the similarities and differences in the prophetic mission and its legacy, employing a comparative-theological approach. Judaism holds its roots in the teachings of Moses, Christianity in the teachings and resurrection of Jesus Christ, whereas Islam derives from the life and mission of the Prophet Muhammad. The three religions share a standard list of prophets with significant differences in the concept. It intends to evaluate and draw a comparison of the shared notions and differences between these faiths.

Keywords: Abrahamic Faiths; Covenant; Divine Revelation; Infallibility; Prophethood

INTRODUCTION

The three faiths—Judaism, Christianity, and Islam—adhered to the covenant of Abram (later called Abraham in the Biblical context and Ibrahim in Islam), worshipping one God called by different names, Yahweh or Elohim, God or Lord, and Allah, in essence, the same God of all, are Abrahamic Faiths (Peters, 2004, p. 1). Jews, Christians, and Muslims are called the people of the Book since the covenant of Abraham unites them all, recorded in their divine scriptures. The common link between the Abrahamic religions is their chain of prophethood, which started with Adam. This shared heritage serves as a unifying force in drawing Judaism, Christianity, and Islam onto a common platform. All three religions reveal their tradition of prophethood from

Abraham as their father in faith (Rom. 4).

The shared legacy draws its roots from the Old Testament and concludes with the birth of the Prophet of Islam. The Abrahamic religions also have momentous doctrinal differences, notwithstanding these similarities. Christianity recognises Jesus' divinity and his role as the saviors, while Judaism rejects accepting him as the Messiah. Islam, on the other hand, regards Jesus as a prophet rather than a god or second person of the Godhead. Despite their differences, all three religions share a common belief in Abraham's importance and covenant with God. Islam is similar to Judaism and Christianity regarding their prophets, books, and acknowledgement of religious truth.

Prophets are a medium of direct communication between God and human beings. In other words, prophets are individuals to whom God spoke directly and who, in turn, could interact with God in a way that an average person could not (Lewis, 2005, p. 3). Prophets act as a link between God and people and manifest divine decisions. In his work, Sa'd ibn Manşūr defined a prophet as someone who gives information about the Lord without having any human intermediary between him and the Lord. It includes the one who receives the word of Allah directly or by other means, i.e., an angel, or celestial soul, or intellect from the intellects, and so on (Ibn Manşūr, n.d, p. 91-92). All the Abrahamic religions have a definite system of the institution of prophethood, ingrained in the belief that God communicates His divine will to humankind through chosen individuals, i.e., prophets.

The Abrahamic faiths share the concepts of divine revelation and prophethood, which take on distinct potentials in the Biblical and Islamic frameworks. Each faith has its scriptures, prophets, and interpretations, leading to different perspectives on the nature and role of prophets. Nonetheless, the central idea of God communicating with humanity through chosen individuals remains a unifying element among these faiths. This belief highlights the significance of prophets as intermediaries between God and humankind, conveying divine guidance and messages to navigate the challenges of their era.

In Judaism, prophets are regarded as divinely appointed messengers of Yahweh who call the people of Israel to the covenant of God. The prominent Jewish prophets are Abraham, Moses, Isaiah, and Jeremiah, who play dominant roles as judges, leaders, visionaries, and elaborate Messianic prophecies (Deut. 3:10, Book of Isaiah, and Kings). Christianity is based on the Jewish institution of prophethood (Matt. 5:17) but considers Jesus Christ as the fulfillment of prophecy, the only begotten son of God (John 3:16 and Mk. 1:1) and his ultimate revelation- the second person of the Godhead. (Nicene Creed) Islam considers prophethood (*nubuwwah*) as a basis of their faith and Prophet

Muhammad as the last prophet, enduring the chain of prophets including Abraham, Moses, and Jesus (Al-Qurʾān 33:40 and 61:6).

Prophets are supported by the miracles and by God's consent to confront the challenges of their time. In the case of Moses, he was confronted by skilled Egyptian magicians. However, through God's power, Moses could perform miracles that surpassed the magicians' abilities. Similarly, Jesus' contemporaries were skilled physicians, and thus Jesus raised the dead and cured lepers and those suffering from incurable diseases. The contemporaries of Prophet Muhammad were talented poets; the Qurʾān revealed to Muhammad by Allah was a literary and linguistic miracle that no other poet could match or surpass. The miraculous nature of the Qurʾān served as a testament to the divine origin of the Qurʾān and the prophethood of Muhammad.

Prophets generally arise during cultural and economic tension when people feel threatened, deprived, unsure, or ill at ease (s.v. 1984 (22), p. 663). Prophets restore humanity to the turbulent society of their day. Prophets are endowed with the mission and power of a word not their own but from a divine will, preaching a universal message to the audience. Prophets clearly state that whatever they speak is not their manifestation but from their Lord for the betterment of humankind. They confirm what was revealed before them and what will be revealed after conveying the message entrusted to them from the Lord. Thus, the word of God is reverberated in a man's voice. "The prophet's theme is, first of all, the very life of a whole people, and his identification lasts more than a moment. He is one not only with what he says; he is involved with his people in what his words foreshadow" (Heschel, 1962, p. 6). This paper explores the concept of prophethood as a shared institution among the Abrahamic faiths, highlighting their theological commonalities and key doctrinal differences.

This paper will employ a qualitative methodology integrating comparative, historical, and theological approaches to examine prophetic institutions in Judaism, Christianity, and Islam. Textual and discourse analysis of primary sources—including scriptures and traditional literature like the Talmud and hadith—is used to compare the prophetic mission, attributes, and authority. This study ensures theological fidelity and critical engagement from an interdisciplinary perspective by situating each tradition within its socio-religious landscape and drawing on modern scholarship.

PROPHETHOOD IN JUDAISM

In the Biblical tradition, the word "prophet" derives from the Greek term

prophētēs, meaning one who speaks on behalf of God. It originates from the Hebrew term *navi*, which comes from the Akkadian *nabū*, meaning “to proclaim” (Schwartz, 2011, p. 583). Jewish prophethood is based on the belief that God chooses specific individuals to be prophets before birth. The Old Testament recounts, “Before I formed thee in the belly, I knew thee; and before thou camest forth out of the womb I sanctified thee, and I ordained thee a prophet unto the nations” (Jer. 1:5). The Bible mentions various titles for the prophets, such as *roeh*, meaning seer (1 Samuel 9:9), *hozeh*, also meaning seer (2 Samuel 24:1 and Amos 7:12-13), and *ish ha ‘Elohim*, meaning man of God or holy man (1 Samuel 9:6 and 2 Kings 4:9). The prophets serve as direct vessels of divine communication to the people, revealing God’s mercy and establishing His covenant with the Israelites. The prophetic writings, which are divinely inspired, manifest the divine and embody the concept of an ever-present, living, and self-determined God, the foundation of the spirit of prophecy (Davidson, 1903, p. 78). Referred to as men of God (1 Samuel 9:6 and 1 Kings 12:22), prophets are more closely associated with God than others, illustrating the moral and ethical concerns surrounding the institution of prophethood in Judaism. Hebrew prophecy aims to uphold Yahweh as the eternal, living God, providing spiritual guidance to the chosen nation, specifically, the Israelites. Consequently, the prophetic mission is spiritually religious, focused on instilling ethical ideals among the people (König, 1956 (10), p. 387). The Jewish prophets condemned social inequalities and injustices faced by the poor and oppressed while rejecting idolatry. Their primary concern was the upliftment of ethical covenants, regardless of social class (Amos 5:21-24). The Biblical prophets acted as reformers, advocating for repentance and cautionary measures against idolatry and injustices. The primary purpose of the prophets was to emphasise the fulfilment of the obligations of the Mosaic covenant for the spiritual and moral development of the Israelites, as well as their faithfulness to divine law.

The institution of prophethood in Jewish tradition forms the social fabric of Israelite society. However, there is a belief that the prophethood was specially reserved for the Israelite nation; only Israelite prophets were chosen to establish the divine covenant between Yahweh and the people. The Israelites were specially selected to be the deliverers and depositaries of the revelation. Only seven people among the Gentiles were deemed prophets, but they held a degree lower than the Israelite prophets. The Talmud elaborates on the parable of a king. When the king wished to interact with his friend, he lifted the curtain (in case of Israelites), but talked to the people behind the curtain (when conversing with Gentiles). Similarly, the parable of a king having a wife and a concubine. The king visits his wife publicly (in the case of the Israelites)

and secretly with his concubine (Gentiles). This shows that the Judaic system of prophethood holds special love and holiness for the Israelites over the Gentiles (Cohen, 1995, pp. 121-22). Moses Ben Maimon, commonly known as Maimonides (1138-1204), a Jewish philosopher and a Rabbi, discussed the different opinions and levels of prophethood. First, to attain the prophecy, a prophet must have moral perfection, intellectual perfection, and a sound imaginative faculty. It is the capability based on divine selection. Secondly, a prophet must have a higher level of human intellect to interact and understand the people best. Third, the hierarchy of the prophetic experience is divinely selected. It lays down the importance of divine acceptance and approval for the prophethood (Maimonides, 1904, pp. 219-21).

A peculiar feature of the Judaic and Christian notion of prophethood is the recognition of the female prophets. In the Judaic tradition, seven prophetesses of the Israelite nation were identified namely Sarah (Gen. 11:29-23:20), Deborah (Jud. 4 and 5), Miriam (Ex. 15:20), Hannah (1 Sam. 1-2), Abigail (1 Sam. 25), Huldah (2 Kgs. 22:14), and Esther (Est. 4) (Rodkinson, 1916, p. 36). In Judaism, prophetic utterances are the principal experiences of a prophet, denoting a feeling of fellowship with God and a communion with the divine consciousness, as well as sympathy towards the divine pathos. "The prophet's theme is, first of all, the very life of a whole people, and his identification lasts more than a moment. He is one not only with what he says; he is involved with his people in what his words foreshadow" (Heschel, 1962, p. 6). The prophetesses served differently from prophets in the Biblical tradition, but their presence marks the importance of gender equality in the prophetic tradition.

The Jewish prophets are categorised into former and later prophets in the section of the Hebrew Bible called *Nevi'im*. The former consists of the Book of Joshua, Samuel, and Kings, containing the narratives of the journey of the Israelites in the promised land, the rise and fall of the kings, the establishment of their monarchy, and the teachings of the pre-classical prophets, including Nathan, Elijah, and Elisha. The themes of the warning, repentance, and the message of hope and restoration are the key concepts of the prophetic books. The later prophets include the 12 minor prophets, including Hosea, Joel, Amos, Obadiah, Jonah, Micah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah, Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi, addressing the issues of social justice, faithfulness to Yahweh, and the restoration of Israel. The classical period of prophecy, which extended from Amos to Malachi (9th to 5th century BCE), featured prophets from diverse social backgrounds who boldly challenged national leaders and often faced persecution. They used symbolic actions to convey their

messages, emphasising moral integrity over mere ritual observance. Though they acknowledged the Temple cult, they condemned those who neglected ethical conduct. Tradition holds that prophecy ended with Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi (Dan and Sherbok, 2004, p. 124). In Judaism, the cessation of prophecy was with Malachi (Mal. 1:1). Since then, no new prophet has come to the Israelites, and they have been waiting for the Messiah for their ethical transformation and salvation. However, they denied the prophethood and messiahship of Jesus Christ.

PROPHETHOOD IN CHRISTIANITY

In Christianity, a prophet is defined as a “Christian who functions within the Church, occasionally or regularly, as a divinely called and divinely inspired speaker who receives intelligible and authoritative revelations or messages which he is impelled to deliver publicly, or in oral or written form, to Christian individuals and/or the Christian community” (Hill, 1979, pp. 8-9). Christianity follows the Judaic system of prophethood, culminating with Jesus Christ, the only begotten son of God, and an atonement for people’s sins. The basis of prophethood in Christianity is rooted in the Jewish notion of prophets. However, they regard Jewish prophets as the foretellers of Jesus Christ, the only begotten Son of God and second person of Godhead. Jesus is described as the promised prophet of the Old Testament, as promised in Deuteronomy 18:18, asserted in John 1:45, 5:39, and Acts 3:22. Jesus Christ is not considered just a prophet in Christianity; his blood is the remission of the sins of mankind, begotten from Adam. In the Christian tradition, Jesus is considered the greatest prophet (Lk. 7:16) in the line of Hebrew prophets (Acts 3:22). However, his presence is not limited to a prophet only delivering the message of the Lord; he acts as a mediator between the Lord and the human world by offering himself as an atonement for the sins of mankind.

The concept of prophethood shifted in emphasis in Christianity. Jesus Christ is regarded as the ultimate prophet, the Son of God, and the Messiah. He is seen as the fulfillment of the prophecies of the Old Testament and bringing a new covenant between God and humanity by his salvation on the cross. The crucifixion on the cross elevated his status beyond prophets and existed before prophets (Abraham), according to the Christian belief (John 8:58). Jesus is considered the foundation of the unity within the Church. In the Apostolic age, the three characteristic features of Jesus’ description are expounded in the work of Harnack. Firstly, Jesus was recognised as the living Lord; secondly, the followers of Jesus recognized the experience with Jesus and the consciousness of the Lord; and thirdly, the return of Christ, that is, the second coming of

Christ, was awaited by Jesus' followers (Harnack, 1902, pp. 164-65). According to Christian belief, Jesus is said to have the same substance (*homoousios*) as the Father. The core belief of Christianity is that Jesus is fully God and the second person of the Godhead, not a created being, but existing since eternity. Only then can the Son be the true revelation of the Father. The Son is consubstantial and co-eternal with the Father, as established in the Council of Nicaea.

However, there has been a dispute about the person of Christ since the first century. The existence of different sects of early Jewish Christianity raised questions about the person of Christ. The Ebionites rejected the divinity of Jesus and considered him a prophet, whereas Docetists considered Jesus to be God. Another heresy, the Alogoi, rejected the concept of the divine Logos. The issues jumped and erupted fiercely in the first three centuries and were resolved in various Ecumenical councils (Priestley, 1871, pp. 11). Further, in Pseudo-Clementine literature, Jesus and the early Christians are depicted as Jewish Christians upholding Jewish laws and following the rites of Baptism. In the writings of Clementine Homilies, Jesus Christ is depicted as a true prophet, stressing the commandments of Moses (Homily 8:6-7). Concerning Jesus as God, the Homilies refuted Christ as God but as God's son since the Father is unbegotten and Jesus is begotten and cannot be of the same substance. He emphasises that Jesus is of the same substance as everyone else, clothed with the breath of God (The Clementine Homilies, 16:15-16, 252-53). The issue persists in modern times in the writings of critical writers. In the works of Weigall, the teachings of Jesus were suppressed by the Hellenistic wisdom of Paul, for he was more concerned with the sacrificial death of Christ rather than his earthly teachings. Paul preferred the ecstatic picture of the divine Christ instead of Jesus the man and prophet. Paul's revelation of the sacrificial lamb of God for the remission of the sins of humanity dominated the teachings and the wisdom taught by Jesus Christ (Weigall, 1928, pp. 276-77).

In Christianity, the prophethood is not limited to the Jewish prophets and Jesus but extends to the apostles. The apostles were filled with the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost (Acts 2:4). The second Pentecostal blessing was received by all who heard the message (Acts 10:44 and 19:6). Thus, those people were chosen and endowed with this spiritual gift (1 Cor. 14:1). The ongoing prophecy involves the divine guidance, spiritual enlightenment even after the completion of the Bible. It is considered one of the everlasting gifts of the Holy Spirit. The spirit of prophecy is revealed by Christ to the Apostles when He breathes upon them, allegorically conveying divine vision. The prophetic leadership is confirmed when Christ guarantees that the Holy Spirit will guide them to the truth. Their decree to prophesy is conveyed in the knock: "*What*

you hear in the ear, proclaim from the housetops.” Prophets are considered in the Book of Acts as recognised teachers in the early Christian community, and Paul includes them among the ministries of the Church. According to Paul, the minister’s faith is both the basis and the degree of prophetic exclamation (Abbott, 1896, pp. 11-12).

Regarding the ongoing prophecy in Christianity, Irenaeus, a second-century scholar, asserts that since man was created in God’s image, prophecy is a spiritual gift declared by the apostles (1 Cor. 2:6). The people receive the spirit. Those who accept that spirit possess spiritual gifts and mysteries of God (Saint Irenaeus, Book V, Chapter 6). The verse in the Revelation of John states, “Then I fell at his feet to worship him. But he said to me, ‘Do not do that; I am a fellow servant of yours and your brethren who hold the testimony of Jesus; worship God. For the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy’” (Rev. 19:10). It emphasizes the essence of the ongoing prophecy centered around the testimony of Jesus Christ. This statement was used in the early church as the standard criterion for distinguishing between true and false prophets. True prophets exhibited a deep connection with the message of Jesus, establishing the discernment for the authenticity of the individuals claiming prophecy (Andrews, 1920, p. 940). Thus, the prophethood in Christianity starts with the Hebrew prophets to the birth of a son of God, Jesus Christ, expelling the original sin of humanity and ongoing prophecy for those having faith in the blood of Christ as the remission of sins.

PROPHETHOOD IN ISLAM

In Islam, there is a specific institution of prophethood starting from the Judaic and Christian prophets and culminating with the birth of the Prophet Muhammad. The institution of *Nubuwwah* forms the backbone of Islamic belief and practices. The Arabic word *Nubuwwah* is derived from the root word *naba’u*, which means news or to announce (Ibn Manzūr, 1984a, s.v. “Naba’a” p. 162). Alternatively, the word *risālah* is also used. The word *risālah* is derived from the root word *rasala*, which means to send or to deliver (Ibn Manzūr, 1984 (11), s.v. p. 281). A prophet is someone who has received a revelation from Allah and then communicates that revelation to others. He qualifies as a Messenger if he is sent to those who disobey Allah’s commands to deliver a message from Allah to them. A prophet is a messenger when he delivers the unseen message of Allah to the people. However, a prophet is not considered a messenger if he is sent as a successor of the former prophets to preach the message proclaimed by them already. Every messenger is a prophet, but not every prophet is a messenger (Al-‘Izz, 2000, p. 85). In the

works of Ibn Taymiyyah, prophethood is defined as a mediation between the Creator and the creature in conveying His law, an embassy between the king and his servants, and a call from the Most Merciful to bring them out of darkness into light and transfer them from the narrowness of this world to the spaciousness of this world and the Hereafter (Ibn Taymiyyah, 2000, p. 19). In Islam, the chain of the prophethood starts from Adam and incorporates all the Judaic and Christian prophets, culminating with the birth of the last prophet of Islam, the Prophet Muhammad, the seal of the prophets.

The Qurʾān recognises the prophets of the Old and New Testaments and names explicitly the 25 prophets, most of whom are shared by all the Abrahamic traditions. However, the Biblical and Islamic narratives differ greatly in narration and emphasis. The role of a prophet is understood in the fact that most people are made in a way that prevents them from understanding their rights and obligations without a mediator confirming Allah's proof (*ḥujjah*) for His servants in sending the prophets. Instead, their capacity is weak, allowing the prophets' messages to strengthen it, or there are evils among them that can only be stopped by force against their will because they will be held accountable in this life and the next. Allah's grace requires that when certain higher and lower causes come together, He will motivate the most upright individuals to lead them to the truth and beckon them to the right path (Dahlawi, 2005, p. 157). Without the community's support, the prophet's message may struggle to reach others; even if it does, it can be easily distorted. The Qurʾān acknowledges this responsibility placed on the prophets, stating that on the day of judgment, the messengers and the people to whom they were sent will be questioned about their actions and interactions (al-Qurʾān 7:7).

While upholding the duty of a prophet, it is necessary to proclaim the message of God loudly and without compromising the truth (al-Qurʾān 5:67 and 15:94) without having any reservation in their minds (al-Qurʾān 7:2). Thus, a prophet is chosen to convey this divine message to the people. In the works of Ibn Khaldūn, he highlights the prophets' efforts in conveying this sacred message. He states that, "God has chosen certain individuals. He honored them by addressing them. He created them so that they might know Him. He made them connect the links between Himself and His servants. (These individuals) are to acquaint their fellow men with what is good for them and to urge them to let themselves be guided aright. They are to make it their task to keep (their fellow men) out of the fire of Hell and to show them the path to salvation. The knowledge that God gave these individuals, and the wonders He manifested through their statements, indicated that there exist things beyond the reach

of man, that can be learned only from God through the mediation of (these individuals), and that (these individuals themselves) cannot know unless God instructs them in them” (Ibn Khaldūn, 1958, p. 184). The fundamental principle of Islam lies in the belief in all the prophets without distinguishing between any of them (al-Qur’ān 2:285).

The key belief in the institution of prophethood in Islam is that the message of all the previous prophets has been distorted, and to renew that message, Allah sent down his last prophet in the chain of the people of the Book. Prophet Muhammad is referred to as the *khātam al-Nabīyīn* or *khatam al-Anbiyā’* (the seal of the prophets) as mentioned in the Qur’ān: “Muhammad is not the father of [any] one of your men, but [he is] the Messenger of Allah and last of the prophets” (Al-Qur’ān 33:40). In his works, Imām Qurṭubī (1214-1273) states that all the traditional and contemporary scholars of the ‘Ummah agree that the words *khātam al-Nabīyīn* are entirely general (i.e., understood in their apparent meaning). These words demand no prophet after Muhammad as a clear textual stipulation. Refuting those who interpret the words *khātam al-Nabīyīn* in a manner that runs counter to the finality of prophethood is heresy and a cunning attempt to undermine Muslim belief in that concept (Al-Qurṭubī, 2006 (17), pp. 65-67).

Thus, the core doctrine of Islam is the finality of Muhammad being the last of the prophets, and no prophet will follow him. This belief is so essential to Islam that to deny the prophets’ finality is to deny the Qur’ān. Further, the prophets are free from all sorts of sins, whether major or minor, and never worship idols or assign partners to Allah. Prophets are divinely shielded from disobeying any of the commandments of Allah as they are sent on a divine mission. Therefore, a Muslim’s belief about the prophets is what the Qur’ān teaches about their lofty and sublime status.

ABRAHAMIC FAITHS: A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS

Fundamentally, Abrahamic religions believe that God communicates with humanity through prophets. The prophets provide God’s commandments and spiritual direction, and this belief is ingrained in the spiritual teachings of these faiths. Although Abrahamic religions follow a standard notion of the prophetic institution, they significantly differ in their prophetic descriptions. The significant difference between the Biblical and Islamic institution of prophethood is the fallibility/ infallibility of prophets. The Biblical prophets recognize the high standards and virtues of prophets divinely appointed for Yahweh’s mission, but consider them as other individuals capable of making mistakes and committing sins. The case of David having affairs with Bathsheba

and arranging the killing of his husband (2 Sam. 11), Elijah's fear and doubt and questioning his prophethood (1 Kgs. 19), Solomon's worship of foreign God's (1 Kgs. 11), daughters of Lot having conceived by her father to continue the lineage (Gen. 19: 30-38) and Jacob tricking his father Issac for receiving the blessing (Gen. 27). This flawed nature is due to the potentiality of human imperfect nature- the need for the forgiveness and repentance. Christianity strictly adheres to the sinlessness of Jesus Christ, while other previous prophets were fallible. On the other hand, Islam strictly adheres to the infallibility of the prophets from any kind of sin or mistake. The Islamic belief of prophethood rejects the Israelite narratives of the prophets as fabricated narratives. Islamic tradition presents prophets as morally exemplary for the people, divinely protected from every type of major sin.

Regarding the prophets' message, the Israelite people shared Yahweh's covenant, which was reserved for their nation alone. This covenant was not meant for any other country or tribe. The Talmud references where Israelite prophets held a more favorable position than non-Israelite prophets. On the other hand, Christianity shared the universal message of Jesus Christ for all nations. This message held equal importance to the Gentiles as that of the Jews. Jesus was sent for the universal salvation of all humanity. Jesus is seen as the scapegoat for the sins of humanity, and his two advents mark the importance of the fulfillment of Jewish prophecies. The suffering and the crucifixion of Jesus mark the first advent. The second advent glorifies the power, judgment, establishment of the kingdom of God, and fulfillment of Messianic hopes in Jesus (Martyr, 1930, pp. 79-81). However, the Jews reject his messiahship, and his presence is not mentioned in any of his contemporary Jewish writings. Except in the writings of Jewish historian Flavius Josephus (37-100) in *Antiquitates Iudaicae* and Tacitus (56-120) in *Annals*, no other Jewish writer mentions him. On the contrary, the Islamic message of monotheism had a universal appeal upheld by every prophet. The Qur'ān stresses the universal messenger of the prophethood that to every nation a prophet was sent (al-Qur'ān16:36). The prophets' message in the Islamic narrative transcended every race and tribe, and every Muslim shared equal reward with God. In the writings of Orientalists, the universal message of the prophets was the reason for Islam's success, accepted by all, especially the vulnerable class of society (Armstrong, 2001, pp. x-xi).

In Judaism, Yahweh had a special covenant with the Israelite people. In contrast, the Christian belief holds that a new covenant was established in the blood of Jesus, offering redemption for all those who believe in Him (Lk. 22:20). In the letter to the Corinthians, Paul expounds on the exceptional splendour of

Jesus' new covenant to the law of Moses (2 Cor. 3:7-18). The description of Jesus changed after the Transfiguration event. Jesus, at that point in history, is supposed to fulfil all the prophecies of the Old Testament. The alignment does not concentrate on the suffering of the Messiah and the coming glory. This event represents Jesus as the splendour of the kingdom of God and his Messianic declaration (Liefeld, 1974, pp. 178-79). Islam rejects all the claims of Christians as being distorted. The Qur'an mentions the pledge taken from the prophets to believe in the finality of the prophethood of the Prophet Muhammad. "And [recall, O People of the Scripture], when Allah took the covenant of the prophets, [saying], "Whatever I give you of the Scripture and wisdom and then there comes to you a messenger confirming what is with you, you [must] believe in him and support him." [Allah] said, "Have you acknowledged and taken upon that My commitment?" They said, "We have acknowledged it." He said, "Then bear witness, and I am with you among the witnesses" (Al-Qur'an 3:81).

In Abrahamic faiths, different prophets uphold the prime identity according to the tradition's theological framework. In Judaism, Moses is considered the foremost prophet for his ability to communicate directly with Yahweh for the reception of the Torah (ten commandments). Further, Biblical prophecy began with Moses as a prophet, deeply rooted in his close connection with God, performing extraordinary signs and liberating the Israelites from Egypt. Moses was blessed with the ability to perform miracles, such as turning the river Nile into blood, parting the sea, and is thus considered a prophet par excellence. Moses is portrayed in the Bible in three ways. Firstly, as a leader for liberating the Israelites into a cohesive society. Secondly, as a promoter of the religion of Yahweh, He revealed His name (Yahweh) and introduced them to the new aspect of religion by revealing commandments and laws. Thirdly, as a prophet and a law-giver, it was Moses who taught the Israelites the method of worship, and all the later prophets upheld the Law of Moses (Neile, 1909, pp. 633-34). In Christianity, all the prophets preceding Jesus Christ serve as foretellers of the coming of Christ, who existed before all the prophets as the Son of God. Jesus Christ is considered the greatest and foremost prophet in Christianity. With the arrival of Jesus and his new covenant, all the prophecies of the Old Testament were fulfilled with the blood of Christ. (2 Cor. 3:7-18). The orientation now focused on the suffering of the Messiah and the coming glory. The Last Supper, also called the Lord's Supper (Matt. 26:26-30; Mk. 14:22-26; Lk. 22:14-20; 1 Cor. 11:23-25), holds prime importance in Christianity, that is, Jesus' historical reconstruction of the old covenant. It gave rise to the new covenant by the body and blood of Jesus for the forgiveness of sins, that is, the atonement of the sins of all who believe in him as predicted

in John (the sacrificial lamb of God- Jn. 1:29). Jesus' ransom serves as the cornerstone of the new covenant, emphasising harmony and reconciliation for those who observe the Lord's Supper. In Islam, Prophet Muhammad, the final and last prophet, culminates the chain of prophethood (Al-Qur'ān33:40). His teachings surpass the teachings of all the previous prophets. The Islamic belief is that the earlier prophets' writings and teachings cannot be traced back reliably, making it difficult to determine the original teachings. Furthermore, the message of Prophet Muhammad was intended for the entire humanity, unlike earlier prophets who were sent to a specific nation. The life of Prophet Muhammad is the only prophetic description with complete detailing and written in the light of history (Mawdūdī, 2018, pp. 153-58).

The Abrahamic religions have a peculiar feature: man has been created in the image of God (*Imago Dei*). However, this concept differs in the faiths based on the theology and the understanding of the nature of God. Judaism draws likeness of man in the image of God based on the divine spirit. The spirit (*ruach*) breathed into man directly from the divine specifically makes a person a self with the power to determine his actions and control his nature, and above all, an ethical being able to direct himself towards God or move away. In Christianity, the original sin damaged the image, and the universal restoration of the image is offered in Jesus Christ. If any man is in Christ, he is a new creature, and the old things have passed away. Thus, Jesus Christ is seen as the image of the invisible God (Col. 1:15). The image of God in the sinful man is renewed in the image of Jesus Christ, with the belief that Christ is all and is in all (Col. 3:11) (Davidson, 1956, pp. 160-63). In Islam, the image of God is not explicitly used. It rejects all the anthropomorphic descriptions of God in the verse, "There is nothing like unto Him" (Al-Qur'ān 42:11). However, there are references that Allah created Adam in his image (Ṣaḥīḥ Bukhārī 6227 and Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim 2841). In Islam, it refers to man as an honored creation, as man was the last of the creation of Allah, and there is no likeness in the essence of man with that of Allah. The *muḥadithūn* have rejected any anthropomorphic comparison of God with man.

SUGGESTIONS AND RELEVANCE

The paper explores the comparative analysis of the prophetic institution in the Abrahamic faiths. It holds significant relevance in contemporary times' changing religious and social contexts. Religious misunderstandings, innocent killings, interfaith tensions, global religious issues, and the most recent and ongoing religious tension between nations have impacted the whole world. The recent decade has witnessed countless innocent killings in

the name of faith and political pressure. All are witnessing the global moral vacuum, and there is a need for a renewed and amplified framework of ethical and faith-based guidance. By exploring the theological foundations of the Abrahamic religions and the portrayal of their prophetic institution, all of them share the values of justice, truth, compassion, and above all, a shared prophetic legacy. The prophets' shared ethical teachings, spiritual values, and their shared moral responsibility can foster mutual respect and interfaith understanding among the faiths in times of global tension. This research offers an insightful contribution to the future dialogue among these faiths. Awareness of the convergences and divergences in prophetic teachings can assist in removing stereotypes, opening the doors of empathy, and building a platform for addressing contemporary moral and religious challenges. The prophetic model of bringing all the religions to a common platform will lead to the ethical reformation and the peaceful coexistence of the religions. The scope of triadialogue is not a new concept in academics. It has been done in the past also, but there is a need for the renewed model to encourage violence-free religious preferences. From an academic viewpoint, the research enriches the developing subjects of comparative religion, theology, and hermeneutics by employing a comprehensive methodological approach that creates avenues for applying traditional theological ideas to contemporary issues, thus connecting the divide between historical religious scholarship and current realities.

CONCLUSION

All the Abrahamic religions—Judaism, Christianity, and Islam—fundamentally believe in the institution of prophethood, in which God speaks to people through prophets as divinely appointed messengers to convey God's word. This belief forms the foundational doctrine of these religions, deeply rooted in their scriptural teachings. The Abrahamic religions are united by their reverence for prophets and their central role in mediating the relationship between God and humanity. However, the significance, nature of the revelation, and understanding of prophethood are interpreted differently in Biblical and Islamic terms. Sharing the common prophets, especially Abraham, Moses, and others, the role, status, and interpretation of these prophets vary significantly in these faiths. While Judaism highlights the role of a prophet as a moral teacher and a reformer for the Israelites and the ability to predict future events, convey divine revelation and guidance, prophecy ceased with the destruction of the Second Temple in 70 CE, marking the end of the biblical era of prophets. Christianity, while acknowledging the Old Testament prophets, considers them as foretellers of the greatest prophet and the son of God, Jesus Christ, who served as a messiah and a savior of humanity from the destruction

of the original sin by offering himself as a sacrificial lamb, restoring the divine relationship of God and people. He is seen as a universal savior instead of focusing only on Jews. On the other hand, Islam recognises the Biblical chain of prophets and considers them the people of the Book, culminating with the Prophet Muhammad, the final and the seal of all prophets. Despite the difference in the interpretation and the understanding of the prophetic mission, all the Abrahamic faiths adhere to the belief that God sends divine guidance, upholding the Law, and spiritual direction via prophets, focusing on the shared veneration and sacred communication between God and the whole of humanity until the end of the world and the hereafter.

All the Abrahamic religions share the same roots, tracing back to Abraham. History has witnessed the unending conflicts and tensions among the sister religions- political, social, territorial, and economic concerns. All the conflicts are deeply rooted in the religious doctrines despite sharing a common lineage. The Israel-Palestine war, Christian-Muslim conflicts, Israel-Iranian conflict, the rising antisemitism and Islamophobia in the West have intensified the scope of reconciliation. Religion can be a binding force among these faiths, sharing a similar ethical and social message. Thus, interfaith dialogue is needed in contemporary times to restore peace and harmony. The renewed efforts are needed for conflict resolution as a mutual responsibility of these faiths.

The study is primarily limited to the theological and textual analysis of the canons of the faiths and their understanding of the prophetic institution. Although it employs a doctrinal framework, it does not count the socio-political dynamics and their impact on the prophetic institution in the changing times and the contemporary reinterpretations. The research prospects can incorporate the ethnographic fieldwork in diverse religious and cultural contexts. The interdisciplinary approach, incorporating theology, sociology, and politics, can reinterpret the prophetic institution to combat the modern-day challenges.

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