

What Is - And An Appeal To The Heart

A thread runs through God, nature and human beings, which binds them all together. You may ask, "What is the connection between the three?" The answer is: "selfless love".

God separated Himself from Himself in order to love Himself. That is how nature came about. Nature, therefore, is a reflection of the love of God. From the tiniest blade of grass to the largest tree, from a small peck of sand to the highest mountain, everything is reflecting His love. It is God's love alone that has manifested in so many ways around you.

The nature of love is giving and forgiving. The nature of selfishness is getting and forgetting. Love only gives, it does not expect anything in return. This quality of God is very much visible in the nature that you see around you. No tree eats its own fruits; no river drinks its own water; not even cows drink their own milk. Likewise, this body has been given to serve others.

When all three components – God, nature and man – are in perfect harmony, there is peace. As God is selfless love, nature is the same; that is why they are always reflecting each other. Nature is always selfless; it only believes in giving and never receives anything, but the problem begins when man becomes selfish and does not follow his divine nature.

The behaviour of man is not in accordance with his original divine name. He is one thing inside and another thing outside. There is no connection between his true nature and what he is doing. Because of this mismatch between the world inside him and the world outside, there is no harmony: there is no peace.

(From A Spiritual Discourse)

It was to help correct man's selfish inclinations that God caused numerous prophets and teachers to appear on planet Earth, to speak unto man that he might hear, according to time and place. That is how various religions have evolved that seem to differ outwardly but inwardly are very similar.

Those of us in the West depend on the teachings from the Middle East - essentially the Judeo-Christian traditions, but the Moslem (Islamic) tradition is also from the same family.

However, as time has passed, the three religions remain separate from one another, despite their familial linkage, and, having lost their essential identity, members of these traditions often refer to their own tradition as being superior to the others. Or, at the very least, different. How can the values be "different" when everyone is made of the same material and contains the same heart and spiritual understanding? Why is this the case? Why, for example, do Christians (in the west) see Jesus as being God and, because of their belief in Him (Jesus), believe their sins are absolved and that they are 'saved'? Why do Sunni Muslims specifically insist that 5 times-a-day prayer is essential and that, with other religious duties, their obligations are fulfilled? Is Theology the problem?

It is a good question as there is no reliable basis for these views. Let us - with open hearts - reflect. The chief Christian authority, the New Testament of the Bible, is - at best - an eclectic collection of books put together under pressure from Emperor Constantine at the Council of Nicea, 325 AD - a long time after the demise of Jesus. Similarly, the Qur'an was finally assembled some time after the death of Prophet Muhammed and (together with a collection of sayings of the Prophet) make up the main religious text of the Sunni branch of Islam, but is not the view of all Islam - though the Sunni are far more numerous.

Many such Christians and Muslims mostly, I'm sure, follow exemplary lives, but they are mostly unaware of the more profound teachings of their own religion.

Further Revelation

Since the 1940s, the Dead Sea Scrolls and the Nag Hammadi Library have emerged to give us a clearer perspective as to the truth of the teachings of Jesus, allied to the Pope's own admission (1990s) that the usual Christmas Day celebration occurs on an ancient pagan day and is not the actual day of the birth of Jesus.

But, despite these fresh insights into Christianity, there is still a lot that has not been clearly revealed.

For example, in the Islamic Qur'an the Muslims are told that they should respect the 'People of the Book' (*ahl-i-kitab*) - namely Jews, Christians and Sabaeans. When I read the word Sabaeans several decades ago, I had no idea who they were, and thought perhaps that they were a religious community long disappeared. Not so: I have more recently found that they survived and later became known as Mandaeans, and from whom Mani seems to have evolved ideas to create his Manichean sect. The Mandaeans survived into southern Iraq having originated in Palestine, where they appear to have been persecuted and left not long after the demise of Jesus.

Most interestingly, the Sabean/Mandaean community have always believed in reincarnation, whereas formal Christianity expunged the belief from official acceptance, probably in 553AD. Until that point, Christians accepted the idea. There is also a strong suggestion that the early Christians were vegetarian.

It is to be noted that as time goes on (in every religion), followers stray from the original intent of the master's teachings and rely more and more on scripture - and their human interpretation. All religions soon experience distortion of their teachings. Messengers were exterminated, but they were replaced by others. And so Faith - a prerequisite to spiritual understanding - has never faded in human hearts.

What is of further note is that throughout time there have been people who have continued to seek Truth despite hostility from others and personal danger to themselves. Truth is not confined to one source. The Vedas, the Puranas, the Bhagavad-Gita, the Tao Te Ching, the Avesta, the Bible, the Qur'an, and many others, past and future — are all Teachings of Light, given to humanity from the One Source for thousands of years. But each of them contains precisely the knowledge which people of different nations needed to learn at the time, taking into consideration a multitude of evolutionary factors.

Of further interest is that the Sabean/Mandaean community take John the Baptist as their primary founder ... but, further, they claim that the basis for their beliefs and gnostic teachings originate in Egypt!

Now, John the Baptist seems to have been a co-worker with Jesus in the foundation of a new age. This idea of a spiritual partnership has nothing new about it for it is said that Aaron was a partner of Moses, and in Islam Ali was a partner of Muhammed. In each case the spiritual partners of the prophets were their actual cousins. The partnership always appears to be down to one (the prophet; Moses, Jesus, Muhammed) who was the outward guide to the teaching, while the partner (in this case John the Baptist) who was the inner teacher. And in saying that John was a return of the prophet Elias strongly suggests Jesus's acceptance of reincarnation.

That being the case, then Jesus was a prophet who had a special function but nevertheless was subject to the same overall tradition as all other prophets. And if it is accepted that Jesus was a co-worker with John, then - especially taking into account much evidence from elsewhere - then Jesus also was influenced by Egyptian spirituality. In fact the idea of sacrificial death followed by resurrection in three days is a story told throughout ancient religion, including the teachings of Egypt.

And then we have the idea (clearly expressed in the Gospel of Thomas) that Jesus and Mary Magdalene had a special relationship, possibly that they were in fact married. It was she who was foremost present at the Crucifixion and the Resurrection and about whom there is a very strong tradition that eventually she went to the south of France. There is a strong indicator that she died in the region of Languedoc, a place that later was very much the centre of so-called heretical activity in the form of the Knights Templar and also the Cathars, who seem to have been a derivative sect of the Sabean/Mandean community! As history tells us, the Cathars were ruthlessly hunted down and killed - often by burning - by the official church despite efforts by the Templars to protect them.

Now - why did the Templars have such special sympathy with the Cathars? It is because they held very similar spiritual views - in reincarnation and in the teachings of John the Baptist, as well as knowledge of sacred geometry and other mystical teachings. The view of the Templars was later to also cause their demise, but the basis of their beliefs would appear to survive in freemasonry.

It is well known that while they were in the Middle East, the Templars gained much knowledge from so-called heretical groups that lived there, including the Sabean/Mandean community and also the Sufis, the upholders of the inner teachings of Islam, who probably derived some of their knowledge from Sabean/Mandean sources, and the Shia Isma'ili Muslims loyal to the line of Ali, the spiritual partner of Muhammed. It is thought that the Templars also discovered hidden knowledge at Temple Mount, Jerusalem.

The Roman Catholic Church, however, gained complete dominance over European religious matters by the 1300s - once the Cathars and Templars influence had been effectively removed - and dominated European religious thinking for another 200 and more years, suppressing so-called heretical thought by cruelty. Interestingly, however, the 13th c. St. Francis of Assisi is known to have found affinity with Muslim Sufis. And, of course, the eastern Christian Church has always held a different perspective to its western counterpart, though there is much similarity. This situation has a corollary in the Unitarian movement, which derives from the views of Arius in early Christian times.

Henry VIII of England put his foot down and the development of the Protestant Church came about, plus the Renaissance. However, the Protestant Church never did go back to try to find the original teachings of Jesus or anything akin to it, and so western Christianity has never regained the essence of Jesus's real teachings. Indeed, the following of Christianity has mainly become more fundamentalist and based on what is in the Bible rather than including scripture from other sources (that were acceptable up to the Council of Nicea, 325AD).

It is notable, however, that the disciple Thomas was instructed by Jesus to take the Gospel to the Malabar coast (south-western India) and it is recorded that the local 'Hindus' found no argument with those teachings. Thus the Hindus and the Thomas Christians lived peacefully side-by-side until the rough incursion of Portugese Roman Catholicism in the 16th c., when they managed to destroy much of the Thomas Christians' scripture. Thomas Christianity exists to this day, but not much in the form taught by Thomas himself.

In this link with India we find a further plausible link in the legend that Jesus himself travelled to India Persia and Egypt between the ages of 12 and 29. An account of this is reported as being seen in a Tibetan monastery by a Russian explorer and writer during the 19th c. It has been confirmed by sages from India since then, they also having had access to the Tibetan record.

More recently, a great Hindu sage has declared that Jesus was not spiritually the 'Son of God' when he was born, but that he went through processes of initiation and trials until Jesus actualised that state (as 'Son of God') and, finally, announced that he and God were One. The life of Jesus and his spiritual development by example and suffering is, we are told by those who know, supposed to be the true way of salvation for all, and is in accord with the Hindu scriptures: the *Vedas* and *Upanishads*.

Sage Vivekananda visited America in the 1890s with the specific purpose of re-kindling True Christianity there, and was well received.

Guatama Buddha, another proof of Indian spiritual teaching, said that many Buddhas preceded him - he was not the only Buddha. Just like the Buddha, Jesus was one of many messengers, and 'True Christianity' is no different in essence to the core teaching of any religion. But many of the sayings of Jesus have been recorded and are particularly poignant.

The Teachings of Jesus

Jesus said: "If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me." The cross, however, pre-dates Jesus and is the most ancient cosmic symbol: the vertical line symbolises spirit while the horizontal one symbolises matter, which together create all that exists. The cross symbolises *karma*. One who is unwilling to accept the cross cannot follow, but to take it means expressing humility before the *karmic* discharge of old debts, the conscious extirpation of vices, and the unconditional acceptance of probations.

The Bible does not make this very clear, yet there are indicators in the Bible that this is so and there have been many advanced teachers who have confirmed this.

'True Christianity' and the purpose of Jesus is much more in accord with the thoughts of great thinkers such as Ralph Waldo Emerson, Dr. Albert Schweitzer and Schopenhauer, and in the Spiritual Discourse that precedes this humble essay.

To Reflect On

All True Religion is one in its aim - the salvation of the soul and the burning of karma through righteous (self-less) living and devotion to God.

No religion is better than another. They may differ externally but they all - inwardly - have the same purpose.

The selfless values of True Religion are needed - now - both to solve the world's problems and for man to reach his true potential.

The Way to Divine Love is the key to success. And that can only be achieved through the Heart.

The purpose of karma is to direct everyone towards the path of evolution.

Hence Love is the quickest way of redeeming one's karma.

In order to hear one's Heart, man must extinguish the noise of his own egotism and begin to pay attention to the Heart — then its voice of Truth will be heard more and more often.

Knowledge is useless unless it is applied in life: experience - not ritual - is vital.

Experiential knowledge enters the Heart, called the Chalice; after being imbued by the energy of the Heart, it becomes man's invisible and unalienable property for all his subsequent lives.

That is why the human Heart feels and intuitively knows much more than the brain.

The oft-quoted number 666 symbolises the old era, marked with brutish strife between people, for the beast has been dominant in man. But now the time has come for the Divine Number (999) to gradually become dominant. By self-work through the Heart, by service, this can be achieved.

Now, the whole world is awaiting the coming of the Messiah, and each people gives Him a very dear and beautiful Name, often unaware that these Names belong to One and the same Supreme Spirit.

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