

### 379 Hope for the world?

Looking at some stats on Wikipedia, it seems that more than half the world's population believe that there is One God, and only One God. So that's the Abrahamic faiths: Judaism, Christianity and Islam – but I realise that, for a proportion, that belief might be nominal.

This set me to some compare-and-contrast thinking, although my view is, of course, affected by having been born in what was then (1948) a 'Christian country'. While I know quite a lot about what Christians believe, and as that faith 'grew out of' the Jewish faith, I know a certain amount about Judaism, I don't yet know much about Islam. Mind you, I'm keen to learn, as I feel it's extremely important – for the sake of the planet, if nothing else – that Christians do learn to understand and appreciate Islam, and vice versa.

Sadly, certain factions within Christianity actually view Islam as evil which is (massive understatement coming...) extremely unhelpful. Then again, some *Christian* groups have viewed other *Christian* groups as evil, and have even used torture and murder to ensure that the 'true truth' prevails. (One person I consulted said that there has been an element of that within Islam, too, sadly.) The One God must almost despair at the variety of ways we humans manage to get it wrong!

In my articles, I try to see things from a positive viewpoint, and I recently spotted what seemed to be a commonality between Christianity and Islam, so I drafted an article and sent it to four lovely people I know, two Christians and two Muslims. When one of the Christians, who has lived and worked amongst Muslims for many years, pointed out how wide of the mark I was, I scrapped it!

I still think that God wants to communicate with all of us – all faiths – so that we can better look after each other, and look after the planet. And it seems we agree that God has communicated through human agents – 'prophets' – in trying to get us to be less barbaric. But today, the stakes are that much higher because humans have much more power and ability both to enhance life and to destroy it.

And the other thing we all agree on is the reality of the force of evil!

Interestingly, one friend offered this list of 'prophets' – historic characters common to both Christians and Muslims, people through whom God has tried to communicate:

Adam, Noah, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Joseph, Moses, David, Solomon, Jonah, Job, John the Baptist, Zechariah and Jesus the Messiah.

Adam, Nuh, Ibraheem, Ishaq, Yaqoob, Yusuf, Musa, Dawud, Sulaiman, Yunus, Ayyub, Yahya, Zakariya and Isa Al-Maseeh.

In the Bible, it says that God spoke to Abraham: 'I want to bring blessing to the whole world, through you and your offspring.' Not 'bring blessing (just) to you and your fellow believers', but **through you to everyone**, so am I totally unrealistic to hope that Christians and Muslims could work together, at least on practical, planet-saving issues?

(Maybe try googling "a common word" – interesting?)

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