Holy Scriptures of Judaism, Christianity, and Islam

Name

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Judaism, Christianity, and Islam are three of the most important and widely practiced religions of the world which are also called as the scriptural religions. These are called the scriptural religions because they affirm the notion that a divine existence is responsible for creating the world, human beings are managing the system of the whole world. The affirmation has been made in the written form, through the holy scriptures of the three religions which are Torah, Gospels and the Holy Quran. The books were transferred to human beings through the prophets of their religion and have reached to modern society after passing through a number of phases. There are different views about the responsible figures for writing the Holy Scriptures of Judaism (Torah), Christianity (Gospels) and Islam (Quran). In addition to it, a number of challenges were also posed to the transition of these holy texts from the oral tradition to the written word and the holy texts also pose a number of challenges to the historians who try to comprehend the origins and development of the respective religions. This paper will discuss in depth the Holy Scriptures of Judaism, Christianity, and Islam and explore the challenges deemed to the transition and writing of the Holy Scriptures.

One of the most important questions posed towards the holy scriptures of Judaism, Christianity, and Islam, which are Torah, Gospel and Quran is that who was responsible for writing these Holy Scriptures. There are a number of views and concepts about this matter, which the historians have discussed in their writings and which have also been communicated to the general society through the words of mouth. The most common belief about the Torah is that God is the figure who taught Moses, which has been composed in the form of the Holy Scripture. Friedman (2019) has discussed in his writing that

“There are traditions concerning who wrote each of the biblical books – the Five Books of Moses and supposed to be by Moses, the book of Lamentations by the prophet Jeremiah, half of the Psalms by King David – but how is one to know if these traditional ascriptions are correct (Friedman, 1)?”

The writing provides support to the point that the Torah is written, Moses. However, the matters and issues discussed in the holy book and the teachings presented through it are not the words of Moses, but of God, who has directly communicated them to him, in order to provide guidance to His people. In addition to it, the gospel is also the words of the god which was communicated to human beings through Jesus. However, there are a number of other holy transcripts of the Christians which are associated with different holy figures (Friedman, 2019). Those holy figures have not only composed the holy teachings but also have made the amendments, according to their understanding and the need of time. The holy books describe the events of the life of Jesus, as well as shed light on his teachings. The language of the book is not that formal or authoritative that it can be associated with the words of God. Peters (2018) has discussed in his book that

“The ascribe authors of the gospels, each of whom has a somewhat distinctive voice, are all enveloped in an opaque tradition or else turn out be another anonymous collector of logia like the unknown figure who stands behind Q and the Gospel of Thomas. In the Pauline letters, however, and in the Quran, we stand face to face not merely with a voice but with a full-throated personality (Peters, 123).”

So, the evidence reveals the fact that the language of the Holy Scriptures, apart from that of Quran is opaque and anonymous. Different historians and scholars have accounted that the god is the figure who is responsible for the writing of the Quran. The text of the whole Quran was revealed upon the last prophet of Islam, Mohammad (SAW) through the angel Gabriel. The holy Quran was composed in a long time span of twenty-two years, in the life of the holy prophet, who then narrated the revelations to his companions, who were assigned the duty of composing it in the written form. The teachings of the holy Quran or its writing are the same even after hundreds of years and no change has been made in it by the followers of the religion (Peters, 2018).

A number of challenges were by the transition of these holy stories from oral tradition to the written word, which is also one of the most important reasons that the teachings and writing of Torah and Gospel are not in their original form. One of the most important challenges in this regard is that at the time the Holy Scriptures were revealed to the people of their era, most of the people denied their authority and refused to accept it. With the passage of time, they accepted the fact that the scriptures were from the god and not the words of human beings. For a great period of time, the messages and teachings of these holy books were passed on to the believers through the oral tradition, which greatly changed the original text, except that of the Holy Quran. The scripts of Torah and Gospel were then composed by the common people, according to their understanding of the teachings, who also changed them for the clarity of the readers, as well as due to their efforts of making it easier for the followers. No specific challenges were accounted during the transition of the holy Quran from oral tradition to written word because the teaching was composed into a transcript n the guidance of the last prophets of Islam, who was the direct receiver of the teachings. In case of any issue or concern, the composers of Quran sought the guidance of the prophet, who amended it. Once it was completed, the written transcripts were sent to different parts of the world which were initially copied and later published and reached the next generations in its original form (Hussain, Bakhtiar, Brettler, Bruce, Carrigan, Frankel, & Reda, 2012).

The challenges that these writings pose for historians trying to comprehend the origins and developments of these three religions is that there is a number of variations in the texts of Torah and Gospel and there is no way to find which one is the real. The people of different times have tried to justify the authenticity of different versions, however, comparing the language, teachings and time of availability of different texts of Torah and Gospel raise serious concerns for the historians, who cannot deny the fact that the changes have been made by the human beings in the original scriptures, as the detail of the incident and events are altered in different versions. The historians have to face the challenge of identifying the truth and its evidence through historical incidents or transcripts. On the other hand, the writings and teachings of Islam provide a complete detail about the development of the religion, as there are no variations in the transcripts of the holy book (Hussain et al., 2012).

The holy scriptures of any religion are the source of teaching and guidance for their followers. The holy scriptures of Torah and Gospel which had been presented by the god are not in their original form now, and changes have been made by the different religious figure according to their understating and ease of the followers. This has posed a challenge to the historian who cannot be sure about the development of the religion. O the other hand, the teachings of Quran, which had been revealed by the god on the last prophet of Islam, is in its original form even after such a long time and provides the opportunity to the historians to know the development of the religion.

References

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