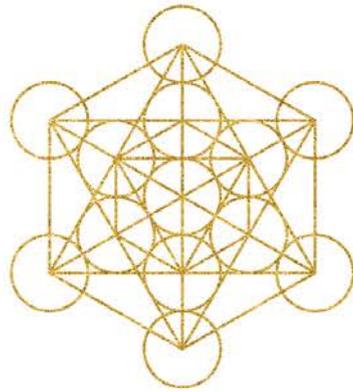


THE FORGOTTEN TRUTH

HISTORY DECODED THROUGH SCRIPTURE



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The Ahmadi Religion of Peace and Light

www.theahmadireligion.org

“The true student will read between the lines and gain wisdom.”

Hermes

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Introduction

What's the Purpose?

You get up, go to work, wait for the day to end, watch some TV and then go to bed. The next day you do the same again. Maybe you get to go on vacation once a year. And then you do it all again, from the beginning. The hamster wheel of life keeps turning. Every day is the same. And what is the purpose of it all? Are we waiting for retirement? So we are taken care of in old age when we can no longer enjoy life because we are sick? That sounds pretty meaningless. But what else are we supposed to do? Where are we meant to find purpose? Are we meant to go to church or convert to Islam? How could we, while faced with numerous scandals and wolves in sheep's clothing that call themselves "religious representatives"?

The Vatican is one of the richest countries in the world and owns luxury goods worth billions, while Christians around the world are starving. The Catholic Church pardons child molesters - finding it more acceptable for men to lay with "young lads" than to start a family.

Islamic scholars aren't any better. So-called "Sheikhs" publish absurd legal verdicts saying women are forbidden from watching football¹ or sitting on chairs. They rule that it is Islamically forbidden to marry if you are poor and that female employees should breastfeed their male co-workers, so working with them is "permissible".² Shia scholars rake in million-dollar donations, which their sons use to buy houses in the supposedly evil West. While women in Iran are being forced to wear a headscarf, Khamenei and his entourage earn money by offering sex tourism for pilgrims.³

In Burma, Buddhists commit genocide in the name of Buddha and burn Muslim children alive.⁴ And Hindus throw babies from temple roofs in the hope that Shiva will be kind to them.⁵

In the end, humanity is divided. The world currently has 45,000 different Christian denominations. The Copts, the Catholics, the Baptists - they all believe they know the true

¹ Iran again bans women from football stadiums. (2022, March 30) Retrieved from: www.france24.com

² Breastfeeding fatwa by a sheikh from Egypt's Azhar. (2009, May 18) Retrieved from: english.alarabiya.net

³ Prayer, food, sex and water parks in Iran's holy city of Mashhad. (2015, May 7) Retrieved from: www.theguardian.com

⁴ Special Report: Buddhist monks incite Muslim killings in Myanmar. (2013, April 8) Retrieved from: www.reuters.com

⁵ For Babies in India, a 30-Foot Plunge for Good Luck. (2016, July 28) Retrieved from: www.nytimes.com

religion of Jesus. And in Islam there are not only Sunnis and Shiites, but Sufis, Zaidis, Ismailis and many other sects. This division causes wars, racism and even genocide and religion appears to be nothing more than a means to achieve political goals. Why is it so hard to find God when he created us? Can atheists really be blamed for choosing to doubt the very existence of God? Even those who describe themselves as more or less religious know very well that something is wrong with their faith. They just don't dare to take a closer look as they fear losing their culture, their habits or their identity. But if God is real, what is there to fear?

In summary: Something is wrong. Now we are left with two options: Either we continue to ignore the problem and distract ourselves from it with our mundane lives. Or we take a closer look and try to figure out what the cause of the problem is. In this book we offer an alternative explanation of the state of the world today. We will look into history and follow the events that brought us to this point.

Chapter 1

The Corruption of History

To understand why the world is the way it is today, we must first acknowledge that history, as we know it, is not 100 percent complete and accurate. Historically, heads of state have used the method of falsifying history to erase certain knowledge and certain unpleasant ideas from people's minds.⁶

The Corruption of History is a Fact

One of the earliest examples of historical distortion is the obliteration of the ancient Egyptian Queen *Hatshepsut*. After her death in 1457 BC her successor, Thutmosis III, systematically removed her image from monuments, statues, cartouches and the official list of Egyptian rulers. It seems that Hatshepsut represented certain ideas that her successors wished to forget. Defaced images of Queen Hatshepsut can now be found in museums across Egypt, but Thutmose and Amenhotep II thrived for millennia and the female king had completely disappeared from Egyptian history until her existence was rediscovered in the 20th century.



Egypt was not alone in this. The destruction of images by government decree in the Roman world is called “*damnatio memoriae*”. Such a decree meant that the name of the damned was scratched from inscriptions, his face carved from statues, and the person excluded from official records. It is unclear how many Romans received the *damnatio memoriae* judgment, as many of them may actually have vanished forever. However, scratches in ancient Roman carvings, as well as some court records, show that this was a widespread practice.

But even in modern times, such methods were widely used. For example, in 1940, Joseph Stalin executed his former associate Nikolai Yezhov and made sure that Yezhov's picture was deleted from all photos with Stalin. Thus, among art historians, Yezhov has been nicknamed “The Vanishing Commissar” because his face was retouched from official press photos after his execution. He is one of the most well-known examples of the Soviet press making someone who had fallen out of favor disappear. Just like Hatshepsut and Akhenaten in ancient Egypt.

⁶ Churchillisms: “Leave the Past to History” (which He will Write). (2016, October 19). Retrieved from: winstonchurchill.hillsdale.edu

How does all of this relate to religion?

If we look at the stories of the Prophets and Messengers in the Bible, Quran, Bhagavad Gita and other religious texts, we see that all of them were revolutionaries and critics of the system. Moses rebelled against the most powerful ruler of his time, the Pharaoh of Egypt, and “kidnapped” his slaves to establish his own sovereign nation. Jesus publicly referred to the Jews of the time as “children of the devil”⁷ and criticized the corruption of the Jewish scholars so vehemently that they ultimately handed him over to the Romans.

14 In the temple courts he found people selling cattle, sheep and doves, and others sitting at tables exchanging money.

15 So he made a whip out of cords, and drove all from the temple courts, both sheep and cattle; he scattered the coins of the money changers and overturned their tables. 16 To those who sold doves he said, “Get these out of here! Stop turning my Father’s house into a market!”⁸

Prophets are sent to change the circumstances of their time. Therefore, they repeatedly encounter strong resistance from the establishment. Although many Islamic practices today seem backward and outdated, the Prophet Mohammed was a radical revolutionary during his lifetime. He banned alcohol in a society where drinking was rampant. He gave women the right to divorce, gave them a share in the inheritance as well as the right to an education - all this in a society where newborn girls at the time were regularly buried alive.

It is for this reason that most prophets make themselves unpopular during their own lifetime, often being killed or imprisoned. And it is for this reason that after their death their memory and teachings are distorted beyond recognition.

However, we do not only find this problem in the Abrahamic religions, but all over the world. The Greek philosopher Plato addresses the very same issue in his famous allegory of the cave. In it, he describes the journey of a person waking up from their sleep and realizing that they have been living in an illusion all their lives. He embarks on an amazing journey of self-discovery, finding truth and then returning to the world



⁷ Gospel of John: Chapter 8

⁸ Gospel of John: Chapter 2

he came from to tell people about his discoveries and “the real world”. But since his findings question the status quo and the reality of the others' lives and encourage them to question and change, he encounters considerable resistance:

Would he not be ridiculous? Men would say of him that up he went and down he came without his eyes; and that it was better not even to think of ascending; and if any one tried to lose another and lead him up to the light, let them only catch the offender, and they would put him to death.⁹

The concept is clear: new radical ideas are dangerous and are met with great resistance within society. Especially when they inspire change and raise difficult questions. As a result, prophets are often killed and the message they came with is distorted after they pass away.

⁹ Politeia, Book 7, 106

Chapter 2

The Corruption of Christianity

As already mentioned and not disputed by any Christian or theologian, Jesus was a revolutionary and a severe critic of the ruling class. For this reason he was sentenced to death by the Romans and the Jewish scholars. But what happened after his death? And how did those in power manage to distort the teachings of Jesus to such an extent that the Pope today has a budget of 400 million dollars while children are starving every day?

A key figure in the early falsification of Christianity is the so-called apostle Paul. Paul wrote nearly 50 percent of the New Testament of the Bible, and is one of the earliest Christian theologians. One could almost say that Christianity as we know it today was more influenced by Paul than by Jesus himself. But Paul never met Jesus. And although he lived in Jerusalem during Jesus' lifetime, he never believed in Jesus. Worse still, he hunted down and killed Jesus' followers after Jesus died.

3 But Saul began to destroy the church. Going from house to house, he dragged off both men and women and put them in prison.¹⁰

Saul, who later changed his name to Paul, persecuted the members of the early Christian community and was responsible for scattering them throughout Palestine. All of this is recorded in the Bible itself. Paul writes about himself:

9 I too was convinced that I ought to do all that was possible to oppose the name of Jesus of Nazareth.

10 And that is just what I did in Jerusalem. On the authority of the chief priests I put many of the Lord's people in prison, and when they were put to death, I cast my vote against them.

11 Many a time I went from one synagogue to another to have them punished, and I tried to force them to blaspheme. I was so obsessed with persecuting them that I even hunted them down in foreign cities.

12 On one of these journeys I was going to Damascus with the authority and commission of the chief priests.¹¹

Following all of these atrocities, Paul supposedly saw a vision of Jesus that caused him to repent and convert to Christianity. Paul's subsequent work became so influential that he has even been referred to as the "founder of Christianity". There is just one problem: Paul's teaching often contradicts Jesus' message. Which begs the question: Was Paul a man who

¹⁰ Acts of the Apostles: Chapter 8

¹¹ Acts of the Apostles: Chapter 26

admitted to his mistake and drastically changed his life? Or did he pursue his original agenda with a different strategy, destroying the Christian faith from within?

Below we list some of the changes introduced by Paul that are in direct contradiction to Christianity.

1. Jesus says that the laws of Moses should continue to be obeyed

17 Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I have not come to abolish them but to fulfill them.

18 For truly I tell you, until heaven and earth disappear, not the smallest letter, not the least stroke of a pen, will by any means disappear from the Law until everything is accomplished.

19 Therefore anyone who sets aside one of the least of these commands and teaches others accordingly will be called least in the kingdom of heaven, but whoever practices and teaches these commands will be called great in the kingdom of heaven.¹²

But Paul contradicts this:

For Christ is the end of the law, with the result that there is righteousness for everyone who believes.¹³

I, Paul, tell you that if you let yourselves be circumcised, Christ will be of no value to you at all...You who are trying to be justified by the law have been alienated from Christ; you have fallen away from grace.¹⁴

2. Jesus forbids taking money for preaching and teaching

8 Heal the sick, raise the dead, cleanse those who have leprosy, drive out demons. Freely you have received; freely give.¹⁵

However, Paul says that priests are entitled to take money

13 Don't you know that those who serve in the temple get their food from the temple, and that those who serve at the altar share in what is offered on the altar?

14 In the same way, the Lord has commanded that those who preach the gospel should receive their living from the gospel.¹⁶

¹² Gospel of Matthew: Chapter 5

¹³ Romans: Chapter 10

¹⁴ Galatians: Chapter 5

¹⁵ Gospel of Matthew: Chapter 10

¹⁶ 1 Corinthians: Chapter 9

3. Jesus teaches that worldly rulers are bad

36 Jesus said, "My kingdom is not of this world. If it were, my servants would fight to prevent my arrest by the Jewish leaders. But now my kingdom is from another place."¹⁷

But Paul said

1 Let everyone be subject to the governing authorities, for there is no authority except that which God has established. The authorities that exist have been established by God.

2 Consequently, whoever rebels against the authority is rebelling against what God has instituted, and those who do so will bring judgment on themselves.

3 For rulers hold no terror for those who do right, but for those who do wrong. Do you want to be free from fear of the one in authority? Then do what is right and you will be commended.¹⁸

1 I urge, then, first of all, that petitions, prayers, intercession and thanksgiving be made for all people

2 for kings and all those in authority, that we may live peaceful and quiet lives in all godliness and holiness.

3 This is good, and pleases God our Savior.¹⁹

We see that Paul allows clerics to take money for their work and teaches that the church is to serve the ruling elite. It is almost ironic that he would take it upon himself to write in the Bible, "The authorities that exist have been established by God" after the Romans brutally tortured and crucified Jesus just a few years earlier.

Paul systematically introduces two of the very teachings that make today's church so questionable: Asking for money from the poor for service in the name of God, and shaking hands with the dictators of the world.

Paul's position regarding women is equally noteworthy. Jesus was strikingly progressive when it came to women's rights. While first-century Jewish culture was decidedly patriarchal, Jesus refused to view women as inferior. The evangelists testify that Jesus treated women with respect. He spoke to women in public, he healed women, he let women attend his sermons and learn from him. We also know from the Gospel of Luke that he traveled from village to village with a group of female disciples.²⁰ Finally, Jesus sent a woman to inform his disciples of his resurrection.

¹⁷ Gospel of John: Chapter 18

¹⁸ Romans: Chapter 13

¹⁹ 1 Timothy

²⁰ Gospel of Luke: Chapter 8

It is Paul, however, who looks down on women, forbidding priesthood for them, laying the foundation for the church's misogynist attitude today.

34 Women should remain silent in the churches. They are not allowed to speak, but must be in submission, as the law says.

35 If they want to inquire about something, they should ask their own husbands at home; for it is disgraceful for a woman to speak in the church.²¹

12 I do not permit a woman to teach or to assume authority over a man; she must be quiet.²²

It was therefore also Paul who, with his explanations in first Corinthians, invented the religious head covering for women that nuns in the Catholic Church wear till today. In fact, Paul even introduced one of the most controversial practices in Catholicism: celibacy. Paul writes in the Bible:

"It is good for a man not to have sexual relations with a woman."²³

Such statements do not come from Jesus. The Gospels never mention whether Jesus was married or not and what his stance on the subject of marriage was. What is clear, however, is that his disciples were married and that Jewish men have always married and had children. Paul himself was a Jew and knew this. Therefore he bases these statements solely on his own understanding and thus changed the history of the church permanently. In fact, he laid the foundation for the child molestation scandals of the coming centuries, in which celibacy played an important role.

These are by no means all of the changes that can be attributed to Paul, but let's leave it at that. It is clear that Paul is a prime example of a scholar who distorts the teachings of a prophet almost beyond recognition, thus giving a bad image to his religion.

The Council of Nicaea

Although Paul was already doing great harm in the first thirty years after Jesus' death, the distortion of religion continued in the centuries that followed. To this day, many Christians have difficulty explaining the so-called concept of the Holy Trinity - because it is simply illogical. According to this teaching, Jesus is both the Son of God and God Himself, as well as the Holy Spirit. Even though Jesus never stated such a thing. Although the Catholic Church now pretends that this teaching was known in the time of Jesus, it was actually introduced in 325 AD. That year, the Pope of Alexandria called for a meeting with the most famous Christian scholars of the time. This meeting is known, to this day, as "The Council

²¹ 1 Corinthians: Chapter 14

²² 1 Timothy: Chapter 2

²³ 1 Corinthians: Chapter 7

of Nicaea”. Up to this point, Jesus was known as a messenger or prophet of God. At this meeting, however, the Pope wanted to proclaim Jesus to be God himself. Many of the scholars of the time opposed this idea, insisting that Jesus was a prophet of God and not



God himself. A man named Arius staunchly opposed the new doctrine. Arius and his followers refused to sign the document, stating that Jesus should be declared absolute God, considering this dogma a distortion of historical events and a contradiction to the teachings of Jesus himself. The Pope of Alexandria exiled Arius over this objection. From that day on, the books of Arius were declared heresy and publicly

burned. The declaration of the Council of Nicaea was nevertheless signed, and Arius and his followers are still labeled as enemies of Christianity.

These events clearly show how such a confusing doctrine as the Trinity has found its way into Christianity today. Fallible men have stolen the right to decide the content of religion. And this, despite the fact that this doctrine directly contradicts the words of Jesus and his predecessors. There are numerous sayings in the Old Testament that testify that there is only one God.

*“Acknowledge and take to heart this day that the Lord is God in heaven above and on the earth below. There is no other.”*²⁴

*“I am the first and I am the last; apart from me there is no God.”*²⁵

*“I am the Lord, and there is no other; apart from me there is no God.”*²⁶

Because all those who preached nonconforming doctrines were persecuted as heretics, many Gnostic Christian sects and communities developed, secretly spreading the now “forbidden” knowledge. One of the most striking pieces of evidence of such movements attempting to transmit so-called "heretical" teachings of Jesus are the Nag-Hammadi scriptures. They were found by chance in 1945 near the small Egyptian town of Nag Hammadi by local farmers. They contain quotes and teachings of Jesus that have never

²⁴ Deuteronomy: Chapter 4

²⁵ Isaiah: Chapter 44

²⁶ Isaiah: Chapter 45

been heard before, which astonishingly also go hand in hand with the gnostic teachings of other religions.

Since these texts have been hidden for almost 2000 years, church clergy such as the Pope of Alexandria have not been able to burn them (like the writings of Arius) or censor them. The existence of such writings is evidence that Christianity and the Bible as we know it today are incomplete.



Pagan Customs

A number of familiar Christian customs have pagan origins and only became symbols of Christianity centuries after Jesus' death. Many Protestants are opposed to the Catholic Church precisely for this reason, since they affirm that rulers like Constantine incorporated pagan customs into Christianity in order to facilitate new converts' conversion to Christianity and gain influence. Most churches are decorated with stained glass windows and paintings showing a circle of light around the heads of Jesus, Mary, angels and “saints”. This is called a halo. However, the *Catholic Encyclopedia*, one of the most important Catholic reference works, confirms that the origin of the halo - which now adorns the windows of almost every church - was not Christian. It says:

*In the plastic arts (painting and sculpture) the symbolism of the nimbus was early in use among the pagans who determined its form. In Rome the halo was first used only for deceased emperors as a sign of celestial bliss, but afterwards living rulers also were given the rayed crown, and after the third century, although not first by Constantine, the simple rayed nimbus. (...) In early Christian art, the rayed nimbus as well as the rayless disc were adopted in accordance with tradition.*²⁷

Important holidays such as Easter have pagan origins as well. The word “Easter” itself is derived from the name of the pagan goddess “Eostre”. It does not even once appear in the Bible.

Easter fires, that are lit on the night of resurrection, are another example of a pagan tradition. They are based on pre-Christian customs in which the Saxen welcomed spring with flames and



²⁷ Catholic Encyclopedia: An International Work of Reference on the Constitution, Doctrine, Discipline, and History of the Catholic Church. Retrieved from: <https://www.newadvent.org/cathen/11080b.htm>

celebrated the sun's victory over winter. That is why the tradition is so widespread, especially in Germany. Such a ritual is never mentioned in the Bible. Nevertheless, this ritual was made a part of Christianity around the 8th century and is now an integral part of the German church's Easter program.

Christmas trees are another well-known example: decorating one's home with fir branches has been a pagan tradition since pre-Christian times. The Romans draped their houses with fir branches on the occasion of Saturnalia, a festival in honor of Saturn. This festival took place from December 17th to December 23rd. Because of these pagan origins, some US states banned all Christmas decorations and fir trees in the 18th century, calling them a “pagan mockery” of Christmas.

Chapter 3

The Corruption of Judaism

But Christianity was not the first religion to be infiltrated and transformed over time. The same happened with Judaism. The history of Judaism, recorded primarily in the Torah, is the history of the so-called “Children of Israel”. They are the descendants of Abraham through Isaac and see themselves as the chosen people of God. The Torah tells the story of this people, which is characterized by two tendencies:

1. The struggle of the children of Israel against pagan peoples and political enemies, which resulted in the Israelites being repeatedly exiled from their land and living under the rule of various tyrants.
2. The struggle and disobedience of the children of Israel against their own prophets.

When reading the Torah, it is striking that the Jewish chosen people often disobeyed their own prophets, defying their instructions and worshiping foreign gods rather than the God of Israel. This resulted in Jewish customs and traditions being infiltrated and distorted over time. The Jewish prophet David wrote about his ancestors in the Torah:

*“How often they rebelled against him in the wilderness and grieved him in the wasteland!”*²⁸

Judaism therefore records and documents the disobedience of believers and the infiltration of religion in its own primary scripture. Ezekiel records in the Torah that God said:

*“But they rebelled against me and would not listen to me; they did not get rid of the vile images they had set their eyes on, nor did they forsake the idols of Egypt. So I said I would pour out my wrath on them and spend my anger against them in Egypt.”*²⁹



This verse is a reference to the Egyptian influences within Judaism that continue to shape it until today. Before the children of Israel were led out of Egypt by Moses, they had lived under the rule of the pharaohs for centuries. This influence can be seen, for example, in the design of the so-called Ark of the Covenant. It is one of the most important Jewish artifacts that the children of Israel carried with them at

²⁸ Psalms: 78:40

²⁹ Ezekiel: 20

all times. But the Ark of the Covenant clearly shows Egyptian elements in its design. It is evident that the Children of Israel designed it based on Egyptian influences.³⁰ So the Torah itself proves that the influences of foreign gods and cultures crept into Judaic traditions and, of course, into Jewish writings as well. This trend continued and hundreds of years after their exile the children of Israel worshiped a foreign god called “Baal”. God is then quoted in the Torah as follows:

*“I will punish her for the days
she burned incense to the Baals;
she decked herself with rings and jewelry,
and went after her lovers,
but me she forgot,”
declares the Lord.*³¹

The early Jews worshiped the alien god “Baal” and engaged in pagan offerings (which included the sacrifice of newborn babies). These are the earliest known accounts of the infiltration of the monotheistic world religions.

Religious scholars agree today: Moses could not have written the Torah. The text has clearly been written and compiled by several authors, since the language used in the different sections is very different and the text is sometimes repeated without any apparent reason. Everything indicates that two versions of a single story were included and woven together.³² Some historians describe that the Jewish writings were almost completely lost around 450 BC after the children of Israel lived in exile in Babylon. They believe that the priest Ezra rewrote most parts of the Torah that exists today.³³ As a matter of fact Ezra “brought the modern Torah to Jerusalem” after the children of Israel had lived in Babylonian exile for centuries, mixing their customs with Babylonian traditions. In any case most rabbis admit that the Torah has been modified over time and there is great consensus that many phrases have been altered.³⁴

³⁰ Scott B. Noegel (2015). The Egyptian Origin of the Ark of the Covenant. Retrieved from: <https://faculty.washington.edu/snoegel/PDFs/articles/noegel-ark-2015.pdf>

³¹ The Torah: Hosea 2

³² Who Wrote the Torah?. (2014, October 22) Retrieved from: www.haaretz.com

³³ Richard Elliott Friedman (1987). Who Wrote the Bible?. S. 232, 242

³⁴ Hellenism in Jewish Palestine (Jewish Theological Seminary, 1994), 28–37

Chapter 4

The Corruption of Islam

Just like Judaism and Christianity, like Buddhism and Hinduism, Islam was also corrupted after the death of Mohammed. The extremism, intolerance and misogyny that are often associated with Islam today, reflect on Mohammed just as much as child abuse scandals in the Catholic Church represent Jesus.

The Four “Rightly Guided Caliphs”

Shortly before his death and after his last pilgrimage, Mohammed gathered the believers and gave them instructions as to what should happen to the community of believers after his death. In Sahih Muslim there is the following narration:

“Someday (after his last pilgrimage) the Messenger of Allah stood to give us a speech beside a pond which is known as Ghadir Khum which is located between Mecca and Medina. Then he praised Allah and reminded Him, and then said: O' people! Behold! It seems the time approaches when I shall be called away (by Allah) and I shall answer that call.

Behold! I am leaving for you two precious things.

First of them is the book of Allah in which there is light and guidance.

The other one is my Ahlul-Bayt.

I remind you in the name of Allah about my Ahlul-Bayt.

I remind you in the name of Allah about my Ahlul-Bayt.

I remind you in the name of Allah about my Ahlul-Bayt. (three times).”³⁵

In this tradition, the Ahlul-Bayt, the family of the Prophet, is equated with the Quran. Their importance is underlined by being repeated three times. The reason is that the Prophet's



cousin, Ali ibn Abi Talib, and his children were appointed by Mohammed to be his successors. They were supposed to continue his life's work and preserve the authenticity of the message and the Quran. However, this did not please the long-time companions of Mohammed. They wanted to become his successors themselves in order to gain power and influence. Because of this, they tried as hard as they could to prevent him from appointing his successors before his

³⁵ Sahih Muslim: Volume 4, page 1873, narration 36

death. Then, as Mohammed's death drew near, some men were in his house. One of them was his companion Umar Ibn al-Khattab.

“When Allah’s Messenger was on his death-bed and in the house there were some people among whom was Umar bin Al-Khattab. The Prophet said, “Come, let me write for you a statement after which you will never go astray.” Umar said, “The Prophet is seriously ill and you have the Quran; so the Book of Allah is enough for us.” The people present in the house differed and quarreled. Some said “Go near so that the Prophet may write for you a statement after which you will never go astray,” while the others said what Umar said. When they caused a hue and cry before the Prophet, Allah’s Messenger said, “Go away!” Narrated Ubaidullah: Ibn Abbas used to say, “It was very unfortunate that Allah's Messenger was prevented from writing that statement for them because of their disagreement and noise.”³⁶

This tradition can be found in various versions and sources and has been classified as genuine by Islamic experts from the two major Islamic schools of thought. You don't have to be an expert on Islam to see how disrespectful it is to keep a dying person silent. Especially when it comes to a prophet of God who wants to announce something so important. What if Peter said to Jesus at the moment of his death: “We Christians have enough information and don't need to hear from you anymore.”? This is clearly not the behavior of a faithful companion. We learn from other sources that Mohammed wanted to appoint his successors one by one for future generations, in order to prevent the corruption of the religion. But at that moment, he let it go.

Abu Bakr and Umar, the First and Second Sunni Caliphs

Shortly after that, Mohammed passed away, and two of his so-called companions appointed themselves to become his successors. It is important to note that the very man called “Umar” who silenced Mohammed in the above narration was actively involved in appointing a new successor for the Islamic Empire.

Abu Bakr said, “No, we will be the rulers and you will be the ministers, for they (i.e. Quarish) are the best family amongst the Arabs and of best origin. So you should elect either Umar or Abu Ubaida bin Al-Jarrah as your ruler.” Umar said (to Abu Bakr), “No but we elect you, for you are our chief and the best amongst us and the most beloved of all of us to Allah's Messenger.” So Umar took Abu Bakr’s hand and gave the pledge of allegiance and the people too gave the pledge of allegiance to Abu Bakr.³⁷

³⁶ Sahih Al-Bukhari 1: Chapter 76, Hadith 5669

³⁷ Sahih Al-Bukhari 3667, 3668

Just as Paul declared himself the spokesman for Christianity after Jesus' death, Abu Bakr and Omar declared themselves successors of Mohammed. Abu Bakr delivered the following speech that day:

“O you people! I have been chosen as your leader, though I am no better than any of you. If I do something good, give me your support! If I do something wrong, let me know! (...) Remember: you must obey me as long as I obey Allah and His Messenger. If I don't obey Allah and His Messenger, you don't have to obey me either!”³⁸

It is clear that Abu Bakr describes himself as fallible. He is not an infallible successor or vicegerent of Mohammed. Wasn't it already a fatal mistake to appoint oneself as a successor when Mohammed had already chosen someone else instead of him? Shortly after Abu Bakr proclaimed himself the first so-called “rightly guided caliph,” he denied the daughter of Mohammed her share of the inheritance.³⁹ Accepted Islamic traditions confirm that Mohammed's daughter went to Abu Bakr personally to claim her share of Mohammed's land. But Abu Bakr forbade her to do so.

Fatima and Al-Abbas came to Abu Bakr, seeking their share from the property of Allah's Messenger and at that time, they were asking for their land at Fadak and their share from Khaibar. Abu Bakr said to them, “I have heard from Allah's Messenger saying, “Our property cannot be inherited, and whatever we leave is to be spent in charity, but the family of Mohammed may take their provisions from this property.” Abu Bakr added, “By Allah, I will not leave the procedure I saw Allah's Messenger following during his lifetime concerning this property.” Therefore Fatima left Abu Bakr and did not speak to him until she died.⁴⁰

One might assume that Abu Bakr, as the “successor of the Prophet” would lovingly care for his predecessor's only daughter - but this is obviously not the case. Even though Mohammed said:

“Fatima is a part of me: whatever upsets her upsets me, and whatever hurts her hurts me.”⁴¹

It is remarkable to see that Abu Bakr was so adamant about denying the Prophet's daughter her inheritance rights, but caused a massacre when some Arabs refused to pay taxes to Abu Bakr after Mohammed's death.

Abu Bakr said, “By Allah! I will fight those who differentiate between the prayer and the Zakat as Zakat is the compulsory right to be taken from the property (according

³⁸ Al-Bidaayah wan-Nihaayah (6/305,306)

³⁹ Sahih Al-Bukhari 6725

⁴⁰ Sahih Al-Bukhari 6726

⁴¹ Sahih Al-Bukhari 3714

to Allah's orders) By Allah! If they refuse to pay me even a she-kid which they used to pay at the time of Allah's Messenger . I would fight with them for withholding it” Then Umar said, “By Allah, it was nothing, but Allah opened Abu Bakr's chest towards the decision (to fight) and I came to know that his decision was right.”⁴²

Here, Abu Bakr orders the killing of all Muslims who do not want to pay alms and thus no taxes to the new “Islamic government”. At this point, it also becomes clear how Islam has gained a reputation for being a brutal and nefarious religion. It was the greedy conquerors after Mohammed who killed innocents and stole from his own family in his name. Countless innocent people have lost their lives in the name of this tradition, and radical groups like ISIS invoke these and similar narrations to justify their extremism.

Uthman the Third Caliph and the Corruption of the Quran

The discovery of the Nag Hammadi scriptures raised questions about the authenticity and, above all, the comprehensiveness of the Bible available today. In the same way, the comprehensiveness of the Quran available today was called into question by a historical find in 1979. That year, construction workers in Yemen found one of the oldest known

versions of the Quran, most likely made during the lifetime of Mohammed. However, this manuscript shows significant changes between the current version of the Quran and the ancient version. The so-called Sana Manuscript is therefore one of the most important pieces of evidence that the Quran that we have today differs from the original Quran. Furthermore, the manuscript - like all other early copies of the Quran - was written without didactic symbols. The writing of the time, which is called “Rasm”, knew only 18 clearly distinguishable letters, while today's Quran contains 28 Arabic letters. The didactic signs and distinctions of these new letters were not inserted into the Quran until about 300 years after Mohammed's death. Over time, significant errors in content have crept into the scripture in this way. An example is the controversial



Quranic verse which states:

“[As for] the thief, the male and the female, amputate their hands in recompense for what they earned [i.e., committed] as a deterrent [punishment] from Allah. And Allah is Exalted in Might and Wise.”⁴³

⁴² Sahih Al-Bukhari 1399 and 1400

⁴³ The Quran 5:38

The Arabic word “faqata’u” means “to cut off”. However, if you only exchange one letter, it means “discolor”. Actually, the hand of a thief was meant to be dyed with a substance that was accessible at the time in order to deter thieves from stealing again due to the fear of public shame. By corrupting a single letter, the heinous practice of mutilating thieves has been introduced to the Middle East. How many people have been turned away from Islam by this mistake? And how many people have been unlawfully mutilated in the name of Islam because of it?

In any case, it should be clear to any Muslim using their mind that the verses of the Quran have been rearranged. After all, the very first verses ever revealed to Mohammed are not found in the first Sura of the Quran, but in Sura 96. When reading the Quran chronologically, it is also noticeable that stories and strands of thought are often interrupted, and that topics are sometimes not completed in the same Sura, but are taken up again in a later Sura.

A comparative study conducted by Samuel Green compared the different versions of the Quran circulating among Muslims.⁴⁴ He found dozens of differences between the various Quranic texts, all of which are now accepted among Muslims. These are not only differences in pronunciation but even entire words are missing or were added.

In fact, there is a Sunni tradition that says:

*“Let no one among you say, “I have collected the entire Quran.” How is he supposed to know what the entire Quran is when so much of it has disappeared. You should say, “I’ve got together what survived.””*⁴⁵

So how is it that today, there is only one version of the Quran to which all Muslim professions refer? Just as the Pope of Alexandria burned all writings that presented Jesus as a man and a prophet, the third so-called “rightly guided Caliph” Uthman burned all Quranic manuscripts that he considered inappropriate. In Sahih Al-Bukhari it says:

Hudhaifa bin Al-Yaman came to Uthman at the time when the people of Sham and the people of Iraq were waging war to conquer Arminya and Adharbijan. Hudhaifa was afraid of their (the people of Sham and Iraq) differences in the recitation of the Quran, so he said to Uthman, “O chief of the Believers! Save this nation before they differ about the Book (Quran) as Jews and the Christians did before.” So Uthman sent a message to Hafsa saying, “Send us the manuscripts of the Quran so that we may compile the Quranic materials in perfect copies and return the manuscripts to you.” Hafsa sent it to Uthman. Uthman then ordered Zaid bin Thabit, Abdullah bin Al-Zubair, Said bin Al-As and Abdurahman bin Harith bin Hisham to rewrite the manuscripts in perfect copies. Uthman said to the three Quraishi men, “In case you

⁴⁴ Samuel Green (2019). The Different Arabic Versions of the Quran.

⁴⁵ Al-Itiqan fi’ulum Al-Quran, Al-Suyuti, vol. 2, p. 66

*disagree with Zaid bin Thabit on any point in the Quran, then write it in the dialect of Quraish, the Quran was revealed in their tongue.” They did so, and when they had written many copies, Uthman returned the original manuscripts to Hafsa. Uthman sent to every Muslim province one copy of what they had copied, and ordered that all the other Quranic materials, whether written in fragmentary manuscripts or whole copies, be burnt.*⁴⁶

Isn't it ironic that many Muslims use the corruption of the Bible and Christianity as an argument to convert Christians to Islam - yet they turn a blind eye to exactly the same events in their own religion? This tradition is not the only one that clearly proves that today's Quran is not complete, but (like the Bible and every other historical document) has been collected and corrupted over time. After Mohammed died, many verses were lost, forgotten or (allegedly) “eaten by sheep”. In Sahih Al-Bukhari it says:

*We used to recite a surah which resembled in length and severity to (Surah) Bara'at. I have, however, forgotten it with the exception of this which I remember out of it: “If there were two valleys full of riches, for the son of Adam, he would long for a third valley, and nothing would fill the stomach of the son of Adam but dust.” And we used to recite a surah which resembled one of the surahs of Musabbihat, and I have forgotten it, but remember (this much) out of it: “Oh people who believe, why do you say that which you do not practise” and, “that is recorded in your necks as a witness (against you) and you would be asked about it on the Day of Resurrection”.*⁴⁷

Another tradition says:

*“The verse of stoning and of breastfeeding an adult ten times was revealed¹, and the paper was with me under my pillow. When the Messenger of Allah died, we were preoccupied with his death, and a tame sheep came in and ate it.”*⁴⁸

So we can see that after the death of Mohammed, Islam also became more and more corrupted. In the last example, it is clear that after Mohammed's death, his so-called companions tried to add verses to the Quran. The above narration, along with some other similar traditions, is used to justify the barbaric practice of stoning adulterers. How is it possible for Muslims to accept that the stoning verse is not found in the Quran today because its transcript was eaten by a sheep, while at the same time they insist that the Quran is infallible?

Shiite traditions report that the successor of Mohammed, Ali, knew the entire and true Quran by heart.⁴⁹ After his death, he spent days in his house putting it together. But when

⁴⁶ Sahih Al-Bukhari 4987. In book reference: Book 66, Hadith 9

⁴⁷ Sahih Muslim 1050. In book reference: Vol. 12, Hadith 156

⁴⁸ Sunan Ibn Majah 1944, Book 9, Hadith 100

⁴⁹ Bihar Al Anwar, Al-Allamah Al-Majlisi, Vol. 89, p. 99

he presented it to the Muslims of the time, they said to him, “We don't need it”.⁵⁰ But that's not all. The same people who usurped the caliphate and harassed Mohammed's family after his death fabricated lies about him as well.

The End of the “Rightly Guided” Caliphate

Uthman's government was accused of corruption and nepotism shortly after he took office, and he was killed by insurgents. However, his legacy continued long afterward.

Uthman belonged to the Umayyad tribe, one of the last tribes to convert to Islam during Mohammad's lifetime. After taking office, he made many of these questionable tribal members administrators and rulers in the government apparatus. His cousin Muawiyah, for example, became governor of Syria while he had been fighting Mohammed with all his might during his lifetime.

This period, that is often referred to by Muslims as the “Glorious Era of the Rightly Guided Caliphs”, was thus an era of discord, intrigue, imposture, innovation and hypocrisy.

The Umayyads ruled the so-called “Islamic Empire” for about 90 years and thus had a great influence on what Muslims call their religion today. The gruesome history of the Islamic empire explains the grievances that persist in the Middle East and North Africa.

It also explains how extremist groups like ISIS came about in the first place. After all, fake books like Sahih Bukhari are the main basis used by terrorists to justify the murder of innocent civilians. Given the corruption of religious scriptures, it is finally clear how some Muslims believe that Islam is a religion of peace while others claim that all unbelievers must be killed.

The Prophet's Family

But how was the religion actually supposed to continue after the death of Mohammed?

As mentioned earlier, on the night of his death, Mohammed wanted to dictate his will that would guide his community on how to proceed after his death. In this will he explicitly mentioned his successors by name. They are the twelve imams known to the Shiites to this day.⁵¹

This resulted in the splitting of Islam that has led to civil wars and violence in the Middle East. On the one hand there are Sunnis, who believe that the “rightly guided caliphs” did the right thing. On the other hand, there are Shiites, who opposed this corruption and joined

⁵⁰ Al-Kafi, Al-Shaikh Al-Kulayni, Vol. 2, p. 633

⁵¹ More on this in the last chapter of the book.

the appointed successors of Mohammed. The dispute between these two groups reached its climax about 50 years after the death of Mohammed. At that time, the Islamic empire was ruled by Muawiyah's son named Yazid. He is also known in Sunni narrations for drinking, dancing and debauchery.⁵² Instead of treating Mohammed's family with respect, he mistreated them and ultimately killed Mohammed's grandson and almost his entire family on the battlefield. Many people are unaware that such a gruesome massacre occurred in Islamic history not long after the death of Mohammed. The grandson of Mohammed, called Hussein, was surrounded in Karbala, Iraq, by the troops of the self-proclaimed "Islamic rulers", and died along with most of his followers on the 10th of Muharram in the year 680. They massacred not only his companions, but captivated the women and murdered even small children of the family. This tragedy in itself is evidence as to how divided the Islamic community has been after the death of Mohammed.

The story of the Karbala massacre is in itself so tragic that writers and historians from other denominations have commented on it. For example, Charles Dickens said:

*"If Husain had fought to quench his worldly desires...then I do not understand why his sister, wife, and children accompanied him. It stands to reason therefore, that he sacrificed purely for Islam."*⁵³



However, the murder of Mohammed's family is not only horrifying on a human level, but also insubordination from a religious point of view. Because some verses of the Quran explicitly refer to the position of Mohammed's family. The following Quranic

verse is known to be about this:

*Say, [O Mohammed], "I do not ask you for this message any payment [but] only good will through kinship." And whoever commits a good deed - We will increase for him good therein. Indeed, Allah is Forgiving and Appreciative.*⁵⁴

Islamic traditions interpret this verse as follows:

Ibn Abbas narrated: When the above verse (42:23) was revealed, the Companions asked: "O Messenger of Allah! Who are these close relatives whose love Allah has

⁵² Hawting, Gerald R (2000). The First Dynasty of Islam: The Umayyad Caliphate AD 661-750 (Second ed.)

⁵³ Charles Dickens: Miscellanies, p. 61

⁵⁴ The Quran 42:23

made obligatory for us?" He said, "Ali, Fatimah and her two sons (Hassan and Hussain)." He repeated this sentence three times.⁵⁵

How could so-called Muslims justify brutally murdering one of these two sons? What happened to Hussein happened to his children after him as well. According to the Twelver Shia traditions, almost all Imams were assassinated on the orders of some self-proclaimed caliph. Most are said to have been killed by poison, others by the sword. Some of them were abducted and imprisoned for several years. There were few real "Shia". The twelfth imam was supposed to bring a "kingdom of God" on earth like Jesus, but like Jesus he found no real supporters and disappeared. The Shiites were left without an Imam and, like the Sunnis before them, were left on their own. At this point, like all those before them, they began to interpret religion based on their own understanding. They resorted to the Sunni method of so-called "Ijtihad".

The Imitation of the Scholars (*Taqleed*)

It has always been the task of Islamic scholars to study and pass on the sayings of Mohammed. Over time, however, they took the right to issue their own rules and so-called "fatwas" or legal opinions - which became their undoing. Over the course of time, it was no longer the prophets who proclaimed God's message, but the scholars who changed the religion on the basis of their own understanding. Just like the Pope or the Jewish rabbis, Islamic scholars took the right to speak "on behalf of God". They invented the concept of "*Taqleed*" which means imitation or emulation. According to this doctrine, it is obligatory for any Schiite to obey and emulate the scholars in all matters of life. Today, scholars have gone one step further: They refer to themselves as "Ayatollahs" or signs of God on earth. This contradicts quite clearly what the vicegerents of Mohammed had commanded. The grandson of Mohammed, Jafar Al Sadiq said:

"Beware of Taqleed (imitation)! Anyone who accepts this into religion will be destroyed! Allah has said: "They took their rabbis and monks as lords beside Allah (Quran:9:31)." No, by Allah! They neither prayed nor fasted, but permitted what was forbidden (haram) and made the forbidden lawful."⁵⁶

And Ali ibn Abi Talib, the successor of Mohammed said:

"(Imam Mahdi) will take revenge on the religion's fatwa issuers for what they don't know. Woe to them and all who follow them. Was there something wrong with the religion that they needed to put right? Or was it crooked so they had to straighten it?"⁵⁷

⁵⁵ Tafsir Al-Kabir, by Fakhr Al-Din Al-Razi, Part 27, pp. 165-166. Tafsir Al-Tha'labi, under the commentary of verse 42:23 of the Quran. Tafsir Al-Tabari, by Ibn Jarir Al-Tabari, under verse 42:23. Tafsir Al-Qurtubi, commenting on verse 42:23 of the Quran. And many more.

⁵⁶ Tasheehul-Itiqaad: Sheikh Mufeed: p. 72

⁵⁷ Bayan Al-A'ema: Vol. 3, p. 298

The followers of Mohammed made it clear that the opinion of the legal scholars has no place in religion. They even point to the corruption of previous religions, in which the Jewish and Christian scholars distorted the message beyond recognition with their opinions. This is also clearly stated in the Quran. But history repeated itself again, and the Shia scholars followed in the footsteps of their predecessors.



As time went by, scholars issued one legal opinion after another, moving farther and farther away from the original teachings of Mohammed. Nowadays, Shias believe that it is obligatory to emulate a scholar in all matters concerning this life and the next and that without the imitation of a scholar no good deed of the believer will be accepted by God. No matter how much one fasts, prays or donates - all good deeds are

worthless if one does not follow one of the great scholars.⁵⁸ The scholar now clearly occupies the position of an infallible prophet or messenger of God. A scholar who has risen to the status of an “Ayatollah” does not have to answer to anyone concerning his legal opinions. Their verdicts no longer need to be based on narrations of the infallibles. This is the reason that we find many obscure practices in Shi'ism today. One of the most controversial fatwas of this century is found in the book *Tahreer Al-Waselah* by the self-proclaimed “Ayatollah” Khomeini:

*“Sexual intercourse cannot be done with the wife before she has completed nine years, whether it was a permanent marriage or a temporary one. As for other pleasures - such as touching with lust and hugging and thighing - there is nothing wrong with that even if she is a suckling child, i.e., an infant. But if he has sexual intercourse with her before she is nine.”*⁵⁹

On the basis of such and similar opinions, Shia scholars in Karbala and the surrounding areas now act as pimps and mediators for underage prostitutes.⁶⁰ “Ayatollah” Sistani also publishes legal opinions that allow people to have sex with animals as long as their flesh is not eaten afterwards.

⁵⁸ Following a Jurist (Taqlid). Retrieved from: <https://www.sistani.org/english/book/48/2116/>

⁵⁹ Tahreer Al-Waselah, Vol. 2, p. 343

⁶⁰ Nawal Al-Maghafi (2019, October 4). The teenager married too many times to count. Retrieved from: www.bbc.co.uk

“If the person who had sexual intercourse with the animal is not its owner, he must pay the value of the animal to its owner. The money that is received from the sale of the animal belongs to the person who had sexual intercourse with it. If a person has sexual intercourse with an animal whose meat is usually eaten, such as a cow, sheep, and camel, their urine and dung become impure and it is unlawful to eat their meat. Similarly, based on obligatory precaution, drinking their milk and the milk of their offspring is unlawful.”⁶¹

But all this was not enough for the scholars. Not only did they want to create their own religion, but after a while they wanted to declare themselves rulers in the name of God. This development found its peak in the 1970s during the so-called Islamic Revolution in Iran. Khomeini established a state under the leadership of the jurists and said:

“The true rulers are the jurists (fuqaha) themselves, and the dominion should officially belong to them.”⁶²

So since the 1970s, Shia scholars have considered it their right to run their own state - without having any basis for it in the Quran or the words of Mohammed and his successors. The concept of “*Wilayat-e-Faqih*”, the absolute rule of the scholars, was invented. However, the results speak for themselves. Corruption, immorality and tyranny reign in the supposed theocracy of Iran. Not only are the rulers unpopular with their own people for their use of violence and hypocrisy, but their style of government commercializes and distorts the religion they represent. Just as the Saudi Arabian royal family has turned Islamic pilgrimage into a tourist attraction, “Ayatollah” Khamenei has found a gold mine in the shrine of Imam Reza. The Wall Street Journal called the shrine “Iran's holy money machine” in 2007, earning the scholarly regime more than \$500 million a year.⁶³ The scholars have equipped the site with luxury hotels and water parks. More importantly, Mashhad is famous for its 5,000 unlicensed so-called “guest houses” that cater to sex workers disguised as women entering into “temporary marriages” for money, lasting just a few hours.⁶⁴

⁶¹ Ali Al-Sistani: Islamic Jurisprudence, Eating and Drinking: Rule 2648

⁶² Islam and Revolution, p. 60

⁶³ Andrew Higgins (2007, June 2). Inside Iran's Holy Money Machine. Retrieved from: www.wsj.com

⁶⁴ Prayer, food, sex and water parks in Iran's holy city of Mashhad. (2015, May 7) Retrieved from: www.theguardian.com

Chapter 5

The Corruption of Buddhism

At this point we would like to briefly mention that similar events occurred in Buddhism. Just like Mohammed and Jesus, Gautama Buddha also had a successor who was supposed to continue his message (the *Dharma*) after his death. His name was Ananda. Ananda is still known among Buddhists today as the “Guardian of the *Dharma*” because he insisted that Buddhists stick to the Buddha's teachings after he passed away.

Buddha called a meeting of the monks and declared: “In my twenty years as leader of the Sangha, I have had many different attendants, but none of them has really filled the post perfectly; again and again some willfulness has become apparent. Now I am fifty-five years old and it is necessary for me to have a trustworthy and reliable attendant.” At once all the noble disciples offered their services, but the Buddha did not accept them. Then the great monks looked at Ananda, who had held back modestly, and asked him to volunteer.

Due to his impeccable behavior as a monk, Ananda seemed predestined for the post. When he was asked why he was the only one who had not offered his services, he replied that the Buddha knew best who was suitable to be his attendant. He had so much confidence in the Blessed One that it did not occur to him to express his own wishes, even though he would have liked to become the Master's attendant. Then the Buddha declared that Ananda would be pleasing to him and would be the best choice for the post. Ananda was in no way proud that the Master had preferred him to the other disciples, but instead asked for eight favors.⁶⁵

It was Ananda who was with Gautama Buddha at the hour of his death and entrusted the Buddha with the custody of his body. But just as Ali ibn Abi Talib, Mohammeds successor, was overpowered and pushed aside by well-known companions, Ananda was not



recognized after the Buddha's death either. The influential monks of the time decided to not even invite him to the first Buddhist council, considering him “not enlightened”. After the Buddha's death, all known monks of the time assembled and established a Buddhist leadership structure in which Ananda was not involved. In the first Buddhist council, a monk by the name of Kassapa became

⁶⁵ Great Disciples of the Buddha: Their Lives, Their Works, Their Legacy (The Teachings of the Buddha): Seite 190

the appointed leader of Buddhism. Interestingly, he is known for his constant arguments and animosity towards Ananda, Buddha's true vicegerent. For example he said:

“Beware, friend Ānanda, or else the Sangha may further investigate you. How is it, friend Ānanda, was it you whom the Exalted One extolled in the presence of the Sangha, saying: ‘I, O monks, can attain at will the four fine-material and immaterial meditative absorptions, the cessation of perception and feeling, the six supernormal knowledges; and Ānanda, too, can so attain’?”

“No, venerable sir.”

“Or did he say: ‘Kassapa, too, can so attain’?”⁶⁶

It is clear from the above account that Kassapa saw himself as superior to Ananda and therefore called to the Buddhist leadership role. It is also known that one of the major areas of contention between Kassapa and Ananda has been the role of women in religion. While Ananda considered it important to teach the Buddhist teachings to women, Kassapa considered it inappropriate. This then reminds us of Paul's negative image of women in society, that did not represent anything Jesus stood for. It is certainly interesting to note how parallel this development is to the processes in Christianity and Islam outlined in previous chapters.

This brief journey through the history of religion has revealed a startling truth: Although there have been numerous prophets who have come to earth to bring God's message, their message has been distorted and falsified one by one. This explains the division that exists between the various religions today. Despite all this, some original teachings have also remained, which point to the common origin of the religions.

⁶⁶ Great Disciples of the Buddha: Their Lives, Their Works, Their Legacy (The Teachings of the Buddha): S. 177

Chapter 6

The Same Message from the Same God

Although the religions of God have been corrupted so many times, there are still many salient commonalities that have survived to this day. Anyone who looks closely will see that certain teachings and trends can be found in all religions. If you, for example, compare the



Jewish call to prayer with the Islamic Azan, it stands out that both sound the same at first. The movements involved in ritual prayer are also amazingly similar. One can see that religious prostration, during which one presses one's forehead to the ground in reverence, is practiced by Jews, Muslims, Buddhists, Hindus, and was even practiced by the ancient Egyptians. Orthodox Christians also practice such prostration as part of their Easter rituals.

It is also interesting to note that many religious narratives show astonishing similarities across cultures. A figure resembling the biblical “Noah” for example can be found in almost all cultures. He builds a ship because God warns him of a great flood from which he is supposed to save himself. Also, he often takes animals on board and spends the time until the end of the flood with his family on the ark. In the Epic of Gilgamesh, which dates to the seventh century BC, his name is Uta-napishti: The lord of the gods Enlil was angry about the noisy people and decided to wipe out the annoying earthlings with a flood. But the wisdom god Ea warned him and instructed him to build a ship and load it with seeds and animals. Indian traditions tell of Manu, who is said to have been warned by a god in the form of a fish about the flood of the world. He built a raft and, as a survivor, became the forefather of a new human race.

The ancient Greeks called this person Deucalion. Zeus was angry with the people and therefore sent a flood. But Deucalion is warned and builds an ark. Him and his wife enter the ark and are saved. From ancient China there are legends of “floods piling up to the heavens”. As the Chinese equivalent of the Biblical Flood legend with Noah, Fu Xi is the only one in the land who was saved and became humanity's new ancestor. All of this cross-referencing and overlapping does not indicate that



these religions have “copied from each other”, as some suggest. This is rather unlikely, especially in the case of Far Eastern religions and Christianity. But this could in fact be an indication that these religions have a common divine origin. In the following, therefore, let us look at some amazing parallels between the different religions of the world today.

Chapter 7

Reincarnation

Everyone knows that both Hindus and Buddhists believe that a person's soul lives on after death and is afterwards reborn in a new body with a new identity. Krishna said:

“Just as the embodied soul continuously passes from childhood to youth to old age, similarly, at the time of death, the soul passes into another body. The wise are not deluded by this.”⁶⁷

On closer inspection, however, we find evidence of reincarnation in other religious scriptures as well.

Reincarnation in the Bible

A careful reading of the Bible reveals some interesting phrases that clearly indicate that the prophets believed in reincarnation. For example, in a prayer of the prophet Job it says:

*“Naked I came from my mother’s womb,
and naked I will return there.”⁶⁸*

He also said:

*“God does all these things to a person—
twice, even three times—
to turn them back from the pit,
that the light of life may shine on them.”⁶⁹*

These two quotes only make sense in light of the doctrine of reincarnation. Furthermore, the Bible clearly proves that Jews who lived during Jesus' lifetime believed in reincarnation as well. The Bible says:

*13 When Jesus came to the region of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples,
“Who do people say the Son of Man is?”
14 They replied, “Some say John the Baptist; others say Elijah; and still others,
Jeremiah or one of the prophets.”⁷⁰*

⁶⁷ Bhagavad Gita 2:13

⁶⁸ Job 1:21

⁶⁹ Job 33: 29-30

⁷⁰ Gospel of Matthew: Chapter 16

This is clear evidence that the Jews thought Jesus was the reincarnation of an earlier prophet. And Jesus himself confirms that reincarnation is true, saying that John the Baptist was the reincarnation of Elijah:

11 Truly I tell you, among those born of women there has not risen anyone greater than John the Baptist; yet whoever is least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he.

12 From the days of John the Baptist until now, the kingdom of heaven has been subjected to violence, and violent people have been raiding it.

13 For all the Prophets and the Law prophesied until John.

14 And if you are willing to accept it, he is the Elijah who was to come.⁷¹

From this point of view, the “return of the prophets” prophesied in the Bible in the end times makes more sense as well. Will they actually rise from the graves as corpses? Or does it not make more sense that the prophets will be born again and reincarnate in the end times? The prophet Daniel prophesied:

2 Multitudes who sleep in the dust of the earth will awake: some to everlasting life, others to shame and everlasting contempt.

3 Those who are wise will shine like the brightness of the heavens, and those who lead many to righteousness, like the stars for ever and ever.⁷²

In Isaiah it says:

*But your dead will live, Lord;
their bodies will rise-
let those who dwell in the dust
wake up and shout for joy-
your dew is like the dew of the morning;
the earth will give birth to her dead.⁷³*

In the Revelation of John it says:

“And I saw the souls of those who had been beheaded because of their testimony for Jesus and because of the word of God. They had not worshiped the beast or his image and had not received his mark on their foreheads or their hands. They came to life and reigned with Christ for a thousand years.

5 The rest of the dead did not come to life until the thousand years were ended. This is the first resurrection.”⁷⁴

⁷¹ Gospel of Matthew: Chapter 11

⁷² Daniel 12: 2-3

⁷³ Isaiah 26:19

⁷⁴ Book of Revelation: Chapter 20

All of this clearly relates to the return of the prophets at the end of time. Just as the Jews of that time believed that Jesus was the reincarnation of a previous Jewish prophet, they also believed that the souls of the prophets would return in new bodies in the end times.

Reincarnation in Judaism

So the Bible clearly proves that the Jews who lived in Jesus' age believed in reincarnation. However, we also find the belief in reincarnation in the Jewish traditions themselves. Although this idea is unknown to the mainstream public, closely guarded circles of Jewish rabbis have taught it for centuries. The Jewish tradition "Kabbalah" explicitly believes in reincarnation and gives the concept the name "Gilgul". This means something like



"wheel" and is therefore strongly reminiscent of the Buddhist tradition of "Samsara" - the wheel of eternal life that keeps turning and carries the soul from body to body. Rabbi Isaac Luria deals with it at length in one of the famous works on the subject entitled "Gates of Reincarnation". Here again the return of a prophet is mentioned. He writes that the prophet Joseph was the reincarnation of the prophet Enoch.

The Rabbi said: "This is the secret of 'He appointed it as Eidut [testimony] for Joseph... (Psalm 81:5) - for Joseph deserved to receive the soul (neshama) of Enoch, that is called 'Eidi' [My witness], as I said"⁷⁵

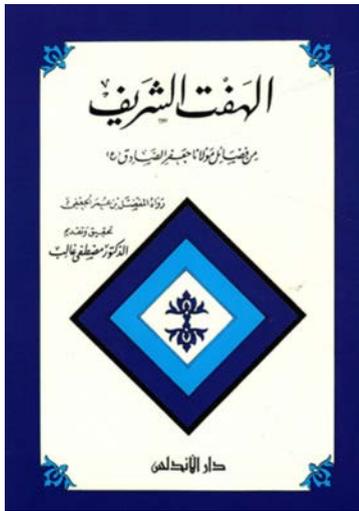
Reincarnation in Islam

Similar to Judaism, the idea of reincarnation is not common in mainstream Islam. However, if you look into mystical Islamic traditions, you will find many explicit references to the belief in reincarnation - especially in Shia scriptures. The mystical Shia book "Haft Al-Shareef" records a conversation between the sixth Shia Imam Jafar Al-Sadiq and his closest companion in which he details the mechanics of reincarnation. For example, it says:

Then God created the twelve rounds and determined their composition by creating bodies of clay for them for five rounds. And each incarnation consists of 50,000 years. And there remain Seven Rounds, and of these Seven Rounds is the Round of Light Bodies. (...) And then the Imam Sadiq recited (the Quranic verse):

⁷⁵Rabbi Isaac Luria. Gates of Reincarnation. Chapter Thirty-One, Section 7b

“(Thus) as We began the first creation, We shall repeat it - binding on Us is the promise; verily We shall fulfill it.”⁷⁶



The book introduces the concept of “rounds”, another word for “reincarnations”. At the same time, the sixth Imam of Shiism quotes various verses from the Quran, such as the one cited above, which speak of a “return” of creation. He explicitly states that this refers to reincarnation. Other well-known Shia traditions confirm this as well. Just as the Bible speaks of the return of the prophets, Shia traditions also speak of the same concept. Imam Al-Sadiq said:

“Allah has not sent a Prophet or Messenger since the time of Adam, except to bring them all back to this world to fight alongside Ali ibn Abi Taleb, the Commander of the Believers.”⁷⁷

Here it is confirmed that the Prophets return with the vicegerent of Mohammed Ali ibn Abi Taleb - which means that they will reincarnate with him. But that's not all. Just like in the Bible, such a return is also prophesied to happen in the end times.

And Al-Hussein will come forth with his companions who were killed with him. And with him also will be seventy prophets, just as they were sent with Moses the son of Imran.⁷⁸

Note that this tradition even confirms the Jewish belief of the return of the prophets, as it references that in the time of Moses the prophets reincarnated as well. How could it be possible that such unprecedented parallels can be found in both religions? Finally, it is important to note that the emptiness of rebirth is not only found in religious writings, but ancient philosophers also believed that the soul is immortal and reborn. Socrates said:

“And this corporeal element, my friend, is heavy and weighty and earthy, and is that element of sight by which a soul is depressed and dragged down again into the visible world, because she is afraid of the invisible and of the world below— prowling about tombs and sepulchres, near which, as they tell us, are seen certain ghostly apparitions of souls which have not departed pure, but are cloyed with sight and therefore visible. (...)

Yes, that is very likely, Cebes; and these must be the souls, not of the good, but of the evil, which are compelled to wander about such places in payment of the penalty of their former evil way of life; and they continue to wander until through

⁷⁶ The Quran 21:104

⁷⁷ Mukhtasar Basair Al-Darajat, Al-Hassan Al-Helli, 1st ed., pp. 25-26

⁷⁸ Mukhtasar Basa'ir Al-Darajat, Al-Hasan Ibn-e-Sulayman Al-Hilli, p. 48

the craving after the corporeal which never leaves them, they are imprisoned finally in another body. And they may be supposed to find their prisons in the same natures which they have had in their former lives. What nature do you mean, Socrates? What I mean is that men who have followed after gluttony, and wantonness, and drunkenness, and have had no thought of avoiding them, would pass into asses and animals of that sort.”⁷⁹

Karma

This last quote from the ancient philosophers points to another important question. So if the soul returns multiple times in new bodies, what system does rebirth follow? Is the dying person randomly assigned a body? Does a killer have the same chances for a fresh start as a philanthropist? Or do our decisions today influence the living conditions of our future incarnations?

The answer of almost all religions is: karma. Karma describes a universally valid rule of the universe. This states that everyone will experience the deeds he inflicts on others - whether good or bad. However, this is not necessarily in this lifetime, but possibly in a future life. The idea of karma also has its roots in culture as it has more to do with human instinct than with religion. Proverbs like “What goes around comes around” point to exactly this idea: All actions have consequences sooner or later. Our karma determines how we return to this world. Rich or poor, healthy or sick. Whether as a human or animal. The idea of karma therefore offers a possible explanation for many of life's existential questions: How can it be fair that every person is born into different circumstances? Buddha said:

*“I am the owner of my karma.
I inherit my karma.
I am born of my karma.
I am related to my karma.
I live supported by my karma.
Whatever karma I create, whether good or evil, that I shall inherit.”⁸⁰*

In the Bible, we see that the Jews of Jesus' day also believed in karma. This becomes clear when Jesus is walking with his disciples and they meet a blind man.

*1 As he went along, he saw a man blind from birth.
2 His disciples asked him, “Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?”⁸¹*

This question of the disciples can only be explained by the fact that they took it for granted that the man either had put karma upon himself in a previous life which now led to his

⁷⁹ Plato: Phaedo, 81d-e

⁸⁰ Anguttara Nikaya Vol. 57 - Upajjhatthana Sutta

⁸¹ Gospel of John: Chapter 9

blindness, or that he carries the karma of his parents. In the previously mentioned book *Al Haft Al-Shareef*, Imam Al-Sadiq describes exactly the same mechanisms:

Imam Al Sadiq said: "O Mufaddal, as for the First Believer whom you see poor in this world: That Believer was rich in his first incarnation. And he had brothers in his life and time who were believers to take care of and share food and clothing with. Then he did less than he ought to do, and he ignored them and did not fulfill God's command concerning his believing brethren."⁸²

So here are the classic ideas of karma, which describe how a person's actions in their previous incarnation affect their future lives. The idea that a bad man can come back in the body of an animal is discussed in the same book as well. It says:

"As for the unbeliever who is dutiful to his family and good to them: He comes in the form of a lion or a tiger or something like that, and what is appropriate for strength and might, so that he is strong and invincible in the eyes of the people. And that's what came from his kindness, which I mentioned, that he is in incarnations that are admired... As for the unbeliever who's hurtful to his family and others, he becomes a bear, or a pig, or a monkey or something like that, he is mischievous and weak."⁸³

It is interesting that exactly the same idea can be found in the scriptures of Hinduism, in the *Bhagavad Gita*. Here too, a man who died in ignorance is reborn as an animal. Krishna said:



⁸² Al Haft Al-Shareef: Door #50

⁸³ Al Haft Al-Shareef: Door #58

“When one dies in the mode of passion, he takes birth among those engaged in fruitive activities; and when he dies in the mode of ignorance, he takes birth in the animal kingdom.”⁸⁴

It is definitely remarkable that such mechanisms are described in detail across cultures. How did Plato, Krishna and Imam Al-Sadiq share the same ideas about karma and reincarnation?

⁸⁴ Bhagavad Gita: Chapter 14, Verse 15

Chapter 8

The Golden Rule

So how can a person avoid bad karma, or even break out of the cycle of birth and death? Interestingly, in all religions we find the so-called “golden rule”. It says: treat others as you would like to be treated yourself. And whoever follows this rule has no karma to fear. In fact, the wording is so similar in the various religions of the world that it clearly points to a common origin of all religions. How else could it be that the same rule can be found all over the world? Such an astonishing unity cannot be a coincidence. Jesus said:

“Do to others what you want them to do to you. This is the meaning of the law of Moses and the teaching of the prophets.”⁸⁵

In the Mahabharata, one of the most important scriptures of Hinduism, it says:

“One should never do something to others that one would regard as an injury to one's own self. In brief, this is dharma. Anything else is succumbing to desire.”⁸⁶

Plato said:

“May I be of a sound mind, and do to others as I would that they should do to me.”⁸⁷

Ali ibn Abi Talib said:

“Thus, you should desire for others what you desire for yourself and hate for others what you hate for yourself. Do not oppress as you do not like to be oppressed. Do good to others as you would like good to be done to you. Regard bad for yourself whatever you regard bad for others. Accept that (treatment) from others which you would like others to accept from you... Do not say to others what you do not like to be said to you.”⁸⁸

Buddha said:

“Hurt not others in ways that you yourself would find hurtful.”⁸⁹

Confucius said:

⁸⁵ Gospel of Matthew: Chapter 7:12

⁸⁶ Mahabharata 13.114.8

⁸⁷ Plato, Laws, Book XI

⁸⁸ Nahjul Balaghah, Letter 31

⁸⁹ Udanavarga 5:18

Zi Gong (a disciple of Confucius) asked: "Is there any one word that could guide a person throughout life?"

The Master replied: "How about 'shu' [reciprocity]: never impose on others what you would not choose for yourself?"⁹⁰

How can we in light of this not at least consider that all religions have a common origin but have been corrupted and altered over time and hence today there is discord among members of the different religious communities?

⁹⁰ Confucius, Analects XV.24

Chapter 9

This World

Along with the understanding that a soul is struggling against bad karma and the temptations of this life comes an understanding of the nature of this world as a whole. From Jesus to Buddha to Imam Ali, they all taught that this world is worthless and nothing but a game or a test. In the Quran it says:

“This worldly life is but a pastime and a game...”⁹¹

Mohammed said:

“God Almighty created no creation he hates more than this world, and he has not looked upon it since he created it.”⁹²

Jesus said:

“My kingdom is not of this world. If it were, my servants would fight to prevent my arrest by the Jewish leaders. But now my kingdom is from another place.”⁹³

Krishna said:

“From the highest planet in the material world down to the lowest, all are places of misery wherein repeated birth and death take place. But one who attains to My abode, O son of Kunti, never takes birth again.”⁹⁴

The first noble truth in Buddhism describes the endless wheel of death and rebirth as the eternal wheel of suffering. It is everyone's job to see through this illusion and break free from it. Buddha said:

*“This is how to contemplate our conditioned existence in this fleeting world:
Like a tiny drop of dew, or a bubble floating in a stream;
Like a flash of lightning in a summer cloud,
Or a flickering lamp, an illusion, a phantom, or a dream.”⁹⁵*

For this reason, all of these religions also condemn greed and encourage moderate and healthy abstinence. Rituals such as fasting can be found in Christianity, Islam, Hinduism

⁹¹ The Quran 29:64

⁹² Ibn Abi Dunya: The book of Zuhd, page 40

⁹³ Gospel of John: Chapter 18

⁹⁴ Bhagavad Gita: Chapter 8, 16

⁹⁵ Diamond Sutra, Chapter 32

and Buddhism. Muslims fast for 30 days during Ramadan, Christians abstain from cravings of their choice during fasting. And in Buddhism there is a time of renunciation called "Vassa". The idea behind it is to curb one's cravings for the lusts of this world and to strengthen one's connection to the spiritual.

This idea of partial asceticism has been reduced to absurdity in most organized religions. Not only the scholars and leaders of organized religions live in the lap of luxury, but religious rituals of contemplation have become more and more commercialized in recent decades as well. In Islam, Ramadan comes with 5-star buffets, Ramadan discounts, Ramadan series marathons and Ramadan shopping offers. And at the end of the so-called fasting month, people ate more than in any other month. The original idea, namely to better understand poor people who have nothing to eat, is completely lost. In Christianity, too, the commercialization of Easter and especially Christmas have taken on grotesque forms. Around 14 billion euros are spent on gifts alone in the Christmas business in Germany. Advertising for Christmas gifts and products is omnipresent. Today the Christmas season has little to do with the remembrance of the birth of Jesus.

Chapter 10

Communal Life

This prescribed abstinence within the religions was mostly accompanied by the establishment of a community. Prophets called on their followers to favor others over themselves and to practice charity. This should be lived practically and not just preached in theory. Therefore, they designed the ideal of communes in which the inhabitants lived together and shared everything with each other. The early Christian community was guided by this ideal. The Bible says:

*44 And all those who had believed were together and had all things in common;
45 and they began selling their property and possessions and were sharing them with all, as anyone might have need.
46 Day by day continuing with one mind in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, they were taking their meals together with gladness and sincerity of heart.⁹⁶*



Such communal life should prevent greed and avoid injustice. In Buddhism, the concept of living in a community is just as important. Traditionally, to profess Buddhism, the three refuges are recited.

*I take refuge in the Buddha,
I take refuge in the dharma,
I take refuge in the sangha.*

The word “Sangha” denotes the same type of community described in Acts. Practicing Buddhists should live together in a community and share everything with each other. Buddha said:

⁹⁶ Acts of the Apostles: Chapter 2

“A man that stands alone, having decided to obey the truth, may be weak and slip back into his old ways. Therefore, stand ye together, assist one another, and strengthen one another's efforts. Be like unto brothers; one in love, one in holiness, and one in your zeal for the truth.”⁹⁷

For Plato, too, the best community is one in which everyone shares everything. Plato writes in his famous book *Nomoi* (Laws), Book V:

“The first and highest form of the State and of the government and of the law is that in which there prevails most widely the ancient saying, that “Friends have all things in common.” This communion of women and children and of property, in which the private and individual is altogether banished from life.”

Mohammed founded such a community as well. He explicitly asked his followers to share everything. Especially with those new members who had come from afar to join the new religion.⁹⁸ The grandson of Mohammed, Imam Sadiq furthermore said:

“The simplest of the rights of the believer is that you should love for him what you love for yourself and you should despise for him what you despise for yourself. The second is that you should help him with yourself, your wealth, your tongue, your hands and your feet... The fifth is that you should not fill your stomach whilst he is hungry, you should not be quenched whilst he is thirsty and you should not clothe yourself whilst he is naked.”

⁹⁷ Gospel of Buddha: XVII. The Sangha

⁹⁸ In the Quran, 59:9 it states: “And [also for] those who were settled in al-Madinah and [adopted] the faith before them. They love those who emigrated to them and find not any want in their breasts of what the emigrants were given but give [them] preference over themselves, even though they are in privation. And whoever is protected from the stinginess of his soul - it is those who will be the successful.”

Chapter 11

Dreams

Although all prophets teach that the believer is trapped in this physical world, they also inform their followers of different ways to connect with the real world and God. It stands out that in most known religions, dreams are of great importance. In Buddhism, for example, it



is said that on the night of a full moon, the mother of Buddha dreamed that a white elephant with a lotus flower on its tusk appeared to her, circled her three times, and then entered her right side. This meant that after 20 years of infertility, she would become pregnant with her son, Buddha, which she subsequently did. In Hinduism, Krishna dedicates pages to the interpretation of dreams in the important scripture Brahma Vaivarta Purana. He describes various symbols and what they predict. In it he says, among other things:

Man attains baths in the holy river Ganges when he hears the description of dreams. This leads to many pious successes.

The Jewish prophet Jacob dreamed in the Torah of a ladder that led to heaven and heard God speak to him in his dream:

16 Then Jacob awoke from his sleep and said, "Surely the Lord is in this place, and I did not know it."

17 And he was afraid and said, "How awesome is this place! This is none other than the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven."⁹⁹

According to the Bible, his son, the Prophet Joseph, was also given the ability to interpret dreams. In this way he predicted a drought in Egypt and saved his people. Dreams also play an important role in the life of Jesus:

19 Because Joseph, her husband, was faithful to the law, and yet did not want to expose her to public disgrace, he had in mind to divorce her quietly.

20 But after he had considered this, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, "Joseph son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary home as your wife, because what is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. 21 She will give birth to a son, and you are to give him the name Jesus, because he will save his people from their sins."¹⁰⁰

⁹⁹ Genesis: Chapter 28

¹⁰⁰ Matthew, Chapter 1

It is thus clearly established that dreams play an important religious role in the sacred scriptures of Judaism and Christianity. The Quran confirms and tells the same stories.

*We relate to you, the best of stories in what We have revealed to you of this Quran although you were, before it, among the unaware. Remember when Joseph said to his father, "O my dear father! Indeed I dreamt of eleven stars, and the sun, and the moon—I saw them prostrating to me!"*¹⁰¹

He also explicitly praises the prophets who believed in their dreams.

*We called out to him, "O Abraham! You have already fulfilled the vision." Indeed, this is how We reward the good-doers.*¹⁰²

And in the traditions, Mohammed clearly says that dreams can be prophetic.

*"A believer's dream is one part of forty-six parts of prophethood."*¹⁰³

¹⁰¹ The Quran: 12: 3

¹⁰² The Quran: 37:104-105

¹⁰³ Sahih Muslim, Nr. 46

Chapter 12

The End Times and the Savior

Interestingly, all religious texts mention a final age, popularly referred to as the “End Times” when the world will be godless and unjust. Every messenger of God also prophesied to his followers that in this age, a savior would return and establish a kingdom of God on earth. In Islam he is called Mahdi, in Zoroastrianism Saoshyant, in Buddhism Maitreya, in Taoism Li Hung, in Christianity it is the Messiah and for Hindus it is the Kalki. They all share basic characteristics: they call to a higher power, work at God's command, end tyranny and poverty, and spread justice and peace in an age of injustice.

Kalki

According to Hinduism, time is divided into four ages. The fourth and final age in the Hindu cycle is called “Kali Yuga”. It is considered the age of decay and doom, and is strongly reminiscent of the Islamic and Christian traditions of the “end times”. Hindu scriptures prophecy that at the end of the Kali Yuga, a savior will appear who will lead the forces of good in a triumphant battle against evil. His name is Kalki. Scripture says:

“He will restore order and peace to this world overflowing with creatures and with conflicting laws. This radiant and highly intelligent brahmin will destroy all things. He will be the destroyer of everything and He will be the creator of a new age (yuga).”¹⁰⁴



Li Hung

Taoist scriptures tell of a character named Li Hung appearing at the end of the world cycle to save the chosen people. He is portrayed as an ideal leader who will bring order to heaven and earth in a time of upheaval. A famous Taoist scripture reports:

“In the Ren Wu year, the disasters will not be erased. Once peace reigns, the Lord of Peaceful Immortals (Li Hung) will reign...”¹⁰⁵

Saoshyant

¹⁰⁴ Mahabharata (Vana Parva, 190)

¹⁰⁵ Taishang dongyuan shenzhou jing; stanza 7

Zarathustra predicted that the world will be darker at the end of time than at any other time in history. Zarathustra called this time the “Age of Confusion”. At that time, Saoshyant will appear and he will be the great savior of mankind:

“He shall be the victorious Benefactor (Saoshyant) by name, and the World Renovator (Astavat-ereta) by name. He is benefactor because he will benefit the entire physical world; he is world renovator because he will establish physical living existence indestructibly.”¹⁰⁶

Maitreya

The Maitreya is a character that Buddhists believe will appear on earth at a time when most people have forgotten the Buddha's teachings (Dharma). He comes at this time to spread the true teachings of the Buddha. Buddha said:

“Now, in those days, brothers, there will arise in the world a Blessed One by the name of Maitreya (the Benevolent), an Arhat, a fully Enlightened One endowed with wisdom and righteousness, a Fortunate One, a Knower of the World, the Peerless Charioteer of the people to be tamed, a teacher of devas (angels) and humanity, an exalted one, a buddha like me.”¹⁰⁷

Moshiach

In the Hebrew Tanakh it is reported that in the Golden Age the promised Messiah will appear, a Jewish king who will rule the whole world. Possessing divine authority and power, he eliminates hatred among people, heals all diseases and puts an end to poverty. In the Talmud, he is given the title ‘Moshiach’ or ‘Melech HaMoshiach’.

3 And he shall judge between many peoples and reprove mighty nations afar off; and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks; nations shall not lift the sword against nation; neither shall they learn war anymore.¹⁰⁸

Many Orthodox Jews, as well as fundamental Christians, continue to believe that the establishment of the State of Israel is a clear sign that we are living in the end times. After the children of Israel had been scattered all over the earth for nearly 2,000 years, Jeremiah prophesied that they would be gathered again in the end times:

“The days are coming,” declares the Lord, “when I will bring my people Israel and Judah back from captivity and restore them to the land I gave their ancestors to possess,” says the Lord.”¹⁰⁹

¹⁰⁶ Avesta, Farvardin Yast 13.129.

¹⁰⁷ Gautama Buddha in Digha Nikaya (Teachings of the Buddha) Cakkavatti Sihanada Sutta

¹⁰⁸ Mica: Chapter 4

¹⁰⁹ Jeremiah: Chapter 30

This theory is also supported by the fact that the Temple Institute in Jerusalem is already planning to rebuild the destroyed Jewish Temple in Jerusalem for a third time. This construction of the so-called third temple is seen by Christians and Jews alike as a sign that the coming of the Messiah is imminent.

*and I will bring my people Israel back from exile.
“They will rebuild the ruined cities and live in them.
They will plant vineyards and drink their wine;
they will make gardens and eat their fruit.
I will plant Israel in their own land,
never again to be uprooted
from the land I have given them,”*¹¹⁰

Although the prophecy of such a Messiah is actually mentioned in the Torah, this belief leads religious Zionists to think they are fulfilling God's commandment by occupying Palestinian lands, illegally demolishing homes, and imprisoning and killing innocent Palestinians.



Christ

Christians also believe in the end times. The Bible describes the signs of this age in great detail. These include wars, natural disasters and mass deaths. Christians also believe in a Savior. However, they believe it is Jesus, himself, who will return in the end times to eliminate suffering and injustice.

*1 Then I saw “a new heaven and a new earth,” for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and there was no longer any sea.
2 I saw the Holy City, the new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride beautifully dressed for her husband.
3 And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, “Look! God’s dwelling place is now among the people, and he will dwell with them. They will be his people, and God himself will be with them and be their God.
4 ‘He will wipe every tear from their eyes. There will be no more death’ or mourning or crying or pain, for the old order of things has passed away.”*¹¹¹

¹¹⁰ Amos: Chapter 9

¹¹¹ Revelation: Chapter 21

The Mahdi

All Muslims believe that at the end of time, a man from the family of Prophet Mohammed will appear who will bring justice to the earth and will rule the whole world. Both Sunni and Shia Muslims are waiting for this person referred to as 'the Mahdi'. Mohammed said:

“The Mahdi is from me. . . . He will fill the world with righteousness and justice just as it was before filled with injustice and wrong. He will reign for seven years.”¹¹²

These clearly overlapping teachings show that all religions are historically, culturally, and substantively intertwined. The deeper one dives into the matter of the religions and also considers their gnostic teachings, the more similar they become. But now everyone is still faced with the big question: How can I be sure that God exists at all?

¹¹² Sunan Abi Dawud 4285

Chapter 13

The God Instinct

Surveys suggest that up to 84% of the world's population are members of some religious or spiritual group, or claim that religion plays an important role in their lives. Studies show that even remote peoples with no contact to civilization have developed their own religions. They worship tree spirits or nature gods - but the belief in some sort of supernatural power is ubiquitous. Even in Iceland, notoriously one of the most “unbelieving” nations in the world, with the highest proportion of atheists, more than 62% of the population believe in the existence of elves. The so-called “hidden people”.¹¹³

Why is the belief in the supernatural so pervasive and persistent? In fact, even atheists who deny the existence of a god today have at some point in their lives searched for God. Everyone wonders, sooner or later, if there is a hidden force that guides and controls the world. Nobody is born an atheist. The biographies of the most famous atheists contain accounts of their past belief in God. In his biography “An Appetite for Wonder”, the famous atheist Dawkins writes that he believed in God as a child, but by the age of 9 began to question his beliefs. He writes:

“I was a strong believer in a non-denominational creator god.”

The same goes for Sam Harris, and pretty much every known atheist in the world. Independent studies conducted with children from different backgrounds and from 20 different countries confirm this. In 2011, the University of Oxford announced that people are naturally predisposed to believe in gods and an afterlife. A £1.9 million study led by two Oxford University academics found that human thought processes are “rooted” in religious concepts. The Telegraph reported that children under the age of five found it easier to believe in superhuman powers than in human limitations.¹¹⁴ What is significant is that the lead scientists experimented with children from diverse backgrounds, such as Mayan children living in Mexico. Experimental evidence, including cross-cultural studies, suggests that three-year-olds attribute superior, god-like qualities to various beings. Superpower, super-knowledge, and superperception are default assumptions. The belief in the supernatural is therefore not acquired, but innate. All children believe in supernatural beings. Therefore, many people have invisible friends in their childhood. They weren't taught this, on the contrary: they are trained to deny these experiences as they get older. All humans have an innate “God instinct” that leads them to search for an omniscient being. Carl Jung, for example, was one of the first psychologists to recognize this. He said:

¹¹³ Laura Studarus (2018, december 18). The elusive ‘hidden people’ of Iceland. Retrieved from: www.bbc.com

¹¹⁴ Tim Ross (2011, May 12). Belief in God is part of human nature - Oxford study. Retrieved from: www.telegraph.co.uk

“... the understanding of religion [of the man of today] is made considerably more difficult owing to the lack of explanations... If, despite this, he has still not discarded all his religious convictions, this is because the religious impulse rests on an instinctive basis and is therefore a specifically human function...When any natural human function gets lost, i.e. is denied conscious and intentional expression, a general disturbance results...”¹¹⁵

This explains why there is not even one culture in the world that doesn't worship their own kind of God. Man searches intuitively for a higher power. Professor Pascal Boyer, an anthropologist at Washington University, confirms this. He says that atheistic thought patterns are unnatural to the human brain.

“Some form of religious thinking seems to be the path of least resistance for our cognitive systems. By contrast, disbelief is generally the result of deliberate, effortful work against our natural cognitive dispositions — hardly the easiest ideology to propagate.”¹¹⁶

Something like this is also evident in everyday life. The most frequently asked question of young children is: Why? Children automatically assume that everything around them was created for a reason. Ask a young child why it rains and they will probably say, “so the plants can drink”. The idea that things exist by chance is completely foreign to children by nature. In psychology, this is called “teleological thinking”. When we are born we assume that everything in life has a purpose. This leads us to ask: If there is no God, why does every single child that is born, no matter where or when, find it so obvious that there is an omniscient Creator and something beyond this physical world? Why should we have this instinct, this inner voice, if it is completely useless? And why should our brains be designed to believe in God if he doesn't exist?

¹¹⁵ Carl Jung. Collected Works. Volume 10, 544

¹¹⁶ Will Gervais (2022, April 15). Atheism is not as rare or as rational as you think. Retrieved from: bigthink.com

Chapter 14

God's Vicegerent on the Earth

So let's assume there is a God. And he instinctively programmed into us the search for him and the meaning of life. If so, he must have a message for us. But how does he convey this message to us so that we can understand it? To do this, he needs a translator. A person from the midst of the people with whom he wants to communicate. Just as early American settlers recruited a translator from among the indigenous peoples who could translate the message of the newcomers into their own language, God chooses a translator from among humans who can translate his message into the appropriate language of the age and adapt it to their culture and understanding. This also explains why the message and rules vary from prophet to prophet. However, the main message remains the same. Noah, Abraham, Moses, Jesus, Mohammed, Plato, Krishna, Buddha - they were all prophets of God, delivering His message in the language of their people.

Amr ibn Al Aas came from Alexandria, Egypt and approached the Prophet of Allah and the Prophet asked him: "What did you see there?" Amr replied: "I saw a people (who believed in the teachings of Aristotle) and gathered in circles and mentioned a man named Aristotle, may God curse him." The Prophet said: "Stop, O Amr! Aristotle was a prophet, but his people did not recognize him as such."¹¹⁷

There is such a translator or vicegerent of God in every age. And his task is to convey the message of God or to protect it from corruption. He does not speak for himself and does not have his own interests in mind - but transmits the message of God undistorted.

Jesus said:

"By myself I can do nothing; I judge only as I hear, and my judgment is just, for I seek not to please myself but him who sent me."¹¹⁸

As we saw in the previous chapter, each prophet's message was corrupted after his death. However, it is still possible for man to find his vicegerent and thus to adhere to the true religion, even if the rulers of the time change the message for the masses.

Problems always arise when people oppose the appointment of the vicegerent. We find the appointment and mention of such vicegerents in virtually all religious writings. In the Quran it says:

I will appoint a vicegerent upon the earth.¹¹⁹

¹¹⁷ Mahbub Al-Qulub, Qutb Al-Din Mohammed Al-Ashkuri Al-Dailmi, p. 14

¹¹⁸ Gospel of John: Chapter 5

¹¹⁹ The Quran 2: 30

In the Bible it says:

26 Then God said, "Let us make mankind in our image, in our likeness, so that they may rule over the fish in the sea and the birds in the sky, over the livestock and all the wild animals, and over all the creatures that move along the ground."¹²⁰

So a vicegerent is like an administrator of God on earth, who represents him on this earth and takes care of people's affairs. Whenever a vicegerent's life draws to a close, he makes sure to appoint his successor. Adam appointed Abel and Seth as his successors.¹²¹ The successorship was then passed from son to son until it reached Lamech, who made Noah his successor.

Enoch answered, and said: "The Lord will do a new thing in the earth. There will come a great destruction on the earth, and a deluge for one year. This son who is born unto thee will be left on the earth, and his three children will be saved with him, when all mankind that are on the earth shall die. And there will be a great punishment on the earth, and the earth will be cleansed from all impurity. And now make known to thy son Lamech that he who was born is in truth his son, and call his name Noah, for he will be left to you, and he and his children will be saved from the destruction which will come upon the earth."¹²²

Noah then appointed Shem. Succession then passed from Abraham to Isaac, who was succeeded by Jacob and Joseph. Centuries later, Moses was chosen to lead the children of Israel out of Egypt. His father Amram had been his predecessor. The appointment of Moses' successor Joshua is then clearly written in the Torah.

*22 Moses did as the Lord commanded him. He took Joshua and had him stand before Eleazar the priest and the whole assembly.
23 Then he laid his hands on him and commissioned him, as the Lord instructed through Moses.¹²³*

The Israelites entered the promised land under the leadership of Joshua. There they were ruled by the respective vicegerents of God, known in the Bible as judges. David is then anointed by Samuel, making him the new vicegerent of God.

*12 So he sent for him and had him brought in. He was glowing with health and had a fine appearance and handsome features.
Then the Lord said, "Rise and anoint him; this is the one."¹²⁴*

¹²⁰ Genesis: Chapter 1, Verses 26-31

¹²¹ See for example: History of Ya'qubi, Vol. 1, p.11

¹²² Louis Ginzberg: Legends of the Jews

¹²³ Numbers: Chapter 27

¹²⁴ Samuel: Chapter 16

When the time of David's death came, David appointed Solomon:

28 Then King David said, "Call in Bathsheba." So she came into the king's presence and stood before him.

29 The king then took an oath: "As surely as the Lord lives, who has delivered me out of every trouble,

30 I will surely carry out this very day what I swore to you by the Lord, the God of Israel: Solomon your son shall be king after me, and he will sit on my throne in my place."¹²⁵

The children of Israel were then ruled by several kings. Over time, however, the Jewish scholars made a pact with the Roman occupying powers and lost their way. So when Jesus, who had been prophesied as their savior, appeared, they rejected him and crucified him. To this day, Jews believe that the last prophet of Israel (and thus the last prophet sent) was Zakariah. But that is not true. Zakariah appointed his son John the Baptist as his successor, who was killed for his teachings by the rulers of his time.

Before his death, however, he publicly announced Jesus to be his successor. Just as Samuel publicly anointed David and "the Spirit of the Lord came upon him," in the same way the Spirit of the Lord came upon Jesus when John baptized him.

32 Then John gave this testimony: "I saw the Spirit come down from heaven as a dove and remain on him.

33 And I myself did not know him, but the one who sent me to baptize with water told me, "The man on whom you see the Spirit come down and remain is the one who will baptize with the Holy Spirit."¹²⁶

Jesus then declared his successor, Simon Peter.¹²⁷ Furthermore, he clearly indicated that his kingdom was given to another people. For centuries, the Children of Israel (the descendants of Abraham through Isaac) had been God's chosen people. That doesn't mean that God didn't send prophets to other peoples. But the children of Israel were promised a certain land and kingdom. However, when they crucified Jesus, their Redeemer, that kingdom was taken from them and given to the children of Ishmael, the Arabs.

43 Therefore I tell you that the kingdom of God will be taken away from you and given to a people who will produce its fruit.

44 Anyone who falls on this stone will be broken to pieces; anyone on whom it falls will be crushed.¹²⁸

¹²⁵ 1 Kings: Chapter 1

¹²⁶ Gospel of John: Chapter 1

¹²⁷ Gospel of Matthew: Chapter 16, verse 18

¹²⁸ The Gospel of Matthew: Chapter 21

The Arabs were now given the chance to empower God's vicegerent on earth. Jesus therefore prophecies Mohammed in the Bible:

*7 But very truly I tell you, it is for your good that I am going away. Unless I go away, the Advocate (Parakletos) will not come to you; but if I go, I will send him to you.*¹²⁹

The word “Parakletos” is a distortion of ‘periklytos’, which is an exact translation of the Aramaic term (used in Palestine during Jesus' day) and name Mauhamana. Accordingly, the ‘Periklytos’ can appropriately be translated to be the names ‘Mohammed’ and ‘Ahmad’, both derived from the Arabic verb hamida ('he praised') and the noun hamd ('praised'), respectively.¹³⁰ In the Quran, Mohammed clearly referred to this verse:

*And [mention] when Jesus, the son of Mary, said, “O children of Israel, indeed I am the messenger of Allah to you confirming what came before me of the Torah and bringing good tidings of a messenger to come after me, whose name is Ahmad.” But when he came to them with clear evidences, they said, “This is obvious magic.”*¹³¹

But the Muslims did not appreciate the kingdom of God, either. And although Mohammed clearly mentioned his successor, the Muslims did not follow him, as mentioned previously.

Mohammed performed the noon prayer and took Ali's hand and said, “Do you know that I am more worthy of the believers than they are?” “Yes, we know,” they replied.

*Thereupon he took Ali's hand and said, “Ali is the lord (maula) of all over whom I am the lord (maula). O Allah! Love him who loves him and be the enemy of his enemy.”*¹³²

So, as we see, God sends a vicegerent in every age. This vicegerent is commissioned by God to lead people to Him. But not only that; it is their task to rule over the people in this world as well.

¹²⁹ The Gospel of John: Chapter 16

¹³⁰ Message of the Quran, 2009, p. 1057, note 6

¹³¹ The Quran 6:16

¹³² Sahih Tirmidhi: Volume 2, page 298; Volume 5, page 63. Sunan Ibn Maja: Volume 1, pages 12, 43, Al-Mustadrak, from Al-Hakim: Volume 2, page 129; Volume 3, pages 109-110,116,371.

Chapter 15

The Reign of God: Religion and Politics

Democracy has established itself as a globally recognized form of government over the course of the last century. More than 80 percent of all countries in the world call themselves “democratic”. Whoever hears the word “democracy” in the West immediately thinks of justice, freedom or equality. Without question, democracy is the most popular system of the 21st century. Yet the Greek philosopher Plato, for example, was critical of the idea of the rule of the majority. In his book *Politeia* he argues that a democracy will ultimately end in tyranny and thus mankind will not benefit from this form of government. If we were to look at the state of the world today, we should at least consider this idea. We live in a world where the richest 1% own as much as 46% of the rest of the world's population. While more than 10, 000 children die of hunger every day, 1/3 of all the food produced in the world is simply thrown away. All this while the majority of nations are democratic. To date, democratic organizations such as the UN or the European Union have not even begun to solve these significant political grievances. Democratic states such as Germany or Switzerland are partially responsible for such social injustices. They allow corporations like Nestlé, which have annual sales of more than 80 billion Swiss francs, to buy water rights from states and then make money from them - while residents are dying of thirst because of water shortages! In 2002, Nestle demanded a \$6 million payment from the government of what was then the world's poorest country, Ethiopia, while the country struggled to fight its worst famine in almost 20 years.¹³³

Neither German nor Swiss democracy is doing anything to prevent this and make the world a better place, although most Swiss and German people probably do not agree with such inhumanity. The reason for this is that in a democracy, citizens have no real influence on political decisions.

In 2014, Princeton University conducted the largest empirical study on the influence of the population on current politics in the USA. They proved what most Americans already knew:

*The preferences of the average American appear to have only a miniscule, near-zero, statistically non-significant impact upon public policy.*¹³⁴

¹³³ Charlotte Denny (2002, December 19). Nestle claims £3.7m from famine-hit Ethiopia. Retrieved from: www.theguardian.com

¹³⁴ Martin Gilens and Benjamin I. Page (2014). Testing Theories of American Politics: Elites, Interest Groups, and Average Citizens.

That means the number of Americans who are for or against an idea don't affect the likelihood of Congress passing it into law. The influence of citizens on politics is almost zero. The idea of democracy is thus a mockery.

The Problem with the Majority

In the Quran it says:

*O Prophet! If you were to obey most of those on earth, they would lead you away from Allah's Way. They follow nothing but assumptions and do nothing but lie.*¹³⁵

The Bible says:

*You shall not fall in with the many to do evil, nor shall you bear witness in a lawsuit, siding with the many, so as to pervert justice.*¹³⁶

Socrates said:

*Then, most excellent friend, we must not consider at all what the many will say of us, but what he who knows about right and wrong, the one man, and truth herself will say. And so you introduced the discussion wrongly in the first place, when you began by saying we ought to consider the opinion of the multitude about the right and the noble and the good and their opposites.*¹³⁷

The idea of democracy is based on a fundamental concept: the right of the majority to decide. The ideology of democracy assumes that it is good for the state to let the majority decide who should rule the country. However, a brief look at history shows that the majority can easily be misled: On July 31, 1932, 37.3 percent of Germans voted in free elections for the National Socialist German Workers' Party (NSDAP). More than a third of the German population thought Hitler was the right person to rule Germany. And this was far from the first and last time that people installed dictators as heads of state who would later commit the most atrocious acts. Similar things happened in Zimbabwe, Cuba and many Latin American countries.

This clearly shows that there is no guarantee that the majority of people will make the right decision. Rather, it's an open secret that crowds develop strange dynamics that make them easily influenced. The French sociologist Gustave Le Bon formulated the so-called "contagion theory". According to it, social groups exert a hypnotic effect on their members. Protected in the anonymity of the crowd, people give up their personal responsibility and surrender to the contagious emotions of the crowd. The crowd develops a life of its own

¹³⁵ The Quran 6:116

¹³⁶ Exodus: Chapter 23

¹³⁷ Plato's Crito: 48a

and tempts people to act irrationally. It is clear that the majority of the population is not capable of making sensible long-term political decisions. According to a study by the Federal Agency for Civic Education, no more than 32 percent of German citizens are interested in politics. Can one expect qualified decisions from an uninterested population?

And it's not just voters who are uninformed. Even the members of parliament, who are paid by state funds to devote themselves to politics full-time, do not even know what they are actually voting on in parliament. Shortly after the Bundestag decided to deploy the Bundeswehr in Syria, NDR reporter Klaas Butenschön went to the Bundestag to ask MPs what Germany was actually doing in Syria. Shockingly, the MPs who voted for the operation didn't even know who was actually fighting whom in Syria and which side was supported by Germany.¹³⁸ How many lives have these MPs carelessly risked with their vote without bothering to inform themselves about the basics of the conflict? In 2011, the Panorama television program questioned several MPs about the Euro Rescue Package, which cost Germany 211 billion euros in tax-payers' money. On the day of the vote, only one of them knew how much money was going to be spent and to which countries those sums were going to be paid out to.¹³⁹ How is a system supposed to function when neither the voters nor the representatives have the knowledge to make qualified decisions? The idea of majority rule contradicts both logic and religious texts. In the Quran it says for example:

*Say, O Prophet, "O Allah! Lord over all authorities! You give authority to whoever You please and remove it from who You please; You honor whoever You please and disgrace who You please—all good is in Your Hands. Surely You 'alone' are Most Capable of everything."*¹⁴⁰

And in the Bible we read:

14 When you enter the land the Lord your God is giving you and have taken possession of it and settled in it, and you say, "Let us set a king over us like all the nations around us,"

*15 be sure to appoint over you a king the Lord your God chooses. He must be from among your fellow Israelites. Do not place a foreigner over you, one who is not an Israelite.*¹⁴¹

Catholics say in the well-known Lord's Prayer:

10 Thy kingdom come.

¹³⁸ Klaas Butenschön fragt Bundestagsabgeordnete: Was machen wir eigentlich in Syrien?. (2016, January 21). Retrieved from: www.ndr.de

¹³⁹ Ahnungslose Abgeordnete: Rettungsschirm? "Irgendwie teuer...". (2011, September 29) Retrieved from: www.ardmediathek.de

¹⁴⁰ The Quran 3:26

¹⁴¹ Deuteronomy: Chapter 17

*Thy will be done on earth, as it is in heaven.*¹⁴²

Politics and religion have always been connected. If there is a God who created us, then he also wants to be actively involved in the lives of his creation and not only be mentioned



once a week in Sunday class. Reading the Bible, the Quran and other religious writings, it is clear that the history of religion is also the history of a struggle for rulership, or at least for autonomy. It is the same in Hinduism. The most famous scripture of Hinduism, the Bhagavad Gita, takes place on a battlefield. Therefore, God intended that the governor appointed by God should also rule on earth. Only he can lead a truly just

state. We find the same idea in Catholicism, where the Pope heads his own state, and also in Tibetan Buddhism, where the Dalai Lama acts as the head of state for Tibetans. Plato describes the same idea in his book "The State". He mentions the concept of a philosopher-king who is the only one who can establish and govern a just state on earth because he calls to the ultimate good, not on the basis of his desires but on the basis of reason.

*Unless either the philosophers become kings in the cities [...] there will [...] be no end to misery, neither for the cities nor [...] for the human race.*¹⁴³

No prophet or messenger came and introduced socialism or democracy or any other new system of government based on people deciding their own affairs.

Every single prophet and messenger proclaimed and taught that God is the only one who can govern the affairs of man.

This idea offers a clear alternative to the idea of democracy. A ruler appointed by God shall rule. Because he is the only one who has enough knowledge to lead a state. And he is the only one who has such a pure heart that the power and temptations of this worldly life do not spoil him. In every age, God chooses at least one governor to rule over the people and preach God's word to them.

¹⁴² Gospel of Matthew: Chapter 6

¹⁴³ Plato, The State, p. 240 below (Stephanus 473 b - e)

Chapter 16

The Law of Knowing the Proof of God

Now we have learned much from history about God's vicegerents and their roles through the ages. How does this knowledge help us to recognize God's representative from the now 8 billion people and countless false redeemers and prophets? In fact, Ahmed Al-Hassan has summarized exactly these historical developments described above in one law: The law for knowing the proof of God. It consists of three components:

The Will

As discussed at length, each prophet was appointed in one way or another by his predecessor. Moses appointed Joshua. David appointed Solomon. Jesus left a clear reference to Mohammed. The people of the respective age could always fall back on the appointment of a predecessor in order to recognize God's vicegerent in their age.

Every true prophet relies on the oral or written appointment of a predecessor.

The Supremacy of God

Every prophet of God calls people to God and His dominion. Today, while Shias call for the rule of scholars and Christians, Sunnis and Buddhists support elections and democracy, a true prophet of God must call for God's rule. He must not be concerned with political power, but solely with making it clear to the people that only God has the ability to appoint a ruler on earth.

Knowledge

A representative of God reveals knowledge. He answers questions that no one else can answer. Especially in relation to the soul, reincarnation and the mysteries of religion. We have already discussed some examples of this in our chapter on the unity of religion. Only a Messenger of God can distinguish and clarify which knowledge actually comes from God and where people have corrupted religion.

Who is Ahmed Al-Hassan?

In our era, the last covenant prophet and leader of one of the three great monotheistic world religions was the Prophet Mohammed. And as discussed in the previous chapter, on the night of his death, Mohammed wrote a will naming his successors for generations to come. In the Quran it says:

*It is prescribed that when death approaches any of you—if they leave something of value—a will should be made in favor of parents and immediate family with fairness. This is an obligation on those who are mindful of Allah.*¹⁴⁴

So this is a duty for every Muslim. Is it conceivable that Prophet Mohammed could have not fulfilled it? In fact, in the most well-known books of the Shia we find a dictation of the will of the Prophet Mohammed. In it he lists the names of the twelve imams and names them as his successors. And then he says the following:

*“These are the twelve Imams. Then there will be twelve Mahdis after them. When he returns to God, let him [the Imamate] be handed over to his son, the first of the Mahdis. He has three names, one is like mine and like my father's name: Abdullah and Ahmed and the third name is the Mahdi and he is the first of the believers.”*¹⁴⁵

Ahmed Al-Hassan and his successor Abdullah Hashem were the first and only ones to claim to be mentioned as 'Ahmed' and 'Abdullah' in this will of the Prophet. Ahmed Al-Hassan was the first to emphasize the importance of the Prophet's will, which had previously lain undiscovered in Shia books for centuries. He was also the first to realistically explain the doctrine of the 12 Mahdis, who follow the 12 Imams, and to back it up with countless Islamic traditions. He pointed out that the Islamic redeemer, the so-called Mahdi, was not the last representative of God. But he too, like all vicegerents before him, will have successors who call themselves “Mahdis”. Imam Sajad said:

*“The Qaim will appear from among us, and after him there will be twelve Mahdis.”*¹⁴⁶

Bader AlDeen AlAyni AlHanafi said:

*“It is possible that after the Mahdi there will be 12 who will appear in the end times...” until he says: “And then after him his son will rule, and with that there will be 12 kings, each of them is one Imam Mahdi.”*¹⁴⁷

Ahmed Al-Hassan is the first of these Mahdis and thus the current representative of God on earth. But the fact that he is the successor of Mohammed and has an Arabic name does not automatically mean that the religion of the end-time redeemer has anything to do with the Islam we see on television today. Imam Al-Baqir said:

¹⁴⁴ The Quran 2:180

¹⁴⁵ Shaykh Tusi, Ghayba li Tusi, p.150. Shaykh Hor L'Amili, Itbat Lhodat, Vol.1, p. 549. Shaykh Hur Al-Amili, Al-Iqad Min Al-hajaa, pp. 393-3. Shaykh Hassan Ben Soulayman Al Hiliy, Mokhtassar Al-Bassa'ir, p.159. Bihar Al-Anwar, Vol. 53, p.147. Al Fayd Al-Kachani, Nawadir Al-Akhbar, pp. 294-9. Shaykh Al-Mirza Annouri, Annajm Attaqib, Vol.2, p.71. And many more.

¹⁴⁶ Sharh Al-Akhbar Vol.3 p. 400 Hadith.1281; Mukhtasar Basa'ir alDarajat, p.49; Muntakhab Al-Anwar Al-Muthee'a, p. 354, section 150 (narrations of Raj'a); Bihar Al-Anwar, Vol. 109, p. 148; Tarikh ma Ba'd Al-Thuhur, pp. 639,642,648,650

¹⁴⁷ Umdat Al-Qaree Sharh, Sahih Al-Bukhari author

“When the Qaim rises, he will destroy everything that came before him, just as the Prophet of Allah did, and he will found a new Islam.”¹⁴⁸

The religion of the Mahdi will have nothing to do with what is currently known as Islam. In fact, Imam Ahmed Al-Hassan said that 99% of Islam is corrupt. In addition, Mohammed founded his religion more than 1400 years ago and it is therefore no longer up to date. Imam Ahmed Al-Hasan comes with a new religion and a new covenant.

¹⁴⁸ Al-Ghayba, Mohammed b. Ibrahim Al-Nu'mani, Vol. 1, p. 236

Chapter 17

The Seven Covenants

Throughout history there have been 124,000 prophets. They all came to spread God's message and lead the people to God. Seven of these prophets are known as the covenant prophets. In the Torah, God says to Noah:

“But I will establish my covenant with you, and you will enter the ark—you and your sons and your wife and your sons’ wives with you.”¹⁴⁹

The Bible says:

And he took bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it and gave it to them, saying, “This is my body, which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me.” And likewise the cup after they had eaten, saying, “This cup that is poured out for you is the new covenant in my blood.”¹⁵⁰

In the Quran it says:

And indeed, We once made a covenant with Adam, but he forgot, and ‘so’ We did not find determination in him.¹⁵¹

In total, God made seven covenants with mankind. Each covenant comes with certain stipulations and laws. If people violate them in a gross manner, there will be a punishment (as shown several times in the Bible, the Torah and the Quran). Then a new covenant is made, and that covenant each time comes with new laws befitting the age. This explains why Muslims pray differently and follow different rules than Christians, Jews or Hindus. This also explains that none of these rules are wrong or have to remain the same for all eternity, as most religions claim. But that the covenants adapt to the dominant culture and age.

1. God's Covenant with Adam

God made a covenant with Adam in the Garden of Eden. This covenant contained only one commandment and one prohibition. The commandment was:

Be fruitful and multiply!¹⁵²

¹⁴⁹ Genesis: Chapter 6

¹⁵⁰ Gospel of Luke: Chapter 22

¹⁵¹ The Quran 20:115

¹⁵² Genesis: Chapter 1

It was forbidden to approach the tree of knowledge. Otherwise, there were no rules. Adam broke this covenant by eating the forbidden fruit. The punishment was mankind's banishment from Paradise. However, because Adam repented, the covenant of Adam continued into Noah's lifetime.

2. God's Covenant with Noah

In Noah's lifetime the earth was so full of evil that God wiped out all of mankind. He allowed only Noah and his family to survive and to repopulate the earth. According to the Bible, after this great punishment, he made a new covenant with Noah, whose sign was the rainbow. This covenant contained some dietary rules that did not exist in Adam's day.

3. God's Covenant with Abraham

The Covenant of Noah was broken when the tyrant Nimrod wanted to burn the vicegerent Abraham in the fire. God then punished the Babylonians with the confusion of tongues and made a new covenant with Abraham. This was the first covenant that was limited to a specific people, namely the children of Israel - Abraham's descendants. The rest of mankind was still part of the Noahic covenant. Prophets like Buddha or Krishna fall under this Noahic covenant as they were not sent to the children of Israel. Therefore one can see that their religion contains only few laws compared to the monotheistic world religions that followed the prophets of the Torah.

4. God's Covenant with Moses

As previously discussed the children of Israel defied their prophets and were punished with enslavement in Egypt. The prophet Moses was sent as their savior. He delivered them from Egypt and made a new covenant with God. The Ten Commandments were the basic rules of this new covenant, and more and more rules were added over time.

5. God's Covenant with Jesus

Jesus was the savior the children of Israel had been waiting for. But instead of acknowledging him, they allowed the Romans to crucify him. Therefore, the spreading of the new covenant with Jesus came to an early end. The "Kingdom of God" was hereby taken away from the Children of Israel and given to the Arabs.

6. God's Covenant with Mohammed

Mohammed came with a new religion, Islam, and many new rules. He was sent to the new chosen people, namely the Arabs. It was once more a worldwide covenant.

7. God's Covenant with the Mahdi

The seventh and final covenant of God with mankind brought by the savior and Mahdi is therefore a universal covenant that includes people of all nations. In his book *The Goal of the Wise*, Ahmed Al-Hassan's vicegerent, Aba Sadiq, writes the following about the seventh covenant:

The Seventh Covenant is the only Covenant that seeks to revive and unite every religion whose origin was a Prophet, worldwide from Adam's time until today.

The sign of the Seventh Covenant is the six-pointed star, commonly known as the Star of David. It is a symbol of the universe-both the physical and non-physical realms.

Thus, we can see that this final and most complete Covenant is the everlasting Covenant that is for the entire universe. It is God's Covenant with all of creation. One of the things that makes this Covenant special and unique compared to the previous Covenants is that it is a Covenant with the souls.

And here begins the journey of every truth seeker. These were just brief glimpses of the history of religion and humanity. We recommend that anyone who has found this book useful and would like a better understanding of religion and the Seventh Covenant reads the book *The Goal of the Wise*.

THE FORGOTTEN TRUTH



BY CAROLINE HÖREN

**WITH CONTRIBUTION FROM NIMA FIROUZI
EDITED BY RUNA FUNKE**

62% of Germans classify themselves as non-religious. And who can blame them? Religion today is full of contradictions, feels outright empty and of no benefit for modern life.

This book takes a look at gnostic Christian scriptures, Buddhist texts, long forgotten Islamic narrations as well as Hindu and Taoist traditions to uncover the hidden history of humanity.