192220 - About the phrase “Abrahamic religions”

the question

Nowadays there is a phrase that is promoted; is it acceptable to speak of the “Abrahamic religions”?

Detailed answer

Praise be to Allah.

The issue of phrases and terminology is one of the most dangerous intellectual challenges facing thinkers and educated people. In fact, some imams and scholars regard it as one of the most dangerous slippery slopes to which specialists may fall prey, let alone others. That is because the glamour of this phrase and its increasing popularity conceals an ugly face which hides behind it; with frequent usage of this phrase, the cards are shuffled and destructive schemes are carried out, and the one who opposes that ugly face becomes alienated and like a stranger among people. At that moment, this idea will have succeeded.

This is the case with phrases such as “Abrahamic religions” or “the unity of religions” or “the global religion” and similar phrases which emerged at the end of the last century. All of them may seem to carry some good and acceptable ideas, such as coexistence, peace and dealing with the People of the Book on the basis of kindness and justice, as Allah, may He be Glorified and Exalted, has enjoined. In fact, it is possible for the Muslims to put all these concepts under the heading of the covenant with non-Muslims living under Muslim rule, to which the Holy Quran refers, but those who seek to deceive others use these good concepts, which are not contrary to Islamic teachings, in a way that – usually – is a bridge that leads to false and destructive ideas, and is a cover for their real intention of mixing religions. This is not mere dialogue; rather it is a type of mixing in which Islamic belief loses its essence, which is based on the testimony that there is no god worthy of worship except Allah and that Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah, so that the main idea

becomes reaching God, may He be Exalted, whether that is through the path of Judaism, Christianity or Islam. So according to those who promote this idea, there is no difference between these religions; rather there are many paths, all of which are equally correct, that lead to God. But Allah, may He be Glorified and Exalted, says:

{And whoever desires other than Islam as religion - never will it be accepted from him, and he, in the Hereafter, will be among the losers} [Al `Imran 3:85].

This is an ancient call which was promoted by some of the Jews and Christians, with the aim of making the Muslims compromise on the idea that their creed is the only acceptable creed, by making the Muslims agree – at a minimum – to regard their religions as true religions that would lead to salvation in the hereafter. But the response is clear and explicit in the Holy Quran:

{They say: Become Jews or Christians, then you will be rightly guided. Say: Rather the religion of Ibrahim the monotheist, and he was not one of those who ascribe partners to Allah } [Al-Baqarah 2:135].

When they insisted that they were following the path of Ibrahim (peace be upon him), the Quran stated that they were lying, because the path of Ibrahim is the path of Tawhid (affirming the oneness of Allah) and believing in all of the prophets, but the Jews and Christians fell into shirk (ascribing partners to Allah) and rejecting some of the prophets.

Allah, may He be Glorified and Exalted, says:

{They say: Become Jews or Christians, then you will be rightly guided. Say: Rather the religion of Ibrahim the monotheist, and he was not one of those who ascribe partners to Allah.

Say: We believe in Allah, and that which has been sent down to us, and that which was sent down to Ibrahim, Isma`il, Is-haq, Ya`qub, and his sons, and that which was given to Musa and `Isa, and that which was given to [all] Prophets from their Lord. We make no distinction between one and another of them, and to Him we have submitted [as Muslims].

So if they believe as you believe, then they are rightly guided; but if they turn away, then it is they

who are entrenched in opposition; but Allah will suffice you against them, and He is the All-Hearing, the All-Knowing.

[Adhere to] the religion of Allah; what religion could be better than the religion of Allah? And it is He Whom we worship.

Say: Would you dispute with us about Allah, when He is our Lord and your Lord? We have our deeds and you have your deeds, and we are sincerely devoted to Him.

Or would you say that Ibrahim, Isma`il, Is-haq, Ya`qub and his sons were Jews or Christians? Say: Do you know better, or does Allah? And who does greater wrong than those who conceal a testimony they have received from Allah? But Allah is not unaware of what you do.

That is a nation which has [already] passed away; they will have what they earned and you will have what you earn, and you will not be questioned about what they used to do} [Al-Baqarah 2:135-141].

So think about how Allah limited the path of guidance to one path, which is that the Jews and Christians should believe in the same as what the Muslims believe of affirming the oneness of Allah and testifying that Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah.

Beware of being deceived by this mixing of religions, of which Allah, may He be glorified and exalted, says:

{And do not mix truth with falsehood, nor conceal the truth knowingly} [Al-Baqarah 2:42].

Qatadah (may Allah have mercy on him) said: Do not mix Judaism and Christianity with Islam, for the religion of Allah is Islam, whereas Judaism and Christianity are innovations that are not from Allah.(*Tafsir Ibn Abi Hatim*, 1/98).

Someone may say that God is one, but the paths to Him may differ, and other similar ideas which either imply that the distorted and abrogated religions of Christianity and Judaism lead to God, or they imply approval of some of what these two religions teach that is contrary to the religion of

Allah, or approval of following either of them, or something else that constitutes disbelief in Allah and His Messenger, and in the Quran and Islam, when there is no difference of opinion among the Muslims, who follow the best path, regarding that. The reason for this confusion is the similarity and what they have in common with Islam.(*Iqtida' as-Sirat al-Mustaqim*, 1/540).

Shaykh Bakr Abu Zayd (may Allah have mercy on him) said:

Every Muslim should understand the real nature of this call: it is philosophical in inclination and political in origin, aiming to lead people to atheism presented in a new form, in order to wreak vengeance on the Muslims by distorting their creed, stealing their land and undermining their power and sovereignty. Thus it targets Islam and Muslims, with the aim of achieving the following goals:

1.. Spreading confusion about Islam and making the Muslims uncertain of their faith, by subjecting them to a flood of specious arguments and desires, so that the Muslim will find himself wavering between resenting Islam and wanting it at the same time.

2.. Stopping and containing the advancement of Islam.

3.. Destroying Islam from its foundations, aiming to destroy Islam and put an end to its existence, to weaken the Muslims, and to uproot faith from their hearts and bury it.

4.. Stopping Muslim writers and speakers describing the Jews, Christians and others as being among those whom Allah and His Messenger (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) declared to be disbelievers unless they believe in this religion of Islam and abandon all other religions.

5.. Aiming to present their hostility to religion under the guise of unifying religions; alienating the Muslim world from its faith, and disconnecting the Quran and Sunnah from Muslims' lives – at which point it will be easy to spread corrupt ideas and destructive behaviour and morals in the Muslim world and strip it of all sublime values, so that there will be no opportunity for it to play any kind of leading role or attain sovereignty. Thus they aim to cause Muslims to be on the receiving end of what their enemies and the enemies of their religion dictate to them. Then they

will be able to attain their vile goal, namely global domination with no resistance.

6.. Aiming to deprive Islam of its essence and superiority, and its distinct and outstanding nature, by turning the religion of Islam, which is very clear and precise and is protected from distortion and alteration, by making it at the same level as other, distorted and abrogated religions, and even with idolatrous belief systems.

7.. Aiming to pave the way for promotion of Christianity, to be preceded by breaking the barriers that the Muslims have, so that the Muslims will not be expected to show any resistance, because they will already have become too careless and foolish.

8.. The ultimate aim is to allow the disbelievers – the Jews, Christians, communists and others – to gain control of the entire world and the Muslim world in particular, more specifically, the Arab world and the heart and capital of the Muslim world, namely the Arabian Peninsula, in the most powerful scheme in which the disbelieving nations got together and started to implement this plan, to launch an all-out campaign against Islam and Muslims using all the power that they have, intellectual, cultural, economic, and political. They also want to establish a common market that is not governed by the Islamic system of law, in which people pay no heed to virtuous manners and attitudes or seeking lawful provision. Usury will become widespread, immorality and corruption will prevail, they will gain full control over people’s minds and consciences, and evil forces will oppose any sound common sense and any element of the Islamic system of law.

We recite the words of Allah, may He be Exalted:

{ This is not but Your trial by which You send astray whom You will and guide whom You will. You are our Protector, so forgive us and have mercy upon us; and You are the best of forgivers}[Al-A`raf 7:155]. End quote.

And he (may Allah have mercy on him) also said, at the end of the essay quoted above:

The Muslims must reject this theory which promotes the uniting of any abrogated, distorted religion with the true religion of Islam, which is precise and clear, is protected from deviation and

alteration, and abrogates all that came before it. This is one of the fundamentals of Islamic belief that no Muslim would question.

The people of this world must believe that there are different systems of law, and that the Islamic system of law is the final system which abrogates every system of law that came before it. Therefore it is not permissible for any member of the human race to worship Allah in accordance with the teachings of any system of law except that of Islam.

All people of earth, the People of the Book and others, must enter Islam by uttering the twin declaration of faith and believing in what Islam teaches in general terms or in detail; they must act in accordance with it and follow it, and give up all other distorted systems of law and the books that are attributed to them. Whoever does not enter Islam is a disbeliever and a polytheist who associates others with Allah.

It is not permissible for any of the people of this earth today to continue to follow either of the two religions, Judaism and Christianity, let alone enter either of them, and it is not permissible to describe one who follows a religion other than Islam as being a Muslim or to say that he is following the path of Ibrahim.

We ask Allah, may He be Glorified, to guide those Muslims who have gone astray, and to protect them and avert from them the schemes of the schemers. We ask Him to make us all steadfast in adhering to Islam until we meet Him, for He has power over all things. May Allah send blessings and peace upon our Prophet Muhammad and his family and companions.

End quote from an essay entitled *Al-Ibtal li Nazariyyat al-Khalt bayna Din al-Islam wa Ghayrihi min al-Adyan* (p. 5-103).

See also the answers to questions no. 10213 and 10232.

And Allah knows best.