

ADAM AND EVIL  
A COMPARISON

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"The People of the Book" is a term used by the Muslims in reference to those religions who have a body of written scripture. These people, are Muslims, Jews, Christians and all have their origins in the Middle East, with Jerusalem being a common "Holy City".

One intriguing concept of these people is that they have one book in common. Similarities meaning that some stories, prophets, and commandments are found in all three religions. These "common" stories are found in the Jewish Tanach, the Christian Old Testament, the Koran and in other religious texts outside of the Tanach.

The Jewish Tanach and the Christian Old Testament are virtually the same material. The Koran on the other hand is not identical with the Tanach, or the Old Testament.

The Koran is made up of the recitations of Mohammed, as revealed by the angel Gabriel. These sayings have become to the Muslims, the infallible word of God.<sup>1</sup> Likewise, the Tanach or Old Testament is considered the word of God, by Christians and Jews, these words are also revealed to Holy Men.

The purpose of the books of scripture used by each religion is to establish the worship of the true God, and to establish social reforms or laws relating to mans dealings with his fellow man.

N.J. Dawood in his introduction to the Koran speaks of the Prophet Mohammed, the Koran and the purpose of each.

"Mohammed, who disclaimed power to perform miracles firmly believed that he was the messenger of God, sent forth to confirm previous scriptures. God had revealed his will to the Jews and the Christians through chosen Apostles but they disobeyed Gods commandments and divided themselves in to schismatic seats. The Koran accused the Jews of corrupting the scriptures and the Christians of worshipping Jewus as the son of God, although he had expressly commanded them to worship none but Him. having thus gone astray, they must by brought back to the right path to the true religion preached by Abraham. This was Islam-absolute submission or resignation to the will of Allah.

The Koran preaches the oneness of God and emphasizes divine mercy and forgiveness. God is almighty and all-knowing and through compassionate towards His creatures He is stern in retribution. He enjoins justice and fair dealing, kindness to orphans and iwdows, and charity to the poor. The most important duties of the Muslim are faith in Allah and his Apostle, prayer, almsgining, fasting, and if possible pilgrimage to the sacred house at Mecca"<sup>2</sup>

Thus we see God calling a prophet. The prophet then speaks for God, revealing to man, through His commandments how man is to conduct himself before God and his fellow beings.

Abraham Heschel, a prolific Jewish writer on the Tanach speaks on the role of a prophet:

"The prophet is a person, not a microphone. He is endowed with a mission, with the power of a word not his own that accounts for his greatness-but also with temperament, concern, character, and individuality. The word of God reverberated in the voice of the man.

The prophet's task is to convey a divine view, yet as a person he is a point of view. He speaks from the perspective of God as perceived from the perspective of his own situation. The prophet is not only a prophet, he is also a poet, preacher, patriot, statesman, social critic and moralist"<sup>3</sup>

Islamic and Judeo-Christian beliefs in a prophet and their purpose are closely related. The people of the Book are brothers in their beliefs. Prophets' stories and moral concepts are just a few things they have in common; the most important being a God who cares and is concerned about all mankind.

The purpose of this paper is to show a few similarities between stories in the Koran and in Christian and Jewish writings.

I am limiting the comparisons to the story of Adam the first man.

There are many stories and individuals that could be compared. However there are vast amounts of what might be termed as doctrines, commandments and moral teachings.

This comparison, will show that there is a common source for some stories contained in the scriptures of the "People of the Book", This source being either a text that was used throughout the Middle east, or doctrine from a God that is common to all three religions. If a prophet is a true prophet, he will teach the same doctrines that the prophets before taught, for "by their fruits ye shall know them".

The approach to be used in comparing will be that of columns. These columns will have the different texts in order that the comparison might be made easily and quickly.

The translation of the Koran will be from A.J. Auberry's The Koran Interpreted, footnotes in reference to the Koran will refer to the names of the Sura and paragraph number. References to other texts will be made in the regular form.

In preparing this paper I found that some important points are not found in the Tanach as we know it. These ideas are however discussed in pre-Christian (i.e. b.c.e.) writings, and in Coptic Christian texts not found in the Christian Bible. There are however a few verses in the Jewish Tanach and the Bible that seem to convey the same thought that is in the Koran and in other texts.

The first encounter with Adam seems to be with Iblis, or

satan, at the time of the creation of Adam. The Koran has similarities with Jewish writings not contained in the Old Testament or the Tanach as we know it today. The Sura begins with Adam being created out of clay then the angels commanded to bow down before the new man. The Jewish text to be used is from , Vita Adae et Evae. This translation in R.H. Charles's Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha of the Old Testament, Vol. II will be used for our text. This text was once used as scripture to both Jews and Christians, and is to be considered written no later than the middle of the second century c.e..

We begin our text in chapter 13 of Vita Adae et Evae, Satan is talking to Adam in answer to Adam's question; "What have I done to thee or what is my fault against thee? Seeing that thou hast received no harm or injury from us, why dost thou pursue us?". Satan begins his answer with the creation of Adam, and continues;

#### THE CREATION OF ADAM FROM CLAY

##### KORAN

Surely we created man of clay of mud moulded, and the Jin created we before of fire flaming, and when thy Lord said to the Angels 'see, I am creating a mortal of clay of mud moulded. When I have shaped him, and breathed my spirit in him...

##### Vita Adae et Evae

When thou wast formed...when God blew into thee the breath of life and thy face and likeness was made in the image of God...

ALL COMMANDED TO WORSHIP ADAM

...fall you down bowing before him. The angels bowed themselves all together...

Michael also brought thee and made (us) worship thee in the sight of God...And michael went out and called all the angels saying worship the image of God ad the Lord God hath commanded and Michael himself worshiped first...

SOME REFUSE TO WORSHIP ADAM

Save Iblis; he refused to be among those bowing said he, what ails thee, Iblis, that thou art not among those bowing.

Then he (michael)called to me (satan)and said, worship the image of God the Lord and I answered 'I have no need to worship Adam. ...Michael kept urging me to worship, I said to him, why dost thou urge me?

IBLIS or SATAN FEELS ADAM SHOULD WORSHIP HIM

Said he(Iblis) I would never low myself befor a mortal whom thou hast created of clay of mud moulded...

Iwill not worship and ingerior and younger being than I. I am his senior in the creation befor he was made was I already made. It ~~is~~ his duty to worship me.

OTHER ANGELS FOLLOW IBLIS

And He said to me, Iblis  
thou shalt have no authority  
except those that follow  
thee being perverse.

When the angels who were under  
me heard this they refused to  
worship him... and Michael said,  
if thou wilt not worship him  
the Lord God will be wrath with  
thee...

SATAN'S REVENGE AND GLORY

KORAN

Said he (Iblis) My  
Lord, for thy per-  
verting me I shall  
deck fair to them  
in the earth and  
I shall pervert  
them all together.

BIBLE

(Lucifer) For thou  
hast said in thine  
heart, I will ascend  
into the heaven, I  
will exalt my throne  
above the stars of  
God. I will ascend  
above the heights  
of the clouds. I  
will be like the most  
High. Yet thou  
shalt be brought  
down to hell.<sup>4</sup>

VITA ADAE ET EVAE

And I (satan) said,  
if He be wrath with  
me, I will set my  
seat above the stars  
of heaven and will  
be like the highest.

THE FALL OR BANISHMENT OF IBLIS OR SATAN

Said He,(God) Then	How art thou fallen	And God the Lord was
go thou forth hence;	from heaven O Lucifer,	wrath with me and
thou art accursed	son of the morning;	banished me and my
upon thee shall rest	how art thou cut	angels from our glory;
the curse till the	down to the ground	and on thy(Adam)
days of doom. <sup>6</sup>	which didst weaken	account were we expelled
	the nations. <sup>5</sup>	from our abodes
		unto this world and
		hurled on the earth. <sup>7</sup>

Another account of the same event as discussed above is in some early Christian Coptic texts. The text that will be used was copied from the Christian Library of Jerusalem by Timothy, Archbishop of Alexandria. Timothy sat as Archbishop from 380 c.e. to 385 c.e.. The text begins with the resurrected Christ answering the questions of the apostles, as is often done in what is called the 'Forty day Literature. Peter asks Christ about evil and its beginning. Christ tells of the creation of the body of Adam and a forty day council as weither or not to put life in to the body. Christ offers himself as the savior of Adam and all mankind, and to atone for the sins that man will commit..

I will use a different Sura from the Koran than in the previous comparison.

CREATION FROM CLAY

KORAN

When thy Lord said to the  
angels, 'See, I am creating a  
mortal of a clay.

DISCOURSE ON ABBATON

And He took the clay from the  
hand of the angel and made  
Adam according to our image and  
likeness.

THE BREATH OF LIFE

When I have shaped him,  
and breathed my spirit  
in him...

And He put breath into him in this  
way; He breathed into his nos-  
trils the breath of life , three  
times saying "live, Live, Live  
according to the type of my  
divinity" And the man lived  
straightway, and became a living  
woul according to the image and  
likeness of God.

ANGELS COMMANDED TO WORSHIP

KORAN

Fall you down bow-  
ing befor him then  
the angels bowed  
themselves all to-  
gather.

BIBLE

And again when he  
bringeth in the first-  
begotton into the  
world, he saith and  
let all the angels  
of God worship him.<sup>8</sup>

ABBATON

Thereupon My Father  
set him(Adam) upon  
a great throne, and  
He placed on his head  
a crown of glory, and  
He put a royal sceptre

in his hand, and My  
Father made every  
order of angels in  
the heavens to come  
and worship him,  
whether angel or  
archangel. and all  
the hosts of heaven  
sorshipped God first  
of all, and then  
they worshipped Adam,  
saying, "Hail,  
thou image and like-  
ness of God"

REFUSAL TO WORSHIP ADAM

KORAN

Save Iblis; he waxed proud,  
and was one of the unbelievers.  
Said He, 'Iblis, what pre-  
vented thee to bow thyself before  
that I created with My own  
hands? Hast thou waxed proud,  
or art thou of the lofty ones?'  
Said he, 'I am better than He;  
Thou createdst me from fire,  
and him thou createdst of clay.

ABBATON

And He intended that the order  
of the angels who were fashioned  
before Adam should youship him,  
and My Father said unto him(i.e.,  
Satan) "Come, thou thyself shalt  
worship my image and likeness."  
And he, a being of great pride,  
drew himself up in a shameless  
manner, and said "It is meet  
that this man Adam should come

and worship me, for I existed  
before he came into being."

THE BANISHMENT OF IBLIS OR SATAN

KORAN

Said He, 'Then go  
thou forth hence;  
thou art accursed.  
Upon thee shall rest  
My curse, till the  
Day of Doom. Said  
he, 'My Lord, respite  
me till the day  
they shall be raised.  
Said He, 'Thou art  
among the ones  
that are respited  
until the day of  
the known time,'  
Said he, 'Now, by  
Thy glory, I shall  
pervert them all to-  
gether excepting  
those thy servants  
among them that are  
sincere. Said He,

BIBLE

And there was war in  
heaven; Michael and  
his angels fought  
against the dragon;  
and the dragon  
fought and his angels.  
And prevailed not;  
neither was their  
place found any  
more in heaven.  
And the great dragon  
was cast out, that  
old serpent, called  
the Devil, and Satan,  
which deceiveth the  
whole world; he was  
cast out in to the  
earth, and his angels  
were cast out with  
him.<sup>10</sup>

ABBATON

And when My Father saw  
his great pride, and  
that his wickedness  
and his evil-doing  
were complete, He  
commanded all the  
armies of heaven,  
saying, "Remove  
the writing in the  
hand of the proud  
one, strip ye off his  
armour and cast ye  
him down upon the  
earth, for his time  
hath come. for he  
is the greatest of  
them all, he is the  
head over them, and  
is like a king, and  
he commandeth them  
as the general of an

'This is the truth  
, and the truth I  
say; I shall as-  
suredly fill gehenna  
with thee, and with  
thee whosoever of  
them gollows thee  
all together.<sup>9</sup>

army, commandeth his  
soldiers; he is the  
head over them, and  
their names are writ-  
ten in his hand." Thus  
is it with this cunning  
one, and the names of  
the angels were writ-  
ten in his hand.  
And all the angels  
gathered together to  
him, and they did  
not wish to remove  
the writing from  
his hand, and My  
Father commanded  
them to bring a sharp  
reaping-knife, and to  
stab him therewith  
on this side and  
on that , right  
through his body to  
the bertebrae of his  
shoulders, and he was  
unable to hold himself  
up. And straightway  
My Father commanded a

mighty Cherubim,  
and he smote him, and  
cast him down from  
heaven upon the earth,  
because of his pride,  
and he broke his wings  
and his ribs and made  
him helpless, and  
those whom he had  
brought with him  
became devils with  
him.<sup>11</sup>

The story of the creation of Adam and the overthrow and banishment of satan is common throughout ancient Neareastern texts.

The texts compared date from about 100 b.c.e. to about 650 c.e.. The story and concepts of our compared texts are so close in content and detail that it is beyond coincidence. The dates and places are so different that they would indicate a common source, probably much earlier than any of our texts.

The story of the over throw of evil in the pre-earth era is a theme often dealt with in early egyptian temples and texts.

I will conclude with a few lines from some different egyptian texts that are much earlier than anything mentioned before. I will not write in columns for comparisons but would suggest that the egyptian texts be compared with the previous ones.

First the so called "Shabaka Stone". The document dates to about 700 b.c.e. but the internal evidence supports the original text dates about 2000 years earlier than the document.<sup>12</sup>

The text begins as a drama or play that is enacted at the temple, involving Geb, Horus and Seth. Geb is the God or leader in this drama. Horus the "first begotten" and favored son of Osiris is the major character. Seth is the proud and evil one that must be dealt with. The play opens with an argument between Horus and Seth, Geb as a mediator separates and judges.

Words spoken by Geb to Seth: "Go to the place in which thou wert born."

Words spoken by Geb to Horus: "Go to the place in which thy father was drowned 13

The two arguing parties are now separated from each other.

But then it became ill in the heart of Geb that the portion of Horus was only equal to the portion of Seth. So Geb gave his entire inheritance to Horus, that is the son of his son, his first born... Thus Horus stood over the entire land. Thus this land was united proclaimed with the great name"... So it was that Horus appeared as King of Upper and lower Egypt, who united the two lands in Wall Nome, in the place in which the Two lands are united. 14

The next text is titled "The repulsing of the Dragon and the Creation" and is dated about 310 b.c.e.. Pritchard makes the statement that "There is no doubt that the basic material derives from a relatively early period."<sup>15</sup>

I will only relate the part of the text that speaks of the fall of the evil one, called Apophis.

"He is one fallen to the flame, Apophis with a knife on his head. He cannot see and his name is no more in this land. I have commanded that a curse be cast upon him; I have consumed his bones; I have annihilated his soul in the course of every day; I have cut his vertebrae at his neck severed with a knife which hacked up his flesh and pierced in to his hide...I have taken away his heart from its place, his seat, and his tomp. I have made him nonexistent; his name is not; his children are not; he is not and his family is not; he is not and his false door is not; he is not and his heirs are not. His egg shall not last, nor shall his seed knit together and vice versa. His soul, his corpse, his state of glory, his shadow, and his magic are not. His bones are not, and his skin is not. He is fallen and overthrown..."<sup>16</sup>

This text is very close to the Abbaton discussed earlier, and could be compared with the Koran, the Bible and the Life of Adam and Eve.

In conclusion, it seems that the story of Adam and the Genesis of Evil does not come from one document but instead comes from one God. Perhaps the name of the God makes no difference, whether it be Allah, Jehovah, or Jesus Christ. The unique thing is that this God is concerned about man on this earth. Concerned as though men are His children, the Children of God.

## NOTES

1. The Koran; Translated by N.J. Dawood; Penguin Books, 1981 p.9
2. Ibid. p. 10
3. The Prophets; Abraham Heschel; Jewish Publication Society of America; 1962; p. 14 Intro.
4. Isaiah 14:12-15
5. Ibid.
6. Sura El-Hijr par. 26-44
7. Vita Adae et Evae; R.H. Charles; Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha of the Old Testament; Oxford; 1977;p.137. See also Hebrew Myths; Graves and Patai; Mcgraw Hill; 1966; pp.82-83
8. Hebrews 1:6 The majority of this chapter in Hebrews seems to be related to the compleat text of the Abbaton and should be read together. The angels refered to in Heb. 1:7 as a "Flame of fire" is the same phrase as in the Sura EL-Hijr par. 26.
9. Sura Sad par. 71-85. See also Suras, The night Journey par.63-67; Ta Ha par. 114-115; The Cow par.32; The Cave par. 49; The Battlements par.10-17.
10. Revelations 12:7-9
11. Coptic Martyrdoms; E.A. Wallis Budge; Osford 1914;pp.482-484.
12. Ancient Near Eastern Texts; James B. Pritchard; Princeton university Press; 1969; p.4.
13. Ibid. p. 4.
14. Ibid. pp.4-5.
15. Ibid. p. 6
16. Ibid.p. 7.