

AL-ITQĀN

JOURNAL OF ISLAMIC SCIENCES AND COMPARATIVE STUDIES

Special Issue (1)

November 2018

EDITOR IN-CHIEF

Dr. Wan Mohd Azam Mohd Amin

MANAGING EDITOR

Dr. Masitoh Ahmad

EDITORIAL BOARD

Dr. Muhammad Afifi al-Akiti, Oxford

Dr. Muhammad Kamal Hassan, IIUM

Dr. Syed Arabi Aidid, IIUM.

Dr. Hassan Basri Mat Dahan, Universiti Sains Islam Malaysia,
Nilai, Negeri Sembilan

Dr. Kamaruzaman Yusuff, Universiti Malaysia Sarawak,
Kota Semarakan, Kucing.

Dr. Kamar Oniah, IIUM.

Dr. Mumtaz Ali, IIUM.

Dr. Siti Akmar, Universiti Institut Teknologi MARA, Shah Alam

Dr. Thameem Ushama, IIUM.

INTERNATIONAL ADVISORY BOARD

Dr. Muhammad Afifi al-Akiti, Oxford University, UK
Dr. Abdullah M. al-Syarqawi, Cairo University, Egypt.
Dr. Abdul Kabir Hussain Solihu, Kwara State University, Nigeria.
Dr. Anis Ahmad, Riphah International University, Islamabad.
Dr. ASM Shihabuddin, Uttara University, Dhakka, Bangladesh.
Dr. Fatimah Abdullah, Sabahattin Zaim University, Turkey.
Dr. Ibrahim M. Zein, Qatar Foundation, Qatar.
Dr. Khalid Yahya, Temple University, USA.

© 2018 IIUM Press, International Islamic University Malaysia. All rights reserved.
eISSN:26008432

Correspondence

Managing Editor, *Al-Itqān*
Research Management Centre, RMC
International Islamic University Malaysia
P.O Box 10, 50728 Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia
Tel: +603 6196 5558
Website: <http://journals.iium.edu.my/al-itqan/index.php/alitqan/index>
Email: al-itqan@iium.edu.my

Published by:
IIUM Press, International Islamic University Malaysia
P.O. Box 10, 50728 Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia
Phone (+603) 6196-5014, Fax: (+603) 6196-6298
Website: <http://iiumpress.iium.edu.my/bookshop>

Table of Contents

Nationhood and Loyalty in Islam: Between <i>Dustūr al-Madīnah</i> and the <i>Bukit Seguntang</i> <i>Covenant</i> .	7-16
<i>Fadzilah Din</i> <i>Mohd. Noh Abdul Jalil</i>	
<i>Fiṭrah</i> in Islam and <i>Ren Xing</i> in Confucianism: Its Relation to Islamic and Confucian Ethics	17-27
<i>Nur Suriya binti Mohd Nor</i>	
Family As a school of love and its role in education in the perspective of confusion religion	29-38
<i>Chandra Setiawan</i>	
The Principle of <i>Wasatīyyah</i> (Moderation) and the Social Concept of Islam: Countering Extremism in Religion	39-48
<i>Haslina Ibrahim</i>	
Islamic Ethics For Sustainable Development And Developing Social Conscience: An Islamic Response To The Challenge Of Ecology Today	49-61
<i>Isham Pawan Ahmad</i>	
Islamic Spirituality and Its Impact on Muslim's Life	63-78
<i>Wan Mohd Azam Mohd Amin</i> <i>Masitoh Ahmad</i> <i>Adibah Abdul Rahim</i>	
Risk Management in Islamic Finance: What does Islam Say about Mukhāṭarah?	79-94
<i>Syahiru Shafiai</i> <i>Engku Rabiah Adawiah Engku Ali</i>	
The Concept of Cleanliness in the Perspective of Abrahamic Faith: Textual Analysis	95-115
<i>Nurul Aminah Mat Zain</i> <i>Fatmir Shehu</i>	

The Importance of Islamic Da‘wah Methods and
Approaches to Diversification in the light of Al-Shari‘ah
Purposes. 117-130

Fatimah Abdullah
El-Sa‘īd Hussein Mohamed Hussein

The Use of Religious Vocabulary and the Exploitation of
Arabic Words Borrowed in the Malaysian Language In
the Preparation of Reading Text for Malaysian High
School Students: Selected Case Study. 131-156

Yasir Ismail
Radziah Salleh

Author Guidelines

1. Manuscript article can be either in English, Malay or Arabic using software Microsoft office (Word, and Excel), Font 12 Times New Roman. Only tables, figures and appendix can be written using Font 10, Times New Roman.
2. If there is a usage of Quranic verses or Hadith from Prophet P.B.U.H., it only needs to be done by translation only.
3. The manuscript should be in 1.5 single spacing and justified, with the margin of 2.5cm.
4. Article needs to have a title and author's name and second author's name along with the full address (institution's or university's address, e-mail, handphone's number, office's number, fax together with the second author's details).
5. Every article must include an abstract in Malay and English. The length of the abstract is no more than 150 words including 5 keywords.
6. The length of each article must not exceed 6000 words.
7. The Arabic words in manuscript should be in a transliterated form.
8. Reference for each article must be written according to **Chicago Manual**.
9. Notification Letter :
10. Letter of Acceptance – editorial board will send an e-mail to the author to notify that the manuscript is received.
11. Letter of Acceptance/Rejection for Publication – editorial board will send a letter by an e-mail to the author to notify if the manuscript judged by the panels is approved or declined to be published.
12. Letter of Publication – editorial board will send a letter by e-mail to the author if the article has been judged, repaired, and corrected to be published in the college's journal.
13. Certificate of Appreciation– editorial board will send a certificate of appreciation by mail to the authors who have sent their articles.

The Concept of Cleanliness in the Perspective of Abrahamic Tradition: Textual Analysis

Nurul Aminah Mat Zain *

Fatmir Shehu *

Abstract

This paper examines the concept of cleanliness and issues pertaining to the environment in some of the major world religions. The authors explore the universal values as transpired in the holy scriptures of the three Abrahamic traditions dealing with the concept of cleanliness and issues of ecological systems, such as environmental protection. A qualitative methodology that covers content and textual analyses on the Holy Scriptures, views of scholars and related materials are employed in this paper. The research reveals that there are agreements on certain issues, such as the triad of position - man, environment and God - shared by the three religions in their approaches toward issues of the environment, specifically and in general.

Keywords: Environment, Abrahamic tradition, *fiṭrah*, cleanliness, religion.

Introduction

The environment is the most important element for human being to live. The environment is the place where humans live and function. Fundamentally, the ecological process of the ecosystem involves the water cycle, nutrient cycle, energy flow and the flows of the community.¹ Biodiversity and ecosystem function in maintaining natural life as a supporting mechanism which involves the productivity of plant, soil fertility, water quality, atmospheric chemistry and other environmental conditions that will give impacts on human welfare. Human activities will affect the ecosystem as well as the biodiversity on earth.² Generally, the

* PhD Candidate, Department of Uṣul al-Dīn and Comparative Religion, Kulliyah of Islamic Revealed Knowledge and Human Sciences, International Islamic University Malaysia. Gombak, Selangor. E-mail: nurul.ameena83@gmail.com

* Assistant Professor, Department of Uṣul al-Dīn and Comparative Religion, Kulliyah of Islamic Revealed Knowledge and Human Sciences, International Islamic University Malaysia. Gombak, Selangor. E-mail: fatmir@iium.edu.my

¹ Robert Whittaker, "Ecological Processes," What Is Ecosystem, accessed December 18, 2017, <<http://www.biodiversidad.gob.mx/v_ingles/ecosystems/whatis.html>>.

² Shahid Naeem et al., "Biodiversity and Ecosystem Functioning: Maintaining Natural

ecosystem or biodiversity can be defined as a set of species in a given area that interacts amongst themselves through the biological process.¹

From the above discussion, it is clear that the environment is an important component in functioning as the life support machine to the human being. Thus, man has a huge responsibility towards the environmental protection. There are so many ways in tackling the environmental issue and one of it is by practicing cleanliness. Protecting the environment becomes the most essential task for a human being to survive² and obviously, the human being would not be able to survive without nature.

This paper highlights the relationship between religion and environment. Specifically it focuses on three major religions of the world, especially Judaism, Christianity and Islam. It also discusses the role of the religion in educating and guiding followers to protect the environment by practicing cleanliness according to their doctrine.

This paper stresses on the role of the Abrahamic religions in guiding their followers to practice cleanliness towards the environmental protection. God created the environment very beautifully as a precious gift for human beings to utilize it wisely because it belongs to Him. Due to this reason the environment must be protected and should not be polluted for the benefit of human being. It is considered as *ni'mah* (blessing) as mentioned in al-Qur`ān from surah al-Ḥaj verse 63:³

See you not that Allah sends down water from the sky, and then the earth becomes green Verily, Allah is the Most Kind and Courteous, Well-Acquainted with all things. To Him belongs all that is in the heavens and all that is on the earth. And verily, Allah, He is Rich, Worthy of all praise. See you not that Allah has subjected to you all that are on the earth, and the ships that sail through the sea by His command He withholds the heaven from falling on the earth except by His leave.

Life SupportProcesses," *Issues in Ecology*, accessed December 18, 2017, <<www.esa.org/esa/wp-content/uploads/2013/03/issue4.pdf>>

¹ Ibid 1, p. 2.

² Professor Rabbi Arthur Hertzberg (His All-Hilliness Bartolomeus) and Fazlun Khalid, *Religion and Nature: The Abrahamic Faiths' Concepts of Creation (Spirit of the Environment: Religion, Value and Environmental Concern*, Edited by David E. Cooper and Joy A. Palmer)

³ "Quran Tafsir Ibn Kathir," 22:63-65, The Creator and Controller of This World Is Allah, accessed October 30, 2018, <<

Verily, Allah is for mankind, full of kindness, Most Merciful.

According to Islamic perspective, humans must understand the concept of religion from the beginning in order to live a better life in the future. Understanding the religion in Islam is different compared with the interpretation from the west. It is because the word *ad-dīn* in Islam does not simply mean as a religion but also referred to the way of life.¹ In Islam, practicing good behavior is also considered as *‘ibādah* (worship) as long as it is done for the sake of Allah SWT.² Allah has said in al-Qur’an from the surah al-Dhāriyāt verse 56:³

“And I created not the Jinn and mankind except that they should worship Me.”

Judaism and the environment

1. God created the universe.

This is the most foundational concept in Judaism. They believed that God has absolute ownership for everything He created.⁴ All creations totally belong to God as mentioned in the Genesis 1-2:

*“In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. 2. Now the earth was formless and empty, darkness was over the surface of the deep, and the Spirit of God was hovering over the waters.”*⁵

From these words in Genesis it can be concluded that they believed the worldview of Judaism is more theocentric and not anthropocentric

¹ Syed Muhammad Naquib Al-Attas, *Faham Agama dan Asas Akhlak* (Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia: IBFIM, 2013), p. 1- 2.

² Ibid, p. 21-22.

³ "Quran Tafsir Ibn Kathir," 51:56, Proofs of Allah's Oneness abound in the Creation of the Heavens and the Earth, accessed October 30, 2018.

<<<http://www.qatafsir.com/index.php?>>>

⁴ Rabbi Lawrence Troster, Ten Jewish Teachings on Judaism and the environment, GreenFaith Rabbinic Fellow <<[>>](http://www.greenfaith.org/religious-teachings/jewish-statements-on-the-environment/ten-jewish-teachings-on-judaism-and-the-environment) Retrieved: 16/10/2017.

⁵ <<[>>](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Genesis+1-2) Retrieved: 30/12/17

like other religions in the world. So, the people do not have freedom to misuse the environment because it absolutely does not belong to them.¹

2. God's creation is good

According to Genesis 1:31

*31: God saw all that he had made, and it was very good. And there was evening, and there was morning—the sixth day.*²

The Rabbi describes the words “very good” in the words of Genesis as having numerous meanings. God sees His creation is sufficient, structured and ordered which the Rabbis call *Seder Bereishit* (the order of creation). It also means harmonious or existed to serve God and this order reflects His wisdom which can be understood by human beings. All the creations of God are consequently part of the Order of Creation including the nature. Human beings are part of the nature, functioning as worshippers.³ The Jews believed that the creation is good which reflects the glory of its creator. Judaism affirms life involves all creation as a whole.⁴

3. Tikkun ‘Olam: The perfection/ Fixing the World is in our Hand

According to the Rabbinic commentary on the Bible which they call as *Midrash*, the Jewish environmentalist remarked that:⁵

*“When God created the first human beings, God led them around all the trees of the Garden of Eden and said: “Look at My works! See how beautiful they are- how excellent! For your sake I created them all. See to it that you do not spoil and destroy My world; for if you do, there will be no one else to repair it.”*⁶

¹ Rabbi Lawrence Troster, Ten Jewish Teachings on Judaism and the environment, GreenFaith Rabbinic Fellow <<<http://www.greenfaith.org/religious-teachings/jewish-statements-on-the-environment/ten-jewish-teachings-on-judaism-and-the-environment>>> Retrieved: 16/10/2017.

² <<<https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Genesis+1%3A31>>>

³ Psalm 148, 104:24, 92:6-7, 148. Job 38-39 <<<https://www.biblegateway.com>>> Retrieved: 30/12/17.

⁴ *Judaism and Ecology* (Villiers House, 41/47, Strand, London, England: Cassell Publishers Limited, 1992), p.19.

⁵ Ibid

⁶ <<<http://www.on1foot.org/text/kahelet-rabbah-713>>> Retrieved: 30/12/17.

During the Jewish ritual ceremony, there is a prayer which they called the *Aleinu*, hoping for the world to be perfected under the sovereignty of God (*le-takein 'olam be-malkut Shaddai*). *Tikkun 'Olam* is the main objective among the modern Jewish social justice theology in their mission of perfecting and repairing the world. It will be expressed through the actions of the worshipper as a symbol of partnership with God. This is very important concept to fulfill the duty ahead in environmentalism. The environment has been damaged due to human greed and ignorance and this is the time to fix it under the responsibilities of each person to save the world.¹ The Jewish believed that the biodiversity need to be cherished and human being are responsible for the active maintenance of all life.² This statement is based on the statement in Genesis:

"Everything is said to be created 'according to its kind'. In the story of the flood, Noah has to conserve in the ark male and female of every species of animal, so that they may subsequently procreate" (Genesis 1)³
"Setting peoples at the top of hierarchy of creation of the places them in a special position of responsibility towards nature. Adam is placed in the Garden of Eden 'to till and to preserve it', and to 'name' (that implies, understand) the animals." (Genesis 2:15)⁴

Christianity

Historically, Christians claims they are the most anthropocentric religion and responsible for the environmental protection. However, the Judaism argued that the Christians are the main culprit for environmental degradation. According to Christianity, the main purpose of God's creations of nature is to serve the human being. Nature is not to be worshipped as it is known as pagan animism like in the practice of certain religions.⁵

¹ Ibid

² Ibid. Pp. 19-21.

³ Ibid. Pp. 19-21.

⁴ Ibid. Pp. 19-21.

⁵ Roman Krznaric, "For God's Sake, Do Something! How Religion Can Find Unexpected Unity Around Climate Change. By: Roman Krznaric," *Human Development Report 2007/2008*, accessed April 23, 2017.

<<[<http://hdr.undp.org/en/content/god%E2%80%99s-sake-do-something>>](http://hdr.undp.org/en/content/god%E2%80%99s-sake-do-something)>>.

The Christian ecologist had promoted a strong environmental ethics among the believers at various sections such as Protestants, Catholics and even Orthodox. According to the Bible, humans have dominion over the earth in the form of stewardship where they have a high responsibility to respect and preserve God's creation. Nature is a sign of the omnipotence of God and His benevolence in the beauty of natural world.¹ In Genesis 1 it is stated that:

“And God said, Let us make man in our own image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fold of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth. So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created He Him: male and female created he them. And God blessed them, and God said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth and subdue it: and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fold of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth”² (there are modern translation in this words)

By referring to this chapter in the Bible, humans are considered the earth and all living creatures have the right to rest and allow them to rejuvenate. Human must preserve nature by using it wisely.

Islam

According to Islam, the environment must be preserved because it is considered as Allah's creation (*al-Makhlūq*). Islam is a complete religion that teaches their followers to be good with all things either living or non-living things. Humankind is the vicegerent (*khalifah*) over the earth and Muslims have a huge responsibility to preserve and respect the environment through this concept.

The environment indicates very important mechanism which affected the development and life of organisms.³ In Islamic perspectives,

¹ Ibid

² Colin A. Russel, *The Earth, Humanity and God*. University College London, London: UCL Press Limited, 1994.

³ Mohammad Hammoud, “Environment, Ecology and Islam.” *Insight*, New South Wales: Islamic Foundation for Education and Welfare, 1990), Vol.5:3, p.19

the ecosystem refers to the unity and interdependence exists within biological systems and their interaction with the environment.¹ These are the inter-connections between living organisms and the environment as the main sources of foods, water and air to sustain human life. This interdependency of life showed that human beings share lived with other living creatures on earth. It is essential for the human to live in peace and harmony towards the environment.²

The Importance of Cleanliness towards the Environmental Protection and Its Relationship with Religion

The environmental issue became vital when many disasters happened nowadays due to human actions and activities. Studies were conducted to highlight the elements related to environmental crisis based on the agreement from the perspective of three religions. They agreed that human greed culture by over consumption among people is a leading factor for the crisis. Religiously, practicing immoral behavior by damaging the nature is considered as sinful. First of all it is better to look at the teachings of each religion towards the concept of cleanliness.

Cleanliness is very important because it is related to personal hygiene which surely affects humans' health and also very much connected with religious worships (*Ibādah*). According to these Abrahamic religions, a person must clean themselves before presenting himself to God especially during prayer. For instance, in Islam, a man must always take *wuḍū'* (ablution) before he performs prayer five times a day. Practicing cleanliness is a symbol of ethics and morality of a person as a good follower of religious belief.

Cleanliness is taught in the doctrine of Judaism, Christianity and Islam. According to the teaching of ancient Jews the personal hygiene of a person is a main requirement of holiness and as a support for physical fitness. Based on the Old Testament in the Bible it is commanded for the follower to clean their physical body with water as well as the purity of the soul as mentioned in the Leviticus, 8:6;

"Moses bathed Aaron and his sons before their ordination as a priest." In other verse it stated that: *"clothing*

¹ Abdul Hadi Skinner, "Environmental Harmony- Islamic Dimensions," Insight, (New South Wales: Islamic Foundation for Education and Welfare, 1990), vol. 5:3, p.25

² Sayed Sikandar Shah Haneef, Ethics and Fiqh for Everyday Life. An Islamic Outline

contaminated by mold or mildew had to be washed”¹

Traditionally, according to the teaching of ancient Jews, they must clean themselves with water before entering the temple or participating in major festivals. The Jews must go through the ceremonial cleanliness with water by soaking in a *mikveh* (or *miqveh*- collection of water). This requirement has been institutionalized in most of the Jews temples. The *mikveh* is like a bathtub or a small garden pond that could be found in most of the Jews temple.²

The other sources which underscores the value of cleanliness and hygiene in the Judaism according to the views of Rabbi Yossi. He stressed on the importance of laundering the clothes because it takes precedence over the lives of others. He emphasizes that laundering is also considered a life-sustaining issue of a person. It is explained in Gemara (Nedarim 81A): *“Wearing unlaundered clothes leads to dementia”*. Thus, it is clear that wearing laundered clothes became a critical element in a person’s life.³

The importance of cleanliness is inter-related with the dignity of a person due to the creator. It is cited in Masechet Shabbat 50b:

“A person should wash his face, hands and feet each day in honor of his creator, as the verse states: “Hashem does everything for his sake”. As Rashi explains: “Keeping clean brings honor to Hashem for man was created in God’s image”⁴

Based on the analysis of the Judaism textual analysis above it is clear that cleanliness is the utmost importance to the Jews. The Rabbis of Talmud stated that the environment undergoes more damage in large cities than in small towns. In explaining a law of the Mishnah:

“[Ketubot 13:10] that a husband may not compel his wife to move from a village to a large city, the Talmud (110b) cites the reasoning of the Eretz Yisraelian Amora, R. Yosi ben Hanina: “Life is more difficult in the city.” Rashi Explains: Because so many live there, its houses are crammed together, there is no fresh air, whereas in villages there are gardens and orchards

¹ Leviticus 13:58. "Ancient Jews and Cleanliness," accessed October 23, 2017. <<<https://earlychurchhistory.org/medicine/ancient-jews-cleanliness/>>>.

² Ibid.

³ Simon Jackson, The Value of Cleanliness in Judaism.

⁴ Ibid.

close to the homes, and the air is clean!".¹

Cleanliness is next to Godliness

The Jews believed that concern on personal health is the core value in Judaism. Many of the verses in the Torah emphasizes on hygiene with the intentions of ritual purity rather than physical cleanliness. The Talmud also recorded numerous references related to personal hygiene and preventive medicine. According to *tractate Ta'anit*² in Talmud, the Rabbis considered the human body as a sanctuary.³ The Jews must wash one's face, hands and feet as the honor of God during the ordination process by the Rabbis.⁴

Cleanliness is very much related to personal hygiene to prevent a person from certain dangerous diseases such as influenza H1N1. This is the reason Judaism teach their followers to practice cleanliness all the time. There are several activities that had been organized to teach the Jews on practicing cleanliness in their daily life.

Christianity

The teaching in Christianity is not so much different with Judaism as they refer to the same Bible. There are some most relevant verses in the Bible saying about cleanliness in Christianity:

Isaiah 1:16

*"Wash yourselves, make yourselves clean; Remove the evil of your deeds from My sight Cease to do evil".*⁵

Psalms 51:10

"Create in me a clean heart, O God, And renew a steadfast spirit within me".

¹ Ibid.

² (literally "fast day") Talmudic tractate that discusses the procedure for the communal fasts that courts would institute in the event of drought in the Land of Israel, as well as the laws for the annual public fast days, commemorating the destruction of Jerusalem <<http://www.chabad.org/search/keyword_cdo/kid/17210/jewish/Tractate-Taanit.htm>> Retrieved: 31/12/2017.

³ Rabbi Jason Miller, "Cleanliness is Next to Godliness- A Learning Opportunity," , accessed October 23, 2017.

<<<http://blog.rabbijason.com/2009/07/cleanlinessisnexttgodliness.html>>>.

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ <<<https://bible.knowing-jesus.com/topics/Cleanliness>>> Retrieved: 1st January 2018.

Psalm 51:7

*“Purify me with hyssop, and I shall be clean; Wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow”.*¹

1 John 1:9

*“If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness”.*²

Matthew 12:43-45

*“Now when the unclean spirit goes out of a man, it passes through waterless places seeking rest, and does not find it. ‘Then it says, ‘I will return to my house from which I came’; and when it comes, it finds it unoccupied, swept, and put in order. ‘Then it goes and takes along with it seven other spirits more wicked than itself, and they go in and live there; and the last state of that man becomes worse than the first. That is the way it will also be with this evil generation”.*³

Luke 11:24-26

*“When the unclean spirit goes out of a man, it passes through waterless places seeking rest, and not finding any, it says, ‘I will return to my house from which I came.’ ‘And when it comes, it finds it swept and put in order. ‘Then it goes and takes along seven other spirits more evil than itself, and they go in and live there; and the last state of that man becomes worse than the first”.*⁴

James 4:8

*“Draw near to God and He will draw near to you Cleanse your hands, you sinners; and purify your hearts, you double-minded”.*⁵

From all the verses in the Bible mentioned above it clearly shows that Christianity is also emphasizing on cleanliness in their teaching.

¹ Ibid.

² Ibid.

³ <<<https://bible.knowing-jesus.com/topics/Cleanliness,-Metaphorical-Use>>>
Retrieved: 1st January 2018.

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ Ibid.

As mentioned before, Islam is a universal religion that governs all aspects of human lives. Islam is much emphasized in cleanliness physically and spiritually. In al-Qur'ān verse 222 from surah al-Baqarah, Allah said:

*They ask you concerning menstruation. Say: "That is an Adha, therefore, keep away from women during menses and go not in unto them till they are purified." And when they have purified themselves, then go in unto them as Allah has ordained for you. Truly, Allah loves those who turn unto Him in repentance and loves those who purify themselves.*¹

It is supported with the hadith narrated by Prophet Muhammad SAW from Sahih Muslim number 223:

*"Abu Malik at-Ash'ari reported: The Messenger of Allah (p.b.u.h) said: Cleanliness is half of faith and al-Hamdu Lillah (Praise be to Allah) fills the scale, and Subhan Allah (Glory be to Allah) and al-Hamdu Lilah (Praise be to Allah) fill up what is between the heavens and the earth, and prayer is a light, and charity is proof (of one's faith) and endurance is a brightness and the Holy Qur'an is a proof on your behalf or against you. All men go out early in the morning and sell themselves, thereby setting themselves free or destroying themselves".*²

From the verse in al-Qur'ān and the Hadīth above it is very clear that Islam emphasizes on cleanliness and every Muslim must practice it in their daily life. The concept of cleanliness in Islam is not only in physical but also in spiritual aspects. The purity of the soul is very essential in the life of Muslims to present themselves to Allah SWT. Muslims are required to cleanse their heart all the time to gain blessings from Allah SWT.

Every Muslim is obligated to practice cleanliness especially when they want to pray. Muslims must take *wuḍū'* (ablution) to clean their

¹ "Quran Tafsir Ibn Kathir," The Prohibition of Marrying Mushrik Men and Women, , accessed October 30, 2018.

<<http://www.qtafsir.com/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=192#1>>.

² Sahih Muslim 223. In-book reference: Book 2, Hadith 1 USC-MSA web (English) reference: Book 2, Hadith 432 (deprecated numbering scheme)

<<<https://sunnah.com/muslim/2>>>

body to perform solat (pray) and some research has been done to know the *hikmah* from the ablution. Several *hikmah* from the ablution practiced by Muslims can be highlighted as follows:¹

1. The ablution refreshes the human's body. Prophet S.A.W recommended Muslims to take ablution before going to bed to get a restful sleep and refresh the human body and soul. In yoga treatment it is also encouraged to wash hands, arms, eyes, legs, mouth and genitals before sleep with cool water for a deep sleep.²
2. Reflex-o-Therapy. The ablution increases the biological rhythms in the human body especially Biological Active Sports (BASEs) which shares similarities with the Chinese reflex-o-therapy based on hydro-therapy.³
3. Washing the nose prevents from microbes diseases. Those who are clean their nose by performing ablution will be able to avoid any harmful microbes which lead to many diseases.
4. Washing the arms activates blood circulation. Performing ablution will reactivate the blood circulation because the arms are considered remote areas that can reenergize the human body.
5. Washing the hands prevents pneumonia. Washing the hands during ablutions helps in reducing respiratory infections because all the infectious pathogens on the hand had been removed.
6. Rinsing the mouth prevents systematic diseases. Muslims rinse their mouth during ablution in order to remove the particles of food or bacteria inside the mouth. Certain people prefer to use *miswak* (teeth cleaning twig) to clean their mouths. This is one of the methods to prevent oral infections which can cause many diseases.

Therefore, from the above discussions, it shows that Islam places an excessive emphasis on cleanliness either physically or spiritually. According to Islamic teachings the spiritual purification has a very significant connection with physical cleanliness as it is the fundamental of faith for human being.⁴ In other verses of al-Qur'an from surah at-Taubah verse 108 Allah SWT said:

¹ Farwa, <<<https://www.parhlo.com/6-benefits-of-ablution-wudhu/>>>

² Ibid.

³ Ibid.

⁴ Muhammad Ali Musofer, Importance of Cleanliness

<<<https://www.dawn.com/news/752560>>> Retrieved: 25/10/2017

“Never stand you therein. Verily, the Masjid whose foundation was laid from the first day on Taqwa is more worthy that you stand therein (to pray). In it are men who love to clean and purify themselves. And Allah loves those who make themselves clean and pure”.

It is clear that a person must take care of physical cleanliness and environment in order to get Allah’s blessings and be close to Him. The faith is not complete without cleanliness and purity of the soul.

In taking care of the environment Islam prohibits the activities of throwing rubbish in the streets, roads or parks. However, these activities became common among people now days even though there are dustbins installed at all places. Some research had been conducted by observing people’s behavior towards the cleanliness of the environment. The result shows that people mostly clean their homes and shops but they would rather throw the rubbish on the street without considering its implications. This shows their attitude on personal cleanliness and hygiene especially towards the environment.¹ Another example of unclean behavior among people is spitting in public. Some of them spit while on moving vehicle without considering the pedestrians walking on the road. This habit is not only affecting the environment but also an ‘eyesore’.²

Based on the above discussion, it is obvious that, cleanliness is extremely important to these three religions. The cleanliness became the main agenda in their teachings of religion for the followers to be clean at all times especially when they want to pray and entering religious places such as a mosque, temple or church. It is because God loves those who are clean. Certain Muslims quote that ‘Allah is beautiful and He loves beauty’.

Practicing cleanliness will help in protecting the environment which is also beneficial to the human beings with the clean air, beautiful scenery and healthy conditions. All of these three religions encourage their believers to practice cleanliness towards the environmental protection. A healthy environment is a guarantee for a healthy lifestyle.

Protecting the environment by practicing cleanliness among the followers of each religion will be able to attract other people to believe in faith and God especially those who are atheist. The religious people carry a huge responsibility to educate their followers into doing good deeds by tackling the environmental issues in general and stressing about cleanliness

¹ Ibid.

² Ibid.

in particular. A person who practices cleanliness to protect the environment is considered a very responsible person in line with their religious teaching.

Besides that, this practice also shows the accountability of a man to God. He or she would like represent themselves as a great person in the eyes of God. The value of practicing cleanliness is not only for a person but also will be able to attract other people as well. Protecting the environment through cleanliness will affect the ecological system of the universe. Human beings really need the environment to breath in clean air for a balanced life. This is the main reason why the environment should not be damaged.

It is hard to live in a bad environment such as pollution with filthy places as it will affect human's health. As mentioned before, a person will be able to get contagious diseases easily which is caused by the bacteria or virus from the polluted environments. A contaminated environment will encourage the breeding of bacteria, viruses and other microorganisms that will give a bad effect to humans' health. Due to these reasons, all religions especially Islam banned the bad habits of unhygienic behavior, dirty places and damaging environment among the human being.

In Islam a person must understand the concept of vicegerent (*khalifah*) in this world. As a vicegerent of Allah the individual have huge responsibilities in all aspects of their life. There a lot of duties they must fulfill as the requirement from Allah. The duty of man can be elaborated here as follows:¹

1. Responsibilities towards Allah SWT.

Man is obligated to worship Allah as a creator. He is the Almighty the Most Powerful and Merciful. So, man has to worship only Him.

2. Responsibilities towards Oneself

Man is prohibited to harm themselves for example by drinking alcohol, committing suicide or other things which can cause damage to their body. It is because Allah created man in a very beautiful manner.

¹IslamWeb, Individual Responsibilities in Islam-Islam web- English
<<[<http://www.islamweb.net/emainpage/printarticle.php?id=61098&lang=E>>](http://www.islamweb.net/emainpage/printarticle.php?id=61098&lang=E)
Retrieved: 1st January 2018.

3. Responsibilities towards other people

Allah creates man and other people as well. He wants the people to live in peace and harmony by helping each other. Man must socialize among other people with good interaction and communications.

4. Responsibilities towards other creations.

Man also has to be good to other creatures like animals, birds, insects and others. It is considered as respecting creatures from Allah SWT.

5. Responsibilities towards nature and environment

Man must take care of their surroundings. It is the place where man lives. Everything is designed by Allah for a good purpose. Islam fights the environment degradation, pollution, cutting trees and plants, misuse of resources and other bad behavior that can damage the earth.

Discussions and Findings: Similarities among the Abrahamic Religions

Performing cleanliness for the environment became the most essential issue among religious people nowadays whether among the Jews, Christians or Muslims. It can be evaluated through religious places such as the mosque and the Church. Like the situations in Malaysia there are many religious places that existed due to the multiracial communities with different practices of religions. Some of the places are like the temples for Hindus, Buddhist or Sikh, Church for the Jews and Christians and the mosque for Muslims.

From all of those religious places people will see the level of cleanliness among the followers. Based on the observations from the visits to certain religious places in Malaysia, the level of cleanliness among the Abrahamic religion is still under control. The followers from these three religions show a good responsibility and discipline in practicing cleanliness especially in tackling the issues of environment. They prefer to stay in a clean and conducive environment to stay healthy through the friendliness with the nature.

Hence, some similarities that can be highlighted from the teaching of Abrahamic religions are, firstly, emphasized on the cleanliness in their teaching. Each of these religions encourages their followers to practice cleanliness towards the environment in their daily life. It is because they believe that the nature is the sacred creation from God that it must be protected. Human beings are unable to live without the biodiversity of nature since it is the main source to sustain people's life in this world.

Secondly, it is agreed that practicing cleanliness is being next to Godliness physically and spiritually. God loves the clean servant and it is considered good deeds as they surrender themselves to Him with pure heart. Protecting the environment also part of '*ibādah* (worship) as mentioned before at the first part of this paper. In performing '*ibādah* the servant must clean their physical body by wearing clean clothes, standing in a spotless place, and have a clean heart by focusing their mind and soul to God only. Usually, it is applied when a person wants to pray but it applicable for all situations in a human's life.

Thirdly, every religion teaches about ethics and morality and it became essential for every person. Protecting the environment by practicing cleanliness is part of the ethics and morality. A person who practices this in their everyday life is considered as an ethical and has high moral behavior. This kind of person will be able to influence other people to be good as them.

According to Islamic perspective, the Prophet Muhammad SAW is a clean person and he wants his followers to practice cleanliness. Rasulullah SAW had taught Muslims the methods to care for their bodies and also to purify their soul. Rasulullah SAW also encourages the Muslims to be good to the environment as it is part of Allah's creation for the human being to use it as a main source of living such as shelter, food, water and the most important, the air for breathing. Islam really cares for environment and very sensitive towards the cleanliness of surroundings. Muslims must increase their self-awareness in this matter towards a better life in the future.

The Differences among the Abrahamic Religions

Previously, this paper had discussed the similarities among these three religions in their teachings of cleanliness towards the environmental protection. Hence, there are some differences that can be highlighted from each religion based on the comparison table below:¹

¹"Comparison Table," Christianity in View, accessed April 12, 2017, <http://christianityinview.com/xncomparison.html>.

Religion	Text/Holly Books	Prophets	Human Nature	Practices
Islam	Al-Qur'an Hadith	Muhammad SAW is the final and greatest	Born with equal ability to do good or evil	Five pillars of Islam
Christianity	Bible (Hebrew Bible + New Testament)	Biblical prophets were true prophet's of God	Created good but all inherit 'Original sin' from Adam"	Prayer, Bible study, Eucharist (Communion), Church on Sundays, Numerous holidays
Judaism	Hebrew Bible (<u>Tanakh</u>) Talmud	Biblical prophets were true prophet's of God	Two equal impulses, one good and one bad	Circumcision at birth, bar/bat Mitzvah adulthood, observing Sabbath, wearing tallit and <u>tefillin</u> , prayer service

Religion	Text/Holly Books	Prophets	Human Nature	Practices
Islam	Al-Qur'an Hadith	Muhammad SAW is the final and greatest	Born with equal ability to do good or evil	Five pillars of Islam
Christianity	Bible (Hebrew Bible + New Testament)	Biblical prophets were true prophet's of God	Created good but all inherit 'Original sin' from Adam"	Prayer, Bible study, Eucharist (Communion), Church on Sundays, Numerous holidays
Judaism	Hebrew Bible (<u>Tanakh</u>) Talmud	Biblical prophets were true prophet's of God	Two equal impulses, one good and one bad	Circumcision at birth, bar/bat Mitzvah adulthood, observing Sabbath, wearing tallit and <u>tefillin</u> , prayer service

Based on the table above it is clear that behind the similarities there are be differences among the religions in terms of their practices. According to Islam, the Muslims are following al-Qur'an and Hadith as their main references for any problems in their life including the issue of environment, whereas the Jews and Christians are using the Bible as their main sources. However, the versions in the Bible contain the Old Testament for the Jews and the New Testament for Christians. Although, al-Qur'an is meant for everybody regardless of their races, colors, positions or family background.

In Islam, Muslims are following Prophet Muhammad SAW and they bear witness that he is the last prophet in this world whereas for the Jews and Christians they believed that the Biblical prophets were true Prophets of God and that Jesus Christ is the savior and the bearer for their sin. Prophet Muhammad SAW is the role model for the Muslims for any action in their life. Rasulullah SAW had taught the Muslim to be good to other people regardless of their level whether they are rich or poor, have different skin colors or the races. He has also stressed on the human being to treat the environment and natural resources nicely as it is part of the creation from Allah SWT.

In terms of human nature the Muslims believed that a person was born with equality either to do good or bad in their life. Allah has given them the intellect, or it is known as the '*aql*', to think thoroughly before they do something either good or bad. Every Muslim must consider the circumstances that will come from their actions. However the Christians believed that the people had inherited the sin from Adam which they called the original sin. While Jews believed that originally humans have two equivalent impulses, one the good side and the other is a bad side.

Finally, the practices that a Muslim must practice, according to the five pillars of Islam, includes Shahadah (bear witness that Allah is a God and Prophet Muhammad SAW is the messenger) *Ṣalat* (prayer), *Ṣawm* (fasting during Ramadhan), *zakat* (alms giving), and *Hajj* (pilgrimage). According to certain practices in Jews and Christian they are also have the obligated practice such as to perform Prayer, Bible study, Eucharist (Communion), Church on Sundays, Numerous holidays, Circumcision at birth, bar/bat Mitzvah adulthood, observing Sabbath, wearing tallit and tefillin, prayer service and others.

Conclusions and Suggestions

This paper has only been able to touch briefly on the teachings of the Abrahamic religion in cleanliness towards the environmental protection. From the overall discussions above, these three religions emphasizes on cleanliness and encourage their followers to practice it in their everyday lives. There are a lot of benefit returns to the human being by practicing cleanliness, especially towards the conditions of their health.

The environment also has the right to live in peace and harmony as they act as a life support mechanism for the human being to live. This is the main purpose for the creation of nature by God. Human being cannot simply destroy the nature with pollution, throwing rubbish everywhere

and other bad habits that could damage the environment. People must understand that clean environment is a guarantee for a healthy life.

Finally, some of the methods to tackle the issue in the environment is by starting from the individual and increasing the self-consciousness. A person must stress on their personal hygiene then apply it into the environment. Every single thing in the humans' life depends on the individual themselves and they must understand their duty of a person towards others. The communities also have to increase their self-awareness in tackling the issue of the environment in general and particularly about cleanliness.

Therefore, it is undeniable that religion plays a bigger role and expected in influencing the communities to practice good behavior amongst the believers. Thus, the religious people have high responsibilities to educate their followers towards a better life. In this issue, the religious people must remind each follower through their teachings according to their holy book. In Islam one of the ways they can do that is to spread the message through Friday Khutbah in order to increase the self-awareness among Muslims.

The environment is one of the most significant element to support the life of the human being. As a conclusion, people must practice good behavior regardless of which religion they believe. The nature is a sacred creation by God and must be used wisely to avoid the natural disasters caused by the greediness of human beings. Overall, religion is the key to educate the people towards the betterment of their lives.

Reference

Books

- Al-Attas, Syed Muhammad Naquib. *Prolegomena To The Metaphysics of Islam: An Exposition of The Fundamental Elements of The Worldview of Islam*. Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia: International of Islamic Thought (ISTAC), 1995.
- Al-Attas, Syed Muhammad Naquib. *Faham Agama dan Asas Akhlak*. Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia: IBFIM , 2013.
- Ethical Issues in Six Religious Traditions*. Second ed. Edinburgh, Scotland: Edinburgh University Press Ltd, 2008.
 Edited by: Peggy Morgan and Clive A. Lawton.
- Haneef, Sayed Sikandar Shah. *Ethics and Fiqh For Daily Life: An Islamic Outline*. Gombak, Selangor: IIUM Press, 2011.
- Rose, Aubrey. *Judaism and Ecology*. London: Cassell, 1992.

Russel, Colin A. *The Earth, Humanity and God*. University College London, London: UCL Press Limited, 1994.

Spirit Of The Environment: Religion, Value and Environmental Concern. 11New Fetter Lane, London: Routledge, 1998.

Edited by, David E.Cooper and Joy A. Palmer.

Journals

Dien, Mawil Izzi. "Islam and the environment: Towards an "Islamic" Ecumenical View." *Quranica, International Journal of Quranic* 5, no. 2 (December 2013): 33-51. Accessed October 24, 2017.

<<mjs.um.edu.my/index.php/quranica/article/download/5187/299>>

Harper, Charles L. "Religion and The Environment." *Journal of Religion and Society* , 3rd ser: 5-26. Accessed October 16, 2017.

<<<http://webcache.googleusercontent.com/search.my>>>.

Kalev Sepp. "Landscape Functions and Ecosystem Services." *The Rural Landscape*: 39-303. Accessed December 18, 2017

<<www.balticuniv.uu.se/.../1475-chapter-2-landscape-functions-and-ecosystem-service&usg>>

Roman Krznaric. "For God's Sake, Do Something! How Religion Can Find Unexpected Unity Around Climate Change. By: Roman Krznaric." *Human Development Report 2007/2008*: 1-20. Accessed April 23, 2017.

<<<http://hdr.undp.org/en/content/god%E2%80%99s-sake-do-something>>>

Shahid Naeem, Robert Costanza, Paul E. Ehrlich, Frank B. Golley, David U. Hooper, J. H. Lawton, Robert V. O'Neill, Harold A. Mooney, Osvaldo E. Sala, Amy J.

Symstad, and David Tillman. "Biodiversity and Ecosystem Functioning: Maintaining Natural Life Support Processes." *Issues in Ecology* :1-12.

Accessed December 18, 2017.

<<www.esa.org/esa/wp-content/uploads/2013/03/issue4.pdf>>.

Websites

"Ancient Jews and Cleanliness ." Accessed October 23, 2017.

<<<https://earlychurchhistory.org/medicine/ancient-jews-cleanliness/>>>.

"Compare Christianity, Islam and Judaism." ReligionFacts(.). Accessed April 12, 2017.

<<<http://www.religionfacts.com/charts/christianity-islam-judaism>>>

"Comparison Table." Christianity in View. Accessed April 12, 2017.

<<<http://christianityinview.com/xncomparison.html>>>

"Hadith 23: Purification is Half of Faith." Honey for the heart. Accessed March 12, 2017.

<<<http://honeyforyourheart.wordpress.com/40-hadith/hadith-23-purification-is-half-of-faith>>>

<https://quran.com/?local=en>

<https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Genesis+1-2>

"Individual Responsibilities in Islam ." Islam web. Accessed January 1, 2018.

<<<http://www.islamweb.net/mainpage/printarticle.php?id=61098&lang=E>>>

"Jewish Views on the Environment." Accessed October 16, 2017.

<https://reformmjudaism.org/jewish-views-environment>.

Miller, Rabbi Jason. "Cleanliness is Next to Godliness- A Learning Opportunity." Accessed October 23, 2017.

<<<http://blog.rabbijason.com/2009/07/cleanlinessisnexttogodliness.html>>>

Nissan Mindell. "Cleanliness for Prayer or Torah Study." Accessed October 1, 2017.

<<<http://www.chabad.org/library/articlecdo/aid/111222/jewish/cleanliness-for-prayer-or-torah-study.htm>>>

Robert Whittaker. "Ecological Processes." What Is Ecosystem. Accessed December 18, 2017.

<<http://www.biodiversidad.gob.mx/v_ingles/ecosystems/whatis.html>>

Troster, Rabbi Lawrence. "Ten Jewish Teachings on Judaism and The Environment."

<<<http://www.greenfaith.org/religious-teachings/jewish-statements-on-the-environment/ten-jewish-teachings-on-judaism-and-the-environment>>>

AL-ITQĀN

JOURNAL OF ISLAMIC SCIENCES AND COMPARATIVE STUDIES

Special Issue

November 2018

EDITOR IN-CHIEF

Dr. Wan Mohd Azam Mohd Amin

MANAGING EDITOR

Dr. Masitoh Ahmad

EDITORIAL BOARD

Dr. Muhammad Afifi al-Akiti, Oxford

Dr. Muhammad Kamal Hassan, IIUM

Dr. Syed Arabi Aidid, IIUM.

Dr. Hassan Basri Mat Dahan, Universiti Sains Islam Malaysia,
Nilai, Negeri Sembilan.

Dr. Kamaruzaman Yusuff, Universiti Malaysia Sarawak,
Kota Semarahan, Kucing.

Dr. Kamar Oniah, IIUM.

Dr. Mumtaz Ali, IIUM.

Dr. Siti Akmar, Universiti Institut Teknologi MARA, Shah Alam

Dr. Thameem Ushama, IIUM.