

# **SIMILARITIES AND CONVERGENCES**

## **Among All Three Abrahamic Faiths**

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**It may astound the typical adherent of any one of the three classic Abrahamic faiths, including Judaism, Christianity and Islam, to discover actually how much they share in common. These commonalities derive chiefly from their common ancestor in faith, Abraham, and thereafter from the traditions and language which developed since Abraham's life. I share with you the following list with this caution: that these traditions use the same term does not mean that they define that term or use that term in the same way. However that the same term in English is used suggests a strong possibility that these same terms may well share common understandings and root ideas. So this list is a teaser to the student to consider how each tradition uses these terms and to explore to what degree their use implies common understandings.**

**Each has its beginnings in a time of political conflict, social injustice and religious polytheism. Each had a "founder" who came from the middle class: Judaism's Moses was a shepherd, Jesus was a carpenter and Muhammad was a caravan leader. They all share many common spiritual "heroes" in their Scriptures. For each God is seen primarily as a God of mercy. In each obeying God's will is paramount. The creation of a just society is a basic focus in each and sees the rich as responsible for supporting the poor. Each saw in its history the development of sectarianism. In each the status of women has always been a struggle.**

**From these beginnings, the religions that arose all use the following terms:**

<b>angels</b>	<b>prophet</b>	<b>feast</b>	<b>revelation</b>	<b>gift</b>	<b>divine</b>
<b>pilgrimage</b>	<b>punishment</b>	<b>blessing</b>	<b>prayer</b>	<b>petition</b>	<b>sin</b>
<b>fasting</b>	<b>Holy days</b>	<b>virtues</b>	<b>vices</b>	<b>sacrifice</b>	
<b>justice</b>	<b>creation</b>	<b>spiritual leader who wears special robes</b>			
<b>heaven</b>	<b>hell</b>	<b>Satan</b>	<b>moral duty and accountability</b>		
<b>forgiveness</b>	<b>judgment</b>	<b>worship</b>	<b>speech or sermon by leader</b>		
<b>purification</b>	<b>holy buildings</b>	<b>tithing or giving of alms or offerings</b>			
<b>A holy Scripture</b>		<b>concern for the poor or needy</b>			<b>ritual</b>
<b>weddings</b>	<b>respect for marriage</b>		<b>spiritual disciplines</b>		
<b>Holy places</b>	<b>importance of parents rearing children</b>			<b>teaching</b>	