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The Trinity from the perspective of a Muslim

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Abstract

How does a Muslim understand and interpret the concept of trinity that Christians preach? Abrahamic faith is famous around the world for the promotion of monotheism. There is a historical clash among Judaism, Christianity, and Islam. Judaism and Islam are still practicing monotheism till today. However, the Trinity's problem in Christianity differs from the Islamic interpretation of monotheism. This research is important because the article shows a historical observation of the development of the Trinity. Islam is very against the concept of the Trinity. This research uses qualitative methodology. Historical and normative methods have been adopted to provide the trinity concept from a Muslim perspective. This research shows how Islam provides a clear answer to this problem of trinity.

Keywords: Trinity, Christianity, Islam, Divinity, Muslim perspective

Introduction

Islam means complete submission and obedience to God. Islam is not a new religion; it is the final fulfilment of the same fundamental truth given by Allah subhanahu wa ta'ala through all His prophets. Therefore, all prophets were indeed Muslims because they were faithful submitters to the will of God, the Creator.

Abrahamic faith concept is monotheistic, believing in one God. As a follower of the Abrahamic faith, Christianity believes in God's

Trinity. This idea of God represents the unique understanding of God held by Christianity.

The Trinity in Christian doctrine is the unity of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit as three persons in one Godhead. The doctrine of the Trinity is the foundational doctrine for all Christian theology. In reality, God came to meet Christians in a threefold figure: Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

Christians and non-Christians, including Muslims and other religious followers, as well as Christians themselves, disagree over the issues of the Trinity, which developed gradually over several centuries and through many controversies.

Though the Trinity has recently become the popular Christian belief, and monotheistic faith in Christianity has become a minority compared to it, history shows that the Trinity was not always the popular Christian doctrine. Instead, it was a doctrine that appealed to the pagan Roman Empire, which had recently converted to Christianity.

Pure monotheism remained the essential foundation of Christian belief until it overshadowed the idea of the Trinity, driven by idolatrous authority. Many Christians continued to profess monotheism until the message of Prophet Muhammad's final monotheistic revelation. He asserted that monotheism was the teaching that was palpably preached by Jesus and renounced all forms of polytheism and paganism.

Hence, monotheistic Christians accepted Islam after discovering that it is the same as the message of Moses and Jesus and the revelations given to them.

The Doctrine of Oneness of God in the Bible

Jesus did not refer to himself as God or believe in himself that way throughout his lifetime, nor did any of his disciples claim that he was God.

Instead, several passages in the New Testament quote Jesus claiming that God is his God and who alone commands the worship of God. Let's have a look at the following texts;

Jesus said, "Do not hold on to me, for I have not yet ascended to the Father. Go instead to my brothers and tell them, 'I am ascending to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God.'"¹

At about three o'clock, Jesus called out with a loud voice, "Eli, Eli, lema sabachthani?" which means "My God, my God, why have you abandoned me?"²

"Get out of here, Satan," Jesus told him. "For the Scriptures say, 'You must worship the Lord your God and serve only him.'"³

The primary foundations of the prophets' preachings never contradict one another, which is a core principle of those faiths. So, when we look at the Quran, it often harmonises with the Bible, especially the New Testament. Let's examine several Quranic verses that speak to this; Allah says,

"But when Jesus felt [persistence in] disbelief from them, he said, 'Who are my supporters for [the cause of] Allah?' The disciples said, 'We are supporters for Allah. We have believed in Allah and testify that we are Muslims [submitting to Him].'"⁴

"And behold! I inspired the disciples to have faith in Me and Mine Messenger: they said, 'We have faith, and do thou bear witness that we bow to Allah as Muslims'."⁵

"Those who say, 'Allah is the Messiah, son of Mary,' have certainly fallen into disbelief. The Messiah himself said, 'O

Children of Israel! Worship Allah—my Lord and your Lord.' Whoever associates others with Allah in worship will surely be forbidden Paradise by Allah. Their home will be the Fire. And the wrongdoers will have no helpers."⁶

Like other Hebrew proper names, the name of God is more than just a simple designation. It stands for the Hebrew understanding of God's attributes and relationship with His people.

Elohim⁷ is a Hebrew word meaning God; although the term is plural in the form in the Hebrew Bible, it doesn't mean God is many. Sometimes Elohim is used to augment its meaning as divine majesty and sometimes to point to one God with many attributes. Even though its grammatical structure appears polytheistic, the term Elohim is typically used in the Old Testament to refer to Israel's one and only God. It has a monotheistic connotation.

YHWH⁸ is the direct personal name used for God in the Old Testament that occurs most frequently, but the Bible doesn't explain the root name of this word. Some scholars believe this word derives from the (Ehyeh-Asher-Ehyeh), which means - I am that I am.

The New Testament was written in Greek and used the Theos⁹ as the name of God. Greek Theos use in many ways, such as God, a god; divine beings; divine; figuratively, a human magistrate; or the devil. So, applying this word to human beings and God distinguishes by using the article.

Explicitly the oneness of God is stated in the following two verses in the Bible.

"Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God is one LORD."¹⁰

"And Jesus answered him, the first of all the commandments is, Hear, O Israel; The Lord our God is one Lord."¹¹

According to the above verses from the Bible and the Quran, it is evident that Jesus preached that God is one and ordered his worship. Furthermore, the followers of Jesus believed in God as Lord and Jesus as prophet and messenger of God.

The Doctrine of Oneness of God in Christianity

Among the Creeds in Christianity, the Apostles' Creed¹² is the oldest Creed which doesn't mention the divinity of Jesus. Meanwhile, the other ancient creeds developed in early Christianity declared the divinity of Jesus. Christian Scholar Wayne Grudem¹³ said that three in God's oneness, which is based

⁶ Al-Maidah 72.

⁷ <https://jewishencyclopedia.com/articles/6727-god-names-of>.

⁸ <https://jewishencyclopedia.com/articles/6727-god-names-of>.

⁹ <https://www.biblestudytools.com/lexicons/greek/kjv/theos.html>.

¹⁰ Deuteronomy 6:4.

¹¹ Mark 12:29.

¹² The Apostles' Creed is one of the three great creeds of the ancient Christian church, the others being the Athanasian Creed and the Nicene Creed. The creed summarises the apostles' preaching and teachings concerning the gospel of Jesus Christ. The apostles did not write the Apostles' Creed. The principle is the oldest, most straightforward, and least developed creed of the Christian church.

¹³ Wayne A. Grudem (born 1948) is a New Testament scholar turned theologian seminary professor and author. He co-founded the Council on Biblical Manhood and Womanhood and served as the general editor of the ESV Study Bible.

¹ John 20:17.

² Matthew 27:46.

³ Matthew 4:10.

⁴ Al Imran 52.

⁵ Al-Maidah 111.

on the Bible, is never found in the Scriptures, especially the Word Trinity and three in the oneness of God. Despite the Bible stating the Oneness of God, Christians tried to apply the doctrine of the Trinity in their religion.

In addition, numerous early Christian denominations were monotheistic and rejected the Trinity. They are;

A. Ebionitism

It was a Jewish Christian movement that flourished in the early Christian years. They considered Jesus of Nazareth the Messiah but denied that he was divine and maintained on following Jewish Law and customs. Only one Jewish gospel acknowledges by the Ebionites, who respected James the Just¹⁴ and rejected Paul the Apostle¹⁵ as a heretic from the Law. Many of the core Nicene orthodoxies, like Jesus' pre-existence, divinity, and atoning death, were denied by the Ebionites, as per the majority of Church Fathers. The Ebionites define as emphasising God's oneness and Jesus' humanity. God chose him to be the Messiah because of His righteousness when He anointed him with the Holy Spirit at his baptism.

B. Paulianism

It is a 3rd-century view that denies Christ's divinity by stating that he was only inspired by God and not a member of the Trinity. It attributes to Paul of Samosata¹⁶, who denied the existence of a distinction of individuals in God and asserted that Christ was merely a man elevated above other men by the divinity which dwelled inside him.

C. Monarchianism

Monarchianism is a belief system that emphasises God as a single person, as opposed to Trinitarianism, which views God as three people coexisting consubstantially as one in being. It held on to the numerical oneness of the divinity, even if it saw Jesus Christ as Redeemer. Two types of Monarchianism developed: Dynamic¹⁷ (Adoptionism) and Modalistic¹⁸ (Sabellian). Monarchianism first appeared in the second century and spread into the third; by the

¹⁴ According to the New Testament, James the Just was "Jesus' brother." He was a pioneering figure in the Apostolic Age Church in Jerusalem. According to tradition, he was crucified by being stoned to death by the Pharisees in AD 62 or AD 69 at the direction of the High Priest Ananus ben Ananus.

¹⁵ Saul of Tarsus, also known as St. Paul the Apostle, was a leader of the first generation of Christians and is frequently regarded as the most significant figure in the history of Christianity after Jesus. He was born in Tarsus, Cilicia, now in Turkey, around 4 BCE and died in Rome, Italy, between 62 and 64 CE.

¹⁶ Paul of Samosata founded the Paulianist movement and served as bishop of Antioch from 260 to 268.

¹⁷ Dynamic Monarchianism held that Christ was a mere man, miraculously conceived, but constituted the Son of God simply by the infinitely high degree to which he had been filled with divine wisdom and power.

¹⁸ The subordinationism of the Church Fathers offended Modalistic Monarchianism, which claimed that the names Father and Son were alternative titles for the same being, the one true God, who was "referred to about the relations in which He had previously stood to the world is called the Father, but concerning his manifestation in humanity is referred to as the Son."

fourth century, the mainstream of Christian theology had declared it a heresy.

D. Arianism

Arianism is Christianity's Christological position that Jesus, as the Son of God, was created by God. It was presented by the Alexandrian presbyter Arius¹⁹ in the early fourth century. It was popular throughout most Eastern and Western Roman empires, even after the Council of Nicaea declared it a heretic in 325. Arianism is frequently regarded as a kind of Unitarian theology since it emphasises God's unity over the theory of the Trinity, which holds that God is three distinct people united in one Godhead. The essential premise of Arius's argument was that God alone is self-existent and unchanging; thus, the Son, who is not self-existent, cannot be the self-existent and immutable God. Furthermore, the Son cannot have direct knowledge of the Father because the Son is not the Father.

Trinity

The idea of the Trinity derives from the Gospel of John.²⁰ The concept of Trinity means that God exists in three coequal and coeternal elements - God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit. The doctrine of the Trinity summarises the concept of God in the Christian faith.

A Trinity doctrine is commonly expressed as the statement that the one God exists as or in three equally divine "Persons", the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Every term in this statement (God, exists, as or in, equally divine, Person) has been variously understood. The guiding principle has been the creedal declaration that the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit of the New Testament are consubstantial (i.e., the same in substance or essence, Greek: homoousion). Because this shared substance or essence is a divine one, all three named individuals are holy and equally so. Yet the three, in some sense, are the one God of the Bible.²¹

The Foundation of the doctrine of the Trinity

Someone may ask, "Where did Jesus and God's divinity and worship come from?" What is the origin of the purported Trinity? What are its roots in history?

Exactly it's not sure when the Trinity taught the first time. Some early theologians stated the concept of the Trinity was established before the agreement on the Trinity at the First Nicaea Council.²² So, later studies discovered that the Creed's development was much more complicated.

It is safe to conclude that Jesus' Ascension was just as controversial as his miraculous birth. People argued about his Ascension much as they did about his birth. The Qur'an and the Bible both contain verses that show how heated the debate about Jesus' Ascension and, by extension, his very nature was.

¹⁹Arius (born c. 250, Libya—died 336, Constantinople [now Istanbul, Turkey]), a Christian priest whose teachings gave rise to a theological doctrine known as Arianism.

²⁰ The Gospel of John is the fourth of the four canonical gospels. It contains a highly schematic account of the ministry of Jesus.

²¹ <https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/trinity/>.

²² First Council of Nicaea (325), the first ecumenical council of the Christian church, met in ancient Nicaea (now İznik, Turkey). It was called by the emperor Constantine I, an unbaptised catechumen, who presided over the opening session and participated in the discussions.

In the Qur'an, for instance, "That is Jesus, the son of Mary - the word of truth about which they are in dispute. It is not [befitting] for Allah to take a son; exalted is He! When He decrees an affair, He only says to it, "Be," and it is. [Jesus said], "And indeed, Allah is my Lord and your Lord, so worship Him. That is a straight path." Then the factions differed [concerning Jesus] from among them, so woe to those who disbelieved - from the scene of a tremendous Day."²³

The Bible tells us about the controversy surrounding Jesus' Ascension and the doubt and confusion that surrounded even his disciples after his Ascension.

"Later, Jesus appeared to the Eleven as they were eating; he rebuked them for their lack of faith and their stubborn refusal to believe those who had seen him after he had risen."²⁴

When Jesus appeared, one of the Twelve, known as the Twin, was not present. So, the other disciples told him, "We have seen the Lord!" But he said to them, "Unless I see the nail marks in his hands and put my finger where the nails were and put my hand into his side, I will not believe."²⁵

As a result, the Ascension and Jesus' miraculous birth sparked a furious debate about his very nature. As a consequence, history shows that in the decades following Jesus' Ascension, there was a profound and sharp divide in Christian circles between monotheists who believed in God as the only one God, polytheists who believed in Jesus as God and worshipped him alongside God, and other factions that were somewhere in between.

First Council of Nicaea

The split, as mentioned above, persisted even after Roman Emperor Constantine converted to Christianity and declared it the Roman Empire's official religion.

In 325 A.D., Emperor Constantine held the First Council of Nicaea, the first ecumenical Council in this city, to discuss the divisions within the Church of Alexandria, settle theological conflicts, and unite the Christian faith.

There were two opinions deciding the nature of Jesus; most of the participants, led by Athanasius²⁶, believed that Jesus has the same essence as Father, who is God. On the contrary, Arius believed that Jesus has similar nature to Father. However, most of the participants, led by Athanasius, dominated the Council and decided that Jesus was God. Consequently, the mainstream restricted Arius' teaching about homoiousia²⁷ but could not stop being taught by the Eastern Church.

Presbyter Arius contended for God the Father's supremacy, claiming that the Son of God was created as an act of the Father's will and thus was a God-created creature. It's worth noting that

²³ Maryam 34-37.

²⁴ Mark 16:14.

²⁵ John 20:25.

²⁶ St. Athanasius, also called Saint Athanasius of Alexandria or Saint Athanasius the Apostolic, (born c. 293, Alexandria—died May 2, 373, Alexandria; feast day May 2), theologian, ecclesiastical statesman, and Egyptian national leader.

²⁷ An adherent of an ecclesiastical party of the fourth century holding that the son is essentially like the father but not of the same substance.

when Arius stood up to explain his beliefs, there was a lot of noise and laughter.

Finally, the Council formulated the (Nicene) Creed, beginning with "We believe in one God" to "and his kingdom will have no end".

The intervention of Constantine²⁸ as the Caesar of the Rome Emperor in the Council of Nicaea and how they dealt with Arius shows that the political aspect had a role in forming the Trinity.

First Council of Constantinople

Other comparable ideas evolved towards the close of the fourth century of the Christian era, notably during the reign of the Roman Emperor Theodosius I²⁹, after Athanasius, the Bishop of Alexandria, had campaigned against Arius' teachings for many years. As a result, the second ecumenical council was held in 381 A.D. in Constantinople.

Among the beliefs at that time were Macedonianism, which denied the Holy Spirit's full personhood and divinity. Those who accepted the doctrine called Macedonians were also known as Pneumatomachians, which meant spirit fighters.

Another popular belief is that Apollinarianism formulated the position on the nature of Christ by Apollinaris³⁰, Bishop of Laodicea.³¹ Apollinaris denied the existence of a rational human soul in Christ.

After the council, Emperor Theodosius issued an imperial edict on 30th July restoring the churches to those bishops who confessed the equal divinity of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit and held communion with Nectarius of Constantinople³² and other significant Asian prelates whom he identified.

First Council of Ephesus

The Council of Ephesus was a council of Christian bishops called by the Roman Emperor Theodosius II in Ephesus³³ in AD

431. The third ecumenical council attempted to achieve unity in the Church by an assembly representing all of Christendom. This

²⁸ Constantine I, byname Constantine the Great, Latin in full Flavius Valerius Constantinus, (born February 27, after 280 CE, Naissus, Moesia [now Niš, Serbia]—died May 22, 337, Ancyrona, near Nicomedia, Bithynia [now İzmit, Turkey]), the first Roman emperor to profess Christianity.

²⁹ Theodosius I, often known as Theodosius the Great, was a Roman emperor of the East from 379 to 392 and subsequently the only emperor of both the East and the West from 392 to 395. He vigorously suppressed Arianism and established the faith of the Council of Nicaea

(325) as the standard for all Christian orthodoxy.

³⁰ Apollinaris Apollinarius the Younger, a Latin, was born c. 310 and died c. 390.

³¹ An ancient city called Laodicea on the Lycus stood on the Lycus River in Asia Minor, present-day Turkey. It was in Caria and Lydia, two Hellenistic territories that later developed into the Roman province of Phrygia Pacatiana.

³² Bishop of Constantinople, modern Istanbul, from 381. He was born in Tarsus, in Cilicia, the son of a senator of Constantinople. Nectarius succeeded St. Gregory Nazianzus upon the latter's resignation.

³³ The most significant Greek city in Ionian Asia Minor was Ephesus, Greek Ephesos, and its ruins can be found in western Turkey close to the present-day settlement of Seluk.

council confirmed the original Nicene Creed and denounced Nestorius³⁴, Patriarch of Constantinople³⁵, who claimed that the Virgin Mary might term the Christotokos, "Christ-bearer," but not the Theotokos, "God-bearer."

Biblical Basic of the Trinity

Christianity claims that some verses in Bible express the doctrine of the Trinity. Christian scholars believe this verse proves that God is not only one person.

"In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God".³⁶

It's essential to note that the way the English Bible translated the word God changes the meaning of God here entirely. Greek or Hebrew does not exist the system in English as capital letters use to start a proper noun, and lowercase letters start a common noun.

It is fundamental to note that the English Bible translated both the Greek words, Ho Theos and Ton Theos, in this verse to mean God, which changes their meaning entirely. Capital letters start a proper noun in English, and lowercase letters start a common noun, but this system does not exist in Greek or Hebrew.

In this verse, the first occurrence of the Word God is the Greek Word Ho Theos, which means The God; used with a capital 'G,' it denotes a proper noun, meaning God, the Almighty above, the Father.

The second occurrence of the Word, God, in this verse is the Greek Word, Ton Theos, which means a god', with a lowercase 'g,' which translates to mean godly, a godly person, a messenger, etc., and is not referring to God, the Almighty above, the Father.

This significant difference between the capital 'G' and the lowercase 'g' should be translated correctly in the English Bible as it changes the meaning entirely. However, the English Bible does relay this.

The Issue on the Son of God

The term son of God is a common term in the Bible. Sometimes, in the Bible, it is used to draw someone or a people group. The title Son of God is the primary Foundation used to prove the doctrine of the Trinity by Christianity.

Christian scholars' evidence from some verses³⁷ in the Bible came as Son of God to denote their argument and interpret those verses as Sonship Jesus to God. Still, they did not explain these verses correctly. For example, this verse, "When all things are subjected to Him, then the Son Himself also will be subjected to the One who subjected all things to Him, so that God may be all in all."³⁸; is not referring to the equality of Jesus and God. Instead, it is evidence that Jesus is subject to God's authority.

In the Old Testament, the term son of God usually points to the king of Israel and Messiah, which are human. Besides, this title

³⁴ From 10 April 428 to 8 August 431, Nestorius served as the archbishop of Constantinople.

³⁵ The Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople, sometimes known as the ecumenical or Roman patriarchate, holds honorary significance for the Eastern Orthodox autocephalous, or ecclesiastically independent, churches.

³⁶ John 1:1.

³⁷ (Matthew 11: 25-30, 1 Corinthians 15:28, and Hebrew1:1-3).

³⁸ Corinthians 15:28.

expresses that the king or Messiah is the representative of God. Unfortunately, in the Hellenistic period³⁹ term son of God had a divine sense because it influences by Egyptian mythology.⁴⁰ So, the word son of God is used by Church fathers⁴¹ to point out Jesus is God because of the influence of Egyptian mythology.

Son of God in the Dead Sea Scrolls

The Dead Sea Scrolls are ancient Hebrew manuscripts discovered in 1947 on the Dead Sea's northern shore. One of the most important discoveries in modern archaeology is the discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls. Scholars have been able to push back the date of a stable Hebrew Bible to no later than 70 C.E. They shed new light on the emergence of Christianity and rabbinic Judaism⁴² and the relationship between early Christian and Jewish religious traditions.

The scrolls clearly show the Jewish soil from which Christianity emerged. The Jesus message, however, is similar and rooted in Jewish history.

To understand Jesus, we must first understand the Jewish milieu in which he lived. The Dead Sea Scrolls have a role in this. The Dead Sea Scrolls place early Christianity in a Jewish context.

There are various depictions of Jesus, but they all agree that he was a devout Jew. He lived his entire life on Earth as a Jew, according to all experts.

One of the Dead Sea Scrolls discovered at Qumran⁴³, 4Q246⁴⁴, also known as the Son of God Text or the Aramaic Apocalypse, is remarkable for its early messianic mention of a son of God. The text is an Aramaic language fragment discovered in cave four at Qumran in 1958, and the identification of this "son of God" person has been the subject of much controversy.

4Q246 says: Affliction will come on Earth . . . He will be called great . . . 'Son of God' he will be called and 'Son of the Most High' they will call him . . . His kingdom will be an everlasting kingdom . . . He will judge the earth in truth, and all will make peace.

This text was written a century before Jesus was born.

³⁹ Hellenistic age, in the eastern Mediterranean and the Middle East, the period between the death of Alexander the Great in 323 BCE and the conquest of Egypt by Rome in 30 BCE.

⁴⁰ Egyptian mythology is the collection of myths from ancient Egypt, which describe the actions of the Egyptian gods as a means of understanding the world around them. These myths' beliefs are an essential part of ancient Egyptian religion.

⁴¹ The Church Fathers, Early Church Fathers, Christian Fathers, or Fathers of the Church were ancient and influential Christian theologians and writers who established Christianity's intellectual and doctrinal foundations.

⁴² Rabbinic Judaism is the traditional branch of Judaism that emerged following the destruction of the Temple in Jerusalem (AD 70). It was based on the legal and commenting writing in the Talmud and originated in the work of the Pharisaic rabbis. It established a form of worship and a way of life that Jews worldwide continue to follow today.

⁴³ A location on the Dead Sea's northern shore is known as Qumran, also spelt Kumran.

⁴⁴ The Qumran text was bought from Kando, the go-between for the Ta'amireh Bedu, on 9th July 1958. It was one of the eight last fragmentary texts of Cave 4.

When we read Luke, it says, "He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High. The Lord God will give him the throne of his father David, and he will reign over Jacob's descendants forever; his kingdom will never end."⁴⁵

In brief, the Dead Sea Scrolls aid our understanding of the Jewish environment in which Christianity arose.

We can see what the Son of God means when we examine the Son of God in a Jewish framework.

In Psalm, the Lord says to the Kings, "I will tell of the decree: The LORD said to me, "You are my son; today I have begotten you."⁴⁶

"Today, I have begotten you." In Hebrew, the word is ha-Yom. When the king of Israel was appointed, he became God's son. The king was not born a son of God in this term but was adopted as the Lord's son when he became king. The monarch is also referred to as the son of God in other places in the Hebrew Bible.

For example, through the prophet Nathan, the Lord speaks to King David, "I will be to him a father, and he shall be to me a son. When he commits iniquity, I will discipline him with the rod of men, with the stripes of the sons of men."⁴⁷

In another context, all of Israel is the son of God. "He shall cry to me, 'You are my Father, my God, and the Rock of my salvation. And I will appoint him to be my firstborn, the most exalted of the kings of the earth."⁴⁸

"When Israel was a child, I loved him, and out of Egypt, I called my son."⁴⁹

So, we can conclude from these texts that these are figurative uses of the concept of the son of God rather than literal ones.

Prominent Figures in Developing the Doctrine of the Trinity

The doctrine of the Trinity is not mentioned explicitly in the Bible. Still, some Church fathers arose this doctrine, and the most prominent figures in the development of the Trinity are Irenaeus, Tertullian, Athanasius and Augustine.

A. Irenaeus

Born around 120-140 CE, one of the early Church fathers played a significant role in developing theology. He builds the Christian theology on a biblical foundation and collects and unites his precursors' traditions from Asia Minor, Syria and Rome. Irenaeus is considered one of the mature theologians of Trinitarian theology. But he never mentioned or used explicitly the term Trinity. He noted that the Baptism of Jesus identifies a mark of three because three's divinity appeared simultaneously.

B. Tertullian

He lived in Carthage⁵⁰ about 160-240 CE. He wrote almost all of his writing in Latin and was called the Father of Latin Christianity. Tertullian was the first theologian who used the term Trinity in the doctrine. He also was the first one who suggested the formula of three-ness in the unity of God. On the one hand, he rejected

⁴⁵ Luke 1:32-33.

⁴⁶ Psalm 2:7.

⁴⁷ 2 Samuel 7:14.

⁴⁸ Psalm 89:26-27.

⁴⁹ Hosea 11:1.

⁵⁰ Carthage, a great city of antiquity on the north coast of Africa, is now a residential suburb of the city of Tunis, Tunisia.

Christian theologies that developed on the non-scriptural source; on the other hand, he developed Trinity theology without a Biblical basis because the Bible does not explicitly mention this doctrine.

C. Athanasius

Athanasius was born and raised in a pagan family in Alexandria around 295-299 CE. Later, he was baptised to be a disciple of Bishop Alexander. Athanasius' earlier theological writings work is about against the Greeks-on the Incarnation, which does not directly mention Arius' name. The later writings were openly opposed to Arius's teachings. The later writings emphasise the ontological issue, namely the relationship between the Father, Son and Holy Spirit, consistent with the Nicene doctrine, namely the Trinitarian doctrine. His theological arguments for the Trinity always aligned with the nature and character of Christian salvation. He continually defends the understanding of the identical substance (homoousion) of Father and Son.

D. Augustine

He was known as St. Augustine. He was born in 354 CE to a low-income family in Thagaste, Algeria. Despite his low-income family background, his father enables him to get a good education. As a result, Augustine got a professor of rhetoric in Milan in 385 CE. He contributed substantially to the development of Christian theology, particularly the theory of the Trinity, the doctrine of grace, and the teaching of the Church and its sacraments. He described the Trinity as a metaphor for human memory, will, and understanding of the human -mind, knowledge, and love.

Models of Trinity

The doctrine of the Trinity is hard to understand because it's not explained explicitly in the Bible. Therefore, the understanding of the Trinity differs from one Christianity to another depending on their knowledge of the Trinity. Here are some of the Trinity models suggested by Christian Theologians.

A. Cappadocians

Cappadocian theologians were Basil of Caesarea⁵¹, Gregory of Nyssa⁵², and Gregory of Nazianzus.⁵³ Basil fought against the idea that Christ is half God and half man. Meanwhile, Gregory of Nazianzus created the definitive formula of the doctrine of the Trinity. Cappadocian's model of the Trinity is that the Godhead exists in three different beings: the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Father is seen as the source of the Trinity because the Father brought his being to the Son and the Holy Spirit, but it doesn't mean that Son or Holy Spirit is dependent on the Father.

B. Augustine

The Augustinian Trinity lies in the essence of the Trinity, not based on the persons Cappadocian's Trinity is based. Augustine developed his model of the Trinity by taking the verse in, "And God said, let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every

⁵¹Basil of Caesarea, also called Saint Basil the Great, was a bishop of Caesarea Mazaca in Cappadocia, Asia Minor.

⁵² Gregory of Nyssa, also known as Gregory Nyssen, was Bishop of Nyssa in Cappadocia, from 372 to 376 and from 378 until he died in 395.

⁵³ Gregory of Nazianzus, also known as Gregory the Theologian or Gregory Nazianzen, was a 4th-century Archbishop of Constantinople and theologian.

creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth."⁵⁴ This verse, "Let us make man in our image after our likeness," refers to God as the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. God has precisely one instance of God, the Trinity itself. Even though there is greatness in each Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, there is only one greatness.

C. Karl Barth

He is one of the significant theologians of the twentieth century. His theology of the Trinity differs from the Cappadocian's and Augustine's models. Based on the reality of God speaking and being heard, he created the idea of the Trinity. He argued that sinful humanity is incapable of listening to the Word of God. Then, God revealed himself to sinful humanity, so the sinful humanity would have the ability to hear the word of God. God is only one with but with three different modes.

D. Karl Rahner

He was the most influential Roman Catholic⁵⁵ theologian of the 20th century. He was born in Freiburg on 5th March 1904 and died in Innsbruck on 30th March 1984. His theology influenced the Second Vatican Council⁵⁶ and the modern understanding of Catholicism.⁵⁷ Rahner contends that the connection between the economic and the immanent Trinity is essential to understanding Trinity's philosophy. The concept of the Economic Trinity examines how each of the Three Persons of the Trinity carries out the Salvation Mission. Meanwhile, the immanent Trinity discusses the Trinity's essential, ontological, and eternal aspects. There are tied to each other and cannot be separated.

E. Robert Jenson

American Lutheran theologian who has dedicated about fifty years as a professional theologian to describe a consistently Evangelical doctrine of God. According to him, it is a must that God has a proper name. He argues that - Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are the appropriate name of God known to Christians in and through Jesus. Jenson conveys that Ancient Israel lived amid a polytheistic environment. The term god they believed in their hearts, who also raised Jesus from the dead, must be distinguished from the gods worshipped by people around them. Therefore, a proper name is necessary for the God of the Christians because the use of God's Word, both in the Old and New Testaments, is unclear.

Conclusion

The purpose of this study was to determine the Muslim's perspective of the Trinity according to an academic Trinitarian study, and the most prominent findings to emerge from this study are that;

⁵⁴ Genesis 1:26

⁵⁵ Roman Catholic is sometimes used to differentiate members of the Catholic Church in full communion with the pope in Rome from other Christians who self-identify as "Catholic". It is also sometimes used to differentiate adherents to the Latin Church and its Roman rite from other Catholics, i.e., followers of the Eastern Catholic Churches of various Eastern traditions.

⁵⁶ The Second Ecumenical Council of the Vatican, commonly known as the Second Vatican Council, or Vatican II, was the 21st ecumenical council of the Roman Catholic Church.

⁵⁷ Catholicism is the tradition and beliefs of Catholic Churches. It refers to their theology, liturgy, morals and spirituality. The term usually refers to western and eastern churches that are in full communion with the Holy See.

- The concept of the oneness of God in Christianity developed based on the Hebrew Bible and the New Testament Bible.
- The Hebrew Bible, which Old Testament calls, is shared by Jews and Christians. But, surprisingly, the concept of God in Jews theology is the oneness of God, which is opposed to the belief concept of Christians.
- The New Testament has the same idea of the oneness of God as the Hebrew Bible, interpreted differently by those who were not from among the Jews, especially the early church fathers, who had a pagan background. Thus, there is a modification of the concept of the oneness of God in non-Jewish Christian circles. This modification of the idea of God's oneness eventually became Christianity's mainstream theology.
- Christianity holds that there are three individuals in one God, known as the Trinity, rather than asserting that God is ultimately one.
- The Dead Sea Scrolls shed new light on the emergence of Christianity and the relationship between early Christian and Jewish religious traditions and place early Christianity in a Jewish context. It is apparent from the dead sea scrolls that the phrase "son of God" is used figuratively rather than literally.
- The Council of Nicaea was the first council in the history of the Christian Church, and the council deemed Arianism a heresy. It glorified the divinity of Christ by invoking the term homoousios in a statement of faith known as the Creed of Nicaea.
- The Nicene Creed believed in representing the doctrine stated at Nicaea in 325 directly, but further research showed that the Creed's origins were much more complicated.
- There were numerous early Christian denominations were monotheistic and rejected the Trinity. Monotheism's multiform re-emergence immediately after the bishop of Alexandria, with the help of the pagan Roman Empire, stood up to Arius' doctrines, which were closer to monotheism, is the most compelling evidence that it existed, had a strong presence, and was even prevalent since the start of Christianity.
- The word Trinity doesn't occur as a theological term until the end of the second century. Through the years, the idea has been aggressively attacked and strongly supported.

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