

# Importance Of Environmental Elements And Natural Resources In The Teachings Of Divine (Elhāmī) Religions: A Comparative Study

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## **Abstract**

Humans and religion have been going hand in hand since the beginning. The teachings of the Holy Quran prove that Islam was the religion of humans in the beginning. But later on, due to differences among people, different religions came into being. And from the beginning until today, people have remained closed to the religion that Allah had chosen for them, and after that, more or less all the nations living in the world have been associated with one or the other of these religions. Because religion is the only means that tells a person the purpose of life. Among the religions of the world, there are those religions whose teachings are based on revelation and heavenly teachings. Such religions are called divine religions. These religions include Judaism, Christianity and Islam. From the teachings of these three religions, it is known that Allah Almighty has mentioned in detail the role and responsibility of man in the creation of the universe, the benefits of the resources in it and their protection and management. In this research article, an attempt has been made to compare the elements of the environment and natural resources in the teachings of the three religions and compare them with each other and to clarify that the teachings of these religions How important are elements in the universe and environmental diversity? And how do the teachings of these religions make man realize his responsibilities by mentioning the environment and natural resources?

**Keywords:** Revelation, purpose, Protection, Natural Resources, Management

### **Introduction to Divine Religions:**

World religions are divided into two categories; Divine or “Elhami” and non-divine or non-Semitic. The former is those which are based on divine revelation whereas the later are not based on divine revelation.

### **The Reason why divine religions are called “Elhami”?**

The word Elhami, an infinitive in Arabic literally means to put something into one’s heart. The word “Wahi” and “Elham” carry nearly the same meaning, which is translated as revelation. The words revelation and inspiration are sometimes used interchangeably in this particular sense; however, Al Râghib has made clear distinction between these two words in Al-Mufardât:

“The meaning of inspiration is to instill something in one's heart, but this word has now become specific with the insinuation of something that comes from Allah or is put into one's heart by an angle”<sup>1</sup>

### **Why divine religions are called Semitic?**

According to Torah, Noah PBUH had three sons, namely, Shem, Ham and Japheth. All human beings living today are the descendants of these three sons of Noah PBUH. Non-revealed religions appeared in the descendants of Ham and Japheth while the revealed religions appeared in the descendants of Shem and they are called Semitic Nations. Since the term Semitic carries a more nationalistic and racist connotation, therefore the term spiritual or celestial religions is more appropriate for it.<sup>2</sup>

### **“Elhāmī” Revealed Religions:**

The divine religions include three major religions of the world which are listed chronologically.

1: Judaism      2: Christianity      3: Islam<sup>3</sup>

The teachings that Allah SWT sent to His Prophets through revelation were the teachings of Islam since the beginning of the world. But the Jews and Christians changed this religion according their personal wishes, they named it, and racialized it. Thus, The Noble Qur’an testifies it by the following verse:

“Ibrahim was neither a Jew nor a Christian, but he was Upright, a Muslim and not one of those who associate partner with Allah SWT”<sup>4</sup>

### **Why Judaism is called Yahodiyyat in Arabic?**

The word “Yahodiyyat” is derived from “Al-Tahawwud” according to scholars, which means, “repentance and righteous deeds”<sup>5</sup>

While The Isrealites used to break their repentance and promise, and then turn back, that’s why they this name.

According to other scholars, the word “Yahodiyyat” is derived from “Al-Hawada” and then “Mawadda”, “**Affection Love and Friendship**”.<sup>6</sup>

Since the Jews love one another and look down on Gentiles, non-Jews, that is why they are called “Yahud” in Arabic.

The third and common opinion is that, it is due to the eldest son of “Sayyidina Yaqub” PBUH whose name was “Yehuda”, this religion became known as “Yahodiyyat”.

### **Why is Christianity called Al- Masihiya, Al-Nasraniya or Al-Eisaiyya in Arabi?**

In the Holy Quran, Jesus is mentioned as “Eisa” and “Maseeh”. Both “Bani Isreal” and the

Muslims attributed the religion Islam, changed later as mentioned earlier, after the Prophet Sayyidna Eisa (PBUH), thus Christianity is also called “Eisaiyya”. Apart from this Holy Quran refers to it as “Al-Nasraniya”. As stated below:

"And from those who say we are Nasārā (Christians), we took a pledge. So they have overlooked a good deal of the advice they were given." <sup>7</sup>

### **Islam:**

The word Islam has two derivations; “Aslama” which means to bow to someone’s orders and “Salima” which means “Peace”. However, Islam has been given these names because the one who becomes a Muslim, he bows before the commandments of Allah SWT and brings peace and harmony.<sup>8</sup>

### **Environment, Natural Resources and Spiritual Religions:**

Uniformity found in the teachings about the environment and natural resources in all three celestial religions and there are detailed description about the wonders of nature, environment and natural resources in these religions. Here, as an example, the teachings related to the elements of the environment and natural resources in these divine religions are briefly mentioned, from which it can be easily estimated how much importance the environment, its elements and natural resources have in the teachings of the divine religions

### **The teachings of Divine religions and mentioning the earth:**

#### **Old Testament:**

Land is mentioned repeatedly in the Old Testament, which shows the importance of land and other resources in it. The Old Testament says that:

“God called the dry ground “land” and the gathered waters he called “seas.” God saw that it was good”  
<sup>9</sup>

#### **Holy Qur’an:**

Just as in the Old Testament, the sea has been mentioned among the land and its resources. The Holy Qur’an has also mentioned the land and its resources. The only difference is that on the one hand, if the Qur’an has confirmed the brief claim of the Old Testament, on the other hand, taking it in more detail and explaining this topic in a comprehensive paragraph. It indicates that the Holy Qur’an is the only book which completes and confirms the previous revealed books. However, the Holy Qur’an has mentioned this in this way:<sup>0</sup>

“And (he subjugated to you) whatever he created for you on the earth having varied colors. Surly, in that, there is a sign for a people who accept advice. He is the One, who has subjugated the sea, so that you may eat fresh meat from it, and may take out from it ornament you wear, and you see the boats cleaving through it, and so that you may seek His bounty, and that you may be grateful.” <sup>10</sup>

### **Earth and Human Creation:**

#### **Old Testament:**

Just as it has been clearly stated in the Holy Qur'an that man was created from the dust of the earth and when Adam (PBUH) was created from the dust, after that a soul was breathed into him, in the Old Testament, approximately same is mentioned:

“The LORD (God) formed the man from the soil of the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and the man became a living being.”<sup>11</sup>

### **Holy Qur'an:**

The entire outline of human creation from the earth has been drawn by the Holy Quran. Allah SWT says:

“Recall when your Lord said to the angels, “I am going to create a human being from ringing clay made of decayed mud. When I form him perfect, and blow in him of My spirit, then you must fall down before him in prostration.”<sup>12</sup>

If the text of the Old Testament and the verses of the Holy Qur'an are compared, it is found in both of them that human creation has been made from the soil. The only difference is that the Old Testament has only indicated, while the Holy Qur'an, if seen in the context, has described the full details of human creation.

### **Sanctity of the Earth:**

In the religious scriptures, the earth has been mentioned in the way that the earth is a holy place and he has dignity and respect. The teachings in this regard are as follows:-

### **Old Testament:**

In the teachings of the Old Testament about the sanctity of the earth, there is an explanation that the earth is a holy place. However, the event of giving prophet hood to Siyyidana Musa (PBUH) has been described in these words:

“God said, “Do not approach any closer! Take your sandals off your feet, for the place where you are standing is holy ground.”<sup>13</sup>

In this text of the Torah, where the incident related to Prophet hood being granted to Musa (PBUH) is indicated, there is also a reference to the sanctity and nobility of the land.

### **Holy Qur'an:**

In the Holy Qur'an, this incident related to Musa (PBUH) is described in a more clear and concise manner, saying:

“Has there come to you the story of Musa? When he saw a fire and said to his family, “Stay here. I have noticed a fire. Perhaps I can bring you an ember from it, or find some guidance by the fire. So when he came to it, he was called, “O Musa, it is Me, your Lord, so remove your shoes; you are in the sacred valley of Tuwa.”<sup>14</sup>

### **Earth is the Place of prostration:**

Just as Islam has given the status of a mosque to the earth, the teachings of the Torah and the Gospel also show that the earth is a place of prostration. The summary of the teachings of the three divine religions in this regard is as follows.

### **Old Testament:**

“Moses quickly bowed to the ground and worshiped. And said, “If now I have found favor in your sight, O Lord, let my Lord go among us, for we are a stiff-necked people; pardon our iniquity and our sin, and take us for your inheritance.”<sup>15</sup>

### **New Testament (Gospel of Marks):**

In the Gospel of Marks, it is also said about Jesus that he prostrated on the ground. As if according to the Bible, the earth has the status of a place of worship. The text of the Holy Bible is as follows:

“Going a little farther, he threw himself to the ground and prayed that if it were possible the hour would pass from him.”<sup>16</sup>

### **Teachings of Islam:**

The teachings of Islam are also that the earth is a place of worship and prostration and it has the same sanctity as the mosque. The Messenger of Allah SWT (peace and blessings of Allah SWT be upon him) said:

"It is permissible for me to pray and attain purity in all the earth, therefore, whoever the time of my Ummah comes to pray (wherever) he should pray (there).<sup>17</sup>

### **Earth Tourism:**

In the sacred books of the divine religions, the earth is also mentioned in the manner that it is a place of travel and expansion and is a great blessing of Allah SWT. Therefore one should enjoy the wonders and rewards of it. About the travel and expansion of the earth, the previous scriptures and the teachings of the Holy Quran are as follows:

### **Old Testament:**

In the Old Testament there is an encouragement to wander the earth and explore its wonders and sights. It is in the Torah that:

“Get up and walk throughout the land, for I will give it to you.”<sup>18</sup>

### **Holy Qur'an:**

In the Holy Qur'an, Allah SWT has also advised us to visit the earth and meditate on its wonders, to see the rewards of God and gain wisdom and knowledge from it. In the Holy Qur'an, Allah SWT says: "Have they not, then, traveled on earth so that they should have had hearts to understand with, or ears to listen with? The fact is that it is not the eyes that turn blind, but what turns blind is the hearts contained in the chests."<sup>19</sup>

In the above text of the Torah and in these blessed verses of the Holy Quran, where it is encouraged to travel and explore the land, the land that the Torah has promised to give to man. The Holy Quran explained it in such a way that the ownership of the land is in fact, giving is possible only by gaining understanding, wisdom and common sense, and this blessing is bestowed on those who meditate on the blessings of Allah SWT and subjugate them.

### **Mentioning the blessings of the earth:**

It is clear from the teachings of all three religions that the earth is the source of God's blessings and all the resources in it are made for the benefit of mankind.

#### **Old Testament:**

It is mentioned in the Old Testament that the earth is the source of the blessings of Allah SWT and that all human beings get different kinds of rewards from it. Furthermore, it is the abode of humans and other animals. The book Deuteronomy States that:

“For the LORD your God is bringing you to a good land, a land of brooks, springs, and fountains flowing forth in valleys and hills,. A land of wheat, barley, vines, fig trees, and pomegranates, of olive trees and honey”<sup>20</sup>

#### **New Testament:**

The Gospel of John also mentions the earth and its blessings and it has also been made clear that the creator of all these blessings is God Almighty who has created them all for man.

“He declared in a loud voice: “Fear God and give him glory, because the hour of his judgment has arrived, and worship the one who made heaven and earth, the sea and the springs of water!”<sup>21</sup>

#### **Holy Qur'an:**

In the Holy Qur'an, it has been explained with more clarity and clarity that the earth and all the blessings in it have been created by Allah SWT for man and it is Allah SWT who subdues all these blessings to man. So Allah SWT says:

" Allah SWT is the One who created the heavens and the earth and sent down water from the sky, then brought forth with it sustenance for you from the produce, and subjugated for you the ships, so that they may sail in the sea with His command, and subjugated for you the rivers;"<sup>22</sup>

#### **Mentioning of water in the teachings of divine religions:**

Water is an important and essential component of our environment. All living things on earth live on water. Therefore, its great importance has been described in the teachings of all divine religions. Water has been mentioned profusely in the Torah, the Bible and the Qur'an karim. The teachings of all divine religions regarding water and its importance are as follows:

#### **Water is the source of life:**

It is an established fact that the life of all living beings depends on water and it is impossible for them to survive without water. Allah SWT has given life to all living things from water. This is what the Old Testament and the Holy Qur'an have taught.

#### **Old Testament:**

Just as the Holy Qur'an teaches that Allah SWT has given life to every living being through water. Similarly, in the Torah, water is life and without it living things cannot survive. It is in the Torah that: “But the people were very thirsty there for water, and they murmured against Moses and said, “Why in the world did you bring us up out of Egypt – to kill us and our children and our cattle with thirst?”<sup>23</sup> This text clearly states that without water living beings die and cannot survive.

### **Holy Qur'an:**

This is also the teaching of the Holy Quran that Allah SWT has given life to everything through water. Allah SWT says in the Holy Quran:

" Did the disbelievers not observe that the heavens and the earth were closed, then We opened them? And We created from water every living thing. Would they still not believe?" 24

In this verse, it is clearly stated that everything was created by Allah SWT from water and the life of every living being is also dependent on water. At another place, Allah SWT has further explained it as follows:

"Allah has created every moving creature from water. So, some of them move on their bellies; and some of them move on two legs, and some of them move on four. Allah creates what He wills. Surely, Allah is powerful over everything." 25

### **Water as the source of land settlement :**

In the teachings of the divine religions, water is also mentioned in the way that water is the means of sustaining the population of the earth and it is an important component of the life system and it has the most important place among the resources of the world. The summary of the teachings of the three divine religions in this regard is as follows.

### **Old Testament:**

According to the teachings of the Bible in the Book of Genesis, Allah SWT created the earth, sky, day and night on the first day and created water in it on the next day to maintain its order and keep it inhabited. And then by mixing the same water and soil of the earth, he created man from it. It seems that water has a big influence in the settlement of the earth and human creation. In the Old Testament it is stated that:

"Springs would well up from the earth and water the whole surface of the ground. The LORD God formed the man from the soil of the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and the man became a living being." 26

### **New Testament:**

In the New Testament (Gospel) water is also mentioned as a blessing and it is taught that God sends down water from the sky and through it produces crops, grains, fruits, and many other things on the earth. which settle the land. In the book of the Bible "Acts of the Apostles" it is said:

"Yet he did not leave himself without a witness by doing good, by giving you rain from heaven and fruitful seasons, satisfying you with food and your hearts with joy." 27

### **Holy Qur'an:**

It is also in the Holy Quran that one of the signs of the earth's population is the greenness and greenery on it, and it is a special favor of Allah SWT to His creatures that He sends down water from the sky and makes the earth green for them. Allah SWT says:

"Did you not see that Allah has sent down water from the sky, whereby the land becomes green? Surely, Allah is All-Kind, All-Aware" 28

In another place Allah SWT says:

"Allah sent down water from the heavens and revived the land with it after it was dead. Surely, in that there is a sign for a people who listen." <sup>29</sup>

### **Water is a means of purification and Cleanliness:**

The divine religions have also mentioned water as a means of attaining purification and cleanliness. In this regard too, there is uniformity in the teachings of these religions to some extent.

### **Old Testament:**

The teaching of the Torah is that water is a means of cleansing and purification, as it says:

"He said, "My lord, if I have found favor in your sight, do not pass by and leave your servant. Let a little water be brought so that you may all wash your feet and rest under the tree."<sup>30</sup>

Another point is that:

"You are to present Aaron and his sons at the entrance of the tent of meeting. You are to wash them with water" <sup>31</sup>

### **Holy Qur'an:**

The Holy Quran has also made it clear in a very clear and comprehensive way that water is necessary to fulfill other needs just like that. In the same way, that purity and purity is also achieved through it, which is an important part of Islam and a mandatory order. So Allah SWT says:

"O you who believe, when you rise for Salah, (prayer) wash your faces and your hands up to the elbows, and make "Masah" (wiping by hands) of your heads and (wash) your feet up to the ankles. If you are in a state of major impurity, cleanse yourselves well (by taking bath)."<sup>32</sup>

There is also a hadith on the authority of Umm al-Mu'minin Sayyidah Aisha (may Allah SWT be pleased with her) that:

"The Messenger of Allah, may God's prayers and PBUH, used to perform ablution with one cup of water and perform "ghusl" with one" saa" of water". <sup>33</sup>

In this hadith, along with declaring water as a means of purification, caution has also been taught in its use:

### **Mentioning the fresh and saltish water:**

There are also mentions of different types of water in the texts of the divine religions, especially sweet and salt water are mentioned in the Holy Bible and the Holy Qur'an.

### **New Testament:**

The New Testament (Gospel) mentions the types of water (fresh and salt water) and gives examples through it. In the Gospel it says:

"A spring does not pour out fresh water and bitter water from the same opening, does it? Can a fig tree produce olives, my brothers and sisters, or a vine produce figs? Neither can a salt water spring produce fresh water."<sup>34</sup>

In this text of the holy book, the two types of water, sweet and salt water, are clearly mentioned and difference between good and bad is taught through it.



### **Holy Qur'an:**

The Holy Qur'an has also mentioned two types of water. The Holy Quran has a clear statement about sea water:

"He is the One who joined the two seas, so as this is sweet, very sweet and this is bitter, very bitter, and made between them a buffer and an insurmountable barrier." <sup>35</sup>

According to the Holy Bible, there are two types of water in the world in terms of taste, but the difference between the Bible and the Qur'an is that the Bible has mentioned these types as an illustration, while the Qur'an has mentioned sweet and salty water. What is mentioned is not as an example, but in fact it exists in the world and the Holy Quran has mentioned its satisfaction and bitterness and has also pointed to its benefits and defects.

### **Mentioning the rewards of offering/ giving water to the thirsty:**

It is clear from the religious texts of the divine religions that water is the basic need of living beings and whoever gives water to someone and saves him from thirst, he gets the reward in return.

### **New Testament:**

It is the teachings of the Gospel of Matthew that giving water to someone is a reward, so in the Gospel of Matthew, Esa ( PBUH) is mentioned in this way:

"And whoever gives only a cup of cold water to one of these little ones in the name of a disciple, I tell you the truth, he will never lose his reward." <sup>36</sup>

Although the word "Shagird" appears in the Urdu translations of the Bible, the word "παιδιά" appears in the Greek versions of the Bible, which has the English pronunciation (Paidiá), which means "The elders of Jesus (PBUH)" This makes it clear that only the disciples of Jesus (PBUH) were not promised a reward for giving water, but for giving water to other people, even trees and plants.

### **Teachings of Islam:**

Watering is also an easy way to earn a reward. In the eyes of Islam, feeding water not only to humans but also to animals and birds is an ongoing charity and a reward. There is in a Hadith that:

"It was narrated from Saad bin Ubadah that the Messenger of Allah SWT, may God bless him and grant him peace, said to him: O Saad! Shall I not tell you a charity in which the hardship is less and the reward is greater? So Saad, may Allah SWT be pleased with him, said: Yes. Then the Messenger of Allah SWT, peace and blessings be upon him, said: Give water to the people!" <sup>37</sup>

In Islam, the promise of reward for watering is not only in a place where water is scarce or non-existent, but this promise of reward has also been made in a place where water is available. So the Messenger of Allah (Peace and blessings be upon Him) said:

"Whoever gives a sip of water to a Muslim in a place where water is available, it is as if he freed a slave, and whoever gives a sip of water to a Muslim in a place where there is no water, it is as if he gave him a new life". <sup>38</sup>

### **Divine Religions and Atmosphere:**

Fresh air and clean atmosphere is also an important element of the environment and a great blessing of Allah SWT. Regarding this blessing of Allah SWT, there are many mentions in the sources of divine

religions from which the need and importance of atmosphere and air is clear. Here is a summary of the teachings of the Semitic Religions regarding space and air:

### **Mention of cold winds:**

In the religious sources of revealed religions, there are mentions of moving winds, in which different types of winds, their characteristics and their importance have been described. Among these types of winds, cold winds have been mentioned as follows:

### **Old Testament:**

In the Torah, it is mentioned that Adam and Eve (peace be upon them) enjoyed the cool air of Paradise after their birth. So it is in the Torah that:

“So they sewed fig leaves together and made coverings for themselves. Then the man and his wife heard the sound of the LORD God moving about in the orchard at the breezy time of the day, <sup>39</sup>

### **Holy Qur’an:**

Various names and properties of winds are also mentioned in the Holy Quran. Among these winds, the names of the famous winds include “Mursalât”, “Dhâriyât”, “Âsifât”, “Nâsharât”, “Musirât” and “Sarsar” etc. Apart from this, the Holy Qur'an has also mentioned the cool winds blowing before the rain as a blessing. Allah SWT says:

"And We sent forth winds carrying the clouds, then sent down water from the sky and gave it to you to drink, and you are not able to store it." <sup>40</sup>

In another place, Allah SWT has mentioned the storage of these winds in this way:

"He is the One who sends the winds carrying good news before His blessings, until when they lift up the heavy clouds, We drive them to a dead land. Then, there We pour down water. Then, We bring forth with it all sorts of fruits. In similar way, We will bring forth all the dead. (All this is being explained to you), so that you may learn a lesson." <sup>41</sup>

Hadith also mentions the strong and cold wind blowing from the east in the morning. The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said :

"I was helped by Parva (naseem sahar or very gentle and pleasant) wind and the nation was killed by ad pachuwa (hot) wind". <sup>42</sup>

### **Wind is mentioned as a blessing:**

According to the teachings of divine religions, wind is the blessing of Allah SWT. Here are the teachings of Adayan Samaviya regarding the blessing of wind.

### **Old Testament:**

The Torah mentions many times after Noah's flood to moderate the earth and make it habitable for living beings.

“But God remembered Noah and all the wild animals and domestic animals that were with him in the ark. God caused a wind to blow over the earth and the waters receded.” <sup>43</sup>

### **Holy Qur’an:**

The elements in the atmosphere such as winds, clouds, thunder, lightning, the atmosphere of the earth, and meteorological factors have also been explained in the most interesting and excellent manner by the Holy Qur'an. Among these elements, air has been mentioned as a special blessing. It is stated in the Holy Qur'an:

"Allah is the One who sends the winds, so they stir up a cloud, then He spreads it in the sky however he wills, and makes it (split) into pieces. Then you see the rain coming out from its midst. So, once He makes it reach those whom He wills from His slaves, they start rejoicing,"<sup>44</sup>

In this verse of the Holy Qur'an, Allah SWT has mentioned the wind and the rain sent because of it in such a way that it is clear that it is a cause of happiness for man: therefore, these two are great blessings.

### **Atmosphere is the place where birds fly:**

The teachings of the divine religions have a common point about the atmosphere in that their sources describe the air and atmosphere as the abode of birds.

### **Old Testament:**

According to the Book of Genesis of the Old Testament, the sky is the abode of birds and their place of flight. As mentioned:

God said, "Let the water swarm with swarms of living creatures and let birds fly above the earth across the expanse of the sky."<sup>45</sup>

Similarly, at another place, the flying of birds in the air has been mentioned as follows:

"Every living creature of the earth and every bird of the sky will be terrified of you."<sup>46</sup>

### **Holy Qur'an:**

The Holy Quran has also repeatedly mentioned the atmosphere in different passages. Similarly, it has also been mentioned that the sky is the abode of birds and their place of flight. Allah says:

"Have they not looked to the birds above them spreading their, and (at times) they fold (them) in? No one holds them up except the Rahman (the All-Merciful Allah). Surely He is Watchful of everything."

<sup>47</sup>

Space is called "Al-jaw" in Arabic. The Holy Quran has indicated this direction by specifically naming the atmosphere.

"Did they not look at the birds how they are controlled in the atmosphere of the sky? No one holds them but Allah. Surely, in that there are signs for a people who believe."<sup>48</sup>

### **Mentioning the trees in divine religions:**

Trees and plants are the beauty of the earth and source of life. They play an important role in maintaining the earth's balance and keeping its temperature moderate. Oxygen is the basic need of humans and living things and their survival depends on oxygen. Trees and plants are very easy and cheap means of getting this basic need of living things. Trees along the banks of sewage streams and canals control water pollution to some extent. Apart from this, trees also play a role in reducing noise pollution. Trees and plants play an important role in absorbing carbon dioxide gas from the atmosphere and increasing the amount of oxygen gas in the atmosphere. In view of the importance of trees, it has been repeatedly mentioned in the religious literature of all religions. In this regard, the summary of the teachings of these religions is as follows:-

### **Old Testament:**

Trees, fruits and the benefits derived from them are mentioned in many places in the Torah. According to the teachings of the Torah, trees and plants are essential for all living things and through them the beauty of the earth is maintained. As in the Old Testament:

“God said, “Let the land produce vegetation: plants yielding seeds according to their kinds, and trees bearing fruit with seed in it according to their kinds.” It was so. The land produced vegetation – plants yielding seeds according to their kinds, and trees bearing fruit with seed in it according to their kinds. God saw that it was good.”<sup>49</sup>

### **New Testament (Gospel of Matthew):**

There are also references to trees in the New Testament. And in many places examples of trees and fruits have been given and it has been taught that trees are good so you should consider them good. In the Holy Scriptures:

“Make a tree good and its fruit will be good, or make a tree bad and its fruit will be bad, for a tree is known by its fruit.”<sup>50</sup>

### **Holy Qur’an:**

Allah SWT has established the beauty of the earth and its beauty through the greenness of trees and plants and the greenness of forests and fields. The beauty that has been given to the earth by plants, trees and different types of vegetation is mentioned in the Qur’an in abundance. For example, at one place Allah says:

"Or the One who created the heavens and the earth and sent down for you water from the sky? Then We caused to grow with it gardens, full of glamour. It was not within your ability to grow their trees. Is there any god along with Allah? No, but they are a people who equate (others with Allah)." <sup>51</sup>

### **Trees and plants are blessings:**

The teaching of divine religions regarding trees and plants is that: It is a great blessing of Allah SWT because through them living beings get sustenance and from them humans and animals also get other benefits.

### **Old Testament:**

Trees and plants are mentioned in the Torah as blessings and it is said that they are among the basic needs of living beings. So it is in the Torah:

“Then God said, “I now give you every seed-bearing plant on the face of the entire earth and every tree that has fruit with seed in it. They will be yours for food. And to all the animals of the earth, and to every bird of the air, and to all the creatures that move on the ground – everything that has the breath of life in it – I give every green plant for food.” It was so.”<sup>52</sup>

### **New Testament (Gospel of Matthew):**

It is indicated in the holy book that trees and plants are blessings and they are necessary for living beings, especially these trees are the habitat of birds, which are no less than a blessing for them. The text of the holy book is as follows:

“It is the smallest of all the seeds, but when it has grown it is the greatest garden plant and becomes a tree, so that the wild birds come and nest in its branches.”<sup>53</sup>

### **Holy Qur’an:**

The teachings of the Qur’an about the blessing of trees and plants are very clear and concise. In Sura al-Rahman of the Holy Qur’an, where other blessings of Allah SWT are mentioned, trees and plants are also specifically mentioned and it is declared as a blessing of Allah SWT. And man has been taught not to be ungrateful for this great blessing of Allah and not to deny it. Allah says:

"As for the earth, He has placed it for creatures, in which there are fruits and date palms having sheaths, and the grain having chaff, and fragrant flowers. So, (O mankind and Jinn,) Which of the bounties of your Lord will you deny?"<sup>54</sup>

### **Relationship between trees and human acts:**

The teachings of divine religions show that trees, plants and human actions are intimately connected. Especially in the teachings of Islam, trees, plants and the environment are connected with the belief and actions of man. Here is a summary of the teachings of the divine religions regarding the relationship between trees, plants and human actions.

### **Old Testament:**

It is mentioned in the Torah that, the benefits obtained from the land, trees and plants have a strong and deep connection with each other and when disobedience and sin become common in a nation, the punishment of Allah will befall that nation, the productivity of the land is affected there is a reduction in yield (crops and grains etc.) and trees stop bearing fruit.

“If, in spite of all these things, you do not obey me, I will discipline you seven times more on account of your sins. I will break your strong pride and make your sky like iron and your land like bronze. Your strength will be used up in vain, your land will not give its yield, and the trees of the land will not produce their fruit.”<sup>55</sup>

### **Teachings of Islam:**

In the Holy Quran, human actions are also clearly linked with trees, plants and the environment. Therefore, in the Holy Qur’an, the Almighty says:

"Calamities have appeared on land and sea because of what the hands of the people have earned, so that He (Allah) makes them taste some of what they did, in order that they may return (to the right way)."<sup>56</sup>

Prophet SAW has also attributed the environmental corruption to human misdeeds, that due to the bad deeds of man, the rains stop and various kinds of troubles, calamities, and diseases are revealed.<sup>57</sup>

Similarly, Ibn al Qayyim also pointed out in his book "Al-Jawb Al-Kafi":

"Among the signs of sin and disobedience is that it causes many kinds of corruption and damage in water, air, agriculture, fruits and living spaces".<sup>58</sup>

Islam has also associated trees and plants with human actions in such a way that when a person in this world glorifies Allah, Allah Almighty plants a tree for him in Paradise. A Hadith in this regard says:

"Whoever says "سُبْحَانَ اللَّهِ الْعَظِيمِ وَبِحَمْدِهِ" (Subhâna Allah al Azîm wa bihamdihî), a palm tree will be planted in Paradise for him".<sup>59</sup>

The holy prophet (SAW) has described trees and plants as continuous charity and has taught that its reward continues even after death. The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said:

"Any Muslim who plants a tree or sows seeds in a field, then whatever birds or humans or animals eat from it is a charity on his behalf." <sup>60</sup>

### **Examples through trees and plants:**

One of the purposes of telling examples is to make it easy for people to understand, and one of the advantages of examples is that people can learn from it. For this purpose, various examples have been described in the Holy Quran. Apart from the Holy Qur'an, examples have been mentioned in other divine books as well. Trees and plants are also used as examples.

### **New Testament (Gospel Of Matthew):**

Examples of trees and plants have been given at various places in the New Testament (Bible) which are intended to highlight the importance of trees and plants on the one hand, and on the other hand, the purpose of these examples is to make things simple. In the Gospel of Matthew, the example of trees and their fruit is given as an illustration of good and evil:

"In the same way, every good tree bears good fruit, but the bad tree bears bad fruit. A good tree is not able to bear bad fruit, nor a bad tree to bear good fruit. Every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire.<sup>61</sup>

### **Holy Qur'an:**

The Holy Qur'an has also given examples of those who do well and those who spend money in the name of God by mentioning plants. And whoever spends in the name of Allah is compared to sowing a seed in the ground and a plant grows out of it, and seven ears of corn are grow on, each ear has a hundred seeds. In the Holy Quran, Allah SWT says:

"The example of those who spend in the way of Allah is just like a grain that produced seven ears, each ear having a hundred grains, and Allah multiplies (the reward) for whom He wills. Allah is All-Embracing, All-Knowing." <sup>62</sup>

Allah SWT has described the example of a sacred tree to explain to humans in the brilliance of His light "Noor" in Surah Al-Nur:

"Allah is the Light of the heavens and the earth. The example of His light is that of a niche, in which there is a lamp; the lamp is in a glass – the glass looks like a brilliant star – it is lit by (the oil of) a blessed tree, the olive, which is neither eastern, nor western. Its oil is about to emit light even though the fire has not touched it – (it is) light upon light. Allah guides to His light whomsoever He wills; Allah describes examples for the people, and Allah knows everything well." <sup>63</sup>

### **Mentioning the animals in divine religions:**

Animals are also an important component and element of the environment. The role of animals in sustaining the ecosystem is very important and it is one of the natural resources that is closely related to other resources of nature. In view of such importance of animals, it has been repeatedly mentioned in the texts of celestial religions and it has been recommended to treat them with mercy.

### **The Old Testament and Mentioning the Animals:**

In various places in the Torah, the importance and usefulness of animals is highlighted and it is taught that rather than exterminating animals, it is necessary to increase and multiply them. The creation of animals is mentioned in the Old Testament in these words:

“God said, “Let the land produce living creatures according to their kinds: cattle, creeping things, and wild animals, each according to its kind.” It was so. God made the wild animals according to their kinds, the cattle according to their kinds, and all the creatures that creep along the ground according to their kinds. God saw that it was good.”<sup>64</sup>

### **New Testament and the Animals:**

Animals have been mentioned in different ways in many places in the Gospel of Mark. According to the teachings of the Holy Book, humans and animals have a very close relationship and both of them are necessary for each other. In the Holy Book, Prophet Esa (PBUH) is mentioned to live with animals for some time as follows:

“He was in the wilderness for forty days, enduring temptations from Satan. He was with wild animals, and angels were ministering to his needs.”<sup>65</sup>

### **Mentioning the animals in Islamic sources:**

In the Islamic sources (the Holy Qur’an, Hadiths and Islamic jurisprudence) the rulings related to animals were explained in a very comprehensive manner. Animals have been mentioned in more than one hundred and forty (140) blessed verses of the Holy Qur’an. There are six (6) Surahs of the Holy Quran which are named after animals. From which it can be inferred that animals have special importance in the eyes of Islam. This is the reason why Islam has made the responsibility of protecting animals obligatory on the individual, the society and the government. Islam has taught to treat animals with kindness and has made a promise punishment for those who hurt and harm animals. It is in the hadith that:

"A woman was tormented by a cat which she had tied until it starved to death. And that woman entered Hell for that reason." <sup>66</sup>

Therefore, Islam forbids hurting animals, fighting them with each other, beating them or putting more burden on them than their strength and has formulated detailed orders regarding animals.

### **Conclusion:**

As a result of this research, it becomes clear that the environment and natural resources have a special importance in the teachings of the revealed religions and in view of the same importance of the environment and natural resources, they have been repeatedly mentioned in the teachings of these religions. There is some degree of uniformity in the teachings of the divine religions regarding the importance and utility of environment and natural resources. As a result of this research, it has also been revealed from the teachings of divine religions, the environment and resources are great blessings of Allah Almighty and its preservation and protection is the responsibility of man. From the results of the research, it is also concluded that in the religious teachings of Judaism and Christianity, despite not being in the original state, there are still many teachings about the importance of the environment and natural resources. But as compared to these religions the teachings of Islam regarding the environment and natural resources are more clear, comprehensive and complete. Islam has not only confirmed the unadulterated commandments and teachings of the Torah and the Gospel, but has also highlighted the

solution to all human problems until the Day of Judgment. Therefore, by presenting comprehensive teachings, it has also fulfilled its responsibility as the last divine religion.

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