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The Baghdadi physician and philosopher, Sa'd ibn Mansur (Izz Al-dawla) Ibn Kammuna (d. 1284),[1] modeled a form of inter-religious scriptural inquiry that may have been even more radical than scriptural reasoning. But, like only a few like-minded spirits in this era, he did so against the weight of both Muslim and Jewish classical teaching. After setting the context for ibn Kammuna's work in 12th- to 14th-century Muslim-Jewish diatribes, this essay introduces his efforts to transform diatribe into dialogue by illustrating and analyzing the central principles of his dialogic method.

I

When we think of the religious and theological debates that took place during the Islamic Middle Ages, a stereotypical picture comes to mind of

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[1] Born into a Jewish family, writing like other Jewish philosophers in Arabic, ibn Kammuna appears to have converted to Islam in his mature years.

a Muslim thinker wrangling with the People of the Book—the Jews and Christians—in an attempt to prove the superiority of the Islamic faith over other belief systems. To be frank, this image is not totally devoid of truth, as the combative character of the titles of books on that subject shows. The nature of the debate was essentially inspired by a desire for victory and triumph over the opponent; consider, for example, the title of the debate with the Jews, *Badhl al-Majhud fi Ifhami 'l-Yahud* (*Striving to Silence the Jews through Argument*), by Samaw'il al Maghrabi (b. Baghdad 1130, d. Maragha 1180)[2] and *Al-Intisarat al Islamiyyah fi Kashfi Shibhi 'l Nasraniyyah* (*The Islamic Victories in Exposing Quasi-Christianity*) by Najm al-Din al Tawfi (1259-1316).[3]

In regard to the activity of 'scriptural reasoning', some Islamic texts insist that it is totally unacceptable to attach any weight to the scriptures of 'the People of the Book' on the grounds that they are either corrupted or liable to mislead and promote apostasy. The majority Muslim view is that Muslims have their own Holy Book and, therefore, have no need for anybody else's scriptures. This position is exemplified by Ibn Yafi'i's (d. 1367) comment on the story of Ibn Yunis/son of Jonas, as it appears in the teachings of Jewish and Christian scriptures:

> I said: This is how [the story] appears, and it is well known that this kind of thing is *haram* (prohibited) and false, for a number of reasons. Firstly, the [correct] ruling is that it is unacceptable to teach books that are false and have been abrogated. Secondly, it amounts to cultivating friendship and consorting with the enemies of Allah, despite the fact that it is obligatory to shun and abhor them. And thirdly, it tempts [Muslims] to follow what is contained within them, and our imams have stated clearly that this is damaging.[4]

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[2] Samau'al al-Maghribi and Ifham Al-Yahud, "Silencing the Jews," Proceedings of the American Academy for Jewish Research, Vol. 32, 1964.

[3] Najm al-Din Sulayman b. Abd al-Qawi al-Tufi, *Al-Intisarat al Islamiyyah fi Kashfi Shibhi al-Nasraniyyah*, ed. Ahmad al-Saqqa, (Cairo, 1985). See also Najm al-Din al-Taufi, *Muslim Exegesis of the Bible in Medieval Cairo*, trans. and ed. Lejla Demiri, (Leiden: Brill, 2013).

[4] Ibid.

Those who prohibit the perusal of non-Muslim scriptures justify their position on three grounds: (1) that the scriptures are corrupted, (2), that examining them amounts to cultivating friendship with non-believers, and (3) that examining them tempts one to unbelief. However, the tradition also offers grounds for another, more moderate image: that of the Muslim thinkers whose aim was not so much "silencing through argument" as it was "understanding" nor "getting one's point across," and whose purpose was the "encouragement of studies" rather than the "achievement of victories." They tried to take as objective a view as possible of different paths and belief systems, to the point that they actually explained and taught them to their own adherents. One prominent example was the Shafi'i scholar and jurist Kamal al-Din bin Yunis (1156-1242), of whom the historiographer Ibn Khallikan (d. 1211) wrote: "The People of the *Dhimmah* (the people under the protection of the Islamic state) used to read the Torah and the Gospels to him. And he would provide them with explanations of those books in such a way that they recognized that they could not find anyone else capable of giving them such a clear exposition."[5]

In his biography of Kamal al-Din bin Yunis, al Dhahabi (d.1348) wrote:

> Ibn Khallikan—who was one of his pupils—said, 'Our sheikh was more conversant than anyone else with jurisprudence, the roots of doctrine and faith, comparative jurisprudence, logic, natural sciences, theology, astronomy, Euclidian geometry, physiognomy, arithmetic, algebra, surveying and music. And he taught in Arabic linguistic literature Sibawiyh's *Kitab* (d. 796) and al Zamakhshari's *Mufassal* (d. 1143). He was also well versed in exegesis, *Hadith* and the biographies of eminent men. Our shaykh Ibn al Salah used to praise him and extol him.' Ibn Khallikan also said that he—may Allah forgive him—was accused of being untrue to his faith since he laid particular emphasis on the intellectual sciences.

Considering the age in which he lived, this sheikh was indeed a rare phenomenon, spending much of his time teaching the Torah and the

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[5] Shams al-Din Ahmad b. Muhammad Ibn Khallikan, *Wafayat al A'yan*, Part 5, ed. Ihsan Abbas, (Beirut: 1994), 313.

Gospels and attaching great importance to the intellectual sciences. That was why he was accused of being untrue to his faith, the fate of anyone who failed to embrace a triumphalist approach to inter-religious debate. Like al-Din bin Yunis, al Jassas (d. 980)—the "Sheikh of the Ascetics"— also "used to read the Qur'an, the Torah, the Gospels and the Psalms, and was able to expound them correctly."[6]

There were also theological discussion groups. If their attitudes to other faiths lacked objectivity, they did at least invite followers of other schools and sects to expound their beliefs and defend them. Baghdad in the 10th-11th centuries offered an ideal forum for people to discuss their beliefs in an objective manner. In his biography of Abu 'Umar Ahmad bin Muhammad bin Sa'adi, the author of *Jadhwat al-Muqtabis* (*Firebrand for the Seeker of Illumination*) reports the following:

> I heard Abu Abd Allah Muhammad bin al Faraj b. 'Abd Allah, al-Wali al Ansari, say: 'One day I heard Abu Muhammad bin 'Abd Allah bin Abi Zayd ask Abu 'Umar Ahmad bin Muhammad bin Sa'adi al Maliki when he arrived in Al Qayrawan from the Eastern Lands (Abu 'Umar had gone to Baghdad during the lifetime of Abu Bakr Muhammad bin 'Abd Allah bin Salih al Abhari): "Did you attend the gatherings of the theologians?" He replied: "Yes, I attended them twice. Then I left their gatherings and did not return to them." Abu Muhammad said to him: "Why?" He replied: "I found that the first gathering I attended had brought together all the groups —Muslims, both Sunnis and heretics, unbelievers including Magians, atheists, infidels, Jews, Christians and all other varieties of unbelievers. Each group had a leader who spoke and debated on behalf of his sect. And if the leader of any group entered, everybody stood up and remained standing until he had sat down, after which they would resume their seats. When the place was full and they saw that they were not waiting for anyone else to turn up, one of the unbelievers said: 'You are now gathered together for the debate, and the Muslims will not be arguing against us on the basis of their Book or the words of their Prophet, since we do not believe in it or endorse it. Rather, our debate will rely upon intellectual arguments and such as can be sustained by rational opinion and analogy.' They replied 'Yes. We grant you that.'"

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[6] Shamas al-Din Muhammad b. Uthman al-Dhahabi, eds. Siyar A'lam al-Nubala, Su'ayb al-Arnawut et. al., vol.13, (Beirut, 1986), 250.

Abu 'Umar said: "So when I heard that, I did not return to that gathering. Then it was suggested that I should attend another theological gathering, so I went to it and found it was the same as the [first one]. So I abandoned the theologians' gatherings and did not return to them."

'Then Abu Muhammad b. Abi Zayd said: "And did the Muslims accept this conduct and speech?" Abu 'Umar replied: "That is what I saw from them."

'Abu Muhammad was amazed when he heard this and said: "The scholars and Islam's inviolability and rights are no more. How can Muslims condone a debate between Muslims and unbelievers? It is not acceptable to do this even with heretics who are Muslims and affirm the truth of Islam. By Muhammad, peace be upon him, a person who embraces heresy and claims to be a Muslim should be called upon to return to the Sunnah wa 'l- Jama'ah (orthodox Islam). If he returns to it, he should be accepted, and if he refuses, his head should be struck off. As for the unbelievers, they should be invited to embrace Islam. If they accept, they should be left alone, while if they refuse but pay the jizyah (tax payable by non-Muslims) in an acceptable form, they should be left alone and accepted. However, that they should debate on the understanding that the argument should not be based on our book or our Prophet...that is unacceptable, for 'surely we belong to Allah and to Him shall we return.'[7]

II

Thus, we can see that there was not any universal injunction against debating or dialogue with non-believers. Muslims did on occasion engage with the scriptures of the 'People of the Book', tending to approach the Scriptures from either of two angles:

1. *By examining the scriptural texts and the exegetic and theological narratives of the Jews—known as Isra'iliyyat—and the Christians.* This examination served three different purposes: *By using the*

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[7] Muhammad b. Futuh Al Humaydi, *Jadhwat al Muqtabis fi 'Ulama'i'l Andalus* (*Firebrand for the Seeker of Illumination about the Scholars of al Andalus*), Part 1, ed. Ibrahim al Abyari, Darul Kutubi'l Islamiyyah/Darul Kitab al Misri/Darul Kitab al Lubnani, (Beirut: 1983), 175-176.

revealed scriptures as sources of knowledge. Orthodox (Sunni) tradition has sought to cover up Jewish and Christian narratives of Muslim thought. Nonetheless, several Muslim jurists, philosophers and Sufis insisted not only on reading those books, but also on teaching them to others. We have already mentioned the Shafi'i jurist Kamal al Din bin Yunis and al Jassas, the "Sheikh of the Ascetics." In addition to these, there are the distinguished linguist and scholar Ibn Baja al Irbili and the wise ascetic Ibn Hud. Al Dhahabi said the following of Ibn Baja al Irbili: "He had insight into Arabic and was intellectually brilliant. He taught the Muslims and People of the *Dhimmah* in his house, and he had a great and venerable presence.... Other sources say that people studied under him and he was visited by people from every religion – Muslims, heretics, Shi'ites, Jews, Christians...He was clever, a man of letters and a man of great merit."[8] It was said of Ibn Hud that even the Jews "studied the book *Dalalat al Ha'irin* under him—a book on the fundamentals of their faith [dogma and theology] – by Moses [that is, the Jewish doctor Moses Ben Maymoon]".[9]

A. *In order to understand passages from the Qur'an*. The books of exegesis are full of *Isra'iliyyat*, which are treated as "traditional authoritative sources" or evidence of the truth of the Qur'anic narratives, particularly the stories of the prophets. This is fundamental to the process of scriptural reasoning.

B. *In theological debate over the evidence proving the prophethood of the Prophet Muhammad in the Torah and the Gospels*. There are numerous books on this subject—most of them with titles such as "Evidence Proving the Prophethood", "Signs of the

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[8] Camilla Adang, *Muslim writers on Judaism and the Hebrew Bible: From Ibn Rabban to Ibn Hazm*, (Leiden: Brill, 1996).

[9] Abd al-Hay Ahmad b. Muhammad b. al-'Imad, *Shadharat al-Dhahab fi Akhbar min Dhahab,* ed. Abd al-Qadir al-Arnawut and Mahmmud al- Arnawut,* vol.7, (Beirut, 1986), 521-22.

Prophethood", or "Proof of the Prophethood"—and they are regarded as established tradition. They include works by Ibn Ribin and Ibn Qutayba, al Bayhaqi al Asbahani's "*Dala'il al Nubuwwah*"a(*"Evidence of the Prophethood"*), and other books proving [Muhammad's] prophethood by al Qurtubi and al Sarhandi. In evidence, these books cite verses from the Torah and the Gospels which Muslims believe contain overt or implicit references to their Messenger's mission.

C. *In theological debate against the Jews and Christians.* There are also large numbers of books in this field including al Tawfi's "*Al Intisarat...*", al Maghrabi's "*Ifham al Yahud*", and Ibn Hazm's (d.1604) "*Al Radd 'ala Ibn al Naghrilah al Yahudi*"l ("Reply to the Jew Ibn al Naghrila"), to name but a few.[10]

No writings have come down to us from those who "crossed the dogmatic barrier" that barred religious debate with the People of the Book and others. However, what has come down to us is Ibn Kammuna and his book on the three [Abrahamic] religions, which represents the "very cream" of the dialectic exchanges that emerged in the atmosphere of the Arab Islamic civilization of the Middle Ages. This book was not chosen at random.[11] In our view it represents the peak not of the kind of inter-religious debates that are inspired by a desire for victory and the "intoxication of winning", but of a religious philosophy based as far as possible on an objective investigation of the belief systems, the criticisms of them, and the replies to those criticisms. It could be re-read as a book on what some label "philosophy of the different paths" or "philosophy of religion" comparable to what is known today as "religious

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[10] Muhammad b. Shakir Al Katabi, *Fawat al Wafayat*, Vol. 1, ed. Ihsan Abbas, (Beirut: 1973), 346.

[11] Ibn Kammuna, *Examination of the Three Faiths,* trans. Moshe Perlmann (Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1971). See list of his writings in Reza Pourjavady and Sabine Schmidtke, *A Jewish Philosopher of Baghdad: Izz Al-dawla Ibn Kammuna (d. 683/1284) and His Writings*, (Leiden: Brill, 2006).

epistemology"—that is, a "value-neutral" examination of the logic driving the religious arguments of the different belief systems. Although Ibn Kammuna may overstep the bounds of that neutrality on occasion, he endeavored—or at least professed—to abide by it.

As a religious thinker, Ibn Kammuna did not approach all of the different religions from a completely neutral standpoint. He had a deep knowledge of the Muslim belief system and had recourse to it as a means of expounding the different paths followed by the other faiths. Clear evidence of this can be seen in the terms and definitions he uses. The trials and tribulations that he faced demonstrated his contemporaries' failures to understand the extent to which he was influenced by Arab Muslim culture. It could even be claimed that he was a Jewish-Islamic thinker. Just as the Jews regard him as one of their own, so too are the Muslims equally entitled to make such a claim—if not with regard to his actual belief, then at least in the way he expressed and described it.

III

As a venture into the realm of "philosophy of religion," Izz al-Dawla Sa'd b. Mansur Ibn Kammuna's book appeared before the concept of "philosophy of religion" had arrived on the scene at all. It stands alone, taking second place only to the groundbreaking German philosopher Immanuel Kant's work *Religion within the Limits of Reason Alone* (1793). Ibn Kammuna's aim was to expound the three Abrahamic faiths and, as far as possible, to respond to the criticisms and attacks that had been directed against them. In doing so, he may have shown a slight bias in favor of Judaism and against Islam—understandable if we consider the circumstances in which the book was written. As the historian and philosopher Ibn Khaldun (d. 1406) put it, as a member of the "subject community in Baghdad"—the Jewish minority—he did not want to imitate the "dominant community"—Baghdad's Muslim majority—but, rather, to criticize it.

What ibn Kammuna actually did was establish a sort of philosophy of religion on what might be described as the Anglo-Saxon model: describing the three Abrahamic faiths and weighing the evidence for and against

them in the light of such basic elements of religious belief as prophethood, the concept of God, and miracles. In so doing, he identified the rationality of religious argumentation, while at the same time drawing a clear distinction between what is true and false in religious reasoning. He also established an ethical framework for the philosophy of religion, whose central principles may be reformulated as follows:

1. *Value neutrality:* He examines the three faiths in as neutral a fashion as possible, evaluating the responses to them, the responses to the responses, and the responses to the successful responses. In this respect, he says, "I have said nothing about that [the beliefs of the different faiths as well as the attacks upon them] in a way that can be described as biased. Nor have I shown a tendency to prefer one religion to another."[12] In order to emphasize his neutrality, he generally refers to the different religions, including his own, in the impersonal, third-person plural "they."[13]

2. *Using the strongest of arguments both for and against each religious belief:* Ibn Kammuna does not seek to present any religion in a way that would cause it to appear weak or at a disadvantage. His aim is instead to cite the strongest arguments espoused by its followers. He also presents the strongest arguments of each religion's opponents in a highly cogent manner. Citing, for example, central objections to the Messiah's miracles, he comments: "The strongest point in their favor [that is, the defenders of the Messiah's miracles] is that they produce this response to these things [that is, doubts over the Messiah's miracles] in the way that I have done."[14] He then constructs arguments to support the assertion that the Messiah's miracles

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[12] Ibn Kammuna, *Tanqih al- Abhath li'l Milali 'l Thalath*, ed. Muhammad Karimi Zanjani Asl, Silsilat Intisharat, (Tehran: 1383/1983), 88. I am using this version, not the one that was translated.

[13] Ibid., 140.

[14] Ibid., 194.

actually took place—even though they were not the miracles of his Jewish prophet—to the point that he even criticizes some members of his own group, the Jews. In this way, ibn Kammuna sought to achieve what he called "attaining the goal of what has been said by both sides, the defenders and the critics,"[15] citing in full what he regarded as the "most emphatic"[16] things that had been said both for and against any particular creed. Thus, for example, he not only apologizes for a lack of convincing Christian arguments against the opponents of Christianity but also constructs his own robust defense of Christianity: "And I have not come across most of these responses in the Christians' theology, but I have given them on their behalf and in order to present a complete and accurate view of their belief system."[17]

3. *Commenting cogently on the "defensibility" or "indefensibility" and the "relevance" or "irrelevance" of the strongest arguments both for and against each religious belief and each argument made in its defense:* Ibn Kammuma would often, for example, comment that a particular instance of religious reasoning was "a matter of opinion, not a certainty." Describing *ijmaa'j* (consensus) as "reasoning in the realm of the speculative, not the definite," he cites those he describes as "investigators who pronounce on *usul al fiqh* "the roots of jurisprudence."[18] When citing a defense of a particular belief system, he comments, "I say: There are different opinions about this assertion."[19] After citing a number of arguments in support of the benefits of the Messenger's mission, he comments, "These are what are said to be the benefits of the mission. Some of them are matters of opinion, not certainties,"[20]

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[15] Ibid., 263.

[16] Ibid., 268.

[17] Ibid., 202.

[18] Ibid., 205.

[19] Ibid., 242.

[20] Ibid., 119.

thereby drawing a distinction—in the manner of the Arab Aristotelians— between arguments that are "certainties" (proven to a high degree of certainty) and arguments that are "speculative" (debatable, rhetorical, and "colored" by a lower degree of certainty).

4. *Critically examining all claims of forgery and deceit:* Ibn Kammuna overcame the seemingly insurmountable obstacle to inter-religious dialogue: the Muslims' accusation that the Jews and Christians had corrupted their holy books, and the Jews' and Christians' accusation that the Muslims are heretics. He critically examines all such claims: "A claim that a text is corrupted cannot be supported by reasoning."[21] This applies equally to accusations of forgery against the Torah, the Gospels and the Qur'an.

Ibn Kammuna's book offers a model for future studies in comparative Abrahamic religion: three religions studied, side-by-side, in three ways. The first way is historical, introducing the three religions in the order of their historical sequence alone: "...I have begun with the oldest—Judaism—and concluded with the most recent—Islam."[22] The second way is analytical: critically examining the basic belief systems in each of the three religions, including examinations of the evidence put forward by their rabbis, priests, and scholars. The third is evaluative: critically evaluating criticisms leveled at each of the religions and of the religions' responses to their critics.

Ibn Kammuna's book also offers a model for future philosophic studies of religion *qua* religion. He makes three elemental philosophic claims:

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[21] Ibid., 259.

[22] Ibid., 88.

1. *The need for religion*: Describing the need for religion as the need for a prophetic mission, he argues:

> In our view man differs from other living creatures insofar as his life will not be good, or complete, if he considers his situation and needs without participating with his fellow human beings, so that for example, one person conveys to another, one informs another, one sews for another and the other takes up the needle on his behalf. Participation cannot take place without interaction, and interaction requires rules of conduct and justice. These in turn require someone to lay down the rules of conduct and impose justice. That 'someone' must be a human being so that he can address his fellow human beings and compel them to practice them. If they were left to their [own individual] opinions they would fall into disputes."[23]

This means that mankind is in need of prophethood and prophets. The position may be summed up as follows:

A. There must be joint participation.
B. Participation requires interaction.
C. Interaction requires rules of conduct and justice.
D. Rules of conduct and justice require someone to lay down the rules of conduct (a legislator or lawgiver) and impose justice. That "someone" must be a single person, not a multiplicity of persons, since the latter situation would lead to disputes.
E. The legislator and imposer of justice must be a human being so that he can address his fellow human beings. This means that there is a need for prophecy and a prophet, and, accordingly, that there must be a religion for people to follow. However, it is also necessary to point out that "the purpose of the mission is to teach that which cannot be known through the intellect."[24]

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[23] Ibid., 110-111.

[24] Ibid., 122.

2. *The impossibility of comprehending religion through the intellect:*
Religion is something that exists beyond the bounds of the
intellect.[25] Its logic is not the logic of everyday life. Religion,
therefore, is linked to the Unknown, and this is just as true with
regard to religious belief as it is at the "legislative level." Belief
includes areas beyond the range of human knowledge, including
knowledge of those hidden things that humans have no means
of acquiring on their own: the "hidden wisdom of God."[26] He
states, "Matters concerning the Divinity may not be contradicted
or questioned, [since] they may amount to a wisdom which we
do not understand."[27] Similarly, the Shariah contains elements
whose benefits cannot be explained intellectually. Hence, God
ordained certain acts of worship for the Jews and forbade them
from other acts of worship, though "we do not know for what
benefit they were imposed." This claim is similar to the position
of the famous Muslim jurist al Shatibi (d.1388), who maintains
that "acts of worship in general have no intellectual
explanation," and so, accordingly, "the intellect may be unable
to see how some of those acts of worship can be beneficial.
[However, this does not mean that] they should be shunned or
rejected, since there may be specific elements in the Shariah
system that heal and purify hearts, yet cannot be comprehended
by the intellect."[28]

3. *Just as there is no way that the intellect can understand religion in all
its aspects, so too is there no way in which one can reason with
religious people about all their attitudes.* Religious people in general
have a tendency to "over-glorify" their religion, which "confirms
that a person's religion is a reflection of his nature, which seeks
to dominate those of opposing [views]."[29] This applies to all

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[25] Ibid., 122.

[26] Ibid.,151-153, 158.

[27] Ibid., 158.

[28] Ibid., 115.

[29] Ibid., 242.

followers of all religions without exception. People love to talk about the wonders of their religion and exaggerate them. "Wonders are talked about for numerous reasons,"[30] and "talking about the supernatural is an essential trait of human nature."[31]

IV

Textual process plays a major role in Ibn Kammuna's book, since he quotes the scriptures of the three religions as evidence. This is not only with the aim of reinforcing the position of a specific religion through its texts; for him, the "textual process" is an external operation—that is, he uses texts from scriptures (from both the Old and New Testaments) other than those of Islam. This process takes two forms:

1.   As a source of "counter-evidence":

While on the one hand Muslims cite verses from the Torah and the Gospels, as well as the *Isra'iliyyat*, to support their positions, ibn Kammuna resorts to a strategy of "counter-evidence," citing verses from the Qur'an in support of the idea that the Jews believe in the Last Day and have a picture of Heaven and Hell.

A.   *Illustration 1: Using the Qur'an as proof that the Jews believe in Heaven and Hell.*

The Muslims also recognize the prophethood of Moses and his miracles and the prophethood of the prophets before him and after him and their miracles. They agree that the Jews recognize the reward of Heaven and the punishment of the Fire. With regard to Heaven, just as the Glorious Qur'an maintains, they do indeed say: 'Nobody will enter Heaven except a Jew or a Christian' (2.111). That is to say, each of those two sects has ruled that no one will enter Heaven who is not a member of their own particular sect. And with regard to the Fire, it is as cited elsewhere in the Glorious Qur'an, in that they say: 'The Fire will not touch us, save for a limited number of days' (2.80). There is

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[30] Ibid., 141.

[31] Ibid., 229.

unanimity among the commentators that this is the position among the Jews.

B.   *Illustration 2: Scriptural reasoning in the effort to prove the prophetic mission of a specific person.*

Supernatural phenomena alone may be insufficient [grounds] for belief in his prophethood [the prophethood of a specific prophet], unless there are innumerable additional associated factors, because [supernatural phenomena] may be seen as magic or delusion, or as temptation from God, since He allows whom He will to go astray and guides whom He will. [32] Ibn Kammuna thus argues that mere supernatural phenomena are insufficient evidence as proof of a prophet's prophethood and must be supported by associated factors. Otherwise they may be a temptation from God. His argument is supported by Qur'anic verses like this:"If Allah willed, He could make you all one People: but He leaves to stray whom He pleases and He guides whom He pleases: but ye shall certainly be called to account for all your actions" (Surah *Al Nahl:* 93)

2.   At the level of individual concepts.

Ibn Kammuna uses Muslim terms in order to express Jewish and Christian religious concepts. These include *usul* and *furu'*,[33] *maqasid al shari'ah* (intentions of the Shariah), [34] *fiqh* (jurisprudence/doctrine),[35] *faqih* and *fuqaha*[36] and *shar'* (Shariah).[37] He also uses the terms *tawatur* (corroboration in narrations of source) and *khabar al-ahad* (narration from a single source), which play a crucial role in reasoning when arguments are exchanged between supporters and opponents of a creed.

3.   At the level of compound meanings.

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[32] Ibid., 24.

[33] Ibid., 141.

[34] Ibid., 156.

[35] Ibid., 183.

[36] Ibid., 166.

[37] Ibid., 183.

Ibn Kammuna uses strictly Muslim expressions to describe Jewish religious concepts. When discussing the beliefs contained in Mosaic Law, for example, he adopts the fundamentalist Muslim term "*ma 'lum mina 'l-din bi 'l-dhururah*" ("known from the religion by necessity") when he says: "And they believe [i.e. the Jews] that this *shariah* has not been abrogated or replaced by any other, on the basis of numerous scriptural texts in the Torah which indicate this, and the community's *tawatur* on the matter, and their assertion that it is 'known from the religion of Moses by necessity'."[38]

The practice of adopting these concepts as tools of his reasoning is exemplified par excellence in the terms he uses when defining the principles of Judaism and Islam:

C.   Illustration 3: Inter-textual principles of Judaism:

And God ordained for them, through the tongue of His faithful messenger Moses (may the blessings of God be upon him), the belief in His Oneness and the abandonment of the worship of idols, [He commanded] that they should not associate anything with God, and that they should refrain from assigning similarities, peers and equals [to Him]; that they should worship Him alone and love Him with all their hearts and souls and strength, that they should fear Him and seek His help and put their trust in Him; that they should believe He is the Knower Whose knowledge does not fail to encompass a single thing, the Omnipotent and the Creator of all things; that He is the Bringer of death and life, and that He causes illness and cures it; that no-one can deliver [another being] from His might, that He is the First and the Last and there is no other god apart from Him; that He enjoined upon them high moral behavior, prayer, fasting and the dispensing of charity, justice and equity, the faithful discharge of their promises and vows, respect for their parents and men of knowledge, obedience and respect for those in authority, and that they should desire those good things for others that they desire for themselves. He showed them how they should conduct themselves, and the policies they should adopt at home, in civil society and within their own souls, and

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[38] Ibid., 133-134.

he forbade them from vices, tyranny, killing, theft and coveting the property of others....[39]

D. Illustration 4: Inter-textual principles of Islam:

The Muslims are agreed that Muhammad...called upon the people to believe in God, His angels, His messengers and His books, and [to believe] that God is One, with no partner, peer, companion or son, that He is Eternal and Alive, the Knower of all things, the Omnipotent, the Hearer, the Seer, the One Who Speaks, that He sent Moses with the Torah and Jesus with the Gospel, that He sent [prophets] before Moses and after him, that he, Muhammad, was told by God that He ordained performance of the Prayer, payment of the zakat, fasting in Ramadan and the Hajj pilgrimage to the Holy House of God in Makkah. He also ordered [his followers] to be true to their promises, to honor their parents and to conduct themselves morally in other respects, and he prohibited the converses of those things. He also laid down the rules and policies of behavior within civil society and in the home...He also declared that God resurrects those who are in the graves and holds people to account on the Day of Rising for their beliefs and deeds, and that He rewards or punishes people to the extent that they deserve.[40]

Ibn Kammuna thus followed the same method when defining the principles of the Jewish and Islamic faiths, in terms of both form and content:

1. In terms of form. In his view there are four elements shared by the two faiths: basic creeds, basic legal codes, high moral standards, and civil and domestic policies.
2. *In terms of content*. If we consider the definition of Judaism as a faith, we find that it and Islam are the same. There is not a single one of the principles of Judaism listed here—whether creedal,

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[39] Ibid., 203-204.

[40] Ibid., 133-134.

legal, moral or political—that does not have its counterpart in Islam, to the extent that if we were to put them before any Muslim while concealing the name of the religion being defined, he would believe that it is a definition of Islam.

If scriptural reasoners were to follow ibn Kammuna's lead, then scriptural reasoning would display its character as much more than a transmissive textual process (as the contemporary logic of scriptural reasoning would appear to suggest). [41] It would appear, instead, as an interpenetrating intertextual process. And that is truly amazing.

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[41] By 'transmissive' I mean the process whereby teaching is reliant on the teacher imparting knowledge and the learner passively receiving information or knowledge.