

Science and Metaphysics in the Three Religions of the Book

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ABSTRACT

The three religions of the Book trace their origins back to the same Abrahamic experience, but only one, Christianity, developed a metaphysical framework consistent with that of modern science. Both Judaism and Islam during their formative years, and continuously up to modern times, considered Greek philosophy and science alien wisdom, jeopardizing their sacred scriptures. The different path followed by Christianity is due to the influence of Hellenistic thought during Christianity's early formative period. Both Judaism and Islam were spared the direct mediation of Greek culture and ideas because both Judaism and Islam developed geographically and linguistically isolated from the Greek influences during the reception of their scriptures.

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Metaphysics is the branch of philosophy that is concerned with basic issues of reality. It addresses questions such as: What is the nature of reality? Is there a God? What is man's place in the universe? A central branch of metaphysics is ontology, the investigation into what categories of things are in the world and what relations these things bear to one another. The metaphysician also attempts to clarify the notions by which people understand the world, including existence, objecthood, property What is taught in metaphysics, if it is derived from divine revelation, is religion; if it is derived from phenomena through the five external senses, it pertains to physics; if it is derived from knowledge of the internal actions of our mind through the sense of reflection, it is only philosophy about the human mind, and its ideas as internal phenomena likewise pertain. to physics. To dispute about the objects of ideas except insofar as they are phenomena is dreaming. Indeed, by the middle of the eighteenth century, only two

