

SACRED TEXTS OF THE WEST

1. JUDAISM - sacred scriptures divided into THE LAW, THE PROPHETS, and THE WRITINGS; this was the BIBLE that Jesus knew, and texts of it survive in DEAD SEA SCROLLS.

LAW - the TORAH, from verses of the Pentateuch: "Hear O Israel, the Lord our God is One God." LEVITICUS lays down Code of Holiness, daily living habits, ethics, and practise of religion.

PROPHETS - Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekial, Daniel, Hosea, Joel, Amos, Odahiah, Johan, Micah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Zeohaniah, Haggai, Zechariah, Malachi.

THE WRITINGS - history, poetry, theology; includes SAMUEL, KINGS, CHRONICLES, also Job, Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Song of Solomon.

Later, ORAL TEACHINGS - THE TALMUD, a collection of parable-like stories (cf zen Koan) that illustrate teachings of the Law and the Prophets.

2. CHRISTIANITY - sacred scriptures divided into GOSPELS (MATTHEW/MARK/LUKE the 3 synoptic gospels; JOHN the eyewitness) - ACTS OF THE APOSTLES - LETTERS OF PAUL/PETER/JAMES JOHN/JUDE - REVELATIONS.

TEACHINGS OF JESUS derive from TEACHINGS OF JOHN THE BAPTIST: 1) repent and be saved; 2) the kingdom of heaven is at hand. BEATITUDES: "Blessed are the poor in spirit for theirs is the kingdom of heaven; blessed are they that mourn for they shall be comforted; blessed are the meek for they shall inherit the earth..." Jesus summarizes the LAW and the PROPHETS in 2 great commandments, love God and love thy neighbor. Also quotes Micah 6:6-8, "It hath been told thee, O man, what is good and what the Lord doth require of thee, only to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God," JOHN 8:32, "And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free," Woman in adultery, JOHN chapter 8; raising of Lazarus, JOHN chapter 11. Sermon on Mount, MATTHEW chapters 5-6-7.

3. ST AUGUSTINE (354-431 A.D.) CONFESSIONS and THE CITY OF GOD ("there are no more than two kinds of society, two cities - the one for those who wish to live after the flesh and the other for those who wish to live after the spirit").

4. MARTIN LUTHER - 1520, TREATISE ON CHRISTIAN LIBERTY ("by no outward work or labor can the inward man be at all justified, made free and saved, and no works whatsoever have any relation to him ..., The just shall live by faith").

5. THE KORAN - Mohammed (570-632 A.D.) declares himself Prophet 611, seeks to restore monotheism of Adam, Noah, Abraham; his revelations are the KORAN. Asked to show miraculous powers he commands Mount Safa to come to him, when it does not he says it is great mercy of Allah as it would have killed many, so he goes to it. KORAN "to read" (Arabic) sacred to Muslims, enjoins prayer, fasting, alms, pilgrimage to Mecca.

