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An Approach to Jonathan Magonet and Desmond Tutu on Global Ethic for Humanity

SUMMARY. This article focuses on the ideas of Jonathan Magonet and Desmond Tutu in promoting religious ethics of social harmony, love, and the peaceful coexistence of humanity. The problem of religious intolerance across the world has resulted in the need to propose ethics that will support the rights to freedom and dignity of humankind. J. Magonet and D. Tutu's ideas seek to bring to the limelight religious ethics to promote respect for humanity through a Judeo-Christian path. While J. Magonet dwells on the foundations of Judaism in relation to the Torah and Talmud, D. Tutu emphasizes the influence of Christianity with respect to human rights in relation to a global ethic.

KEYWORDS: global ethic, human dignity and human rights, Christianity, Judaism, religious tolerance.

Introduction

J. Magonet's formulation is on the ethics of Judaism in the Torah and Talmudic texts. He reveals the essential ethics of love (the golden rule), peace, and equality of humans based on the image of God in the Torah for the equality of humanity.

D. Tutu portrays Christianity as an influence on the freedom and equality of humankind regardless of religion, gender, or race. D. Tutu believes Paul's idea of freedom in the Bible has influenced Christianity to promote religious tolerance, equality, justice, forgiveness, and peace in society.

Both J. Magonet and D. Tutu believe Hans Kung's desire for a global ethic can be expanded as they propose Judeo-Christian ethics in promoting religious freedom and human equality. Kung's global ethic opposes the politicization of religion but appeals to world peace and tolerance through interfaith dialogue.¹ This work on J. Magonet

¹ Hans Küng, *A Global Ethic for Global Politics and Economics* (Oxford University Press, 1998), 91–92.

and D. Tutu will draw ideas from the Torah, the Holy Bible, and other ideas on Judaism and Christianity with respect for the dignity of persons in society. The article is structured into various discussions with the first section on the ideas of J. Magonet while the other is on D. Tutu.

Jonathan Magonet on a Global Ethic in Judaism

A Reflection on the Torah and the Talmud

J. Magonet points to how Talmudic texts reveal the legitimacy of the Torah as an inexhaustible source of interpretation in promoting moral ethics in response to human dignity. Judaism as a revealed religion depends on the divine revelation of the Torah in preserving the moral traditions of the Jewish people as a way of life from one generation to another.²

“The Talmud, it is quite possible to assert that a particular point of view on a given subject is authentically Jewish. But it is also possible to prove that the opposite opinion is equally opposite <...> Once the word of God has been given, canonized, and thus fixed for all eternity, interpretation becomes essential”.³

The idea of the authenticity of the Jew can be considered from the point that Judaism shows support for the Jew as God’s unique human creation which differs from what other religions consider about the authenticity of the human being. Various religions often interpret the anthropological origin of humans differently, which opposes Jewish authenticity. The direction of the authenticity of Jews does not portray Jews as a superior race but as a Biblical metaphor of being covenanted people based on their Abrahamic roots. This Jewish interpretation focuses more on Jewish dignity which is visible in the Jewish socio-cultural life. The Torah and Talmud do not describe Gentiles as inferior to Jews, despite the revelation about humanity portraying the image and likeness of God. For J. Magonet, the interpretations of the rabbis of the Talmudic of the seventy faces of the Torah without being ignored have shown their relevance from one generation to another.⁴ This shows that the revelation in the Torah is not limited but is open to reinterpretation as society progresses in search of religious ethics that promote respect for humanity. The Jewish communities have continued to obey these ethics in their daily lives without ignoring that which was initially expressed even in the midst of new revelations. This has provided socio-religious direction for Jews across the world in order to live in peace and harmony.

² Jonathan Magonet, “Judaism and Global Ethic”, in *Yes to a Global Ethic*, ed. Hans Kung (SCM Press, Ltd, London, 1996), 89–96.

³ *Ibid.*, 89.

⁴ *Ibid.*, 89.

Ethics of Obedience to God's Commandment

For J. Magonet, the Ten Commandments and other commands in the Torah are considered viable sources that has been imbibed as part of the Jewish culture over the years in relation to the peace and harmony enjoyed by Jews. Despite the rise of pragmatism and interpretations of the Ten Commandments by scholars, the rabbis of the Talmud believe the authenticity of the Torah is reliable in interpreting the Ten Commandment as it portrays moral obligations toward God and the social life of Jews. "In early rabbinic debates about the importance of the Ten Commandments, great care was taken to limit their prominence because of the fear that they would be seen as some kind of essence of Judaism, whereas the Rabbis asserted that the Torah in its entirety was the word of God <...> It can be seen in the following Talmudic passage: Rabbi Simlai taught: Six hundred and thirteen commandments were given to Moses. Then King David reduced them to eleven in Psalm 15 <...> The Prophet Micah reduced them to two <...> The prophet Amos reduced them to one"⁵

The Ten Commandments over the years have been adopted as a moral law in the Jewish society giving Jews the idea of sets of unwritten codes that shaped their lives. Adherence to the Ten Commandments is considered synonymous with obeying the Torah. Before the Ten Commandments were various sets of ordinances in the Torah given by God to shape the lives of the people morally. The introduction of the Ten Commandment by Moses helped to put God's law in tablets to give the Jews a reference to God and responsibility toward others. The rabbis promoted adherence to the Ten Commandments in alignment with various instructions of the prophets. The Jews believed they mirrored God's qualities in helping others as required by God in obeying the Ten Commandments. Obedience to God is a guide for Jewish social relations because the second half of the Ten Commandments focuses on obligations towards the neighbour. This ethical reflection of obeying God's commandment helps us to commit to the instructions of the Torah in promoting faith, holiness, mercy, humility, righteousness, integrity, justice, etc. summed up in the Akiba, Ben Azai, and Makkot of the Talmud.⁶ For instance, the laws of Psalm 15 warn against backbiting and evil against the neighbour and encourage righteous living before as obedience to God. We also see the importance of justice by prophet Micah 6: 8 "O man, what is good and what does the Lord require of you but to do justice, and to love kindness and to walk humbly with God". The command for justice promotes fairness and love towards each other in the community and also ensured the poor were not oppressed in the community. We also see this being affirmed in Isaiah 56: 1: "keep justice and act with integrity" because Yahweh is against corrupt practices and the prophet Amos focused on the guiding principle of repentance as obeying God's command (Amos 5: 4).⁷ The Makkot

⁵ Ibid., 92.

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ Ibid.

23b–4a in the Talmudic text reveals the 613 commandments of the Torah are known as the Mitzvot consisting of 248 that must be obeyed and 365 negative commandments which must be avoided. The Makkot consist of a command from the books of Moses in the Torah namely Genesis, Exodus, Numbers, Leviticus, and Deuteronomy. The Makkot laws encouraged to show tolerance, respect, justice, rights to property and love towards others, jubilee and sabbath, religious obligations, etc. The Ten Commandments were also included in the Makkot for Jewish teachers to educate the people about God's order for humanity in a society has remained symbolic of Jewish universal ethics. The Ten Commandments in the Torah give us an understanding of the love of God as our Creator and the neighbour including sustained ethics of tolerance with non-Jews. The Rabbis did not exalt their revelation above the Torah but believed in the Talmudic text portrays good morals without deviating from God's command have been fused into Jews civilization. The concept of love "Golden Rule" is significant in obeying the Ten Commandments and the universal moral laws of the Talmud are a guiding principle that governs the Jewish socio-spiritual community.

The Golden Rule. The summation of the law of God is expressed in the Torah in two directions of love which involves the love of God and the neighbour as mentioned in the Ten Commandments. The other version of the golden rule of love is Akiba Hillel which is summarized in the Talmudic text (Avot d'Rabbi Natan XXVI 27a) affirmed love as the foundation of human relations in which Hillel showed patience, tolerance, and kindness toward others as attributes of love.⁸ This idea of care for others supports that of the Ten Commandments "you shall love your neighbour as yourself (Leviticus 19: 18) and is often quoted by people of other religions and cultures for peace in society. The Talmudic text of the Shabbat 31a also showed how Hillel cared for a Gentile who was rejected by Shammai.⁹ The teachings of the rabbis on love reveal how the Jewish tradition encourages care for each other as well as strangers. Obedience to Golden in Judaism is the summation of the Ten Commandments and is essential ethics in upholding tolerance and peace among Jews.

Universal moral laws of the Talmudic. The Talmudic rabbis were able to compile a list of laws that influenced the Jewish legal system over the years in order to create law and order in the society. The Sanhedrin 56a texts explained the Seven Noachide Laws as that which helps the Jews community to maintain a set of norms and values in order to ensure equality of rights amongst the people.

"The Seven Noachide Laws, universally binding moral obligation is given to Noah after the flood, and hence through the sons to all humanity. They include prohibitions

⁸ Ibid., 93.

⁹ Ibid.

on idolatry, blasphemy, bloodshed, sexual sins, theft, and eating a limb from a living animal as the positive command to establish a legal system".¹⁰

The Noachide laws reflect the Jewish tradition in the oral laws of Tosefta Avodah Zarah 8: 4 is used to explain the Mishnah, while the Sanhedrin 56a focused on the moral aspects of life. The Noachide laws teach Jews morals and wisdom for everyday life in the Jewish communities and have influenced the man-made legal system to focus on justice and respect for humanity. The seven Noachide laws were compiled from the Torah (Genesis 2: 16, Gen 9: 4–6) and the rabbis the Noachide laws existed before the Ten Commandments.¹¹ Other laws in the Noachide laws include the promotion of justice and preventing murder showing recognition of the right to life. J. Magonet believes these laws seek to promote ethics that are open to all faith communities provided all men obey the law, such people are considered righteous.¹² However, the definition of what is considered an act of sin could be a concern in monotheistic religions as the purpose and action sometimes interfere with morality. The rabbis regardless have shown that commitment to sets of norms in relation to the Torah has not only promoted the moral consciousness of God but deepened the acceptance of the dignity of all persons among Jews.

A Reflection on Global Ethic

J. Magonet supports the proclamation of a global ethic for religious tolerance calling which seeks interreligious dialogue to pursue love and tolerance across the world. The aim is to promote harmony in society in order to prevent socio-religious conflicts and socio-economic marginalization across the world. J. Magonet believes a global ethic does not seek to create a new religious other but religious harmony that allows us to express our faith universally.¹³ The quest for ethical obligation helps us prevent problems in society resulting from religious intolerance such as the tragedy of the World War II Jewish holocaust across Europe, the Bosnia war, and other religious-induced wars across the world.

"The quest for a global ethic is one where our particular world-view demands that religions dig into their myriad treasures to find those teachings that encourage mutual understanding, solidarity with and generosity of spirit toward each other <...> Religion seeks to address all aspects of human life and activity so as to redeem them in some way, to other them back to God who is the source".¹⁴

The project for global ethics must pursue uttermost respect for religious tolerance without denying people any opportunity to express their faith encouraging solidarity

¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹ "The 7 Noahide Laws: Universal Morality", *chabad.org*, accessed September 12, 2022, https://www.chabad.org/library/article_cdo/aid/62221/jewish/The-7-Noahide-Laws-Universal-Morality.htm.

¹² Magonet, "Judaism and Global Ethic".

¹³ Ibid., 93–94.

¹⁴ Ibid., 90.

and understanding among religions of the world. We must avoid the politicization of religion and ethnic sentiment because we live in a pluralistic and global world. It is also important in realizing that religion aims to bring people back to God and therefore encourage ethics and values that abolish intolerance such as religious bigotry, racial segregation, etc. The interpretations of revelations of religions such as Judaism must not create ambiguity but show openness to the common good of humanity. This also supports J. Magonet's desire for the ethics of Judaism in solidarity with other religions in pursuing global harmony for the sake of world peace.

Jewish Offer in Support for Global Ethic

J. Magonet believes Judaism as an Abrahamic religion offers itself to self-criticism due to its openness in its belief in tolerance towards others and continuous repentance to God as a good source for Global Ethics. "Religion seeks to address all aspects of human life and activity so as to redeem them in some way, to offer them back to God who is their source <...> Lionel Blue expressed it by arguing that religion seeks to make the world religious, yet all too often ends up by itself becoming worldly".¹⁵ The Jewish religious life instills the consciousness of God in the lives of people through the obligation to obey God as the creator of humankind. J. Magonet shows Judaism pushes our hearts from sinfulness and intolerance toward one another to God's peace and love towards each other. For instance, "teshuvah" involves returning back to God through the atonement of sins and restitution before God; forgiving wrongdoers, and ensuring that wrong actions are avoided thereafter.¹⁶ Judaism helps us to understand our dependency on God as people making it relevant for the adoption of a global ethic. This is based on the belief in human creation in the image and likeness of God and the pursuit of peace for humanity.

The Universalism of Humanity: Created in The Image of God. The creation of humankind in God's image and likeness has become a foundation for Jews to consider themselves as God's own people. This does not give Jews superiority over others but is metaphoric because Judeo-Christianity as a whole believes in human creation in the likeness and image of God which has shown universalism in human equality. The revelation of the image of God is considered very important to the Jewish tradition because it was revealed before the Ten Commandments which also showed the preservation of human life "Thou shall not kill". The text of Ben Azai in the Talmud describes the creation of humanity in the likeness of God in relation to the Torah. J. Magonet believes the Talmud is synonymous with the Torah on human dignity in relation to creation in God's likeness (Gen 5: 1) but the Torah did not attach it to a specific race or nationality (Gen 1: 26-27).

¹⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶ Ibid., 91.

“But Ben Azai taught a greater principle: This is the book of the generation of man. When God created man, He made him in the likeness of God (Genesis 5: 1; Makkot 23b–24a; Genesis Rabbah, Bereshit 24: 7; Sifra 89b) <...> The Leviticus verse finds our obligation to our fellow human beings in their likeness to ourselves <...> In contrast the Genesis quotation puts every human being into the category of a person made in the image of God, and therefore not only like us, but equally bearing the imprint of the Creator”.¹⁷

J. Magonet shows the idea of human creation in the likeness and image of God in Judaism brings about universal ethics for mutual respect and moral obligation as equal to each other. The rabbis of the Talmud expressed humankind as having the likeness of God as a display of His characteristics such as the love required for the Jews to live cordially with their neighbours. The Jews believe in God based on His unique creative abilities – Elohim: the creator of the natural world who watches over all His creation (Makkot 23b–24a) and also God’s blessings on His creation (Bereshit 24: 7). God’s desire for us to live in freedom in the declaration of Jubilee (Sifra 89b). The law on the sacredness of human life (Genesis 9: 6: Whose sheds another man’s blood, by man shall his blood be shed: for in the image of God made man) opposes murder which existed before Moses received the law of “thou shall not kill” in Ten Commandments to show that our lives matter to God. The ethical consideration of Judaism is reflected in the Judeo-Christian world in promoting the project of human dignity in regard to the equality and rights of all people. It expresses God’s glory in human life which is incomparable to other animals as described in the Psalms of David (Psalm 8: 3–4) whereby we have dominion on earth which does not permit us to oppress others but as His regents.

The universalism of Peace in Judaism: “For the Sake of Peace”. The idea of shalom is a recognized concept in Jewish culture that encourages the peace of all nations either Jews or Gentiles. The Talmudic rabbis emphasized this in other to avoid conflict among the Jewish people which was used for communal peace in the Mishnah (Gittin 5: 8). This was considered the idea of “in the interest of peace” was also observed in settling disputes on lost goods (Demai 4: 6), also allowing the poor to collect the leftovers of the harvest.¹⁸

“The Talmud then elaborates: One provides for the poor of the Gentiles as well as the poor of Israel and visits the sick of the Gentiles as well as the sick of Israel and buries the dead of the Gentiles as well as the dead of Israel – in the interest of peace (Gittin 61a)”.¹⁹

The God of peace – Jehovah Shalom Judges 6: 24 Yeh-hovav’ shaw-lome “God is Peace” is the foundation of peace in the Jewish culture and is rooted in the Torah

¹⁷ Ibid., 92.

¹⁸ Ibid., 94.

¹⁹ Ibid.

“Tanhuma Softim 18” which encourages the restoration of goods previously lost and caring for the needy in society. The prayer of peace was also sought for Jerusalem so that its inhabitants can be blessed (Psalm 22: 6). The declaration of Independence of Israel is a commitment to live in peace with all its neighbours regardless of religion or culture. The Demai 4: 6 encouraged peace amongst the dwellers of Jerusalem either Jews or Gentiles regardless of their socio-religious status. The part of peace was significant to King Solomon’s rule of Jerusalem in the Torah (Proverbs 3: 17) and Israel experienced peace from within and in other territories. The exiled Jews did not fail to key the tradition of peace as we noticed in Jeremiah’s plea for peace while in Babylon. J. Magonet believes Jeremiah’s pursuance of peace encouraged mutual respect for relationships in the community. “Presumably this idea can be traced back to Jeremiah’s letter to the exiles in Babylon, encouraging them to seek the interest of the city to which I have exiled you, for in their peace will be your peace (Jeremiah 19: 7) <...> Thus, the ethos of establishing norms for relationships with the other on the principle of in the interests of peace has enormous long-term value and importance”.²⁰

Jeremiah’s letter urges the captives to pray for the peace and prosperity of the territories of their exile. The exiled Jews were also to create peace in a foreign land, and there to honor the Lord which is a consideration of peace between nations. Peace became a cherished prosperity essential for the survival of both the rich and poor, the strong and weak, and towards people of different cultures or religions. The universalism of Judaism in the interest of peace aims to promote tolerance for consideration of all persons especially the vulnerable such as minority cultures, and faiths, the needy in the society, etc. J. Magonet shows Judaism brings to the attention the role of religion in promoting an ethic that promotes the dialogue of peace that seeks to address es solidarity and harmony in the community. This brings ethics of peace that involve dialogue with each other as members of society in other to ensure we accommodate each other culturally, emotionally, religiously, and in all areas that pertain to humanity in an increasingly global world.

A Global Ethic for Interreligious Dialogue of Peace Between Nations. This is essential Jewish ethics such as universalism of humanity rooted in the image of God, shalom “sake of peace” between Jews and Gentiles, and love for neighbour (Jere 29: 7) with the interest of peace both in the Torah and Talmud.²¹ Judaism promotes love for oneself and neighbour is a tradition in the Talmudic text that requires Jews to commit to caring for each other at all times.²² Love as ethics makes it easier for religious dialogue to pursue religious dialogue among people of various faiths. Kung’s support for the World Parliament of Religions seeks a commitment to global ethics in which interfaith

²⁰ Ibid., 95.

²¹ Ibid.

²² Ibid., 93–94.

ecumenism promotes love, justice, and peace in society.²³ Interreligious dialogue helps to prevent religion used as a manipulative tool leading to conflicts but as an ethic of peace and love. For instance, the Bosnian war (1992–1995) war between Serbs and Bosnians and the conflict between Protestants of Northern Ireland and Roman Catholics of the Republic of Ireland ended in 1998 reminded us to pursue religious intolerance for the sake of peace and universal brotherhood. The politicization of religion should be discouraged due to its impact on the marginalization of people across the world. This means the quest for interreligious dialogue has become more necessary than ever due to globalization. Jews, Christians, Muslims, or people of different religions should dialogue rather than war against each other due to beliefs or doctrinal differences. Despite being a Roman Catholic priest, Hans Kung with the World Parliament of Religions advocated for the Golden Rule and preservation of all forms of rights of people regardless of their religions. J. Magonet has shown in Judaism that Jeremiah's request for peace becomes a clarion call for religions across the world due to increasing new trends of social upheaval in today's world. This has shown public support for the project of a global ethic by the World Parliament of Religion 1993,²⁴ condemns all forms of religious, socio-cultural, and political intolerance such as xenophobia, religious hatred, fanaticism, economic and political segregation, etc.

D. Tutu's Focus on Christianity and Respect for Human Rights

D. Tutu believed our democratic values must recognize human dignity in relation to our openness to faith respect for equality of race, gender, and gender, and survival in life.²⁵ His idea believes the influence of Christianity helps us to relate with ourselves as a people created by God regardless of religion, gender, or race. D. Tutu's commitment was shown in his chairmanship of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission in South Africa (1994–1998).

The Dignity in Human Creation

D. Tutu believed in the Bible as a source of our humanity in God's image and likeness esteemed above all other creations on earth.

“The Bible makes some quite staggering assertions about human beings which came to be the foundations of the culture of basic human rights that have become so commonplace in our day and age <...> Genesis 1–3 asserts quite categorically that

²³ Ibid., 93.

²⁴ Parliament of The World Religions, *Towards A Global Ethic* (an Initial Declaration of the World Parliament of World's Religions), 1993.

²⁵ Desmond Tutu, “Religion and Human Rights”, in *Yes to a Global Ethic* (London: SCM Press, Ltd, 1996), 165–174.

human beings are the pinnacle, the climax, of the divine creative activity; if not climactic, then central or crucial to the creative activity”²⁶

Our understanding of our creation in God helps us to consider humanity from a universal concept of one people void of any form of sentiment that aims to make others inferior. This helps us to understand our worth as humans coupled with our unique physiological attributes such as a high level of intelligence and speech, posture and skin, and the ability to engage with the spiritual world. The creation of humankind in the Bible (Genesis 1: 26–28; 2: 3–4) by God was with a mandate of human beings to have dominion over all other living creatures embracing the earth as a common community. Unfortunately, intolerance amongst ourselves has shown disrespect and gross violations of human freedom across the world. The Biblical creation described humanity as a product of God’s image without specification of a particular gender, race, or religion. “As the image of God, we are God’s vicars preparing the way for his own dominion in the world”²⁷ The idea of dignity reminds us that our lives are precious and sacred regardless of our personalities. The life of each human is precious before God and the Bible wants us to be deliberate about our actions in order to avoid trampling on the dignity and rights of others. The different human traits such as intelligence, heights, habits, etc., this does not mean superiority over another but help us to complement each other in relation to survival on earth. Before God, we are created equal and He expects humanity to live on earth as His regents with consideration of other humans as co-owners of the earth. Our actions are expected to conform to God’s image and likeness without denying our social experience on earth.

D. Tutu believed the influence of the Ten Commandments (Exodus 20) showed our spiritual and social life helps us to understand respect for the rights of others in the community.

“We must therefore have a deep reverence for the sanctity of human life. That is why homicide is universally condemned. Thou shall not kill would be an undisputed part of a global ethic accepted by the adherents of all faiths and of none <...> the life of every human person is inviolable as a gift from God. And since this person is created in the image of God and is a God-carrier <...> but we should have a deep reverence for that person”²⁸

The Bible shows the sacredness of human life is as endowed by God as moral law, but a manmade law is however required to give legality to the preservation of human dignity. D. Tutu preached against Apartheid as segregation, but a repeal of the law paved way for integration making Apartheid unlawful in South Africa. The Ten Commandments showed preservation of our God-given human dignity as an inalienable right with specific respect for human life, and property in support of the creation of

²⁶ Ibid., 165.

²⁷ Wolfhart Pannenberg, *Systematic Theology*, Vol. II, translated by Geoffrey W. Bromiley (Michigan: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing, 1994), 203.

²⁸ Tutu, “Religion and Human Rights”, 170.

humanity (Genesis 1: 26–28). D. Tutu's idea shows the need for a universal approach to upholding dignity as a basic and essential part of our existence in society. D. Tutu believes a moral obligation is required in upholding human dignity as a universal campaign rather than individualism which promotes intolerance among us. For D. Tutu, human imperialism and segregation are in opposition to our God-given dignity which only succeeds in dehumanizing us.

“That this attribute is a universal phenomenon was not necessarily self-evident. Someone as smart as Aristotle taught that human personality was not universally possessed by human beings, because slaves in his view were not persons”.²⁹

D. Tutu's quest for respect for human dignity shows his belief in equality and freedom of humanity which unfortunately human events such as slavery had violated. His rejection of the Aristotelian approach to slavery as a natural process in society was born out of His faith in the Bible which makes us believe no human is created to be a slave or master over another. He believed in the message of perfect jubilee (Jeremiah 34: 8–10, Lev 25: 40) which declared freedom for all those held in slavery.³⁰ The universalism of freedom humanity for D. Tutu admires Paul on freedom for all in Christ in Galatians abolishing racial, cultural, and economic limitations that could impede our freedom.³¹ D. Tutu's idea shows we all have the same rights to life and nobody should be restricted in form of slavery, discrimination, or actions against our humanity. Slavery violates human dignity and promotes imperialism in the social structure which does not ensure the respect of human rights in society. D. Tutu likened this situation to the era of Apartheid in South Africa to slavery disregarding the dignity of black South Africans and elevating the Afrikaans as a special race.³² Unfortunately, the political direction of the Afrikaner nationalist party was supported by Churches such as the Dutch Reformed Church. D. Tutu showed that we must consider the sacredness of human life and must not misuse the Bible or religion to violate human rights.

D. Tutu's idea further expresses concern against a closed approach to human dignity under the disguise of religion as it creates socio-religious differences and intolerance in society. “The Babylonian creation narratives make human beings have a low destiny and purpose as those intended to be the scavengers of the gods. Not so the biblical worldview, which declares that human being created in the image of God is meant to be God's viceroy”.³³ The Babylonian myth of creation has failed in describing humanity of lesser worth as that of a slave which is not dignified and against Biblical values of human creation. D. Tutu believed similar to Christianity was also Buddhism in its consideration of human beings as gods on earth which is why he believes

²⁹ Ibid., 166.

³⁰ Ibid., 168–169.

³¹ Ibid., 169.

³² Ibid., 169; 173.

³³ Ibid., 171.

Buddhists greet each other with profound respect.³⁴ The Christian account of creation makes us understand apart from us being created in God's image and on earth to live with dominion over (Gen 1: 26–28) and not as slaves and also expresses the Psalmist's on humankind as gods (Psalm 86: 6). We must avoid restricting ourselves to a close system of approaching human dignity which the Christian experience has shown universalism in its approach to humanity. Religion must have an open approach to respect for human dignity regardless of our spiritual disposition as regards human creation. D. Tutu believes religious narratives across the world must reflect our conviction to love each other in openness to the recognition of human dignity. This is important to avoid being insensitive to how people of different religions perceive human dignity as an inherent endowment of God. For instance, the Bible (Gen 1: 28) shows how God esteemed us above other creations and animals and not imposing our will against humans but show respect for the common rights to survival and brotherhood.

“To have dominion is not an authoritarian and destructive manner, but to hold sway as God would hold sway <...> contributing to the harmony and unity which God's intention for the whole creation <...> all this makes human beings unique. It imbues each one of us with profound dignity and worth.”³⁵

The God-given dominion of humanity His creation implies we live in dignity without depriving others of the rights to freedom and common survival in society. This is much in line with the recognition of the dignity of humanity in pursuing a universalism for the respect of human rights. D. Tutu's consideration of this Biblical narrative of our dominion is a desire for a universal consideration of humanity regardless of our race, tribe or creed but created as a people by God. The Churches continued to in denouncing any act of dehumanization such as Apartheid in South Africa, the Jim Crow laws in America, and numerous cases of ethnoreligious crises such as the persecution of Rohingya in Myanmar.

D. Tutu: The Gospel in Support for Human Freedom and Liberty

D. Tutu believes the Bible promotes human freedom as part of our human expression with admonition on liberty by Paul in the New Testament. The idea of rights to freedom of humanity shows the removal of the wall of segregation relating to race, gender, religion, culture, or any other social considerations. D. Tutu dwells on Paul's quest for the freedom of humanity as an emulation of Christian ethics that shows tolerance and unity in society.

“St Paul exults as he speaks of what he calls the glorious liberty of the children of God and elsewhere declares that Christ has set us free for freedom.”³⁶

³⁴ Ibid., 167.

³⁵ Ibid.

³⁶ Ibid., 169.

The Gospel shows an expression of God's mandate for humanity to enjoy freedom without demarcation between Jews and Gentiles. The liberation of Israel from the slavery of Egypt in the Bible shows us God's desire to set a nation free from oppression.³⁷ The understanding of liberty gives us an obligation to uphold human freedom as an inalienable right without trampling on the rights of others. The respect for human freedom shows we recognize human freedom as our basic right to preservation of life, acquisition of property, and daily survival. To D. Tutu, our freedom as humans is dependent on our relationship with others as part of the same community of humanity. "We are created to exist in a delicate network of interdependence with fellow human beings and the rest of God's creation".³⁸ Individualism creates intolerance in society and hence creating a social relationship based on respect for dignity results in respect for equality of rights. Paul's letter to Galatia in the fifth chapter expresses the idea of the origin of freedom in Christ Jesus who gives us spiritual redemption as well as a social identity when he showed care for the poor and people regardless of their race, culture, or gender.

For D. Tutu, Christianity portrayed the idea of human freedom with the openness of the Bible on the creation of humankind as God's supreme creation with intrinsic personalities that revealed we were created in God's image and likeness.

"The biblical understanding of being human includes freedom from fear and insecurity, freedom from penury and want, freedom of association and movement because we would live ideally in the kind of society that is characterized by these attributes <...> all a declaration of the unique worth of persons that does not hinge on the economic, social or political status but simply on the fact that they are persons created in God's image".³⁹

D. Tutu's idea expresses our humanity in God's image in a manner that requires us to live in a society with equality in freedom of survival for the common good of humanity. For a society to respect human rights are a God-given endowment its constitution must reflect all elements that preserve our humanity. The influence of the western constitution has shown how the quest for religious freedom by persecuted Christians in Europe resulted in early America as a land of religious liberty. D. Tutu shows support for any political draft that fails to recognize the basic rights of the people and only exists to trample the rights of humanity against the principle of our creation in God's image. This was portrayed in the 1620 Mayflower Compact and the 1780 Massachusetts Constitution amongst other political documents that promoted inalienable rights.

The misuse of religion has promoted intolerance between Christians, Muslims, Hinduism, Buddhism, etc., and has also shown difficulty in religious harmony. Religion must therefore have a deliberate intention for the human rights of other humans so as to prevent intolerance and segregation towards others.

³⁷ Ibid.

³⁸ Ibid.

³⁹ Ibid., 170.

“Christians have waged wars against fellow Christians. Saint Paul was flabbergasted that Christians could bring charges against fellow Christians in a court of law <...> Christians have been grossly intolerant for one another, as when Christians persecuted fellow Christians for holding different views about religious dogma and practice”.⁴⁰

Paul’s message in the New Testament to the Corinth and Galatian Christians admonishes freedom for all as a gift of Christ to humanity. Christians must not abandon the project of freedom for the pursuit of religious intolerance in society. Differences in religious doctrines have resulted in conflicts among Christians across the world which we saw in the agony of World War II with groups of Christians aligning with Hitler while the Barman Christians rejected Nazism. Later in the twentieth century, the Ku Klux Klan (KKK) arose in brutal attacks and murders against Afro-Americans during the Jim Crow era and in Europe was the conflict between Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland. Other countries such as Sudan, Sierra Leone, the Central African Republic, and Congo also experienced religious conflicts arising from Christian and Muslim groups militia groups for decades. New forms of religious extremist groups such as Boko Haram, Al-Qaeda, Al-Shabaab, the Islamic State, etc. have shown the need for inter-religious dialogue for harmony and unity in society. D. Tutu’s advocacy for Christian ethics is in accordance with the Bible and oppresses any socio-political systems that hinder human rights. Some theologians have caused variations contrary to Paul’s advice on freedom which has pushed for a need to embrace the ethics of peace, tolerance, and love for one another. The call for a global ethic is channeled around human freedom and liberty that is void of the sentiment against humanity. D. Tutu’s quest for a global ethic upholds human rights with a belief that Christianity had shown support for peace and ecumenicism without imposing one religion over another. This would help to eliminate religious bigotry and manipulation of socio-political structures in using religion as a yardstick for inequality in society.

D. Tutu’s Global Ethic

A global ethic for D. Tutu entails promoting those ethics that promote religious tolerance and unity in relation to our shared value for freedom as citizens of the world. He believes the Parliament of World Religions (1993) needs to use its influence in clamoring for ethics that promotes the dignity of humanity regardless of our religious differences.⁴¹

“And yet the potential for great good in the impact and influence of religions remains, and was recognized by the Parliament of the World Religions <...> which produced a call for a global ethic”.⁴²

⁴⁰ Ibid., 172.

⁴¹ Hans Küng, *Declaration Toward a Global Ethic: Council for a Parliament of World’s Religions*, Chicago (München: Piper Verlag, 1993).

⁴² Tutu, “Religion and Human Rights”, 173.

D. Tutu's call for religious ecumenism in championing the campaign for world peace, love, and respect for human rights and is believed to have influenced peace and reconciliation in several multi-religious and ethnic societies in Africa and Asia. This means regardless of our religion we have to adopt an ethical obligation that promotes the brotherhood of humankind as God's esteemed creation.⁴³ The World Parliament of Religion has shown openness to interfaith harmony through its congresses on cooperation to promote peace, tolerance, and religious unity. Religious ecumenism and committees can also help to unify religious leaders who have an influence on the moral life of the society in restoring trust and influencing justice to have suffered human rights violations. For instance, D. Tutu and members of the South African Council of Churches (1968) campaigned against Apartheid publicly and condemned it for inflicting segregation of racial inequality on the black majority.⁴⁴ The principle of love, forgiveness, unity, and equality for all was adopted by the SACC in adopting various agreements in opposition to Apartheid such as the Evangelical Witness in South Africa against Apartheid 1986, the Belhar Confession against segregation 1986, and Kairos Document of intolerance against racism 1985. The condemnation against Apartheid was supported by forums across the world such as the World Council of Churches (1948) and the United Nations Human Rights Charter (1948).

D. Tutu believes Christianity as a religion has what it takes to lead a project of global ethic, but it must be open to synergizing with other faiths as regards religious tolerance and respect for human dignity.

"I can testify that our own struggle for justice, peace, and equity would have floundered badly had we not been inspired by our Christian faith and assured of the ultimate victory of goodness and truth, compassion and love, against their ghastly counterparts. We want to promote freedom of religion as an indispensable part of any genuinely free society".⁴⁵

D. Tutu's openness to religious freedom means religion should be accessible to human unity in a manner that harmonizes respect for human rights. His opposition to Apartheid did not just focus on the demolition of the political system of segregation but shows how Christian ethics of peace in numerous non-violence social actions, and public rejection of injustice prevailed over imperialism. This also showed the need for solidarity in the project of human rights among religions as leaders of other faiths such as Islam, Hindus, Eastern Orthodoxy, and civil rights groups joined the mainstream evangelical Churches in defeating apartheid. Tolerance towards the Jews is also being supported by the Vatican through its support

⁴³ Desmond Tutu, *God is not a Christian and Other Provocations* (San Francisco: Harper One, 2011).

⁴⁴ —, "The Divine Intention", *Presentation to Eloff Commission*, September 1, 1982, 153–189, <http://sacc.org.za/wp-content/uploads/2021/08/The-Divine-Intention.pdf>.

⁴⁵ Tutu, "Religion and Human Rights", 174.

religious dialogue with Judaism.⁴⁶ D. Tutu's Christian ethos was also commended in working with leaders such as the Dalai Lama, a Buddhist and spiritual leader of the Tibetans in promoting forgiveness, love, and tolerance of humanity in the global world.⁴⁷

Conclusions

J. Magonet and D. Tutu have been able to show similarity in their quest for a global ethic that recognizes the rights and dignity of humanity. While J. Magonet focuses on the influences of Judaism, D. Tutu points to Christianity. They both show a Judeo-Christian path that promotes a global ethic for the recognition of human equality and freedom. Their ideas portray essential attributes such as love, peace, unity, and tolerance in society regardless of religion or ethnicity. J. Magonet and D. Tutu considered the image and likeness of an image of God as necessary in understanding the universalism of human dignity. J. Magonet relies on the significance of the Talmud and its influence on the interpretation of the Torah in creating awareness of human dignity in Jewish society. D. Tutu points to the role of Christianity in the rejection of intolerance towards all people regardless of race or religion and supports the ecumenism of religious councils such as the Parliament of World Religions in relation to the coexistence of people of various religions in society. The ideas of J. Magonet and D. Tutu have shown that true a religion must show openness to the peaceful existence towards rights to life, property, faith, and human survival. Their idea is also a wake-up call for religious education in promoting equality of rights and freedom across societies especially those that have suffered socio-religious conflicts. A global ethic would also give moral support to sustaining existing peace agreements such as the Israeli-Palestine peace accord of 1978 (Camp David Accord), the Good Friday Peace Accord (1998), and the Dayton Peace deal between Orthodox Serbs, Muslim Bosnians, and Catholic Croatians after the war in 1995.

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⁴⁶ Dicastery for Christian Unity, "Joint Declaration of the Twenty Forth International Catholic-Jewish Liaison Committee Meeting", Rome, May 13–16, 2019, *christianunity.va*, <http://www.christianunity.va/content/unitacristiani/en/commissione-per-i-rapporti-religiosi-con-l-ebraismo/ilc---international-catholic-jewish-liaison-committee-/incontri/2019-rome-joint-declaration.html>.

⁴⁷ Ibid.; Desmond Tutu, *No Future without Forgiveness* (Random House South Africa (Pty) Limited, 1999), 235–237.

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DŽONATANO MAGONETO IR DESMONDO TUTU VISUOTINĖS ŽMONIJOS ETIKOS TRAKTUOTĖ

S a n t r a u k a

Šiame straipsnyje nagrinėjamos Jonathano Magoneto ir Desmondo Tutu religinės etikos idėjos, skatinančios socialinę darną, meilę ir taikų žmonijos sambūvį. Visame pasaulyje plintant religinei netolerancijai iškilio būtinybė plėtoti etiką, kuri palaikytų žmonijos teises į laisvę ir orumą. J. Magoneto ir D. Tutu idėjomis siekiama judaizmo ir krikščionybės pagrindų visuomenėje iškelti religinę etiką, kuri skatintų pagarbą žmonijai. J. Magonetas akcentuoja judaizmo pagrindus, remdamasis Tora ir Talmudu, o D. Tutu pabrėžia krikščionybės įtaką žmogaus teisėms, kurios yra susijusios su visuotine etika.

RAKTAŽODŽIAI: visuotinė etika, žmogaus orumas ir žmogaus teisės, krikščionybė, judaizmas, religinė tolerancija.

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