

Influence of Al-Samaw' al ibn Yahyā in development of comparison of religions

Abstract

Islam's admission of the real existence of other religions and its tolerance with its people has had a great impact on the origin of the science of comparative religions. This tolerance opened the field for scientific discussion about these religions in the light of a scientific approach that is far from intolerance in its entirety, this is recognized by some orientalists, such as Adam Metz.

In this field, there has been a distinct group of converts to Islam from the other religions, among them; Al-Samaw' al ibn Yahyā al-Maghribī (570 A.H.), who was one of the rabbis of the Jews, Then God guided him to Islam after a mental research for the truth.

He composed a book, in which responded to Jews in the following matters: abrogation, proving the prophecy of Jesus and Muhammad peace be upon them, and refuted their fabrications against the prophets, depending in his response on the reason and the Revelation.

The mental sciences studied by Al-Samaw'al, such as mathematics, engineering and medicine, and his knowledge of the book Kalila and Dimna, have had a great influence on the formation of his thought, his intellectual method and his dialectic style.

The Muslim scholars have benefited from this book in many of its subjects. They have quoted many proofs, wonderful analyzes and valuable opinions from it, Those who have benefited from it, such as: al-Qarafi (682 A.H.) , and Ibn al-Qayyim (751 A.H.).