

## Whose God?

Not too long ago, the three Abrahamic faith groups came together to discuss 'food' in our respective religious and cultural traditions. It proved an insightful and filling occasion due to the diverse gathering of cultures, ages and nationalities. How does one describe the complexity of British society today? One generation born in another country, the youngest born in this, others who can trace descendants back to King Richard III or Arthur, whilst yet others immigrated as young adults. All brought something to bare from their experiences: watching the animal be slaughtered in the rural community with meat only available every second or third day, how it was prepared to keep it safe through to only knowing what you buy in the supermarket and having to try and explain its origins to children who will never likely see a farm animal unless a special trip is made to the farm or zoo.

All being of the liberal tradition, there was a more relaxed approach to the religious aspect although pork was not on the menu for those not Christian, and in a mixed gathering, meats do not need to be kosher or halal. What was of greater concern was the origin and purity of the food (ie how organic) and the number of chemicals we're ingesting with who knows what consequence. How to overcome this in busy lifestyles is the challenge.

Of our time together though, the most moving part was the opening of the occasion. Usually when the faith groups get together we have a reading from each of our spiritual books followed by a short reflection. It was felt this occasion didn't warrant that approach, but we would open in prayer. The question became: who was to go first? (I couldn't help think of Spitting Image's [My God is bigger than your God](#).) The situation was made a little more complicated as this was the first time we had a Jewish friend with us, one who follows the faith culturally rather than spiritually and asking her to pray would be unkind. The suggestion was therefore made that we say our prayers together as we all have one in common: *The Lord's Prayer* for Christians, *The Fatihah* for Muslims and *The Kaddish* for Judaism. And we would say them in our respective languages. What a lovely cacophony of sound: people of faith invoking one God to be with us as we entered into discussion.

### *The Lord's Prayer*

Our Father who art in heaven  
Hallowed be Thy name  
Thy kingdom come  
Thy will be done  
On earth as it is in heaven  
Forgive us this day, our daily bread as  
we forgive others who trespass  
against us.  
And lead us not into temptation but  
deliver us from evil,  
For Thine is the kingdom, the power  
and the glory  
For ever

### *The Fatihah*

In the name of God, the Beneficent,  
the Merciful, Praise be to God, Lord of  
the Worlds, The Beneficent, the  
Merciful.  
Owner of the day of judgement, Thee  
alone we worship, Thee alone we ask  
for help.  
Show us the straight path: the path of  
those whom Thou hast favoured; not  
of those who earn Thine anger nor of  
those who go astray.

### *The Kaddish*

Glorified and sanctified be God's  
great name throughout the world  
which he has created according to his  
will. May he establish his kingdom in  
your lifetime and during your days,  
and within the life of the entire house  
of Israel, speedily and soon, and say,  
Amen.  
May his great name be blessed  
forever and to all eternity.  
Blessed and praised, glorified and  
exalted, extolled and honoured,  
adored and lauded be the name of  
the Holy One, blessed be he, beyond  
all the blessings and hymns, praises  
and consolations that are ever spoken  
in the world; and say, Amen.  
May the prayers and supplications of  
the whole house of Israel be accepted  
by their Father who is in heaven, and  
say, Amen.  
May there be abundant peace from  
heaven, and life, for us and for all  
Israel; and say, Amen. He who creates  
peace in his celestial heights, may he  
create peace for us and for all Israel;  
and say, Amen.

