

# *The God Of Islam*

## **Introduction**

It is quite obvious to the student of the Bible and Islam, that Allah is thought and meant to be the same as Jahweh Elohim, the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. Muhammad thought so, and the Qur'an makes this quite clear as well.

"And dispute ye not with the People of the Book, except with means better (than mere disputation), unless it be with those of them who inflict wrong (and injury); But say: **'We believe in the Revelation which has come down to us and in that which came down to you; our Allah and your Allah is One; and it is to Him we bow (in Islam).'**"

Surah 29:46

"Say ye: 'We believe in Allah, and the revelation given to us, and to Abraham, Ismail, Isaac, Jacob, and the Tribes, and that given to Moses and Jesus and that given to (all) prophets from their Lord; We make no difference between one and another of them; and we bow to Allah (in Islam).'

Surah 2:136

Read also Surahs 3:2-3; 4:136; 5:47, 71; 10:17, 94; 6:92; 4:47; 21:7 ! These texts are supposed to be believed and accepted by all Muslims.

## **The Knowledge of God was Kept Alive in Arabia since Hagar and Ishmael**

Muslims are made to believe that the Arabs' knowledge of God (Allah) was transmitted by word of mouth from the time of Hagar and Ishmael to Muhammad (2000 BC - 610 AD). It was suppressed for a time by idol worship prior to the coming of Muhammad, but was upheld by the Hanifs, people who believed in the God of Abraham.

## **The Qur'an is the Final Revelation and Abrogates all Former Ones**

According to contemporary Islam the Qur'an is now replacing all former revelations which were lost or corrupted. All 'former revelations', including the Bible, are thought to have been originally synonymous with the Qur'an, which is believed to exist eternally, uncreated in heaven. Only the Arabic Qur'an is viewed to be a true replica of this now.

## **The Word "god" has Many Meanings**

But even Christians might be tempted to assume that Allah is the same as Jahweh of the Bible. Let us try to compare. But before this, let us be aware of the word **God** as it is used for a great number of deities (gods). Buddha of the Far East, Vishnu, Krishna, Shiva, and thousands of others in India, not to mention the many deities in Africa, South America and Australia, are all called gods. Are they all the same? Of course not!

## Recognizing the True God

A person is recognized by his features. Our friends know us by our looks and our voice, and we recognize them the same way. We may say, we all have a head with two ears, a nose, a mouth and hair etc.. We all have a body with two arms and hands, two legs and feet, and inside us blood, veins, a heart, lungs, a stomach, intestines etc. etc. So we are all the same. Are we really? Can we distinguish one from another?

Of course we cannot recognize Jahweh or Allah by their looks. They cannot be seen. But we can recognize them by what they reveal of themselves. Both claim to be the Creator of the world. Both claim to be almighty, all-knowing, and present everywhere. Both have given mankind rules of behaviour, and both claim to be the Judge of the "Last Day". Both speak of themselves as being merciful and forgiving. Both mention in their revelations Adam and Noah, Abraham and Moses, David and Jesus, besides many others.

But we must not close our eyes to the differences. These are subtle but important indeed.

### **JAHWEH ELOHIM**

Jahweh (= Lord) revealed Himself as Elohim (= the plural form of God), implying the Trinity, i.e. God the Creator and Father, God the Son and Redeemer and God the Holy Spirit (Isa. 63:8-10).

Jahweh is holy. He expects us to be holy (Hebr. 12:14). Holiness and corruption do not agree and cannot exist alongside each other. Therefore Jahweh revealed His righteous standards to man.

These were conditional to our relationship with Him. Man - every man - fell short of this standard; voluntarily and involuntarily.

This caused a total separation between God and man. And man cannot do anything to change that! However, in His love and pity, God made right from the beginning a plan to reconcile man to Himself.

Being holy and righteous, He must condemn sin. Every sin! Condemnation is followed by execution. In His love and mercy, however, the holy Judge took man's sin on Himself and was executed in our place. He became the "Lamb of God", who carries away the sin of the world" (John 1:29). In this way Jahweh's holiness and righteousness was satisfied; sins was punished. And Jahweh's love and mercy was also satisfied: He saved us by placing our sin on Jesus, so that we can be reconciled to Him, have peace with Him and live with him forever. This is the main theme of the Bible!

On the cross the holiness and righteousness of God and His love came together.

**ALLAH**

Allah, on the other hand, although calling himself merciful and gracious and all-forgiving, differs dramatically. He is the absolute Singular, he has no partners! (Surahs 6:22-24, 136-137, 163). He has no son! (Surah 2:116; 6:100; 19:85; 23:91; 112:1-4). He forgives whom he pleases and punishes whom he pleases (Surah 5:20; see chapter on 'Predestination', p. 111ff). He is high above all else - remote from man, although the Qur'an also says: "We [i.e. Allah] are nearer to him [i.e. man] than his jugular vein" (Surah 50:16).

Muslims interpret this to show the closeness of Allah. In a sense this is true. But why speak of jugular vein and not of ones skin or hair or perhaps heart or friend? The context suggests that this closeness is rather a threat. A jugular vein is but to kill!

**Points to be considered:**

1. Allah was known and worshipped as a pagan deity long before Muhammad. He was a somewhat misunderstood or misrepresented form of the God of Abraham, and although given a biblical appearance by Muhammad, is different in character and essence.
2. The description of Jahweh Elohim (in the Bible) and Allah (in the Qur'an) are varying very much in all its finer details, although both are viewed to be the creator, almighty etc., and to judge mankind on the Last Day.
3. Muhammad - the only witness to the Qur'an and by that merit of Islam - does not qualify biblically as a prophet, particularly since his message differs fundamentally from our Scripture which was revealed to many prophets over a period of 1400 years. There is no other acceptable evidenced reason by which Muhammad could be classified as trustworthy, above the biblical writers whom he contradicts. (Read: "The Islamic-Christian Controversy").
4. There is no reasonable evidence of the divine origin of the Qur'an.
5. Arab Christians use the name Allah for the God of the Bible, this simply being the Arab word for god. In the Arabic Bibles the Word Elohim or Theos (= God) is always translated as Allah. This goes back to the time before Islam!

It follows that:

**If Muhammad was not a prophet of Jahweh Elohim, his book - the Qur'an - is not the word of God.**

But then we also need to conclude:

**If the revelation, nature and expression of Allah in the Qur'an does not coincide with those of the Bible, the Qur'anic Allah is not Jahweh Elohim, the God of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and Israel, the father of our Lord Jesus Christ.**

## Who was Hubal?

In Chapter 2 we had mentioned Hubal who was considered the god of the Ka'ba before the time of Muhammad. What does the name mean? It cannot be explained from the Arabic language (*ENCYCLOPEDIA OF ISLAM* by Gibb and Kramers). In his book "Specimen Historicae Arabum" the author (Pocock) suggests that the name might well have been derived from ha-Baal. The old Hebrew and Arabic written languages had no vowels, so this

would have been one of many common changes (e.g. one can read Mohamed, Muhamad, Muhammed, Mahomet etc.).

Interesting is the name **HuBAL** (in Arabic and Hebrew script the vowels were not noted). This shows a very suspicious connection to the Hebrew **HaBAAAL** (= the Baal). As we all know this was an idol mentioned in the Bible (Num. 25:3, Hosea 9:10, Deut. 4:3, Josh. 22:17 and **Ps. 106:28-29**). Where was Baal worshipped? In Moab! It was the "god of fertility". Amr ibn Luhaiy brought Hubal from Moab to Arabia.

The name 'Allah' (from 'al-illah' - the god or 'al-Liah' = the one worshipped) was well used in pre-Islamic times. It was rather a title than a name and, was used for a diversity of deities. As we shall see later, an image called Hubal was addressed as Allah. Muhammad's grandfather reportedly prayed to Hubal and addressed him as Allah. The deities al-Lat, al-Uzza and Manat were called "the daughters of Allah" (Surah 53:19). "Allah was viewed, already before Muhammad, as the Lord of the Ka'ba, while, if not surely, but very probably, this sanctuary was devoted to Hubal, whose image was placed inside" (*RESTE ARABISCHEN HEIDENTHUMS*, p. 221 by J. Wellhausen). "While the rituals performed are still addressed to the respective deities, Allah is seen as the creator, the father and with that the superior Lord. But he is viewed to be too general, neutral and impersonal a Lord" (ibid p. 219). "Allah became the Islamic substitute for any idol" (ibid p. 85).

*"It is presupposed by Muhammad and admitted by his opponents, that Allah is the Lord of the Ka'ba. Is perhaps the Allah of Mecca Hubal? In other words, was Hubal called Allah in Mecca as Jahweh was called Elohim in Israel?", asks J. Wellhausen (ibid p. 75). This becomes even more likely when we realize that the polytheists of Arabia recognized Allah as creator (Surahs 23:84-89; 29:61), and swore by him (Surah 6:109). So the name Allah must at first have been a title. "At first Allah was the title used within each individual tribe to address its tribal deity instead of its proper name. All said 'Allah', but each one had its own deity in mind. The expression 'the god' (al-ilah), which became the only usage, became the bridge to the concept of an identical god which all tribes had in common' (J. Wellhausen, p. 218)".*

But there is also a close resemblance to the Hebrew 'Elah' (O.T.), which is translated in the O.T. as God (89 times compared with El = 224 times, and Elohim = 3251 times).

We have reason to believe that parts of the Bible were translated into Arabic before or at the time of Muhammad. In this the name theos or Elohim (Greek or Hebrew terms for God) etc. was translated as Allah. Considering all the above it is quite logical to assume that from the pre-Islamic concept under the monotheistic influence of the Jews and Christians, the qur'anic Allah emerged, and that the many deities were replaced by the one.

But let us have another look at **Hubal**, as he is reported of by the 'Siratu'l Rasul' of ibn Ishaq ("The Life of the Prophet", the oldest biography of Muhammad. Ibn Ishaq was born 85 AH (after the Hedjra), which was 622 AD) and compiled this biography from many sources. This is now lost, but a revision of his book by ibn Hisham has been preserved:

Abdu'l-Muttalib's vow to sacrifice his son

It is alleged, and God only knows the truth, that when 'Abdu'l-Muttalib encountered the opposition of Quraysh when he was digging Zamzam, he vowed that if he should have ten sons to grow up and protect him, he would sacrifice one of them to God at the Ka'ba. Afterwards when he had ten sons who could protect him he gathered them together and told them about his vow and called on them to keep faith with God. They agreed to obey him and asked what they were to do. He said that each one of them must get an arrow, write his name on it, and bring it to him; this they did and he took them before Hubal in the middle of the Ka'ba. (The statue of) Hubal stood by a well there. It was that well in which gifts made to the Ka'ba were stored.

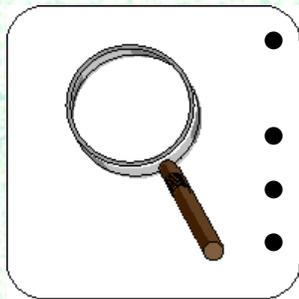
Now beside Hubal there were seven arrows, each of them containing some words. One was marked 'bloodwit'. When they disputed about who should pay the bloodwit they cast lots with the seven arrows and the one on whom the lot fell had to pay the money. Another was marked 'yes', and another 'no', and they acted accordingly on the matter on which the oracle had been invoked. Another was marked 'of you'; another mulsaq, another 'not of you'; and the last was marked 'water'. If they wanted to dig for water, they cast lots containing this arrow and wherever it came forth they set to work. If they wanted to circumcise a body, or make a marriage, or bury a body, or doubted someone's genealogy, they took him to Hubal with a hundred dirhams and a slaughter camel and gave them to the man who cast the lots; then they brought near the man with whom they were concerned, saying, 'O our god this is A the son of B with whom we intend to do so and so; so show the right course concerning him'. Then they would say to the man who cast the arrows 'Cast!' and if there came out 'of you' then he was a true member of their tribe; and if there came out 'not of you' then he was an ally; and if there came out mulsaq he had no blood relation to them and was not an ally. Where 'yes' came out in other matter, they acted accordingly; and if the answer was 'no', they deferred the matter for a year until they could bring it up again. They used to conduct their affairs according to the decision of the arrows.

'Abdu'l-Muttalib said to the man with the arrows, 'Cast the lots for my sons with these arrows', and he told him of the vow which he had made. Each man gave him the arrow on which his name was written. Now 'Abdullah was his father's youngest son, he and al-Zubayr and Abu Talib were born to Fatima d.'Amr b.'A'idh b.'Abd b.'Imran b. Makhzum b.Yaqaza b. Murra b. Ka'b b.Lu'ayy b.Ghalib b.Fihr (113). It is alleged that 'Abdullah was 'Abdu'l-Muttalib's favourite son, and his father thought that if the arrow missed him he would be spared. (He was the father of the apostle of God). When the man took the arrows to cast lots with them, **'Abdu'l-Muttalib stood by Hubal praying to Allah**. Then the man cast lots and 'Abdullah's arrow came out. His father led him by the hand and took a large knife; then he brought him up to Isaf and Na'ila (T. two idols of Quraysh at which they slaughtered their sacrifices) to sacrifice him; but Quraysh came out of their assemblies and asked what he was intending to do. When he said that he was going to sacrifice him,

they and his sons said 'By God! you shall never sacrifice him until you offer the greatest expiatory sacrifice for him. If you do a thing like this there will be no stopping men from coming to sacrifice their sons, and what will become of the people then?' Then said al-Mughira b. 'Abdullah b. 'Amr b. Makhzum b. Yaqaza, 'Abdullah's mother being from his tribe, 'By God, you shall never sacrifice him until you offer the greatest expiatory sacrifice for him. Though his ransom be all our property we will redeem him'. Quraysh and his sons said that he must not do it, but take him to the Hijaz for there there was a sorcerer who had a familiar spirit, and he must consult her. Then he would have liberty of action. If she told him to sacrifice him, he would be no worse off; and if she gave him a favourable response, he could accept it. So they went off as far as Medina and found that she was in Khaybar, so they allege. So they rode on until they got to her, and when 'Abdu'l-Muttalib acquainted her with the facts she told them to go away until her familiar spirit visited her and she could ask him. When they had left her 'Abdu'l-Muttalib prayed to Allah, and when they visited her the next day she said, 'Word has come to me. How much is the blood money among you?' they told her that it was ten camels, as indeed it was. He told them to go back to their country and take the young man and ten camels. Then cast lots for them and for him; if the lots falls against your man, add more camels, until you lord is satisfied. If the lots falls against the camels then sacrifice them in his stead, for your lord will be satisfied and your client escape death. So they returned to Mecca, and when they had agreed to carry out their instructions, 'Abdu'l-Muttalib was praying to Allah. Then they brought near 'Abdullah and ten camels while **'Abdu'l-Muttalib stood by Hubal praying to Allah**. Then they cast lots and the arrow fell against 'Abdullah. They added ten more camels and the lot fell against 'Abdullah, and so they went on adding ten at a time, until there were one hundred camels, when finally the lot fell against them. Quraysh and those who were present said, 'At last your lord is satisfied 'Abdu'l-Muttalib'. 'No, by God', he answered (so they say), 'not until I cast lots three times'. This they did and each time the arrow fell against the camels. They were duly slaughtered and left there and no man was kept back or hindered (from eating them)".

"Siratu'l Rasul" by Ibn Ishaq

### We note:



- Abdu'l-Muttalib was Muhammad's grandfather, and Abdullah his father (Abd-Allah = servant of Allah).
- One of Abdu'l-Muttalib's sons was to be sacrificed to 'god at the Ka'ba'.
- The god of the Ka'ba, as we already saw, was Hubal.
- For circumcision, marriage, burial etc. people went to Hubal, the 'Lord of this house'.
- Magic was used to determine Hubal's will (casting of arrows).
- The boy Abdullah was brought to an idol to be sacrificed to 'him' (i.e. Hubal-Allah).
- Abdu'l-Muttalib consulted a sorcerer who had a familiar spirit ('demon attending and

obeying a witch'; Oxford Dictionary).

- He gets an answer from the 'familiar spirit' through the witch.
- He is to cast lots before Hubal 'until your lord is satisfied'. This lord can only be Hubal-Allah.

### **What do we make out and what do we learn from that?**

We do not question that Muhammad was an ardent monotheist. He had all idols, including that of Hubal, destroyed. He allowed only Allah to 'survive' and equated him with "I am Who I am, the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob".

All this may well be perceived to be a trump card in the hands of Christians to 'prove' that Allah is an idol or a demon. Beware !!

Anyone using the information in these notes as ammunition to 'shoot' Muslims has certainly not as yet understood what Muslim evangelism is all about!

**No Muslim will perceive that he believes in an idol or a demon - and he doesn't! Allah to him is the very opposite of that. Little could be more offensive to a Muslim than the suggestion that Allah is an idol or demon.**

Yet what we must try to understand is that the original pre-Islamic concept of Allah was drastically changed by Muhammad.

However, we deal here with spiritualities. Although the Bible says that 'we know that an idol is nothing at all in the world' and that there is no God but one' (1. Cor. 8:4), the Word of God also says: 'Do I mean then that a sacrifice offered to an idol is anything? No, but the **sacrifices of pagans are offered to demons**, not to God' (1. Cor. 10:19-20). We also read that when people were pagans, 'somehow or other they were influenced and led astray to dumb idols' (1. Cor. 12:2) and that 'all the gods of the nations are idols' (Ps. 96:5). It also teaches us that when one does not know God, people are 'slaves to those who by nature are not gods' (Gal. 4:8).

**We may rightly conclude that idols are man-made and as such utterly impotent. But idols may be associated with demons, and demons are powerful indeed. Demons lie and deceive.**

If by that token we look at Hubal and his role, one may well suspect that anyone bowing down to him to submit to him, could come under his influence, even if the worshipper has a totally different perception in his mind. The Ka'ba was, and I believe, could still operate as the house of Hubal. And even if this is unknown to Muslims, they well may submit to his influence and by that become resistant and blinded to the Gospel.

**Important is not so much whom Muslims *think* they worship and submit to - but to whom they actually bow down!**

**(although they may not realize it)**

In the light of all this it is surely significant that we read of Muhammad in the Qur'an:

"For me, I have been commanded to serve the Lord of this city, Him Who has sanctified it and to whom (belong) all things ... ."

Surah 27:91:

### May we conclude:

- Hubal was the centre of worship in the Ka'ba in Mecca.
- He came from Moab where he was a contestant to Jahweh Elohim.
- He was 'the Lord of this city', Mecca, and also called Allah.
- While we must not conclude that Allah is Hubal, we may well consider spiritual implications when Muslims bow in worship towards the Ka'ba and submit to Allah.

## Who is the Allah of the Qur'an?

In fairness to both the Islamic and the Christian sides we would like to present here three assessments or presentations on the topic "Who is Allah?". First a theological investigation followed by statements of two of the foremost theologians of Islam, Al-Ghazzali and Al-Barqavi.

In the *DICTIONARY OF ISLAM* by T.P. Hughes we read:

*"Allah is supposed to be derived from ilah, a deity or god with the addition of the definite article al-lah, "the God" - or, according to some authorities, it is from lah, i.e. Al-lah, "the secret one". But Abu Hanifah says that just as the essence of God is unchangeable, so is His name, and that Allah has ever been the name of the Eternal Being.*

*Allah may be an Arabic rendering of the Hebrew El, and the unused root Ul, "to be strong", or from Eloah, the singular form of Elohim. Another word very frequently used for the Almighty in the Qur'an is Rabb, which is generally translated in English versions of the Qur'an as "Lord". It seems to stand in the relative position of the Jehovah of the Old Testament and the kyrios of the New Testament. The word is understood by Muslims to mean "the sustainer", but it is probably derived from the Hebrew rabbah, "a stronghold", or from its root rab, which, according to Gesenius, means "a multitude", or anything of size or importance.*

*A belief in the existence of God, His Unity, His Absolute Power, and in the other essential attributes of an Eternal and Almighty Being, is the most important part of the Muslim religion, and is supposed to be expressed in the two clauses of the well-known formula: **There is no deity but Allah.***

*The first clause, 'There is no deity' is known as the Nafi, or that which is rejected, and the second clause, 'but Allah', as the Isbat, or that which is established, the terms Nafi wa-Isbat being applied to the first two clauses of the Muslim's Kalimah, or creed.*

*The teaching of Muhammad in his Qur'an as to the nature of God, forms such*

*an important consideration in an exposition of Islam, that no apology is needed for full and lengthy quotations from that book on the subject.*

The following verses are arranged in chronological order according to Jalalu'd-din as-Suyuti's list:

Say: He is Allah, the One and Only. Allah, the Eternal, Absolute. He begetteth not, nor is He begotten. And there is none like unto Him."

Surah 112:1-4 [one of the earliest chapters of the Qur'an]

"They say, '(Allah) Most Gracious hath begotten a son!"

Indeed ye have put forth a thing most monstrous.

At it the skies are ready to burst, the earth to split asunder, and the mountains to fall down in utter ruin.

That they should invoke a son for (Allah) Most Gracious.

For it is not consonant with the majesty of (Allah) Most Gracious that he should beget a son.

Not one of the beings in the heavens and the earth but most come to (Allah) Most Gracious as a servant.

He does take an account of them (all) and hath numbered them (all) exactly.

And every one of them will come to Him singly on the Day of Judgement.

On those who believe and work deeds of righteousness, will (Allah) Most Gracious bestow love."

Surah 19:88-96 - Suratu'l Maryam

"And your Allah is One Allah. There is no god but He, Most Gracious, Most Merciful.

Behold! In the creation of the heavens and the earth; in the alternation of the night and the day; in the sailing of the ships through the ocean for the profit of mankind; in the rain which Allah sends down from the skies, and the life which He gives therewith to an earth that is dead; in the beasts of all kinds that he scatters through the earth; in the change of the winds, and the clouds which they trail like their slaves between the sky and the earth; (Here) indeed are signs for a people that are wise.

Yet there are men who take (for worship) others besides Allah as equal (with Allah). They love them as they should love Allah".

Surah 2:163-165 - Suratu'l-Baqarah

"Allah! There is no god but He - the Living. The Self-subsisting, Eternal. No slumber can seize Him nor sleep. His are all things in the heavens and on earth.

Who is there can intercede in his presence except as he permitteth? He knoweth what (appeareth to His creatures as) Before or After or Behind them. Nor shall they compass aught of his knowledge except as he willeth. His throne doth extend over the heavens and the earth, and he feeleth no fatigue in guarding and preserving them for he is the Most High, the Supreme (in glory)".

Surah 2:255

"Say: 'O Allah! Lord of Power (and Rule). Thou givest Power to whom Thou pleasest, and Thou strippest off Power from whom Thou pleasest. Thou enduest with honour whom thou pleasest, and Thou bringest low whom Thou pleasest; in Thy hand is all Good. Verily, over all things Thou hast power.

Thou causest the Night to gain on the Day, and Thou causest the Day to gain on the Night; Thou bringest the Living out of the Dead, and Thou bringest the Dead out of the Living; and Thou givest sustenance to whom Thou pleasest without measure."

Surah 3:26+27

Let us follow this up with the extracts written by two well-known and accepted Islamic theologians of old. For the sake of brevity we have selected the passages which are in contrast to biblical understanding.

**Al-Ghazzali** (1058-1111) in his book "al-Maqsadu'l-asna" describes the attributes of Allah, namely His power, His knowlewdge, His will, His word, His works:

"(His word)**He does speak, command, forbid, promise, and threaten** by an eternal, ancient word, subsisting in His essence. Neither is it like to the word of the creatures, nor doth it consist in a voice arising from the commotion of the air and the collision of bodies, nor letters which are separated by the joining together of the lips or the motion of the tongue. **The Qur'an, the Law, the Gospel, and the Psalter, are books sent down by Him to His apostles,** and the Qur'an, indeed, is read with tongues, written in books, and kept in hearts.

(His works). He, praised be His name, exists after such a manner that nothing besides Him hath any being but what is produced by His operation, and floweth from His justice after the best, most excellent, most perfect, and most just model. **He is, moreover, wise in His works, and just in His decrees. But His justice is not to be compared with the justice of men. For a man may be supposed to act unjustly by invading the possession of another; but no injustice can be conceived by God, inasmuch as there is nothing that belongs to any other besides Himself, so that wrong is not imputable to Him** as meddling with things not appertaining to Him. **All things, Himself only excepted, genii, men, the devil, angels, heaven, earth, animals, plants, substance, accident, intelligible, sensible, were all created originally by Him. He created them by His power out of mere privation,** and brought them into light, when as yet they were nothing at all, but He alone existing from eternity, neither was there any other with Him. Now **He created all**

**things in the beginning for the manifestation of His power, and His will, and the confirmation of His word, which was true from all eternity. Not that He stood in need of them, nor wanted them; but He manifestly declared His glory in creating and producing, and commanding, without being under any obligation, nor out of necessity.** Loving kindness, the showing of favour and grace, and beneficence, belong to Him; whereas it is in His power to pour forth upon men a variety of torments, and afflict them with various kinds of sorrows and diseases, which, if He were to do, His justice could not be arraigned, nor would he be chargeable with injustice.

Yet he rewards those that worship Him for their obedience on account of his promise and beneficence, not of their merit nor of necessity, since **there is nothing which He can be tied to perform; nor can any injustice be supposed in Him, nor can He be under any obligation to any person whatsoever. That His creatures however, should be bound to serve Him, ariseth from His having declared by the tongues of the prophets** that it was due to Him from them. The worship of Him is not simply the dictate of the understanding, but **He sent messengers to carry to men His commands, and promises, and threats**, whose veracity He proved by manifest miracles, whereby **men are obliged to give credit to them in those things that they relate**".

**Imam al-Barqavi** was a celebrated Qur'an commentator and Tradition collector (died 1132). He wrote in his "Haft sifat":

"Hayat, or Life. God Most High is alone to be adored. He has neither associate nor equal. He is free from the imperfections of humanity. He is neither begotten nor does He beget. He is invisible. He is without figure, colour or parts. His existence has neither beginning nor end. He is immutable. If He so wills, He can annihilate the world in a moment of time and, if it seems good to Him, recreate it in an instant. Nothing is difficult to Him, whether it be the creation of a fly or that of the seven heavens. He receives neither profit nor loss from whatever may happen. If all the Infidels became believers and all the irreligious pious, He would gain no advantage. On the other hand, if all Believers became infidels, He would suffer no loss.

He can do what he wills, and whatever He wills comes to pass. He is not obliged to act. Everything, good or evil, in this world exists by His will. He wills the faith of the believers and the piety of the religious. If He were to change His will there would be neither a true believer nor a pious man. He willeth also the unbelief of the unbeliever and the irreligion of the wicked and, without that will, there would neither be unbelief nor irreligion. All we do we do by His will; what He willeth not does not come to pass. If one should ask why God does not will that all men should believe, we answer: 'We have no right to enquire about what God wills and does. He is perfectly free to will and to do what he pleases'. In creating unbelievers, in willing that they should remain in that state; in making serpents, scorpions and pigs; in willing, in short,

all that is evil, God has wise ends in view which it is not necessary that we should know".

Extracts from "Dictionary of Islam", pp. 141ff

## Allah is One

The so-called "unity of Allah", 'Tawhid', is possibly the most fundamental issue in Islamic theology. A condensed concept of this is found in the "Shorter Encyclopedia of Islam":

*"Tawhid, means literally 'making one' or 'asserting oneness' (Lane, p. 2927). In consequence, it is applied theologically to the oneness (wahdaniya, tawahhud) of Allah in all its meanings. The word does not occur in the Kur'an ... But unity is far from being a simple idea; it may be internal or external; it may mean that there is no other god except Allah, who has no partner (sharik); it may mean that Allah is a Oneness in himself; it may mean that he is the only being with real or absolute existence (al-hakk), all other beings having merely a contingent existence;*

*it may even be developed into a pantheistic assertion that Allah is All. Again, knowledge of this **unity** may be reached by the methods of systematic theology ('ilm) or by religious experience (ma'rifa, mushahada); and the latter, again, may be pure contemplation or philosophical speculation".*

H. A. R. Gibb and J. H. Kramers, p. 586

Whatever unity in essence means, the chief purpose is obviously to exclude any other deity - and Jesus as He is portrayed in the Bible is one of them, according to Islam.

### ALLAH IS HIGHLY ELEVATED

He has no needs. Al-Ghazzali illustrates it:

"Love is to sense a need of the beloved and since Allah cannot be said to have a need or an experience of a need, it is therefore impossible that Allah should love". (Compare John 3:16 with this).

By this token Allah is also considered to be altogether other than man ('mukhalafa') and holy ('qudzi'). These concepts, though in a very different sense, may also be attributed to Jahweh.

### Allah is Most Gracious, Most Merciful

Every Surah (chapter) in the Qur'an (except Surah 9, which seemed to have been part of Surah 8 before), begins with the 'Bismillah': In the name of Allah, most gracious and most merciful.

Ibn-Hazm, another theologian, observes:

"While the Qur'an uses the name Allah, which means 'the most merciful of those who show mercy', this cannot mean that he is merciful in the way we understand the word, for Allah is evidently not merciful. He tortures his

children with all manner of sicknesses, warfare and sorrow. What then does the Qur'an mean? Simply that 'merciful' is one of Allah's names. A name that is not in any way descriptive of Allah or man to throw light on his nature. We must use it because the Qur'an uses it, but not pretend to understand what is meant by it".

"The word originally used in the Qur'an must have had a different meaning in that day, which we cannot really understand today. Nevertheless, we must continue to use the word, because we cannot change the words of the Qur'an".

The words '**mercy**' and '**grace**' have, no doubt, a meaning here different to the Bible. According to the Qur'an this means a host of things, from Paradise (Surah 3:107), the Knowledge of Allah (Surah 18:65), the Qur'an (Surah 7:204; 17:82; 10:57), the books of Moses (Surah 11:17), the Biblical Apostles (Surah 12:11), to livelihood in this world (Surah 43:32; 35:3), not to drown (Surah 36:43-44), ships sailing on the sea (Surah 30:46; 42:32), the cycle of seasons (Surah 30:48-50), hearing, sight, intelligence, affection, homes, garments and even armour (Surah 16:78-81), women for the men (Surah 30:22), marriage (Surah 25:54), purity of heart (Surah 14:21), comfort and ease (Surah 18:16), domestic animals (Surah 16:5-13; 42:29; 36:71-73), night and day (Surah 28:73; 25:47), rain, wind and clouds (Surah 25:48; 42:28; 2:164; 31:31). It is further, averted penalty (Surah 6:16), honour (Surah 19:50), guidance through darkness on land and sea (Surah 27:63) and is a result of regular prayer (salat) and charity (Surah 14:56). It is granted to those who do good (Surah 7:50), because of righteousness (Surah 21:75,86), and is ordained for all Christians (Surah 57:27). Allah's revelation is mercy, but admission to Allah's mercy is granted only to whom he wills (Surah 48:25). Mercy is a treasure (Surah 18:82) and prevents the sky from falling onto the earth (Surah 2:65). In Surah 55 we find a condensation of some of these.

Are we encouraged to make a similar study in the Bible? (There are varying words used in Hebrew and Greek, all indicating kindness, love, pity, to incline, to be beneficial, tender: Psalm 13:5+6; 21:7; 25:7; 44:26; 85:9-11; 86:5; 94:17-19; 98:2-3; 103:8-14; 145:8-9. Proverbs 16:6. Isaiah 54:7-10; 55:6-9. Lamentations 3:22. Ephesians 2:4-10. Titus 3:5. Jude 21; 1.Timothy 1:16.)

## **Nature and Essence of Jahweh and Allah**

**Jahweh revealed Himself as the One, but triune God.** "Part" of this triune God is the **Lord Jesus Christ**, also called the **Son of God** and there is the **Holy Spirit**. We state this without apology! This is how God revealed Himself in Scripture.

**Allah is 'tawhid', i.e. is one.**

**"They do blaspheme who say: 'Allah is Christ the son of Mary'. But said Christ: 'O Children of Israel! Worship Allah, my Lord and your Lord'. Whoever joins other gods with Allah, Allah will forbid him the garden, and the fire will be his abode. There will for the wrong-doers be no one to help.**

They blaspheme who say: Allah is one of three in a trinity; for there is no god except One Allah.

**Christ** the son of Mary was no more than an apostle; many were the apostles that passed away before him. His **mother** was a woman of truth, **they had both to eat their (daily) food.**"

Surah 5:72-75

The last verse is somewhat revealing Muhammad's perception of the **Trinity: God + Mother Mary + Christ, the son**. The response is also notable: "They (i.e. Mary and Christ) had both to eat their (daily) food". Since one cannot assume that God has any physical needs, it was clear to Muhammad, that the two could not have been divine.

"O people of the book! Commit no excesses in your religion: nor say of Allah aught but truth. **Christ Jesus the son of Mary was (no more than) an apostle of Allah**. And His Word, which he bestowed on Mary, and a spirit proceeding from Him: so believe in Allah and His apostles. **Say not "Trinity": desist**. It will be better for you: **For Allah is One Allah**. Glory be to Him; **(For exalted is He) above having a son**. To Him belong all things in the heavens and on earth. And enough is Allah as a Disposer of affairs."

Surah 4:171

**"It is not befitting to (the majesty of) Allah that He should beget a son**. Glory be to Him! When He determines a matter, He only says to it, 'Be', and it is."

Surah 19:35

"The Jews call 'Uzair a son of Allah, and **the Christians call Christ the Son of Allah**. That is a saying from their mouths; (In this) they but imitate what the Unbelievers of old used to say. **Allah's curse be on them: how they are deluded away from the Truth!**"

Surah 9:30

## JAHWEH'S LOVE

If asked which is the most prominent characteristic of God's nature, most Christians would reply without hesitance **love**. A few passages from the Word of God will demonstrate this convincingly:

*"The Lord appeared to us in the past saying: 'I have loved you with an everlasting love; I have drawn you with loving-kindness.'"*

Jer. 31:3

*"He said: 'Surely they are my people, sons who will not be false to me'; and so he became their saviour. In all their distress he too was distressed, and the angel of his presence saved them. **In his love and mercy he redeemed them; he lifted them up and carried them.**"*

Isa. 63:8+9

**"For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that**

*whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life. For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him."*

John 3:16+17

*"Jesus knew that the time had come for him to leave this world and go to the Father. Having loved his own who were in the world, he now showed them the full extent of his love."*

John 13:1

***"As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you. Now remain in my love. If you obey my commands, you will remain in my love, just as I have obeyed my Father's commands and remain in his love. I have told you this so that my joy may be complete. My command is this: **Love each other as I have loved you. Greater love has no-one than this, that one lay down his life for his friends.**"***

John 15:9-12

***"Because of his great love for us, God, who is rich in mercy, made us alive with Christ even when we were dead in transgressions - it is by grace you have been saved."***

Eph. 2:4+5

***"You see, at just the right time, when we were still powerless, Christ died for the ungodly. Very rarely will anyone die for a righteous man, though for a good man someone might possibly dare to die. But **God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners Christ died for us.**"***

Rom. 5:6-8

***"Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall trouble or hardship or persecution or famine or nakedness or danger or sword? As it is written: 'For your sake we face death all day long; we are considered as sheep to be slaughtered'. No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. For I am convinced that **neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.**"***

Rom. 8:35-39

***"The life I live in the body, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me."***

Gal. 2:20

***"How great is the love the Father has lavished on us, that we should be***

*called children of God!"*

1. John 3:1

**"God is love. This is how God showed his love among us: He sent his one and only Son into the world that we might live through him. This is love: not that we loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son as an atoning sacrifice for our sins."**

1. John 4:8-10,16

**"We love him because he first loved us."**

1. John 4:19

**"To him who loves us and has freed us from our sins by his blood, and has made us to be a kingdom and priests to serve his God and Father - to him be glory and power for ever and ever! Amen."**

Rev. 1:5+6

Is it not significant that the word 'love' or related words are mentioned more than 250 times alone in the New Testament (which is about 25% longer than the Qur'an), whereas only 23 times in the Qur'an?

## ALLAH'S LOVE

If we likewise would ask Muslims about the most prominent attribute or feature of Allah, we most likely will be told *Allahhu akbar* - Allah is greater! Allah is power! (Surah 3:26; 6:65; 6:102; 30:54; 54:55; 65:12 etc.). He is the sovereign that is above all and able to do as he pleases. He is totally unrestricted, as we already saw in the previous chapter.

It would be unjust, however, to say that the attribute 'love' of Allah does not appear in the Qur'an. A summary of **all** instances is showing the nature thereof. Let us first of all look at the negative:

### Allah does NOT love

- transgressors (Surah 2:190)
- mischief and those who do it (Surah 2:205; 28:77)
- ungrateful and wicked creatures (Surah 2:276)
- the treacherous (Surah 8:58)
- wasters (Surah 6:141; 7:31; 5:87 [those who live in excess, extravagant!])
- those who trespass beyond bounds (Surah 7:55)
- those who do wrong (Surah 3:140; 42:40)
- arrogant boasters (Surah 31:18; 57:23)
- those who exult [in riches] (Surah 28:76)
- those who reject faith (Surah 30:45)
- any traitors (Surah 22:38)

- those given to perfidy and crime [cheating] (Surah 4:107)

### Allah loves

- those who do good (Surah 2:195; 3:134; 5:93)
- those who turn to him constantly and keep themselves pure and clean (Surah 2:222; 9:108)
- those who believe and work deeds of righteousness (Surah 19:96)
- those who love him (Surah 3:31; 5:54)
- those who fight in his cause in battle (Surah 61:4)
- the just (Surah 49:9; 60:8; 5:42)
- the righteous (Surah 9:4,7)
- those who are kind (Surah 5:13)

This is the full list except for two passages:

- "He is oft-forgiving, full of loving-kindness" (Surah 85:14) and "My lord is indeed full of mercy and loving-kindness" (Surah 11:41).

The quoted texts describe towards whom Allah is full of loving-kindness:

The pure, kind, just and righteous believers, who do good, love Allah and (if need be) fight for him in battle, and who do no mischief or exult in riches or cheat, are not transgressors (of God's law) or trespassers, live not extravagantly in excess and waste, are not ungrateful or wicked, are not arrogant or vainglorious or boasters, neither traitors and do no wrong.

### Who would qualify?

So the love of Allah is conditional, quite unlike the love of Jahweh and our Lord Jesus Christ.

*"While we were still powerless, Christ died for the ungodly."*

*"While we were still sinners, Christ died for us!"*

Rom. 5:6+8

*"This is love: not that we loved God, but that He loved us. We love Him, because **He first loved us**"*

1. John 4:10,16

*"God's Son loves us and gave himself for us"*

Gal. 2:20

*"Nothing will separate believers from the love of God".*

Rom. 8:35-39

## JAHWEH'S POWER

It would be equally incorrect to say that the Bible does not mention the sovereignty and

power of God:

*"God is exalted in His power! Who is a teacher like Him?"*

Job 36:22

*He heals the broken-hearted and binds up their wounds. He determines the number of the stars and calls them each by name. Great is our Lord and mighty his power; his understanding has no limit.*

Ps. 147:3-5

*No-one is like you; O Lord, you are great, and your name is mighty in power. Who should not revere you, O King of the nations? This is your due. Among all the wise men of the nations and in all their kingdoms, there is no-one like you.*

Jer. 10:6+7

*"Tell them this: 'These gods, who did not make the heavens and the earth, will perish from the earth and from under the heavens'. But God made the earth by his power; he founded the world by his wisdom and stretched out the heavens by his understanding."*

Jer. 10:11+12

*"Come and see what God has done, how awesome his works in man's behalf! He turned the sea into dry land, they passed through the river on foot - come, let us rejoice in him. He rules for ever by his power, his eyes watch the nations - let not the rebellious rise up against him."*

Ps. 66:5-7

Jahweh shares His power to benefit us:

*"His divine power has given us everything we need for life and godliness through our knowledge of him who called us by his own glory and goodness. Through these he has given us his very great and precious promises, so that through them you may participate in the divine nature and escape the corruption in the world caused by evil desires."*

2. Pet. 1:3+4

*"God did not give us a spirit of timidity, but a spirit of power, of love and self-discipline."*

2. Tim. 1:7

**But there is neither arbitrary action nor change on the side of Jahweh. Neither He nor His Word will change. He has committed Himself to it - so we can fully trust it.**

*"I, the Lord, do not change!"*

Mal. 3:6

*"Every good and perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of the heavenly lights, who does not change like shifting shadows."*

James 1:17

*"Because God wanted to make the unchanging nature of his purpose very clear to the heirs of what was promised, he confirmed it with an oath. God did this so that, by two unchangeable things in which it is impossible for God to lie, we who have fled to take hold of the hope offered to us may be greatly encouraged. We have this hope as an anchor for the soul, firm and secure."*

Hebr. 6:17-19

In addition it must be said that **Jahweh is not the author of evil or sin, neither does He will it.** He temporarily tolerates it and uses sorrow or distress as means to call people to faith and to himself. Only those who die without having accepted the offer of God - which is forgiveness made available by the death of the Lord Jesus Christ on the cross - are lost and will be in hell. It was their own choice!

*"You are not a God who takes pleasure in evil. With you the wicked cannot dwell, the arrogant cannot stand in your presence. You hate all who do wrong. You destroy those who tell lies. Bloodthirst and deceitful men the Lord abhors."*

Ps. 5:4-6

## **ALLAH'S POWER**

The same cannot be said of Allah. He acts as he pleases:

**"Allah leads astray those whom He pleases, and guides whom He pleases. He is the Mighty, the Wise."**

Surah 14:4

**"Had Allah willed He could have made you (all) one nation, but He sendeth whom He will astray and guideth whom He will, and ye will indeed be asked of what ye used to do."**

Surah 16:93

**"If We [i.e. Allah] had so willed, we could certainly have brought every soul its true guidance; but the word from me will come true, 'I will fill hell with Jinns and men all together'."**

Surah 32:13

**"Of the men He hath created: He forgiveth whom He pleaseth and He punishes whom He pleaseth."**

Surah 5:20

Read also Surah 37:96; 76:29-30; 4:88; 16:36; 6:149; 7:158.

This is strongly supported by the Hadith. There is yet another grievous inconsistency: the **Law of Abrogation**. Let us recap this briefly:

"If it were our will we could take away that which we have sent thee by inspiration; then wouldst thou find none to plead thy affair in that matter as against us."

Surah 17:86

Indeed Allah did take away, though, we are informed, this was by way of 'improvement'.

"None of our revelations do we abrogate or cause to be forgotten but we substitute something better or similar. Knoweth thou not that Allah hath power over all things?"

Surah 2:106

"When we substitute one revelation for another - and Allah knows best - what He reveals (in stages), they say, 'Thou art but a forger'. But most of them understand not."

Surah 16:101

One can hardly blame the accusers for stating that Muhammad was a forger when considering the rather contrary statement:

"There is none that can alter the Words (or decrees) of Allah."

Surah 6:34

"No change can there be in the Words of Allah. This is indeed the supreme felicity."

Surah 10:64

The felicity ('intense happiness', Oxford Dictionary) evaporates and turns into despair in the light of all the above texts, which simply contradict the last two quotes.

## **The 99 Most Excellent Names of Allah**

"The most beautiful (or excellent) names belong to Allah, so call on Him by them."

Surah 7:180

According to a Hadith Muhammad said: "Verily there are 99 names of Allah, and whoever recites them shall enter into Paradise".

Based on this, many Muslims recite these names (often using a 'Tasbih', a kind of rosary with 100 beads, one, the bigger one, stands for the name Allah, and the others for the 99 names or attributes).

See Appendix for a list of these names.

## Evaluation



The contradicting doctrines of the Qur'an and the Bible on the essence, character and nature of Allah and Jahweh and the contradicting teachings of the two books on Jesus, the Messiah, cannot be made to match each other. In the final analysis we have to conclude, that although a lot of parallels exist, the centre piece of the Old and New Testament "Gospel" is missing in the Qur'an, which is God's way to redeem sinners by way of sacrifice. Without a sacrifice there is no forgiveness, no atonement and no reconciliation. Consequently, Allah denies the only

way back to Jahweh - the Lord Jesus Christ and His atoning death. It is therefore very difficult to assume that Allah and Jahweh are different names for the same God.

Thus we may conclude that Islam is an 'imitation religion', similar enough to the true one to make it *seem* trustworthy, yet keeping its members in acute fear of the consequences of turning away from it.

## Recommended Literature for Chapter 5

**Ishmael, my Brother**, compiled by Anne Cooper, MARC, Evangelical Missionary Alliance, 1993, pp. 59-76.

**The Moslem Doctrine of God**, Samuel Zwemer, American Tract Society 1905, 120 pages.

- *as a missionary and scholar of Islam Zwemer demonstrates clearly that the Allah of Islam is the complete opposite of the God of the Bible, the Father of Jesus Christ. Although written long time ago it has its relevance because of the unchanged Muslim concept of God.*

**Who is Allah in Islam?**, Abd Al-Masih, Light of Life, 108 pages.

- *this evaluation of the Muslim concept of God in contrast with the Biblical view points to the fact that such a concept leads to the oppression of the church and the bondage of the Muslims. It is very helpful to show the difference between the God of the Bible and the Qur'an.*