

# Hubal and Allah the Moon God?



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### Introduction to basic facts of history:

1. Moon worship has been practiced in Arabia since 2000 BC. The crescent moon is the most common symbol of this pagan moon worship as far back as 2000 BC.
2. In Mecca, there was a god named Hubal who was Lord of the Kabah.
3. This Hubal was a moon god.
4. One Muslim apologist confessed that the idol of moon god Hubal was placed upon the roof of the Kaba about 400 years before Muhammad. This may in fact be the origin of why the crescent moon is on top of every minaret at the Kaba today and the central symbol of Islam atop of every mosque throughout the world:

About four hundred years before the birth of Muhammad one Amr bin Lahyo ... a descendant of Qahtan and king of Hijaz, **had put an idol called Hubal on the roof of the Kaba. This was one of the chief deities of the Quraish before Islam.** ([Muhammad The Holy Prophet](#), Hafiz Ghulam Sarwar (Pakistan), p 18-19, Muslim)

5. The moon god was also referred to as "al-ilah". This is not a proper name of a single specific god, but a generic reference meaning "the god". Each local pagan Arab tribe would refer to their own local tribal pagan god as "al-ilah".
6. "al-ilah" was later shortened to Allah before Muhammad began promoting his new religion in 610 AD.
7. There is evidence that Hubal was referred to as "Allah".
8. When Muhammad came along, he dropped all references to the name "Hubal" but retained the generic "Allah".
9. Muhammad retained almost all the pagan rituals of the Arabs at the Kaba and redefined them in monotheistic terms.
10. Regardless of the specifics of the facts, it is clear that Islam is derived from paganism that once worshiped a moon-god.
11. Although Islam is today a monotheist religion, its roots are in paganism.

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## Hubal, the moon god of the Kaba



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### Hubal, the moon god of the Kaba:

What is quite certain is that the Pagan Arabs in Mecca worshipped a moon god called Hubal at the Kabah. Hubal was the Lord of the Kabah, being the highest ranking god of the 360 gods worshipped in the Kabah. Now here is the amazing thing. Allah was also worshipped as the Lord of the Kabah. Yet, Allah was never represented by any idol of physical nature. To suggest the polytheistic Arabs never created an idol to represent Allah is simply unreasonable and unbelievable. We suggest rather, that Hubal was who the Pagan Arabs addressed their prayers to Allah through. In other words, Allah was Hubal. Muhammad came along and smashed the idol of Hubal and now the Arabs had no idol of Allah to pray through any more and Hubal was forgotten. **There are stories in the Sira of pagan Meccan praying to Allah while standing beside the image of Hubal.** ([Muhammad's Mecca](#), W. Montgomery Watt, Chapter 3: Religion In Pre-Islamic Arabia, p26-45) We suggest that Arabs stood beside Hubal and prayed to him, referring to him as Allah.

1. "II. The Religion of the Pre-Islamic Arabs The life of the pre-Islamic Arabs, especially in the Hijaz depended on trade and they made a trade of their religion as well. About four hundred years before the birth of Muhammad one Amr bin Lahyo bin Harath bin Amr ul-Qais bin Thalaba bin Azd bin Khalan bin Babalyun bin Saba, a descendant of Qahtan and king of Hijaz, **had put an idol called Hubal on the roof of the Kaba. This was one of the chief deities of the Quraish before Islam.** It is said that there were altogether three hundred and sixty idols in and about the Kaba and that each tribes had its own deity...The shapes and figures of the idols were also made according to the fancy of the worshippers. Thus Wadd was shaped like a man, Naila like a woman, so was Suwa. Yaghuth was made in the shape of lion, Yauq like a horse and Nasr like a vulture.. **Besides Hubal,**

there was another idol called Shams placed on the roof of the Kaba...The blood of the sacrificial animals brought by the pilgrims was offered to the deities in the Kaba and sometimes even human beings were sacrificed and offered to the god... Besides idol-worship, they also worshipped the stars, the sun and the moon." ([Muhammad The Holy Prophet](#), Hafiz Ghulam Sarwar (Pakistan), p 18-19, Muslim)

2. Among the gods worshiped by the Quraysh, the greatest was **Hubal**, this on the expert testimony of Ibn al-Kalbi: "The Quraysh had several idols in and around the Ka'ba. **The greatest of these was Hubal**. It was made, as I was told, of red agate, in the form of a man with the right hand broken off It came into the possession of the Quraysh in this condition, and they therefore made for it a hand of gold.... It stood inside the Ka'ba, and in front of it were seven divinatory arrows. On one of these was written the word "Pure," and on another "associated alien." Whenever the lineage of a new-born was doubted, they would offer a sacrifice to **Hubal** and then shuffle the arrows and throw them. If the arrows showed the word "Pure," the child would be declared legitimate and the tribe would accept him. If, however, the arrows showed "associated alien," the child would be declared illegitimate and would reject him. The third arrow had to do with divination concerning the dead, while the fourth was for divination about marriage. **The purpose of the three remaining arrows has not been explained. Whenever they disagreed concerning something, or proposed to embark upon a journey, or undertake some other project, they would proceed to Hubal and shuffle the divinatory arrows before it. Whatever result they obtained they would follow and do accordingly.** (Ibn al-Kalbi, *Book of Idols* 28-29 = Ibn al-Kalbi 1952: 23-24) ([The Hajj](#), F. E. Peters, p 3-41, 1994)
3. "Before Muhammad appeared, the Kaaba was surrounded by 360 idols, and every Arab house had its god. Arabs also believed in jinn (subtle beings), and some vague divinity with many offspring. Among the major deities of the pre-Islamic era were al-Lat ("the Goddess"), worshiped in the shape of a square stone; al-Uzzah ("the Mighty"), a goddess identified with the morning star and worshiped as a thigh-bone-shaped slab of granite between al Talf and Mecca; Manat, the goddess of destiny, **worshiped as a black stone on the road between Mecca and Medina; and the moon god, Hubal, whose worship was connected with the Black Stone of the Kaaba.** The stones were said to have fallen from the sun, moon, stars, and planets and to represent cosmic forces. The so-called Black Stone (actually the color of burnt umber) that Muslims revere today is the same one that their forebears had worshiped well before Muhammad and that they believed had come from the moon. (No scientific investigation has ever been performed on the stone. In 930, the stone was removed and shattered by an Iraqi sect of Qarmatians, but the pieces were later returned. The pieces, sealed in pitch and held in place by silver wire, measure about 10 inches in diameter altogether and several feet high; they are venerated today in patched-together form.)" ([The Joy of Sects](#), Peter Occhigrosso, 1996)
4. It is not related that the Black Stone was connected with any special god. In the Ka'ba was the statue of the god **Hubal** who might be called the god of Mecca and of the Ka'ba. Caetani gives great prominence to the connection between the Ka'ba and **Hubal**. Besides him, however, al-Lat, al-`Uzza, and al-Manat were worshipped and are mentioned in the Kur'an; **Hubal** is never mentioned there. What position **Allah** held beside these is not exactly known. The Islamic tradition has certainly elevated him at the expense of other deities. It may be considered certain that the Black Stone was not the only idol in or at the Ka'ba. The Makam Ibrahim was of course a sacred stone from very early times. Its name

has not been handed down. Beside it several idols are mentioned, among them the 360 statues. ([First Encyclopedia of Islam, E.J. Brill, 1987, Islam, p. 587-591](#))

5. All the accumulation of heathendom, which had gathered round the Ka'ba, was now thrust aside. 360 idols are said to have stood around the building. When touched with the Prophet's rod they all fell to the ground. The statue of **Hubal** which `Amr b. Luhaiy is said to have erected over the pit inside the Ka'ba was removed as well as the representations of the prophets. ([First Encyclopedia of Islam, E.J. Brill, 1987, Islam, p. 587-591](#))
6. Towards the end of the fifth century, perhaps, a strong man by the name of Qusayy succeeded either by force or trickery in gaining control of the temple. He belonged to the tribe of Quraysh, an assemblage of several clans which, through him, supplanted the Khuza'a. There may be some foundation of truth in the story that Qusayy had travelled in Syria, and had brought back from there the cult of the goddesses al- 'Uzza and Manat, and had combined it with that of **Hubal**, the idol of the Khuzaca. It has been suggested that he may actually have been a Nabataean. ([Mohammed, Maxime Rodinson, 1961, translated by Anne Carter, 1971, p 38-49](#))
7. The Ka'ba at Mecca, which may have initially been a shrine of **Hubal** alone, housed several idols; a number of others, too, were gathered in the vicinity. ([Mohammed, Maxime Rodinson, 1961, translated by Anne Carter, 1971, p 38-49](#))
8. **The use of the phrase 'the Lord of this House makes it likely that those Meccans who believed in Allah as a high god-and they may have been numerous-regarded the Ka'ba as his shrine, even though there were images of other gods in it. There are stories in the Sira of pagan Meccan praying to Allah while standing beside the image of Hubal.** ([Muhammad's Mecca, W. Montgomery Watt, Chapter 3: Religion In Pre-Islamic Arabia, p26-45](#))
9. The temple was evidently at the centre of a cult involving idol worship. The presiding deity was **Hubal**, a large carnelian statue kept inside the temple; 360 other idols were ranged outside. The three goddesses described in the Quran as the 'daughters of Allah' - Allat, 'Uzza and Manat - were also worshipped in the vicinity. ([Islam in the World, Malise Ruthven, 1984, p 28-48](#))
10. **Hubal** (from Aram. for vapour, spirit), evidently the chief deity of al-Ka'bah, was represented in human form. Beside him stood ritual arrows used for divination by the soothsayer (kdhin, from Aramaic) who drew lots by means of them. The tradition in ibn-Hisham, which makes 'Amr ibn-Luhayy the importer of this idol from Moab or Mesopotamia, may have a kernel of truth in so far as it retains a memory of the Aramaic origin of the deity. At the conquest of Makkah by Muhammad **Hubal** shared the lot of the other idols and was destroyed. ([History Of The Arabs, Philip K. Hitti, 1937, p 96-101](#))
11. The statue of **Hubal** was inside the building during the Age of Barbarism, but the ritual performed there was the Abrahamic one of circumcision. ([The Hajj, F. E. Peters, p 3-41, 1994](#))
12. Amr ibn Luhayy brought with him (to Mecca) an idol called **Hubal** from the land of Hit in Mesopotamia.<sup>59</sup> **Hubal** was one the Quraysh's greatest idols. So he set it up at the well inside the Ka'ba and ordered the people to worship it. Thus a man coming back from a journey would visit it and circumambulate the House before going to his family, and he would shave his hair before it. Muhammad ibn Ishaq said that **Hubal** was (made of)

cornelian pearl in the shape of a human. His right hand was broken off and the Quraysh made a gold hand for it. It had a vault for the sacrifice, and there were seven arrows cast (On issues relating to) a dead person, virginity and marriage. Its offering was a hundred camels. It had a custodian (hajib). (Azraqi 1858: 73-74) Finally, among the pictures that decorated the interior of the Ka'ba in pre-Islamic days, there was one, as Azraqi says, "of Abraham as an old man." But because the figure was shown performing divination by arrows, it seems likely that it was **Hubal**. The suspicion is strengthened by the fact that when Muhammad finally took over the sanctuary, he permitted the picture of Jesus to remain but had that of "Abraham" removed with the dry comment, "What has Abraham to do with arrows?" Has **Hubal** depicted as "Abraham the Ancient" anything to do with the "Ancient House," as the Ka'ba is often called? Or, to put the question more directly: Was it **Hubal** rather than **Allah** who was "Lord of the Ka'ba"?" Probably not. The Quran, which makes no mention of **Hubal**, would certainly have raised the contention. **Hubal** was, by the Arabs' own tradition, a newcomer to both Mecca and the Ka'ba, an outsider introduced by the ambitious Amr ibn Luhayy, and the tribal token around which the Quraysh later attempted to construct a federation with the surrounding Kinana, whose chief deity **Hubal** was. **Hubal** was introduced into the Ka'ba, but he never supplanted the god **Allah**, whose House it continued to be. ([The Hajj](#), F. E. Peters, p 3-41, 1994)

13. "According to a theory held by many, this temple had been sourceally connected with the ancient worship of the sun, moon and stars, and its circumambulation by the worshippers had a symbolical reference to the rotation of the heavenly bodies. Within its precincts and in its neighborhood there were found many idols, such as **Hubal**, Lat, Ozza, Manah, Wadd, Sawa, Yaghut, Nasr, Isaf, Naila, etc. A black stone in the temple wall was regarded with superstitious awe as eminently sacred" ([Muhammad and Muhammadanism](#), S.W. Koelle, 1889, p. 17-19)
14. The god Il or Ilah was originally a phase of the Moon God, but early in Arabian history the name became a general term for god, and it was this name that the Hebrews used prominently in their personal names, such as Emanuel, Israel, etc., rather than the Bapal of the northern semites proper, which was the Sun. Similarly, under Mohammed's tutelage, the relatively anonymous Ilah became Al-Ilah, The God, or Allâh, the Supreme Being. ([Southern Arabia](#), Carleton S. Coon, Washington, D.C. Smithsonian, 1944, p.399)
15. The more the significance of the cult declined, the greater became the value of a general religious temper associated with **Allah**. Among the Meccans he was already coming to take the place of the old moon-god **Hubal** as the lord of the Ka'bah...Allah was actually the guardian of contracts, though at first these were still settled at a special ritual locality and so subordinate to the supervision of an idol. In particular he was regarded as the guardian of the alien guest, though consideration for him still lagged behind duty to one's kinsmen." ([History of the Islamic Peoples](#), Carl Brockelmann, p 8-10)
16. At Mekka, **Allah** was the chief of the gods and the special deity of the Quraish, the prophet's tribe. **Allah** had three daughters: Al Uzzah (Venus) most revered of all and pleased with human sacrifice; Manah, the goddess of destiny, and Al Lat, the goddess of vegetable life. **Hubal** and more than 300 others made up the pantheon. The central shrine at Mekka was the Kaaba, a cube like stone structure which still stands though many times rebuilt. Imbedded in one corner is the black stone, probably a meteorite, the kissing of which is now an essential part of the pilgrimage." ([Meet the Arab](#), John Van Ess, 1943, p. 29.)

17. "As well as worshipping idols and spirits, found in animals, plants, rocks and water, the ancient Arabs believed in several major gods and goddesses whom they considered to hold supreme power over all things. The most famous of these were Al-Lat, Al-Uzza, Manat and **Hubal**. The first three were thought to be the daughters of **Allah** (God) and their intercessions on behalf of their worshippers were therefore of great significance. **Hubal** was associated with the Semitic god Ba'l and with Adonis or Tammuz, the gods of spring, fertility, agriculture and plenty...**Hubal's idol used to stand by the holy well inside the Sacred House. It was made of red sapphire but had a broken arm until the tribe of Quraysh, who considered him one of their major gods, made him a replacement in solid gold.**" ([Fabled Cities, Princes & Jin from Arab Myths and Legends](#), Khairt al-Saeh, 1985, p. 28-30.)
18. This was especially true of **Allah**, 'the God, the Divinity', the personification of the divine world in its highest form, creator of the universe and keeper of sworn oaths. In the Hejaz three goddesses had pride of place as the 'daughters of **Allah**'. The first of these was Allat, mentioned by Herodotus under the name of Alilat. Her name means simply 'the goddess', and she may have stood for one aspect of Venus, the morning star, although hellenized Arabs identified her with Athene. Next came Uzza, 'the all-powerful', whom other sources identify with Venus. The third was Manat, the goddess of fate, who held the shears which cut the thread of life and who was worshipped in a shrine on the sea-shore. **The great god of Mecca was Hubal, an idol made of red cornelian.** ([Mohammed](#), Maxime Rodinson, 1961, translated by Anne Carter, 1971, p 16-17)
19. Sacred times and places also seem to have been respected for the most part. The Qur'an has many references to Pagans Praying to their 'Partner-gods' (shuraka') -a matter to be discussed later-and **there is a report of Abu Sufyan Praying to the god Hubal at Uhud.** ([Muhammad's Mecca](#), W. Montgomery Watt, Chapter 3: Religion In Pre-Islamic Arabia, p26-45)
20. Each state or tribe had had its own moon god under a national or local name. The temples had been centres of religious life, and the priests of the moon gods had normally provided oracle services. Pilgrimage had been performed to certain temples of the moon gods, with rituals similar in many details to those of the pre-Islamic and Islamic pilgrimage to Mecca. ([Britannica](#), Arabia, History of, p 1045, 1979)
21. South Arabian deities. In the official cults of the South Arabian kingdoms, the devotees venerated most highly a triad of deities that were astral in character: the moon god, the sun goddess, and the god equated with the planet Venus. Each of these deities bore a variety of names, depending on the region, or on a particular attribute of the divinity. Chief among the triad was the moon god, who was the protector of the principal cities. ... the people of Hadramawt the offspring of Sin (the name of the moon god in ancient Babylonia). In each region other names of the moon god appear, derived from aspects of the lunar cycle or other attributes. ([Britannica](#), Arabian Religions, p1057, 1979)
22. Despite the prominence of the name elsewhere among Semitic peoples, the god Il (El) appears to play a comparatively minor role in the South Arabian inscriptions. Some modern scholars have sought to explain this circumstance by equating Il with the moon god, but this opinion has not prevailed. ([Britannica](#), Arabian Religions, p1057, 1979)
23. **HUBAL, the name of an idol, which was worshipped at Mecca in the Ka`ba but otherwise is only known from a Nabataean inscription** (Carp. Inscr. Semit., ii. n". 189 = Jaussen et Savignac, Afission Archiol. en Arabie, i. 169, 170) where it is mentioned

along with Dushara and Manutu. It is thus probable that the tradition according to which `Amr b. Luhayy [q. v.] brought the idol with him from Moab or Mesopotamia, is correct in retaining a memory of the foreign, to be more accurate Aramaic, origin of **Hubal**, although the substance of the tradition is otherwise quite legendary. The name cannot be explained from the Arabic for the etymologies in Yakut etc. condemn themselves, but Pocock's supposition that **Hubal** is equivalent to [Hebrew] although defended by Dozy, is hardly better founded. Another tradition indeed relates that **Hubal** was an idol of the Banu Ki-nana, worshipped also by the Kuraish, and had been placed in the Ka'ba by Khuzaima b. Mudrika wherefore it used to be called **Hubal** Khuzaima. It is further related that the idol was of red carnelian in the form of a man; the Kuraish replaced the right hand which was broken, by a golden one; it was the custom to consult the idol by divination with arrows; this was done for example by `Abd al-Muttalib with reference to his son `Abd Allah, etc. We learn nothing further about the cult of this idol and the legends are quite worthless for the comprehension of the real nature of the deity. After the conquest of Mecca **Hubal** shared the lot of all other idols and the image was removed from the Ka'ba and destroyed. ([First Encyclopedia of Islam](#), E.J. Brill, 1987, **Hubal**)

24. **Hubal**, an Arabian god whose worship was fostered in Mecca by the Khuza'i 'Amr b. Luhayy [q.v.] in the first half of the 3rd century A.D. Represented at first by a baetyl, like most of the Arab deities, it was later personified, with human features, by a statue made of cornelian, with the right arm truncated (cf. Judges III, 15, XX, 16) and which the Kuraysh's are said to have replaced by a golden arm (al-Azraki, Akhbar Makka, ed. Wustenfeld, Leipzig 1858, 74). It was from a town with thermal springs (hamma) that it was apparently brought to the Hijaz. Having come there to bathe in the waters and thereby being cured of a serious illness, `Ainr b. Luhayy, it is said, had taken back this statue with him. ([The Encyclopaedia Of Islam](#), New Edition, Edited By B. Lewis, V. L. Menage, Ch. Pellat And J. Schacht, 1971, **HUBAL** page 536)
25. Having asked the local inhabitants what was the justification of their idols, `Amr b. Lullayy is said to have received the following reply: .. these are the lords (arbab) whom we have chosen, having [simultaneously] the form of the celestial temples (al-hayakil al-`ulwiyya) and that of Human beings. We ask them for victory over our enemies and they grant it to us; we ask them for rain, in time of drought, and they give it to us". In the Ka'ba, **Hubal** must have preserved this original character of a stellar deity; but his most characteristic role was that of a cleromantic divinity. Indeed, it was before the god that the sacred lots were cast. The statue stood inside the Ka'ba, above the sacred well which was thought to have been dug by Abraham to receive the offerings brought to the sanctuary (al-Azraki, 31). Another Somewhat surprising fact indicates a connection with Abraham: in the mural paintings of the pre-islamic Ka'ba, **Hubal**, represented as an old man holding arrows, seems to have been assimilated with Abraham (al-Azraki, III). ([The Encyclopaedia Of Islam](#), New Edition, Edited By B. Lewis, V. L. Menage, Ch. Pellat And J. Schacht, 1971, **HUBAL** page 536)
26. The earliest mention of the name **Hubal** occurs in a Nabataean inscription (CIS, ii, 198), in which it appears as an associate of Manawat. According to al-Azraki (73), its cult was the best organized in the Ka'ba: a hadjib guarded the idol; he received the offerings and sacrifices that were brought; he shook the arrows of divination before it. When a Meccan returned from travelling, he used to go to give thanks to the god before going to his own home. In the field of popular piety at least, it eclipsed the other deities in the Meccan

pantheon, to such an extent that there has been some speculation whether the unanimity regarding this cult did not help to prepare the way for **Allah**. ([The Encyclopaedia Of Islam](#), New Edition, Edited By B. Lewis, V. L. Menage, Ch. Pellat And J. Schacht, 1971, HUBAL page 536)

27. "the Ka'aba was dedicated to al-Ilah, the High God of the pagan Arabs, despite the presiding effigy of **Hubal**. By the beginning of the seventh century, al-Ilah had become more important than before in the religious life many of the Arabs. Many primitive religions develop a belief in a High God, who is sometimes called the Sky God...But they also carried on worshipping the other gods, who remained deeply important to them." ([Karen Armstrong, Muhammad](#), (New York: San Francisco, 1992) p. 69.)

## Allah, the moon god of the Kaba



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#### Allah, the moon god of the Kaba:

There are a number of scholars who believe that Allah, was originally the name of the moon god of Northern Arabia. It is important to remember that the word "Allah" simply means "the god" and corresponds to "ho theos" in the Greek New Testament as "the God" which refers to the Father in John 1:1 and the Son in John 20:28 and Heb 1:8. What is interesting is that Hubal was the top pagan moon god of the Kabah. So Allah is the generic and Hubal, may have been the actual name, in the same way that "the God" is generic and "Jehovah" is the name. The Arabs may have referred to "Hubal" as "Allah", just like Jews would refer to "Jehovah" as "The God".

1. "Allah, the Supreme Being of the Mussulmans: Before Islam. That the Arabs, before the time of Muhammed, accepted and worshipped, after a fashion, a supreme god called Allah,--"the Ilah, or the god, if the form is of genuine Arabic source; if of Aramaic, from Alaha, "the god"—seems absolutely certain. **Whether he was an abstraction or a development from some individual god, such as Hubal, need not here be considered...**But they also recognized and tended to worship more fervently and directly other strictly subordinate gods...It is certain that they regarded particular deities (mentioned in liii. 19-20 are al-'Uzza, Manat or Manah, al-Lat'; some have interpreted vii, 179 as a reference to a perversion of Allah to Allat as daughters of Allah (vi. 100; xvi, 59; xxxvii, 149; liii, 21); they also asserted that he had sons (vi. 100)... "There was no god save Allah". This meant, for Muhammed and the Meccans, that of all the gods whom they worshipped, Allah was the only real deity. It took no account of the nature of God in the abstract, only of the personal position of Allah. ...ilah, the common noun from which Allah is probably derived..." ([First Encyclopedia of Islam, E.J. Brill](#), 1987, Islam, p. 302)

2. Allah. Islamic name for God. Is derived from Semitic El, and [Allah] **originally applied to the Moon**; he [Allah] seems to have been preceded by Ilmaqah, the Moon-god. Allat is the female counterpart of Allah. ([Everyman's Dictionary of Non-Classical Mythology](#), Egerton Sykes, Godspeed, Allah)
3. The Bedouin's astral beliefs centred upon the moon, in whose light he grazed his flocks. **Moon-worship implies a pastoral society**, whereas sun-worship represents a later agricultural stage. In our own day the Moslem Ruwalah **Bedouins imagine that their life is regulated by the moon**, which condenses the water vapours, distils the beneficent dew on the pasture and makes possible the growth of plants. On the other hand the sun, as they believe, would like to destroy the Bedouins as well as all animal and plant life. ([History Of The Arabs](#), Philip K. Hitti, 1937, p 96-101)
4. **There are stories in the Sira of pagan Meccan praying to Allah while standing beside the image of Hubal.** ([Muhammad's Mecca](#), W. Montgomery Watt, Chapter 3: Religion In Pre-Islamic Arabia, p26-45)
5. "The relation of this name, which in Babylonia and Assyrian became a generic term simply meaning 'god', to the Arabian Ilah familiar to us in the form Allah, which is compounded of al, the definite article, and Ilah by eliding the vowel 'i', is not clear. **Some scholars trace the name to the South Arabian Ilah, a title of the Moon god, but this is a matter of antiquarian interest**" ([Islam](#), Alfred Guillaume, 1956, p 6-7)
6. "The first pre-Islamic inscription discovered in Dhofar Province, Oman, this bronze plaque, deciphered by Dr. Albert Jamme, dates from about the second century A.D. and gives the name of the Hadramaut moon god Sin and the name Sumhuram, a long-lost city....**The moon was the chief deity of all the early South Arabian** kingdoms—particularly fitting in that region where the soft light of the moon brought the rest and cool winds of night as a relief from the blinding sun and scorching heat of day. In contrast to most of the old religions with which we are familiar, **the moon god is male**, while the sun god is his consort, a female. The third god of importance is their child, the male morning star, which we know as the planet Venus...The spice route riches brought them a standard of luxurious living inconceivable to the poverty-stricken South Arabian Bedouins of today. Like nearly all Semitic peoples they worshipped the moon, the sun, and the morning star. The chief god, the moon, was a male deity symbolized by the bull, and we found many carved bulls' heads, with drains for the blood of sacrificed animals." ([Qataban and Sheba](#), Wendell Phillips, 1955, p. 227)
7. "...a people of Arabia, of the race of the Joktanites...the Alilai living near the Red Sea in a district where gold is found; their name, children of the moon, so called from the worship of the moon, or Alilat." ([Gesenius Hebrew and Chaldee Lexicon to the Old Testament Scriptures](#), translated by Samuel Prideaux Tregelles, 1979, p. 367)
8. Allat, according to recent study of the complicated inspirational evidence, is believed to have been introduced into Arabia from Syria, and to have been **the moon goddess of North Arabia**. If this is the correct interpretation of her character, **she corresponded to the moon deity of South Arabia, Almaqah, `Vadd, `Amm or Sin as he was called**, the difference being only the oppositeness of gender. Mount Sinai (the name being an Arabic feminine form of Sin) would then have been one of the centers of the worship of this northern moon goddess. Similarly, al-`Uzza is supposed to have come from Sinai, and to have been the goddess of the planet Venus. **As the moon and the evening star are associated in the heavens, so too were Allat and al-`Uzza together in religious belief, and**

so too are the crescent and star conjoined on the flags of Arab countries today. ([The Archeology Of World Religions](#), Jack Finegan, 1952, p482-485, 492)

## There are remnants of pagan moon god worship in the Koran



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A. There are remnants of pagan moon god worship in the Koran when we have examples of Muslims swearing by the moon. There is no example in the Bible, of anyone ever swearing by a planet. This evidence is not decisive, but it is interesting to note.

- "I swear by the moon, And the night when it departs, And the daybreak when it shines; Surely it (hell) is one of the gravest (misfortunes)" (Koran 74:32)
- But nay! I swear by the sunset redness, And the night and that which it drives on, And the moon when it grows full, That you shall most certainly enter one state after another. But what is the matter with them that they do not believe, And when the Qur'an is recited to them they do not make obeisance? (Koran 84:16)
- Koran translator Yusuf Ali comments on these two passages: "Nay, verily by the Moon," Yusuf Ali comments, "The moon was worshipped as a deity in times of darkness." (Qur'an, translated by Yusuf Ali, footnote 5798, pg. 1644, explanation of why the Qur'an swears by the moon in Surah 74:32)

B. Jesus' condemned the Jews of the practice of swearing by the temple:

1. "Woe to you, blind guides, who say, 'Whoever swears by the temple, that is nothing; but whoever swears by the gold of the temple, he is obligated.' 'You fools and blind men; which is more important, the gold, or the temple that sanctified the gold?' 'And, 'Whoever swears by the altar, *that* is nothing, but whoever swears by the offering upon it, he is obligated.' 'You blind men, which is more important, the offering or the altar that sanctifies the offering?' 'Therefore he who swears by the altar, swears *both* by the altar and by everything on it. 'And he who swears by the temple, swears *both* by the temple and by Him who dwells within it. 'And he who swears by heaven, swears *both* by the throne of God and by Him who sits upon it. (Mt 23:16-22)
2. "Again, you have heard that the ancients were told, 'You shall not make false vows, but shall fulfill your vows to the Lord.' 'But I say to you, make no oath at all, either by heaven, for it is the throne of God, or by the earth, for it is the footstool of His feet, or by Jerusalem, for it is the city of the great King. 'Nor shall you make an oath by your head, for you cannot make one hair white or black. 'But let your statement be, 'Yes, yes' or 'No, no'; and anything beyond these is of evil. (Mt 5:33-37)

C. The Koran condemns moon god worship:

1. "Among His Signs are the Night and the Day, and the Sun and the Moon. Adore not the sun and the moon, but adore God, Who created them, if it is Him ye wish to serve."  
(Koran 41:37)

**The pagan origin of the word, "Allah".**

## **Islam: Truth or Myth?** [start page](#)

Interestingly, not many Muslims want to accept that Allah was already being worshipped at the Ka'ba in Mecca by Arab pagans before Muhammad came.

Some Muslims become angry when they are confronted with this fact. But history is not on their side. Pre-Islamic literature has proved this." ([Who Is This Allah?](#), G. J. O. Moshay, 1994, p 138)



"But history establishes beyond the shadow of doubt that even the pagan Arabs, before Muhammad's time, knew their chief god by the name of Allah and even, in a sense, proclaimed his unity...Among the pagan Arabs this term denoted the chief god of their pantheon, the Kaaba, with its three hundred and sixty idols." ([The Moslem Doctrine of God](#), Samuel M. Zwemer 1905, p 24-25)

In fact, he did not at first intend to establish a new religion, but rather to reform the belief in Allah which already existed, and to show what this belief truly signified and rightfully demanded. ([Mohammed: The man and his faith](#), Tor Andrae, 1936, Translated by Theophil Menzel, 1960, p13-30)

## **The pre-Islamic origin of "Allah"**

1. There is absolutely no question that Allah was worshipped by the pagan Arabs as one of many polytheistic gods.
2. Allah was worshipped in the Kabah at Mecca before Muhammad was born. Muhammad merely proclaimed a god the Meccans were already familiar with. The pagan Arabs never accused Muhammad of preaching a different Allah than the one they already worshipped.
3. Many scholars say "Allah" is derived from a compound Arabic word, AL + ILAH = Allah. "Ilah" in Arabic is "God" and "Al" in Arabic is a definite article like our word "the". So from an English equivalent "Allah" comes from "The + God". Others, like Arthur Jeffery say, "The common theory is that it is formed from ilah, the common word for a god, and the article al-; thus al-ilah, the god," becomes Allah, "God." This theory, however, is untenable. In fact, the name is one of the words borrowed into the language in pre-Islamic times from Aramaic." ([Islam: Muhammad and His Religion](#), Arthur Jeffery, 1958, p 85)

4. Although "Allah" has become known as the proper name for the Muslim god, Allah is not a name, but a descriptor that means literally, "the god". All pagan cultures have these generic terms that refer to their "top god" as "the god". In comparison to the perfect monotheism of Judaism and Christianity, "Allah" was originally no more a proper name for the Muslim God, than the word Hebrew "elohim" (god) or Greek "theos" (god) are proper names of the one true God of the Bible. "Jehovah" is the only revealed proper name for the "Elohim" of the Old Testament ( Ex 3:13; 6:3) and "Jesus" is the only revealed proper name of "Theos" in the New Testament. (Acts 4:12) Islam has no proper name for their god, but merely transformed, by universal use and confusion, the generic Allah into a proper name. So although today, Muslims use "Allah" as a proper name, it was never used this way originally. Allah, therefore is equivalent to "elohim" and "ho theos" but not "Jehovah" or "Jesus". Allah is not the name of the nameless Muslim God. However Muslims will claim that Allah is the name of God that corresponds to Jehovah. Both the Father and the Son are called "ho theos" (The God). Jesus is called "The God" many times in the New Testament: John 20:28; Heb 1:8. An important conclusion from this, is that the mere fact that "Allah" is equivalent to "elohim" and "ho theos" does not mean they are directly corresponded. It certainly doesn't prove Allah is the same as the God of the Old or New Testament. It does not prove that Muslim's worship the same God as Christians. If this correspondence proved the Muslim god was the same as the Christian God, then because pagan religions also have generics that correspond to "the god" (Allah), this correspondence would also prove that Allah is the same god as the Buddhist god, for Buddhists also refer to their god as "the god".

## **What scholars say about the origin of the word "Allah":**

1. It is not related that the Black Stone was connected with any special god. In the Ka'ba was the statue of the god Hubal who might be called the god of Mecca and of the Ka'ba. Caetani gives great prominence to the connection between the Ka'ba and Hubal. Besides him, however, al-Lat, al-'Uzza, and al-Manat were worshipped and are mentioned in the Kur'an; Hubal is never mentioned there. What position Allah held beside these is not exactly known. The Islamic tradition has certainly elevated him at the expense of other deities. It may be considered certain that the Black Stone was not the only idol in or at the Ka'ba. The Makam Ibrahim was of course a sacred stone from very early times. Its name has not been handed down. Beside it several idols are mentioned, among them the 360 statues. ([First Encyclopedia of Islam, E.J. Brill, 1987, Islam, p. 587-591](#))
2. "The verses of the Qur'an make it clear that the very name Allah existed in the Jahiliyya or pre-Islamic Arabia. Certain pagan tribes believed in a god whom they called 'Allah' and **whom they believed to be the creator of heaven and earth and holder of the highest rank in the hierarchy of the gods**. It is well known that the **Quraish** as well as other tribes believed in Allah, whom they designated as the 'Lord of the House' (i.e., of the Ka'ba)...It is therefore clear that the Qur'anic conception of Allah is not entirely new." ([A Guide to the Contents of the Qur'an](#), Faruq Sherif, (Reading, 1995), pgs. 21-22., Muslim)
3. According to al-Masudi (Murudj, iv. 47), certain people have regarded the Ka'ba as a temple devoted to the sun, the moon and the five planets. The 360 idols placed round the Ka'ba also point in this direction. It can therefore hardly be denied that traces exist of an astral symbolism. At the same time one can safely say that there can be no question of

any general conception on these lines. The cult at the Ka'ba was in the heathen period syncretic as is usual in heathenism. ([First Encyclopedia of Islam, E.J. Brill, 1987, Islam, p. 587-591](#))

4. The name Allah, as the Qur'an itself is witness, was well known in pre-Islamic Arabia. Indeed, both it and its feminine form, Allat, are found not infrequently among the theophorous names in inscriptions from North Arabia. **The common theory is that it is formed from ilah, the common word for a god, and the article al-; thus al-ilah, the god, becomes Allah, "God." This theory, however, is untenable. In fact, the name is one of the words borrowed into the language in pre-Islamic times from Aramaic.** ([Islam: Muhammad and His Religion](#), Arthur Jeffery, 1958, p 85)
5. "If a Muslim says, "Your God and our God is the same," either he does not understand who Allah and Christ really are, or he intentionally glosses over the deep-rooted differences." ([Who Is Allah In Islam?](#), Abd-Al Masih, Light of Life, 1985, p. 36.)
6. Now there dwelt in Mecca a god called Allah. He was the provider, the most powerful of all the local deities, the one to whom every Meccan turned in time of need. But, for all his power, Allah was a remote god. At the time of Muhammad, however, he was on the ascendancy. He had replaced the moon god as lord of the Kaaba although still relegated to an inferior position below various tribal idols and three powerful goddesses: al-Manat, goddess of fate, al-Lat, mother of the gods, and al-Uzza, the planet Venus. ([Islam and the Arabs](#), Rom Landau, 1958 p 11-21)
7. Muhammad no more invented Allah than he did al-Lat, al-Uzza, and Manat. The Cult of the deity termed simply "the god" (al-ilah) was known throughout southern Syria and northern Arabia," and it was obviously of central importance in Mecca, where the building called the Ka'ba was indisputably his house. Indeed, the Muslim profession of faith, "there is no ilah except al-ilah," attests to precisely that point: the Quraysh are being called upon to repudiate the very existence of all the other gods save this one. It seems equally certain that Allah was not merely a god in Mecca but was widely regarded as the "high god," the chief and head of the Meccan pantheon, perhaps the result, as has been argued, of a natural progression toward henotheism or of the growing influence of Jews and Christians in the peninsula." The most convincing piece of evidence that the latter was at work is the fact that of all the gods of Mecca, Allah alone was not represented by an idol. ([The Hajj](#), F. E. Peters, p 3-41, 1994)
8. Allah, we can be sure, was neither an unknown nor an unimportant deity to the Quraysh when Muhammad began preaching his worship at Mecca. What is equally certain is that Allah had what the Quran disdainfully calls "associates": other gods and goddesses who shared both his cult and his shrine. The processional chant of the pagans of the Age of Barbarism was, we are told, "Here I am, O Allah, here I am; You have no partner except such a partner as You have; You possess him and all that is his." 103 The last clause may reflect what we have already seen was an emerging tendency toward henotheism, the recognition of Allah as the "high god" of Mecca. But it was not sufficient for Muslims, who put in its place their own manifestly monotheistic hymn: "Here I am, O Allah, here I am; You have no partner; the praise and the grace are Yours, and the empire; You have no partner." ([The Hajj](#), F. E. Peters, p 3-41, 1994)
9. While Allah is best known as the principal god of Mecca, he was also worshiped in other places throughout Arabia as is shown by the occurrence of the name in Sabean, Minean and particularly Libyanite inscriptions." The Qur'an (xxix, 61) refers to the belief of the

pagans in Allah as the creator of the heavens and the earth; and Muhammad's own father bore the name of `Abd Allah or `Abdullah, meaning the slave or worshiper of this god. In Mecca, Allah was worshiped in the Ka'bah and possibly represented by the famous Black Stone in that place. ([The Archeology Of World Religions](#), Jack Finegan, 1952, p482-485, 492)

10. In Mecca, Allah was worshiped in the Ka'bah and possibly represented by the famous Black Stone in that place. ([The Archeology Of World Religions](#), Jack Finegan, 1952, p482-485, 492)
11. Prior to the rise of Islam, these three goddesses were associated with Allah as his daughters and all were worshiped at Mecca and other places in the vicinity. ([The Archeology Of World Religions](#), Jack Finegan, 1952, p482-485, 492)
12. Allah (allah, al-ilah, the god) was the principal, though not the only, deity of Makkah. The name is an ancient one. It occurs in two South Arabic inscriptions, one a Minaean found at al-'Ula and the other a Sabaeen, but abounds in the form HLH in the Lihyanite inscriptions of the fifth century- B.C. Lihyan, which evidently got the god from Syria, was the first Centre of the worship of this deity in Arabia. The name occurs as Hallah in the Safa inscriptions five centuries before Islam and also in a pre-Islamic Christian Arabic inscription found in umm-al-Jimal, Syria, and ascribed to the sixth century . The name of Muhammad's father was 'Abd-Allah ('Abdullah, the slave or worshiper of Allah). The esteem in which Allah was held by the pre-Islamic Makkans as the creator and supreme provider and the one to be invoked in time of special peril may be inferred from such koranic passages as 31 : 24, 31; 6 : 137, 109; to : 23. Evidently he was the tribal deity of the Quraysh. ([History Of The Arabs](#), Philip K. Hitti, 1937, p 96-101)
13. When Mohammed proclaimed his creed: 'There is no God but Allah,' he was not trying to introduce a new God. His pagan countrymen knew and acknowledged this divinity. His name, Allah, occurs already in pre-Mohammedan times, both in inscriptions and in compound personal names like Abd Allah, 'servant of Allah.' The effective note in Mohammed's evangelistic preaching is that he is able to accuse the pagans of acknowledging Allah as the creator of heaven and earth, and yet failing to draw the only possible conclusion from their belief; which is, to worship Allah and none else besides Him. 'If thou ask them who hath created the Heavens and the Earth, and hath imposed laws upon the sun and the moon, they will certainly say, "Allah". . If thou ask them who sendeth rain from Heaven, and by it quickeneth the earth after it hath been dead, they will certainly answer "Allah"' (Sura 29, 6 1 and 63). When in extreme danger, especially on the sea, the pagans call upon Allah (29, 65; 31, 31; 17, 69), but when they are on land again, and feel safe, they share His divine honour with other beings. Allah is supposed to have given certain commandments and taboos to men (Sura 6, 139 ff.), and the most sacred oaths are sworn in His name (Sura 3,r, 40; 16, 40). Thus, even though Allah was not worshipped as He deserved, the cult of Allah was not entirely neglected. A species of tithing, or offering of the first-fruits of grain and cattle, was offered to Allah as well as to the other gods (6, 137). But, above all, Allah was apparently regarded as ,the Lord of the Ka'ba,' the God to whom the cult of the highest sanctuary of Central Arabia was dedicated. In one of the oldest Suras (io6) Mohammed urges his tribesmen, the Quraish, to worship 'the Lord of this house, who allows the two annual trade caravans to be equipped, and who cares for them, and permits them to dwell in security. Concerning himself he says that he has received the commandment to worship 'the Lord of the house,'

- i.e. the Ka'ba. Apparently, then, the Prophet and his countrymen fully agree that the God who is worshipped through the ritual of the Ka'ba is Allah. ([Mohammed: The man and his faith](#), Tor Andrae, 1936, Translated by Theophil Menzel, 1960, p13-30)
14. "The religion of the Arabs, as well as their political life, was on a thoroughly primitive level...In particular the Semites regarded trees, caves, springs, and large stones as being inhabited by spirits; like the Black Stone of Islam in a corner of the Ka'bah at Mecca, in Petra and other places in Arabia stones were venerated also...Every tribe worshipped its own god, but also recognized the power of other tribal gods in their own sphere...Three goddesses in particular had elevated themselves above the circle of the inferior demons. The goddess of fate, al-Manat, corresponding to the Tyche Soteira of the Greeks, though known in Mecca, was worshipped chiefly among the neighboring Bedouin tribes of the Hudhayl. Allat—"the Goddess," who is Taif was called ar-Rabbah, "the Lady," and whom Herodotus equates with Urania—corresponded to the great mother of the gods, Astarte of the northern Semites; al-'Uzza, "the Mightiest," worshipped in the planet Venus, was merely a variant form... In addition to all these gods and goddesses the Arabs, like many other primitive peoples, believed in a God who was creator of the world, Allah, whom the Arabs did not, as has often been thought, owe to the Jews and Christians...The more the significance of the cult declined, the greater became the value of a general religious temper associated with Allah. Among the Meccans he was already coming to take the place of the old moon-god Hubal as the lord of the Ka'bah...Allah was actually the guardian of contracts, though at first these were still settled at a special ritual locality and so subordinate to the supervision of an idol. In particular he was regarded as the guardian of the alien guest, though consideration for him still lagged behind duty to one's kinsmen." ([History of the Islamic Peoples](#), Carl Brockelmann, p 8-10)
  15. The god Il or Ilah was originally a phase of the Moon God, but early in Arabian history the name became a general term for god, and it was this name that the Hebrews used prominently in their personal names, such as Emanuel, Israel, etc., rather than the Bopal of the northern semites proper, which was the Sun. Similarly, **under Mohammed's tutelage, the relatively anonymous Ilah became Al-Ilah, The God, or Allâh, the Supreme Being.** ([Southern Arabia](#), Carleton S. Coon, Washington, D.C. Smithsonian, 1944, p.399)
  16. "...a people of Arabia, of the race of the Joktanites...the Alilai living near the Red Sea in a district where gold is found; their name, children of the moon, so called from the worship of the moon, or Alilat." ([Gesenius Hebrew and Chaldee Lexicon to the Old Testament Scriptures](#), translated by Samuel Prideaux Tregelles, 1979, p. 367)
  17. Al-Kindi, one of the early Christian apologists against Islam, pointed out that Islam and its god Allah did not come from the Bible but from the paganism of the Sabeans. They did not worship the God of the Bible but the moon-god and his daughters al-Uzza, al-Lat, and Manat ([Three Early Christian-Muslim Debates](#), ed. by N. A. Newman, Hatfield, PA, IBRI, 1994, pp.357, 413, 426).
  18. "The cult of a deity termed simply "the god" (al-ilah) was known throughout southern Syria and northern Arabia in the days before Islam—Muhammad's father was named 'Abd Allah ("Servant of Allah")--and was obviously of central importance in Mecca, where the building called the Ka'bah was indisputably his house. Indeed, the Muslims shahadah attests to precisely that point: the Quraysh, the paramount tribe of Mecca, were being called on by Muhammad to repudiate the very existence of all the other gods save this one. It seems equally certain that Allah was not merely a god in Mecca but was

widely regarded as the "high god," the chief and head of the Meccan pantheon, whether this was the result, as has been argued, of a natural progression toward henotheism or of the growing influence of Jews and Christians in the Arabian Peninsula... Thus Allah was neither an unknown nor an unimportant deity to the Quraysh when Muhammad began preaching his worship at Mecca." ([The Oxford Encyclopedia of the Modern Islamic World](#), ed. John L. Esposito, 1995, p 76-77)

19. "That Islam was conceived in idolatry is shown by the fact that many rituals performed in the name of Allah were connected with the pagan worship that existed before Islam. ... Before Islam Allah was reported to be known as: the supreme of a pantheon of gods; the name of a god whom the Arabs worshipped; the chief god of the pantheon; Ali-ilah; the god; the supreme; the all-powerful; all-knowing; and totally unknowable; the predeterminer of everyone's life destiny; chief of the gods; the special deity of the Quraish; having three daughters: Al Uzzah (Venus), Manah (Destiny), and Alat; having the idol temple at Mecca under his name (House of Allah).; the mate of Alat, the goddess of fate. . . . Because of other Arabian history which points to heathen worship of the sun, moon, and the stars, as well as other gods, of which I believe Allah was in some way connected to. This then would prove to us that Allah is not the same as the true God of the Bible whom we worship, because God never changes." ([Is Allah The Same God As The God Of The Bible?](#), M. J. Afshari, p 6, 8-9)
20. "In pre-Islamic days, called the Days of Ignorance, the religious background of the Arabs was pagan, and basically animistic. Through wells, trees, stones, caves, springs, and other natural objects man could make contact with the deity... At Mekka, Allah was the chief of the gods and the special deity of the Quraish, the prophet's tribe. Allah had three daughters: Al Uzzah (Venus) most revered of all and pleased with human sacrifice; Manah, the goddess of destiny, and Al Lat, the goddess of vegetable life. Hubal and more than 300 others made up the pantheon. The central shrine at Mekka was the Kaaba, a cube like stone structure which still stands though many times rebuilt. Imbedded in one corner is the black stone, probably a meteorite, the kissing of which is now an essential part of the pilgrimage." ([Meet the Arab](#), John Van Ess, 1943, p. 29.)
21. "Muslims are notoriously loathe to preserve traditions of earlier paganism and like to garble what pre-Islamic history they permit to survive in anachronistic terms" ([Southern Arabia](#), Carleton S. Coon, Washington DC, Smithsonian, 1944, p 398)
22. "But history establishes beyond the shadow of doubt that even the pagan Arabs, before Muhammad's time, knew their chief god by the name of Allah and even, in a sense, proclaimed his unity... Among the pagan Arabs this term denoted the chief god of their pantheon, the Kaaba, with its three hundred and sixty idols." ([The Moslem Doctrine of God](#), Samuel M. Zwemer 1905, p 24-25)
23. "Historians like Vaqqidi have said Allah was actually the chief of the 360 gods [one for each day of the year] being worshipped in Arabia at the time Muhammad rose to prominence. Ibn Al-Kalbi gave 27 names of pre-Islamic deities... **Interestingly, not many Muslims want to accept that Allah was already being worshipped at the Ka'ba in Mecca by Arab pagans before Muhammad came.** Some Muslims become angry when they are confronted with this fact. But history is not on their side. Pre-Islamic literature has proved this." ([Who Is This Allah?](#), G. J. O. Moshay, 1994, p 138)
24. "Islam also owes the term "Allah" to the heathen Arabs. We have evidence that it entered into numerous personal names in Northern Arabia and among the Nabatians. It occurred

among the Arabs of later times, in theophorous names and on its own." ([Why I Am Not A Muslim](#), Ibn Warraq, 1995, p. 42)

25. "Arabia in Muhammad's time was polytheistic in its conception of the cosmos and tribal in its social structure. Each tribe had its own god(s) and goddess(es), which were manifest in the forms of idols, stones, trees, or stars in the sky." ([Islamic Studies, A History of Religions Approach](#), Richard C. Martin, 2<sup>nd</sup> Ed., p 96)
26. "Before Islam, the religions of the Arabic world involved the worship of many spirits, called jinn. Allah was but one of many gods worshiped in Mecca. But then Muhammad taught the worship of Allah as the only God, whom he identified as the same God worshiped by Christians and Jews." ([A Short History of Philosophy](#), Robert C. Solomon, p. 130)
27. "Allah: Originally applied to the moon; he seems to be preceded by Ilmaqah, the moon god... Allat: the female counterpart to Allah." ([A Dictionary of Non-Classical Mythology](#), Marian Edwardes, Lewis Spence, Allah, p. 7)
28. There were hundreds of such deities in pagan Arabia; the Ka'bah alone at one time housed three hundred and sixty-seven of them. Of all those mentioned in the Qur'an, four appeared to be most popularly revered on the eve of Islam, al`-Uzzah (power), al-Lat (the goddess), and Manah (fate); all three female deities, popularly worshiped by the tribes of the Hijaz, were regarded as the daughters of Allah (the god) who headed the Arabian pantheon when Muhammad began to preach. Allah, the paramount deity of pagan Arabia, was the target of worship in varying degrees of intensity from the southernmost tip of Arabia to the Mediterranean. To the Babylonians he was "Il" (god); to the Canaanites, and later the Israelites, he was "El", the South Arabians worshipped him as "Ilah," and the Bedouins as "al-Ilah" (the deity). With Muhammad he becomes Allah, God of the Worlds, of all believers, the one and only who admits of no associates or consorts in the worship of Him. Judaic and Christian concepts of God abetted the transformation of Allah from a pagan deity to the God of all monotheists. There is no reason, therefore, to accept the idea that "Allah" passed to the Muslims from Christians and Jews. ([Islam, Beliefs And Observances](#), Caesar E. Farah, p2-7, 26-35)
29. Before the name [Allah] came into Islam, it had already long been part of the pre-Islamic system, and a considerably important part, too...the pagan concept of Allah, which is purely Arabian—the case in which we see the pre-Islamic Arabs themselves talking about "Allah" as they understand the word in their own peculiar way." ([God and Man in The Koran](#), Toshihiko Izutsu, Chapter 4: Allah, p96-119, 1980)
30. Let us begin by remarking that the name itself of Allah is common to Jahiliyyah and Islam. **When, in other words, the Koranic Revelation began to use this word, it was not introducing a new name of God, a name strange and alien to the ears of the contemporary Arabs.** The first problem, then, that we must answer is: **Was the Koranic concept of Allah a continuation of the pre-Islamic one, or did the former represent a complete break with the latter? Were there some essential-not accidental-ties between the two concepts signified by one and the same name? Or was it a simple matter of a common word used for two different objects? ."** ([God and Man in The Koran](#), Toshihiko Izutsu, Chapter 4: Allah, p96-119, 1980)
31. What does this mean from the semantical point of view? What are the implications of the fact that the name of Allah was not only known to both parties but was actually used by both parties in their discussion with each other? The very fact that the name of Allah was

common to both the pagan Arabs and the Muslims, particularly the fact that it gave rise to much heated discussion about the concept of God, would seem to suggest conclusively that there was some common ground of understanding between the two parties.

Otherwise there, could have been neither debate nor discussion at all. And when the Prophet addressed his adversaries in the name of Allah all, he did so simply and solely because he knew that this name meant something and something important to their minds too. If this were not, so, his activity would have been quite pointless in this respect. "

([God and Man in The Koran](#), Toshihiko Izutsu, Chapter 4: Allah, p96-119, 1980)

32. As regards the 'basic' meaning of Allah, we may remark that many Western scholars have compared rightly -to my mind- the word in its formal aspect with the Greek "Ho Theos" which means quite simply 'the God'. On such an abstract level the name was common to all Arab tribes. In pre-Islamic times each tribe, as a rule, had its own local god or divinity known by a proper name. So, at first, each tribe may have meant its own local divinity, when it used an expression equivalent to "the God"; this is quite probable. But the very fact that people began to designate their own local divinity by the abstract form of "the God" must have paved, the way for the growth of an abstract notion of God without any localizing qualification and then, following this, for a belief in the supreme God common to all the tribes. We meet with similar instances all over the world. Besides, we must remember, there were the Jews and the Christians with whom the Arabs had constant opportunities of a close cultural contact. And naturally these Jews and Christians both used the same word Allah to denote their own Biblical God. This must have exerted a great influence on the development of the pre-Islamic concept of Allah among the Arabs towards a higher concept than that of a mere tribal divinity, not only among the town-dwellers but also among the pure Bedouins of the desert. However this may be, it is certain from the Koran alone, that by the time Muhammad began to preach, the pagan Arabs had come to cherish at least a vague idea, and perhaps also a vague belief, in Allah as the highest God standing above the level of local idols. This much we may reasonably assume as the 'basic' meaning, of the word Allah in Jahiliyah. And this much meaning, at least, must the word have carried into the Islamic system when the Koran began to use it as the name of the God of Islamic Revelation. For otherwise, as I have said, even a polemic discussion on this Islamic God could not have been possible between the Muslims and the Meccan pagans. " ([God and Man in The Koran](#), Toshihiko Izutsu, Chapter 4: Allah, p96-119, 1980)
33. However, this is not the whole picture. We would commit a grave mistake if we imagined that this 'basic' meaning was the sole point of contact between the two conceptions of God. The thing did not occur in such a way that the pure concept of Allah with its simple 'basic' meaning or which is suggested by its formal structure -Allah = ho theos - came straight into the Islamic conceptual system falling down, so to speak, from some metaphysical world of pure concepts. But actually, i.e. historically, it came into the Islamic system through another system, namely, the pre-Islamic system of religious concepts, however crude the latter might have been. **Before the name came into Islam, it had already long been part of the pre-Islamic system, and a considerably important part, too.** ([God and Man in The Koran](#), Toshihiko Izutsu, Chapter 4: Allah, p96-119, 1980)
34. To put it in another way, when the Islamic Revelation began, the pagan Arabs of Mecca could possibly have no other way of understanding the word Allah than by associating with it all the semantic elements that were already present in their minds. This was the

first big semantic problem which faced the Prophet Muhammad when he started his prophetic career. ... The chief of those objectionable elements was the idea that Allah, although admittedly the supreme God, allowed of the existence of so-called "associates" shuraka' besides Him. But apart from this polytheistic element and some other less important points, the Koran acknowledges that the general concept of Allah entertained by the contemporary Arabs was surprisingly close to the Islamic concept of God. ([God and Man in The Koran](#), Toshihiko Izutsu, Chapter 4: Allah, p96-119, 1980)

35. The first is the pagan concept of Allah, which is purely Arabian-the case in which we see the pre-Islamic Arabs themselves talking about "Allah" as then, understand the word in their own peculiar way ... (II) The case in which we observe the Jews and the Christians of pre-Islamic times using the very word Allah in referring to their own God. In this case "Allah" means of course the God of the Bible, a typically monotheistic concept of God. Exceedingly interesting examples are found in this respect, for instance, in the work of 'Adi b. Zayd, a well-known Arab Christian, the Court poet of al-Hirah. (III) Lastly, the case in which we see the pagan Arabs - non-Christian, non-Jewish pure Jahili Arabs - handling the Biblical concept of God under the name of "Allah".([God and Man in The Koran](#), Toshihiko Izutsu, Chapter 4: Allah, p96-119, 1980)
36. **II THE CONCEPT OF ALLAH IN ARABIAN PAGANISM** (1) Allah in this conception, is the Creator of the world. (2) He is the Giver of rain, i.e., more generally, the Giver of life to all living things on earth. (3) He is the One who presides over the most solemn oaths. (4) He is the object of what we might justly describe as "momentary?" or "temporary" monotheism, the existence of which is evidenced by the recurrent expression in the Koran "making (momentarily) their faith pure for Him alone" (5) Finally, Allah is the Lord of Ka'bah. ([God and Man in The Koran](#), Toshihiko Izutsu, Chapter 4: Allah, p96-119, 1980)
37. "The relation of this name, which in Babylonia and Assyria became a generic term simply meaning 'god', to the Arabian Ilah familiar to us in the form Allah, which is compounded of al, the definite article, and Ilah by eliding the vowel 'i', is not clear. Some scholars trace the name to the South Arabian Ilah, a title of the Moon god, but this is a matter of antiquarian interest...it is clear from Nabataen and other inscriptions that Allah meant 'the god.' The other gods mentioned in the Quran are all female deities: Al-Lat, al-Uzza, and Manat, which represented the Sun, the planet Venus, and Fortune, respectively; at Mecca they were regarded as the daughters of Allah... As Allah meant 'the god', so Al-Lat means 'the goddess'." ([Islam](#), Alfred Guillaume, 1956, p 6-7)
38. Apparently, then, Allah was, already in the conception of the pre-Islamic Arabs the Creator of the world and the Giver of rain, i.e., the Giver of life to all that exists on earth. The only serious complaint brought against them by the Qur'an in this respect was that the pagans failed to draw the only reasonable conclusion from the acknowledgment of Allah's being the Creator of the heaven and the earth: that they should serve Allah alone and none else. ([God and Man in The Koran](#), Toshihiko Izutsu, Chapter 4: Allah, p96-119, 1980)
39. It is indeed remarkable that this expression implies that in an emergency when they really felt that their own life was in mortal danger, the pagan Arabs used to have recourse to 'temporary monotheism' apparently without any reflection on the grave implication of such an act. That the phrase "making one's religion pure for Allah" in contexts of this kind means what we might call 'momentary -or temporary- monotheism', and not simply

"sincerity" or "earnestness" in one's prayer is clearly shown by the fact that in the majority of the verses in which this expression is used the Koran adds the remark that these pagans, as soon as they reach the shore and feel sure of absolute safety, forget about all that has passed and begin again "to ascribe partners to Allah", i.e., fall back into their original polytheism. ([God and Man in The Koran](#), Toshihiko Izutsu, Chapter 4: Allah, p96-119, 1980)

40. "The enemies tried hard against me", he says, "without desisting from doing anything that could harm me, by the Lord of Mecca and the 'Crucified'. ... In this verse 'Adi b. Zayd claims his complete innocence and says that the misunderstanding on the part of the king has been produced only by the machination of the slanderers envious of his good fortune, and in order to give special weight to this declaration he swears by the Lord of Mecca and Christ putting together the two "Lords" into a single oath. What is important to remember regarding this verse is that the poet 'Adi b. Zayd was an Arab Christian, but he was neither a simple Arab nor an ordinary Christian. He was a man of the highest culture of his age. ... The fact that this man of highest culture and education put in one of his solemn oaths the Lord of Mecca and Christ together is significant, in My view, in two different ways: it is of importance, first of all, in connection with the problem of the relational meaning of the word Allah in its purely Arabian aspect. That a highly educated Christian, not a pagan Arab, living in Hirah, away from Mecca, did use this concept of the Lord of Ka'bah in this way shows better than anything else how wide-spread and influential was this particular connotation of Allah. ... The example of 'Adi b. Zayd's verse would seem to suggest, at least to my mind, that there was in the Christian psychology an unconscious tendency or inclination towards identifying -their Christian concept of Allah with the purely pagan Arabian concept of Allah as the Lord of the Meccan shrine. ([God and Man in The Koran](#), Toshihiko Izutsu, Chapter 4: Allah, p96-119, 1980)
41. Both the Jews and the Christians in Arabia used Arabic as their vernacular, and, as I have pointed out earlier, referred to their Biblical God by the very word Allah, which was something quite natural seeing that the 'basic' meaning conveyed by this word was a very abstract one that would correspond roughly to the Greek *ho theos*. ([God and Man in The Koran](#), Toshihiko Izutsu, Chapter 4: Allah, p96-119, 1980)
42. It is clear from the negative form of the Muslim creed, "There is no god except God," that the existence and lordship of Allah were known and recognized in pre-Islamic Arabia. The Prophet's mission was not to proclaim God's existence but to deny the existence of all lesser deities. The fact that Muhammad's own father bore the name 'Abd-Allah, slave of God, demonstrates that God was known by that name prior to Islam. The Qur'an in many passages refers to Muhammad's adversaries in Mecca, swearing by God, invoking Him, and recognizing His sovereignty as Creator. The name Allah is also evident in archaeological and literary remains of pre-Islamic Arabic. But the people of Mecca did not understand or allow that God alone should be worshipped. Indeed they contended against Muhammad that if God had willed it they would have refrained from believing in other deities (Surah vi. 148), clearly implying that God approved of their concurrent idolatry. ([The Call of The Minaret](#), Kenneth Cragg, 1956, 35-41)
43. There can be no doubt then that the Prophet's contemporaries knew of a Supreme Being, but He did not dominate their minds. Rather they thought more directly and frequently of the lesser gods, the daughters, perhaps even the sons, of Allah who were far more

intimately related to their daily lives, their wars, their harvests, and their fertility. ([The Call of The Minaret](#), Kenneth Cragg, 1956, 35-41)

44. Certain trees and stones (especially meteorites and those shaped to resemble human forms) housed spirits and divinities. ([Mohammed](#), Maxime Rodinson, 1961, translated by Anne Carter, 1971, p 16-17)
45. This was especially true of Allah, 'the God, the Divinity', the personification of the divine world in its highest form, creator of the universe and keeper of sworn oaths. In the Hejaz three goddesses had pride of place as the 'daughters of Allah'. The first of these was Allat, mentioned by Herodotus under the name of Alilat. Her name means simply 'the goddess', and she may have stood for one aspect of Venus, the morning star, although hellenized Arabs identified her with Athene. Next came Uzza, 'the all-powerful', whom other sources identify with Venus. The third was Manat, the goddess of fate, who held the shears which cut the thread of life and who was worshipped in a shrine on the sea-shore. The great god of Mecca was Hubal, an idol made of red cornelian. ([Mohammed](#), Maxime Rodinson, 1961, translated by Anne Carter, 1971, p 16-17)
46. In recent years I have become increasingly convinced that for an adequate understanding of the career of Muhammad and the origins of Islam great importance must be attached to the existence in Mecca of belief in Allah as a 'high god'. In a sense this is a form of paganism, but it is so different from paganism as commonly understood that it deserves separate treatment. Moreover there is much about it in the Qur'an. The first point to note is that the pagans are prepared to admit that Allah is the creator of the heavens and the earth. ([Muhammad's Mecca](#), W. Montgomery Watt, Chapter 3: Religion In Pre-Islamic Arabia, p26-45)
47. The Arabic word for 'God', Allah, is a contraction of al-ilah, which like the Greek ho theos simply means 'the god' but was commonly understood as 'the supreme god' or 'God'. It is possible that before the time of Muhammad the Meccan pagans used to indicate the principal deity of the Ka'bah, in the same way in which the deity worshipped at at-Ta'if was known simply as al-Lat, the goddess. If the word Allah was also used for God as acknowledged by Jews and Christians, the opportunities for confusion would be great. The probability therefore is that while some Meccans acknowledged God, they did not see that their old polytheistic beliefs were incompatible with belief in God and reject them. These premonitions of monotheism among the Arabs must have been due mainly to Christian and Jewish influences. The Arabs had many opportunities of contact with Christians and Jews. The Byzantine empire, whose power and higher civilization they greatly admired, was Christian, and so was Abyssinia. Even in the Persian empire Christianity was strong, and al-Hirah, the Persian vassal-state with which the Arabs were much in contact, was an outpost of the East Syrian or Nestorian Church. This combination of monotheism with military and political strength and a higher level of material civilization must have impressed the Arabs greatly. ([Muhammad at Mecca](#), W. Montgomery Watt, 1953, p 23-29)
48. All this material goes to show that among the pagans in Mecca and presumably also in the region round there was widespread recognition of Allah as high god. Such people may even have been more numerous than those who gave no special place to Allah, and they may have differed among themselves about the powers of a high god. This conclusion has been reached from a study of the Qur'an, and refers to a relatively small region during a restricted period. The study of inscriptions, however, has shown that

belief in a high or supreme god was common throughout the Semitic Near East in the Greco-Roman period. It is worth quoting the conclusions of one who has made a thorough study of the inscriptions. It is worth quoting the conclusions of one who has made a thorough study of the inscriptions: "The epigraphical material reveals that the worship of a supreme god coexisted with that of other minor gods. The belief that one god is able to control all the other gods, or is supreme in that he has created and looks after the world, does not constitute monotheism. But the increasing emphasis on such beliefs is evidence of a trend towards monotheism, namely towards the exclusion of other gods' existence." [Javier Teixidor, *The Pagan God: Popular Religion in the Greco-Roman Near East*, Princeton 1977, 17.] "The authors of the inscriptions worshipped a supreme god who was alone in possessing a power that excelled any other divine power. He was believed to be a Weather god; heaven belonged to him. Lesser gods were his messengers and ministers. As stated in the first chapter, the cult of the angels became a significant feature of the religious life of the Near East during the Persian and Hellenistic times. It gave the angels their role of messengers, but also stressed the fact that the Lord of Heaven ranked at the top of a hierarchy of divine beings. On the other hand, the religious life of the various groups whose inscriptions have been studied in the preceding pages was rooted in the traditions of the ancestors." [Javier Teixidor, *The Pagan God: Popular Religion in the Greco-Roman Near East*, Princeton 1977, 161f.] In the light of this further evidence it becomes highly probable that when Muhammad began preaching the dominant view among thinking people in Mecca was the belief in Allah as high god. Pure paganism was in decline. ([Muhammad's Mecca](#), W. Montgomery Watt, Chapter 3: Religion In Pre-Islamic Arabia, p26-45)

49. North Arabian deities. Among the peoples around the northern perimeter of Arabia, "god," in the most generic sense, was El, or in a longer form of the same name, Ilah. ([Britannica](#), Arabian Religions, p1057, 1979)
50. "Allah: Before the birth of Muhammad, Allah was known as a supreme, but not sole, God." ([Oxford Dictionary of World Religions](#), 1997, p. 48)
51. "Origin- Nabataean and Arabic: Derived from the western Semitic god Il. ... Known period of worship: circa 300 BC until present. ... The creator god of Islam. Perceived in pre-Islamic times as the creator of the earth and water" ([Encyclopedia of Gods, Michael Jordan](#), Allah, p 12)
52. "Despite the prominence of the name elsewhere among Semitic peoples, the god Il (El) appears to play a comparatively minor role in the South Arabian inscriptions. Some modern scholars have sought to explain this circumstance by equating Il with the moon god, but this opinion has not prevailed." ... "Among the peoples around the northern perimeter of Arabia, "god," in the most generic sense, was El, or in a longer form of the same name, Ilah. ([Britannica](#), [Arabian Religions](#), p1057, 1979)
53. Allah was known to the pre-Islamic Arabs; he was one of the Meccan deities, possibly the supreme deity and certainly a creator-god (cf. Kur'an, xiii, 16; xxix, 61, 63; xxxi, 25; xxxix, 38; xliii, 87). He was already known, by antonomasia, as the God, al-Ilah (the most likely etymology; another suggestion is the Aramaic Alaha). For Allah before Islam, as shown by archaeological sources and the Kur'an, see ILAH. ([The Encyclopaedia Of Islam](#), New Edition, Edited By B. Lewis, V. L. Menage, Ch. Pellat And J. Schacht, 1971, ALLAH, page 406)

54. But the vague notion of supreme (not sole) divinity, which Allah seems to have connoted in Meccan religion, was to become both universal and transcendental; it was to be turned, by the Kur'anic preaching, into the affirmation of the Living God, the Exalted One. ([The Encyclopaedia Of Islam](#), New Edition, Edited By B. Lewis, V. L. Menage, Ch. Pellat And J. Schacht, 1971, ALLAH, page 406)
55. ALLAH is the proper name of God among Muslims, corresponding in usage to Jehovah (Jahweh) among the Hebrews. Thus it is not to be regarded as a common noun meaning 'God' (or 'god'), and the Muslim must use another word or form if he wishes to indicate any other than his own peculiar deity. Similarly, no plural can be formed from it, and though the liberal Muslim may admit that Christians or Jews call upon Allah, he could never speak of the Allah of the Christians or the Allah of the Jews. ([Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics](#), James Hastings, Allah p 326)
56. "The origin of this goes back to pre-Muslim times, as Prof. Noldeke has shown" ([Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics](#), James Hastings, Allah p 326)
57. Muhammad found the Meccans believing in a supreme God whom they called Allah, thus already contracted. With Allah, however, they associated other minor deities, some evidently tribal, others called daughters of Allah. Muhammad's reform was to assert the solitary existence of Allah. The first article of the Muslim creed, therefore, La ilaha illa-llahu means only, as addressed by him to the Meccans, 'There exists no God except the one whom you already call Allah.' Naturally, this precise historical origin is not clear to the Muslim exegetes and theologians. But that Allah is a proper name, applicable only to their peculiar God, they are certain, and they mostly recognize that its force as a proper name has arisen through contraction in form and limitation in usage. ([Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics](#), James Hastings, Allah p 326)
58. The preferable view is that Allah is a proper name of God and has no derivation; this he defends with arguments based on the undoubted usage of the Qur'an and the impossibility of making a common noun apply to an individual only. ([Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics](#), James Hastings, Allah p 326)
59. Broadly, Allah is used of the true God only, as also, in the first instance, al-ilah ; but the latter can by extension be applied to any god, as Allah Himself applies it in the Qur'an. ([Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics](#), James Hastings, Allah p 326) [This, of course, is a complete reversal of the historical fact.]
60. "In any case it is extremely important fact that Muhammad did not find it necessary to introduce an altogether novel deity, but contented himself with ridding the heathen Allah of his companions subjecting him to a kind of dogmatic purification." ([Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics](#), I:664.)
61. Comment: Allah is a term Muslims use to distinguish their moon god. The term was in existence before Muhammad was born. However it has no history of use outside the Arabic world, as Muslims claim. For example, it is not found in the Bible or in any Jewish or Christian writings. The moon god, however, does have a long history that dates back to the time of Abraham.
62. The final divinity to be considered is Allah who was recognized before Islam as god, and if not as the only god at least as a supreme god. The Quran makes it quite clear that he was recognized at Mecca, though belief in him was certainly more widespread .78 How is this to be explained? Earlier scholars attributed the diffusion of this belief solely to Christian and Judaic influences. But now a growing number of authors maintain that this

idea had older roots in Arabia. Wellhausen's view that Allah (al-ilah, "the god") is a sort of abstraction which (originating in the local gods) gave rise first to a common word, then a common concept that merged the various gods into one single god has rightly been judged inadequate. One must rather see in this pre-Islamic Allah one of those great supreme gods who created the world but who plays a minor role in the actual cult. 79 If, therefore, Allah is indigenous to Arabia, one must ask further: Are there indications of a nomadic origin? I think there are, based on a comparison of the beliefs of the nomads in central and northern Asia with those of northeastern Africa. Like the supreme being of many other nomads, Allah is a god of the sky and dispenser of rain. 80 These indications might not seem sufficiently peculiar to Bedouin, for the notion of such a god might just as well have been formed by settled farming people. But one must not forget that rain is even more important for nomads. ([Studies on Islam](#), edited by Merlin L. Swartz, Pre-Islamic Bedouin Religion, by Joseph Henninger, 1981, p 3-22)

63. "...the Ka'aba was dedicated to al-Ilah, the High God of the pagan Arabs, despite the presiding effigy of Hubal. By the beginning of the seventh century, al-Ilah had become more important than before in the religious life many of the Arabs. Many primitive religions develop a belief in a High God, who is sometimes called the Sky God...But they also carried on worshipping the other gods, who remained deeply important to them." ([Karen Armstrong, Muhammad](#), (New York: San Francisco, 1992) p. 69.)
64. From the Koran itself it is clear that monotheistic ideas were familiar in Western Arabia. The existence of a supreme God, Allah, is assumed as an axiom common to Mohammed and his opponents. The Koran never argues the point; what it does argue is that He is the one and only God. *La ilaha illa'llah*, 'there is no god but Allah.' Mohammedanism, An Historical Survey H.A.R. Gibb, 1950, [The Koran](#), p 36-47
65. "Allah, the Supreme Being of the Mussulmans: Before Islam. **That the Arabs, before the time of Muhammed, accepted and worshipped, after a fashion, a supreme god called Allah,--"the Ilah, or the god, if the form is of genuine Arabic source; if of Aramaic, from Alaha, "the god"—seems absolutely certain.** Whether he was an abstraction or a development from some individual god, such as Hubal, need not here be considered...But they also recognized and tended to worship more fervently and directly other strictly subordinate gods...It is certain that they regarded particular deities (mentioned in liii. 19-20 are al-'Uzza, Manat or Manah, al-Lat'; some have interpreted vii, 179 as a reference to a perversion of Allah to Allat as daughters of Allah (vi. 100; xvi, 59; xxxvii, 149; liii, 21); they also asserted that he had sons (vi. 100)..."There was no god save Allah". This meant, for Muhammed and the Meccans, that of all the gods whom they worshipped, Allah was the only real deity. It took no account of the nature of God in the abstract, only of the personal position of Allah. ...ilah, the common noun from which Allah is probably derived..." ([First Encyclopedia of Islam, E.J. Brill](#), 1987, Islam, p. 302)
66. "The name Allah goes back before Muhammad" ([The Facts on File Encyclopedia of World Mythology and Legend](#), Anthony S. Mercatante, I:41, 1983)

## Archaeological photo gallery of the Arabian Moon-God

The names of the moon god in Arabia were Wadd, `Amm, Sin, Il Mukah, [Hubal](#) and [Allah](#).



## Islam: Truth or Myth? [start page](#)

### **The crescent moon symbol of Islam is a remnant of ancient pagan moon worship.**

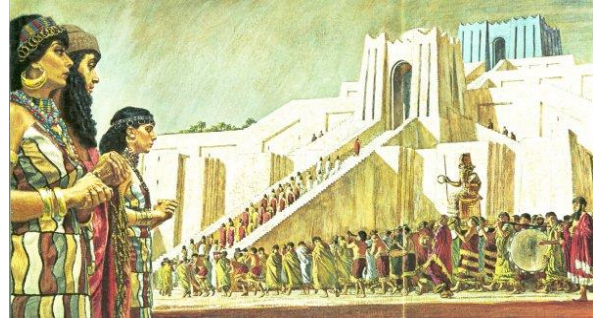
Muhammad grew up worshipping many pagan gods in the Kabah including the moon, either called [Hubal](#) and [Allah](#). After his conversion to monotheism, through the influence of Christians, Muhammad stopped worshipping the moon. The same is true for all Muslims since, down to the present day. However, the crescent moon is the universal symbol of Islam. Muslims will argue that there is no archeological evidence for the crescent moon symbol being used in Islam for the first few centuries after Muhammad. Yet Muslims also claim that Koran in its completed form existed in the time of Muhammad, yet there is no archeological evidence for this claim either. What we can be sure of, is the moon worship was more prevalent in Arabia than any other part of the world and that the symbol of the crescent moon has been used by the Arab religions as far back as the time of Abraham. It is a falsification of history to think there is no connection with the history of the crescent moon symbol of pagan moon god worship and Islam. The fact remains that most Arab/Muslim countries today still use the crescent moon symbol on their flags and atop of their mosques. The connection is so powerful that only the blind would reject any connection.



### **Sîn: Moon god in 2100 BC**

"Sin.—The moon-god occupied the chief place in the astral triad. Its other two members, Shamash the sun and Ishtar the planet Venus, were his children. Thus it was, in effect, from the night that light had emerged....In his physical aspect Sin—who was venerated at Ur under the name of Nannar—was an old man with long beard the color of lapis-lazuli. He normally wore a turban. Every evening he got into his barque—which to mortals appeared in the form of a brilliant crescent moon—and navigated the vast spaces of the nocturnal sky. Some people, however, believed that the luminous crescent was Sin's weapon. But one day the crescent gave way to a disk which stood out in the sky like a gleaming crown. There could be no doubt that this was the god's own crown; and then Sin was called "Lord of the Diadem". These successive and regular transformations lent Sin a certain mystery. For this reason he was considered to be 'He whose deep heart no god can penetrate'... Sin was also full of wisdom. At the end of every month the gods came to consult them and he made decisions for them...His wife was Ningal, 'the great Lady'. He was the father not only of Shamash and Ishtar but also of a son Nusku, the god fire." ([Larousse Encyclopedia of Mythology](#), 1960, p 54-56)

The worship of the Moon god " Sîn" was widespread and common during the time of Abraham. Contrary to Muslim claims, Abraham was asked to leave Ur of the Chaldees where the moon god Sîn was worshipped and migrate to Canaan and worship Jehovah. The Ur of Chaldees is in the region of Babylon.



The Mesopotamian Ziggurat: Temple of the moon God 2100 BC.

"Sîn, moon god of Semitic origin, worshiped in ancient Middle Eastern religions. One of the principal deities in the Babylonian and Assyrian pantheons, he was lord of the calendar and of wisdom. **The chief centers of his worship were** at Harran and **at Ur**, where he was known as Nanna." (encyclopedia.com, Sîn)

The ziggurat of Ur, and the of the moon god Sin who is seen being carried in procession to the temple called the "Hill of Heaven".

The tower of Babal in Gen 10 may in fact have been a Ziggurat.



Above is actual drawing at the British Museum in London.

Nanna was worshipped in the ziggurat of Ur. There was also a smaller temple for Ningal the moon goddess. Nanna was worshipped both by a High Priestess and priests. Great Kings throughout history from Sargon 2600 BC to Nabonidus 550 BC had their daughters officiate as high-priestess of Nanna at Ur. The tradition begins with the first dynasties of Ur around 3400 BC and continued through to the fall of Ur around the time of Nabonidus, a period of some 3000 years. As we shall see this tradition continued for another 1700 years at Harran and still underlies the Islam of today.



"The Sumerians, in the first literate civilization, left thousands of clay tablets describing their religious beliefs. As demonstrated by Sjöberg and Hall, the ancient Sumerians worshipped a moon-god who was called by many different names. The most

popular names were Nanna, Suen, and Asimbabbar" (Mark Hall, *A Study of the Sumerian Moon-god, Sin*, PhD., 1985, University of Pennsylvania).

### **Harran, City of the Moon God**

At the Northernmost end of the Sumerian empire the city of Harran likewise had the Moon Deity as patron God, under the name of Sin. From about 2000 BC to 1200 AD Harran continued an evolving tradition of Moon God worship. Harran is the place of Abraham's family and ancestors and the centre of many of the early events of genesis, including the naming of Israel. As described by Ezekiel 27:23, Harran along with Sheba and other cities were traders 'in blue clothes and brodered work, in chests of rich apparel , bound with cords and made of cedar.'

The status of Sin was so great that from 1900 BC to 900 BC his name is witness to the forging of international treaties as the guarantor of the word of kings. The temple was resotred by Shalmanester of Assyria in the 9th century BC, and again by Asshurbanipal. About 550 BC, Nabonidus the last king of Babylon, who originated from Harran, rebuilt the temple of the Moon God, directed by a dream. His mother was high priestess at Harran and his daughter at Ur. Ironically his devotion to the Moon God caused a rfit between him and his people and contributed to his defeat by the Persians. The worship of the Moon God at Harran evolved with the centuries. It included E-hul-hul, the Temple of Rejoicing, and a set of temples of distinctive shape and colour dedicated to each of the seven planets as emissaries of the cosmic deity. Many of the descriptions of Harran through Christian and Moslem eyes include exaggerated tales of sacrifice which are probably not factual. It was said by one writer that they sacrificed a different character or type of human to each planet. A garlanded black bull was however sacrificed in public ceremony, as the bull was



Star and Crescent of Harran coin



Sign of sin



Stele of Nabonidus

at Ur, and Moslem sources refer to seasonal weeping for Ta'uz at Harran, and up to the 10th century among bedouin in the desert.

"His symbol was the crescent moon. Given the amount of artifacts concerning the worship of this moon-god, it is clear that this was the dominant religion in Sumeria. The cult of the moon-god was the most popular religion throughout ancient Mesopotamia. The Assyrians, Babylonians, and Arkkadians took the word *Suen* and transformed it into the word *Sîn* as their favourite name for this deity." (Austin Potts, *The Hymns and Prayers to the Moon-god, Sin*, PhD., 1971, Dropsie College, p.2).

"Sîn is a name essentially Sumerian in origin which had been borrowed by the Semites" (Austin Potts, *The Hymns and Prayers to the Moon-god, Sin*, PhD., 1971, Dropsie College, p 4)

Assyrians had established 20 independent trade colonies throughout Anatolia known as KARUM. It can be said that the Assyrians had developed the most sophisticated trading system of their time



Anatolian mural from Karum - notice the boxed pre-Islamic Crescent-and-Star glyph



Anatolian mural from Karum

Another pre-Islamic crescent moon and star from the same location



close up of Anatolian mural from Karum

In the Ugaritic texts, the moon-god was sometimes called Kusuh.



Ancient Persian Moon-goddess



Ancient Egyptian Moon-goddess

Ur of the Chaldees was so devoted to the moon-god that it was sometimes called Nannar in tablets from that time period. A temple of the moon-god was excavated in Ur by Sir Leonard Woolley. He dug up many examples of moon-worship that are now displayed in the British Museum.



Nannar with the 'three muses' and Eternally Fruiting Orb - Ur-Nammu (Maspero 655)

Harran was likewise noted for its devotion to the moon-god. is shown to the right. Note the presence of the crescent moon on the Babylonian moon-god.



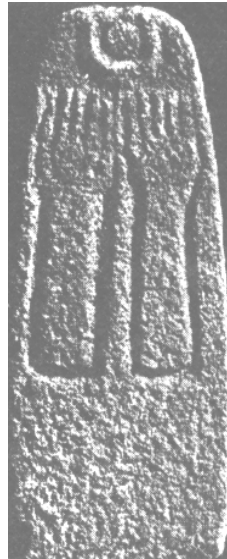
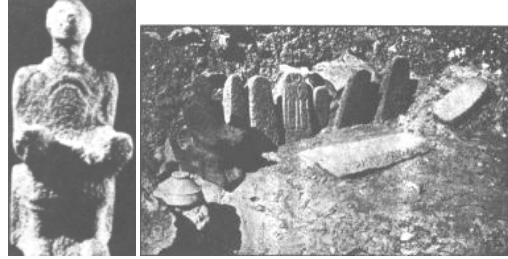
## Moon God Aksum 0-600 AD

Moon God Aksum 0-600 AD



## Yerah - The Moon God of Canaan

In the 1950's a major temple to the moon-god was excavated at Hazor in Palestine. Two idols of the moon-god were found. Each was a statue of a man sitting upon a throne with a crescent moon carved into his chest (below left). The accompanying inscriptions make it clear that these were idols of the moon-god (below right). The worship tablet found at the same sight shows arms outstretched towards the Moon-god here represented by the full moon within the crescent moon. Several smaller statues were also found which were identified by their inscriptions as the daughters of the moon-god.



Thousands of inscriptions from walls and rocks in northern Arabia have also been collected. Reliefs and votive bowls used in worship of the "daughters of Allah" have also been discovered. The three daughters, Al-Lat, Al-

- Isaac Rabinowitz, *Aramaic Inscriptions of the Fifth Century*, JNES, XV, 1956, pp.1-9;
- Another Aramaic Record of the North Arabian goddess Han'Llat, JNES,

Uzza, and Manat are sometimes depicted together with Allah the moon-god represented by a crescent moon above them (North Arabian archaeological finds concerning Al-Lat are discussed in:

- XVIII, 1959, pp.154-55
- Edward Linski, The Goddess Atirat in Ancient Arabia, in *Babylon and in Ugarit: Her Relation to the Moon-god and the Sun-goddess*, *Orientalia Lovaniensia Periodica*, 3:101-9
- H.J.Drivers, *Iconography and Character of the Arab Goddess Allat*, found in *Études Preliminaires Aux Religions Orientales Dans L'Empire Roman*, ed. Maarten J. Verseren, Leiden, Brill, 1978, pp.331-51)

Nabonidus the last King of Babylon, (555-539 BC), built Tayma, Arabia, as a centre of moon-god worship.

"South Arabia's stellar religion has always been dominated by the Moon-god in various variations" (Berta Segall, *The Iconography of Cosmic Kingship*, the Art Bulletin, vol.xxxviii, 1956, p.77).

In 1944, G. Caton Thompson revealed in her book, *The Tombs and Moon Temple of Hureidah*, that she had uncovered a temple of the moon-god in southern Arabia. The symbols of the crescent moon and no less than 21 inscriptions with the name Sîn were found in this temple.



In 1944, G. Caton Thompson also found an idol which is probably the moon-god himself was also discovered. This was later confirmed by other well-known archaeologists



Richard Le Baron Bower Jr. and Frank P. Albright, *Archaeological Discoveries in South Arabia*, Baltimore, John Hopkins University Press, 1958, p.78ff

Ray Cleveland, *An Ancient South Arabian Necropolis*, Baltimore, John Hopkins University Press, 1965; Nelson Gleuck, *Deities and Dolphins*, New York, Farrar, Strauss and Giroux, 1965).

This MAY be the moon god but it is not certain check the references.

## Modern usage of the moon god symbol in Islam and Arab nations



**Islam: Truth or Myth?** [start page](#)

Modern usage of the moon god symbol in Islam and Arab nations is a throw back to when the Arabs all worshipped the moon.

Flags of  
Arab nations:



Every  
mosque has  
the moon  
god symbol  
on top of it



Maqam Ibrahim beside the Kaba has the moon god symbol on top of it



## The Bible condemns moon god worship



**Islam: Truth or Myth?** [start page](#)

### The Bible condemns moon worship:

1. "And *beware*, lest you lift up your eyes to heaven and see the sun and the moon and the stars, all the host of heaven, and be drawn away and worship them and serve them, those which the Lord your God has allotted to all the peoples under the whole heaven." Deut 4:19
2. "and has gone and served other gods and worshiped them, or the sun or the moon or any of the heavenly host, which I have not commanded" Deut 17:3
3. "For he rebuilt the high places which Hezekiah his father had destroyed; and he erected altars for Baal and made an Asherah, as Ahab king of Israel had done, and worshiped all the host of heaven and served them." 2 Kings 21:3
4. "And he did away with the idolatrous priests whom the kings of Judah had appointed to burn incense in the high places in the cities of Judah and in the surrounding area of Jerusalem, also those who burned incense to Baal, to the sun and to the moon and to the constellations and to all the host of heaven." 2 Kings 23:5

5. "And they will spread them out to the sun, the moon, and to all the host of heaven, which they have loved, and which they have served, and which they have gone after, and which they have sought, and which they have worshiped." Jer 8:2
6. "And the houses of Jerusalem and the houses of the kings of Judah will be defiled like the place Topheth, because of all the houses on whose rooftops they burned sacrifices to all the heavenly host and poured out libations to other gods." Jer 19:13
7. "And those who bow down on the housetops to the host of heaven" Zeph 1:5