

Question, is Allah and God the same person?

"Allah" is the Arabic word for "God" and has been so long before the existence of **Islam**. The names "Allah" and "God" are generally interchangeable within the Muslim religion and in Middle Eastern cultures. Some English translations of the Qur'an (Koran) use the name "God," others use "Allah." This sometimes comes as a surprise to Christians who were raised in Western cultures. Among former Muslims, many converts to Christianity commonly refer to God as "Allah." (This is despite the fact that they recognize clear differences in the character of God as described by the Bible compared to Islamic writings. For example, although Christians, Muslims and Jews firmly believe there is only one God, Christians have the additional doctrine of the **Trinity**.)

Of course, the word "God" does not actually appear in the original **Hebrew** or Greek manuscripts of the Bible, accepted as Holy by both Christians and Muslims. "God" is an old English word which developed from an Indo-European word, meaning "that which is invoked," which is also the ancestor of the German word *Gott* (meaning: God).

The Navigators, a well-known evangelical Christian organization, published the following:

"...It's interesting to observe that, in rejecting the Athenian's erroneous concept of God, Paul did not reject the word they used for God, Theos, which was the common Greek word for God.

Some Christians unthinkingly say 'Allah is not God.' This is the ultimate **blasphemy** to Muslims, and furthermore, it is difficult to understand. Allah is the primary Arabic word for God. It means 'The God.' There are some minor exceptions. For example, the Bible in some Muslim lands uses a word for God other than Allah (Farsi and Urdu are examples). But for more than five hundred years before Muhammad, the vast majority of Jews and Christians in Arabia called God by the name Allah. How, then, can we say that Allah is an invalid name for God? If it is, to whom have these Jews and Christians been praying?

And what about the 10 to 12 million Arab Christians today? They have been calling God 'Allah' in their Bibles, hymns, poems, writings, and worship for over nineteen centuries. What an insult to them when we tell them not to use this word 'Allah!' Instead of bridging the distance between Muslims and Christians, we widen the gulf of separation between them and us when we promote such a doctrine. Those who still insist that it is blasphemy to refer to God as Allah should also consider that Muhammad's father was named Abd Allah, 'God's servant,' many years before his son was born or Islam was founded!"

-excerpted from *BUILDING BRIDGES* by Fouad Accad (Colorado Springs, CO: Navpress)

The publishing arm of the Moody Bible Institute published the following:

"Whenever it is postulated that Christians and Muslims worship the same God, there are some-both Christians and Muslims-who say this is simply untrue. Those who raise objections generally agree that Christians and Muslims worship one God, but will not accept the statement that they worship the same God. Admittedly, this problem is probably more of a Christian problem than it is a Muslim problem. Once a Muslim is ready to acknowledge that God can be known by a name other than Allah (i.e., God, Onyame, etc.), he will generally agree that Christians and Muslims worship 'the same God.' At the same time, he will insist, however, that Christians err in 'associating' (shirk) others with God. This conclusion grows out of the common misunderstanding among Muslims, based partially on the Quran (5:119), that Christians worship a Trinity of Father, Mother, and Son.

The problem as it confronts Christians is another kind of a problem altogether. It is a question of whether you can say you are worshipping the same God when you have such different understandings of the nature of God. Those who are troubled by this concern say that although Christians and Muslims use the same name for God and many of the same words to describe Him, they are not talking about the same God because Christians are talking about the Triune God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit..."

-excerpted from *REACHING MUSLIMS FOR CHRIST: A Handbook for Christian Outreach Among Muslims* by William J. Saal (Chicago: Moody Press, 1991) (© 1991 Arab World Ministries).

I do agree that some Moslems who call on Allah may be calling on a false Allah just as some so-called Christians and Jews may call on a false God.

Just as Paul said in 2 Co 11:4 "For if he who comes preaches another Jesus whom we have not preached, or if you receive a different spirit which you have not received ----".

Does this indicate that there can be a true Jesus and a false Jesus.

Look up all the 99 Arabic names for Allah. They sound like the God I know.

Of course we can all misrepresent Him, and convey a wrong concept of Him, but He never changes.

We welcome some further constructive dialogue on this subject.

Blessings, John (Walton)

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