



Allah vs. Yahweh / Tawhid vs. Trinity

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One of the most common points on which Muslims attack Christians is on the whole question of the nature of God: in short, is God uni-personal or multi-personal? Does the doctrine of tawhid (God's oneness) or Trinity better describe who God is? This seminar will demonstrate that the Trinity is scriptural and consonant with logic, and will turn the whole question around and equip attendees to argue that it is the Muslim concept of God which is deeply flawed. Not only does their wholly monistic concept of God have serious weaknesses, but it will be argued that the Qur'an and Islamic sources are deeply ambivalent on the nature of that unity. In short, their doctrine of the Qur'an's eternal nature calls their whole tawhid doctrine into question.

Part 1: THINKING ABOUT GOD'S NATURE

1. INTRODUCTION

2. GENERAL SIMILARITIES

- 2.1 Seven Areas of general similarity
- 2.2 Muslims will say: "We believe basically the same thing!"
- 2.3 Agreement **That** God Does these, but not **How** He does them.

3. INCONSISTENCIES IN ALLAH'S CHARACTER

- 3.1 The Just vs. The Deceiver
- 3.2 Power over Love

Part 2: SOME PHILOSOPHICAL PROBLEMS WITH THE ISLAMIC DOCTRINE OF TAWHID AND A CONTRAST WITH THE DOCTRINE OF THE TRINITY

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 *Tawhid* a central doctrine of Islam
- 1.2 Muslims claim that because of it, Islam is 'simple'
- 1.3 Muslims often attack Christians on the area of the Trinity, perceiving it as our area of weakness and their area of strength
- 1.4 We need to turn this around

2. THE CENTRALITY OF TAWHID QUESTIONED: IS ALLAH A MONOD?

- 2.1 Absence of the nominal form *tawhid* in the Qur'an
- 2.2 The Qur'an's eternal nature and the Mu'tazilite controversy
- 2.3 The throne, the pen and the book — other eternal entities?
- 2.4 Allah's transcendence and the necessity of angelic intermediaries

3 PROBLEMS WITH TAWHID

- 3.1 Allah's 99 names: ontological attributes?
- 3.2 Attributes of Allah that require a second party
- 3.3 If Allah is a monad, some of his attributes are contingent upon his creation

4 THE CHRISTIAN CONCEPT OF GOD AS TRIPERSONAL

- 4.1 From theophany to incarnation to Trinity
- 4.2 A God who is active versus a God who is static and limited under *tawhid*
- 4.3 The Trinity and the *imago dei* (Gen 1:26-27)
- 4.4 The problem of the one and the many solved

5 CONCLUSION

Christians need to see the Trinity as a philosophical and theological trump card, not as something we need to 'defend' out of weakness.