

# Ultimate 1: Allah

A. W. Tozer reflects in his Christian classic *“The Knowledge of the Holy”* about God with these remarkable thoughts: “What comes to our minds when we think about God is the most important thing about us. Worship is pure or base as the worshiper entertains high or low thoughts of God. Low views of God destroy the Gospel for all who hold them.

*At the root of idolatry is nourishing thoughts about God that are unworthy of Him.”*

**1. What are our thoughts about God?** – Religion can basically be understood as creating our own image of the Almighty / Supreme one and the various religions offer many different ideas about him. Where would you fit these in?

- The gods are constantly envious and fighting against each other; man is somehow in between them and has to be smart how to get the most powerful ones on his side > Greek
- We have to appease the gods with sacrifices and offerings to get them conditioned into a favourable mood towards us > many Eastern religions
- God is tired and moody; you have to wake him up and put him into a good spirit > Baal
- God is like an old man with a long beard, always smiling and too fragile to do anything about the problems or the bad guys in this world > Western world (“christianized materialism”)
- You must bring offerings to god, but since they are too weak to act you can snatch things from them again > Bhuddism
- God is great, but far removed from us and our needs > Islam
- If we perform the right rituals, god is obliged to help and defend us > Judaism

## 2. Who is Allah in Islam?

- 2.1 His character: *Allah-u-akbar* = greater than (2:255; 55:22-24 > key verses)
- 2.2 His most beautiful names (7:180); however: attributes and names are NOT the same!
- 2.3 The Negatives: It is much clearer what He is not than what He is (see Zwemer’s book)
- 2.4 The three big shortcomings in the Islamic perception of Allah are: No assurance (predetermination), No holiness (just greatness), No relationship (the otherness of Allah - )

**3. In Summary:** The concepts are vastly different despite similarities in vocabulary. Muslims need to know the Lord from His revelation in Scripture. In Jesus Christ they will eventually know Him fully (John 14: 9).

## 4. So, how do we challenge this ultimate?

- 4.1 Portray the living God through your lifestyle and actions (prayer, caring, use of the Bible).
- 4.2 Present and emphasize the very attributes of God that are lacking in the Islamic system (see Al Kitab, chapter 5).
- 4.3 Ask challenging questions and present Islamic source material that will stimulate reflection on relating to the living God.