

# Islam - Allah

by Sophia



## WHAT'S COVERED

In the study of the monotheistic religions, you come across many names for God. In the Judaic tradition, speaking or writing the name of God in full is considered blasphemous. There are many other names used in different contexts to refer to the sole creator god. Today you'll look at Allah, the Supreme and all-comprehensive divine name for God in Islam. Specifically, this lesson will cover:

### 1. Allah

### 2. Names of Allah

#### 2a. Al-Wadud

#### 2b. As-Salam

#### 2c. Rahma

#### 2d. Al-Malik

#### 2e. Al-Quddus

## 1. Allah

**Allah** is unique for Muslims in many different ways. Looking at a well-known Hadith, or saying of the prophet Muhammad: "I was a hidden treasure. I loved to be known. Therefore, I created the creation so that I would be known." All creation is a calling out of Allah's love and compassion, and the names serve to bring one back to Allah.

You might often hear the god of monotheism referred to in the masculine. In Islam, Allah is not considered male or female. Allah may be referred to as both depending on the context. In some teachings, Allah's essence is sometimes understood in the feminine form, but as the creator with attention on the world, the masculine form is used.

The teaching expresses that any apparent dualities are transcended by the divine nature of Allah, which is wholly one and unified. Allah has many qualities that are reflected in creation. For this, the name is given in the Qur'an as Al-Khaliq, the creator. It's generally agreed in the tradition of Islam that the Qur'an offers 99 names for Allah. The names are organized into three categories:

- Perfection
- Majesty
- Beauty

Addressing Allah by one of these names is meant to always refer back to the source. Calling attention to Allah through one of these names expresses the adherent's desire to fully affirm the oneness of Allah. For a Muslim, Allah is the first and the greatest name. All of the other names for Allah in the Qur'an are equally important, and they're meant to be guides to help one return to Allah.



#### DID YOU KNOW

Although non-Muslims sometimes think that "Allah" is a different God than the God worshipped by Jews and Christians, the word "Allah" is simply the Arabic word that means "God," similar to the way "Dios" is the Spanish word for "God." In fact, Arabic speaking Christians also use the word "Allah" when speaking of "God."



#### TERM TO KNOW

#### Allah

In Islam, God, the Supreme Being.

## 2. Names of Allah

### 2a. Al-Wadud

One name is Al-Wadud, "the loving one." In the Qur'an, it states: "surely my Lord is all merciful, all love." This contains the idea that is common to the other Abrahamic traditions that this one god, this single deity, exercises both divine judgment and loving mercy. For a Muslim, Allah's omnipotence includes all forms of judgment and mercy.

### 2b. As-Salam

As-Salam is the name that means "the source of peace." In the Qur'an, it says that when one enters a house, one must offer and receive a greeting from Allah. The customary greeting is "as-salamu alaykum." In the Qur'an, peace is identified with the primordial nature of man and woman. It is a state of perfection that resides within but has been lost and forgotten due to negligence.

The idea is to remember the way home to this state of being internally in a world filled with conflict and imbalance. The name and the greetings function as reminders.

### 2c. Rahma

Such reminders are in the Qur'an as well. Two of them are the divine names Al-Rahman, "the infinitely good and compassionate," and Al-Rahim, "the all-merciful." Each chapter of the Qur'an begins with these names except for one chapter.

For a devout Muslim, the world and all aspects of creation are an expression of this mercy and compassion. The Arabic word or term “Ramah” signifies compassion and mercy, which offers a direct link to Al-Rahman and Al-Rahim, often uttered in the same breath. For a Muslim, these qualities saturate all existence and form an essential aspect of one’s awareness during prayer and worship.

## 2d. Al-Malik

Looking at the idea of governing and ruling, Islamic societies are generally ruled by leaders who are believed to be divinely guided and inspired. Yet Muhammad is understood to have said there is no king that has absolute power except Allah. His name in this case is referred to as “absolute ruler,” Al-Malik.

## 2e. Al-Quddus

One last name that we’ll look at is Al-Quddus, “the pure one.” Allah is infinitely pure and free of imperfections. One can show devotion and respect by trying to emulate this purity and cleanliness in one’s life. This includes:

- Clean faith and belief in the oneness of God, which is called Tawid.
- Clean heart, meaning clean and pure intention.
- Clean action, which has a lot to do with the physical body.

Cleanliness and respect for the body express devotion, positive intention, and love for Allah.



### SUMMARY

In the monotheistic religions, there are many ways of referring to God, and this is true for Islam. The greatest name is **Allah**. There are many other **names of Allah**, which are expressed in the Qur'an.

You looked at several today, including **Al-Khaliq**, the creator; **As-Salam**, source of peace; **Al-Malik**, absolute ruler; **Al-Wadud**, the loving one; **Al-Quddus**, the pure one; and **Al-Rahman** and **Al-Rahim**, infinitely good and compassionate.

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### TERMS TO KNOW

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