

## WHAT DO THE QIBLAS OF THE OLDEST MOSQUES POINT TO?

### Tract M22

From ancient times until well into the 7th century worship of the moon, sun, stars, planets, and even Jinn devils or demons, was the order of the day in Arabia. Many Kaabas were established featuring stone idols that represented these objects of worship, to which the pagans went on pilgrimage and circumambulated in ceremony. Mohammed's own tribe the Quraish went on summer and winter pilgrimages to other sites, long after the Kaaba in Mecca was built, indicating that there were far more important and more firmly established kaabas at which to worship, than the kaaba in Mecca. Might we be able to learn more about the objectives of those early pilgrimages by studying the Qibla of the oldest mosques?

Qibla is an Arabic word that describes the direction in which Muslims are to direct their prayers. Mosques have a niche on the inside wall that indicates the direction to the Kaaba, and it's black stone, in

Mecca. It's interesting to discover that the Qibla of the oldest mosques do not point to Mecca but are off by thirty degrees and more. The Islamic website "Islamic Awareness", includes compass roses that indicate the direction in which the Qiblas of some of the oldest mosques point.

When the angles presented in that website for mosques in Wasit, Baghdad and Cairo, are plotted on a map, they actually **triangulate** to a location almost 500 miles north-northwest of Mecca. This is near Al-`Ula (which was Dedan - inhabited perhaps as early as the 8th century BC), which is near Mada'in Saleh.

There is an interesting Wikipedia article on "Ancient Towns in Saudi Arabia", which of course doesn't mention Mecca, because there is no evidence that suggests that Mecca existed before the 4<sup>th</sup> century AD.

The article does however mention:

"Mada'in Saleh... Also called Al-Hijr, this is an ancient city located in northern Saudi Arabia.... **Mada'in Saleh** is considered to be one of the most important and oldest ancient cities in the country. Mada'in Saleh **lies to the northwest of the city of al-Ula...**"

"Mada'in Saleh was recognized by the UNESCO as a site of patrimony, the first world heritage site in Saudi Arabia. The story of these people called the people of Thamud (including petra) is mentioned several times in the Quran along with prophet Saleh."

The article continues, "A religious area, known as Jabal Ithlib, is

located to the north-east of the site. It is believed to have been originally dedicated to the Nabatean deity Dushara."

The deity Dushara was supposed to have been mothered by Manat. Where else do we find Manat?

Sura 53.19 Have ye seen Lat. and 'Uzza, 20 And another, **the third (goddess), Manat?**

Mohammed recognized Manat as a daughter of Allah in what some have dubbed the "satanic verses" in the Quran. The deity **Manat is also found in pagan Arabian Star Family Worship as a daughter of the moon god.** Isn't that an interesting connection?

How does Manat fit into the Islamic ritual of the Hajj? Much of the following is credited to Dr. Rafat Amari and his book "Islam: In Light of History".

### The Hill of Mina/Muna/Manat

On the second day of Hajj pilgrims depart for the hill Arafa, located east of Mecca. It takes more than four hours to reach this hill by camel. In the middle of the journey to Arafa, there is a place called Muna, currently known as Mina', where they pray the prayer of noon time. Muna is an important place in the Hajj. Both the words Muna and Manat have the same Arabic meaning, "to wish or aspire." Manat was the daughter of Allah. This indicates Muna was dedicated to the worship of Manat.

Manat was the deity that Arabians would appeal to when they needed rain. As mentioned in part 2, at the end of their Hajj, they presented animal sacrifices to Manat.

Manat, originally a planet, was represented by a rock on which sacrifices to the various gods were made during the Hajj ceremonies. According to many narrators, this was due to two factors. First, the word Mana means "to shed blood" suggesting to some narrators that the rock of Manat received its name because of all the sacrifices made on the rock of Manat.

Second, because Manat means "wish or aspiration," it was a place where many tribes came to present their animal sacrifices, which represented their own aspirations and pleading for rain.

### The Cutting of Hair

The cutting of the hair was practiced by some Arabian tribes after a pilgrimage to honor their gods. For example they conducted a pilgrimage to the idol of one of their gods - al-akyaser - where they cut their hair mixed it with flour and tossed it in the air. The same celebration was also observed by many pagan Yemeni tribes. Those same tribes emigrated from Yemen to the area around Medina and Mecca, after the collapse of the dam at Ma'rib in about 150 A.D. Thus cutting hair is still the ritual which ends the Hajj.

Stations of the pre-Islamic Hajj included Arafa, the place where they would stop to worship the sun, and Muzdalifah, where they would stop to worship the moon. Then the Hajj would conclude at Mina, called Muna, the place dedicated to Manat, where they cut their hair and presented their animal sacrifices. This same Hajj was transferred to Islam with the same rituals including the ritual of cutting the hair at Manat.

**"Allah are them, I am here."**

On the third day of Hajj pilgrims continue to the hill called Arafa. They all wear white, indicating a state of consecration, according to tradition. They stand in a plain near a mount called "Jabal Al-Rahmah," which means the "mountain of mercy," and cry in loud voices from afternoon until sunset "Labeik Allahumma Labeik." Allahumma means "Allah, are them," so their cry is translated, "Allah are them, I am here."

The same cry was made by Arabians before Manat. They said:

"Allah are them, I am here. Without the prayerful who come early before you, people will fail and abandon you, but they will still come to you in one pilgrimage after another."

When the Hajj was transferred to Islam it presented the same religious words. When the pagans came to the hill dedicated to the worship of the moon they cried "Allah Akber" which means "Allah is greater." This is because the moon, who was Allah, was viewed as head of the Star Family and was greater than the other members, Ellat, the sun, and Manat and al-'Uzza, two of the planets.

These deities were also mentioned by Mohammed in the Quran. Sura 53.19 Have ye seen Lat. and 'Uzza, 20 And another, **the third (goddess), Manat?**

The cry "Allah is greater" is not an Islamic cry but, rather, a pagan cry which the worshipers of the Star Family used to recite. Pre-Islamic Arabian poetry often honored members of the Star Family by emphasizing Allah as the head of the Star Family by repeating the

words "Allah Akber." For example, Loas Bin Hagar, the Arabian poet of the pre-Islam period, said:

"I swear by Ellat and al-Uzza and all who follow their faith, and in Allah, Allah is greater than they."

It is a simple matter of fact that the Qiblas of the oldest mosques do not point to Mecca, but far more reasonably, pointed to other sites of pagan Arabian idol worship. Indeed it is also a matter of fact, that the Kaaba in Mecca was used for the same, prior to the 7th century A.D. Indeed pagans continued to circumambulate the Kaaba right up until the year before Mohammed's last Hajj.

Sahih Bukhari V 1, Book 8, No 365: Narrated Abu Huraira:

... in the year prior to the last Hajj of the Prophet .... Allah's Apostle .... made the announcement along with us ... **"No pagan is allowed to perform Hajj after this year and no naked person is allowed to perform the Tawaf around the Ka'ba."**

Imagine a bunch of naked pagans and Muslims circumambulating the Kaaba!

If Islam is supposed to have been around since Adam, where are all the mosques that predated Mohammed and the 7th century? What about the one that Mohammed claimed he visited on his overnight ride on a flying animal to Jerusalem, heaven, and back to Mecca by morning?

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