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DID MUHAMMAD DENY THE INCARNATION OR PAGANISM?<sup>1</sup>  
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Arabia Prior to Islam

Prior to the introduction of Islam, the people of the Arabian Peninsula were largely nomadic and principally polytheistic.<sup>3</sup> In the midst of this polytheism, however, there existed a monotheistic minority known as the *Hanifs*. Within some scholarly circles it is believed that the *Hanifs* were a codified group or movement of neo-Abrahamic monotheists entirely independent of Judaism.<sup>4</sup> However, it must be admitted that details from this period of history are scant to say the least and any proposition based upon the known data is ultimately conjecture rather than established fact. It is interesting to note that Khadijah, Muhammad's first wife, had a cousin named Waraqa ibn Naufal who was reported to be a *Hanif*.<sup>5</sup> Further,

<sup>1</sup> This article is adapted from Mr. Hartman's original paper written for Answering Islam entitled, Did Muhammad Deny the Trinity or Paganism? You can view Mr. Hartman's original paper along with many other articles written by various authors by visiting the Answering Islam website: [www.answering-islam.org](http://www.answering-islam.org).

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<sup>3</sup> William Montgomery Watt, *A Short History of Islam* (Boston, MA: OneWorld Oxford Publishing, 1996), p. 9.

<sup>4</sup> Winfried Corduan believes this monotheism represents Arab vestiges of original monotheism. Winfried Corduan, *Neighboring Faiths* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1998), p. 79. Cf. Timothy Tennent, *Christianity at the Religious Roundtable* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2002), p. 143.

<sup>5</sup> Ibn Ishaq, *The Life of Muhammad* translated by Alfred Guillaume (Oxford University Press, 1979), p, 99. Interestingly enough the Qur'an refers to Abraham as a true Muslim *Hanifa*. See Surah 3:67.