

**Robert Morey's**  
**Moon-god Myth**  
**&**  
**Other Deceptive Attacks**  
**On Islam**

**By**

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## Morey's Deceptive Methods

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A Christian acquaintance proudly handed me a copy of a book entitled *The Moon-god Allah in the Archeology of the Middle East* by Dr. Robert Morey. I found the author using a number of deceptive tactics to prove his foregone conclusion that Allah is not the God of the Bible but rather the Moon-god of pre-Islamic Arabia whose worship is now perpetuated within Islam. I will classify his deceptive methods under five broad headings for simplicity of discussion:

1. Misquoting authorities,
2. Concealing evidence,
3. Filling pages with irrelevant information thus giving a false impression of establishing something,
4. Using logical fallacies to establish conclusions, and
5. Drawing conclusions for which no evidence was even suggested, much less established.

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## How Morey Quotes Professor Goon

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Let us now discuss these deceptive methods in some detail. I quote below from Morey's book to see how he argues that Allah was the Moon-god. After we read this I will point out with the help of Allah several of Morey's deceptive methods working together:

According to numerous inscriptions, while the name of the Moon-god was Sin, his title was al-ilah, i.e. "the deity," meaning that he was the chief or high god among the gods. As Goon pointed out, "The god Il or Ilah was originally a phase of the Moon God." The Moon-god was called al-ilah, i.e. the god, which was shortened to Allah in pre-Islamic times. The pagan Arabs even used Allah in the names they gave to their children. For example, both Muhammad's father and uncle had Allah as part of their names. The fact that they were given such names by their pagan parents proves that Allah was the title for the Moon-god even in Muhammad's day. Professor Goon goes on to say, "Similarly, under Mohammed's tutelage, the relatively anonymous Ilah, became Al-Ilah, The God, or Allah, the Supreme Being" (Morey, pp. 10-11).

There are several problems in this short passage from Morey's book.

**The first problem** is that Morey has so misquoted Professor Goon that he makes the quotations say the opposite of what Goon actually said. Notice that he quoted Goon twice. According to Morey's footnote, both quotes come from Carleton S. Goon, *Southern Arabia*, (Washington, D.C. Smithsonian, 1944) p. 399. Very impressive! But I was able to locate these quotes in Professor Goon's book and I found that Morey clipped them out of a larger paragraph. He deceptively left out a crucial part, and separated the other two parts as though they were two unrelated quotes. Here is what Goon actually said:

The god *Il* or *Ilah* was originally a phase of the Moon God, but early in Arabian history the name became a general term for god, and it was this name that the Hebrews used prominently in their personal names, such as Emanu-el, Isra-el, etc., rather than the Ba'al of the northern semites proper, which was the sun. Similarly, under Mohammed's tutelage, the relatively anonymous *Ilah* became *Al-Ilah*, The God, or Allah, the Supreme Being (Carleton S. Goon, *Southern Arabia*, (Washington, D.C. Smithsonian, 1944) p. 399).

This quote from Professor Goon does not say what Dr. Morey wants to use it for, so he applied the following methods to bend it out of shape: a) He quoted the first sentence to show that the name Il or Ilah was the Moon-god of Arabia up to the time of Islam's revelation. Read Goon's statement:

The god Il or Ilah was originally a phase of the Moon God, but early in Arabian history the name became a general term for god ....

Now read Morey's quotation of that statement:

The god Il or Ilah was originally a phase of the Moon god. Morey uses this quote to support his case that up to the time of Muhammad (pbuh) the name Allah was the title for the Moon-god. To accomplish his sin, Morey chopped the sentence in half to exclude the word "but" and everything that follows that conjunction. He did not even bother to place three dots to indicate that he has left out some words.

**A second problem** with Dr. Morey's approach here is that he left out of Professor Goon's statement what would disprove Morey's most important argument against the God of Islam. Morey is proud of repeating that Allah is not the God of the Bible but the Moon-god of pre-Islamic Arabia. It would have been inconvenient for him to repeat what Goon had said as follows: "... and it was this name that the Hebrews used prominently in their personal names, such as Emanu-el, Isra-el, etc..." Morey would not let his readers understand that according to Professor Goon the same name which in South Arabia was used for the Moon-god was also used in Hebrew names like Emanu-el which Morey considers a name for Jesus.

**A third problem** is that Morey so separated two clipped pieces from Goon's writing and so interwove them with his own words that Professor Goon's meaning is lost and Morey's own meaning dominates the text. This way it appears that Goon is supporting Morey whereas he is not. Whereas, for example, Professor Goon's last statement is supportive of the fact that Allah is not a Moon-god but rather "the Supreme Being,"

Morey's placement of it within his own text will convince a less than careful reader that Goon agrees with Morey's Moon-god-in-Islam theory.

**A fourth problem** is that Morey does not expect his readers to spot logical fallacies in his writings. When he claimed that the title of the Moon-god was "al-ilah" he quoted Goon in his support as saying that "Il or Ilah" was originally a phase of the Moon God. Morey did not expect his readers to notice that "al-ilah" is not the same as "Il or Ilah." But even readers who are unfamiliar with the Arabic language can notice two things:

- a) the words are spelt very differently, and
- b) Morey's second quote from Goon exposes the error. There, Goon says that "Ilah became Al-Ilah" in Muhammad's teachings. Obviously, then, al-ilah was not the Moon-god according to Goon but only according to Morey. Goon would be shocked to see his writing misquoted in Morey's fashion.

**A fifth problem** is that Dr. Morey must have sent manuscript hurriedly off to press and did not have time to notice that he contradicted himself in the above passage.

After pointing out that the prophet's father and uncle both had names which included the name Allah, he quoted with approval Professor Goon as saying that "Ilah became ... Allah" under Muhammad's tutelage. Morey did not notice that in order for his readers to accept everything he said in that paragraph, they must conclude that Muhammad was present when his father was born so he could instruct his grandfather what name to give to Muhammad's new-born father!

My point here is not whether Goon was right or not, or whether he was ever an authority on Islam. My point is that Morey quoted him as an authority and did not notice the resulting contradiction in his own writing.

**A sixth problem** is that Morey draws conclusions which do not follow from his evidence thus committing the logical fallacy known as *non sequitur*. We notice the fallacy in the following passage:

For example, both Muhammad's father and uncle had Allah as part of their names. The fact that they were given such names by their pagan parents proves that Allah was the title for the Moon-god even in Muhammad's day.

In the above passage Morey gives an evidence and draws a conclusion. Let us identify the evidence and the conclusion to help us spot the fallacy. Evidence: Muhammad's father and uncle were given names by their pagan parents and those names included the name Allah [as in abd-Allah meaning Servant of Allah].

**Conclusion:** This proves that Allah was the name of the Moon-god at the time. The conclusion simply does not follow from the evidence. The most one can conclude from the stated evidence is that pagans were prepared to name their children servants of Allah. The evidence does not show whether Allah was the Moon-god or the God of Abraham. Who he was has to be established from other evidence which Morey has done his best to conceal. Morey's concealed evidence reveals again and again that the

Arabs at the time of Muhammad worshipped many idols but they also believed in Allah the high God whom they would call upon for help. This Supreme God for them was never the moon. A seventh problem with this passage from Morey is that his whole discussion is irrelevant to the question. To establish that Allah was believed to be this or that before Islam proves nothing for our present discussion. Morey needs to show that in the Qur'an Allah is represented as the Moon-god. But this is what is rather impossible for Morey. The Qur'an again and again speaks of the moon as a creature of Allah. And Allah in the Qur'an tells his creatures that they should not bow down to the sun or the moon but that they should bow down to Allah who created them (Qur'an 41:37).

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## How Dr. Morey Quotes From Caesar Farah

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Let's look at another passage from page 13 of Morey's book where he quotes, this time from Caesar Farah:

Islamic scholar Caesar Farah concluded "There is no reason, therefore, to accept the idea that Allah passed on to the Muslims from the Christians and Jews." (Farah p. 28).

Please compare this quote with the entire paragraph where Morey said he quoted it from. Here it is reproduced from Caesar Farah's book:

Allah, the paramount deity of pagan Arabia, was the target of worship in varying degrees of intensity from the southernmost tip of Arabia to the Mediterranean. To the Babylonians he was "II" (god); to the Canaanites, and later the Israelites, he was "El"; the South Arabians worshipped him as "Ilah, " and the Bedouins as "al-Ilah" (the deity). With Muhammad he becomes Allah, God of the Worlds, of all believers, the one and only who admits no associates or consorts in the worship of Him. Judaic and Christian concepts of God abetted the transformation of Allah from a pagan deity to the God of all monotheists. There is no reason, therefore, to accept the idea that "Allah" passed to the Muslims from Christians and Jews. (Farah p. 28).

**The first problem** with Morey's quote is that he so separated the last sentence from the rest of the paragraph, that he made it say something different from what it used to say in the context of that paragraph. Such out-of-context quotations is a common ploy of Morey.

**A second problem** is that Morey referred to Caesar Farah as an "Islamic Scholar." Morey tries to bolster the authority of his quoted authorities by giving them adjectives as above. If by "Islamic" readers think that Caesar Farah is a Muslim, Morey has no motive to correct such a misunderstanding. And if challenged, he could say he meant "scholar of Islam." Then he should say what he means.

**A third problem** is that Morey left out the important discussion from Farah's book. That passage was saying that the God who was called Ilah in South Arabia was called El by the Israelites. This fact would have ruined Morey's entire Moon-god-in-Islam theory, so Morey conveniently concealed it. Why should Morey let his readers know that according to two of the gospels Jesus was on the cross calling out to El who, if Morey is right, is the Moon- god of Islam?



## Morey Contradicts Himself

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Let us consider a passage from pages 11-12 of Morey's book:

Muhammad was raised in the religion of the Moon-god Allah. But he went one step further than his fellow pagan Arabs. While they believed that Allah, i.e. the Moon-god, was the greatest of all the gods and the supreme deity in a pantheon of deities, Muhammad decided that Allah was not only the greatest god but the only god. In effect he said, "Look, you already believe that the Moon-god Allah is the greatest of all gods. All I want you to do is to accept that the idea that he is the only god(sic). I am not taking away the Allah you already worship. I am only taking away his wife and his daughters and all the other gods." This is seen from the fact that the first point of the Muslim creed is not, "Allah is great" but "Allah is the greatest," i.e., he is the greatest among the gods. Why would Muhammad say that Allah in the "greatest" except in a polytheistic context? The Arabic word is used to contrast the greater from the lesser (Morey pp. 11-12).

**The first problem** with this passage is that Morey contradicts himself. In the first two paragraphs he claimed that the pagan Arabs believed Allah to be the greatest of all the gods, and all Muhammad (pbuh) preached to them was that they should take Allah not merely as the greatest god but as the only god. Then Morey forgot what he just finished writing and wrote in the very next paragraph that Muhammad was preaching that Allah is the greatest. And, according to Morey, greatest means he is not the only god.

**A second problem** is that Morey seems to have not the slightest idea of what Islam is. According to him the first point of the Muslim creed is not, "Allah is great" but "Allah is the greatest" (Morey p. 12). Where did he learn that this is the first point of the Muslim creed? If Morey is to be believed, millions of Muslims have been teaching their children the wrong shahadah (testimony of faith). But, much to Morey's shame, the first point of the Muslim creed is not that "Allah is the greatest," but that "there is no god except Allah."

**A third problem** is that Morey thinks "Allah is the greatest" means that "he is the greatest among the gods" and that this could only be said in a polytheistic context. He does not realize that the phrase he is referring to is, in Arabic, Allahu Akbar which means "Allah is greater." This phrase is a shorter form of Allahu Akbaru min kulli shay' which means "Allah is greater than everything." You do not need a polytheistic

context to say this. This can be said to anyone in any situation. It means that Allah is greater than everything whether things we perceive or things we do not.

**A fourth problem** has to do not with Morey's ignorance of the Arabic language, but with his lack of care to use proper reasoning. According to him, if the first point of the Muslim creed was "Allah is great" this would not imply a polytheistic context. Does he think that polytheists are excluded from saying about any one of their gods, "she is great"?

**A fifth problem** is that Morey keeps repeating the phrase Moon-god every time he mentions Allah as if by sheer repetition he hopes to convince his readers that Allah is the Moon-god. What he ought to do is present evidence instead.

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## Irrelevant Archeological Evidence

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First Dr. Morey makes a claim, then he discusses pages and pages of irrelevant evidence. This gives the impression that he is proving his claim whereas in fact he is not. My case in point is the following claim of Morey and the subsequent evidence he offers to support that claim:

As we shall see, the hard evidence demonstrates that the god Allah was a pagan deity. In fact, he was the Moon- god who was married to the sun goddess and the stars were his daughters (Morey PP. 1-2).

To prove this claim, he spent the next five pages, five illustrations, four diagrams, and one map. But what, according to him does all of this prove? Only that the Moon-god was worshipped in the ancient world outside of Arabia. This information is most irrelevant. He should get to the point of proving that Moon- worship existed in Arabia. Whether or not it existed elsewhere makes no difference to the point he is trying to prove. His proving, for example, that the Canaanites worshipped the Moon-god does not prove that the pagan Arabs did.

But Morey has his own reasons for this roundabout way of doing things. After spending almost half the book arguing a point and supporting it with documented evidence by way of maps, illustrations, diagrams, and quoted authorities, he leaves his readers with the impression that he proves his points very well and therefore he should be believed. He needs this credibility because when he turns to what he needs to prove he has no evidence, and he will offer none. He will make unsupported claims after he has already bewildered his readers with impressive irrelevant material.

In a book of fifteen pages, it is only on page seven that Morey turns to a discussion of what the situation was in Arabia. But even then, he discusses Southern Arabia which was far away from the Mecca where Muhammad preached. So, for another three pages he discusses evidence that the Moon-god was worshipped in South Arabia. He does not make any effort to alert his readers that he was unable to gather any evidence for the Moon-god in North Arabia. Rather, he concludes on page 10:

Evidence gathered from both North and South Arabia demonstrate that Moon-god worship was clearly active even in Muhammad's day and was still the dominant cult (Morey p. 10).

But where is the evidence concerning North Arabia? The only evidence he furnished for Arabia had to do with South Arabia only. On page 7 he cited the

findings of Arnaud, Halevy and Glaser who "went to Southern Arabia and dug up thousands of Sabeian, Minaean and Qatabanian inscriptions" (Morey, p. 7). On the same page he cited the findings of G. Caton Thompson and Carleton S. Goon "in Arabia." He did not say at this point that he meant South Arabia, but on page 9 and on map #3 he did make it clear that these findings were in "Southern Arabia" (Morey p. 9). How can he then make such a barefaced claim when careful readers will discover the opposite on the very pages he writes? Why does he imply that he will supply evidence for moon-worship in both North and South Arabia when the only evidence he has is for the South alone? Morey obviously considers Islam so evil that he is willing to use evil in battling Islam. But if Islam is from the Devil you do not need the Devil's ways to defeat it. Just simply explaining it should be sufficient to expose it. Morey needs to remember good Christian principles while he attacks Islam.

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## How Morey Twists Things

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To see how Morey is willing to bend quoted passages out of shape to make them somehow fit his Moon-god- in Islam theory, consider the following passage from p. 8 of his book:

The archeological evidence demonstrates that the dominant religion of Arabia was the cult of the Moon-god. In Old Testament times, Nabonidus (555-539 BC), the last King of Babylon, built Tayma, Arabia as a center of Moon-god worship. Segall stated, "South Arabia's stellar religion has always been dominated by the Moon-god in various variations" (Morey, p. 8).

What Morey quotes constantly belies him but he does not seem to notice, or he hopes his readers will not notice. Consider his quotation of Segall above. According to Segall in the above quote, **South Arabia's** stellar religion has always been dominated by the Moon- god in various variations (Segall, quoted in Morey, p.8). According to Morey, this agrees with his point that,

The archaeological evidence demonstrates that the dominant religion of **Arabia** was the cult of the Moon-god (Morey, p.8 emphasis added).

A careful comparison of these two statements reveal, however, that they are not saying the same things. The following are the important differences: a) Morey speaks "of *Arabia*"; Segall speaks "of *South Arabia*."

b) Segall does not speak of all of South Arabia's religions. He says only that of the **stellar religions**, religions that involved the worship of the Sun, Moon, and Venus, the most dominant was the worship of the Moon; Morey speaks of **all religion**. The deception here is that from Segall's words we understand only that the moon was worshipped more than the Sun, and Venus. But from Morey's words we understand that the moon was worshipped more than any other god. My point is not that Morey and Segall should say the same thing. My point is that when we can see that they are saying two different things Morey should not insult our intelligence by implying that they are saying the same thing.

## Morey's Intended Audience

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Morey obviously thinks his readers will fall for anything. So he does not bother to tidy up his deceptions. Page after page of Morey's book reveals how he manipulates the evidence he is working with. For example, on pages 5 and 7 he discusses the findings at Hazer in Palestine. On page 6 he shows four diagrams of the artifacts discovered there. After identifying the findings as having come from a major temple to the Moon-god in Palestine, Morey describes diagram 4 in the following words:

Several smaller statues were also found which were identified by their inscriptions as the "daughters" of the Moon-god (See Diagram #4); (Morey, p.7).

Notice here that according to Morey the inscriptions identify the statues as the daughters of the Moon-god. But didn't he direct us to look at Diagram #4? Well, Diagram #4 reveals something interesting. Underneath Diagram #4 we find the following words:

Pieces of the idols of the daughters of the Moon-god. The inscription identifies them as the "daughters of god" (Morey, p.6).

But we have already seen that according to Morey on his page 7, the inscriptions identified the statues as daughters of the Moon-god (Morey, p.7). Which page of Morey's book are we to believe? Six or Seven? It appears that the inscriptions did not say Moon-god. But Morey is so fond of his Moon-god-in-Islam theory that he just simply inserted the word "Moon" before "god" on page 7.

We still do not know for sure what the inscription (page 6) or inscriptions (page 7) do say. But without doing any further checking we discover Morey's errors from the very pages he writes. What level of readership was he writing for?

## Fallacy of Equivocation

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Why did Morey go to such great depths to invent daughters for the Moon-god? Because the pagan Arabs just before Islam believed that their gods al-Lat, Uzzah and Manat were daughters of Allah. If Morey can convince his readers that the Moon-god had daughters he might just be able to confuse them into thinking that the pagan Arabs believed in the Moon-god and his daughters. And this is the point he tries to drive home. Notice his following claim which we find on pages 7-8 of his book:

Thousands of inscriptions from walls and rocks in Northern Arabia have also been collected. Reliefs and votive bowls used in worship of the "daughters of Allah" have also been discovered. The three daughters, al-Lat, al-Uzza and Manat are sometimes depicted together with Allah the Moon-god represented by a crescent moon above them (Morey, pp.7-8).

He does not quote any authority for any of the above claims. The only thing he has in quotes is "daughters of Allah." Well this is nothing new and I do not need to see an authority cited for it. What I want to see an authority for is Morey's allegation about "Allah the Moon-god" (Morey, p.8). But these are Morey's words, and he can find no authority to connect the name Allah with the Moon-god. Surely Morey can do better than that. For this important claim he offers no quote of an authority, no diagram, no illustration, no map, and no specific detail. He does not say when, where or by whom the inscriptions were collected.

He does tell us in his footnotes where we can find more information about this. But after discovering Morey's misquotes one after another I lack the time and energy to check out these writings from which he did not have the time or energy to make a direct quotation. I did notice, however, that one of the authorities mentioned has nothing to do with a discussion about Allah being a Moon-god of any sort. It deals with the goddess Atirat and her relation to the Moon-god and the Sun-goddess. But this goddess Atirat is related not to the Moon-god Allah, for there is no such being. From an ancient Qatabanian inscription discovered at Timna, we know that the goddess Atirat was related to the Moon-god `Amm (see Pritchard, *The Ancient Near East: A New Anthology of Texts and Pictures*, vol 2, p. 237). So I am not prepared to go on any more wild- goose chases than what Morey has already sent me on.

If there is something significant in those writings why does Morey not make a direct quotation? Then we can check again for the accuracy of his quotations. I don't think this is an unreasonable demand. When Morey was proving less significant and what I

call highly irrelevant points he was busy quoting authorities. When he told us about Moon-god worship everywhere else he furnished us with names of discoverers, dates of discoveries, names of discovery cites, and lots of pictures to boot.

Why is it that when it comes to Northern Arabia he offers not a shred of evidence? Does Morey expect his readers to accept his most important point on faith alone? Usually we take at face value what a writer says, because we expect him to tell the truth. We have been seeing again and again that with Morey we cannot afford that risk. Morey has committed here what in logic is known as the fallacy of equivocation. He takes a term which meant one thing in a certain context and the same term which means another thing in a new context and pretends that since the term is the same the meaning is also the same. He argues that the Moon-god of the South Arabians had daughters, and the High God Allah of the Mecca Arabs had daughters, therefore they are one and the same god having daughters.

To see how this fallacy works, consider this argument for illustration:

The Japanese believed their emperor to be the son of God. Christians also believe in the Son of God.

That way of saying things imply that Christians believe in the Japanese emperor. That, of course is not true. Now consider Morey's argument:

The South Arabians believed that the Moon-god had daughters. The pagan Arabs of Mecca also believed that Allah had daughters.

Morey implies that Allah was therefore the Moon-god. But this is no more true than to say that Christians believe in the Japanese emperor. Morey should know better than to commit such a fallacy. As a teacher of a course on logic, he should be trained in spotting such fallacies rather than committing them. But Morey's misuse of this knowledge reminds us that good knowledge can also be used for evil purposes.



## False Evidence

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On page 7, Morey writes:

In the 1940's, the archeologists G. Caton Thompson and Carleton S. Goon made some amazing discoveries in Arabia (Morey p. 7).

On page 9 we discover he meant "southern Arabia" but we have already dealt with this discrepancy. What is important here is that these "amazing discoveries" are revealed by G. Caton Thompson in her 1944 book "The Tombs and Moon Temple of Hureidha." What did she reveal? Here is one thing, according to Mr. Morey:

An idol which may be the Moon-god himself was also discovered (see Diagram #6); (Morey, pp. 9-10 emphasis added).

Here he says only that the idol "may be the Moon-god himself." But he proudly labeled Diagram #6: An idol of the Moon-god (Morey, p. 10). Although Morey knows, according to his own words, that it is not certain that this idol was the Moon-god, yet he is prepared to label it as though it was for sure. There is no excuse for such carelessness. But I suspect a further discrepancy. I did not have occasion to read G. Caton Thompson's 1944 book, but her companion archeologist Carleton S. Goon wrote in 1945 his treatise Southern Arabia, A Problem for the Future. Morey is aware of this writing, for he quoted from it several times.

The discrepancy is that what Morey leads us to expect in Thompson's book is denied in Goon's treatise! Morey showed us a picture of a woman-like idol and claims that this may be the Moon-god himself which was discovered by Goon and Thompson and revealed in Thompson's book. Goon's treatise says no such thing was discovered! About the three astral deities of South Arabia, the Sun, the Moon, and the Star Venus, Goon writes:

There were no carved images of these three-the Semitic tabu against graven images, while by no means generally applicable, was in force in regard to the divinities themselves. What images we do find are of people (Goon, p. 399).

According to Goon, then, they found no graven images of gods but only of people. Then Morey shows us the graven image of a woman and tells us this "may be the Moon-god himself" (Morey, p. 10). So either Goon or Morey is wrong here. And I don't think it is Goon. He was there when he and Thompson made those amazing discoveries, so he ought to know what he discovered.

I do not know where this leaves Thompson because, as I have said, I did not read her book. But it is rather odd that she would write something in her book and then her partner writing a year later would contradict her like that. Or, perhaps Morey does not mean to imply that either Goon or Thompson claimed any such thing. Perhaps it is only his words that mislead, not his intention. After saying that this idol may have been the Moon-god himself, Morey claimed:

This was later confirmed by other well-known archeologists (Morey, p. 10).

If "confirmed" here does not mean what it says, Morey should have used some other word we can hold him to. What is important, though, and for this I give him credit, is his reference in a footnote to three of these "well-known archaeologists." My concern for the moment is not whether or not they are "well-known" but my concern is to know what exactly they said about this idol. A direct quote please? I have developed a liking for checking such quotes. I find it rather interesting that when Morey refers to the idol later he says:

Now we have the actual idols of the Moon-god ... (Morey, p. 14 emphasis added).

What **may** have been is now **actual**, and it has multiplied: now **"idols"**! Is Morey never satisfied adding to his cup of sins?

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## Optical Delusions

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Earlier I said that Morey spent five illustrations to prove that in the ancient world the Moon-god was worshipped everywhere outside Arabia. Although these illustrations are irrelevant to our study of the history of the Moon-god in Arabia, I am interested here in how Morey's illustrations are not always what they are chiseled out to be!

I refer to page 3 of Morey's book. This page contains two illustrations. I was able to locate an illustration similar to the first one, and an exact copy of the second in a book *The Ancient Near East: A New Anthology of Texts and Pictures*, edited by James B. Pritchard, 1975, Princeton University Press. Morey had implied that these are illustrations of the Moon-god. However, Pritchard and his group of scholars know differently. What resembles the first illustration is catalogued #140 in Vol. 1 by Pritchard.

But here it is not a Moon-god but a Storm-god. The second illustration is catalogued #136 in

Pritchard's Vol. 1. But this too is not a Moon-god of any kind. It is "Baal of Lightning." That's two out of five. Again and again what I am able to check turn out false. Is it me or is it Morey? Or is it Pritchard? I don't think so. An exact copy of the second illustration is found also in *The Bible As History in Pictures*, p. 206, and there it is identified as Baal of lightning. In the book *Tells, Tombs and Treasure*, an exact copy appears on page 118. There it is called Baal of Storm.

The book *Archaeology of The Bible* shows an exact copy on page 80, and calls it the Storm God Baal. Morey is alone against all the scholars, and against all the evidence.

## What Was the Name of That Moon-god?

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Morey was successful in proving that moon worship was prevalent in South Arabia before Islam. But what was the name of that Moon-god? Morey would have us believe that the name was Allah. That is the point of his whole booklet. The title of his book bears this out and he keeps repeating this throughout the book. But he did not produce a single piece of evidence to connect Allah with the Moon-god. Quite the contrary. His own evidence proves that the name of the Moon-god was not Allah. On page 9 Morey reports on the findings of Goon and Thompson in Southern Arabia where they discovered a temple of the Moon-god. What did they find? Morey tells us:

The symbols of the crescent moon and no less than twenty-one inscriptions with the name Sin were found in this temple (see Diagram #5); (Morey, p. 9).

So what was the name of that Moon-god? Allah? No! It was Sin according to Morey's own words. But that does not stop him from claiming two paragraphs later that the Moon-god was Allah.

But he invented a clever device to save face. Now he claims that

... while the name of the Moon-god was Sin, his title was al-ilah, i.e. "the deity,"  
...(Morey, p. 19).

Rather neat. Now al-ilah which he says later becomes Allah (p.11) is no longer a name, but a title.

Morey has a way with words. Does Morey then retract what he wrote in his book *The Islamic Invasion*? In that book published just two years earlier he was calling Allah a name again and again. On page 48 he quoted from Hastings Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics that "Allah" is a proper name. Then on the same page he quoted from the Encyclopedia of Religion that "Allah" is a pre-Islamic name (Morey, *Invasion*, p. 48). Then in his own words Morey said: Allah was a pagan name (Morey, *Invasion*, p. 48).

We can go on and on, but the point is proven. In the book *The Islamic Invasion* Morey quoted many authorities who rightly said that Allah was the name of the high God of the pagan Arabs. Morey insisted contrary to the authorities he deceptively quoted, that Allah was the name of the Moon-god. Either way, in that book of his, Allah was a name.

Now, in his book of two years later he makes an about-face. There is nothing wrong with learning more.

If Morey discovered some new information he can acknowledge his previous error and we can go on without much comment. But the problem is not that Morey was wrong about Allah being a name. He was wrong about Allah being the Moon-god. But he was right in saying that Allah is a name. Now Morey's problem is that the same archaeological findings he relies on to establish moon-worship in Southern Arabia also reveal that the name of the Moon-god was not Allah but Sin. Now he is trapped. To escape this trap he claims that Allah is a title. He has no evidence for this claim. In his previous book, however, he was clear that Allah was a name, not a title. He wrote:

The name Allah was used as the personal name of the moon god, in addition to other titles that could be given to him (The Islamic Invasion, p. 50).

I think it was Mark Twain who said, Always speak the truth, then you have nothing to remember. So, what was the name of that Moon-god? According to Goon,

The state god of the Minaeans was *Wadd*, that of the Katabanians *`Amm*, that of the Hadramis *Sin*, and of the Sabaeans *Il Mukah*. All were the moon (Goon, p. 399).

The names of the moon-god were *Wadd*, *`Amm*, *Sin*, and *Il Mukah*. Allah was never the Moon-god, despite Morey's desperate pleading.

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## Concealed Evidence

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Morey makes much of archaeological findings in South Arabia at Qataban, Timna, and Marib. So he speaks of

"thousands of Sabean, Minean, and Qatabanian inscriptions which were subsequently translated" (Morey, p. 7).

Wow! Except that I noticed he did not bother to quote from these inscriptions or tell us what they say. Instead, he immediately moved on to describe findings in other areas. Hmn. This is quite unlike Morey. I am sure that if he has some solid evidence he would jump on it. Why so quiet about the translated inscriptions?

One possible reason is that Morey heard about these but knows not what they say. Another possibility is that Morey found them inconvenient. I much prefer the first possibility, but in any case the findings are inconvenient for Morey. The inscriptions just do not gel with Morey's Moon-god-in-Islam theory. The translated inscriptions are compiled in the book we already referred to: *The Ancient Near East, vol. 2*, by James Pritchard. These inscriptions show that the Moon-god was not Allah, but Anbay, 'Amm, 'lyn, and Waddum.

Sabaeen inscriptions from Mareb show that they worshipped Attar and Waddum (see Pritchard, vol. 2, p. 230). Minaean Inscriptions mention Wadd, Waddum and Attar. Although their lunar god was Waddum, they also sacrificed to Attar (Pritchard, vol. 2 p. 235).

Hadrami inscriptions, as we have already learnt from Morey's book, reveal that the name of the Moon-god in that region was Sin. Pritchard's collection of inscriptions confirms this, Sin was "the principal Hadrami lunar god" (Pritchard, vol. 2, p. 238). Here, however, we catch a glimpse of the identity of the god Attar we heard about from the Sabaeen and

Minaean inscriptions. One inscription here reads: "... to Sin, He of Ilum, and to Attar, his father" (Pritchard, vol. 2, p. 238).

Quite revealing! This shows that the Moon-god Sin had a father Attar who was also a god. So for these people the Moon-god was not the high god. This again disproves Morey. Morey kept telling us that the Moon-god was the high god among the pagans. Now we know that he was not only different in name from the high God Allah but that he also had a father. Allah, of

course, was never believed to have a father. A Qatabanian inscription from Timna recognises the god `Anbay (Pritchard, vol. 2, p. 238). And this `Anbay is "the moon divinity `Anbay" (Pritchard vol. 2, p. 236). Another god `Amm is also mentioned (p. 237). One Qatabanian rock inscription is quite revealing. It shows the name of a previously unknown god written as `lyn, consonants only. What vowels should complete that word? Pritchard and his contributors observe that `lyn may be graphically compared with the divine epitheton in the Old Testament, `elyon (`lywn; e.g., Dt 32:8); (Pritchard, vol. 2, p. 239).

So the God of the Bible was worshipped here too. Would Morey make this clear?

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## Back to the Real Issue

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I had to deal with Morey's contention in some depth to uncover his deceptions and mistakes because his speeches and writings have misled many people. But at the end of the day his theory is rather silly.

Even if he was able to show that the North Arabs in Mecca worshipped the Moon-god, and even if he was able to show that they used to call this Moon-god Allah, this still does not prove that Allah in Islam is a Moon-god. To prove or disprove this he needs to show what the Qur'an teaches about moon worship. The Qur'an, however, clearly refutes moon-worship. The Qur'an says: Adore not the sun and the moon, but adore Allah who created them ... (Qur'an 41:37).

But Morey is not interested in letting his readers know what the Qur'an says. In his book *The Islamic Invasion* Morey gave a description of the Sabaeans and their religion. He says: The Sabaeans had an astral religion in which they worshipped heavenly bodies. The moon was viewed as a male deity and the sun as a female deity. Together they produced other deities such as the stars. The Qur'an refers to this in Sura 41:37 and elsewhere (Morey, *Islamic Invasion*, p. 42)

Morey mentioned Sura 41:37 from the Qur'an but he did not reveal what the verse says. But I have quoted it above to reveal what Morey wishes to conceal. If he would let his readers know what that verse says his deception would crumble. He did not even say that the Qur'an in that verse prohibits the worship of the sun and moon. He merely says that "the Qur'an refers to this in Sura 41:37 and elsewhere." If his readers understand from this that the Qur'an accepts the worship of the sun and the moon, Morey's aims would be accomplished. Morey should realize that as a scholar he has an academic obligation to make honest use of his sources. He should also recall that as a Christian he ought to speak the truth always.



## Morey's Folly

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Morey thinks that if he can prove that the pagan Arabs at the time of the Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) worshipped the Moon-god and called him Allah, then he will have proved that Islam is nothing more than a revival of the ancient Moon-god cult (Morey, p. 15).

Perhaps we can help rescue him from his folly by pointing to what he has already admitted. On pages 10- 11 of his book he wrote that al-iiyah means "the deity." Well, in that case, when a message about the true God comes to them what are they supposed to call the true God? The non-deity? Of course they will call Him by the names and titles they already know for deity. But they will be no longer calling out to their pagan gods although they are still using the same title or name meaning deity.

If Morey still cannot understand this we can draw his attention to the Old Testament which uses the ancient Babylonian and Canaanite name for god "El." We do not accuse the Old Testament in that case of idolatry. So why does Morey seek to insult the Qur'an in this way? Or, we can draw his attention to the New Testament. There God is referred to as *ho theos*. Does Morey realize that the worshippers of Jupiter referred also to Jupiter as *ho theos*? Would Morey then accuse the New Testament writers of reviving the worship of Jupiter?

Or, read Acts chapter 17. Athens was a major centre of idolatry, but the people there also worshipped what they called "an unknown god." When Paul had an opportunity to address them, he spoke thus:

Men of Athens! I see that in every way you are very religious. For as I walked around and looked carefully at your objects of worship, I even found an altar with this inscription: To An Unknown God. Now what you worship as something unknown I am going to proclaim to you (Acts 17:22-23).

Would Morey take issue with Paul for this? You see what Paul has done. He noticed an altar dedicated to an unknown god and realized that in addition to all their idols, they also worshipped the true God. Their problem, however, was that they did not know enough about the true God, and Paul aimed to now fix that with his preaching. In a similar way the pagan Arabs worshipped 360 idols, but they also worshipped the true God. Their problem was that they did not know enough about the true God. So God commissioned his prophet Muhammad (pbuh) to fix that with his preaching.

The message of Paul to the Athenians and of Muhammad to the Arabians was not that they should forget about the unseen god in whom they believed. The message was that they should come to accurate knowledge about Him. Alternatively, we may argue the point using Morey's patent argument, in which we would present the following facts and then draw a conclusion. This would establish the absurdity of Morey's Moon-god-in-Islam theory.

**Fact #1:**

Morey has already convinced us that Moon worship was prevalent in the Bible region of Hazer in Palestine, and the archaeological findings confirm that fact.

**Fact #2:**

The name of the Moon-god corresponds with El according to Goon, whom Morey cites as an authority.

**Fact #3:**

The Bible tells us that FI created the heavens and the earth.

**Conclusion from above facts:**

Morey must conclude that the Bible recommends Moon-worship. Of course Morey will resist this conclusion because the Bible rejects Moon-worship. But, then, I also resist Morey's conclusion that Islam recommends Moon-worship. Why? Because the Qur'an condemns Moon-worship in the verse which Morey wished to conceal.

That verse reads:

Adore not the sun and the moon, but adore Allah who created them ... (Qur'an 41:37).

## The Crescent Moon in Islam

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Morey asks a few questions on page 14 of his book to plant a thought in the minds of his readers. He asks:

Is it any wonder then that the symbol of Islam is the crescent moon? That a crescent moon sits on top of their mosque and minarets? That a crescent moon is found on the flags of Islamic nations? That the Muslims fast during the month which begins and ends with the appearance of the crescent moon in the sky? (Morey, p. 14).

Of course Morey does not state his conclusions about these facts. He wants his readers to draw the conclusion that these facts prove that Muslims are worshipping the Moon-god. But Morey does not state the conclusion because he knows it does not follow from those facts. The fact that the symbol of Islam is the crescent moon does not mean that Muslims worship the moon. The farthest thing from the Muslim mind is to worship anything or anyone other than God. That would be the sin of shirk, association of another in worship—a sin that is unforgivable except by repentance. No, the symbol of a religion is not necessarily an object of worship. The symbol of Daoism is the ying-yang symbol, but Daoists do not worship it. The symbol of Buddhism is the eight-spoke wheel, but Buddhists do not worship it. Muslims also do not worship the crescent moon, just as the early Christians also did not worship their fish symbol. And many present-day Christians do not worship the cross although they display it everywhere.

It is another question as to how the crescent became the symbol of Islam. The Qur'an and the hadith do not give this significance to the crescent moon. And for the first several centuries of Islam the crescent was not a symbol of Islam. Morey may have a good point if he encourages Muslims to revert to the practice of the ideal period of Islam, the first three generations of Muslims, when there was no such symbol used for identifying the religion of God. But to stretch this and conclude from it what does not follow is to go beyond the bounds of truth.

Morey did not make that mistake, but his book led Jack T. Chick to make it. Whether such an effect was intended by Morey is between him and God. Where that leaves Jack Chick is also up to God. Jack Chick wrote a tiny booklet entitled "Allah Had No Son" in which he depicts some Muslims in their mosque prostrating on the floor in worship of "their moon god" (Jack T. Chick, Allah Had No Son; U.S. Chick Publications, 1994; p.1). Morey does however make mention of the fact that Muslims use the appearance of the crescent moon in the sky to mark the beginning and end of their month of fasting. It is highly fallacious to connect this with moon worship. Many

people regulate much of their affairs based on a solar calendar. This does not mean anything for sun-worship, does it?

Jews and Muslims regulate their religious festivals and observance using the lunar calendar. Would Morey then accuse the Jews of moon-worship?

Note: After I had already written what I wrote above by way of excusing Morey for Chick's mistake, I came across a leaflet claiming that the crescent is the god of Muslims. The leaflet does not name its author, but it is published by the Research and Education Foundation of which Robert Morey is the director.

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## Questions Answered

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The Christian acquaintance who sent me a copy of Morey's booklet also sent me five questions related to this subject. I will attempt to answer them below:

### **Question 1:**

What is the significance of the crescent moon in Islam?

### **Answer:**

The Qur'an answers this question before you asked it. Read this verse:

They ask you about the new moons. Say: These are signs to mark fixed periods of time for mankind and for the pilgrimage (Qur'an 2:189).

### **Question 2:**

Why does Islam follow a lunar calendar?

### **Answer:**

In both the Bible and the Qur'an religious festivals are regulated by the lunar calendar. Jews and Muslims have kept to these regulations which they believe to be from God.

Why does Christianity follow a solar calendar?

### **Question 3:**

Why is the feast of Ramadan marked by the appearance of the crescent moon?

### **Answer:**

I think you mean the fast of Ramadan. God commanded Muslims in the Qur'an to fast from dawn to sunset during the month called Ramadan (see Qur'an 2:185, 187). The beginning and end of the month is determined by the crescent (2:189) based on the instructions of God's Messenger, on whom be peace. Why this method and not another is not for us to say but for God and His Messenger to prescribe. However, I find it an efficient method. It is a universally applicable method, and it allows for Ramadan to move through all the seasons. This allows believers to have the pleasure of worshipping God by fasting in all the various seasons: one year in the summer, some years later in the winter.

### **Question 4:**

Why does the Qur'an place the Sabeans on the same level with Jews and Christians when scholars have clearly proven that the Sabeans were involved in the moon cult?

### **Answer:**

I am not aware that the Qur'an has placed the Sabeans on the same level with Jews and Christians. Perhaps you have in mind the following verse:

Those who believe and those who are Jews and Christians and Sabians, whoever believes in Allah and the Last Day and do righteous good deeds shall have their reward with their Lord. On them shall be no fear, nor shall they grieve. Qur'an 2:62; also 5:69).

This verse, however, does not place the Sabians on the same level as the Jews and Christians except in a particular context. The verse speaks of four distinct communities, and offers all four the opportunity to fear not nor grieve if only they would believe in Allah and the Last Day and do right. The four communities are:

- (a) the believers (i.e. the Muslims)
- (b) the Jews
- (c) the Christians and
- (d) the Sabians.

While they are all offered the same opportunity for improvement, nothing is said in this verse about the validity of the existing faiths of these four communities. Otherwise the Jews and Christians who are criticized in the Qur'an for their deviations will not be placed on the same level with the believers. The matter becomes clear when you realize that believers here does not mean saved persons but those who ostensibly belong to the community of Muslims. They, as well as the other three groups, must do the following to be saved: believe in Allah, believe in the Last Day, and do right. Doing right, according to the Qur'an, includes following every teaching of Muhammad.

#### **Question 5:**

Did the Meccans worship the true God since they recognized Allah? Was Allah one of the gods of the Ka'abah? And if so, where did the Meccans derive the recognition and the name of Allah from?

#### **Answer:**

First, Allah was not one of the 360 idols which were in the ka'abah, although Morey has claimed this without evidence. When prophet Muhammad (pbuh) entered Meccah victorious he went into the Ka'abah and broke the idols therein. Allah to the Arabs was the Lord of the Ka'abah. He was the unseen God whom they would call upon when in distress. Yes, they worshipped the true God but their worship was not purely for Him. They also worshipped other gods thinking that they would act as intermediaries between them and the true God Allah. The Arabs know of Allah because Abraham visited Meccah and together with his son Ishmael laid the foundation of the Ka'abah. The descendants of Ishmael retained some of the worship rites and beliefs from Abraham. This included their knowledge of the true God Allah.

Elsewhere I have shown conclusively that the true god El of the Bible is the same as Allah of the Qur'an. Please refer to *Yahweh, Jehovah, or Allah-What is God's real name ?* by Shabir Ally.

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## Appendix

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### **Robert Morey's Deceptive Methods His Use of False Quotations and Other Dishonest Tactics to Prove that Allah is a Moon-god**

*Adapted from the book  
Common Questions People Ask About Islam  
by Shabir Ally*

#### **Question 7**

Dr. Robert Morey proves in his book that Allah is the name of the moon god worshipped in Arabia before Islam. Is he right?

#### **Answer**

The book you refer to is entitled *The Islamic Invasion: Confronting the World's Fastest Growing Religion*.<sup>1</sup> The author, Dr. Robert Morey, sees Islam as an invasion into North America and a threat to his religious heritage. Unfortunately, Dr. Morey has resorted to dishonest tactics in combatting Islam. To prove his contention that Allah is not the God of Christians and Jews, he quoted from several books in such a dishonest fashion that the quotations say the opposite of what we find in those books.<sup>2</sup>

Dr. Morey quoted from the Encyclopedia Britannica to support his case. But in fact the Encyclopedia says: "Allah is the standard Arabic word for "God" and is used by Arab Christians as well as by Muslims" (Britannica, 1990 Edition, vol. 1, p. 276). Dr. Morey also quoted from H.A.R Gibb to support his case. But Gibb actually says the opposite. In his book Mohammedanism, Gibb says on page 26 that both Muhammad and his opponents believed in "the existence of a supreme God Allah." Gibb further explained this on pages 37-38.<sup>3</sup> Dr. Morey should have checked his references more carefully before his book went into print.

Dr. Morey said that Alfred Guillaume agrees with him, and he refers to page 7 of Alfred Guillaume's book entitled Islam. But here is what Alfred Guillaume actually says on page 7 of his book: "In Arabia Allah was known from Christian and Jewish sources as the one God, and there can be no doubt whatever that he was known to the pagan Arabs of Mecca as the supreme being".<sup>4</sup> How could Dr. Morey misquote like this? Dr. Morey quoted from page 28 of a book by another non-Muslim writer Caesar Farah. But when we refer to that book we find that Dr. Morey gave only a Partial quotation which leaves out the main discussion. The book actually



says that the God who was called Il by the Babylonians and El by the Israelites was called ilah, al-ilah, and eventually Allah in Arabia .<sup>5</sup> Farah, says further on page 31 that before Islam the pagans had already believed that Allah is the supreme deity.

Of course they had 360 idols, but, contrary to Dr. Morey's assertion, Allah was never one of the 360 idols. As Caesar Farah points out on page 56, the prophet Muhammad, on whom be peace, personally destroyed those idols. Dr. Morey also quoted from William Montgomery Watt. But Watt says on page 26 of his book that the Arabic word Allah is similar to the Greek term ho theos which we know is the way God is referred to in the New Testament .<sup>6</sup>

Dr. Morey quoted from Kenneth Cragg's book entitled The Call of the Minaret. However, on page 36

of Kenneth Cragg's book we find the following: "Since both Christian and Muslim faiths believe in One supreme sovereign Creator-God, they are obviously referring when they speak of Him, under whatever terms, to the same Being."<sup>7</sup>

Further on the same page, Cragg explains that the One whom the Muslims call Allah is the same One whom the Christians call 'the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ', although the two faiths understand Him differently.

Dr. Morey should know that as a scholar he has the academic obligation to quote honestly. He should also know that as a follower of Jesus, on whom be peace, he has an obligation to speak the truth.

1. Published by Harvest House Publishers, Oregon, US, 1992.
2. See quotations on pp. 47-53 of Dr. Morey's book.
3. See Mohammedanism by H.A.R. Gibb, Oxford University Press, 1969.
4. See Islam by Alfred Guillaume, Penguin, 1956, p. 7.
5. See Islam: Beliefs and Observances, by Caesar Farah, Barren's Educational Series, 4<sup>th</sup> Edition, p. 28.
6. See Muhammad; Prophet and Statesman by William Montgomery Watt, Oxford University Press, 1964, p. 26.
7. The Call of the Minaret by Kenneth Cragg, Oxford University Press, 1964, p. 36.

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