

Dr. Robert A. Morey Vindicated Once Again!

Dr. Morey argued back in 1980's, long before anyone else, that Allah in pre-Islamic times was the moon god. The Muslims, not being able to refute his arguments and documentation, made up the LIE that he was saying that Muslims today consciously worship the moon. Of course, he corrected their subterfuge over and over again. But Shabir Ali and rest of the Muslim apologists made up a straw man argument because they could not deal with what he actually wrote.

The Muslims enlisted stupid Christians to condemn Dr. Bob and they went on the internet to attack his character and motives. They are dupes of the devil who invented Islam. The Bible tells us that those who engage in slander and gossip are no more saved than a door knob.

Sam Shamoun has just written a wonderful article that vindicates what Dr. Morey wrote in *Islamic Invasion* and *Winning the War Against Radical Islam*.

Revisiting the Identity of the pre-Islamic Allah at Mecca, Part 1

By **Sam Shamoun**

Muslim polemicists seemingly never tire of misrepresenting the arguments of their opponents, specifically Christian apologists. And instead of addressing the best that the other side has to offer, these dawagandists normally go after the worst arguments that are (unfortunately) raised by those who really have no in-depth knowledge of either Christianity or Islam.

Take the issue of Allah being the moon-god, for example. These apologists will post articles or videos attacking those who claim that Muslims are worshiping a moon deity. Yet these same individuals rarely touch on the real issue raised by those who are somewhat knowledgeable about Christianity and Islam.

After all, the point isn't whether Muslims are worshiping a moon god. The real objection centers on the identity of the pre-Islamic Allah worshiped by the pagan Arabs at Mecca.

One such Muslim **taqiyyist** who has chosen to address the worst that the other side has to offer, as opposed to addressing the real issue, is Sami Zaatari. Here is what he writes concerning the charge leveled against Muslims regarding their worship of Allah:

One claim that has often been thrown against the religion of Islam is that the Muslim God, Allah, is a moon God! This claim has been widely circulated amongst many missionaries with an agenda to try and 'disprove' Islam.

So, do we the Muslims worship a moon God? Well, if the answer is a yes, then we would at least expect to find a verse within the Quran saying Allah is indeed a moon God, and that the Muslims should worship the moon. So does such a passage exist in the Quran? The answer is an emphatic no, there is not a single verse in the Quran (let alone the hadiths) that refers to Allah as a moon

God, nor is there any verse about worshipping the moon, on the contrary there is a verse within the Quran that explicitly says the OPPOSITE:

*041.037 Among His Signs are the Night and the Day, and the Sun and the Moon. **Do not prostrate to the sun and the moon, but prostrate to Allah, Who created them**, if it is Him ye wish to serve.*

So the Quran explicitly forbids the Muslims from worshipping the moon, as well as the sun, and it goes on to clearly state that Allah, created the moon! So how can anyone claim that Muslims worship a moon God when we have such a clear and explicit verse in the Quran saying the exact opposite? This is what we call dishonesty, dishonesty in it's highest form, and it's very sad that some people are deceived by such arguments passed on by certain missionaries.

So in conclusion, the case is clear, Allah created the moon, and has commanded the Muslims to NOT worship the moon, the case is closed: Allah is NOT a moon God. (***Do Muslims Worship A Moon God?***)

Instead of responding to Zaatari's tirade against Muslims worshipping a moon deity, what we will seek to do in this article is to present the one objection that Zaatari and his ilk rarely (if at all) address, namely, the identity of the pre-Islamic Allah at Mecca. We will present evidence to prove that the Allah which the Meccans worshiped was associated with the moon, e.g. the pagans viewed the moon as representing their supreme god whom they called Allah. In that way, Muslim polemicists such as Zaatari will be forced to respond to the real issues, and not waste their time on the claims of those less informed in this area.

The Prevalence of Moon Worship in Arabia

What Zaatari, and others like him, conveniently overlook and forget to mention is that the pagans of Mecca ran around the kabah seven times, much like the Muslims do till this day. Evidence exists to show that the number of circumambulation corresponded to the number of the heavenly bodies which the pagans thought existed and which they associated with certain gods. Significantly, the celestial object that the pagans associated with the chief deity was not the sun, but the moon!

The Arabic words may provide the key in understanding why the moon was taken to be the head god, or the celestial body associated with the high god. The Arabic word for moon (*qamar*) is masculine in gender, whereas the word for sun (*shams*) is feminine. Since the pagan Arabs were, for the most part, a patriarchal culture it only makes sense that they would have taken the moon as the symbol of the supreme god, in light of it being a masculine noun.

As the late Muslim translator Abdullah Yusuf Ali explained in regards to the paganism of Arabia:

5. To revert to the worship of the heavenly bodies... A few individual stars did attract the worshippers' attention, e.g. Sirius the Dog-star, the brightest fixed star in the heavens, with a

bluish tinge in its light... It is probably Sirius that is referred to as the fixed star in the Parable of Abraham (vi. 76). With regard to the fixed stars in their myriads, the astronomers turned their fancy to devising Groups or Constellations. But the moving 'stars', or planets, each with a motion and therefore will or influence of its own. As they knew and understood them, **they were seven in number**, viz.: (1) and (2) **the moon and the sun**, the two objects which most closely and indubitably influence the tides, the temperatures, and the life in our planet; (3) and (4) the two inner planets, **Mercury and Venus**, which are morning and evening stars, and never travel far from the sun; and (5), (6) and (7) **Mars, Jupiter, and Saturn**, the outer planets whose elongations from the sun on the ecliptic can be as wide as possible. **The number seven itself is a mystic number**, as explained in n. 5526 to lxv. 12.

6. It will be noticed that the sun and the moon and the five planets got identified each with a living deity, god or goddess, with characteristics and qualities of its own...

7. Moon worship was equally popular in various forms. I have already referred to the classical legends of Apollo and Diana, twin brother and sister, representing the sun and the moon. The Egyptian Khonsu, traversing the sky in a boat, referred to the moon, and the moon legends also got mixed up with those about the god of magic, Thoth and the Ibis. In the Vedic religion of India the moon-god was Soma, the lord of the planets, and the name was also applied to the juice which was the drink of the gods. It may be noted that the moon was a male divinity in ancient India; it was also a male divinity in ancient Semitic religion, **and the Arabic word for the moon (*qamar*) is of the masculine gender. On the other hand, the Arabic word for the sun (*shams*) is of the feminine gender. The pagan Arabs evidently looked upon the sun as a goddess and the moon as a god.**

8. Of the five planets, perhaps Venus as the evening star and the morning star alternately impressed itself most on the imagination of astro-mythology. **This planet was in different places considered both male and female...** Mercury is a less conspicuous planet, and was looked upon as a child in the family, **the father and mother being the moon and the sun, or the sun and the moon (according to the sex attributed to these divinities), or else either the sun or the moon was the father** and Venus the mother (the sexes being inter-changeable in the myths)...

10. These cross-currents and mixtures of nature-worship, astral-worship, hero-worship, worship of abstract qualities, etc., resulted in a medley of debasing superstitions which are summed up in five names, Wadd, Suwa', Yaguth, Ya'uq, **and Nasr**, as noted in paragraph 3 above... If Wadd and Suwa' represented Man and Woman, **they might well represent the astral-worship of the moon and the sun...** On the other hand, it is possible that the worship of Jupiter and Venus itself got mixed up with **the worship of the sun-moon pair...** Further, it may be that **Nasr (the vulture, falcon, hawk, or eagle, the Egyptian Horus) also represents a solar myth**, mixed up with the cult of the planets...

11. It may be noted that the five deities mentioned here to represent very ancient religious cults are well-chosen. They are not the names of the deities best known in Mecca, but rather those which survived as fragments of very ancient cults among the outlying tribes of Arabia, which were influenced by the cults of Mesopotamia (Noah's country). The Pagan deities best known in

the Kaba and round about Mecca were Lat, 'Uzza, and Manat. (Manat was also known round Yathrib, which afterwards became Medina.) See liii. 19-20. They were all female goddesses. **Lat almost certainly represents another wave of sun-worship; the sun being feminine in Arabic and in Semitic languages generally.** "Lat" may be the original of the Greek "Leto", the mother of Apollos the sun-god (*Encyclopedia of Islam*, I, p. 380). If so, the name was brought in prehistoric times **from South Arabia** by the great Incense Route (n. 3816 to xxxiv. 18) to the Mediterranean. **'Uzza probably represents the planet Venus.** The origin of Manat is not quite clear, but it would not be surprising if it also turned to be astral. The 360 idols established by the Pagans **probably represented the 360 days of an inaccurate solar year.** This was the actual "modern" Pagan worship as known to the Quraysh contemporary with our Prophet... (Yusuf Ali, *The Holy Qur'an: Text and Translation*, Appendix XIII. Ancient Forms of Pagan Worship, pp. 1620-1622; bold emphasis ours)

If Ali is correct that the sun represented Allat, then wouldn't this make it rather obvious that the moon must have symbolized Allah?

Now where did Ali derive the understanding that the number seven is a mystical number? Was it from the Holy Bible and the fact that God is said to have rested on the seventh day, thereby hallowing it (cf. Genesis 2:2-3)? Let us read fn. 5526 to find his answer:

"Seven Firmaments." **The literal meaning refers to the seven orbits or firmaments that we see clearly marked in the motions of the heavenly bodies in the space around us... In poetical imagery there are the seven Planetary spheres, which form the lower heaven or heavens, with higher spheres culminating in the Empyrean or God's throne of Majesty...** The mystical meaning refers to the various grades in the spiritual or heavenly kingdom, the number seven being itself a mystical symbol, comprising many and yet form an indivisible integer, the highest indivisible integer of one digit. (Ibid., p. 1567; bold emphasis ours)

Thus, the pagans at Mecca during Muhammad's time worshiped the sun and the moon, along with the planets and stars. This explains why the Meccans ran around the kabah and between the hills of Safa and Marwa seven times, as well as throwing seven stones at Mina; they did this in veneration of these seven heavenly objects!

As one author stated:

According to al-Shahrastani, (d. 1153), **an opinion prevalent among the Arabians was that the circumambulation of the Kaaba originally symbolized the motion of the planets** (Rodwell, 1915, p. 455)... The number seven, one quarter of the number of days in a lunar month, is a lunar number. Herodotus mentions the use of the seven stones by the Arabs when taking solemn oaths. **The historian Masudi (d. 956) records an old belief that the Kaaba was dedicated to seven heavenly bodies.** In pre-Islamic times the Kaaba was to be circumambulated seven times, keeping the Kaaba on the left, the sinistral feminine side. The pilgrim had to run between the hills of Safa and Marwa seven times. Seven stones were thrown by each pilgrim at Mina, and so on. Some of these practices, as we have seen, have lasted to the present day. (Benjamin Walker, *Foundations of Islam: The Making of a World Faith* [Peter Owen Publishers, London & Chester Springs, 1998], pp. 46-47; bold emphasis ours)

The evidence further shows that moon worship was rather prevalent throughout Arabia. As Y. Ali had to acknowledge in explaining the Quran's swearing by the moon:

“... The moon, next after the sun, is the most striking luminary to our sight. Its reflected light has for us even a greater mystery than the direct light of the sun, which looks to us like pure fire. **The moon was worshipped as a deity in times of darkness.**” (Ali, p. 1644, fn. 5798; bold emphasis ours)

In fact, scholars and historians alike admit that Arabs particularly loved and worshiped the moon, especially in South Arabia. One such noted historian of Arabic civilization is Philip K. Hitti, who wrote that,

“**The religion of South Arabia was in its essence a planetary astral system in which the cult of the moon-god prevailed. The moon**, known in Hadramawt as Sin, to the Minaeans as Wadd (love or lover, father), to the Sabaens as Almaqah (the health-giving god?) and to the Qatabanians as ‘Amm (paternal uncle), **stood at the head of the pantheon. He was conceived as a masculine deity and took precedence over the sun, Shams, who was his consort.** ‘Athar (Venus, corresponding to the Babylonian goddess Ishtar, Phoenician ‘Ashtar), their son, was the third member of the triad. From this celestial pair sprang the many other heavenly bodies considered divine. **The North Arabian al-Lat, who figured in the Koran, may have been another name for the sun-goddess.**” (Hitti, *History of the Arabs from the Earliest Times to the Present*, new preface by Walid Khalidi [Palgrave Macmillan, 2002; paperback, revised tenth edition], pp. 60-61; bold emphasis ours)

And:

“**The Bedouin's beliefs centered upon the moon in whose light he grazed his flocks.** Moon-worship implies a pastoral society, whereas sun-worship represents a later agricultural stage. In our own day the Moslem Ruwalah Bedouins imagine that their life is regulated by the moon, which condenses the water vapours, distills the beneficent dew on the pasture and makes possible the growth of plants. On the other hand the sun, as they believe, would like to destroy the Bedouins as well as all animal and plant life.” (Ibid, pp. 97-98; bold emphasis ours)

Wendell K. Phillips concurs with Hitti:

“**The moon was the chief deity of all the early South Arabian kingdoms** - particularly fitting in that region where the soft light of the moon brought the rest and cool winds of the night as a relief from the blinding sun and scorching heat of day. **In contrast to most of the old religions with which we are familiar, the Moon God is male, while the Sun God is his consort, a female.** The third god of importance is their child, the male morning star, which we know as the planet Venus.” (Phillips, *Qataban And Sheba: Exploring Ancient Kingdoms On The Biblical Spice Routes Of Arabia* [Victor Gollancz Ltd.: London 1955], p. 69; bold emphasis ours)

And:

“The spice route riches brought them a standard of luxurious living inconceivable to the poverty-stricken South Arabian Bedouins of today. Like nearly all the Semitic peoples, **they worshipped the moon, the sun, and the morning star. The CHIEF GOD, the moon, was a male deity** symbolized by the bull, and we found many carved bull's heads, with drains for the blood of sacrificed animals.” (Ibid, p. 204; bold and capital emphasis ours)

In light of the foregoing, the questions that Muslim propagandists such as Zaatari need to answer are the following.

Since the pagan Arabs viewed the moon as the chief deity and/or the heavenly object associated with the supreme god, what word would they have used to denote this belief of theirs?

Specifically, doesn't common sense tell us that these Arabs would have called the moon Allah seeing that this was the word which they used in reference to the god they thought was supreme over the rest?

In other words, since the moon was considered a deity, and/or the celestial body of a god, wouldn't the pagans have called it *ilah* in Arabic? After all, this happens to be the generic word for god in the Arabic language, and it only makes sense that the pagans would have used this Arabic term in reference to the moon.

And wouldn't we expect to find them referring to the moon as Allah as well, seeing that the pagans viewed it as the chief deity?

This, perhaps, explains why even scholarly sources admit that the moon was called *ilah* and Allah before Muhammad's time.

For instance, here is what one professor wrote concerning the phrase *ilah*, from which Allah originates:

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, Israel, 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. (C. S. Coon, "Southern Arabia, A Problem For The Future", Papers Of The Peabody Museum Of American Archaeology And Ethnology, 1943, Volume 20, p. 195; capital and underline emphasis ours)

Another source says:

Allah. Islamic name for God. Is derived from Semitic El, and originally applied to the moon; he seems to have been preceded by Imaqah, the moon god. ("Allah" in E. Sykes, *Everyman's Dictionary Of Non-Classical Mythology* [J. M. Dent & Sons Ltd., London, E. P. Dutton & Co. Inc., New York, 1961] p. 7; underline emphasis ours)

This makes perfect sense. After all, how could the pagans not have addressed the moon as Allah when they took it to be the representation of their supreme deity?

The Hubal Connection

There is additional evidence connecting the pre-Islamic Allah with the moon. According to the scholarly sources, the chief god worshiped at Mecca was Hubal, whom many authorities claim was the moon god.

Hubal Chief god of the Ka 'ba; a martial and oracular deity; a moon god. (*Gods, Goddesses and Mythology*, ed. C. Scott Littleton [Marshall Cavendish Corporation 2005], Volume 11, p. 137)

Hubal – an idol, the God of the Moon. Centuries before Islam, ‘Amr ibn Luhayy, a chief of the tribe of Jurhum who dwelt in Mecca before the coming of the Quraysh tribe, brought the idol to the city from Syria. It was set up in the Ka‘bah and became the principal idol of the pagan Meccans. The ritual casting of lots and divining arrows was performed in front of it.

Hubal was pulled down and used as a doorstep when the Prophet conquered Mecca and purified the Ka‘bah. See IDOLS: JAHILIYYAH (Cyril Glasse, *The New Encyclopedia of Islam*, Third Edition [Stacey International, 2008], p. 209; underline emphasis ours)

Of the 360 idols set up in the Ka‘bah, the most important was Hubal, the god of the moon. Upon the conquest of Mecca the Prophet cut open some of these idols with a sword and black smoke is said to have issued forth from them, a sign of the psychic influences which had made these idols their dwelling place. The Prophet turned the idol of Hubal into a doorstep. (Ibid., p. 235; underline emphasis ours)

al-‘Uzza. One of the more important idols of the pagan Arabs, closely associated with al-Lat and al-Manat. All three were considered to be females. It is known that human sacrifice had been made to them on occasion. The other principal idol of the Meccans was Hubal, god of the Moon. See IDOLS (Ibid., p. 543; underline emphasis ours)

Hubal A pre-Islamic deity represented by an idol in Kaaba that was destroyed by Muhammad when he conquered Mecca in 630. Patron of the Quraysh, leading tribe of Mecca. (*The Oxford Dictionary of Islam* [Oxford University Press, 2003], p. 117; underlined emphasis ours)

“The *sira* literature presents Mecca's cult **as a pagan one to the god Hubal**, and depicts the Arabian religious environment in which Muhammad grew up as overwhelmingly pagan – the final vestiges of the ancient near eastern religious tradition...” (*The Cambridge Companion to the Qur’an*, ed. Jane Dammen McAuliffe [Cambridge University Press, 2006], p. 24; bold emphasis ours)

“Among the many deities that the Arabs worshiped in and around the Ka‘bah were the god Hubal and the three goddesses Al-Lat, al- ‘Uzza, and Manat. **Hubal was originally a moon god**,

and perhaps also a rain god, as *hubal* means ‘vapor.’ ...” (Mahmoud M. Ayoub, *Islam: Faith and History* [Oneworld Publications Ltd., 2005]), p. 15; bold emphasis ours)

"Khuza 'ah thus shared the guilt of Jurhum. They were also to blame in other respects: a chieftain of theirs, on his way back from a journey to Syria, had asked the Moabites to give him one of their idols. **They gave him Hubal**, which he brought back to the Sanctuary, setting it up within the Ka'bah itself; **and it became THE CHIEF IDOL OF MECCA.**" (Martin Lings, *Muhammad: His Life Based on the Earliest Sources* [Inner Traditions International, LTD. One Park Street, Rochester Vermont 05767, 1983], p. 5; bold and capital emphasis ours)

“The Quraysh were wont to venerate her above all other idols. For this reason Zayd ibn-'Amr ibn-Nufayl, who, during the Jahilyah days, had turned to the worship of God and renounced that of al-'Uzza and of the other idols, said:

‘I have renounced both Allat and al-'Uzza,
For thus would the brave and the robust do.
No more do I worship al-'Uzza and her two daughters,
Or visit the two idols of the banu-Ghanm;
**Nor do I journey to Hubal and adore it,
ALTHOUGH IT WAS OUR LORD WHEN I WAS YOUNG.**’ ...

“The Quraysh had also several idols in and around the Ka'bah. **The greatest of these was Hubal.** It was, as I was told, of red agate, in the form of a man with the right hand broken off. It came into the possession of the Quraysh in this condition, and they, therefore, made for it a hand of gold. The first to set it up [for worship] was Khuzaymah ibn-Mudrikah ibn-al-Ya's' ibn-Mudar. Consequently it used to be called Khuzaymah's Hubal.

“It stood inside the Ka'bah. In front of it were seven divination arrows (sing. *qidh*, pl. *qidah* or *aqduh*). On one of these arrows was written ‘pure’ (*sarih*), and on another ‘consociated alien’ (*mulsag*). Whenever the lineage of a new-born was doubted, they would offer a sacrifice to it [Hubal] and then shuffle the arrows and throw them. If the arrows showed the word ‘pure,’ the child would be declared legitimate and the tribe would accept him. If, however, the arrows showed the words ‘consociated alien,’ the child would be declared illegitimate and the tribe would reject him. The third arrow was for divination concerning the dead, while the fourth was for divination concerning marriage. The purpose of the three remaining arrows has not been explained. Whenever they disagreed concerning something, or purposed to embark upon a journey, or undertake some project, they would proceed to it [Hubal] and shuffle the divination arrows before it. Whatever result they obtained they would follow and do accordingly.

“It was before [Hubal] that 'Abd-al-Muttalib shuffled the divination arrows [in order to find out which of his ten children he should sacrifice in fulfilment of a vow he had sworn], and the arrows pointed to his son 'Abdullah, the father of the Prophet. Hubal was also the same idol which abu-Sufyan ibn-Harb addressed when he emerged victorious after the battle of Uhud, saying:

‘Hubal, be thou exalted’ (i.e. may thy religion triumph);

“To which the Prophet replied:

‘Allah is more exalted and more majestic.’”

(Hisham Ibn al-Kalbi, *The Book of Idols (Kitab Al-Asnam)*, Translated with Introduction and Notes by Nabih Amin Faris, pp. 19, 23-24)

Not only was Hubal considered the chief Meccan deity he was also identified as the lord and god of the kabah. Even the black stone of the kabah, which Muslims venerate till this day, was associated with Hubal:

“... **The great god of Mecca was Hubal**, an idol of carnelian.” (Maxime Rodinson, *Muhammad* [New Press, NY, May 2000 ISBN: 1565847520], p. 16; bold emphasis ours)

“... The Ka'ba **which may have initially been a shrine of Hubal alone**, housed several idols...” (Ibid., p. 40; bold emphasis ours)

“... **The presiding deity was Hubal**, a large carnelian kept inside the temple; 360 other idols were arranged outside...” (Malise Ruthven, *Islam in the World* [Oxford University Press, Second edition 2000], p. 15; bold emphasis ours)

“... **Although originally under the aegis of the pagan god Hubal**, the Makkan *haram* which centered around the well of Zamzam, may have become associated with the ancestral figures of Ibrahim and Isma'il as the Arab traders, shedding their parochial backgrounds sought to locate themselves within the broader reference-frame of Judeo-Christianity.” (Ibid., p. 17)

“... **the god of Makka, Hubal**, represented by a statue of red carnelian, is thought to have been originally a totem of the Khuza'a, rulers of Makka before their displacement by the Quraysh...” (Ibid. p. 28; bold emphasis ours)

“... At the time of Muhammad, **the Ka'abah was OFFICIALLY DEDICATED to the god Hubal**, a deity who had been imported into Arabia from the Nabateans in what is now Jordan. But the pre-eminence of the shrine as well as the common belief in Mecca seems to suggest that it may have been dedicated originally to al-Llah, the High God of the Arabs...” (Karen Armstrong, *Muhammad: A Biography of the Prophet* [Harper San Francisco; ISBN: 0062508865; Reprint edition, October 1993], pp. 61-62; bold and capital emphasis ours)

“... Legend had it that Qusayy had travelled in Syria and brought the three goddesses al-Lat, al-Uzza and Manat to the Hijaz **and enthroned the Nabatean god Hubal in the Ka'abah...**” (Ibid., p. 66; bold emphasis ours)

“... At the center of the town was the shrine called the Ka'ba – a large, cubical building with a sacred black stone affixed in one corner – **that was the sanctuary to the pagan god Hubal...**” (Fred McGraw Donner, *Muhammad And The Believers: At The Origins Of Islam* [Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2010], 1. The Near East on the Eve of Islam, p. 35; bold emphasis ours)

“... In the Ka‘ba was the statue of the god Hubal **who might be called the god of Mecca and of the Ka ‘ba. Caetani gives great prominence to the connection between the Ka‘ba and Hubal.** Besides him, however, al-Lat, al-‘Uzza, and al-Manat were worshipped and are mentioned in the Kur’an; Hubal is never mentioned there. **What position Allah held beside these is not exactly known.** The Islamic tradition has certainly elevated him at the expense of other deities.” (M. Th. Houtsma, *E. J. Brill’s First Encyclopedia of Islam 1913-1936*, **Volume IV**, p. 591; bold emphasis ours)

“... The question might even be asked whether and how far the Ka‘ba was regarded as an astral symbol. For the affirmative there is the fact that the Ka‘ba is the object of the *tawaf* and that *tawaf* and Kab‘a are represented by Muslim tradition itself as connected with the host of spirits round the throne of God. The throne of God is, as is well known, a cosmic magnitude, and the Ka‘ba and the Black Stone are described as the throne of God's *khalifa* on earth, Adam. The dance of the heavenly spirits can easily be interpreted as a dance of the planets. **Moreover, golden suns and moons are repeatedly mentioned among the votive gifts (al-Azraki, p. 155 sqq.). According to al-Mas ‘udi (Murudj, iv. 47), certain people regarded the Ka‘ba as a temple devoted to the sun, the moon and the five planets. The 360 idols placed round the Ka‘ba also point in this direction.** It can therefore hardly be denied that traces exist of astral symbolism. At the same time one can safely say that there can be no question of any general conception on these lines. The cult at the Ka‘ba was in the heathen period syncretic as is usual in heathenism. How far also North Semitic cults were represented in Mecca cannot be exactly ascertained. It is not excluded that Allah was of Aramaic origin. The dove of aloe wood which Muhammad found existing in the Ka‘ba may have been devoted to the Semitic Venus.” (Ibid.; bold emphasis ours)

“... Before Muhammad appeared, the Kaaba was surrounded by 360 idols, and every Arab house had its god. Arabs also believed in **jinn** (subtle beings), and some vague divinity with many offspring. Among the major deities of the pre-Islamic era were **al-Lat** (‘the Goddess’), worshiped in the shape of a square stone; **al-Uzza** (‘the Mighty’), a goddess identified with the morning star and worshiped as a thigh-bone shaped slab of granite between al-Taif and Mecca; **Manat**, the goddess of destiny, worshiped as a black stone on the road between Mecca and Medina; and the moon god, **Hubal**, whose worship was connected with the Black Stone of the Kaaba.” (Peter Occhiogrosso, *The Joy Of Sects: A Spirited Guide To The World's Religious Traditions* [An Image Book published by DoubleDay, 1996], p. 399; underline emphasis ours)

Many scholars are also of the opinion that Hubal was simply the Arabic equivalent of the false god Baal:

“The Kaaba itself, which was the sanctuary of the *Pagan* Arabs, and remained such after they had embraced Islam, is a building about thirty-four feet high and about twenty-seven broad, so called from being almost a perfect square, as the name implies. In this building we find no less than 360 idols; **a chief of them, Hubal, was at once the presiding god in the temple and the principal deity of the Koreishites**, who were its guardians. The pre-eminence of this idol was evinced by the fact, that before it, the casting of lots with arrows took place. Prior, however, to its obtaining this honour, it passed through a term of probation, for we learn upon good authority, that for a considerable period it stood outside the walls of the Kaaba, patiently waiting for its

admission. It was probably introduced when the sanctuary of the Koreish tribe was converted into the Pantheon of the whole of Arabia. The name of Hubal remains a mystery. **The opinion that it is synonymous with the Babylonian and Syrian Baal or Bel is supported by the testimony of Arab authorities**, according to whom Hubal was originally imported from Syria. These writers do not indeed maintain that Hubal was identical with Baal, but they admit Hubal to be an astronomical deity.

“Again, when it is stated by Abulfeda that the image of Abraham occupied the chief in the Kaaba, and that he was represented by Hubal, we may take it for granted that Hubal had a double character, **like Baal**, who was both the founder of the Babylonian empire and the solar deity...” (John Muehleisen Arnold, *Islam: Its History, Character, and Relation to Christianity*, Chapter I. The Land Of Its Birth, The Pre-Islamite Kaaba, pp. 26-27; bold emphasis ours)

And:

“As well as worshipping idols and spirits, found in animals, plants, rocks and water, the ancient Arabs believed in several major gods and goddesses whom they considered to hold supreme power over all things. **The most famous of these were Al-lat, Al-‘Uzza, Manat and Hubal**. The first three were thought to be the daughters of Allah (God) and their intercessions on behalf of their worshippers were therefore of great significance...”

“Al-lat, also known as Alilat, was worshiped in the shape of a square white stone. She was known to other Semitic people in Syria and Mesopotamia, and was the Mother Goddess of Palmyra (in northern Syria), whose symbol was the lion. The Nabataeans of south Jordan and south Palestine worshiped her **as the sun goddess**, the giver of life. In Mecca, Al-lat had a *haram* (sanctuary) and a *hima* where the Arabs flocked to perform the rites of worship and sacrifice which would bring her favour upon them.

“Al-‘Uzza was worshiped in the form of three palm trees, a stone and an idol. She was the supreme deity of the tribe of Quraysh, the rulers of Mecca immediately before Islam. She had a temple and a *hima* there and was offered gifts in gold and silver and adorned with jewellery. Her name means ‘the most cherished’ but she was a cruel goddess who could be appeased only by the shedding of blood, both human and animal. Like Al-lat, al-‘Uzza was associated with the goddess of love, al-Zuhara, but was more closely linked with Al-lat. The two were often worshipped together **and sometimes formed a trinity with Manat or the god Hubal**. Replicas of them were carried by the clans of Quraysh when they went to war to inspire the fighters with courage and devotion...”

“**Hubal was associated with the Semitic god Ba‘l and with Adonis or Tammuz, the gods of spring, fertility, agriculture and plenty**... Hubal’s idol used to stand by the holy well inside the Sacred House...” (*Fabled Cities, Princes & Jinn From Arab Myths and Legends*, text by Khairat al-Saleh, illustrations by Rashad N. Salim [Schocken Books, New York 1985], p. 28; bold emphasis ours)

Finally:

“In addition to the sun, moon and the star Al-Zuhara, the Arabs worshipped the planets Saturn, Mercury, and Jupiter, the stars Sirius and Canopies and the constellations of Orion, Ursa Major and Minor, and the seven Pleiades.

“Some stars and planets were given human characters. According to legend, Al-Dabaran, one of the stars in the Hyades group, fell deeply in love with Al-Thurayya, the fairest of the Pleiades stars. **With the approval of the Moon**, he asked for her hand in marriage. Al-Thurayya objected, saying coquettishly, ‘What would I do with a fellow like that, with no money?’” (Ibid., pp. 29-30; bold emphasis ours)

Since Hubal was identified with the moon, this means that al-Dabaran had received Hubal’s approval to go ahead with the marriage proposal. This indicates the kind of status accorded to Hubal by the pagan Arabs.

Now these facts present a major problem for taqiyyists such as Zaatari, as we shall see in the **next part** of our rebuttal.

(Endnote: Muslims may object to the identification of Hubal with Baal on the grounds that in some of the above quotations Baal is said to have been the sun god. This objection misses the point since it is to be expected that the word Baal would be used in reference to the particular celestial body which symbolized the prominent male deity in any given patriarchal culture. It, therefore, shouldn’t surprise us that Baal would be identified with the sun in those cultures which viewed this celestial body as a male figure. However, we would not expect the Arabs to associate Baal with the sun, which to them was a female deity. The Arabs would have associated the moon with Baal/Hubal, which they took to be the male god.)