

Idol gods from Bible

Scripture from the Bible

Baal (demon)

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This article is about demonology. For other uses, see [Baal \(disambiguation\)](#).



The [Dictionnaire Infernal](#) illustration of Baal.

Baal (/ˈbeɪl/[ⓘ] ***BAYL***; sometimes spelled **Bael**, **Baël** (French), **Baell**) is one of the [seven princes](#) of [Hell](#). He is mentioned widely in the Old Testament as the primary pagan idol of the Phoenicians, often associated with the pagan goddess [Ashtaroth](#).

Archaeology and scripture

Numbers 22: 35

Balak entertains him

36 And when Balak heard that Balaam was come, he went out to meet him unto a city of Moab, which [*is*] in the border of Arnon, which [*is*] in the utmost coast. **37** And Balak said unto Balaam, Did I not earnestly send unto thee to call thee? wherefore camest thou not unto me? am I not able indeed to promote thee to honour? **38** And Balaam said unto Balak, Lo, I am come unto thee: have I now any power at all to say any thing? the word that God putteth in my mouth, that shall I speak. **39** And Balaam went with Balak, and they came unto Kirjathhuzoth. **40** And Balak offered oxen and sheep, and sent to Balaam, and to the princes that [*were*] with him. **41** And it came to pass on the morrow, that Balak took Balaam, and brought him up into the high places of **Baal**, that thence he might see the utmost [*part*] of the people.

Deuteronomy 4

An exhortation to obedience

1 Now therefore hearken, O Israel, unto the statutes and unto the judgments, which I teach you, for to do [*them*], that ye may live, and go in and possess the land which the LORD God of your fathers giveth you. **2** Ye shall not add unto the word which I command you, neither shall ye diminish [*ought*] from it, that ye may keep the commandments of the LORD your God which I command you. **3** Your eyes have seen what the LORD did because of **Baal**peor: for all the men that followed **Baal**peor, the LORD thy God hath destroyed them from among you. **4** But ye that did cleave unto the LORD your God [*are*] alive every one of you this day. **5** Behold, I have taught you statutes and judgments, even as the LORD my God

[Ba'al](#) is a title meaning "lord" that was applied to a number of West Semitic gods.^[1]

Baal Hadad, probably the most widely worshiped Baal, was worshiped by [Arameans](#) who brought his worship to other parts of the Mediterranean. Early demonologists, unaware of Hadad or that the instances of the term "Ba'al" in the Bible referred to any number of local deities, few to none of them referring to Hadad, came to regard the term as referring to but one personage. Until archaeological digs at [Ras Shamra](#) and [Ebla](#) uncovered texts explaining the Syrian pantheon, the [Ba'al Zebûb](#) was frequently confused with various Semitic deities named Ba'al, and in the [New Testament](#) might refer to a high-ranking devil or to Satan himself.^{[2][3]}

The Biblical and historical evidence shows that the Moabites worshiped a Baal. The pre-Islamic and Muslim sources show that the Meccans took over the idol [Hubal](#) from the Moabites.

[\[edit\]](#) Christian demonology

Baal is a Christian demon.^[4] According to [Christian demonology](#), Baal was ranked as the first and principal king in Hell, ruling over the East. According to some authors Baal is a Duke, with sixty-six legions of demons under his command. The term "Baal" is used in various ways in the Old Testament, with the usual meaning of master, or owner. It came to sometimes mean the local pagan god of a particular people, and at the same time all of the idols of the land. It is also found in several places in the plural Baalim, or Baals ([Judges 2:11](#),[Judges 10:10](#)). There were many variations, such as the sun god, the god of fertility, and [Beelzebub](#), or the "lord of flies".

During the English [Puritan](#) period, Baal was either compared to [Satan](#) or considered his main assistant. According to [Francis Barrett](#), he has the power to make those who invoke him invisible, and to some other demonologists his power is stronger in October. According to some sources, he can make people wise, speaks hoarsely, and carries ashes in his pocket.

While his Semitic predecessor was depicted as a man or a [bull](#),^[5] the demon Baal was

commanded me, that ye should do so in the land whither ye go to possess it. **6** Keep therefore and do *[them]*; for this *[is]* your wisdom and your understanding in the sight of the nations, which shall hear all these statutes, and say, Surely this great nation *[is]* a wise and understanding people. **7** For what nation *[is there so]* great, who *[hath]* God *[so]* nigh unto them, as the LORD our God *[is]* in all *[things that]* we call upon him *[for]*? **8** And what nation *[is there so]* great, that hath statutes and judgments *[so]* righteous as all this law, which I set before you this day? **9** Only take heed to thyself, and keep thy soul diligently, lest thou forget the things which thine eyes have seen, and lest they depart from thy heart all the days of thy life: but teach them thy sons, and thy sons' sons; **10** *[Specially]* the day that thou stoodest before the LORD thy God in Horeb, when the LORD said unto me, Gather me the people together, and I will make them hear my words, that they may learn to fear me all the days that they shall live upon the earth, and *[that]* they may teach their children. **11** And ye came near and stood under the mountain; and the mountain burned with fire unto the midst of heaven, with darkness, clouds, and thick darkness. **12** And the LORD spake unto you out of the midst of the fire: ye heard the voice of the words, but saw no similitude; only *[ye heard]* a voice. **13** And he declared unto you his covenant, which he commanded you to perform, *[even]* ten commandments; and he wrote them upon two tables of stone. **14** And the LORD commanded me at that time to teach you statutes and judgments, that ye might do them in the land whither ye go over to possess it. **15** Take ye therefore good heed unto yourselves; for ye saw no manner of similitude on the day *[that]* the LORD spake unto you in Horeb out of the midst of the fire: **16** Lest ye corrupt *[yourselves]*, and make you a graven image, the similitude of any figure, the likeness of male or female, **17** The likeness of any beast that *[is]* on the earth, the likeness of any winged fowl that flieth in the air, **18** The likeness of any thing that creepeth on the ground, the likeness of any fish that *[is]* in the waters beneath the earth: **19** And lest thou lift up thine eyes unto heaven, and when thou seest the sun, and the moon,

in [grimoire](#) tradition said to appear in the forms of a man, [cat](#), [toad](#), or combinations thereof. An illustration in [Collin de Plancy's](#) 1818 book [Dictionnaire Infernal](#) rather curiously placed the heads of the three creatures onto a set of [spider](#) legs.

and the stars, [*even*] all the host of heaven, shouldst be driven to worship them, and serve them, which the LORD thy God hath divided unto all nations under the whole heaven. **20** But the LORD hath taken you, and brought you forth out of the iron furnace, [*even*] out of Egypt, to be unto him a people of inheritance, as [*ye are*] this day. **21** Furthermore the LORD was angry with me for your sakes, and swore that I should not go over Jordan, and that I should not go in unto that good land, which the LORD thy God giveth thee [*for*] an inheritance: **22** But I must die in this land, I must not go over Jordan: but ye shall go over, and possess that good land. **23** Take heed unto yourselves, lest ye forget the covenant of the LORD your God, which he made with you, and make you a graven image, [*or*] the likeness of any [*thing*], which the LORD thy God hath forbidden thee. **24** For the LORD thy God [*is*] a consuming fire, [*even*] a jealous God. **25** When thou shalt beget children, and children's children, and ye shall have remained long in the land, and shall corrupt [*yourselves*], and make a graven image, [*or*] the likeness of any [*thing*], and shall do evil in the sight of the LORD thy God, to provoke him to anger: **26** I call heaven and earth to witness against you this day, that ye shall soon utterly perish from off the land whereunto ye go over Jordan to possess it; ye shall not prolong [*your*] days upon it, but shall utterly be destroyed. **27** And the LORD shall scatter you among the nations, and ye shall be left few in number among the heathen, whither the LORD shall lead you. **28** And there ye shall serve gods, the work of men's hands, wood and stone, which neither see, nor hear, nor eat, nor smell. **29** But if from thence thou shalt seek the LORD thy God, thou shalt find [*him*], if thou seek him with all thy heart and with all thy soul. **30** When thou art in tribulation, and all these things are come upon thee, [*even*] in the latter days, if thou turn to the LORD thy God, and shalt be obedient unto his voice; **31** (For the LORD thy God [*is*] a merciful God;) he will not forsake thee, neither destroy thee, nor forget the covenant of thy fathers which he swore unto them. **32** For ask now of the days that are past, which were before thee, since the day that God created man upon the

earth, and [*ask*] from the one side of heaven unto the other, whether there hath been [*any such thing*] as this great thing [*is*], or hath been heard like it? **33** Did [*ever*] people hear the voice of God speaking out of the midst of the fire, as thou hast heard, and live? **34** Or hath God assayed to go [*and*] take him a nation from the midst of [*another*] nation, by temptations, by signs, and by wonders, and by war, and by a mighty hand, and by a stretched out arm, and by great terrors, according to all that the LORD your God did for you in Egypt before your eyes? **35** Unto thee it was shewed, that thou mightest know that the LORD he [*is*] God; [*there is*] none else beside him. **36** Out of heaven he made thee to hear his voice, that he might instruct thee: and upon earth he shewed thee his great fire; and thou heardest his words out of the midst of the fire. **37** And because he loved thy fathers, therefore he chose their seed after them, and brought thee out in his sight with his mighty power out of Egypt; **38** To drive out nations from before thee greater and mightier than thou [*art*], to bring thee in, to give thee their land [*for*] an inheritance, as [*it is*] this tamday. **39** Know therefore this day, and consider [*it*] in thine heart, that the LORD he [*is*] God in heaven above, and upon the earth beneath: [*there is*] none else. **40** Thou shalt keep therefore his statutes, and his commandments, which I command thee this day, that it may go well with thee, and with thy children after thee, and that thou mayest prolong [*thy*] days upon the earth, which the LORD thy God giveth thee, for ever.

Ishtar (Related to Tammuz)

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Old Babylonian period [Queen of Night relief](#), often considered to represent an aspect of Ishtar.

Ishtar (pronounced /ˈɪʃtɑːr/; Transliteration: [ⓘ]/ŠTAR/; Akkadian: ; Sumerian)

is the [Assyrian](#) and [Babylonian](#) goddess of [fertility](#), [war](#), [love](#), and [sex](#).^[1] She is the counterpart to the [Sumerian Inanna](#) and to the [cognate](#) north-west [Semitic goddess Astarte](#).

[[edit](#)] **Characteristics**

Ishtar was the god of love and war above all associated with sexuality:

her [cult](#) involved [sacred prostitution](#);^{[2][3]} her holy city [Uruk](#) was called the "town of the sacred courtesans"; and she herself was the "courtesan of the gods".^[4] Ishtar had

Ezekiel 8:17

Ezekiel, in a vision of God at Jerusalem

1 And it came to pass in the sixth year, in the sixth *[month]*, in the fifth *[day]* of the month, *[as]* I sat in mine house, and the elders of Judah sat before me, that the hand of the Lord GOD fell there upon me. **2** Then I beheld, and lo a likeness as the appearance of fire: from the appearance of his loins even downward, fire; and from his loins even upward, as the appearance of brightness, as the colour of amber. **3** And he put forth the form of an hand, and took me by a lock of mine head; and the spirit lifted me up between the earth and the heaven, and brought me in the visions of God to Jerusalem, to the door of the inner gate that looketh toward the north; where *[was]* the seat of the image of jealousy, which provoketh to jealousy. **4** And, behold, the glory of the God of Israel *[was]* there, according to the vision that I saw in the plain.

is shewn the image of jealousy

5 Then said he unto me, Son of man, lift up thine eyes now the way toward the north. So I lifted up mine eyes the way toward the north, and behold northward at the gate of the altar this image of jealousy in the entry. **6** He said furthermore unto me, Son of man, seest thou what they do? *[even]* the great abominations that the house of Israel committeth here, that I should go far off from my sanctuary? but turn thee yet again, *[and]* thou shalt see greater abominations.

the chambers of imagery

7 And he brought me to the door of the court; and when I looked, behold a hole in the wall. **8** Then said he unto me, Son of man, dig now in the wall: and when I had digged in the wall, behold a door. **9** And he said unto me, Go in, and behold the wicked abominations that they do here. **10** So I went in and saw; and behold every form of creeping things, and abominable beasts, and all the idols of the house of Israel,

many lovers; however, as Guirand notes,

"Woe to him whom Ishtar had honoured! The fickle goddess treated her passing lovers cruelly, and the unhappy wretches usually paid dearly for the favours heaped on them. Animals, enslaved by love, lost their native vigour: they fell into traps laid by men or were domesticated by them. 'Thou has loved the lion, mighty in strength', says the hero [Gilgamesh](#) to Ishtar, 'and thou hast dug for him seven and seven pits! Thou hast loved the steed, proud in battle, and destined him for the [halter](#), the [goad](#) and the [whip](#).' Even for the gods Ishtar's love was fatal. In her youth the goddess had loved [Tammuz](#), god of the harvest, and—if one is to believe Gilgamesh—this love caused the death of Tammuz.^[4]

Ishtar was the daughter of [Sin](#) or [Anu](#).^[4] She was particularly worshipped at the [Assyrian](#) cities of [Nineveh](#), [Ashur](#) and [Arbela](#)^[disambiguation needed] (Erbil).^[4]

Besides the lions on her gate, her symbol is an [eight-pointed star](#).^[5]



Ishtar holding her weapon, [Louvre Museum](#)

pourtrayed upon the wall round about. **11** And there stood before them seventy men of the ancients of the house of Israel, and in the midst of them stood Jaazaniah the son of Shaphan, with every man his censer in his hand; and a thick cloud of incense went up. **12** Then said he unto me, Son of man, hast thou seen what the ancients of the house of Israel do in the dark, every man in the chambers of his imagery? for they say, The LORD seeth us not; the LORD hath forsaken the earth.

the mourners for Tammuz

13 He said also unto me, Turn thee yet again, [*and*] thou shalt see greater abominations that they do. **14** Then he brought me to the door of the gate of the LORD'S house which [*was*] toward the north; and, behold, there sat women weeping for Tammuz. **15** Then said he unto me, Hast thou seen [*this*], O son of man? turn thee yet again, [*and*] thou shalt see greater abominations than these.

the worshippers toward the sun

16 And he brought me into the inner court of the LORD'S house, and, behold, at the door of the temple of the LORD, between the porch and the altar, [*were*] about five and twenty men, with their backs toward the temple of the LORD, and their faces toward the east; and they worshipped the sun toward the east.

God's wrath for their idolatry

17 Then he said unto me, Hast thou seen [*this*], O son of man? Is it a light thing to the house of Judah that they commit the abominations which they commit here? for they have filled the land with violence, and have returned to provoke me to anger: and, lo, they put the branch to their nose. **18** Therefore will I also deal in fury: mine eye shall not spare, neither will I have pity: and though they cry in mine ears with a loud voice, [*yeŕ*] will I not hear them.



One type of depiction of Ishtar/Inanna



The lion was her symbol (detail of the [Ishtar Gate](#))

In the Babylonian [pantheon](#), she "was the divine personification of the planet [Venus](#)".^[4]

[\[edit\]](#) Descent into the underworld

One of the most famous myths^[6] about Ishtar describes her descent to the underworld. In this myth, Ishtar approaches the gates of the underworld and demands that the gatekeeper open them:

If thou openest not the gate to let me enter,
I will break the door, I will wrench the lock,
I will smash the door-posts, I will force the doors.
I will bring up the dead to eat the living.
And the dead will outnumber the living.

The gatekeeper hurried to tell [Ereshkigal](#), the Queen of the Underworld. Ereshkigal told the gatekeeper to let Ishtar enter, but "according to the ancient decree".

The gatekeeper lets Ishtar into the underworld, opening one gate at a time. At each gate, Ishtar has to shed one article of clothing. When she finally passes the seventh gate, she is naked. In rage, Ishtar throws herself at Ereshkigal, but Ereshkigal orders her servant [Namtar](#) to imprison Ishtar and unleash sixty diseases against her.

After Ishtar descends to the underworld, all sexual activity ceases on earth. The god [Papsukal](#) reports the situation to [Ea](#), the king of the gods. Ea creates an [intersex](#) creature called Asu-shu-namir and sends it to Ereshkigal, telling it to invoke "the name of the great gods" against her and to ask for the bag containing the waters of life. Ereshkigal is enraged when she hears Asu-shu-namir's demand, but she has to give it the water of life. Asu-shu-namir sprinkles Ishtar with this water, reviving her. Then Ishtar passes back through the seven gates, getting one article of clothing back at each gate, and is fully clothed as she exits the last gate.

Here there is a break in the text of the myth. The text resumes with the following lines:

If she (Ishtar) will not grant thee her release,

To Tammuz, the lover of her youth,

Pour out pure waters, pour out fine oil;

With a festival garment deck him that he may play on the flute of [lapis lazuli](#),

That the votaries may cheer his liver. [his spirit]

Belili [sister of Tammuz] had gathered the treasure,

With precious stones filled her bosom.

When Belili heard the lament of her brother, she dropped her treasure,

She scattered the precious stones before her,

"Oh, my only brother, do not let me perish!

On the day when Tammuz plays for me on the flute of lapis lazuli, playing it for me with the [porphyry](#) ring.

Together with him, play ye for me, ye weepers and lamenting women!

That the dead may rise up and inhale the [incense](#)."

Formerly, scholars^{[4][7]} believed that the myth of Ishtar's descent took place after the death of Ishtar's lover, Tammuz: they thought Ishtar had gone to the underworld to rescue Tammuz. However, the discovery of a corresponding myth^[8] about Inanna, the Sumerian counterpart of Ishtar, has thrown some light on the myth of Ishtar's descent, including its somewhat enigmatic ending lines. According to the Inanna myth, Inanna can only return from the underworld if she sends someone back in her place. Demons go with her to make sure she sends someone back. However, each time Inanna runs into someone, she finds him to be a friend and lets him go free. When she finally reaches her home, she finds her husband Dumuzi (Babylonian Tammuz) seated on his throne, not mourning her at all. In anger, Inanna has the demons take Dumuzi

back to the underworld as her replacement. Dumuzi's sister [Geshtinanna](#) is grief-stricken and volunteers to spend half the year in the underworld, during which time Dumuzi can go free. The Ishtar myth presumably has a comparable ending, Belili being the Babylonian equivalent of [Geshtinanna](#).^[9]

[\[edit\]](#) Ishtar in the Epic of Gilgamesh

The *[Epic of Gilgamesh](#)* contains an episode^[10] involving Ishtar which portrays her as bad-tempered, petulant and spoiled by her father.

She asks the hero [Gilgamesh](#) to marry her, but he refuses, citing the fate that has befallen all her many lovers:

Listen to me while I tell the tale of your lovers. There was Tammuz, the lover of your youth, for him you decreed wailing, year after year. You loved the many-coloured [roller](#), but still you struck and broke his wing [...] You have loved the lion tremendous in strength: seven pits you dug for him, and seven. You have loved the stallion magnificent in battle, and for him you decreed the whip and spur and a thong [...] You have loved the shepherd of the flock; he made meal-cake for you day after day, he killed kids for your sake. You struck and turned him into a wolf; now his own herd-boys chase him away, his own hounds worry his flanks."^[11]

Angered by Gilgamesh's refusal, Ishtar goes up to heaven and complains to her father the high god [Anu](#) that Gilgamesh has insulted her. She demands that Anu give her the [Bull of Heaven](#). Anu points out that it was her fault for provoking Gilgamesh, but she warns that if he refuses, she will do exactly what she told the gatekeeper of the underworld she would do if he didn't let her in:

If you refuse to give me the Bull of Heaven [then] I will break in the doors of hell and

smash the bolts; there will be confusion [i.e., mixing] of people, those above with those from the lower depths. I shall bring up the dead to eat food like the living; and the hosts of the dead will outnumber the living."^[12]

Anu gives Ishtar the Bull of Heaven, and Ishtar sends it to attack Gilgamesh and his friend Enkidu. Gilgamesh and [Enkidu](#) kill the Bull and offer its heart to the sun-god [Shamash](#).

While Gilgamesh and Enkidu are resting, Ishtar stands upon the walls of the city (which is [Uruk](#)) and curses Gilgamesh. Enkidu tears off the Bull's right thigh and throws it in Ishtar's face, saying, "If I could lay my hands on you, it is this I should do to you, and lash your entrails to your side."^[13] (Enkidu later dies for this impiety.) Then Ishtar called together "her people, the dancing and singing girls, the prostitutes of the temple, the courtesans,"^[13] and had them mourn for the Bull of Heaven.

[\[edit\]](#) Comparisons with other deities

Like Ishtar, the Greek [Aphrodite](#) and Northwestern Semitic [Astarte](#) were love goddesses who were "as cruel as they were wayward".^[14] [Donald A. Mackenzie](#), an early popularizer of mythology, draws a parallel between the love goddess Aphrodite and her "[dying god](#)" lover [Adonis](#)^[15] on one hand, and the love goddess Ishtar and her "dying god" lover Tammuz on the other.^[14] Some scholars have suggested that the myth of Adonis was derived in post-Homeric times by the Greeks indirectly from Mesopotamia (Assyria and Babylonia) through the Western Semites, the Semitic title 'Adon', meaning 'lord', having been mistaken for a proper name. This theory, however, cannot be accepted without qualifications."^[16]

[Joseph Campbell](#), a more recent scholar of [comparative mythology](#), equates Ishtar,

Inanna, and Aphrodite, and he draws a parallel between the Egyptian goddess [Isis](#) who nurses [Horus](#), and the Babylonian goddess Ishtar who nurses the god Tammuz.^[17]

Ashtoreth/Astarte/Assyrian

the **moon** goddess of the **Phoenicians**, representing the passive principle in nature, their principal female deity; frequently associated with the name of **Baal**, the **sun-god**, their chief male deity ([Judg. 10:6](#); [1 Sam. 7:4](#); [12:10](#))

These names often occur in the plural (**Ashtaroth**, **Baalim**), probably as indicating either different statues or different modifications of the deities. This deity is spoken of as Ashtoreth of the **Zidonians**. She was the **Ishtar** of the **Accadians** and the **Astarte** of the Greeks ([Jer. 44:17](#); [1 Kings 11:5, 33](#); [2 Kings 23:13](#)).

There was a temple of this goddess among the **Philistines** in the time of **Saul** ([1 Sam. 31:10](#)). Under the name of **Ishtar**, she was one of the great deities of

I Kings 11

Solomon's wives and concubines

1 But king Solomon loved many strange women, together with the daughter of Pharaoh, women of the Moabites, Ammonites, Edomites, Zidonians, [*and*] Hittites; **2** Of the nations [*concerning*] which the LORD said unto the children of Israel, Ye shall not go in to them, neither shall they come in unto you: [*for*] surely they will turn away your heart after their gods: Solomon clave unto these in love. **3** And he had seven hundred wives, princesses, and three hundred concubines: and his wives turned away his heart.

In his old age they draw him to idolatry

4 For it came to pass, when Solomon was old, [*that*] his wives turned away his heart after other gods: and his heart was not perfect with the LORD his God, as [*was*] the heart of David his father. **5** For Solomon went after Ashtoreth the goddess of the Zidonians, and after Milcom the abomination of the Ammonites. **6** And Solomon did evil in the sight of the LORD, and went not fully after the LORD, as [*did*] David his father. **7** Then did Solomon build an high place for Chemosh, the abomination of Moab, in the hill that [*is*] before Jerusalem, and for Molech, the abomination of the children of Ammon. **8** And likewise did he for all his strange wives, which burnt incense and sacrificed unto their gods.

the **Assyrians**. The Phoenicians called her Astarte.

Solomon introduced the worship of this **idol** (**1 Kings 11:33**). **Jezebel's** 400 priests were probably employed in its service (**1 Kings 18:19**). It was called the "queen of heaven" (**Jer. 44:25**).

Astarte

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For other uses, see [Astarte \(disambiguation\)](#).



Astarte riding in a [chariot](#) with four branches protruding from roof, on the reverse of a [Julia Maesa](#) coin from [Sidon](#)

Astarte^[1] ([pronunciation?[?]; **Greek** Ἀστάρτη, "Astártē") is the Greek name of a **goddess** known throughout the Eastern Mediterranean from the **Bronze Age** to Classical times. Originally the deified **evening star**, she is found as **Ugaritic** 𐎠𐎵𐎲𐎠 *ʾttrt* ("ʾAttart" or "ʾAthtart"); **Phoenician** ʾštrt ('*Ashtart*); and **Hebrew** עשתרת *Ashtoret*, singular, or *Ashtarot*, plural), and appears in **Akkadian** as 𒂗𒂗𒂗𒂗², the grammatically masculine name of the goddess *Ishtar*; the form *Astartu* is used to describe her age.^[2] The name appears also in **Etruscan** as

God threatens him

9 And the LORD was angry with Solomon, because his heart was turned from the LORD God of Israel, which had appeared unto him twice, **10** And had commanded him concerning this thing, that he should not go after other gods: but he kept not that which the LORD commanded. **11** Wherefore the LORD said unto Solomon, Forasmuch as this is done of thee, and thou hast not kept my covenant and my statutes, which I have commanded thee, I will surely rend the kingdom from thee, and will give it to thy servant. **12** Notwithstanding in thy days I will not do it for David thy father's sake: *[but]* I will rend it out of the hand of thy son. **13** Howbeit I will not rend away all the kingdom; *[but]* will give one tribe to thy son for David my servant's sake, and for Jerusalem's sake which I have chosen.

Ezekiel 16:14

Her monstrous whoredom

15 But thou didst trust in thine own beauty, and playedst the harlot because of thy renown, and pouredst out thy fornications on every one that passed by; his it was. **16** And of thy garments thou didst take, and deckedst thy high places with divers colours, and playedst the harlot thereupon: *[the like things]* shall not come, neither shall it be *[so]*. **17** Thou hast also taken thy fair jewels of my gold and of my silver, which I had given thee, and madest to thyself images of men, and didst commit whoredom with them, **18** And tookest thy brodered garments, and coveredst them: and thou hast set mine oil and mine incense before them. **19** My meat also which I gave thee, fine flour, and oil, and honey, *[wherewith]* I fed thee, thou hast even set it before them for a sweet savour: and *[thus]* it was, saith the Lord GOD. **20** Moreover thou hast taken thy sons and thy daughters, whom thou hast borne unto me, and these hast thou sacrificed unto them to be devoured. *[Is this]* of thy whoredoms a small matter, **21** That thou hast

□□□ □□□□□ Uni-Astre ([Pyrgi Tablets](#)), *Ishtar* or *Ashtart*.

[\[edit\]](#) Overview

Astarte was connected with [fertility](#), [sexuality](#), and [war](#). Her symbols were the [lion](#), the [horse](#), the [sphinx](#), the [dove](#), and a [star](#) within a circle indicating the planet [Venus](#).

Pictorial representations often show her naked.

Astarte was accepted by the [Greeks](#) under the name of [Aphrodite](#). The island of [Cyprus](#), one of Astarte's greatest faith centers, supplied the name *Cypris* as Aphrodite's most common byname.

Other major centers of Astarte's worship were [Sidon](#), [Tyre](#), and [Byblos](#). Coins from Sidon portray a [chariot](#) in which a globe appears, presumably a stone representing Astarte. "She was often depicted on Sidonian coins as standing on the prow of a galley, leaning forward with right hand outstretched, being thus the original of all figureheads for sailing ships."^[a] In Sidon, she shared a temple with [Eshmun](#). Coins from [Beirut](#) show [Poseidon](#), Astarte, and [Eshmun](#) worshipped together.

slain my children, and delivered them to cause them to pass through [*the fire*] for them? **22** And in all thine abominations and thy whoredoms thou hast not remembered the days of thy youth, when thou wast naked and bare, [*and*] wast polluted in thy blood. **23** And it came to pass after all thy wickedness, (woe, woe unto thee! saith the Lord GOD;) **24** [*That*] thou hast also built unto thee an eminent place, and hast made thee an high place in every street. **25** Thou hast built thy high place at every head of the way, and hast made thy beauty to be abhorred, and hast opened thy feet to every one that passed by, and multiplied thy whoredoms. **26** Thou hast also committed fornication with the Egyptians thy neighbours, great of flesh; and hast increased thy whoredoms, to provoke me to anger. **27** Behold, therefore I have stretched out my hand over thee, and have diminished thine ordinary [*food*], and delivered thee unto the will of them that hate thee, the daughters of the Philistines, which are ashamed of thy lewd way. **28** Thou hast played the whore also with the **Assyrians**, because thou wast unsatiable; yea, thou hast played the harlot with them, and yet couldest not be satisfied. **29** Thou hast moreover multiplied thy fornication in the land of Canaan unto Chaldea; and yet thou wast not satisfied herewith. **30** How weak is thine heart, saith the Lord GOD, seeing thou doest all these [*things*], the work of an imperious whorish woman; **31** In that thou buildest thine eminent place in the head of every way, and makest thine high place in every street; and hast not been as an harlot, in that thou scornest hire; **32** [*But as*] a wife that committeth adultery, [*which*] taketh strangers instead of her husband! **33** They give gifts to all whores: but thou givest thy gifts to all thy lovers, and hirest them, that they may come unto thee on every side for thy whoredom. **34** And the contrary is in thee from [*other*] women in thy whoredoms, whereas none followeth thee to commit whoredoms: and in that thou givest a reward, and no reward is given unto thee, therefore thou art contrary.



[Lady of Galera](#)

Other faith centers were [Cythera](#), [Malta](#), and [Eryx](#) in [Sicily](#) from which she became known to the [Romans](#) as [Venus Erycina](#). A bilingual inscription on the [Pyrgi Tablets](#) dating to about [500 BC](#) found near [Caere](#) in [Etruria](#) equates Astarte with [Etruscan](#) Uni-Astre that is, [Juno](#). At [Carthage](#) Astarte was worshipped alongside the goddess [Tanit](#).

Donald Harden in *The Phoenicians* discusses a [statuette of Astarte](#) from Tutugi (Galera) near [Granada](#) in [Spain](#) dating to the [6th](#) or [7th century BC](#) in which Astarte sits on a [throne](#) flanked by sphinxes holding a bowl beneath her pierced breasts. A hollow in the statue would have been filled with [milk](#) through the head and gentle heating would have melted wax plugging the holes in her breasts, producing an apparent [miracle](#) when the milk emerged.

The [Syrian](#) goddess [Atargatis](#) (Semitic form 'Atar'atah) was generally equated with

Astarte and the first element of the name appears to be related to the name Astarte.

[\[edit\]](#)Astarte in Ugarit

Astarte appears in Ugaritic texts under the name 'Athtart', but is little mentioned in those texts. 'Athtart and ['Anat](#) together hold back [Ba'al](#) from attacking the other deities. Astarte also asks *Ba'al* to "scatter" *Yamm* "Sea" after Ba'al's victory. 'Athtart is called the "Face of Ba'al".

[\[edit\]](#)Astarte in Egypt

Astarte arrived in [Ancient Egypt](#) during the [18th dynasty](#) along with other deities who were worshipped by northwest Semitic people. She was especially worshipped in her aspect as a [warrior](#) goddess, often paired with the goddess [Anat](#).

In the *Contest Between Horus and Set*, these two goddesses appear as daughters of [Ra](#) and are given in marriage to the god [Set](#), here identified with the Semitic name [Hadad](#). Astarte also was identified with the lioness warrior goddess [Sekhmet](#), but seemingly more often conflated, at least in part, with [Isis](#) to judge from the many images found of Astarte suckling a small child. Indeed there is a statue of the 6th century BC in the [Cairo](#) Museum, which normally would be taken as portraying Isis with her child [Horus](#) on her knee and which in every detail of iconography follows normal Egyptian conventions, but the dedicatory inscription reads: "Gersaphon, son of Azor, son of Slrt, man of Lydda, for his Lady, for Astarte." See G. Daressy, (1905) pl. LXI (CGC 39291).

[Plutarch](#), in his *On Isis and Osiris*, indicates that the King and Queen of Byblos, who, unknowingly, have the body of Osiris in a [pillar](#) in their hall, are *Melcarthus* (i.e. [Melqart](#)) and Astarte (though he notes some instead call the

Queen *Saosis* or *Nemanūs*, which Plutarch interprets as corresponding to the Greek name *Athenais*)^{[[dubious](#) - [discuss](#)]}.

[\[edit\]](#) Astarte in Phoenicia



Figurine of Astarte with a horned headdress

In the description of the [Phoenician](#) pantheon ascribed to [Sanchuniathon](#), Astarte appears as a daughter of Epigeius (Greek: Uranus) and Ge (Earth), and sister of the god [Elus](#). After Elus overthrows and banishes his father Epigeius, as some kind of trick Epigeius sends Elus his "virgin daughter" Astarte along with her sisters [Asherah](#) and the goddess who will later be called [Ba`alat Gebal](#), "the Lady of Byblos". It seems that this trick does not work, as all three become wives of their brother Elus. Astarte bears Elus children who appear under Greek names as seven daughters called the [Titanides](#) or [Artemides](#) and two sons named *Pothos* "Longing" and *Eros* "Desire". Later with Elus' consent, Astarte and [Hadad](#) reign over the land

together. Astarte puts the head of a bull on her own head to symbolize Her sovereignty. Wandering through the world, Astarte takes up a star that has fallen from the sky (a [meteorite](#)) and consecrates it at Tyre.

[Ashteroth Karnaim](#) (Astarte was called Ashteroth in the Hebrew Bible) was a city in the land of [Bashan](#) east of the [Jordan River](#), mentioned in [Genesis 14:5](#) and [Joshua 12:4](#) (where it is rendered solely as Ashteroth). The name translates literally to 'Ashteroth of the Horns', with '[Ashteroth](#)' being a [Canaanite](#) fertility goddess and 'horns' being symbolic of mountain peaks. Figurines of Astarte have been found at various archaeological sites in Palestine, showing the goddess with two horns.^[4]

Astarte's most common symbol was the crescent moon (or horns), according to religious studies scholar [Jeffrey Burton Russell](#), in his book *The Devil: Perceptions of Evil from Antiquity to Primitive Christianity*.^[5]

[\[edit\]](#)Astarte in Judah

Ashtoreth is mentioned in the [Hebrew Bible](#) as a foreign, non-Judahite goddess, the principal [goddess](#) of the [Sidonians](#) or [Phoenicians](#), representing the productive power of [nature](#). It is generally accepted that the [Masoretic](#) "vowel pointing" adopted ca. 135 AD, indicating the pronunciation 'Aštōreṯ ("Ashtoreth," "Ashtoret") is a deliberate distortion of "Ashtart", and that this is probably because the two last syllables have been pointed with the vowels belonging to *bōšēṯ*, ("bosheth," abomination), to indicate that that word should be substituted when reading.^[6] The plural form is pointed 'Aštārōṯ ("Ashtaroth"). The biblical Ashtoreth should not be confused with the goddess [Asherah](#), the form of the names being quite distinct, and both appearing quite distinctly in the Book of 1st Kings. (In Biblical Hebrew, as in other older Semitic languages, Asherah begins with an *aleph* or [glottal stop](#) consonant *ʕ*, while 'Ashtoreth

begins with an *ʿayin* or voiced [pharyngeal](#) consonant *ν*, indicating the lack of any plausible etymological connection between the two names.) The biblical writers may, however, have conflated some attributes and titles of the two, as seems to have occurred throughout the 1st millennium Levant.^[7] For instance, the title "[Queen of heaven](#)" as mentioned in [Jeremiah](#) has been connected with both. (In later [Jewish mythology](#), she became a female demon of lust; for what seems to be the use of the Hebrew plural form *ʿAštārōt* in this sense, see [Astaroth](#)).

[\[edit\]](#) Other associations

Some ancient sources assert that in the territory of [Sidon](#) the temple of Astarte was sacred to [Europa](#). According to an old Cretan story, Europa was a Phoenician princess whom [Zeus](#) transformed into a white bull, abducted, and carried to Crete.^[8]

Some scholars claim that the cult of the [Minoan snake goddess](#) who is identified with [Ariadne](#) (the "utterly pure")^[9] was similar to the cult of Astarte. Her cult as [Aphrodite](#) was transmitted to [Cythera](#) and then to Greece.^[10] [Herodotus](#) wrote that the religious community of Aphrodite originated in [Phoenicia](#) and came to Greeks from there. He also wrote about the world's largest temple of Aphrodite, in one of the Phoenician cities. Her name is the second name in an energy chant sometimes used in [Wicca](#): "[Isis](#), Astarte, [Diana](#), [Hecate](#), [Demeter](#), [Kali](#), [Inanna](#)."^[11]

Molech/Moloch

Moloch (representing [Semitic](#) מלך *m-l-k*, a [Semitic root](#) meaning "king") — also rendered as **Molech**, **Molekh**, **Molok**, **Molek**, **Molock**, or **Moloc** — is the name of an ancient [Ammonite](#) god^[1]. Moloch worship was practiced by the [Canaanites](#), [Phoenician](#) and related cultures in [North Africa](#) and the [Levant](#).

As a god worshipped by the [Phoenicians](#) and [Canaanites](#), Moloch had associations with a particular kind of [propitiatory child sacrifice](#) by parents. Moloch figures in [the Book of Deuteronomy](#) and in the [Book of Leviticus](#) as a form of [idolatry](#) ([Leviticus 18:21–23](#): “And thou shalt not let any of thy seed pass through the fire to Moloch”). In the Hebrew Bible, [Gehenna](#) was initially where apostate Israelites and followers of various [Ba'als](#) and Caananite gods, including Moloch, sacrificed their children by fire ([2 Chr. 28:3](#), [33:6](#); [Jer. 7:31](#), [19:2-6](#)).

Moloch has been used figuratively in [English literature](#) from [John Milton's *Paradise Lost*](#) (1667) to [Allen Ginsberg's *Howl*](#) (1955), to refer to a person or thing demanding or requiring a very costly sacrifice.

[\[edit\]](#)Forms and grammar

See also: [Malik](#)

The Hebrew letters מלך (*mlk*) usually stand for *meleḵ* 'king' (Proto-Northwest [Semitic](#) *malku*) but when vocalized as *mōleḵ* in [Masoretic](#) Hebrew text, they have been traditionally understood as a proper name Μολοχ (*molokh*) (Proto-Northwest Semitic *Mulku*) in the corresponding [Greek](#) renderings in the [Septuagint](#) translation, in [Aquila](#), and in the Middle Eastern [Targum](#). The form usually appears in the compound *lmlk*. The Hebrew preposition *l-* means "to", but it can often mean "for" or "as a(n)". Accordingly one can translate *lmlkas* "to Moloch" or "for Moloch" or "as a Moloch", or "to the Moloch" or "for the Moloch" or "as the Moloch", whatever a "Moloch" or "the Moloch" might be. We also once find *hmlk* 'the Moloch' standing by itself.

Leviticus 18:1

Unlawful marriages, and unlawful lusts

1 And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying, **2** Speak unto the children of Israel, and say unto them, I am the LORD your God. **3** After the doings of the land of Egypt, wherein ye dwelt, shall ye not do: and after the doings of the land of Canaan, whither I bring you, shall ye not do: neither shall ye walk in their ordinances. **4** Ye shall do my judgments, and keep mine ordinances, to walk therein: I [*am*] the LORD your God. **5** Ye shall therefore keep my statutes, and my judgments: which if a man do, he shall live in them: I [*am*] the LORD.

6 None of you shall approach to any that is near of kin to him, to uncover [*their*] nakedness: I [*am*] the LORD. **7** The nakedness of thy father, or the nakedness of thy mother, shalt thou not uncover: she [*is*] thy mother; thou shalt not uncover her nakedness. **8** The nakedness of thy father's wife shalt thou not uncover: it [*is*] thy father's nakedness. **9** The nakedness of thy sister, the daughter of thy father, or daughter of thy mother, [*whether she be*] born at home, or born abroad, [*even*] their nakedness thou shalt not uncover. **10** The nakedness of thy son's daughter, or of thy daughter's daughter, [*even*] their nakedness thou shalt not uncover: for theirs [*is*] thine own nakedness. **11** The nakedness of thy father's wife's daughter, begotten of thy father, she [*is*] thy sister, thou shalt not uncover her nakedness. **12** Thou shalt not uncover the nakedness of thy father's sister: she [*is*] thy father's near kinswoman. **13** Thou shalt not uncover the nakedness of thy mother's sister: for she [*is*] thy mother's near kinswoman. **14** Thou shalt not uncover the nakedness of thy father's brother, thou shalt not approach to his wife: she [*is*] thine aunt. **15** Thou shalt not uncover the nakedness of thy daughter in law: she [*is*] thy son's wife; thou shalt not uncover her nakedness. **16** Thou shalt not uncover the nakedness of thy brother's wife: it [*is*] thy brother's nakedness. **17** Thou shalt not uncover the nakedness of a woman and her daughter, neither shalt thou take her son's daughter, or her

Because there is no difference between *mlk* 'king' and *mlk* 'moloch' in unpointed text, interpreters sometimes suggest *molek* should be understood in certain places where the Masoretic text is vocalized as *melek*, and vice versa.

Moloch has been traditionally interpreted as the name of a god, possibly a god titled *the king*, but purposely mispronounced as *Molek* instead of *Melek* using the vowels of Hebrew *bosheth* "shame".^[2]

Moloch appears in the Hebrew of [1 Kings 11:7](#) (on [Solomon](#)'s religious failings):

Then did Solomon build a high place for [Chemosh](#), the [abomination](#) of [Moab](#), in the hill that is before [Jerusalem](#), and *lmlk*, the abomination of the Sons of [Ammon](#).

In other passages, however, the god of the Ammonites is named Milcom, not Moloch (see [1 Kings 11.33](#); [Zephaniah 1.5](#)). The [Septuagint](#) reads *Milcom* in [1 Kings 11.7](#) instead of Moloch. Many English translations accordingly follow the non-Hebrew versions at this point and render *Milcom*. The form *mlkm* can also mean "their king" as well as Milcom, and therefore one cannot always be sure in some other passages whether the King of Ammon is intended or the god Milcom. It has also been suggested that the Ba'al of [Tyre](#), [Melqart](#) "king of the city" (who was probably the Ba'al whose worship was furthered by [Ahab](#) and his house) was this supposed god Moloch and that Melqart/Moloch was also Milcom the god of the Ammonites and identical to other gods whose names contain *mlk*.

[Amos 5:26](#) reads in close translation:

But you shall carry Sikkut your king,
and Kiyyun, your images, the star-symbol of your god
which you made for yourself.

The [Septuagint](#) renders "your king" as *Moloch*, perhaps from a scribal error, whence the verse appears in [Acts 7.43](#):

You have lifted up the shrine of Molech

daughter's daughter, to uncover her nakedness; [*for*] they [*are*] her near kinswomen: it [*is*] wickedness. **18** Neither shalt thou take a wife to her sister, to vex [*her*], to uncover her nakedness, beside the other in her life [*time*].

19 Also thou shalt not approach unto a woman to uncover her nakedness, as long as she is put apart for her uncleanness. **20** Moreover thou shalt not lie carnally with thy neighbour's wife, to defile thyself with her. **21** And thou shalt not let any of thy seed pass through [*the fire*] to **Molech**, neither shalt thou profane the name of thy God: I [*am*] the LORD. **22** Thou shalt not lie with mankind, as with womankind: it [*is*] abomination. **23** Neither shalt thou lie with any beast to defile thyself therewith: neither shall any woman stand before a beast to lie down thereto: it [*is*] confusion. **24** Defile not ye yourselves in any of these things: for in all these the nations are defiled which I cast out before you: **25** And the land is defiled: therefore I do visit the iniquity thereof upon it, and the land itself vomiteth out her inhabitants. **26** Ye shall therefore keep my statutes and my judgments, and shall not commit [*any*] of these abominations; [*neither*] any of your own nation, nor any stranger that sojourneth among you: **27** (For all these abominations have the men of the land done, which [*were*] before you, and the land is defiled;) **28** That the land spue not you out also, when ye defile it, as it spued out the nations that [*were*] before you. **29** For whosoever shall commit any of these abominations, even the souls that commit [*them*] shall be cut off from among their people. **30** Therefore shall ye keep mine ordinance, that [*ye*] commit not [*any one*] of these abominable customs, which were committed before you, and that ye defile not yourselves therein: I [*am*] the LORD your God.

Leviticus 20:1-27

Of him that gives of his seed to Moloch

1 And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying, **2** Again, thou shalt say to the children of Israel, Whosoever [*he be*] of the children of Israel, or of the strangers that sojourn in Israel,

and the star of your god [Rephan](#),

the idols you made to worship.

Other references to *Moloch* use *mlk* only in the context of "passing children through fire *lmlk*", whatever is meant by *lmlk*, whether it means "to Moloch" or means something else. Though the Moloch sacrifices have traditionally been understood to mean burning children alive to the god Moloch, some have suggested a rite of purification by fire instead, though perhaps a dangerous one.^[3] References to passing through fire without mentioning *mlk* appear in [18:10-13](#); [2 Kings 21.6](#); [Ezekiel 20.26,31](#); [23.37](#). So this phrase is well documented in scripture, and similar practices of rendering infants immortal by passing them through the fire, are indirectly attested in early Greek myth, such as the myth of [Thetis](#) and the myth of [Demeter](#) as the nurse of [Demophon](#). Some have responded to the proponents of this view of the Moloch sacrifices (being only a ritualized "pass between flame") by pointing out their failure to understand the Hebrew idiom *le ha'avir ba'esh* to imply "to burn" and their use of anthropological evidence of suspect relevance to draw parallels to early Hebrew religious practices.^[4]

[\[edit\]](#) **Biblical texts**

that giveth [*any*] of his seed unto **Molech**, he shall surely be put to death: the people of the land shall stone him with stones. **3** And I will set my face against that man, and will cut him off from among his people; because he hath given of his seed unto Molech, to defile my sanctuary, and to profane my holy name.

Of him that favours such an one

4 And if the people of the land do any ways hide their eyes from the man, when he giveth of his seed unto Molech, and kill him not: **5** Then I will set my face against that man, and against his family, and will cut him off, and all that go a whoring after him, to commit whoredom with Molech, from among their people.

Of going to wizards

6 And the soul that turneth after such as have familiar spirits, and after wizards, to go a whoring after them, I will even set my face against that soul, and will cut him off from among his people.

Of sanctification

7 Sanctify yourselves therefore, and be ye holy: for I [*am*] the LORD your God. **8** And ye shall keep my statutes, and do them: I [*am*] the LORD which sanctify you.

Of him that curses his parents

9 For every one that curseth his father or his mother shall be surely put to death: he hath cursed his father or his mother; his blood [*shall be*] upon him.

Of adultery

10 And the man that committeth adultery with [*another*] man's wife, [*even he*] that committeth adultery with his neighbour's wife, the adulterer and the adulteress shall surely be put to death.

Of incest

11 And the man that lieth with his father's wife hath



An 18th century German illustration of Moloch ("Der Götze Moloch" i.e. Moloch, the false god).

The word here translated literally as 'seed' very often means *offspring*. The forms containing *mlk* have been left untranslated. The reader may substitute either "to Moloch" or "as a *mol*k".

The laws given to [Moses](#) by [God](#) expressly forbade the Israelites to do what was done in Egypt or in Canaan.

[Leviticus 18:21](#):

'Do not give any of your children to be sacrificed to Molek, for you must not profane the name of your God. I am the LORD.

uncovered his father's nakedness: both of them shall surely be put to death; their blood [*shall be*] upon them. **12** And if a man lie with his daughter in law, both of them shall surely be put to death: they have wrought confusion; their blood [*shall be*] upon them.

Of sodomy

13 If a man also lie with mankind, as he lieth with a woman, both of them have committed an abomination: they shall surely be put to death; their blood [*shall be*] upon them.

14 And if a man take a wife and her mother, it [*is*] wickedness: they shall be burnt with fire, both he and they; that there be no wickedness among you.

Of bestiality

15 And if a man lie with a beast, he shall surely be put to death: and ye shall slay the beast. **16** And if a woman approach unto any beast, and lie down thereto, thou shalt kill the woman, and the beast: they shall surely be put to death; their blood [*shall be*] upon them. **17** And if a man shall take his sister, his father's daughter, or his mother's daughter, and see her nakedness, and she see his nakedness; it [*is*] a wicked thing; and they shall be cut off in the sight of their people: he hath uncovered his sister's nakedness; he shall bear his iniquity.

Of uncleanness

18 And if a man shall lie with a woman having her sickness, and shall uncover her nakedness; he hath discovered her fountain, and she hath uncovered the fountain of her blood: and both of them shall be cut off from among their people. **19** And thou shalt not uncover the nakedness of thy mother's sister, nor of thy father's sister: for he uncovereth his near kin: they shall bear their iniquity. **20** And if a man shall lie with his uncle's wife, he hath uncovered his uncle's nakedness: they shall bear their sin; they shall die childless. **21** And if a man shall take his brother's wife, it [*is*] an unclean thing: he hath uncovered his brother's nakedness; they shall be childless.

[Leviticus 20:2-5](#):

Again, you shall say to the Sons of [Israel](#): Whoever he be of the Sons of Israel or of the strangers that sojourn in Israel, that gives any of his seed *'Molech*; he shall surely be put to death: the people of the land shall [stone him](#) with stones. And I will set my face against that man and will cut him off from among his people; because he has given of his seed *'Molech*, to defile my sanctuary, and to profane my holy name. And if the people of the land do at all hide their eyes from that man, when he gives of his seed *'Molech*, and do not kill him, then I will set my face against that man, and against his family, and will cut him off, and all that go astray after him, whoring *'Molech* from among the people.

[2 Kings 23:10](#) (on King [Josiah](#)'s reform):

And he defiled the [Tophet](#), which is in the [valley of Ben-hinnom](#), that no man might make his son or his daughter pass through the fire *'Molech*.

[Jeremiah 32:35](#):

And they built the high places of the Ba'al, which are in the valley of Ben-hinnom, to cause their sons and their daughters to pass through the fire *'Molech*; which I did not command them, nor did it come into my mind that they should do this abomination, to cause Judah to sin.

[\[edit\]](#) [Jewish rabbinic commentary](#)

Obedience is required with holiness

22 Ye shall therefore keep all my statutes, and all my judgments, and do them: that the land, whither I bring you to dwell therein, spue you not out. **23** And ye shall not walk in the manners of the nation, which I cast out before you: for they committed all these things, and therefore I abhorred them. **24** But I have said unto you, Ye shall inherit their land, and I will give it unto you to possess it, a land that floweth with milk and honey: I [*am*] the LORD your God, which have separated you from [*other*] people. **25** Ye shall therefore put difference between clean beasts and unclean, and between unclean fowls and clean: and ye shall not make your souls abominable by beast, or by fowl, or by any manner of living thing that creepeth on the ground, which I have separated from you as unclean. **26** And ye shall be holy unto me: for I the LORD [*am*] holy, and have severed you from [*other*] people, that ye should be mine.

Wizards must be put to death

27 A man also or woman that hath a familiar spirit, or that is a wizard, shall surely be put to death: they shall stone them with stones: their blood [*shall be*] upon them.

The 12th century [Rashi](#), commenting on [Jeremiah 7:31](#) stated:

Tophet is Moloch, which was made of brass; and they heated him from his lower parts; and his hands being stretched out, and made hot, they put the child between his hands, and it was burnt; when it vehemently cried out; but the priests beat a drum, that the father might not hear the voice of his son, and his heart might not be moved.

A rabbinical tradition attributed to the *Yalkout* of Rabbi Simeon,^[6] says that the idol was hollow and was divided into seven compartments, in one of which they put flour, in the second [turtle-doves](#), in the third a [ewe](#), in the fourth a ram, in the fifth a calf, in the sixth an ox, and in the seventh a child, which were all burned together by heating the statue inside.

[\[edit\]](#) Classical Greek and Roman accounts

Later commentators have compared these accounts with similar ones from Greek and Latin sources speaking of the offering of children by fire as sacrifices in the [Punic](#) city of [Carthage](#), a [Phoenician](#) colony. [Cleitarachus](#), [Diodorus Siculus](#) and [Plutarch](#) all mention burning of children as an offering to [Cronus](#) or [Saturn](#), that is to [Ba'al Hammon](#), the chief god of Carthage. Issues and practices relating to Moloch and [child sacrifice](#) may also have been exaggerated for effect. After the [Romans](#) defeated Carthage and totally destroyed the city, they engaged in post-war propaganda to make their arch-enemies seem cruel and less civilized.^[6]

Paul G. Mosca, in his thesis described below, translates Cleitarachus' paraphrase of a scholium to [Plato's Republic](#) as:

There stands in their midst a bronze statue of [Kronos](#), its hands

extended over a bronze brazier, the flames of which engulf the child. When the flames fall upon the body, the limbs contract and the open mouth seems almost to be laughing until the contracted body slips quietly into the brazier. Thus it is that the 'grin' is known as 'sardonic laughter,' since they die laughing.

[Diodorus Siculus](#) (20.14) wrote:

There was in their city a bronze image of Cronus extending its hands, palms up and sloping toward the ground, so that each of the children when placed thereon rolled down and fell into a sort of gaping pit filled with fire.

[Diodorus](#) also relates that relatives were forbidden to weep and that when [Agathocles](#) defeated Carthage, the Carthaginian nobles believed they had displeased the gods by substituting low-born children for their own children. They attempted to make amends by sacrificing 200 children of the best families at once, and in their enthusiasm actually sacrificed 300 children.

In the book *The History of Sicily from the Earliest Times* the author recounts the tale slightly differently. He states that the Carthaginian nobles had actually acquired and raised children not of their own for the express purpose of sacrificing them to the god. The author states that during the siege, the 200 high-born children were sacrificed in addition to another 300 children who were initially saved from the fire by the sacrifice of these acquired substitutes.^[7]

[Plutarch](#) wrote in *De Superstitiones* 171:

... the whole area before the statue was filled with a loud noise of flutes and drums so that the cries of wailing should not reach the

ears of the people.

[\[edit\]](#) In medieval texts



[William Blake](#) (1809, *The Flight of Moloch*, watercolour, 25.7 x 19.7 cm. One of [Blake's illustrations of *On the Morning of Christ's Nativity*](#), the [poem by John Milton](#)

Like some other gods and demons found in the Bible, Moloch appears as part of [medieval demonology](#), as a Prince of [Hell](#). This Moloch finds particular pleasure in making mothers weep; he specializes in stealing their children. According to some 16th century demonologists, Moloch's power is stronger in December.

[\[edit\]](#) In early modern and modern texts

[\[edit\]](#) in Milton's *Paradise Lost*

In [John Milton's *Paradise Lost*](#), Moloch is one of the greatest warriors of the [fallen angels](#),

"First MOLOCH, horrid King besmear'd with blood
Of human sacrifice, and parents tears,
Though, for the noyse of Drums and Timbrels loud,
Their children's cries unheard that passed through fire
To his grim Idol. Him the AMMONITE
Worshipt in RABBA and her watry Plain,
In ARGOB and in BASAN, to the stream
Of utmost ARNON. Nor content with such
Audacious neighbourhood, the wisest heart
Of SOLOMON he led by fraud to build
His Temple right against the Temple of God
On that opprobrious Hill, and made his Grove
The pleasant Vally of HINNOM, TOPHET thence
And black GEHENNA call'd, the Type of Hell."

He is listed among the chief of [Satan's](#) angels in Book I, and is given a speech at the parliament of Hell in Book [2:43 - 105](#), where he argues for immediate warfare against God. He later becomes revered as a pagan god on Earth.

[\[edit\]](#) in the ***Munich Cosmic Circle***

In writings of the so-called [Munich Cosmic Circle](#) the name Moloch was used to symbolize a hostile to life, emotionally cold and intellectualist principle.^[8]

[\[edit\]](#) in ***Russell's A Free Man's Worship***

In [Bertrand Russell's *A Free Man's Worship*](#), Moloch is used to describe

a particularly savage brand of religion:

The savage, like ourselves, feels the oppression of his impotence before the powers of Nature; but having in himself nothing that he respects more than Power, he is willing to prostrate himself before his gods, without inquiring whether they are worthy of his worship. Pathetic and very terrible is the long history of cruelty and [torture](#), of degradation and human sacrifice, endured in the hope of placating the jealous gods: surely, the trembling believer thinks, when what is most precious has been freely given, their lust for blood must be appeased, and more will not be required. The religion of Moloch — as such creeds may be generically called — is in essence the cringing submission of the [slave](#), who dare not, even in his heart, allow the thought that his master deserves no adulation. Since the independence of ideals is not yet acknowledged, Power may be freely worshipped, and receive an unlimited respect, despite its wanton infliction of pain.

[\[edit\]](#) **in Čapek's *War with the Newts***

In [Karel Čapek's *War with the Newts*](#), the [Newts](#) counter [Christian](#) attempts at [conversion](#) by turning to a god of their own creation named Moloch:

At a later period and almost universally the Newts themselves came to accept a different faith, whose origin among them is unknown; this involved adoration of Moloch, whom they visualized as a giant Newt with a human head; they were

reported to have enormous submarine idols made of cast iron, manufactured to their orders by Armstrong or Krupp, but no further details ever leaked out of their cultic rituals since they were conducted under water; they were, however, believed to be exceptionally cruel and secret. It would seem that this faith gained ground rapidly because the name Moloch reminded them of the zoological "molche" or the German "Molch," the terms for Newt.

[\[edit\]](#) **in Allen Ginsberg's "Howl"**

In [Allen Ginsberg's](#) poem "[Howl](#)", Moloch is used as a metaphor for capitalism and industrial civilization, and for America, more specifically. The word is repeated many times throughout [Part II](#) of the poem, and begins (as an exclamation of "Moloch!") in all but the first and last five stanzas of the section.

Moloch! Solitude! Filth! Ugliness! Ashcans and unobtainable dollars! Children screaming under the stairways! Boys sobbing in armies! Old men weeping in the parks!

Moloch! Moloch! Nightmare of Moloch! Moloch the loveless! Mental Moloch! Moloch the heavy judger of men!

Moloch the incomprehensible prison! Moloch the crossbone soulless jailhouse and Congress of sorrows! Moloch whose buildings are judgment! Moloch the vast stone of war! Moloch the stunned governments!

Moloch whose mind is pure machinery! Moloch whose blood is running money! Moloch whose fingers are ten armies! Moloch

whose breast is a cannibal dynamo! Moloch whose ear is a smoking tomb!

Moloch whose eyes are a thousand blind windows! Moloch whose skyscrapers stand in the long streets like endless Jehovahs! Moloch whose factories dream and croak in the fog! Moloch whose smoke-stacks and antennae crown the cities!

Moloch whose love is endless oil and stone! Moloch whose soul is electricity and banks! Moloch whose poverty is the specter of genius! Moloch whose fate is a cloud of sexless hydrogen!

Moloch whose name is the Mind!

[\[edit\]](#) **References in literature and film**

In [Giovanni Pastrone](#)'s film [Cabiria](#), the protagonist is saved from being sacrificed to Molech.

In [Fritz Lang](#)'s film [Metropolis](#), Freder, the son of Joh Fredersen, the master of Metropolis, uses the term to describe the horror as he watches his fellow men devoured by their labors in the workers' city. Freder has a vision in which the large M-Machine transforms into a monster-like entity which is shown swallowing the workers.

In Jeff Lindsay's [Dexter in the Dark](#), Moloch is cast as the original and almighty entity behind all human evil.

In [Wayne Barlowe](#)'s *God's Demon*, Moloch is cast as the supreme general of the armies of Hell's capital city, Dis. He is portrayed as a fierce and merciless warrior, although he lacks legs, which burnt away during the fall from Heaven.

In [Dan Brown](#)'s novel, [The Lost Symbol](#), the principal villain's backstory reveals that he renamed himself Mal'akh after the angel Moloch

in [Paradise Lost](#). As well as naming himself after Mal'akh, the villain performs a black magic ritual to allow the angel to descend and possess him, as he gains extra powers after the ritual is complete.

Alan Moore's [Watchmen](#) features a retired super villain who once adopted the name Moloch and wore the robes of a magician.

In *The Gathering Storm*, the first volume of [Winston Churchill's](#) history of WW2, Churchill describes Hitler's triumph at the moment he finally achieved total power in 1933; *"He had called from the depths of defeat the dark and savage furies latent in the most numerous, most serviceable, ruthless, contradictory and ill-starred race in Europe. He had conjured up the fearful idol of an all-devouring Moloch of which he was the priest and incarnation."*^[9]

[\[edit\]](#) **Modern research, theories and concepts**

[\[edit\]](#) **Nineteenth and early twentieth century theories**

Nineteenth century and early twentieth century [archaeology](#) found almost no evidence of a god called Moloch[references?] or Molech. (See ["Eissfeldt's theory: a type of sacrifice" below](#)) They also characterized Rabbinical traditions about other gods mentioned in the [Tanach](#) as simply legends, and regarded them as raising doubt about what was said about Moloch. They suggested that such descriptions of Moloch might be simply taken from accounts of the sacrifice to [Cronus](#) and from the tale of the [Minotaur](#); They found no evidence of a bull-headed Phoenician god. Some identified Moloch with Milcom, with the Tyrian god [Melqart](#), with [Ba'al Hammon](#) to whom children were purportedly sacrificed, and with other gods called "Lord" ([Ba'al](#)) or ([Bel](#)). These various suggested equations combined with the popular solar theory hypotheses of the day generated a single theoretical [sun god](#): Baal.

[\[edit\]](#) **Flaubert's conception**

[Gustave Flaubert's *Salammbô*](#), a semi-[historical novel](#) about [Carthage](#) published in 1862, included a version of the Carthaginian religion, including the god Moloch, whom he characterized as a god to whom the Carthaginians offered children. Flaubert described this Moloch mostly according to the Rabbinic descriptions, but with a few of his own additions. From chapter 7:

Then further back, higher than the candelabrum, and much higher than the altar, rose the Moloch, all of iron, and with gaping apertures in his human breast. His outspread wings were stretched upon the wall, his tapering hands reached down to the ground; three black stones bordered by yellow circles represented three eyeballs on his brow, and his bull's head was raised with a terrible effort as if in order to bellow.

Chapter 13 describes how, in desperate attempt to call down rain, the image of Moloch was brought to the center of Carthage, how the arms of the image were moved by the pulling of chains by the priests (apparently Flaubert's own invention), and then describes the sacrifices made to Moloch. First grain and animals of various kinds were placed in compartments within the statue (as in the Rabbinic account). Then the children were offered, at first a few, and then more and more.

The brazen arms were working more quickly. They paused no longer. Every time that a child was placed in them the priests of Moloch spread out their hands upon him to burden him with the crimes of the people, vociferating: "They are not men but oxen!" and the multitude round about repeated: "Oxen! oxen!" The devout exclaimed: "Lord! eat!" and the priests of [Proserpine](#), complying through terror with the needs of Carthage, muttered

the [Eleusinian](#) formula: "Pour out rain! bring forth!" The victims, when scarcely at the edge of the opening, disappeared like a drop of water on a red-hot plate, and white smoke rose amid the great scarlet colour. Nevertheless, the appetite of the god was not appeased. He ever wished for more. In order to furnish him with a larger supply, the victims were piled up on his hands with a big chain above them which kept them in their place. Some devout persons had at the beginning wished to count them, to see whether their number corresponded with the days of the solar year; but others were brought, and it was impossible to distinguish them in the giddy motion of the horrible arms. This lasted for a long, indefinite time until the evening. Then the partitions inside assumed a darker glow, and burning flesh could be seen. Some even believed that they could descry hair, limbs, and whole bodies. Night fell; clouds accumulated above the Baal. The funeral-pile, which was flameless now, formed a pyramid of coals up to his knees; completely red like a giant covered with blood, he looked, with his head thrown back, as though he were staggering beneath the weight of his intoxication.

Italian director [Giovanni Pastrone's](#) [silent film](#) [Cabiria](#) (1914) was largely based on *Salammbô* and included an enormous image of Moloch modeled on Flaubert's description. American anti-communist agitator [Elizabeth Dilling](#), and her husband Jeremiah Stokes, wrote an [anti-Semitic](#) book, *The Plot Against Christianity* (1964). Re-released under the title *The Jewish Religion: Its Influence Today* — with Talmudic writings annotated by Dilling — it quoted Flaubert's description as if it were historically accurate. Information from the novel and film still finds

its way into serious writing about Moloch, Melqart, Carthage, and Ba'al Hammon ^{[[citation needed](#)]}.

^{[[edit](#)]} **Eissfeldt's theory: a type of sacrifice**



A human sacrifice in this poster of [Cabiria](#).

In 1921 [Otto Eissfeldt](#), excavating in the neighbourhood of Salammbó, Carthage, discovered inscriptions with the word MLK, which in the context meant neither "king" nor the name of any god. He concluded that it was instead a term for a particular kind of sacrifice, one which at least in some cases involved human sacrifice. A relief was found showing a priest holding a child. Also uncovered was a sanctuary to the goddess [Tanit](#) comprising a cemetery with thousands of burned bodies of animals and of human infants, dating from the 8th century BC down to the destruction of Carthage in 146 BC. Eissfeldt identified the site as

a *tophet*, using a Hebrew word of previously unknown meaning connected to the burning in some Biblical passages. Most of the children's bodies appeared to be those of newborns, but some were older, up to about six years of age.

Eissfeldt further concluded that the Hebrew writings were not talking about a god Moloch at all, but about the *molk* or *mulk* sacrifice, that the abomination was not in worshiping the god Molech who demanded children be sacrificed to him, but in the practice of sacrificing human children as a *molk*. The Hebrew Bible states that the Hebrews were strongly opposed to sacrificing first-born children as a *molk* to [Yahweh](#) himself. The relevant Scriptural passages depict Yahweh condemning Hebrews sacrificing their first-borns; those who did were stoned to death, and those who witnessed but did not prevent the sacrifice were [excommunicated](#).^[10]

Similar "tophets" have since been found at [Carthage](#) and other places in [North Africa](#), and in [Sardinia](#), [Malta](#), and [Sicily](#). In late 1990 a possible *tophet* consisting of cinerary urns containing bones and ashes and votive objects was retrieved from ransacking on the mainland just outside of [Tyre](#) in the Phoenician homeland.^[11]

Further discussion of Eissfeldt's theories unfolded.

[\[edit\]](#) **Discussion of Eissfeldt's theory**

From the beginning there were some who doubted Eissfeldt's theory but opposition was only sporadic until 1970. Prominent archaeologist Sabatino Moscati (who had accepted Eissfeldt's idea, like most others) changed his opinion and spoke against it. Others followed.^[*citation needed*]

The arguments were that classical accounts of the sacrifices of children at Carthage were not numerous and were only particularly described as occurring in times of peril, not necessarily a regular occurrence.

Texts referring to the *molk* sacrifice mentioned animals more than they

mentioned humans. Of course, those may have been animals offered instead of humans to redeem a human life. And the Biblical decrying of the sacrificing of one's children as a *molk* sacrifice doesn't indicate one way or the other that all *molk* sacrifices must involve human child sacrifice or even that a *molk* usually involved human sacrifice.

It was pointed out the phrase "whoring after" was elsewhere only used about seeking other gods, not about particular religious practices.

Eissfeldt's use of the Biblical word *tophet* was criticized as arbitrary; even those who believed in Eissfeldt's general theory mostly took *tophet* to mean something like 'hearth' in the Biblical context, not a cemetery of some kind.

[John Day](#), in his book *Molech: A God of Human Sacrifice in the Old Testament* ([Cambridge](#), 1989; [ISBN 0-521-36474-4](#)), again put forth the argument that there was indeed a particular god named Molech, citing a god *mlk* from two [Ugaritic](#) serpent charms, and an obscure god [Malik](#) from some god lists who in two texts was equated with [Nergal](#), the [Mesopotamian](#) god of the underworld.

[\[edit\]](#) **Archaeology**

A temple at Amman (1400–1250 BC) excavated and reported upon by [J.B. Hennessy](#), shows possibility of animal and human sacrifice by fire.

[\[edit\]](#) In popular culture

- The British [sludge metal](#) band Moloch took their name from the Moloch mythos.
- Moloch played a heavy role in [Jeff Lindsey's](#) third Dexter book, *[Dexter in the Dark](#)*.
- Moloch features in Episode 8 of the television series *[Buffy: The Vampire Slayer](#)*.

- In [*The Mortal Instruments*](#), a series of novels, there is a demon species called a Moloch Demon.
- In the PC game [*Disciples 2: Dark Prophecy*](#), Moloch is a unit on the Legion of the Damned faction, the third level of evolution of the unit Devil.
- Moloch is a demon in the Felix Castor novels written by [Mike Carey](#).
- Moloch is a vision of a demon-machine in the 1927 film [*Metropolis*](#) directed by [Fritz Lang](#).
- Moloch is an evil System Lord in [*Stargate SG-1*](#). In this portrayal he demands all female children be burnt alive at birth.
- Moloch is featured as a Djinn summon in the Game Boy Advance game [*Golden Sun: The Lost Age*](#) and it's sequel [*Golden Sun: Dark Dawn*](#) for the Nintendo DS.
- Moloch is one of the names given to Corky Laputa in Dean Koontz's novel *The Face*.
- In Robert A. Heinlein's novel [*Job: A Comedy of Justice*](#) the main characters join a church pastored by "Reverend Dr. M. O. Loch".
- Appears in the song "Molochwalker" off the album [*Noctourniquet*](#), performed by the [The Mars Volta](#).
- Appears in Video Game Mortal Kombat: Deadly Alliance as a three eyed oni creature.
- In the PC game [*Nethack*](#), Moloch's Temple has four stacked unaligned altars and Priests of Moloch. The High Priest of Moloch holds the main quest item, the Amulet of Yendor, at the bottom of Gehennom.
- Moloch is a class of enemy ship in the PC Game [*Freespace 2*](#)

Diana (mythology)/Artemis

From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

In [Roman mythology](#), **Diana** (lt. "heavenly" or "divine") was the goddess of the [hunt](#) and [moon](#) and [birthing](#), being associated with wild animals and woodland, and having the power to talk to and control animals. She was equated with the [Greek goddess Artemis](#), though she had an independent origin in Italy. Diana was worshiped in [ancient Roman religion](#) and is revered in [Roman Neopaganism](#) and [Stregheria](#). Dianic Wicca, a largely feminist form of the practice, is named for her. Diana was known to be the virgin goddess and women. She was one of the three maiden goddesses, Diana, Minerva and Vesta, who swore never to marry.

Oak groves were especially sacred to her. According to mythology, Diana was born with her twin brother [Apollo](#) on the island of [Delos](#), daughter of [Jupiter](#) and [Latona](#). Diana made up a triad with two other Roman deities: [Egeria](#) the water nymph, her servant and assistant midwife; and [Virbius](#), the woodland god.

[\[edit\]](#)Etymology

Diana (pronounced with long 'ī' and 'ā') is an adjectival form developed from an ancient *divios, corresponding to later 'divus', 'dius', as in [Dius Fidius](#), [Dea Dia](#) and in the neuter form *dium* meaning the sky.^[1] It is rooted in Indo-European *d(e)y(e)w, meaning bright sky or daylight, from which also derived the name of [Vedic](#) god [Dyaus](#) and the Latin [deus](#), (god) and *dies* (day, daylight).

On the [Tablets of Pylos](#) a theonym δῖ(digamma)ἰα is supposed as referring to a deity precursor of Artemis. Modern scholars mostly accept the identification.^[2]

The ancient Latin writers [Varro](#) and [Cicero](#) considered the etymology of Dīāna as

Acts 19:18-35

Conjuring books are burnt

19 Many of them also which used curious arts brought their books together, and burned them before all [*men*]: and they counted the price of them, and found [*it*] fifty thousand [*pieces*] of silver. **20** So mightily grew the word of God and prevailed.

Demetrius, for love of gain, raises an uproar against Paul

21 After these things were ended, Paul purposed in the spirit, when he had passed through Macedonia and Achaia, to go to Jerusalem, saying, After I have been there, I must also see Rome. **22** So he sent into Macedonia two of them that ministered unto him, Timotheus and Erastus; but he himself stayed in Asia for a season. **23** And the same time there arose no small stir about that way. **24** For a certain [*man*] named Demetrius, a silversmith, which made silver shrines for Diana, brought no small gain unto the craftsmen; **25** Whom he called together with the workmen of like occupation, and said, Sirs, ye know that by this craft we have our wealth. **26** Moreover ye see and hear, that not alone at Ephesus, but almost throughout all Asia, this Paul hath persuaded and turned away much people, saying that they be no gods, which are made with hands: **27** So that not only this our craft is in danger to be set at nought; but also that the temple of the great goddess Diana should be despised, and her magnificence should be destroyed, whom all Asia and the world worshippeth. **28** And when they heard [*these sayings*], they were full of wrath, and cried out, saying, Great [*is*] Diana of the Ephesians. **29** And the whole city was filled with confusion: and having caught Gaius and Aristarchus, men of Macedonia, Paul's companions in travel, they rushed with one accord into the theatre. **30** And when Paul would have entered in unto the people, the disciples suffered him not. **31** And certain of the chief of Asia, which were his friends, sent unto him, desiring [*him*] that he

allied to that of *dies* and connected to the shine of the Moon.

[\[edit\]](#) Theology

The persona of Diana is complex and contains a number of archaic features. According to Dumézil^[2] it falls into a particular subset of celestial gods, referred to in histories of religion as *frame gods*. Such gods, while keeping the original features of celestial divinities, i.e. transcendent heavenly power and abstention from direct rule in worldly matters, did not share the fate of other celestial gods in Indoeuropean religions - that of becoming *dei otiosi*,^[4] since they did retain a particular sort of influence over the world and mankind.

would not adventure himself into the theatre. **32** Some therefore cried one thing, and some another: for the assembly was confused; and the more part knew not wherefore they were come together. **33** And they drew Alexander out of the multitude, the Jews putting him forward. And Alexander beckoned with the hand, and would have made his defence unto the people. **34** But when they knew that he was a Jew, all with one voice about the space of two hours cried out, Great *[is]* Diana of the Ephesians.

which is appeased by the townclerk

35 And when the townclerk had appeased the people, he said, *[Ye]* men of Ephesus, what man is there that knoweth not how that the city of the Ephesians is a worshipper of the great goddess Diana, and of the *[image]* which fell down from Jupiter? **36** Seeing then that these things cannot be spoken against, ye ought to be quiet, and to do nothing rashly. **37** For ye have brought hither these men, which are neither robbers of churches, nor yet blasphemers of your goddess. **38** Wherefore if Demetrius, and the craftsmen which are with him, have a matter against any man, the law is open, and there are deputies: let them implead one another. **39** But if ye enquire any thing concerning other matters, it shall be determined in a lawful assembly. **40** For we are in danger to be called in question for this day's uproar, there being no cause whereby we may give an account of this concourse. **41** And when he had thus spoken, he dismissed the assembly.



The [*Diana of Versailles*](#) a 2nd Century marble statue of Diana, copied from an earlier Greek original.

The celestial character of Diana is reflected in her connection with light, inaccessibility, virginity, and her preference for dwelling on high mountains and in sacred woods. Diana therefore reflects the heavenly world (*diuum* means sky or open air) in its sovereignty, supremacy, impassibility, and indifference towards such secular matters as the fates of mortals and states. At the same time, however, she is seen as active in ensuring the succession of kings and in the preservation of humankind

through the protection of childbirth.

These functions are apparent in the traditional institutions and cults related to the goddess. 1) The institution of the [rex Nemorensis](#), Diana's *sacerdos* (priest) in the Arician wood, who held the position till someone else challenged and killed him in a duel, after breaking a branch from a certain tree of the wood. This ever open succession reveals the character and mission of the goddess as a guarantor of kingly status through successive generations.^[5] Her function as bestower of authority to rule is also attested in the story related by Livy in which a Sabine man who sacrifices a [heifer](#) to Diana wins for his country the seat of the Roman empire.^[6] 2) Diana was also worshipped by women who wanted to be pregnant or who, once pregnant, prayed for an easy delivery. This form of worship is attested in archeological finds of votive statuettes in her sanctuary in the [nemus Aricinum](#) as well as in ancient sources, e.g. Ovid.^[7]

According to Dumézil the forerunner of all *frame gods* is an Indian epic hero who was the image ([avatar](#)) of the Vedic god Dyaus. Having renounced the world, in his roles of father and king, he attained the status of an immortal being while retaining the duty of ensuring that his dynasty is preserved and that there is always a new king for each generation. The Scandinavian god [Heimdallr](#) performs an analogous function: he is born first and will die last. He too gives origin to kingship and the first king, bestowing on him regal prerogatives. Diana, although a female deity, has exactly the same functions, preserving mankind through childbirth and royal succession.

F. H. Pairault in her essay on Diana qualifies Dumézil's theory as "*impossible to verify*".

Dumézil's interpretation appears deliberately to ignore that of [James G. Frazer](#), who

links Diana with the male god [Janus](#) as a divine couple. This looks odd as Dumézil's definition of the concept of *frame god* would fit well the figure of Janus.^[8] Frazer identifies the two with the supreme heavenly couple Jupiter-Juno and additionally ties in these figures to the overarching Indoeuropean religious complex. This regality is also linked to the cult of trees, particularly oaks. In this interpretative schema, the institution of the Rex Nemorensis and related ritual should be seen as related to the theme of the dying god and the [kings of May](#).^[9]

[\[edit\]](#) Physical description

Diana often appeared as a young woman, age around 12 to 19^[citation needed]. It was believed that she had a fair face like Aphrodite with a tall body, slim, small hips, and a high forehead. As a goddess of hunting, she wore a very short tunic so she could hunt and run easily and is often portrayed holding a bow, and carrying a quiver on her shoulder, accompanied by a deer or hunting dogs. Sometimes the hunted creature would also be shown. As goddess of the moon, however, Diana wore a long robe, sometimes with a veil covering her head. Both as goddess of hunting and goddess of the moon she is frequently portrayed wearing a moon crown.

[\[edit\]](#) Worship



Diana as the Huntress, by [Giampietrino](#)

Diana was initially just the hunting goddess, ^[citation needed] associated with wild animals and woodlands. She also later became a [moon goddess](#), supplanting [Titan](#) goddess [Luna](#). ^[citation needed] She also became the goddess of childbirth and ruled over the countryside. Catullus wrote a poem to Diana in which she has more than one alias: Latonia, Lucina, Iuno, Trivia, Luna. ^[10]

In Rome the cult of Diana should have been almost as old as the city itself as Varro mentions her in the list of deities to whom king [Titus Tatius](#) vowed a shrine. It is noteworthy that the list includes Luna and Diana Lucina as separate entities. Another testimony to the high antiquity of her cult is to be found in the *lex regia* of king [Tullus Hostilius](#) that condemns those guilty of incest to the *sacratio* to the goddess.

Diana was worshipped at a festival on August 13,^[11] when King [Servius Tullius](#), himself born a slave, dedicated [her temple](#) on the [Aventine Hill](#) in the mid-sixth century BC. Being placed on the Aventine, and thus outside the *pomerium*, meant that Diana's cult essentially remained a *foreign* one, like that of [Bacchus](#); she was never officially *transferred* to Rome as [Juno](#) was after the sack of [Veii](#). It seems that her cult originated in [Aricia](#),^[12] where her priest, the [Rex Nemorensis](#) remained. There the simple open-air fane was held in common by the Latin tribes,^[13] which Rome aspired to weld into a league and direct. Diana of the wood was soon thoroughly Hellenized,^[14] "a process which culminated with the appearance of Diana beside Apollo in the first *lectisternium* at Rome".^[15] Diana was regarded with great reverence by lower-class citizens and [slaves](#); slaves could receive asylum in her temples. This fact is of difficult interpretation. [Georg Wissowa](#) proposed the explanation that it might be because the first slaves of the Romans must have been Latins of the neighbouring tribes.^[16] However in Ephesus too there was the same custom of the asylum (ασυλιον).

According to Françoise Hélène Pairault's study,^[17] historical and archaeological evidence point to the fact that both Diana of the Aventine and Diana Nemorensis were the product of the direct or indirect influence of the cult of Artemis spread by the Phocceans among the Greek towns of Campania [Cuma](#) and [Capua](#), which in turn

passed it over to the Etruscans and the Latins by the VI and V centuries BC.

The origin of the ritual of the rex Nemorensis should have to be traced to the legend of [Orestes](#) and [Iphigenia](#) more than that of Hippolitos. The formation of the Latin League led by Laevius (or Baebius) Egerius^[18] happened under the influence of an alliance with the tyrant of Cuma Aristodemos^[19] and is probably connected to the political events of end of VI century narrated by Livy and Dionysius, such as the siege of [Aricia](#) by [Porsenna](#)'s son Arruns. It is remarkable that the composition of this league does not reflect that of the Latin people who took part in the [Latiar](#) or [Feriae Latinae](#) given by Pliny and it has not as its leader the *rex Nemorensis* but a *dictator Latinus*.^[20] It should thence be considered a political formation and not a traditional society founded on links of blood.

It looks as if the confrontation happened between two groups of Etruscans who fought for supremacy, those from [Tarquinia](#), [Vulci](#) and [Caere](#) (allied with the Greeks of Capua) and those of [Clusium](#). This is reflected in the legend of the coming of Orestes to Nemi and of the inhumation of his bones in the Roman Forum near the temple of Saturn.^[21] The cult introduced by Orestes at Nemi is apparently that of the [Artemis Tauropolos](#). The literary amplification^[22] reveals a confused religious background: different Artemis were conflated under the epithet.^[23] As far as Nemi's Diana is concerned there are two different versions, by [Strabo](#)^[24] and [Servius Honoratus](#). Strabo's version looks to be the most authoritative as he had access to first hand primary sources on the sanctuaries of Artemis, i.e. the priest of Artemis Artemidoros of Ephesus. The meaning of *Tauropolos* denotes an Asiatic goddess with lunar attributes, lady of the herds.^[25] The only possible *interpretatio graeca* of high antiquity concerning *Diana Nemorensis* could have been the one based upon this ancient aspect of deity of light, master of wildlife. *Tauropolos* is an ancient epithet attached

to [Hecate](#), [Artemis](#) and even [Athena](#).^[26] According to the legend Orestes founded Nemi together with Iphigenia.^[27] At Cuma the [Sybil](#) is the priestess of both [Phoibos](#) and [Trivia](#).^[28] [Hesiod](#)^[29] and [Stesichorus](#)^[30] tell the story according to which after her death Iphigenia was divinised under the name of Hecate, fact which would support the assumption that Artemis Tauropolos had a real ancient alliance with the heroine, who was her priestess in [Taurid](#) and her human paragon. This religious complex is in turn supported by the triple statue of Artemis-Hecate. A coin minted by P. Accoleius Lariscolus in 43 BC has been acknowledged as representing the archaic statue of Diana Nemorensis.^[31] It represents Artemis with the bow at one extremity, Luna-Selene with flowers at the other and a central deity not immediately identifiable, all united by a horizontal bar. The iconographical analysis allows the dating of this image to the VI century at which time there are Etruscan models. Two heads found in the sanctuary^[32] and the Roman theatre at Nemi,^[33] which have a hollow on their back, lend support to this interpretation of an archaic Diana Trivia, in whom three different elements are associated. The presence of a Hellenised Diana at Nemi should be related to the presence of the cult in Campania, as Diana *Tifatina* was appelled *Trivia* in an imperial age inscription which mentions a *flamen Virbialis* dedicted by *eques* C. Octavius Verus.^[34] Cuma too had a cult of a chthonic Hecate and certainly had strict contacts with Latium.^[35] The theological complex present in Diana looks very elaborated and certainly Hellenic, while an analogous Latin concept of Diana Trivia seems uncertain, as Latin sources reflect a Hellenised character of the goddess.^[36]

Though some Roman patrons ordered marble replicas of the specifically Anatolian "Diana" of Ephesus, where the [Temple of Artemis](#) stood, Diana was usually depicted for educated Romans in her Greek guise. If she is accompanied by a deer, as in

the [Diana of Versailles](#) (*illustration, above right*) this is because Diana was the patroness of hunting. The deer may also offer a covert reference to the myth of [Acteon](#) (or Actaeon), who saw her bathing naked. Diana transformed Acteon into a stag and set his own hunting dogs to kill him.

Worship of Diana is mentioned in the Bible. In [Acts of the Apostles](#), Ephesian metal smiths who felt threatened by Saint Paul's preaching of Christianity, jealously rioted in her defense, shouting "*Great is Diana of the Ephesians!*" ([Acts 19:28](#), [New English Bible](#)). After the city secretary (γραμματεὺς) quieted the crowd, he said, "*Men of Ephesus, what person is there who does not know that the city of the Ephesians is the keeper (guardian) of the temple of the great Diana and of her image that fell from heaven ?*" ([Acts 19:36](#))

[\[edit\]](#) Sanctuaries

Diana was an ancient goddess common to all Latin tribes. Therefore many sanctuaries were dedicated to her in the lands inhabited by Latins. The first one is supposed to have been near [Alba Longa](#) before the town was destroyed by the Romans.

The [Arician](#) wood sanctuary near the [lake of Nemi](#) was Latin confederal as testified by the dedicatory epigraph quoted by Cato.^[37]

She had a shrine in Rome on the Aventine hill, according to tradition dedicated by king [Servius Tullius](#). Its location is remarkable as the Aventine is situated outside the [pomerium](#), i.e. original territory of the city, in order to comply with the tradition that Diana was a goddess common to all Latins and not exclusively of the Romans.

Other sanctuaries we know about are listed below:

- Colle di Corne near [Tusculum](#).^[38] where she is referred to with the archaic Latin name of *deva Cornisca* and where existed a [collegium](#) of worshippers.^[39]
- Mount Algidus, also near Tusculum.^[40]
- At [Lavinium](#).^[41]
- At [Tibur](#) (Tivoli), where she is referred to as *Diana Opifera Nemorensis*.^[42]
- A sacred wood mentioned by Livy^[43] *ad compitum Anagninum* (near [Anagni](#)).
- On Mount [Tifata](#), near [Capua](#) in Campania.^[44]
- In [Ephesus](#), where she was worshipped as Diana of Ephesus and the temple [Artemision](#) used to be one of world's seven wonders.

[\[edit\]](#) Legacy



Diana (1892 - 93), [Augustus Saint-Gaudens](#). Bronze, [Metropolitan Museum of Art](#), [New York](#)

[City](#)

[\[edit\]](#) In religion

Diana's cult has been related in [Early Modern Europe](#) to the cult of [Nicevenn](#) (aka Dame Habond, Perchta, Herodiana, etc.). She was related to myths of a female [Wild Hunt](#).

Wicca

Today there is a [branch of Wicca](#) named for her, which is characterized by an exclusive focus on the feminine aspect of the Divine.^[45] Diana's name is also used as the third divine name in a wiccan energy chant- "Isis Astarte Diana Hecate Demeter Kali Inanna".

Stregheria

In Italy the old religion of [Stregheria](#) embraced the goddess Diana as Queen of the Witches; witches being the wise women healers of the time. Diana was said to have created the world of her own being having in herself the seeds of all creation yet to come. It was said that out of herself she divided the darkness and the light, keeping for herself the darkness of creation and creating her brother Apollo, the light. Diana was believed to have loved and ruled with her brother Apollo, the god of the Sun.^[citation needed] (Charles G. Leland, *Aradia: The Gospel of Witches*)

[\[edit\]](#) In language

Both the [Romanian](#) word for "fairy" *Zână*^[46] and the [Leonese](#) word for "water nymph" *xana*, seem to come from the name of Diana.

[\[edit\]](#) In the arts

Since the [Renaissance](#) the myth of Diana has often been represented in the visual and dramatic arts, including the opera *L'arbore di Diana*. In the sixteenth century,

Diana's image figured prominently at the châteaux of [Fontainebleau](#), [Chenonceau](#), & at [Anet](#), in deference to [Diane de Poitiers](#), mistress of [Henri of France](#).

At [Versailles](#) she was incorporated into the Olympian iconography with which [Louis XIV](#), the Apollo-like "Sun King" liked to surround himself. Diana is also a character in the 1876 [Léo Delibes](#) ballet [Sylvia](#). The plot deals with Sylvia, one of Diana's nymphs and sworn to chastity, and Diana's assault on Sylvia's affections for the shepherd Amyntas.

[\[edit\]](#)**In literature**

In "[The Knight's Tale](#)" in [Geoffrey Chaucer's](#) [The Canterbury Tales](#), Emily prays to Diana to be spared from marriage to either Palamon or Arcite.

In "Ode" by [John Keats](#), he writes 'Browsed by none but Dian's fawns' (line 12)

In the sonnet "To Science" by [Edgar Allan Poe](#), science is said to have "dragged Diana from her car".

Diana Soren, the main character in [Carlos Fuentes'](#) novel *Diana o la cazadora soltera* (*Diana, or The Lone Huntress*), is described as having the same personality as the goddess.

In "Castaway" by [Augusta Webster](#), women who claim they are virtuous despite never having been tempted are referred to as "Dianas." (Line 128)

In Jonathan Swift's poem: "The Progress of Beauty", as goddess of the moon, Diana is used in comparison to the 17th/early 18th century everyday woman Swift satirically writes about. Starts: 'When first Diana leaves her bed...'

In Shakespeare

In [Shakespeare's](#) [Pericles, Prince of Tyre](#) Diana appears to Pericles in a vision, telling

him to go to her temple and tell his story to her followers.

Diana is referenced in [As You Like It](#) to describe how Rosaline feels about marriage.

Diana is referred to in [Twelfth Night](#) when Orsino compares Viola (in the guise of Cesario) to Diana. "Diana's lip is not more smooth and rubious"

Speaking of his wife, Desdemona, [Othello the Moor](#) says, "Her name that was as fresh/As Dian[a]'s visage, is now begrim'd and black/As mine own face."

There is a reference to Diana in [Much Ado About Nothing](#) where Hero is said to seem like 'Dian in her orb', in terms of her chastity.

In [All's Well That Ends Well](#) Diana appears as a figure in the play and Helena makes multiple allusions to her, such as, "Now, Dian, from thy altar do I fly..." and "...wish chastely and love dearly, that your Dian/was both herself and love..." The Steward also says, "...; Dian no queen of virgins,/ that would suffer her poor knight surprised, without/ rescue in the first assault or ransom afterward." It can be assumed that 'Dian' is simply a shortening of 'Diana' since later in the play when Parolles' letter to Diana is read aloud it reads 'Dian'.^[47]

The goddess is also referenced indirectly in [A Midsummer Night's Dream](#). The character Hippolyta states "And then the moon, like to a silver bow new bent in Heaven". She refers to Diana, goddess of the moon, who is often depicted with a silver hunting bow. In the same play the character Hermia is told by the Duke Theseus that she must either wed the character Demetrius "Or on Diana's alter to protest for aye austerity and single life". He refers to her becoming a nun, with the goddess Diana having connotations of chastity.

In [The Merchant of Venice](#) Portia states "I will die as chaste as Diana, unless I be

obtained by the manner of my father's will". (I.ii)

In [Romeo and Juliet](#), Romeo describes Rosaline, saying that "She hath Dian's wit".

[\[edit\]](#) **In painting and sculpture**

Diana has been one of the most popular themes in art. Painters like [Titian](#), [Peter Paul Rubens](#), [François Boucher](#), [Nicholas Poussin](#) made use of her myth as a major theme. Most depictions of Diana in art featured the stories of Diana and [Actaeon](#), or [Callisto](#), or depicted her resting after hunting. Some famous work of arts with a Diana theme are :

- [Diana and Actaeon](#), [Diana and Callisto](#), and [Death of Actaeon](#) by Titian.
- *Diana and Callisto*, *Diana Resting After Bath*, and *Diana Getting Out of Bath* by François Boucher.
- *Diana Bathing With Her Nymphs* by [Rembrandt](#).
- *Diana and Endymion* by Poussin.
- *Diana and Callisto*, *Diana and Her Nymph Departing From Hunt*, *Diana and Her Nymphs Surprised By A Faun* by Rubens.
- *Diana and Endymion* by Johann Micheal Rottmayr.
- The famous fountain at [Palace of Caserta](#), Italy, created by Paolo Persico, Brunelli, Pietro Solari, depicting Diana being surprised by Acteon.
- A sculpture by [Christophe-Gabriel Allegrain](#) can be seen at the Musée du Louvre.
- A [sculpture](#) by French sculptor François-Léon Sicard in the [Archibald Fountain](#), Sydney NSW Australia

In Parma at the convent of San Paolo, Antonio Allegri da Correggio painted the chamber of the Abbess Giovanna Piacenza's apartment. He was commissioned in

1519 to paint the ceiling and mantel of the fireplace. On the mantel he painted an image of Diana riding in a chariot possibly pulled by a stag.

[\[edit\]](#) **In beaux arts**



[Pomona](#) (left, symbolizing [agriculture](#)), and Diana (symbolizing [commerce](#)) as building decoration

[Beaux Arts architecture](#) and garden design (late 19th and early 20th centuries) used classic references in a modernized form. Two of the most popular of the period were of [Pomona](#) (goddess of orchards) as a metaphor for Agriculture, and Diana, representing Commerce, which is a perpetual hunt for advantage and profits.

[\[edit\]](#) **In film**

In [Jean Cocteau](#)'s 1946 film *[La Belle et la Bête](#)* it is Diana's power which has transformed and imprisoned the beast.

Diana/[Artemis](#) appears at the end of the 'Pastoral Symphony' segment of *[Fantasia](#)*.

In his 1968 film *[La Mariée était en noir](#)* [François Truffaut](#) plays on this mythological symbol. Julie Kohler, played by Jeanne Moreau, poses as Diana/[Artemis](#) for the artist Fergus. This choice seems fitting for Julie, a character beset by revenge, of which

Fergus becomes the fourth victim. She poses with a bow and arrow, wearing white.

[\[edit\]](#) **Other**

- In the funeral oration of [Diana, Princess of Wales](#) in 1997, her brother drew an analogy between the ancient goddess of hunting and his sister - 'the most hunted person of the modern age'.
- [William Moulton Marston](#) used the Diana myth as a basis for [Wonder Woman](#).
- For the album art of Progressive metal band [Protest the Hero](#)'s second studio album [Fortress](#), Diana is depicted, protected by rams and other animals. The theme of Diana is carried throughout the album.
- In the Addams Family Musical, Lucas described Wednesday as Diana goddess of the hunt when he first saw her.