

## ~GODS AND GODDESSES (1504)

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• **The deities that have been and still are worshiped by the nations are human creations, the products of the imaginations of imperfect, empty-headed men, who turned the glory of the incorruptible God into something like the image of corruptible man and of birds and four-footed creatures and creeping things.**

• **Because, although they knew God, they did not glorify him as God nor did they thank him, but they became empty-headed in their reasonings and their unintelligent heart became darkened. (Romans 1:21)**

• **Although asserting they were wise, they became foolish (Romans 1:22)**

• **And turned the glory of the incorruptible God into something like the image of corruptible man and of birds and four-footed creatures and creeping things. (Romans 1:23)**

• **It is, therefore, not surprising to note that these deities mirror the very characteristics and weaknesses of their imperfect worshipers. One Hebrew term used to refer to idols or false gods literally means valueless thing or worthless thing.**

• **Do not turn yourselves to valueless gods, and you must not make molten gods for yourselves. I am Yehowah your God. (Leviticus 19:4)**

• **In that day the earthling man will throw his worthless gods of silver and his valueless gods of gold that they had made for him to bow before to the shrewmice and to the bats. (Isaiah 2:20)**

- **The Bible refers to Satan the Devil, as **the god of this system of things**.**
- **Among whom the **god of this system of things** has blinded the minds of the unbelievers, that the illumination of the glorious Good News about the Christ, who is the image of God, might not shine through. (**2 Corinthians 4:4**)**
- **That Satan is the god there referred to is clearly indicated later in verse 4 where it says that this god has blinded the minds of the unbelievers.**
- **So down the great dragon was hurled, the original serpent, the one called Devil and Satan, who is misleading the entire inhabited earth, he was hurled down to the earth, and his angels were hurled down with him. (**Revelation 12:9**)**
- **He is said to be misleading the entire inhabited earth. Satan's control over the present system of things, including its governments, was indicated when he offered Jesus all the kingdoms of the world in exchange for an act of worship.**
- **Again the Devil took him along to an unusually high mountain, and showed him all the kingdoms of the world and their glory. (**Matthew 4:8**)**
- **And he said to him; All these things I will give you if you fall down and do an act of worship to me. (**Matthew 4:9**)**
- **The worshipful adoration that men direct toward their idol-gods actually goes, to demons, and not to God.**
- **No; but I say that the things which the nations sacrifice they sacrifice to demons, and not to God, and I do not want you to become sharers with the demons. (**1 Corinthians 10:20**)**
- **And they kept serving their idols, and these came to be a snare to them. (**Psalms 106:36**)**
- **And they would sacrifice their sons and their daughters to demons. (**Psalms 106:37**)**
- **Yehowah God requires exclusive devotion.**

- **I am Yehowah. That is my name, and to no one else shall I give my own glory, neither my praise to graven images. (Isaiah 42:8)**
- **The one who worships an idol-god denies the true God and thus serves the interests of Yehowah's chief Adversary, Satan, and his demons.**
- **Although the Bible makes reference to a number of **gods** and goddesses of ancient peoples, it is not always possible to identify such gods specifically.**

### ·· **Origin Of God's And Goddesses**

- **The striking similarity readily observable when comparing the **gods** and **goddesses** of ancient peoples can hardly be attributed to chance. Concerning this, **J. Garnier** writes:**
- **Not merely Egyptians, Chaldeans, Phoenicians, Greeks and Romans, but also the Hindus, the Buddhists of China and of Thibet, the Goths, Anglo-Saxons, Druids, Mexicans and Peruvians, the Aborigines of Australia, and even the savages of the South Sea Islands, must have all derived their religious ideas from a common source and a common centre. Everywhere we find the most startling coincidences in rites, ceremonies, customs, traditions, and in the names and relations of their respective gods and goddesses. [The Worship of the Dead, London, 1904, p. 3]**
- **The evidence of Scripture points to the land of Shinar as the post-Flood birthplace of false religious concepts. Undoubtedly under the direction of Nimrod, a mighty hunter in opposition to Yehowah, the building of the city of Babel and its tower, likely a ziggurat to be used for false worship, began.**
- **This building project was undertaken, not to bring honor to Yehowah God, but for the self-glorification of the builders, who desired to make a celebrated name for themselves.**
- **Also, it was in direct opposition to God's purpose, which was for mankind to spread about in the earth. The Almighty frustrated the plans of these builders by confusing their language. No longer being able to understand one another, they gradually left off building the city and were scattered.**

- **And Cush became father to Nimrod. He made the start in becoming a mighty one in the earth. (Genesis 10:8)**
- **He displayed himself a mighty hunter in opposition to Yehowah. That is why there is a saying; Just like Nimrod a mighty hunter in opposition to Yehowah. (Genesis 10:9)**
- **And the beginning of his kingdom came to be Babel and Erech and Accad and Calneh, in the land of Shinar. (Genesis 10:10)**
- **And it came about that in their journeying eastward they eventually discovered a valley plain in the land of Shinar, and they took up dwelling there. (Genesis 11:2)**
- **And they began to say, each one to the other; Come on! Let us make bricks and bake them with a burning process. So brick served as stone for them, but bitumen served as mortar for them. (Genesis 11:3)**
- **They now said; Come on! Let us build ourselves a city and also a tower with its top in the heavens, and let us make a celebrated name for ourselves, for fear we may be scattered over all the surface of the earth. (Genesis 11:4)**
- **And Yehowah proceeded to go down to see the city and the tower that the sons of men had built. (Genesis 11:5)**
- **After that Yehowah said; Look! They are one people and there is one language for them all, and this is what they start to do. Why, now there is nothing that they may have in mind to do that will be unattainable for them. (Genesis 11:6)**
- **Come now! Let us go down and there confuse their language that they may not listen to one another's language. (Genesis 11:7)**
- **Accordingly Yehowah scattered them from there over all the surface of the earth, and they gradually left off building the city. (Genesis 11:8)**
- **That is why its name was called Babel, because there Yehowah had confused the language of all the earth, and Yehowah had scattered them from there over all the surface of the earth. (Genesis 11:9)**

- **However, Nimrod apparently remained at Babel and expanded his dominion, founding the first Babylonian Empire.**
- **Out of that land he went forth into Assyria and set himself to building Nineveh and RehobothIr and Calah ([Genesis 10:11](#))**
- **And Resen between Nineveh and Calah. This is the great city. ([Genesis 10:12](#))**
- **As for the scattered people, wherever they went they carried their false religion with them, to be practiced under new terms and in their new language and new locations.**
- **The people were scattered in the days of Peleg, who was born about a century after the Deluge and died at the age of 239. Since both Noah and his son Shem outlived Peleg, the dispersal took place at a time when the facts about earlier events, such as the Flood, were known.**
- **And Noah continued to live three hundred and fifty years after the deluge. ([Genesis 9:28](#))**
- **And to Eber there were two sons born. The name of the one was Peleg, because in his days the earth was divided, and the name of his brother was Joktan. ([Genesis 10:25](#))**
- **This is the history of Shem. Shem was a hundred years old when he became father to Arpachshad two years after the deluge. ([Genesis 11:10](#))**
- **And after his fathering Arpachshad Shem continued to live five hundred years. Meanwhile he became father to sons and daughters. ([Genesis 11:11](#))**
- **And Arpachshad lived thirty-five years. Then he became father to Shelah. ([Genesis 11:12](#))**
- **And after his fathering Shelah Arpachshad continued to live four hundred and three years. Meanwhile he became father to sons and daughters. ([Genesis 11:13](#))**
- **And Shelah lived thirty years. Then he became father to Eber. ([Genesis 11:14](#))**

- **And after his fathering Eber Shelah continued to live four hundred and three years. Meanwhile he became father to sons and daughters. ([Genesis 11:15](#))**
- **And Eber lived on for thirty-four years. Then he became father to Peleg. ([Genesis 11:16](#))**
- **And after his fathering Peleg Eber continued to live four hundred and thirty years. Meanwhile he became father to sons and daughters. ([Genesis 11:17](#))**
- **And Peleg lived on for thirty years. Then he became father to Reu. ([Genesis 11:18](#))**
- **And after his fathering Reu Peleg continued to live two hundred and nine years. Meanwhile he became father to sons and daughters. ([Genesis 11:19](#))**
- **This knowledge undoubtedly lingered in some form in the memory of the dispersed people. Indicative of this is the fact that the mythologies of the ancients echo various parts of the Biblical record, but in a distorted, polytheistic form.**
- **The legends depict certain **gods** as serpent slayers, also, the religions of many ancient peoples included the worship of a god placed in the role of a benefactor who dies a violent death on earth and then is restored to life.**
- **This may suggest that such a god was actually a deified human wrongly viewed as being the promised seed.**
- **And I shall put enmity between you and the woman and between your seed and her seed. He will bruise you in the head and you will bruise him in the heel. ([Genesis 3:15](#))**
- **The myths tell of the love affairs had by **gods** and earthly women and of the heroic deeds of their hybrid offspring.**
- **Now it came about that when men started to grow in numbers on the surface of the ground and daughters were born to them. ([Genesis 6:1](#))**
- **Then the sons of the true God began to notice the daughters of**

- men, that they were good-looking, and they went taking wives for themselves, namely, all whom they chose. (**Genesis 6:2**)
- The Nephilim proved to be in the earth in those days, and also after that, when the sons of the true God continued to have relations with the daughters of men and they bore sons to them, they were the mighty ones who were of old, the men of fame. (**Genesis 6:4**)
  - And the angels that did not keep their original position but forsook their own proper dwelling place he has reserved with eternal bonds under dense darkness for the judgment of the great day. (**Jude 1:6**)
  - There is hardly a nation on the earth that does not have a legend concerning a global flood, and traces of the tower-building account are likewise to be found in the legends of mankind.

### •• **Babylonian Deities**

- After the death of Nimrod, the Babylonians reasonably would have been inclined to hold him in high regard as the founder and builder and first king of their city and as the organizer of the original Babylonian Empire. Tradition has it that Nimrod died a violent death. Since the god Marduk, Merodach, was regarded as the founder of Babylon, it has been suggested by some that Marduk represents the deified Nimrod. However, the opinions of scholars as to the identification of deities with specific human's are quite varied.
- With the passage of time, the **gods** of the first Babylonian Empire began to multiply. The pantheon came to have a number of triads of gods, or deities. One such triad was composed of Anu, the god of the sky, Enlil, the god of the earth, air, and storm, and Ea, the god presiding over the waters.
- Another triad was that of the moon-god Sin, the sun-god Shamash, and the fertility goddess Ishtar, the lover or consort of Tammuz. The Babylonians even had triads of devils, such as the triad of Labartu, Labasu, and Akhkhazu. The worship of heavenly bodies became prominent
- You have grown weary with the multitude of your counselors. Let them stand up, now, and save you, the worshipers of the heavens, the lookers at the stars, those giving out knowledge at

the new moons concerning the things that will come upon you.  
([Isaiah 47:13](#))

- And various planets came to be associated with certain deities. The planet Jupiter was identified with the chief god of Babylon, Marduk, Venus with Ishtar, a goddess of love and fertility, Saturn with Ninurta, a god of war and hunting and patron of agriculture. Mercury with Nebo, a god of wisdom and agriculture. Mars with Nergal, a god of war and pestilence and lord of the underworld.
- The cities of ancient Babylonia came to have their own special guardian deities, somewhat like patron saints. In Ur it was Sin, in Eridu, Ea, in Nippur, Enlil, in Cuthah, Nergal, in Borsippa, Nebo, and in the city of Babylon, Marduk - Merodach.
- At the time that Hammurabi made Babylon the capital of Babylonia, the importance of the city's favorite god Marduk was, of course, enhanced. Finally Marduk was given the attribute of earlier **gods** and displaced them in the Babylonian myths.
- In later periods his proper name Marduk was supplanted by the title Belu, Owner, so that finally he was commonly spoken of as Bel. His wife was called Belit, Mistress, **par excellence**.

**See Also BEL**

**See Also NEBO 4**

- The picture portrayed of the **gods** and **goddesses** in ancient Babylonian texts is but a reflection of sinful mortal man. These accounts say that the deities were born, loved, had families, fought, and even died, as did Tammuz.
- Terrified by the Deluge, they are said to have crouched like dogs. The deities were also portrayed as being greedy, frequently eating to the point of gluttony, and drinking to the point of intoxication.
- They had furious tempers and were vindictive and suspicious of one another. Bitter hatreds existed among them.
- To illustrate; Tiamat, bent on destroying the other gods, was overcome by Marduk, who split her into two halves, forming the sky with one half and using the other half in connection with the establishment of the earth. Eresh-Kigal, the goddess of the



underworld, instructed Namtaru, the god of pestilence, to imprison her sister Ishtar and afflict her with 60 miseries.

**See Also NERGAL**

- The above gives some indication of the environment that faithful Abraham left behind when he went out from the Chaldean city of Ur, which was then steeped in Babylonian idolatry.

- After that Terah took Abram his son and Lot, the son of Haran, his grandson, and Sarai his daughter-in-law, the wife of Abram his son, and they went with him out of Ur of the Chaldeans to go to the land of Canaan. In time they came to Haran and took up dwelling there. ([Genesis 11:31](#))

- And Yehowah proceeded to say to Abram; Go your way out of your country and from your relatives and from the house of your father to the country that I shall show you. ([Genesis 12:1](#))

- And Joshua went on to say to all the people; This is what Yehowah the God of Israel has said; It was on the other side of the River that your forefathers dwelt a long time ago, Terah the father of Abraham and the father of Nahor, and they used to serve other **gods**. ([Joshua 24:2](#))

- And now fear Yehowah and serve him in faultlessness and in truth, and remove the **gods** that your forefathers served on the other side of the River and in Egypt, and serve Yehowah. ([Joshua 24:14](#))

- Now if it is bad in your eyes to serve Yehowah, choose for yourselves today whom you will serve, whether the **gods** that your forefathers who were on the other side of the River served or the gods of the Amorites in whose land you are dwelling. But as for me and my household, we shall serve Yehowah. ([Joshua 24:15](#))

- Centuries later, it was into Babylon, a land of graven images and filthy dungy idols, that thousands of Jewish captives were thrust. ([2 Kings Chapter 25](#))

- The word that Yehowah spoke concerning Babylon, concerning the land of the Chaldeans, by means of Jeremiah the prophet. ([Jeremiah 50:1](#))

- **Tell it among the nations and publish it. And lift up a signal, publish it. Hide nothing, O men. say; Babylon has been captured. Bel has been put to shame. Merodach has become terrified. Her images have been put to shame. Her dungy idols have become terrified. (Jeremiah 50:2)**
- **There is a devastation upon her waters, and they must be dried up. For it is a land of graven images, and because of their frightful visions they keep acting crazy. (Jeremiah 50:38)**

### ·· **Assyrian Deities**

- **Generally speaking, the Assyrian **gods** and **goddesses** are identical with the Babylonian deities. However, one deity, Asshur, the chief god, seems to have been peculiar to the Assyrian pantheon. Since Assyria takes its name from Asshur, it has been suggested that this god is actually Shem's son named Asshur, deified by false worshipers.**
- **And to Shem, the forefather of all the sons of Eber, the brother of Japheth the oldest, there was also progeny born. (Genesis 10:21)**
- **The sons of Shem were Elam and Asshur and Arpachshad and Lud and Aram. (Genesis 10:22)**
- **Unlike the Babylonian Marduk, who was also worshiped in Assyria but whose seat of worship always remained in the city of Babylon, Asshur's seat of worship changed as the kings of Assyria took up official residence in other cities.**
- **Also, sanctuaries to Asshur were built in various parts of Assyria. A military standard was Asshur's primary symbol, and this was carried right into the thick of the battle. The winged circle, or disk, from which the figure of a bearded man often emerges, represented the god Asshur.**
- **At times the human figure is shown as holding a bow or in the act of shooting an arrow. Another representation of Asshur suggests a triad concept.**
- **In addition to the central figure emerging from the circle, two human heads are shown on top of the wings, one on either side of the central figure.**

**See Also ASSYRIA**  
**See Also NISROCH**

- **It was among such Assyrians that exiles of the northern ten-tribe kingdom found themselves following Samaria's fall in 740 B.C.E.**
- **In the twelfth year of Ahaz the king of Judah, Hoshea the son of Elah became king in Samaria over Israel for nine years. (2 Kings 17:1)**
- **And he continued to do what was bad in Yehowah's eyes, only not as the kings of Israel that happened to be prior to him. (2 Kings 17:2)**
- **It was against him that Shalmaneser the king of Assyria came up, and Hoshea came to be his servant and began to pay tribute to him. (2 Kings 17:3)**
- **However, the king of Assyria got to find conspiracy in Hoshea's case, in that he had sent messengers to So the king of Egypt and did not bring the tribute up to the king of Assyria as in former years. Hence the king of Assyria shut him up and kept him bound in the house of detention. (2 Kings 17:4)**
- **And the king of Assyria proceeded to come up against all the land and to come up to Samaria and lay siege against it for three years. (2 Kings 17:5)**
- **In the ninth year of Hoshea, the king of Assyria captured Samaria and then led Israel into exile in Assyria and kept them dwelling in Halah and in Habor at the river Gozan and in the cities of the Medes. (2 Kings 17:6)**
- **Later, the prophet Nahum foretold the fall of Nineveh, capital of Assyria, and its gods, which destruction came in 632 B.C.E.**
- **The pronouncement against Nineveh. The book of the vision of Nahum the Elkoshite. (Nahum 1:1)**
- **And concerning you Yehowah has commanded, Nothing of your name will be sown anymore. Out of the house of your gods I shall cut off carved image and molten statue. I shall make a burial place for you, because you have been of no account. (Nahum 1:14)**

## · Egyptian Deities

- The **gods** and **goddesses** worshiped by the Egyptians give evidence of an underlying Babylonian heritage. There were triads of deities and even triple triads, or enneads. One of the popular triads consisted of Osiris, his consort Isis, and their son Horus.
- Osiris was the most popular of the Egyptian **gods** and was regarded as the son of the earth-god Geb and the sky-goddess Nut. It was said that Osiris became the husband of Isis and reigned as king over Egypt.
- The mythological accounts tell of Osiris being murdered by his brother Set and then being restored to life, becoming the judge and king of the dead.
- The relationship of Osiris and Isis and their respective characteristics strikingly correspond to the relationship and characteristics of the Babylonian Tammuz and Ishtar. Hence, numerous scholars consider them to be identical.
- Mother-and-son worship was also very popular in Egypt. Isis is often portrayed with the infant Horus on her knees. This representation is so much like that of the Madonna and child that certain ones in Christendom have at times venerated it in ignorance.
- With respect to the god Horus, there is evidence of the distortion of the Edenic promise concerning the seed that would bruise the serpent in the head.
- And I shall put enmity between you and the woman and between your seed and her seed. He will bruise you in the head and you will bruise him in the heel. (**Genesis 3:15**)
- At times Horus is depicted as trampling crocodiles and grasping snakes and scorpions. According to one account, when Horus proceeded to avenge the death of his father Osiris, Set, who had murdered Osiris, changed himself into a serpent.
- On Egyptian sculptures and paintings the sacred symbol, the crux ansata, occurs very frequently. This so-called sign of life looks like the letter T with an oval handle on top and probably represented the male

and female organs of reproduction combined. The Egyptian deities are often depicted as holding the crux ansata.

- Many were the creatures venerated as sacred by the Egyptians. These included the bull, the cat, the cow, the crocodile, the falcon, the frog, the hippopotamus, the ibis, the jackal, the lion, the ram, the scarab, the scorpion, the serpent, the vulture, and the wolf.
- However, some of these were sacred in one part of Egypt and not in another, this, at times, even resulting in the outbreak of civil wars. Not only were animals sacred to certain **gods**, but some of them were even viewed as incarnations of a god or goddess.
- The Apis bull, for instance, was regarded as the very incarnation of the god Osiris and also an emanation of the god Ptah.
- According to **Herodotus [II, 65-67]**, a person killing a sacred animal deliberately was put to death, if the killing of the animal was by accident, the priests stipulated a fine.
- However, one killing an ibis or a hawk, whether intentionally or not, was put to death, usually at the hands of an enraged mob. When a cat died, all in the household shaved their eyebrows, whereas at the death of a dog they shaved their entire body.
- Sacred animals were mummified and given elaborate burials. Among the mummified animals that have been found are the bull, the cat, the crocodile, and the falcon, to mention but a few.
- The mythological accounts portray the Egyptian deities as having human weaknesses and imperfections. They were said to have experienced anguish and fright and repeatedly found themselves in peril. The god Osiris was slain.
- Horus, in childhood, was said to have suffered from internal pains, headaches, and dysentery and to have died from a scorpions sting, but then was said to have been restored to life. Isis was believed to have suffered from abscess of the breast.
- With advancing years, it was taught, the strength of the sun-god Ra waned and saliva dripped from his mouth. His very life was in jeopardy after being bitten by a magical serpent formed by Isis, although he recovered as a result of Isis words of magic.

- **Sekhmet, a goddess representing the destructive power of the sun, was depicted as being bloodthirsty. She took such delight in killing men that Ra was said to have feared for the future of the human race. To save humankind from extermination, Ra distributed 7,000 jugs of a beer and pomegranate mixture over the battlefield.**

- **Thinking it to be human blood, Sekhmet drank it ardently until too intoxicated to continue her slaughter. Nephthys was said to have got her brother Osiris, the husband of her sister Isis, drunk and then had relations with him. The sun-gods Tem and Horus were portrayed as masturbators.**

- **Interestingly, when Pharaoh constituted Joseph second ruler of the land of Egypt, Joseph was thus elevated over the worshipers of Egypt's false gods.**

- **Well, the thing proved to be good in the eyes of Pharaoh and of all his servants. (Genesis 41:37)**

- **So Pharaoh said to his servants; Can another man be found like this one in whom the spirit of God is? (Genesis 41:38)**

- **After that Pharaoh said to Joseph; Since God has caused you to know all this, there is no one as discreet and wise as you are. (Genesis 41:39)**

- **You will personally be over my house, and all my people will obey you implicitly. Only as to the throne shall I be greater than you. (Genesis 41:40)**

- **And Pharaoh added to Joseph; See, I do place you over all the land of Egypt. (Genesis 41:41)**

- **With that Pharaoh removed his signet ring from his own hand and put it upon Joseph's hand and clothed him with garments of fine linen and placed a necklace of gold about his neck. (Genesis 41:42)**

- **Moreover, he had him ride in the second chariot of honor that he had, so that they should call out ahead of him, Avrék! Thus putting him over all the land of Egypt. (Genesis 41:43)**

- **And Pharaoh further said to Joseph; I am Pharaoh, but without your authorization no man may lift up his hand or his foot in all**

the land of Egypt. ([Genesis 41:44](#))

## · The Ten Plagues

· **By means of the plagues he visited upon the Egyptians, Yehowah humiliated and executed judgment upon their **gods**.**

· **And I must pass through the land of Egypt on this night and strike every firstborn in the land of Egypt, from man to beast, and on all the **gods** of Egypt I shall execute judgments. I am Yehowah. ([Exodus 12:12](#))**

· **All the while the Egyptians were burying those whom Yehowah had struck among them, that is, all the firstborn, and upon their **gods** Yehowah had executed judgments. ([Numbers 33:4](#))**

· **The first plague, the turning of the Nile and all the waters of Egypt into blood, brought disgrace to the Nile-god Hapi. The death of the fish in the Nile was also a blow to Egypt's religion, for certain kinds of fish were actually venerated and even mummified.**

· **Subsequently Yehowah said to Moses; Say to Aaron, Take your rod and stretch your hand out over the waters of Egypt, over their rivers, over their Nile canals and over their reedy pools and over all their impounded waters, that they may become blood. And there will certainly be blood in all the land of Egypt and in the wooden vessels and in the stone vessels. ([Exodus 7:19](#))**

· **Immediately Moses and Aaron did so, just as Yehowah had commanded, and he lifted up the rod and struck the water that was in the Nile River under the eyes of Pharaoh and his servants, and all the water that was in the Nile River was turned into blood. ([Exodus 7:20](#))**

· **And the fish that were in the Nile River died, and the Nile River began to stink, and the Egyptians were unable to drink water from the Nile River, and the blood came to be in all the land of Egypt. ([Exodus 7:21](#))**

· **The frog, regarded as a symbol of fertility and the Egyptian concept of resurrection, was considered sacred to the frog-goddess Heqt. Hence, the plague of frogs brought disgrace to this goddess.**

· **Later on Yehowah said to Moses; Say to Aaron, Stretch your**

hand with your rod out over the rivers, the Nile canals and the reedy pools and make the frogs come up over the land of Egypt. **(Exodus 8:5)**

- **At that Aaron stretched his hand out over the waters of Egypt, and the frogs began to come up and to cover the land of Egypt. (Exodus 8:6)**
- **However, the magic-practicing priests did the same thing by their secret arts and made the frogs come up over the land of Egypt. (Exodus 8:7)**
- **In time Pharaoh called Moses and Aaron and said; Entreat Yehowah that he may remove the frogs from me and my people, as I want to send the people away that they may sacrifice to Yehowah. (Exodus 8:8)**
- **Then Moses said to Pharaoh; You take the glory over me to say when I shall make entreaty for you and your servants and your people in order to cut the frogs off from you and your houses. Only in the Nile River will they be left. (Exodus 8:9)**
- **To this he said; Tomorrow. So he said; It will be according to your word, in order, that you may know that there is no one else like Yehowah our God. (Exodus 8:10)**
- **In that the frogs will certainly turn away from you and your houses and your servants and your people. Only in the Nile River will they be left. (Exodus 8:11)**
- **Accordingly Moses and Aaron went out from Pharaoh, and Moses cried out to Yehowah because of the frogs that He had put upon Pharaoh. (Exodus 8:12)**
- **Then Yehowah did according to Moses word, and the frogs began to die off from the houses, the courtyards and the fields. (Exodus 8:13)**
- **And they went piling them up, heaps upon heaps, and the land began to stink. (Exodus 8:14)**
- **The third plague saw the magic-practicing priests acknowledging defeat when they proved to be unable by means of their secret arts to turn dust into gnats.**



- **Yehowah now said to Moses; Say to Aaron, Stretch your rod out and strike the dust of the earth, and it must become gnats in all the land of Egypt. (Exodus 8:16)**
- **And they proceeded to do this. So Aaron stretched out his hand with his rod and struck the dust of the earth, and the gnats came to be on man and beast. All the dust of the earth became gnats in all the land of Egypt. (Exodus 8:17)**
- **And the magic-practicing priests tried to do the same by their secret arts, in order to bring forth gnats, but they were unable. And the gnats came to be on man and beast. (Exodus 8:18)**
- **Hence the magic-practicing priests said to Pharaoh; It is the finger of God! But Pharaoh's heart continued to be obstinate, and he did not listen to them, just as Yehowah had spoken. (Exodus 8:19)**
- **The god Thoth was credited with the invention of magic or secret arts, but even this god could not help the magic-practicing priests to duplicate the third plague.**
- **The line of demarcation between the Egyptians and the worshipers of the true God came to be sharply drawn from the fourth plague onward. While swarms of gadflies invaded the homes of the Egyptians, the Israelites in the land of Goshen were not affected.**
- **And I shall indeed set a demarcation between my people and your people. Tomorrow this sign will take place. (Exodus 8:23)**
- **And Yehowah proceeded to do so, and heavy swarms of gadflies began to invade the house of Pharaoh and the houses of his servants and all the land of Egypt. The land came to ruin as a result of the gadflies. (Exodus 8:24)**
- **The next plague, the pestilence upon the livestock, humiliated such deities as the cow-goddess Hathor, Apis, and the sky-goddess Nut, who was conceived of as a cow having the stars affixed to her belly.**
- **Consequently Yehowah said to Moses; Go in to Pharaoh and you must state to him; This is what Yehowah the God of the Hebrews has said; Send my people away that they may serve me. (Exodus**

**9:1)**

- **But if you continue refusing to send them away and you are still keeping hold of them. (Exodus 9:2)**
- **Look! Yehowah's hand is coming upon your livestock that is in the field. On the horses, the asses, the camels, the herd and the flock there will be a very heavy pestilence. (Exodus 9:3)**
- **And Yehowah will certainly make a distinction between the livestock of Israel and the livestock of Egypt, and not a thing of all that belongs to the sons of Israel will die. (Exodus 9:4)**
- **Moreover, Yehowah set an appointed time, saying; Tomorrow Yehowah will do this thing in the land. (Exodus 9:5)**
- **Accordingly Yehowah did this thing on the next day, and all sorts of livestock of Egypt began to die, but not one of the livestock of the sons of Israel died. (Exodus 9:6)**
- **The plague of boils brought disgrace to the **gods** and goddesses regarded as possessing healing abilities, such as Thoth, Isis, and Ptah.**
- **After that Yehowah said to Moses and Aaron; Take for yourselves both hands full of soot from a kiln, and Moses must toss it toward the heavens in Pharaoh's sight. (Exodus 9:8)**
- **And it must become a powder upon all the land of Egypt, and it must become boils breaking out with blisters upon man and beast in all the land of Egypt. (Exodus 9:9)**
- **So they took the soot of a kiln and stood before Pharaoh, and Moses tossed it toward the heavens, and it became boils with blisters, breaking out on man and beast. (Exodus 9:10)**
- **And the magic-practicing priests were unable to stand before Moses as a result of the boils, because the boils had developed on the magic-practicing priests and on all the Egyptians. (Exodus 9:11)**
- **The severe hailstorm put to shame the **gods** who were considered to have control of the natural elements, for example, Reshpu, who, it appears, was believed to control lightning, and Thoth, who was said to have power over the rain and thunder.**

- **Yehowah now said to Moses; Stretch out your hand toward the heavens, that hail may come on all the land of Egypt, upon man and beast and all vegetation of the field in the land of Egypt. (Exodus 9:22)**
- **So Moses stretched out his rod toward the heavens, and Yehowah gave thunders and hail, and fire would run down to the earth, and Yehowah kept making it rain down hail upon the land of Egypt. (Exodus 9:23)**
- **Thus there came hail, and fire quivering in among the hail. It was very heavy, so that there had not occurred any like it in all the land of Egypt from the time it became a nation. (Exodus 9:24)**
- **And the hail went striking at all the land of Egypt. The hail struck everything that was in the field, from man to beast, and all sorts of vegetation of the field, and it shattered all sorts of trees of the field. (Exodus 9:25)**
- **Only in the land of Goshen, where the sons of Israel were, there occurred no hail. (Exodus 9:26)**
- **The locust plague spelled defeat for the **gods** thought to ensure a bountiful harvest, one of these being the fertility god Min, who was viewed as a protector of the crops.**
- **Yehowah now said to Moses; Stretch your hand out over the land of Egypt for the locusts, that they may come up over the land of Egypt and eat up all the vegetation of the land, everything that the hail has let remain. (Exodus 10:12)**
- **At once Moses stretched his rod out over the land of Egypt, and Yehowah caused an east wind to blow upon the land all that day and all night. The morning came and the east wind carried the locusts. (Exodus 10:13)**
- **And the locusts began to come up over all the land of Egypt and to settle down upon all the territory of Egypt. They were very burdensome. Before them there had never turned up in this way locusts like them, and there will never turn up any in this way after them. (Exodus 10:14)**

- And they went covering the visible surface of the entire land, and the land grew dark, and they went on eating up all the vegetation of the land and all the fruit of the trees that the hail had left, and there was left nothing green on the trees or on the vegetation of the field in all the land of Egypt. (**Exodus 10:15**)
- Among the deities disgraced by the plague of darkness were **sun-gods**, such as Ra and Horus, and also Thoth the god of the moon and believed to be the systematizer of sun, moon, and stars.
- Yehowah then said to Moses; Stretch your hand out toward the heavens, that darkness may occur over the land of Egypt and the darkness may be felt. (**Exodus 10:21**)
- Moses immediately stretched his hand out toward the heavens, and a gloomy darkness began to occur in all the land of Egypt for three days. (**Exodus 10:22**)
- They did not see one another, and none of them got up from his own place three days, but for all the sons of Israel there proved to be light in their dwellings. (**Exodus 10:23**)
- The death of the firstborn resulted in the greatest humiliation for the Egyptian **gods** and goddesses.
- And I must pass through the land of Egypt on this night and strike every firstborn in the land of Egypt, from man to beast, and on all the **gods** of Egypt I shall execute judgments. I am Yehowah. (**Exodus 12:12**)
- The rulers of Egypt actually styled themselves as **gods**, the sons of Ra, or Amon-Ra. It was claimed that Ra, or Amon-Ra, had intercourse with the queen.
- The son born was, therefore, viewed as a god incarnate and was dedicated to Ra, or Amon-Ra, at his temple. Hence, the death of Pharaoh's firstborn, in effect, actually meant the death of a god.
- And it came about that at midnight Yehowah struck every firstborn in the land of Egypt, from the firstborn of Pharaoh sitting on his throne to the firstborn of the captive who was in the prison hole, and every firstborn of beast. (**Exodus 12:29**)

- This in itself would have been a severe blow to Egypt's religion, and the complete impotence of all the deities was manifested in their being unable to save the firstborn of the Egyptians from death.

**See Also AMON 4**

### ·· Canaanite Deities

- Extra-biblical sources indicate that the god El was considered to be the creator and sovereign. Although El seems to have been somewhat remote from earthly affairs, he is repeatedly shown as being approached by the other deities with requests. El is depicted as a rebellious son that dethroned and castrated his own father, and also as a bloody tyrant, a murderer, and an adulterer.

- In the Ras Shamra texts El is referred to as father bull and is represented as having gray hair and a gray beard. His consort was Asherah, who is referred to as the progenitress of the **gods**, whereas El is placed in the role of progenitor of the gods.

- Most prominent of the Canaanite **gods**, however, was the fertility god Baal, a deity of the sky and of rain and storm.

- Thus they abandoned Yehowah the God of their fathers who had brought them out of the land of Egypt and went following other **gods** from among the gods of the peoples who were all around them and they began bowing down to them, so that they offended Yehowah. (**Judges 2:12**)

- Thus they abandoned Yehowah and took up serving Baal and the Ashtoreth images. (**Judges 2:13**)

- In the Ras Shamra texts, Baal is often called the son of Dagon, though El is also spoken of as his father. Baals sister Anath is shown referring to El as her father and he, in turn, calls her his daughter. Hence, Baal probably was regarded as the son of El, though he may also have been viewed as El's grandson.

- In the mythological accounts Baal is depicted as assaulting and triumphing over Yamm, the god who presided over the water and who seems to have been El's favorite or beloved son. But Baal is slain in his conflict with Mot, who was viewed as a son of El and the god of death and aridity.

- Thus, Canaan, like Babylon, had its god who died a violent death and thereafter was restored to life.

#### **See Also BAAL 4**

- Anath, Asherah, and Ashtoreth are the principal goddesses mentioned in the Ras Shamra texts. However, there appears to have been a considerable overlapping in the roles of these goddesses. In Syria, where the Ras Shamra texts were found, Anath may have been viewed as Baals wife, since she, though repeatedly referred to as maiden, is shown as having intercourse with Baal.
- But the Scriptural record mentions only Ashtoreth and the sacred pole, or Asherah, in connection with Baal. Hence, at times Asherah and then again Ashtoreth may have been regarded as wives of Baal.
- Thus they abandoned Yehowah and took up serving Baal and the Ashtoreth images. (**Judges 2:13**)
- So the sons of Israel did what was bad in Yehowah's eyes, and they were forgetful of Yehowah their God and went serving the Baals and the sacred poles. (**Judges 3:7**)
- And the sons of Israel again proceeded to do what was bad in the eyes of Yehowah, and they began to serve the Baals and the Ashtoreth images and the **gods** of Syria and the gods of Sidon and the gods of Moab and the gods of the sons of Ammon and the gods of the Philistines. So they left Yehowah and did not serve him. (**Judges 10:6**)
- At that the sons of Israel put away the Baals and the Ashtoreth images and began serving Yehowah alone. (**1 Samuel 7:4**)
- And they began to call to Yehowah for aid and say; We have sinned, for we have left Yehowah that we might serve the Baals and the Ashtoreth images, and now deliver us out of the hand of our enemies, that we may serve you. (**1 Samuel 12:10**)
- And now send, collect together all Israel to me at Mount Carmel and also the four hundred and fifty prophets of Baal and the four hundred prophets of the sacred pole, who are eating at the table of Jezebel. (**1 Kings 18:19**)

#### **See Also ASHTORETH**

**See Also SACRED PILLAR**

**See Also SACRED POLE**

- The references to Anath in the Ras Shamra texts give some indication of the degraded conception of the deities that the Canaanites undoubtedly shared with the Syrians. Anath is described as the fairest among Baals sisters, but as having an extremely violent temper.

- She is depicted as threatening to smash the skull of her father, El, and cause his gray hair to flow with blood and his gray beard with gore if he did not comply with her wishes. On another occasion Anath is shown going on a killing spree. She attached heads to her back, and hands to her girdle, and she plunged knee-deep in the blood and hip-deep in the gore of valiant ones.

- Her delight in such bloodshed is reflected in the words: **Her liver swells with laughter, her heart fills up with joy.** [Ancient Near Eastern Texts, edited by J. Pritchard, 1974, pp. 136,137,142,152]

- The extremely base and degraded nature of Canaanite worship underscores the justness of God's executing a decree of destruction upon the inhabitants of the land. **(Leviticus Chapter 18)**

- And you well know today that Yehowah your God is crossing before you. A consuming fire he is. He will annihilate them, and he himself will subdue them before you, and you must dispossess them and destroy them speedily, just as Yehowah has spoken to you. **(Deuteronomy 9:3)**

- Do not say in your heart when Yehowah your God pushes them away from before you this, It was for my own righteousness that Yehowah has brought me in to take possession of this land, whereas it is for the wickedness of these nations that Yehowah is driving them away from before you. **(Deuteronomy 9:4)**

- However, because the Israelites failed to carry out that divine decree completely, they eventually became ensnared by the degenerate practices associated with the worship of Canaanite **gods.**

- They did not annihilate the peoples, as Yehowah had said to them. **(Psalms 106:34)**

- And they went mingling with the nations and took up learning

- their works. (**Psalms 106:35**)
- And they kept serving their idols, and these came to be a snare to them. (**Psalms 106:36**)
  - And they would sacrifice their sons and their daughters to demons. (**Psalms 106:37**)
  - So they kept spilling innocent blood, the blood of their sons and their daughters, whom they sacrificed to the idols of Canaan, and the land came to be polluted with bloodshed. (**Psalms 106:38**)
  - And they got to be unclean by their works and kept having immoral intercourse by their dealings. (**Psalms 106:39**)
  - And the anger of Yehowah began to blaze against his people, and he came to detest his inheritance. (**Psalms 106:40**)
  - And he repeatedly gave them into the hand of the nations, that those hating them might rule over them. (**Psalms 106:41**)
  - And that their enemies might oppress them, and that they might be subdued under their hand. (**Psalms 106:42**)
  - Many times he would deliver them, but they themselves would behave rebelliously in their disobedient course, and they would be brought low for their error. (**Psalms 106:43**)

**See Also CANAAN, CANAANITE 2**

### **·· Deities Of Medo-Persia**

- The indications are that the kings of the Medo-Persian Empire were Zoroastrians. While it cannot be proved or disproved that Cyrus the Great adhered to the teachings of Zoroaster, from the time of Darius I the inscriptions of the monarchs repeatedly refer to Ahura Mazda, the principal deity of Zoroastrianism.
- Darius I referred to Ahura Mazda as the creator of heaven, earth, and man, and he looked to this god as the one who had bestowed upon him wisdom, physical skillfulness, and the kingdom.
- A characteristic feature of Zoroastrianism is dualism, that is, the belief in two independent divine beings, one good and the other evil.



**Ahura Mazda was viewed as the creator of all good things, whereas Angra Mainyu was regarded as the creator of all that is evil.**

- **It was thought that the latter could bring about earthquakes, storms, disease, and death as well as stir up unrest and war. Lesser spirits were believed to assist these two **gods** in carrying out their functions.**
- **The symbol of the god Ahura Mazda was much like the representation of the Assyrian Asshur, namely, a winged circle, from which, at times, a bearded man with the vertical tail of a bird emerges.**
- **Ahura Mazda may have figured in a triad. This is suggested by the fact that Artaxerxes Mnemon invoked the protection of Ahura Mazda, Anahita, a goddess of water and of fertility, and Mithra, a god of light, and he attributed his reconstruction of the Hall of Columns at Susa to the grace of these three deities.**
- **A number of scholars have linked Anahita with the Babylonian Ishtar. Observes E. O. James in his book *The Cult of the Mother-Goddess* (1959, p. 94): She was worshipped as the Great Goddess whose name is Lady, the all-powerful immaculate one, purifying the seed of males and the womb and the milk of females. She was, in fact, the Iranian counterpart of the Syrian Anat, the Babylonian Inanna-Ishtar, the Hittite goddess of Comana, and the Greek Aphrodite.**
- **According to the Greek historian Herodotus [I, 131], the Persians also worshiped the natural elements and heavenly bodies. He writes: As to the usages of the Persians, I know them to be these.**
- **It is not their custom to make and set up statues and temples and altars, but those who make such they deem foolish, as I suppose, because they never believed the **gods**, as do the Greeks, to be in the likeness of men, but they call the whole circle of heaven Zeus, and to him they offer sacrifice on the highest peaks of the mountains, they sacrifice also to the sun and moon and earth and fire and water and winds.**
- **These are the only gods to whom they have ever sacrificed from the beginning, they have learnt later, to sacrifice to the heavenly Aphrodite, from the Assyrians and Arabians. She is called by the Assyrians Mylitta, by the Arabians Alilat, by the Persians Mitra.**

- **The Zend-Avesta, the sacred Zoroastrian writings, actually contain prayers to fire, to water, and to planets as well as to the light of the sun, moon, and stars. Fire is even referred to as the son of Ahura Mazda.**
- **Although he may have been a Zoroastrian, King Cyrus was named in Bible prophecy as the one appointed by Yehowah to overthrow Babylon and bring about the release of the Jewish captives.**
- **The One making the word of his servant come true, and the One that carries out completely the counsel of his own messengers, the One saying of Jerusalem; She will be inhabited, and of the cities of Judah; They will be rebuilt, and her desolated places I shall raise up. (Isaiah 44:26)**
- **Forming light and creating darkness, making peace and creating calamity, I, Yehowah, am doing all these things. (Isaiah 45:7)**
- **A kings heart is as streams of water in the hand of Yehowah. Everywhere that he delights to, he turns it. (Proverbs 21:1)**
- **Following Babylon's destruction in 539 B.C.E, the Israelites came under the control of the Zoroastrian Medo-Persians.**

## •• Grecian Deities

- **An examination of the **gods** and **goddesses** of ancient Greece reveals the traces of Babylonian influence. Observed Oxford University Professor George Rawlinson; **The striking resemblance of the Chaldaean system to that of the Classical Mythology seems worthy of particular attention.****
- **This resemblance is too general, and too close in some respects, to allow of the supposition that mere accident has produced the coincidence. In the Pantheons of Greece and Rome, and in that of Chaldaeia, the same general grouping is to be recognized, the same genealogical succession is not infrequently to be traced, and in some cases even the familiar names and titles of classical divinities admit of the most curious illustration and explanation from Chaldaean sources.**
- **We can scarcely doubt but that, in some way or other, there was a communication of beliefs a passage in very early times, from the shores of the Persian Gulf to the lands washed by the Mediterranean,**

of mythological notions and ideas. [The Seven Great Monarchies of the Ancient Eastern World, 1885, Vol. I, pp. 71,72]

- **A distortion of God's statement concerning the seed of promise may possibly be noted in the mythological accounts that tell of the god Apollos killing the serpent Python, and of the infant Hercules, the son of Zeus and an earthly woman, Alcmene, strangling two serpents.**
- **The familiar theme of a god who dies and then is restored to life again confronts us. Annually the violent death of Adonis and his return to life were commemorated, it was principally the women who bewailed his death and who carried images of his body as in funeral procession and later tossed them into the sea or springs.**
- **Another deity whose violent death and restoration to life were celebrated by the Greeks was Dionysus, or Bacchus, he, like Adonis, has been identified with the Babylonian Tammuz.**
- **The mythological accounts make the Grecian **gods** and goddesses appear much like men and women. Although the gods were thought to be of much greater size and to exceed men in beauty and strength, their bodies were depicted as human bodies.**
- **Since their veins supposedly flowed with ichor, rather than blood, the bodies of the deities were considered to be incorruptible. Nevertheless, it was believed that men, by means of their weapons, could actually inflict painful wounds upon the gods. However, it was said that the wounds always healed and that the gods remained youthful.**
- **For the most part, the deities of the Greeks are depicted as being very immoral and as having human weaknesses. They quarreled among themselves, fought against one another, and even conspired against one another. Zeus, the supreme god of the Greeks, is said to have dethroned his own father Cronus.**
- **Earlier, Cronus himself had deposed and even castrated his father Uranus. Both Uranus and Cronus are depicted as cruel fathers. Uranus immediately concealed in the earth the offspring borne to him by his wife Gaea, not even permitting them to see the light.**
- **Cronus, on the other hand, swallowed the children borne to him by Rhea. Among the detestable practices attributed to certain deities**

are adultery, fornication, incest, rape, lying, thievery, drunkenness, and murder.

- Those who incurred the disfavor of a god or goddess are depicted as being punished in a most cruel manner. For example, the satyr Marsyas, who challenged the god Apollo to a musical contest, was attached by the latter to a tree trunk and skinned alive.

- The goddess Artemis is said to have changed the hunter Actaeon into a stag and then caused his own hounds to devour him, this because he had seen her nakedness.

- Of course, some claimed that these mythological accounts were merely the imaginations of the poets. But on this, Augustine of the **Fourth Century C.E.** wrote:

- For whereas it is said in their defense, that these tales of their gods were not true, but merely poetical inventions, and false fictions, why this doth make it more abominable, if you respect the purity of your religion, and if you observe the malice of the devil, what more cunning or more deceitful craftiness can there be?

- For when an honest and worthy ruler of a country is slandered, is not the slander so much more wicked and unpardonable, as this party's life that is slandered is clearer and sounder from touch of any such matter? [The City of God, Book II, chap IX]

- However, the popularity of the poetical accounts as enacted on the Greek stage indicates that the majority did not regard them as slander, but were in harmony with them. The immorality of the gods served to justify man's wrongdoing, and this found favor with the people.

### **See Also GREECE, GREEKS (Greek Religion)**

- The apostle Paul's ministry brought him in contact with worshipers of the Grecian **gods** Zeus and Hermes.

- And they went calling Barnabas Zeus, but Paul Hermes, since he was the one taking the lead in speaking. (**Acts of Apostles 14:12**)

- And the priest of Zeus, whose temple was before the city, brought bulls and garlands to the gates and was desiring to offer sacrifices with the crowds. (**Acts of Apostles 14:13**)

- **The Athenians expressed their fear of the deities by building many temples and altars.**
- **Paul now stood in the midst of the Areopagus and said; Men of Athens, I behold that in all things you seem to be more given to the fear of the deities than others are. (Acts of Apostles 17:22)**
- **For instance, while passing along and carefully observing your objects of veneration I also found an altar on which had been inscribed, To an Unknown God. Therefore what you are unknowingly giving godly devotion to, this I am publishing to you. (Acts of Apostles 17:23)**
- **The God that made the world and all the things in it, being, as this One is, Lord of heaven and earth, does not dwell in handmade temples. (Acts of Apostles 17:24)**
- **Neither is he attended to by human hands as if he needed anything, because he himself gives to all persons life and breath and all things. (Acts of Apostles 17:25)**
- **And he made out of one man every nation of men, to dwell upon the entire surface of the earth, and he decreed the appointed times and the set limits of the dwelling of men. (Acts of Apostles 17:26)**
- **For them to seek God, if they might grope for him and really find him, although, in fact, he is not far off from each one of us. (Acts of Apostles 17:27)**
- **For by him we have life and move and exist, even as certain ones of the poets among you have said; For we are also his progeny. (Acts of Apostles 17:28)**
- **Seeing, therefore, that we are the progeny of God, we ought not to imagine that the Divine Being is like gold or silver or stone, like something sculptured by the art and contrivance of man. (Acts of Apostles 17:29)**
- **The gross sexual immorality that was a part of Grecian worship even affected the Christian congregation in Corinth, the apostle Paul finding it necessary to rebuke that congregation. (1 Corinthians Chapter 5)**

## **· Roman Deities**

- **The religion of the Romans was greatly influenced by the Etruscans, a people generally thought to have come from Asia Minor. The practice of divination definitely links the religion of the Etruscans to that of the Babylonians.**
- **For example, the models of clay livers used for divination found in Mesopotamia resemble the bronze model of a liver found at Piacenza in the region of Emilia-Romagna, Italy. So, when the Romans adopted the Etruscan deities they were, in effect, receiving a Babylonian heritage.**
- **The Roman triad of Jupiter, the supreme god, a god of the sky and light, Juno, the consort of Jupiter regarded as presiding over matters of particular concern to women, and Minerva, a goddess presiding over all handicrafts, corresponds to the Etruscan Tinia, Uni, and Menrva.**

## **See Also ASTROLOGERS**

- **In the course of time, the prominent Greek **gods** found their way into the Roman pantheon, although they were known by different names.**
- **Also, deities of still other lands were adopted by the Romans, including the Persian Mithras, whose birthday was celebrated on December 25, and the Phrygian fertility goddess Cybele and the Egyptian Isis, both of whom have been identified with the Babylonian Ishtar. Then, too, the Roman emperors themselves were deified.**
- **Saturn was worshiped for bringing a golden age to Rome. The Saturnalia, originally a one-day festival in his honor, was later expanded into a seven-day celebration in the latter half of December. The event was marked by great revelry.**
- **Gifts, such as waxen fruits and candles, were exchanged, and clay dolls were especially given to the children. During the festival, no punishment was meted out.**
- **Schools and courts had a holiday, even war operations were brought to a halt. Slaves exchanged places with their masters and**

were permitted, without needing to fear punishment, to give free rein to the tongue.

- The early Christians refused to participate in Roman worship, particularly worship of the emperor, which made them objects of intense persecution. They were uncompromising in their stand to obey God as ruler rather than men, refusing to give to Roman rulers the worship that rightfully belonged to God.
- In answer Peter and the other apostles said; **We must obey God as ruler rather than men. (Acts of Apostles 5:29)**
- Jesus then said; **Pay back Caesar's things to Caesar, but God's things to God.** And they began to marvel at him. **(Mark 12:17)**

**See Also ROME (Religion)**

### **•• God's Of Nations Contrasted With Yehowah**

- Today many of the **gods** mentioned in the Bible are little more than a name. Although their worshipers at times even sacrificed their own children to them, the false gods were unable to rescue those who looked to them for aid in time of need.
- As for the Avvites, they made Nibhaz and Tartak, and the Sepharvites were burning their sons in the fire to Adrammelech and Anammelech the **gods** of Sepharvaim. **(2 Kings 17:31)**
- Hence, in the face of his military successes, the king of Assyria, through his spokesman Rabshakeh, boasted; Have the **gods** of the nations at all delivered each one his own land out of the hand of the king of Assyria?
- Where are the gods of Hamath and Arpad? Where are the gods of Sepharvaim, Hena and Ivvah? Have they delivered Samaria out of my hand? Who are there among all the gods of the lands that have delivered their land out of my hand, so that Yehowah should deliver Jerusalem out of my hand?
- And Rabshakeh continued to stand and call out in a loud voice in the Jews language, and he went on to speak and say; Hear the word of the great king, the king of Assyria. **(2 Kings 18:28)**
- Do not listen to Hezekiah, for this is what the king of Assyria has

- said; Make a capitulation to me, and come out to me, and eat each one from his own vine and each one from his own fig tree and drink each one the water of his own cistern. (2 Kings 18:31)
- Until I come and I actually take you to a land like your own land, a land of grain and new wine, a land of bread and vineyards, a land of oil-olive trees and honey, and keep living that you may not die. And do not listen to Hezekiah, for he allures you, saying; Yehowah himself will deliver us. (2 Kings 18:32)
  - Have the gods of the nations at all delivered each one his own land out of the hand of the king of Assyria? (2 Kings 18:33)
  - Where are the gods of Hamath and Arpad? Where are the gods of Sepharvaim, Hena and Ivvah? Have they delivered Samaria out of my hand? (2 Kings 18:34)
  - Who are there among all the gods of the lands that have delivered their land out of my hand, so that Yehowah should deliver Jerusalem out of my hand? (2 Kings 18:35)
  - **But Yehowah did not fail his people as had those false gods. In one night the angel of Yehowah killed 185,000 in the camp of the Assyrians.**
  - **Humiliated, the proud Assyrian monarch Sennacherib returned to Nineveh, later to be murdered by two of his sons in the temple of his god Nisroch.**
  - It is a fact, O Yehowah, the kings of Assyria have devastated the nations and their land. (2 Kings 19:17)
  - And they have consigned their **gods** to the fire, because they were no gods, but the workmanship of man's hands, wood and stone, so that they destroyed them. (2 Kings 19:18)
  - And now, O Yehowah our God, save us, please, out of his hand, that all the kingdoms of the earth may know that you, O Yehowah, are God alone. (2 Kings 19:19)
  - And it came about on that night that the angel of Yehowah proceeded to go out and strike down a hundred and eighty-five thousand in the camp of the Assyrians. When people rose up early in the morning, why, there all of them were dead carcasses.



**(2 Kings 19:35)**

- Therefore Sennacherib the king of Assyria pulled away and went and returned, and he took up dwelling in Nineveh. **(2 Kings 19:36)**
- And it came about that as he was bowing down at the house of Nisroch his god, Adrammelech and Sharezer, his sons, themselves struck him down with the sword, and they themselves escaped to the land of Ararat. And Esar-haddon his son began to reign in place of him. **(2 Kings 19:37)**
- For all the **gods** of the peoples are **valueless gods**, but as for Yehowah, he has made the very heavens. **(Psalms 96:5)**
- **Not only do the false gods have the characteristics of their makers, but people also become much like the gods whom they worship.**
- **To illustrate; King Manasseh of Judah was devoted to false gods, even to the point of making his son pass through the fire. But Manasseh's zealous pursuit of false worship did not make him a better king. Rather, he proved to be like the bloodthirsty deities he worshiped, shedding innocent blood in very great quantity.**
- **Twelve years old was Manasseh when he began to reign, and for fifty-five years he reigned in Jerusalem. And his mother's name was Hephzibah. (2 Kings 21:1)**
- **And he proceeded to do what was bad in Yehowah's eyes, according to the detestable things of the nations that Yehowah had driven out from before the sons of Israel. (2 Kings 21:2)**
- **So he built again the high places that Hezekiah his father had destroyed, and set up altars to Baal and made a sacred pole, just as Ahab the king of Israel had done, and he began to bow down to all the army of the heavens and to serve them. (2 Kings 21:3)**
- **And he built altars in the house of Yehowah, respecting which Yehowah had said; In Jerusalem I shall put my name. (2 Kings 21:4)**
- **And he went on to build altars to all the army of the heavens in two courtyards of the house of Yehowah. (2 Kings 21:5)**

- **And he made his own son pass through the fire, and he practiced magic and looked for omens and made spirit mediums and professional foretellers of events. He did on a large scale what was bad in Yehowah's eyes, to offend him. (2 Kings 21:6)**
- **And there was also innocent blood that Manasseh shed in very great quantity, until he had filled Jerusalem from end to end, besides his sin with which he caused Judah to sin by doing what was bad in the eyes of Yehowah. (2 Kings 21:16)**
- **In sharp contrast with this, worshipers of the true God endeavor to be imitators of their Perfect Maker, displaying the fruitage of his spirit: love, joy, peace, long-suffering, kindness, goodness, faith, mildness, and self-control.**
- **Therefore, become imitators of God, as beloved children. (Ephesians 5:1)**
- **On the other hand, the fruitage of the spirit is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, kindness, goodness, faith. (Galatians 5:22)**
- **Mildness, self-control. Against such things there is no law. (Galatians 5:23)**