

# EARLY MESOPOTAMIAN MYTHOS

## History and Overview -

Ancient Mesopotamia was the home of some of the world's earliest cities, and the place where writing was invented. For these two major developments alone—urban society and literate society—it might justly be titled the 'cradle of civilization', but in its literature, its religious philosophies and no less in its art it can also be placed firmly as the direct ancestor of the Western world.

Our knowledge of the civilization of ancient Mesopotamia is constantly expanding. A hundred and fifty years after the first modern excavations, archaeological work in the Near East continues unabated and new discoveries are constantly being made which add to, reshape and refine our assessments of some of the most staggering human achievements of antiquity. At the sites of ancient settlements and in the museums of Iraq and of other countries one can contemplate and wonder at the monuments, arts, handicrafts and utensils of daily life of the Mesopotamians.

This is not to say that vast amounts of research still remains to be done. If some

areas of history can be reconstructed down to the smallest detail, there are periods where enormous gaps in our knowledge remain. If numerous copies survive of one poem, there are many others of which only fragments have been recovered. If we can trace the use and meaning of some religious motifs throughout thousands of years, there remain some whose significance still eludes us completely. There is a constant need for skilled archaeologists and scholarly researchers to sift through the great wealth of evidence coming to light. But for the general reader, several reliable accounts of Mesopotamian civilization, together with the story of how it has been revealed to us, are now available. There are lavishly illustrated books showing the full range of ancient art, from temple architecture and palace reliefs to cylinder seals and filigree jewellery. And gradually, accurate and readable modern translations of the extensive Sumerian and Babylonian literatures are appearing, together with explanatory studies.

The uses to which cuneiform writing was put in Mesopotamia have ensured that, in addition to administrative, commercial and historical documents, extensive attention was paid to the recording of religious matters. In pre-modern societies, religion had a much more pervasive influence on every aspect of life: government and politics, social relations, education and literature were all dominated by it. Thus in this context we subsume under the term religion a wide sweep of ideas and beliefs ranging from magic at one extreme to philosophy at the other. A very considerable portion of ancient art, too, was produced within this broad religious sphere, or using motifs and images derived from religious traditions. The gods, goddesses and demons, the motifs, symbols and religious beliefs of the several thousand years of Mesopotamian civilization are bewilderingly complex to the modern person who stands on the threshold of that world.

Sumer was a collection of city states around the Lower Tigris and Euphrates rivers in what is now southern Iraq. Each of these cities had individual rulers, although as early as

the mid-fourth millennium BCE the leader of the dominant city could have been considered the king of the region. The history of Sumer tends to be divided into five periods. They are the Uruk period, which saw the dominance of the city of that same name, the Jemdat Nasr period, the Early Dynastic periods, the Agade period, and the Ur III period - the entire span lasting from 3800 BCE to around 2000 BCE. In addition, there is evidence of the Sumerians in the area both prior to the Uruk period and after the Ur III Dynastic period, but relatively little is known about the former age and the latter time period is most heavily dominated by the Babylonians.

## Peoples and Places

The cultures of Mesopotamia grew up through the interplay, clash and fusion of different peoples, with their separate social systems, religious beliefs and pantheons, languages and political structures. Uniquely, Mesopotamia was a crossroads and melting-pot for vastly different groups of peoples over thousands of years from the prehistoric periods to

the Persian conquest. Moreover, although the potential productivity and prosperity of the region was the impetus for extensive and prolonged immigration, the area has no real geographical unity, nor any obvious or permanent capital, so that it is in marked contrast to civilizations of greater uniformity, such as Egypt. There are, however, a few unifying factors, such as the cuneiform script for writing, the pantheon of gods which through syncretism and assimilation was an evolving tradition, and the highly conservative works of art, especially religious art. In these fields, at least, it is therefore possible to speak of something uniquely 'Mesopotamian'.

Mesopotamia—'the land between two rivers'—was a name given first by the Greeks to the exceptionally fertile river valley of the twin streams Tigris and Euphrates, which both rise in the mountains of Turkey. The Tigris flows faster and deeper,

has more tributaries and is more prone to flood than the Euphrates, which follows a more circuitous course until it joins the Tigris in the very south of Iraq and they flow together as the Shatt al-'Arab down to the Gulf (of which the shoreline may have been slightly further north in ancient times). More generally, the term Mesopotamia is used to cover the whole extent of the civilization associated with this region, so that the term effectively includes an area extending outside the borders of modern Iraq into Syria, and parts of Turkey and Iran. At its greatest extent, the influence of Mesopotamian civilization could be felt as far away as modern Iran, Lebanon, Jordan, Israel, Egypt, Saudi Arabia and the Gulf States, Turkey, Cyprus and Greece; there were also commercial connections with the Indus Valley (Pakistan) which already had a flourishing vedic society. Mesopotamia proper can be divided into two regions, corresponding to two once-great empires and, later, to two provinces of the Persian Empire. The northern area is Assyria, named after its original capital city Assur; the southern is Babylonia, named after its principal city Babylon: the boundary between the two lay a little north of modern Baghdad. Earlier Babylonia was made up of two regions: a





southern area called by modern archaeologists Sumer (anciently Sumerum) and a northern half called Akkad, and it is from these two areas that the principal ancient languages of Mesopotamia take their names: Sumerian, an agglutinative, ergative language of which no related language is preserved, and Akkadian, a member of the Semitic family of languages (including also Arabic, Hebrew, Aramaic, Phoenician and Ugaritic). The people who invented writing in Sumer in roughly 3400 BC almost certainly spoke Sumerian. They had no traditions of having come to that region from elsewhere and, although the archaeological evidence is not absolutely conclusive, there seems no reason necessarily to assume that they were not the descendants of the earlier, prehistoric peoples of Sumer. Although in time Sumerian spread, as a written language, as far as western Syria, and was widely used as a cultural language throughout Mesopotamian history, its homeland was Sumer, where it was probably spoken as a vernacular until about 2000 BC. None of the other languages related to Sumerian was ever written down and so they remain unknown to us. The Sumerians, then, were the originators of the early high civilization of southern Mesopotamia from shortly before 3000 BC. As their language died out as an everyday idiom, they were probably absorbed into the other peoples of the region, who spoke languages of the Semitic family.

Scribes with Semitic names are attested in northern Babylonia almost as early as the earliest writing we can read, and they probably spoke Old Akkadian, the earliest recorded form of a Semitic language. Akkadian is used as a general term for this language, of which the later forms Assyrian and Babylonian are also dialects. Other early Semitic languages are Amorite, which we know only from personal names (the Amorites were apparently a largely nomadic people) and the recently discovered language of Ebla in western Syria, which seems to have been very close to Old Akkadian. Akkadian first came to the fore during the period of the Akkadian kingdom (see below), but it was Assyrian and Babylonian, in their respective areas, which gradually took over as Sumerian died out in the south.

A third ethnic group, the Hurrians, were settled in a wide band across northern Mesopotamia, most of Syria and the very south-east of Turkey by at least 2000 BC. These agricultural people spoke a language of their own, of which the only known relative is the later Urartian; the extent to which they possessed a definable civilization of their own, as opposed to borrowing their religion and art from their neighbors, is still debated. The climax of their history was the formation of the Hurrian kingdom of Mitanni, which reached its high point around 1400 BC. More than a century later, there still seems to have been a considerable number of Hurrians in Assyria and northeastern Babylonia, but thereafter they must have been absorbed into the general population.

The names of many tribal and nomadic peoples are mentioned throughout Mesopotamian history, especially the often war-like groups who were either attracted down into the fertile river valleys from the inhospitable Zagros Mountains to the east, or were driven into Mesopotamia by the pressure of other groups behind them. Such a people were the Gutians, whose entry on the Mesopotamian scene coincided with, if it was not actually responsible for, the decline and fall of the Akkadian kingdom. According to some sources, a series of Gutian leaders ruled southern Mesopotamia until a Sumerian dynasty was eventually able to reassert itself.

A similar story can be told about the Kassites, a people who are first mentioned in Syria in the eighteenth century BC but who moved gradually down into Babylonia and even-

tually controlled it. A dynasty of Kassite kings ruled Babylonia for half a millennium thereafter. We know very little about the origins of the Kassites, and only a few words of their unclassifiable language and the names of some of their gods: despite their position of political control, they appear to have contributed relatively little to the culture of the lands they ruled.

It was inevitable that the stable, urban cultures of Babylonia and Assyria should be infiltrated by nomadic elements who took advantage of the opportunity to gain material benefit, whether peacefully or by raiding. There is good evidence that both the earliest Assyrians (with their 'kings who lived in tents') and the earliest Babylonians were of Amorite origin. During the second millennium a further wave of Semitic nomads entered history, first as troublesome raiders, then as mercenaries and gradually as settled elements in the population. These were the Aramaeans, who may have developed originally out of one particular Amorite tribal clan. Soon after 1000 BC it is likely that their language, Aramaic, was widely used as an everyday vernacular in both Assyria and Babylonia as well as over most of Syria and Palestine (where Hebrew also was still spoken). The Neo-Babylonian Empire founded in 626 BC may also have had its origins in an Aramaic speaking tribal confederation, the Chaldaeans. In this way, there was throughout Mesopotamian history a constant interfer-

ence with the settled, traditional civilization of the great ancient cities by a variety of groups moving into the area from the mountain regions to the east or the rolling plains to the north-west. These new ethnic and cultural infusions were an important factor in reviving and preserving the long-lived culture which they found in the river valleys.

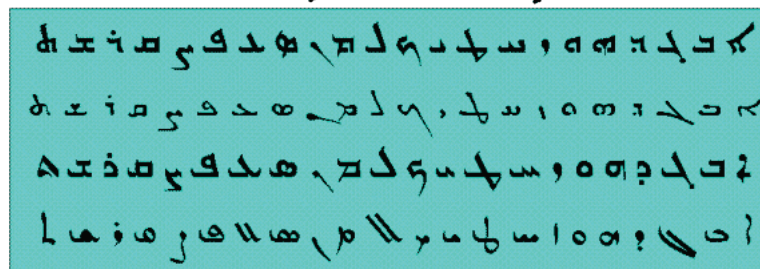
A great power to the north-west of Mesopotamia was the kingdom of the Hittites, with its capital at Hattusas in central Turkey. This people, who spoke the earliest recorded Indo-European language, had become very powerful at a time when Babylonia was weak, and a Hittite king was able to attack Babylon

itself during the seventeenth century BC, although their kingdom never made any serious headway with expansion into the Mesopotamian area, and after 1200 BC was no longer a force to be reckoned with. Similarly the kings of Elam, located in south-west Iran to the east of Babylonia, were able at various times to make forays deep into Babylonian territory, on one occasion carrying away the cult statue of the Babylonian national god, Marduk. For short periods the Elamites (who spoke a language unrelated to any other surviving language) were able to control parts of Babylonia, even to rule it, and some cultural transfer seems to have taken place: certain aspects of Babylonian magic and religion seem to derive from Elam.

### Mythology and Legends

The myths and legends of ancient Mesopotamia form an exceptionally diverse collection of material. Some are preserved in Sumerian and some in Akkadian, the earliest from 2500 BC and the latest from the first century BC. As might be expected from such a broad field, they display very considerable variety, and in many cases there are several different versions of a narrative, originating from different localities or in different periods, some of which directly contradict other versions. Some myths were created within the historical period; others are of indeterminate antiquity. No doubt they were transmitted orally in many forms and on many occasions: however, the only form in which they survive is of course the written form. It is essential to bear in mind that every myth or legend preserved in written form is preserved as part of a (perhaps fragmentary) work of literature which was created in

## The Assyrian Alphabet



a specific historical environment and which was intended to serve a specific literary aim. In this way they can be compared to the use of Greek myths by the Greek tragedians, and the same cautions apply. There is no homogeneous system and it makes no sense to talk of the 'character of Mesopotamian myth', except in the most general terms. The very distinction between myth, legend and history is of course a largely modern one in the pursuit of historical truth and not of the human condition.

Most of the Akkadian works incorporating myths and legends which have been studied and edited so far are now available in English translations, but numbers of Sumerian compositions are available only in foreign language editions or in doctoral dissertations (which may not be readily available), or have not yet been published. Apart from these, there are many that have not yet even been read or studied in modern times.

Interest in the Bible has been an important stimulus to modern research in and about the ancient Near East in general. The very diverse collection of prose and poetry, written down over a considerable period of time in Hebrew, Aramaic and Greek, which makes up the Bible, is the product of a world both alien to that of Mesopotamia and which echoes of Mesopotamian society, beliefs and history. This raises the complex question of the existence of various oral traditions throughout the whole Near East, influencing each other. The Mesopotamian evidence happens to be attested in writing at much earlier dates, but this need not lead to the conclusion that it was therefore the origin of all similar themes occurring later on.

## Periods

Sumer may very well be the first civilization in the world (although long term settlements at Jericho and Çatal Hüyük predate Sumer and examples of writing from Egypt and the Harappa, Indus valley sites may predate those from Sumer). From its beginnings as a collection of farming villages around 5000 BCE, through its conquest by Sargon of Agade around 2370 BCE and its final collapse under the Amorites around 2000 BCE, the Sumerians developed a religion and a society which influenced both their neighbors and their conquerors. Sumerian cuneiform, the earliest written language, was borrowed by the Babylonians, who also took many of their religious beliefs. In fact, traces and parallels of Sumerian myth can be found in Biblical Genesis.

The Uruk period, stretched from 3800 BCE to 3200 BCE. It is to this era that the Sumerian King Lists ascribe the reigns of Dumuzi the shepherd, and the other antediluvian kings. After his reign Dumuzi was worshiped as the god of the spring grains. This time saw an enormous growth in urbanization such that Uruk probably had a population around 45,000 at the period's end. It was easily the largest city in the area, although the older cities of Eridu to the south and Kish to the north may have rivaled it. Irrigation improvements as well as a supply of raw materials for craftsmen provided an impetus for this growth. In fact, the city of An and Inanna also seems to have been at the heart of a trade network which stretched from what is now southern Turkey to what is now eastern Iran. In addition people were drawn to the city by the great temples there.

The Eanna of Uruk, a collection of temples dedicated to Inanna, was constructed at this time and bore many mosaics and frescoes. These buildings served civic as well as religious purposes, which was fitting as the en, or high priest, served as both the spiritual and

temporal leader. The temples were places where craftsmen would practice their trades and where surplus food would be stored and distributed.

Writing was invented towards the end of the Late Uruk Period, named after the important city of Uruk in southern Sumer where so much of the monumental architecture of that epoch was excavated. (Uruk is actually the later Akkadian name for Sumerian Unug.)

The Jemdat Nasr period lasted from 3200 BCE to 2900 BCE. It was not particularly remarkable and most adequately described as an extension and slowing down of the Uruk period. This is the period during which the great flood is supposed to have taken place. The Sumerians' account of the flood may have been based on a flooding of the Tigris, Euphrates, or both rivers onto their already marshy country.

The Early Dynastic period ran from 2900 BCE to 2390 BCE and it is this period for which we begin to have more reliable written accounts although some of the great kings of

this era later evolved mythic tales about them and were deified. Kingship moved about 100 miles upriver and about 50 miles south of modern Baghdad to the city of Kish. One of the earlier kings in Kish was Etana who "stabilized all the lands" securing the First Dynasty of Kish and establishing rule over Sumer and some of its neighbors. Etana was later believed by the Babylonians to have rode to heaven on the back of a giant Eagle so that he could receive the "plant of birth" from Ishtar (their version of Inanna) and thereby produce an heir.

This is the period of the earliest literary and religious texts that can effectively be read (for instance the great lists of the names of more than 500 gods and goddesses from the Sumerian town of Suruppak), so that when the name or cult of a deity is traced back to the Early Dynastic Period, that means in practice to the beginning of written history. Exact dates for these early periods are difficult to calculate, but the Early Dynastic Period (which is sometimes divided into sub-periods for archaeological purposes) is regarded as ending in about 2390 BC, when the first great kingdoms began.

The Dynasty of Erech was founded by Meskiaggasher, who, along with his successors, was termed the "son of Utu", the sun-god. Following three other kings, including another Dumuzi, the famous Gilgamesh took the throne of Erech around 2600 BCE and became involved in a power struggle for the region with the Kish Dynasts and with Mesannepadda, the founder of the Dynasty of Ur. While Gilgamesh became a demi-god, remembered in epic tales, it was Mesannepadda who was eventually victorious in this three-way power struggle, taking the by then traditional title of "King of Kish".

Although the dynasties of Kish and Erech fell by the wayside, Ur could not retain a strong hold over all of Sumer. The entire region was weakened by the struggle and individual city-states continued more or less independent rule. The rulers of Lagash declared themselves "Kings of Kish" around 2450 BCE, but failed to seriously control the region, facing several military challenges by the nearby Umma. Lugalzagesi, ensi or priest-king of Umma from around 2360-2335 BCE, razed Lagash, and conquered Sumer, declaring himself "king of Erech and the Land". Unfortunately for him, all of this strife made Sumer ripe for conquest by an outsider and Sargon of Agade seized that opportunity.

The city of Agade, which has still not been located, gave its name to the region of which it was capital (Akkad), to its language and to its kingdom. The period is sometimes known also as the Sargonic period, after Sargon (a Biblical form of the name of the founder





of the kingdom, Sarrum-kin). Sargon united both Sumer and the northern region of Akkad - from which Babylon would arise about four hundred years later - not very far from Kish. Evidence is sketchy, but he may have extended his realm from the Mediterranean Sea to the Indus River. This unity would survive its founder by less than 40 years. He built the city of Agade and established an enormous court there and he had a new temple erected in Nippur. Trade from across his new empire and beyond swelled the city, making it the center of world culture for a brief time. After Sargon's death, however, the empire was fraught with rebellion. Naram-Sin, Sargon's grandson and third successor, quelled the rebellions through a series of military successes, extending his realm. He declared himself 'King of the Four corners of the World' and had himself deified. His divine powers must have failed him as the Guti, a mountain people, razed Agade and deposed Naram-Sin, ending that dynasty.

It was the collapse of this kingdom that the Gutians took advantage of, and a Gutian period of uncertain length marks their control of at least parts of Sumer and Akkad at this date (although the Sumerian city-state of Lagas seems to have remained independent).

After a few decades, the Guti presence became intolerable for the Sumerian leaders. Utuhegal of Uruk/Erech rallied a coalition army and ousted them. One of his lieutenants, Ur-Nammu, usurped his rule and established the third Ur dynasty around 2112 BCE. He consolidated his control by defeating a rival dynast in Lagash and soon gained control of all of the Sumerian city-states. He established the earliest known recorded law-codes and had constructed the great ziggurat of Ur, a kind of step-pyramid which stood over 60' tall and more than 200' wide. For the next century the Sumerians were extremely prosperous, but their society collapsed around 2000 BCE under the invading Amorites. A couple of city-states maintained their independence for a short while, but soon they and the rest of the Sumerians were absorbed into the rising empire of the Babylonians.

The great Sumerian kingdoms of the Third Dynasty of Ur (a city in southern Sumer) and then of Isin and Larsa (partially contemporary with each other) mark the golden age of Sumerian culture, even if the star of a fifth kingdom, that centered on a still insignificant city of Akkad called Babylon, was rising. The kings of this Old Babylonian Period (or First Dynasty of Babylon), including Hammurabi (reigned 1848-1806 BC according to the now preferred chronology), sometimes made their official pronouncements bilingually in Akkadian and Sumerian, but as a living language and culture Sumerian was by now obsolescent. In northern Mesopotamia, the city of Assur remained a minor city-state in a largely Hurrian area until the fourteenth century BC, with one brilliant and brief exception in the reigns of Samsi-Adad I (1869-1837BC) and his son when an 'Old Assyrian' kingdom of enormous proportions suddenly came into being, swept across Syria and was then lost. The collapse of the Old Babylonian kingdom in the south was hastened by the arrival of the Kassites, and their long rule over Babylonia from their capital Dur-Kurigalzu is termed the Middle Babylonian Period, matched by a Middle Assyrian Period in northern Mesopotamia. The date 1000 BC is then conventionally taken as marking the beginning of the Neo-Assyrian and Neo-Babylonian Periods, although the great days of the most famous Assyrian kings, ruling at successive capitals, Assur, Kalhu (modern Nimrud), Dur-Sarken (modern Khorsabad) and Nineveh (Nineveh)—kings such as Sargon II, Sennacherib, Esarhaddon and Assurbanipal—came to an end with the fall of Nineveh in 612 BC at a time when the Neo-Babylonian Empire, founded in 626

BC, had barely begun. The Neo-Babylonian dynasty – whose territory reached its greatest extent under Nebuchadnezzar II (reigned 605-562 BC) - ruled until 539 BC. This crucial date in Mesopotamian history, the capture of Babylon by Cyrus, king of the Medes and Persians, marks the first point at which the whole of Mesopotamia was to become part of an empire ruled from outside its own borders. The age of 'world empires' had begun. The Persian or Achaemenid Empire (so called from an eponymous ancestor of Cyrus' family) was swept away in 331 BC by Alexander the Great: the Hellenistic Period which followed is often also called Seleucid after the dynasty initiated by the general of Alexander who gained control of Mesopotamia, Iran, Syria and half of Turkey. His son founded Seleucia-on-the-Tigris in 274 BC. The Parthians, an Iranian people, effectively dominated Babylonia from 126 BC, and their dynasty (sometimes called Arsacid, again after an eponymous ancestor) ruled Mesopotamia until they were dispossessed by another great Iranian dynasty, the Sasanians, in AD 227. The very latest texts written in Akkadian in the cuneiform script—reports of astronomical observations—are dated towards the end of the first century AD, and by this time it is very unlikely that there was more than a handful of people—highly educated intellectuals—who were still in touch with the ancient culture of Mesopotamia and able to understand its languages or read its writing. The beginning of the Christian era marks a convenient, if approximate, date for the extinction of the three-thousand-year Mesopotamian literate tradition



## Culture

Seated along the Euphrates River, Sumer had a thriving agriculture and trade industry. Herds of sheep and goats and farms of grains and vegetables were held both by the temples and private citizens. Ships plied up and down the river and throughout the Persian gulf, carrying pottery and various processed goods and bringing back fruits and various raw materials from across the region, including cedars from the Levant.

Sumer was one of the first literate civilizations leaving many records of business transactions, and lessons from schools. They had strong armies, which with their chariots and phalanxes held sway over their less civilized neighbors. Perhaps the most lasting cultural remnants of the Sumerians though, can be found in their religion.

## Art and Iconography

The interpretation of elements in the religious art of ancient Mesopotamia encounters the difficulty that direct 'captions' (that have been so fundamentally useful in the study of Egyptian and Classical art) are extremely rare and hardly ever straightforward. The following examples may help to illustrate this point. The symbols of the gods shown on Babylonian kudurru-stones (stones recording royal land grants) occasionally have captions identifying the deities symbolized. All the known examples of these had been looted from Babylonia and taken to the Elamite city of Susa, and the labels were perhaps added there for the benefit of the Elamites. Neo-Assyrian and Neo-Babylonian figurines of supernatural beings are sometimes inscribed with incantations which name the creature concerned (for example, as Huwawa, Lamastu or Pazuzu). In the Neo-Assyrian Period, clay figurines of beneficent beings were also often inscribed with magical spells. These do not name the creatures directly, but they are named in ritual texts which give instructions for the figurines' manufacture, the writing to be put on each type and the sites of placement or burial within a

building. Furthermore, on stelae and rock reliefs erected by Assyrian kings (or exceptionally governors) to commemorate special events, there is sometimes a one-to-one correlation in both number and order between the gods invoked in the inscription and the symbols depicted. Yet more usually this is not so. For the kudurrus, moreover, the gods invoked in the curses of the main text are never those symbolized on the stone. Sometimes named supernatural beings are described in texts in a way which makes it possible to relate them to existent art. Once again, the Neo-Assyrian rituals concerning the placing of magical figurines refers to types of creature which can easily be identified even though the figurines of these particular creatures were never inscribed. An example is the Sages (apkallu) 'with the faces of birds, and wings, carrying in their right hands a "purifier" (mullilu) and in their left a bucket (banduddû)', or another set of Sages 'cloaked in the skins of fishes'. Similarly the inscription on one of the kudurru-stones refers in clear terms to some of the symbols of the gods (though not the ones carved upon it): ... the seat and horned crown of Anu, king of heaven; the walking bird of Enlil, lord of the lands; the ram's head and goat-fish, the sanctuary of great Ea; . . . the sickle, water-trough (and) wide boat of Sin; the radiant disc of the great judge Samas; the star-symbol of Istar, the mistress of the lands; the fierce young bull of Adad, son of Anu . . .

Glyptic art (for the ancient Near East the term refers to the craft of cutting small seals) provides the most spectacular detail of the religious art of any period, including the association of figures and motifs. On the seals were cut, in miniature and in reverse (for sealing), friezes which involve gods, worshippers, symbols and other motifs, often arranged heraldically or in a form which gives the appearance of a mythological scene. The seals are often inscribed with writing (usually also in reverse) which may give the names of particular deities (as part of a person's name, as the name of the seal owner's personal god or within a prayer of incantation). Occasionally it is clear that the deities so named correspond to those depicted. More usually, however, it is not so. Some scholars have argued that while on an individual seal the deity shown may not be the one mentioned, nevertheless in any given period there will be a rough correlation on seals in general between the deities most often depicted and those whose names are most frequently given. However, the identifications so far suggested appear on other grounds improbable. It may be that the mention of some gods was sometimes an alternative to their depiction and that certain gods were known more for their personalities and deeds than for their pictorial forms.

## Religion

The religion of the ancient Sumerians has left its mark on the entire middle east. Not only are its temples and ziggurats scattered about the region, but the literature, cosmogony and rituals influenced their neighbors to such an extent that we can see echoes of Sumer in the Judeo-Christian-Islamic tradition today. From these ancient temples, and to a greater extent, through cuneiform writings of hymns, myths, lamentations, and incantations, archae-

ologists and mythographers afford the modern reader a glimpse into the religious world of the Sumerians.

Each city housed a temple that was the seat of a major god in the Sumerian pantheon, as the gods controlled the powerful forces which often dictated a human's fate. The city leaders had a duty to please the town's patron deity, not only for the good will of that god or goddess, but also for the good will of the other deities in the council of gods. The priesthood initially held this role, and even after secular kings ascended to power, the clergy still held great authority through the interpretation of omens and dreams. Many of the secular kings claimed divine right; Sargon of Agade, for example claimed to have been chosen by Ishtar/Inanna.

The rectangular central shrine of the temple, known as a 'cella,' had a brick altar or offering table in front of a statue of the temple's deity. The cella was lined on its long ends by many rooms for priests and priestesses. These mud-brick buildings were decorated with cone geometrical mosaics, and the occasional fresco with human and animal figures. These temple complexes eventually evolved into towering ziggurats.

The temple was staffed by priests, priestesses, musicians, singers, castrates and hierodules. Various public rituals, food sacrifices, and libations took place there on a daily basis. There were monthly feasts and annual, New Year celebrations. During the later, the king would be married to Inanna as the resurrected fertility god Dumuzi, whose exploits are dealt with below.

When it came to more private matters, a Sumerian remained devout. Although

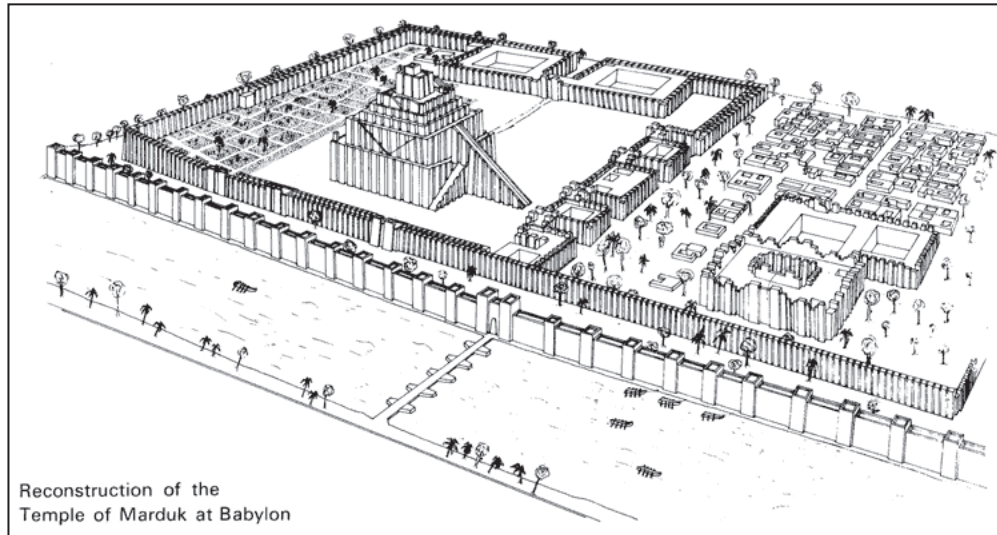
the gods preferred justice and mercy, they had also created evil and misfortune. A Sumerian had little that he could do about it. Judging from Lamentation records, the best one could do in times of duress would be to "plead, lament and wail, tearfully confessing his sins and failings." Their family god or city god might intervene on their behalf, but that would not necessarily happen. After all, man was created as a broken, labor saving, tool for the use of the gods and at the end of everyone's life, lay the underworld, a generally unhappy place.

## THE DEITIES

**A-shar** - See "Ashur"

**A-sir** - See "Ashur"

**Aa, Ai, Aah, Aos, Iah, Sirdu, Sirrida** - In mesopotamian mythology, Aa is the Great-Mother. The Mother of all things; Goddess of dawn; She Who inspired the invention of letters. Also a Chaldean deity known as Aos. Her emblem is a disk with eight rays. In Egypt, Ra was called Aa of Aah (the sun) and Aa is another name for the moon god. Aah means "great" to them.



Reconstruction of the Temple of Marduk at Babylon



**Adad (Hadad, Teshub, Resheph, Rimmon)** - In Sumerian mythology, Adad is a storm god, son of Anu. He holds a lightning bolt in his right hand and an axe in his left and is the keeper of life giving rains. He is partially responsible for the flood. He relates to the Canaanite god Hadad. His symbol is forked lightning and his beast is a bull, which bel-lowed like thunder. He despairs and will not attack Anzu after Anzu has stolen the Tablet of Destinies from Ellil. He replaces Ellil's position when he is promoted to the head of the Gods. He is known at the "Lord of foresight" and is depicted wearing a pointed helmet with horns riding a bull and holding three pronged lightening in his hand. A probable forerunner to Zeus and Yahveh. Sacred number is 6.

**Aia, Aya** - In Sumerian mythology, Aia is a consort of Utu or Shamash. Goddess of the dawn and was later merged with Ishtar.

**Aklm** - 'the devourers' - These are some creatures who fought Baal-Hadad in the desert, they remind some of grasshoppers. See Baal.

**Alalu(s)** (Hittite and Hurrian) - He was the king in heaven in olden days and Anus was the first among the gods. Anus served as his cupbearer for 9 years before defeating him and dispatching him to under the earth.

**Alauwaimis** (Hurrian) - Properly propitiated with ritual, libation, and goat sacrifice, this demon drives away evil sickness.

**An, Anu, Anum** (Mesopotamian) - Sky God, chief God, Father of Ishtar. His wife is **Antum** and is son of Nammu or Tiamat. Their cult center city was Uruk. The head of the family of Gods of heaven and Earth was An - (or ANU in the Babylonian / Assyrian myths). He was the Great Father of the Gods, the king of the Gods, the God of the Sun (Creation). His realm was the expanse of the heavens. His symbol was a star. He lived in Heaven and - according to Sumerian texts came to Earth either at times of great crisis, or in ceremonial visitations when he was accompanied by his spouse **Antu**. The temple of Anu was called **E.anna** (house of An). The insignias of Anu were: the tiara (divine headdress), the scepter (symbol of power), and the staff (symbolizing the guidance provided by the shepherd. This is similar to the Gods of Egypt, who were to follow later. In Sumerian mythology, An was the personification of heaven. **An** relates to the Babylonian god **Anu**. **An** may have been the main god of the pantheon prior to 2500 BC until the city of Erech began to lose its power., although his importance gradually waned. In the early days he carried off heaven, while Enlil carried away the earth. It seems likely that he and Ki/Ninhursag were the progenitors of most of the gods. although in one place Nammu is listed as his wife. Among his children and followers were the Anunnaki. His primary temple was in Erech. He and Enlil give various gods, goddesses, and kings their earthly regions of influence and their laws. Enki seats him at the first seat of the table in Nippur at the feast celebrating his new house in Eridu. He hears Inanna's complaint about Mount Ebih (Kur?), but discourages her from attacking it because of its fearsome power. After the flood, he and Enlil make Ziusudra immortal and make him live in Dilmun. (Also See also Anu.)

**Anu(s)** (Akkadian in origin)(Hittite god) - While Alalus was king in heaven, Anus was more powerful. He served as Alalus' cup bearer for nine years and then defeated him, dispatching him to under the earth. He took his seat on the throne and had Kumarbis as his cupbearer. Likewise, after nine years Kumarbis rebelled, chased Anus - who fled in the sky like a bird, and bit off and swallowed his phallus. In this act Anus had some revenge by impregnating

Kumarbis with the Storm-god, the Aranzahus (Tigris) river, and Tasmisus. He then hid himself in heaven. He advised the Storm-god on the places where he might exit Kumarbis. After the Storm-god's birth, they plotted to destroy Kumarbis and, with his other children, apparently succeeded.

**Anat (Anath, Rahmay** - 'the merciful') (Caanite) - She Baal's sister and the daughter of El. Goddess of war, the hunt, warfare and savagery. She is an archer. Virgin, sister-in-law (progenitor?) of peoples (Li'mites?). She and Athirat are nursemaids to the gracious gods. She restrains Baal when he intends to attack Yam's messengers. In missing texts, she killed Yam-Nahar, the dragon, the seven-headed serpent. She also destroyed Arsh, Atik, Ishat, and Zabib, all enemies of Baal. An often cruel goddess, she is associated with Astarte.

She holds a feast at Baal's palace to celebrate his victory over Yam. After the guests arrive, she departs her abode and adorns herself in rouge and henna, closes the doors and slaughters the inhabitant of two nearby towns, possibly Baal's enemies. She makes a belt of their heads and hands and wades through the blood. She lures the towns' warriors inside to sit and joyfully massacres them. She then makes a ritual peace offering and cleans up. This is possibly related to a seasonal fertility ritual welcoming the autumn rains.

Anat receives messengers from Baal thinking that some new foe has arisen, but they assure her that he only wishes that she make a peace offering that he might tell her the secret of lightning and seek it on Mt. Zephon. She does so, demanding first to see the lightning, and is welcomed by Baal from afar. Hearing him complain of lack of a proper mansion, she storms off to El, creating tremors. She threatens to mangle his face lest he heed her and have Baal's court constructed, yet her plea is rejected. She is assisted in her petition, possibly by Athtart. She accompanies Baal to Athirat with a bribe and assists Athirat in her successful petition to El for Baal's court. After Baal dies, she searches for him and, finding his body goes into a violent fit of mourning. She has Shapash take his body to Mt. Zephon, where she buries it and holds a feast in his honor. After seven years of drought, she finds Mot, and cuts, winnows, and sows him like corn.

She attends the feast where Daniel presents Aqhat with a bow and arrows set made by Kothar-and-Khasis. Desiring the bow, she offers Aqhat riches and immortality, for it. He refuses and so she promises vengeance upon him should he transgress and leaves for Mt. LeI to denounce him to El. Upset with El's response, she threatens to strike his head, sarcastically suggesting that Aqhat might save him. El remarks that he won't hinder her revenge, so she finds Aqhat, and taking the form of a kinswoman, lures him off to Qart-Abilim. Unsuccessful with her first attempt there, she calls her attendant warrior Yatpan to take the form of an eagle, and with a flock of similar birds of prey, strike Aqhat as he sits on the mountain. They do so and Aqhat is slain, unfortunately, the bow falls into the waters and is lost and Anat laments that her actions and Aqhat's death were in vain.

When Baal was out hunting, she followed after him and copulated with him in the form of a cow. She gave birth to 'a wild ox' or a 'buffalo', visiting Mt. Zephon to tell Baal of the good news. This is probably not their only affair.

**Annunaki** (Mesopotamian) - The Annunaki (anukki) were the old Sumerian Gods of fertility and the underworld. Igigi, paired with Annunaki was a Sumerian group of Sky-gods headed by Ellil. The sky Anunnaki set the Igigi to digging out the rivers Eventually this term became a reference to the first born gods who were without names. During the Middle Kingdom it referred to the chthonic deities like Marduk and Nergal.



**Anshar** - In Sumerian mythology Anshar is the father of Anu and the child of Tiamat and Apsu. Eventually he was progenitor of all the other gods. His consort is his sister, Kishu. Anshar is the male principle, Kishu the female principle. Anshar is the sky, Kishu the earth. Anshar led the gods in the war against Tiamat and his qualities were assimilated with Ashur.

**Anu** - In Sumerian and Babylonian mythology, Anu is the god of the sky. He is the son of Anshar and Kishar. Anu is Sumerian for “heaven”, father and king of the gods. He is the son of Anshar and Kishar. He lives in the third heaven. The Eanna in Uruk was dedicated both to him and consort. His first consort was Antu. They produced the Anunnaki - the underworld gods, and the utukki - the seven evil demons. His second consort was Innina (Ishtar). He is a god of monarchs and is not friendly to the common people. He is a “King of the Igigi”. He is assigned the sky as his domain in ‘Atrahasis’. His ‘kishru’s (shooting stars) have awesome strength. He has the ability that anything he puts into words, becomes reality. He is Niudimmud’s (Ea’s) father. He calls Adapa to account for breaking the wing of the South Wind, and offers him the food and drink of eternal life after Dumuzi and Gizzida speak on Adapa’s behalf. He agrees to send the Bull of Heaven after Gilgamesh on Ishtar’s behalf, if she has made sure that the people of Uruk are properly provisioned for seven years. He decrees that either Gilgamesh or Enkidu must die for the slaying of Humbaba and the Bull of Heaven. He sends Kakka to Kurnugi to tell Ereshkigal to send a messenger to receive a gift from him. When Anzu stole the Tablet of Destinies from Ellil, he called for one of the gods to slay Anzu and thereby greatly increase his reputation. He gave Marduk the four winds to play with. He made a whirlwind and a flood wave and stirred up Tiamat on purpose. When Tiamat’s retaliation for Apsu’s death was discovered, Anshar sent him on a peace mission to her, but he returned unsuccessfully. He helps form a princely shrine for Marduk prior to his battle with Tiamat, and gives him the Anu-power of decreeing fates, such that his word is law. He and Earth father the Sebitti. He gives them fearsome fates and powers and puts them at Erra’s command, to aid in killing noisy, over populous people and animals. Symbol: sacred shine surmounted by the divine horned cap. Sacred number: 60 Astrological region: heavenly equator Sacred animal: the heavenly Bull See **An**.



**Antu (Antum)** - Sumerian for “the earth”, she is a colorless being who was the first consort of Anu. They produced the Anunnaki – the underworld gods, and the utukki - the seven evil demons. She was replaced by Ishtar (Inanna) who is sometimes her daughter.

**Anshar** (Babylon) - ‘whole sky’ He is the father of Anu and the child of Tiamat and Apsu. He is often paired with Kishara, and his qualities were assimilated with Ashur. When Ea learned of Tiamat’s planned war, Anshar tried to stir him into attacking her first, but was rebuffed. He turned to Anu and sent him on a peace mission to Tiamat, but Anu returned unsuccessful. An assembly was convened and Marduk came forth at Ea’s urging, promising to deliver Tiamat’s defeated body to Anshar’s feet. He required of the assembly a promise that he would be given the leadership of the pantheon after he is victorious. He had Kappa gather Lahmu, Lahamu, and the other gods together to send off Marduk on his fight and rally them to his side. When they arrive they help find a princely shrine for Marduk.



Anshar

**Ansar and Kisar** - early names of **An** and **Ki**. They were the respective male and female primordial progenitors representing earth and heaven.

**Anzu, Zu** - In Sumerian mythology, Anzu is a demonic being with lion paws and face and eagle talons and wings. It guards Enlil’s bath chamber and for a short time stole and kept the powerful **Me**. In Akkadian he was called **Imdugud**.

**Apsu, Apzu** - In Babylonian and Sumerian mythology, Apsu is the sweet-water ocean. A kind of ethereal place of water where the gods came from. “The Waters of Life.” It is the union of Apsu with Tiamat which brings forth the first gods.

**Apsu** (Babylon) - The underworld ocean, masculine. The begetter of the skies and the earth. The father of Lahmu, Lahamu, Anshar and Kishar. He could not quell the noise of them or their children. He colluded with his vizier Mummu to silence the gods and allow Tiamat to rest, after Tiamat rejected the idea. Ea found out about his plans, cast a sleeping spell on him and killed him.

**Aranzahas** (Hittite and Hurrian) - The Tigris river deified. A child of Anus and Kumarbis, he was the brother of the Storm-god and Tasmisus, spat out of Kumarbis’ mouth onto Mount Kanzuras. Later he colludes with Anus and the Storm-god to destroy Kumarbis.

**Aruru** - See **Ninmah**.

**Arsay** (Canaanite) - ‘she of the earth’, ‘daughter of [ample flows]’ - Baal’s daughter.

**Arsh** (Canaanite) - The ‘darling of the gods’, a monstrous attendant of Yam, slain by Anat. Arsh lives in the sea.

**Aruru** - In Sumerian mythology, Aruru (also known as Ninmah, Nintu, Ninhursaga, Belet-ili or Mami) was the almighty gentle mother goddess of the earth and birth. She Who first created humanity from clay.

**The Annuna (Anunnaki) and Others** -At the next level were fifty “great gods”, possibly the same as the Annuna, although several gods confined to the underworld are specifically designated Annuna, An’s children. The Annuna are also said to live in Dulkug or Du-ku, the “holy mound”. In the “Descent of Inanna to the Nether World” the Anunnaki are identified as the seven judges of the nether world. The Anunnaki were the High Council of the Gods, and Anu’s companions. They were distributed through the Earth and the Underworld. The best known of them were Asaru, Asarualim, Asarualimnunna, Asaruludu, En-Ki (Ea for the Akkadians), Namru, Namtillaku and Tutu. Though it is discounted by many reputable scholars, some proponents of ancient astronaut theories especially Zecharia Sitchin, Laurence Gardner and David Icke claim that the Anunnaki were in fact extra-terrestrials who came to Earth in antiquity and created or tampered with the genetic makeup of primitive mankind. They propose various readings of the word, two of which are “anu-na-ki” and “an-unnak-ki”, both translated something like ‘those who came from heaven to Earth’.

**Anunitu** - A babylonian goddess associated with childbirth and eventually relegated to the constellation of pisces north-eastern quadrant.



**Ashur (A-sir, Arusar, A-shar, Assur)** - god of Assyria and war. He is a “King of the Igigi” Symbol: winged disk enclosing upper body, while he shoots an arrow. He is a deification of the city of Assyria itself. His attributes are borrowed from Enlil, Marduk, Anu and is similar to Yahweh. His emblems are a winged disk, a fir cone and a bow and arrow. See **Anu**.



**Ashnan** (The kindly maid of Sumer) - Ashnan is a grain goddess as appointed by Enki, initially living in Dulkug (Du-ku). At Enki's urging, he creates farms and fields for her and for the cattle god Lahar. This area has places for Lahar to take care of the animals and Ashnan to grow the crops. The two agricultural deities get drunk and begin fighting, so it falls to Enlil and Enki to resolve their conflict - how they do so has not been recovered.

**Astabis** or **Zamama**, Akkadian **Ninurta** - He is a Hurrian warrior god. After the Storm-god's first attack on Ullikummi is unsuccessful, he leads seventy gods in battle wagons on an attack on the diorite giant. They try to draw the water away from him, perhaps in order to stop his growth, but they fall from the sky and Ullikummi grows even larger, towering over the gate of Kummiya.

**Astarte, Athtart, Ashtoreth, Ashtart, Ah, Ast, Ashdar, Kaukabhta, Qadesh, Qedeset** (caanite) - She is a consort of Baal, and lesser goddess of war and the chase. Outside of Ugarit, many nude goddess statues have been tenuously identified with her as a goddess of fertility and sex. In Sidon she merited royal priests and priestesses. There she served as a goddess of fertility, love, war and sexual vitality and to that end had sacred prostitutes. She was the Phoenician great goddess and was identified with Aphrodite by the Greeks and was possibly derived from the Phoenician goddess Tanit. She restrains Baal when he intends to attack Yam's messengers. She rebukes Baal for holding Yam captive and calls on him to 'scatter' Yam, which he does. Apparently she, along with Anat, is willing to become Baal's cupbearer once he achieves a proper palace. Also known as **Ashtar** to the Moabites. She corresponds to **Isis, Istaru, Aphodite, Ishtar** and **Inana and Lillith**.



**Atargatis** (or **Atergata**) - Atargatis was worshipped in Carnaim, a town in Bashan. The fishtail on the goddess was said to represent her journey through the Underworld. Atargatis was an ancient Syrian goddess. She belongs to the general pattern of mother goddesses that were worshipped throughout Asia and Greece. In Rome she was called 'Dea Syria.' She is depicted as the mother of mermaids. May be a combination between Athar and Ate. Eventually she was worshipped by the Romans. Also see **Dagon**.

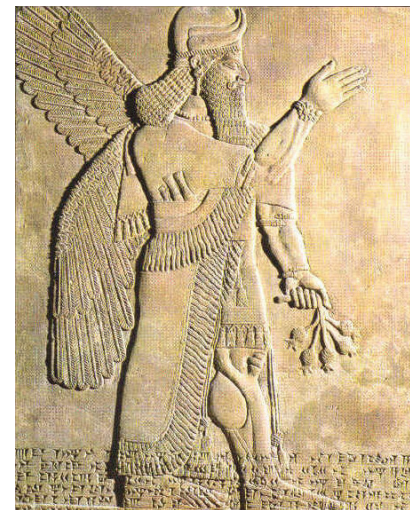
**Athirat (Asherah, Ashtartian)**(caanite) - 'the Lady of the Sea', Elat - 'the goddess' El's loving consort and is protective of her seventy children who may also be known as the gracious gods, to whom she is both mother and nursemaid. Her sons, unlike Baal initially, all have godly courts. She frequents the ocean shore. In the Syrian city of Qatra, she was considered Baal-Hadad's consort. Asherah is associated with a cult of fertility and eroticism. Her sacred animal is the lion. Associated with the Egyptian goddess Hathor.

**Athtar (Ashtar, 'Athtar, Atra of the sky)** 'the terrible' - He is a son of Athirat, possibly a caanite god of the desert or of artificial irrigation. He is sometimes a suitor of Pidray. As the great god of the Sabeans and Himyar (both South Arabian states), he was identified with Venus and was sired by the moon on the sun. He loses his kingship to Yam at the behest of El and is warned off from an attack on Yam by Shapshu. He complains to her of his lack of status, palace and court. He attempts to take Baal's place at his throne while Baal is dead, but he is too small for the seat and rejects it, becoming king of the earth instead.

**Atik**(Caanite) - The 'calf of El', an enemy of Baal. Slain by Anat.

**Ayas** (Hurrian Ea)- He is the keeper of the 'old tablets with the words of fate' (Tablets of Destiny or me'). The Ullikummi myth has him as the father of the Storm-god. He attends Kumarbis and fetches that god's son to be devoured as a means of releasing Kumarbis' pains from the Storm-god. He advises Kumarbis to have experts work 'poor' magic to aid him in his distress, bringing bulls and sacrifices of meal. This magic helps secure Kumarbis' 'tamnasus'. He is prevailed upon by the Storm-god following his defeat by Ullikummi. He and presumably the Storm-god present a case against Kumarbis' for his creation of Ullikummi before Ellil. Rebutting Ellil's defense that Kumarbis is well behaved regarding worship and sacrifices, Ea proclaims that Ullikummi 'will block off heaven and the gods holy houses.' He seeks out Upelluri, and after interviewing him, locates Ullikummi's feet on Upelluri's shoulder. He charges the olden gods to deliver the copper knife with which they severed heaven from earth, in order to cut through Ullikummi's feet. He then spurs Tasmisus and the Storm-god on to fight the crippled giant.

**Ba'al** (also called **Baal-Zephon(Saphon), Hadad, Pidar** and **Rapiu (Rapha)** - 'the



shade')(Caanite) – Meaning Master, is one of the major gods of the Canaanite cult and is associated with a holy mountain called Zaphon. The son of El, the god of fertility, 'rider of the clouds', and god of lightning and thunder. He is 'the Prince, the lord of earth', 'the mightiest of warriors', 'lord of the sky and the earth' (Alalakh). His voice is thunder, his ship is a snow bearing cloud. He is known as **Rapiu** during his summer stay in the underworld. Numerous bronze votives show him as a young man with his hand raised in a gesture of victory. The bull was a major symbol of this god. Ba'al was the owner and defender of fertile lands as well as the gods of storms. Another myth involves a struggle between Ba'al and Mot, the god of Death and Sterility. Ba'al is closely associated with the goddess Anat (or Astarte), who is his sister, and

in some myths, his consort. Anat is a warlike and often cruel goddess. Ba'al is associated with the Egyptian god Seth.

Baal upbraids the gods for their cowardice when they intend to hand him over to Yam's messengers and attacks them but is restrained by Athtart and Anat. Kothar-and-Khasis gives him the magic weapons Yagrush (Chaser) and Aymur (Driver). He strikes **Yam** in chest and in the forehead, knocking him out. Athtart rebukes Baal and calls on him to 'scatter' his captive, which he does. In an alternate version of this episode, he slays **Lotan (Leviathan)**, the seven-headed dragon. The battle may have been representative of rough winter sea-storms which calmed in the spring and which were preceded and accompanied by autumn rains which ended summer droughts and enabled crops to grow.

After his victory he holds a feast and remarks on his lack of a proper palace, instead retaining residence with El and Athirat. He sends messengers to Anat to ask her to perform a peace-offering that he might tell her the word which is the power of lightning and seek lightning on the holy Mt. Zephon. She does so and he welcomes her. Hearing his complaints Anat leaves to petition El for a new palace for Baal. Rejected, Baal dispatches Qodesh-and-Amrur to Kothar-and-Khasis with a request to make a silver temple set with which to bribe Athirat. He and Anat view Athirat with trepidation keeping in mind past insults which he has suffered at the hands of the other gods. He and Anat ask Athirat to ask El for permission to build a more extravagant house and Athirat's request is granted. Gathering cedar, gold, silver, gems, and lapis at Mt. Zephon, he calls Kothar-and-Khasis, feeding him and instructing him on how to build the palace. He doesn't want a window, for fear of Yam breaking through or his daughters escaping, but Kothar-and-Khasis convinces him to allow its inclusion so that he might lightning, thunder, and rain through it.

At its completion he holds a feast, takes over scores of towns and allows the window to be built. He threatens to ask Mot to invite any of his remaining enemies to come for a visit and at night, binds the lightning, snow and rains. He sends Gupn and Ugar to Mot to invite him to acknowledge his sovereignty at his new palace. He sends messengers to Mot to carry this message to him and they return with a message of such weight that Baal declares himself Mot's slave. He hopes to ameliorate Mot by having Sheger and Ithm supply live sheep and cattle for the god to feast upon. Fearing Mot he seeks Shapshu's advice and sires a substitute on a cow. He (or possibly his substitute) dies and remains in the underworld for seven years. El dreams that he is alive again but he is absent. Ashtar attempts to take Baal's place, but can not. Shapshu searches for him. Baal returns and fights Mot's allies, the sons of Athirat and the yellow ones. After seven years, Mot returns, demanding one of Baal's brothers lest he consume mankind. Baal rebuffs him and they fight tooth and nail. Shapshu separates the two declaring that Baal has El's favor and Baal resumes his throne.

As Baal-Hadad, he sends monstrous creatures to attack the handmaidens of Yarikh, and of Athirat of the Sea. He hunts the horned, buffalo-humped creatures which were birthed by the handmaidens at the advice of El. During the hunt he is stuck in a bog for seven years and things fall to pot. His kin recover him and there is much rejoicing.

**Baalat** (caanite) - The 'mistress' of Gubla she was not found in Ugarit. This great fertility goddess was the foremost deity of that city. She served as protector of the city and of the royal dynasty. She was associated with Baal-Shamen and she assimilated the characteristics of the Egyptian goddesses Hathor and Ast (Isis).

**Baal-Shamen (Baal-Shamain)** 'lord of the skies' - Lord of the Assembly of the gods at Gubla. He was the great god of the Aramaean kingdoms of Hama and Laash and the protector of their rulers.

**Bau** (Sumerian) - goddess worshiped primarily in Lagash where she was regarded as spouse to Ningirsu or Zababa. She had several children with him.

**Bagbarti** - Urartu supreme goddess. Married to **Haldi** - national god of Urartu or Van. Called Ararat in the Bible. Urartu was a later keeper of Hurrian traditions.

**Bel** - In Sumerian mythology, Bel is the cleverest of the clever - and sage of the gods, he is the child of Ea and Dumkina, another name for **Marduk**. See Marduk.

**Belili (Geshtinanna)** - Tammuz/Dumuzi's sister, 'the one who always weeps', the wife of Ningishzida.

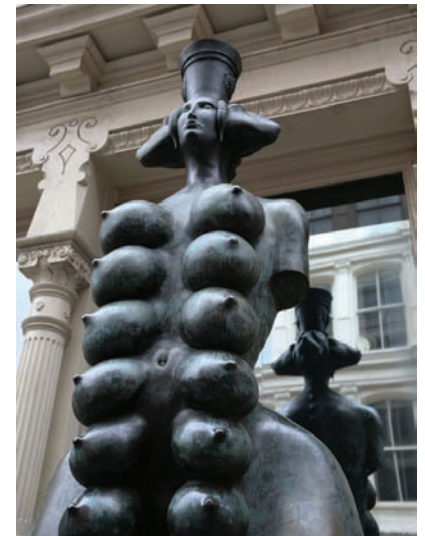
**Belit-tseri** - In Sumerian mythology, Belit-tseri is the tablet-scribe of the underworld. She kneels before Ereshkigal.

**Birdu** - (means 'pimple') an underworld god. Ellil used him as a messenger to Ninurta

**Buriash** or **Hudha** (Kassite god)- same as Adad or Iskur.

**Cybele** (largely aisa minor goddess or Phrygian) - "The Great Goddess of Asia Minor is the oldest true Goddess known, predating the Goddesses of the Sumerian and Egyptians by at least 5,000 years." "The priestesses of The Great Pagan Goddess, Cybele (Kybele - cave dweller) would, through a transformation by the Greeks, be confused with and eventually known as the Sibyls. Originally a Phrygian goddess, Cybele ("she of the hair") She was an earth mother, goddess of caverns, walls, fortresses, nature, fertility, wild animals (especially bees) and mountains. She is a life-death-rebirth deity. Her consort was Attis. She was supposed to have been born on Mt. Ida in Asia Minor; this is the source of an epithet, Idaea.

While there have been Goddess figurines found which date to 30,000 years ago, they come to us without knowledge of their origin or character of the Goddess they represent. A figurine found at Çatal Hüyük, dating to 8,000 year ago, depicts the Mother Goddess squatting in the process of giving birth while flanked by two leopards. In later centuries, the leopards would be changed to lions - the metamorphosed **Atalanta** and **Hippomenes** (see greek mythology), though leopards were considered to be female lions by the ancients. Her worship was originally combined with that of the Bull of Heaven which is also prominently displayed at Çatal Hüyük. Cybele was worshiped in Rome and was also called the "Magna Mater", or the great queen mother goddess, which evolved into Catholic Mariology. The priesthood of Cybele was composed of castrated males, which parallels the celibate priesthood of Catholicism. The basilica of Saint Peter's, according to some, stands upon the former site of Cybele's main temple in Rome. The ruins of temple to Cybele/Magna Mater can still be seen today in Rome on Palatine hill.





The miter on the head of the goddess Cybele is striking similarity to the 'fish head' of the God Dagon. (See Dagon) There are some scholars who say the fish head hat of the priests of Enki (a Sumarian god of the Earth and world order) later became the miter of the bishops.

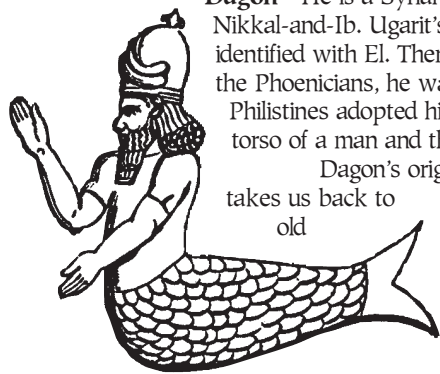
Enki was part of the tri-gods who were considered the gods of 'water' and the one having devised men as slaves to the gods. Just as the Dagon priests sprinkled holy water in ceremony, so too did the priests of Enki- this god of water. He was even commonly represented as a half-fish, half-goat creature.

In actuality calling Christians fish, symbolizing them with the fish, and calling the disciples as fishers of men has little or nothing to do with the Jesus of Capernaum. Dagon's son was Baal the god of harvest. The many analogies of the fish and the mentions of harvests, the seeds along with shining sunlight and water flowing to watering it, are all lures to converge the mystery cults in with the new compiled religion. In fact the tradition of eating fish on Friday comes from many different pagan cultures. Aphrodite Salacia, the fish Goddess, was worshiped by her followers on her sacred day of Friday. They ate fish and engaging in orgies. Which is how the word "salacious" meaning lustful became used. The Christian church assimilated this tradition by requiring the faithful to eat fish on Friday.

Throughout the Mediterranean, mystery religions used fish, wine and bread for their sacramental meal and ancient Rome called Friday "dies veneris" or Day of Venus, the Pagan goddess. Venus (the star) is the one in the fable of the mystic egg of the Babylonians about a giant egg falling from heaven into the River Euphrates. The fishes rolled it to the bank where the doves having perched upon it, hatched it. What came out of this egg was Venus-also referred to as the morning star. Venus (star) afterwards was called the Assyrian goddess or Astarte, the queen of heaven.

In all of these stories we find the tradition of Easter born from these mystery legends as Easter was just another name for Astarte. This festival in ancient Babylonianism of Astarte (known as Istar or Easter), was about her son coming back from the dead which is why the Easter celebration has the symbolic egg as well as the Astarte name for the celebration of the borrowed mythical resurrection of the Bright Morning Star -Jesus (Revelation 22:16).

**Dagan** (Ugaric for 'grain') - chthonic god of fertility and of the Underworld. He is paired with Anu as one who acknowledges directives and courses of action put forth in front of the assembly of the gods. In Babylonian and Assyrian mythology, Dagan was an earth god and inventor of the plough.



**Dagon** - He is a Syrian version of Dagan, and the probable father of Nikkal-and-Ib. Ugarit's Dagon was the father of Baal and may have been identified with El. There were also temples to Dagon in Mari and Emar. To the Phoenicians, he was a god of wheat and the inventor of the plow. The Philistines adopted him as their own and depicted him with the upper torso of a man and the back half of a fish. See the Hittite Kumarbi.

Dagon's origin was supposedly the Sirius star system, which takes us back to old the Nommos - Dogon - Amphibious Gods and good Nibirul. Dagon poses exactly like Zoroaster. In the role of Dagon - he was the god of the Philistines mentioned in the Old Testament in connection with the Ark of the Covenant. The Philistines placed the captured Ark in a temple of Dagon in Ashdod, before his statue. The next morning

they found the statue lying on its face on the temple floor. They set it upright again, but the morning after the statue was again lying face down on the floor, this time with its head and hands broken off. The Hebrews regarded this as a sign of the Ark's power (Samuel 5:1-7). Dagon was a Semitic god adopted by the Philistines after their invasion of Canaan.

Dagon (or Dagan) was worshiped in Mesopotamia at Ur in 2500 BC. His cult was popular among the Assyrians. He probably began his existence as a god of vegetation and evolved into a storm god. The Hebrew name Dagon means "Great Fish." The god was variously described as a fish god, an idol with the head and hands of a man and the tail of a fish, and as half-woman and half-fish. An identification or association was sometimes made between Dagon and the goddess Atargatis (or Atergata), who had the upper body of a woman and the lower body of a fish. See **Atargatis**.

**Damgalnuna, Damkina** - Another mother goddess in Lagas and Umma where she was mother to Marduk and wife the Enki. Ninmah's name was changed to Ninhursaga by her son Ninurta to commemorate the creation of the mountains. Strongly associated to Nammu.

**Dark-goddess** (Hittite and Hurrian) - One of the deities who sat under the Hawthorn tree awaiting the return of Telipinu.

**Dazibogu** (Sumerian) A solar deity - not much is remembered of Him. But note a strong connective parallel to the much later Slavic Dazhdebog.

**Dimpemekug** - In Sumerian mythology, he was due gifts in Kur, and has no palace. God of the underworld of Kur.

**Dumkina** - In akkadian mythology, Dumkina is Ea's lover and the mother of Bel or Marduk.

**Dumuzi or Tammaz** (Sumerian Demigod) - He has a palace in Kur, and is due a visit by those entering Kur. He is Inanna's (Ishtar's) husband. In life, he was the shepherd god king of Uruk. He successfully courted and married Inanna. Following the consummation of this marriage, he was given divine powers over the fertility of plants and animals, especially over grain. Upon her rescue from the dead, he was pursued by galla demons, which he eluded for a time with the aid of Utu. Eventually he was caught and slain; however, he was partially freed from his stay in the underworld by the actions of his sister **Geshtinanna**. Now he resides there only half of the year, while she lives there the other half year; this represents seasonal change. Also a god of sacred marriage.

**Dumuzi** (Sumerian) - Child of Duttur, Lord of shepherds and the flocks, and eternal adversary to Enkidu. He is regarded as both divinity and royal ancestor in several Mesopotamian city-states, most notably Uruk, where he is listed as an earlier predecessor to the hero Gilgamesh. He has strong Underworld associations as well; the beloved of Inanna, He is taken by minions of Nergal to the depths when She visits the Final Land and then seeks to leave. Eventually, he returns to the upper land for 6 months of the year, while His place is taken then by His sister Gestinanna. Students of the Old Testament will recognize the Hebrew form of His name: Tammuz, which has become the 10th month of the Jewish calendar; and Tammuz, in a rare survival into modern times, is still used as the Iraqi name for the month of July.

**Duttur** (Sumerian) - The sheep Goddess, and Patroness of the flocks. She is the mother of both Dumuzi and Gestinanna.



**Ea (Enki, Nudimmud)** - god of the waters. In Babylonian mythology, Ea was the god of wisdom, magic and water. He relates to the Sumerian god Enki. Ea is Lord of Apsu, the domain of sweet water beneath the earth. He is the source of all secret magical knowledge and instructed mankind in the arts and crafts. His cult center city was Eridu. He is in charge of the bolt which bars the sea. He knows everything. He is the "Lord of Wisdom" and "Lord of Incantations". When he speaks, of a thing, it will be made. He is the son of Anu, but sometimes he is the son of Anshar. Dumkina is his consort. He created Zaltu as a complement to Ishtar. He discovered the plot of Apsu and Mummu, put Apsu under a sleeping spell, and slew him and put Mummu into a daze, tied him up, and slew him. He then named his quarters Apsu, the underworld ocean that supports the world. He and Damkina produced Bel and Marduk. He learned that Tiamat was planning a war of revenge against the gods. His father Anshar tries to spur him into making the first attack against Tiamat, but Ea rebuffs him. When Anu's peace mission fails, he urges Marduk into action. He suggests the method of creating man, in response to the heavy workload of the Igigi. As mankind's patron, he is the instructor of all crafts, writing, building, farming, and magic. He advises mankind when other gods would do them harm. He granted Adapa understanding, to teach mankind. When Adapa used this knowledge to break the wing of the South Wind, he cursed him and told him to complain of Dumuzi and Gizzida's absence to Anu. While in Anu's court, he advises Adapa not to eat the bread of eternal life (lest he forfeit his life on earth). He refuses to flood mankind for Ellil. Eventually he accedes, but only after advising Atrahasis to build a boat in which to weather the flood. He tells Nergal to allow Enkidu's spirit to visit with Gilgamesh. When Ea is informed of Ishtar's imprisonment in the Underworld, he creates 'His appearance is bright' to stand at Ereshkigal's gate and mellow her mood and have her swear an oath by the great gods. He instructs Nergal on how to build the gift throne for Ereshkigal, and hides him with spring water to hide him from Namtar after he returned from the underworld. When Anu and the gods could not locate a volunteer to kill Anzu, he told the Igigi that he would pick one. He instructs Belet-ili/Mami to send Ninurta to slay Anzu and, through Sharur advises Ninurta on how to defeat the creature. Symbol: Ram's head or goat-fish (capricorn). Sacred number: 40. Also see **Enki**.

**El** (Canaanite) (also called **Latipan**, and possibly **Dagon**) - He is known as the Father of the gods, 'the father of mankind', the 'Bull', and 'the creator of creatures'. He is grey haired and bearded and lives at Mt. Lel. He is a heavy drinker and has gotten extremely drunk at his banquets. The chief god of the pantheon, is identified in Canaanite art as a seated male figure with arms raised as if about to give a blessing. In myths from Ugarit (in Syria) he is described as sitting enthroned in his palace, where he gives his sanction to all decisions among the gods affecting nature and society. As a young god, he went out to the sea and, spying two ladies, one of whom is presumably Athirat, becomes aroused, roasts a bird and asks the two to choose between being his daughters or his wives. They become his wives and in due course they give birth to Shachar, Shalim, and possibly other gracious gods, who could be Athirat's seventy children and/or much of the rest of the pantheon. The new family raises a sanctuary in the desert and lived there for eight years.

**Elamite Gods** - These gods were adapted by the Elamites from Sumerian deities.

E-mah - see Ninhursaga, Sara  
E-meslam - see Nergal  
E-mete-ursag - see Zababa  
Enbilulu - see Enkimdu  
Engur - see abzu  
E-ninnu - see Ningirsu  
See remaining text for other Elamite gods.

**Ellil** - See "Ellil" Ellil is Anu's son, later replaces his father and becomes King of the Gods. To Him belonged the "Tables of Destinies", by which the fates of men and Gods were decreed. His wife was Mulliltu or Mylitta (Ninlil) and his cult center city was Nippur.

**Ellil** (See Assyro-Babylonian Ellil) (Hurrian) - He is presented with Ullikummiss by the Irsirra deities and declares that the child will bring the mightiest battles and an awesome rival to the Storm-god. Later, Ea and presumably the Storm-god present before him a case against Kumarbis' for his creation of Ullikummiss. He counters with Kumarbis' good record of worship and sacrifice and is in turn countered with Ea's testimony describing Ullikummiss.

**Elsh** (Canaanite)- He is the steward (carpenter?) of El and of Baal's house. His wife is the stewardess (carpenter?) of the goddesses.

**Enbilulu** (Sumerian) The River God, divine master of the Tigris-Euphrates watershed system.



**Enki, Nudimmud (Also Ea)** - Lord of water, wisdom, the Abzu, creation, fertility and ultimately the lands. Enki emits streams from his shoulders; he is the god who gave rulers their intelligence and who provided craftsmen with their skills. Enki was the Sumerian water god. Enki supplied clear drinking water to the town of Dilmun at the request of Ninhursag. Enki is the son of Nammu, the primeval sea. Contrary to the translation of his name, Enki is not the lord of the earth, but of the abzu (See Abzu) and of wisdom. This contradiction leads Kramer and Maier to postulate that he was once known as En-kur, lord of the underworld, which either contained or was contained in the Abzu. He did struggle with Kur as mentioned in the prelude to "Gilgamesh, Enkidu, and the Underworld", and presumably was victorious and thereby able to claim the title "Lord of Kur" (the realm). He is the keeper of the **me**, the divine laws. Enki sails for the Kur, presumably to rescue Ereshkigal after she was given over to Kur. He is assailed by creatures with stones. These creatures may have been an extension of Kur itself. Enki is attended by a god with two faces called Usmu (Isimud). Within his sacred precinct 'Mound of Creation' in Eridu, Enki unraveled the secrets of life and death. In a more modern interpretation, "The Water of Life" flowing into the laboratory glassware indicates alchemical circulations by Enki. His emblem was two serpents entwined on a staff - the basis for the winged caduceus symbol used by modern Western medicine. Enki was the god who created the first humans: In those days, in those years, The



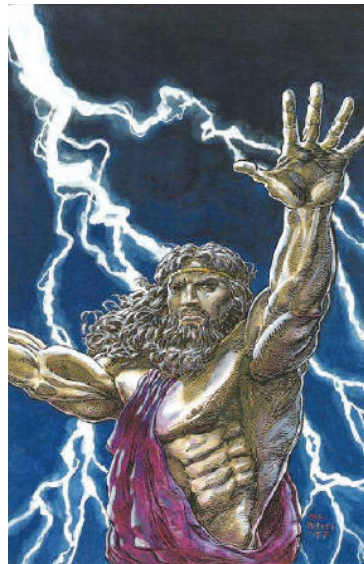


Wise One of Eridu, Ea, created him as a model of men. His name was Adapa, Adam in the Old Testament: Elohim created the Adam in His image - in the image of Elohim created He him. He was once known as En-kur, lord of the underworld, which either contained or was contained in the Abzu. He struggled with Kur as mentioned in the prelude to "Gilgamesh, Enkidu, and the Underworld", and presumably was victorious and thereby able to claim the title "Lord of Kur" The Realm. Enki had a fun loving and mischievous nature. His sacred number is 40. He also holds dominion over the land. He is the keeper of the 'me' - the Divine Laws - the Rules of the Universe. The 'me' were assembled by Enlil in Ekur and given to Enki to guard and impart to the world, beginning in Eridu, his center of worship. From there, he guards the me and imparts them on the people. He directs the 'me' towards Ur and Meluhha and Dilmun, organizing the world with his decrees. Later, Inanna comes to Enki and complains at having been given too little power from his decrees. In a different text, she gets Enki drunk and he grants her more powers, arts, crafts, and attributes - a total of ninety-four 'me'. Inanna parts company with Enki to deliver the 'me' to her cult center at Erech. Enki recovers his wits and tries to recover the 'me' from her, but she arrives safely in Erech with them. Enki was the leader of the first sons of Anu that came down to Earth. He played the pivotal role in saving humanity from the global Deluge. He defied the Anunnaki ruling council and told Ziusudra (the Sumerian Noah) how to build a ship on which to save humanity from the killing flood. Ea would have been over 120 sars old at that time, yet his activity with humanity continued to be actively reported for thousands of years thereafter.

**Enkimdu** - In Sumerian mythology, he was a god placed in charge of canals and ditches by Enki. The "knower" of rivers and had dominion over the Tigris and Euphrates rivers.

**En-kur** - possibly the early name of Enki (Ea).

**Enlil** - An and Ki's union produced Enlil (Lord of 'lil'). Ellil (Enlil) - Sumerian for "wind/storm-god", "King of the Anunnaki" and leader of the pantheon from at least 2500 BC and he has since relinquished his spot to Anu, when his temple Ekur in Nippur was the spiritual center of Sumer. His role in this was uplanted by Marduk by the Babylonians. In the early days he separated and carried off the earth (Ki) while An carried off heaven. He assumed most of Anu's powers. He is glorified as "the father of the gods, 'the king of heaven and earth,' 'the king of all the lands'". Kramer portrays him as a patriarchal figure, who is both creator and disciplinarian. Enlil causes the dawn, the growth of plants, and bounty. He guards the **tablets of destiny**, which allow him to determine the fate of all things animate or inanimate. He also invents agricultural tools such as the plow or pickaxe. Without his blessings, a city would not rise. Most often he is considered Ninlil's husband, with Ninhursag as his sister, but some traditions have Ninhursag as his spouse. He is the second and most powerful deity of the Sumerian pantheon. He was God of Heaven and Earth, Dispenser of Kingship, Chief of the Assembly of the Gods, Father of Gods and men, Granter of Agriculture, Lord of Airspace, His name meant 'lord of the airspace' - the prototype and father of the later Storm Gods that were to head the pantheons of the ancient world. He supposedly arrived



on Earth before the human race was created. He was considered a supreme God by the Sumerians and by the Sumerian Gods. At some point in the early times he descended to Earth, and was thus became the principle God of Heaven and Earth. When the Gods met in Heaven he sat beside his father. When the Gods met for assembly on Earth, they met at Enlil's court in Nippur, the city dedicated to Enlil. Even though Enlil was considered 'the Father of the Gods', he was banished to the world of the dead by the assembly of the gods for having raped the grain goddess, Ninlil, his intended bride. Some say that she seduced him. With his misdeed, Enlil had impregnated the grain goddess. To let him witness the birth of his own child, Ninlil decided to follow him to the underworld. This thoughtless decision could have obliged the newborn moon god Sin to be imprisoned forever in the world of the dead. Thus, Enlil and Ninlil copulated again and offered their three future children to the infernal deities. Thus, their child, the moon god Sin could finally ascend the heavens in order to light the night sky. The Sumerians revered Enlil out of both fear and gratitude. Enlil made sure that decrees made by the assembly of the Gods were carried out on Mankind. Some say he was responsible for the great Deluge. He helped mankind by bestowing the knowledge of farming, using the plow and the pick-axe. Enlil also selected the kings who were to rule over Mankind not as sovereigns but as servants to the Gods. From earliest recorded times, Nippur was a sacred city, not a political capital. It was this holy character which allowed Nippur to survive numerous wars and the fall of dynasties that brought destruction to other cities. Although not a capital, the city had an important role to play in politics. Kings, on ascending the throne in cities such as Kish, Ur, and Isin, sought recognition at Ekur, the Temple of Enlil, the chief god of the Mesopotamian pantheon. In exchange for such legitimization the kings lavished gifts of land, precious metals and stones, and other commodities on the temples and on the city as a whole.

When the Igigi rebelled against him, and surrounded his house and called for Anu. After man was created in response to the Igigi's grievances, he grew weary of their noise and released several disasters upon them, after each one, man recovered and then he released a new one. The disasters included disease, flood, drought, and the great flood. He appointed Humbaba to guard the cedar forest and terrify mankind. He decreed that Enkidu must die for the slaying of the Bull of Heaven and Humbaba. He does not answer Gilgamesh's plea to restore Enkidu to life. He found a throne for Etana to rule from in Kish. He appointed Anzu as the guardian of his bath chamber, but while bathing, Anzu stole from him the Tablet of Destinies, and his Ellil-power. Ninurta, with Ea's advise and Belet-ili's urgings slew Anzu and recovered the Tablet of Destinies. Symbol: Seven small circles representing the Pleiades. Sacred number: 50

**Ennugi** - This god, who had special care over dikes and canals, is believed to be the son of Enlil or Enmesarra and his wife is the goddess Ninibgal. He is also associated with the underworld. See **Enkimdu**.

**Enmesarra** - a primeal deity believed to be the ancestor of Enlil. His wife was Ninmesarra.

**Enten** - He is a farmer god, and is Enlil's field worker and herdsman. He quarrels with his brother Emesh and makes an appeal to Enlil that he deserves to be 'farmer of the gods'. Enlil judges Enten's claim to be the stronger and the two reconcile with Emesh bringing Enten gifts.

**Enzag** - Sumerian name for the Dilum goddess Meskilak.

**Emesh** - Created by Enlil this god is responsible for agriculture. He quarrels with his brother Enten, and makes a claim to be the 'farmer of the gods', bringing his claim to Enlil after Enten. When Enlil judges Enten's claim to be stronger, Emesh relents, brings him gifts, and reconciles.

**Ereshkigal, Allatu** - Ereshkigal is the Queen of the Underworld, who is either given to Kur in the underworld or given dominion over the underworld in the prelude to "Gilgamesh, Enkidu, and the Underworld". She has a palace there with seven gates and is due a visit by those entering Kur. She was married to Gugalanna, the Bull of Heaven, and is Inanna's older sister. In Akkadian Nergal is her consort. She is often considered Ishtar's sister. When angered, her face grows livid and her lips grow black. When Ishtar descended into the underworld to save Tammuz, Ereshkigal tricked her into leaving some part of her clothing or insignias at each of the underworld's seven gates as she passed through them.



Then when Inanna arrives she:  
...fastened on Inanna the eye of death.  
She spoke against her the word of wrath.  
She uttered against her the cry of guilt  
She struck her.  
Inanna was turned into a corpse,  
...And was hung from a hook on the wall.

Later, when Enki's messengers arrive, she is moaning in pain. When they empathize with her, she grants them a boon. They request Inanna's corpse and she agrees.

Anu sends Kakka to her with a message and then sends Nergal to give her a throne upon which she is to sit and give judgment. She offers Nergal food, drink, a foot bath, and entices him with her body. Eventually he succumbs and they sleep with each other for seven days. She is enraged when he wishes to leave. She sends Namtar to the apsu to request that Anu, Ellil, and Ea send Nergal to her as one of the few favors she has ever had. If they do not, she will raise the dead and they will eat and outnumber the living. Nergal is brought back. In some versions of the myth, Nergal takes control of Namtar's attendant demons and grabs Ereshkigal by the hair. In this position she proposes marriage to him. In both versions they are married.

**Ennugi** - canal controller of the Anunnaki.

**Erra** - In Sumerian mythology, Erra is a form of Erragal as a hunter god, a god of war and plague. Also see Nergal.

**Erragal** - In Sumerian mythology, Erragal was god of the underworld, husband of Ereshkigal and a lover of Mami.

**Eshmun** 'the holy prince' - He was a god of healing and the great god in Sidon. He was known in Tyre, Cyprus, and Carthage, but not in Ugarit. In the 5th century AD, Damascius identified him with the Greek god Asclepius.

**Fate goddesses** (Hittite and Hurrian) - They were among the deities who sat under the Hawthorn tree awaiting the return of Telipinu. In one myth, they and the Mother-goddesses are missing.

**Gapn** (vine) - Baal's page and messenger to both Anat and Mot.

**Gatumdug** - goddess of the city of Lasgash, regarded as the daughter of An. Later is associated with the local god **Bau**.

**Gerra (Gibil)** - the god of fire, Anunitu (Antu)'s son. He despairs and will not attack Anzu after Anzu has stolen the Tablet of Destinies from Ellil.

**Geshtu-e** - 'ear', God whose blood and intelligence are used by Mami to create man.

**Geshtinanna** (Sumerian) - An oracular Goddess, one who is associated with the interpretation of dreams, and also has widespread shepherding connections. She is the loyal sister of Dumuzi, and hides him by various stratagems when he is sought by demons of the underworld. When He is eventually seized anyway, it is arranged that She take His place for half the year, and He Hers. While in the Underworld, She functions as Ereshkigal's scribe.

**Gibil, Gerra** (Sumerian) - Divine Lord of fire, and personification of fire in all its aspects, both harmful and beneficial. Son of Shala or son of Nusku. See **Nusku**.

**Gizzida (Gishzida)** - son of Ninazu, consort of Belli, doorkeeper of Anu.

**'god(s) of the fathers'** - They are ancestral or clan deities, commonly associated with one family or another, outside of the main pantheon.

**Gula** (Sumerian) - A healer and patroness of medicine; She is also something of a tutelary Goddess of the city-state of Isin. Unsurprisingly for her vocation, she is almost always accompanied by a dog. Also worshiped as **Nintinuga**, **Ninkarrak** and **Meme**. As **Ninisina**, she was the "Lady of Isin". Wife of **Ninurta** or **Pabilsag**. Mother of the healing god **Damu**.

**Gushkin-banda** - In Sumerian mythology, Gushkin-banda is the goldsmith god and the creator of god and man.

**Hahhimas** (Frost) (Hittite and Hurrian) - When the Sea-god captures the Sun-god, he takes hold of the other gods and of the land's plants and animals, paralyzing them. He is half-brother to Hasamili's brothers and spares them from his grip.

**Haldi** - national god of Urartu or Van. Called Ararat in the Bible. Urartu was a later keeper of Hurrian traditions.

**Hanish** - In Sumerian mythology, Hanish is servant to the weather god.

**Hannahanna(s) (Nintu, Mah)** (Hittite origin) - the mother of all the gods. She is associated with Gulses. After Telepinu disappears, the Storm-god complains to her. She sends him to search himself and when he gives up, she dispatches a bee, charging it to purify the god by stinging his hands and feet and wiping his eyes and feet with wax. She recommends to



the Storm-god that he pay the Sea-god the bride-price for the Sea-god's daughter on her wedding to Telipinu. Apparently she also disappears in a fit of anger and while she is gone, cattle and sheep are stifled and mothers, both human and animal take no account of their children. After her anger is banished to the Dark Earth, she returns rejoicing. Another means of banishing her anger is through burning brushwood and allowing the vapor to enter her body. After Inara consulted with her, she gave her a man and land. Soon after, Inara is missing and when Hanna hanna is informed thereof by the Storm-god's bee, she apparently begins a search with the help of her Female attendant a. She appears to consult with the Sun-god and the War-god, but much of the text is missing.

**Hapantalliyas, Hapantalli** (Hittite and Hurrian) - He took his place at the Moon-god's side when he fell from heaven on the gate complex and uttered a spell.

**Hapantallis** (Hittite and Hurrian) - He is the Sun-god's shepherd.

**Harbe** (Kassite) - A primary God of the Kassite people, equated with Anu or Enlil.

**Hasamelis** (Hittite and Hurrian) - He is a god who can protect travelers, possibly by causing them to be invisible.

**Hebat** (Hurrian name) (**Hepit, Hepatu**) - The matronly wife of the Storm-god. She is sometimes depicted standing on her sacred animal, the lion. After the Storm-god and Astabis' failed attacks on Ullikummiss, the giant forced her out of her temple, causing her to lose communication with the gods. She frets that Ullikummiss may have defeated her husband and expresses her concern to her servant Takitis, charging him to convene the assembly of the gods and bring back word of her husband. Presumably she is brought word of his defeat. Tasmisus visits her in the high watchtower, telling her that the Storm-god is consigned to a 'lowly place' for a length of time. She is the mother of Sharruma.

**Hirgab** - He is the father of the eagles in caanite lore.

**Horon** - He is probably a cthonic deity of the Caanite mythos.

**Hubishag** - gate keeper. God of the underworld of Kur.

**Humban** (Elamite) - A sky God, one who dwells in the heavens, and (probably) personifies masculine energy. He very likely is connected in some way to Humbaba, the giant guarding the cedars of Lebanon from Gilgamesh. Laer he was called **Napirsa** (Great god). Also see **Hawawa**.

**Humbaba** - In Sumerian mythology, the Humbaba is a monster appointed by Enlil to guard the cedar forest. See Gilgamesh epic,

**Hutran** (Elamite god) - Son of Kirirsa and Napirsa. (**Pienenkir** and **Humban**)

**Huwawa** - Akkadian version of Humbaba

**Igigi or Igigu** - gods (mostly of the heavens) They are given the task of digging riverbeds by the Anunnaki. . Considered lessor gods and more human like, they rebelled against Ellil to create man so that they would not have to work so hard.

**Ilaba** (Akkadian) - a warrior god worshiped during the Akkadian period, personal god of the Kings of that dynasty.

**Illuyankas** (Hittite and Hurrian) - the Dragon - He defeated the Storm-god in Kiskilussa. Later he was lured from his lair with his children by a well dressed Inaras with a feast. After they were too engorged to get into their lair again, the Storm-god, accompanied by the other gods, killed him. In another version of the myth, he defeated the Storm-god and stole his eyes and heart. Later, his daughter married the son of the Storm-god. Acting on the Storm-god's instruction, his son asked for the eyes and heart. When these were returned to him, the Storm-god vanquished Illuyankas, but slew his son as well when the youth sided with the dragon. The ritual of his defeat was invoked every spring to symbolize the earth's rebirth.

**Imbaluris** (Hittite and Hurrian) - He is Kumarbis' messenger. He is sent to warn the Sea that Kumarbis' must remain the father of the gods.

**Inanna** - In Sumerian mythology, Inanna is the sister of Utu. She must choose as a husband between Enkimdu and Dumuzi. Both gods were keen to marry her, but she eventually married Dumuzi.

**Inanna** (Also **Innin, Innini, Babylonian Ishtar**) - The goddess Inanna was the patron and special god/goddess of the ancient Sumerian city of Erech (Uruk), the City of Gilgamesh. As Queen of heaven, she was associated with the Evening Star (the planet Venus), and sometimes with the Moon. She may also have been associated the brightest stars in the heavens, as she is sometimes symbolized by an eight-pointed star, a seven-pointed star, or a four pointed star. In the earliest traditions, Inanna was the daughter of An, the Sky, Ki, the Earth (both of Uruk, (Warka)). In later Sumerian traditions, she is the daughter of Nanna (Narrar), the Moon God and Ningal, the Moon Goddess (both of Ur). On either side of her cult statue shown above is the ring-post, also known as Inanna's knot. This was a sacred symbol of Inanna, associated exclusively with her. It represents a door-post made from a bundle of reeds, the upper ends, bent into a loop to hold a cross-pole. The ring-post is shown on many depictions of Inanna, including those of the famed Warka Vase. The Goddess Inanna ruled the people of Sumer. Under Her rule the people and their communities prospered and thrived. The urban culture, though agriculturally dependent, centered upon the reverence of the Goddess - a cella, or shrine, in her honor was the centerpiece of the cities. Inanna was the queen of seven temples throughout Sumer. Their literary works reveal religious beliefs, ethical ideas, and the spiritual aspirations of the Sumerians. Among these works are the hymns and stories of Inanna -- important here because they



were recorded at a time when the patriarchy was beginning to take hold, and the position of the Goddess, although strong, was changing.

Inanna was also the Queen of Beasts, and the Lion was her sacred animal. She presented the me by Enki. The me(plural,pronounced 'may') is the order out of chaos, the great attributes of civilization, the powers of the gods. The me were conferred by the gods on other gods or on the king-priests, who as the representatives of the gods on Earth, ensured the continuation of civilization. These special powers, contained within the me allowed the holy plan or design (the gis-hur) to be implemented on Earth. The me were contained within special objects of great sacred value, such as the royal throne, the sacred bed, the temple drum, the scepter, the crown, and other special articles of clothing or jewelry to be worn, sat on, lied in, and so forth. These things were charmed like a talisman; they contained the power; they were the me. Inanna got Enki drunk and tricked him into giving her the me. They gave her many special gifts and powers, she was Goddess and Queen of Heaven and Earth, the me even gave her the power to descend into the Underworld and ascend from it. Inanna could be wily and cunning. She outwitted both Enki, the God of Wisdom, and her dark sister Ereshkigal. She was a powerful warrior, and drove a war chariot, drawn by lions. She was gentle and loving, a source of beauty and grace. She was a source of inspiration. She endowed the people of Sumer with gifts that inspired and insured their growth as a people and a culture. She is also depicted as a passionate, sensuous lover in The Courtship of Inanna and Dumuzi, which established the principle of Sacred Marriage. Indeed, one aspect of Inanna is as the Goddess of Love, and it is in this aspect that she embodies creativity, procreativity, passion, raw sexual energy and power. Erech or Uruk, near modern Warka was Inanna's sacred city. It was one of the oldest cities of Sumer. The Bible said that it was founded by King Nimrod . Dumuzi , Inanna's consort was a shepherd king of Uruk, as was Gilgamesh and his father Lugalbanda. The Temple of Inanna was in Erech. Also known as the E-ana or House of Heaven, this was her most important temple. The shrine of the Goddess was built on an artificial mound some forty feet above the ground level and was reached by a staircase. A statue of the Goddess was housed within the shrine.

#### FROM A HYMN TO INANNA

My father gave me the heavens, gave me the earth,  
I am Inanna!  
Kingship he gave me,  
queenship he gave me,  
waging of battle he gave me, the attack he gave me,  
the floodstorm he gave me, the hurricane he gave me!  
The heavens he set as a crown on my head,  
the earth he set as sandals on my feet,  
a holy robe he wrapped around my body,  
a holy sceptre he placed in my hand.  
The gods are sparrows -- I am a falcon;  
the Anunnaki trundle along -- I am a splendid wild cow;  
I am father Enlil's splendid wild cow,  
his splendid wild cow leading the way!

Goddess of Love and War: Inanna stands beside her insignia, gateposts hung with streamers, and is present whenever life is conceived through love or ended in battle. Nanna and Ningal's daughter.

**Inaras** (Hittite and Hurrian) - Daughter of the Storm-god and goddess of the wild animals of the steppe. After the Storm-god's initial defeat by Illuyankas, she follows his request to

set up a feast. She recruits Hupasiayas of Zigaratta, to aid in revenge on Illuyankas, by taking him as a lover. She then sets about luring Illuyankas and his children to a feast. After the dragon and his children gorge themselves on her meal, Hupasiayas binds him with a rope. Then the Storm-god sets upon them and defeats them. She then gives Hupasiayas a house on a cliff to live in, yet warns him not to look out the window, lest he see his wife and children. He disobeys her, and seeing his family begs to be allowed to go home. She consults with Hannahanna, who promises to give her land and a man. She then goes missing and is sought after by her father and Hannahanna with her bee.

**Insusinak** (Elamite god) - god of the city of Susa, and later a god of the underworld.

**Inzak, Enzag** (Dilmun) - Regarded by non-Dilmunites as the supreme deity of Dilmun, but on the island itself He seems to have been accounted as Lord and Patron of the desert tribes dwelling nearby.

**Irra** - In Sumerian mythology, Irra is a plague god and underling of Nergal.

**Irsirra deities** (Hittite and Hurrian) - These gods who live in the dark earth are charged by Kumarbis through Imbaluris to hide Ullikummi from the sky gods, the Sun-god, the Storm-god, and Ishtar. They are also charged with placing the child on the shoulder of Upelluri. Later they accept the child and deliver it to Ellil, before placing it on Upelluri's right shoulder.

**Ishat** (fire) - The 'bitch of the gods', an enemy of Baal, slain by Anat.

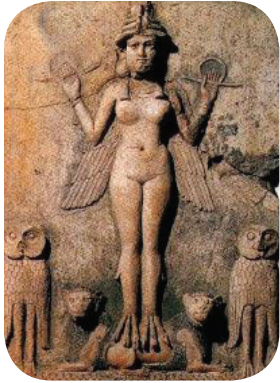
**Ishhara** (I) (Semitic/Sumarian) - A Goddess of love, and consort of Dagan in at least one tradition, or the Hurrian Underworld goddess. Possible mother of **Sebittu** and the **Seven**.

**Ishkur** (Sumarian) - God appointed to be in charge of the winds by Enki. He is in charge of "the silver lock of the 'heart' of heaven". (Reference to the silver thread which attaches the soul of the wanderer to his/her body) He is identified with the Akkadian god, Adad. Iskur was the chief weather deity, Lord of storms and tempests; He-Who-Wields-The-Lightning. He also has a beneficent aspect as the bringer of cleansing and fructifying rain. He was patron of flowing water generally, and that could imply either living streams and rivers which irrigate the land, or floods which destroy. In Akkadian he was known as **Adad**. Associated with the Hurrian god **Teshup** or the Kassite god **Buriash**.

**Isimud** - minister to Enki/Ea and acts as a messenger for him also. In Akkadian he is called Usmu.

**Istar/Ishtar** - She is Anu's second consort, daughter of Anu and Antum, (sometimes daughter of Sin), and sometimes the sister of Ereshkigal. She is the goddess of love, procreation, and war. She is armed with a quiver and bow. Her temples have special prostitutes of both genders. She is often accompanied by a lion, and sometimes rides it. The Eanna in Uruk is dedicated both to her and Anu. As Irmini, she has a parakku (throne-base) at the cedar mountain. She loved Tammuz in her youth, although he spends half the year in the nether world wailing. She loved a lion, a stallion, a shepherd, all of whom she required great sacrifice from and abandoned. She loved Ishullanu, a gardener who offered her fruit, but was taken aback when she revealed herself to him, so she turned him into a frog. After Gilgamesh cleans himself up, following his defeat of Humbaba, she asks him to be her lover and husband, and offers him many gifts and the homage of earthly rulers and kingdoms.





She is rejected, both because of her godly nature, and as a fair-weather lover. Ishtar asks Anu to send the Bull of Heaven to kill Gilgamesh, and he agrees. She determines to go to the Underworld. She threatened to smash the gate and raise the dead so that they would eat and outnumber the living unless the gatekeeper would open it for her. She holds the great keppu-toy (a whipping top). She is allowed in by the gate keeper, who takes her through seven gates to Ereshkigal's realm. By Ereshkigal's rites, she is stripped of items of clothing as she passes through each of the gates: first her crown, then her earrings, then her necklace, then her tudditu (breast pins), then her belt of birthstones, then her wrist and ankle bangles, and finally her garment. While in the underworld, no creatures engaged in acts of procreation. She was kept in Egalgina and

brought forth by Namtar after being sprinkled with the water of life, and after 'His appearance is bright' has been cursed. She is led back out through the gates, given back her accoutrements, and released in exchange for Dumuzi (Tammuz).

Her Symbols are an eight or sixteen-pointed star. Sacred number: 15 Astrological region: Dibal (Venus) and the Bowstar (Sirius) Sacred animal: lion, (dragon)

**Ishtar(Sumarian Innana)** - Ishtar was the Babylonian goddess of love and war, worshiped by the Babylonians and Assyrians, and personified as the legendary queen Semiramis. Ishtar (Sumerian Inanna) is Goddess of love, sexuality and war. Is described in a Sumerian Text as "One whom not even 120 lovers could exhaust". She became the most important Goddess in Western Asia. Her sacred beast was a lion. Her cult center cities were Uruk, Kish, Agade and Arba'il.

### A PRAYER TO ISHTAR

Unto the queen of the gods, into whose hands are committed the behest of the great gods, unto the lady of Nineveh, the queen of the gods, the exalted one, unto the daughter of the moon-god, the twin sister of the sun god, unto her who ruleth all kingdoms, unto the goddess of the world who deethers decrees, unto the Lady of heaven and earth who receiveth supplication, unto the merciful goddess who hearkeneth unto entreaty, who receiveth prayer, who loveth righteousness, I make my prayer unto Ishtar to whom all confusion is a cause of grief. The sorrows which I see I lament before thee. Incline thine ear unto my words of lamentation and let thine heart be opened unto my sorrowful speech. Turn thy face unto me, O Lady, so that by reason thereof the heart of thy servant may be made strong! I, Ashur-nasir-pal, the sorrowful one, am thy humble servant; I, who am beloved of thee, make offerings unto thee and adore thy divinity . . . I was born in the mountains which no man knoweth; I was without understanding and I prayed not of thy majesty. Moreover the people of Assyria did not recognise and did not accept thy divinity. But thou, O Ishtar, thou mighty Queen of the gods, by the lifting up of thine eyes did teach me, for thou didst desire my rule. Thou didst take me from the mountains, and didst make me the Door of my peoples . . . and thou, O Ishtar, didst make great my name! As concerning that for which thou art wrath with me,



grant me forgiveness. Let thine anger be appeased, and let thine heart be mercifully inclined towards me.

### INCANTATION TO ISHTAR

O heroic one, Ishtar; the immaculate one of the goddesses,  
Torch of Heaven and earth, radiance of the continents,  
The goddess 'Lady of Heaven', first-begotten of Sin, first-born of Ningal,  
Twin-sister of . . . the hero Shamash [the Sun-god];  
O Ishtar, you are Anu [the supreme god], you rule the heavens;  
With Enlil the Counsellor you advise mankind;  
The Word, creator of liturgies and rituals of 'Hand-washing'.

You alter the Fates, and an ill event becomes good;  
I have sought you amongst the gods; supplications are offered to you;  
To you amongst the goddesses I have turned, with intent to make entreaty,  
Before you is a (protecting) shedu[a genie], behind you a (protecting) lamassu,  
At your right is Justice, at your left Goodness,  
Fixed on your head are Audience, Favour, Peace,  
Your sides are encompassed with Life and Well-being;  
How good it is to pray to you, how blessed to be heard by you!  
Your glance is Audience, your utterance is the Light.  
Have pity on me, O Ishtar! Order my prospering!  
Glance on me in affirmation! Accept my litany!

I have borne your yoke; set tranquility (for me)!  
I have sought your brightness; may my face be bright.  
I have turned to your dominion; may it be life and well-being for me.  
May I (too) have a favourable shedu like that before you;  
May I (too) have a lamassu like that which goes behind you.  
May I garner the prosperity at your right hand,  
May I attain to the favour at your left hand.

Lengthen my days, bestow life!  
Let me live, let me be well, let me proclaim your divinity.  
Let me achieve what I desire . . .

At the end of the prayer comes the instruction:  
Wording of the 'hand-raising to Ishtar'. Before Ishtar you shall set a censer with juniper-wood; you shall pour a gruel-libation, you shall recite the 'hand-raising' three times, you shall do obeisance.

**Ishtaran** - a local deity of the Third dynastic period on to the Middle Babylonian period. Associated with justice and keeper of the borders of Lamash and Umma. He was the protector of the city of Deer. His wife was known as Sharrat-Deer or "Queen of Deer", and his minister was the snake god Nirah.

**Ishum (Hendursanga** - 'lofty mace') - He is the god of fire, and is adept at using weapons. He lights the way in front of Erra and the Sebitti. He advises Erra against attacking Marduk or his people in Babylon. When Erra takes Marduk's seat, Ishum persuades him against

destroying Babylon, finally appeasing him by promising that the other gods would acknowledge themselves as his servants.

**Ismekarab and Lagamal** (Elamite goddesses) - goddess of judgement of the dead.

**Istustaya** (Hittite and Hurrian) - One of the deities who sat under the Hawthorn tree awaiting the return of Telipinus.

**Isum** (Sumerian) - Guardian and protector from night-time terrors, divine messenger, and benign influence within the underworld, He was a God of enduring popularity.

**Ithm** - He is the caanite god of sheep.

**Kabta** - In Sumerian mythology, Kabta is the god of bricks, he is the god who lays foundations and builds houses. Appointed to that position by Enki.

**Kakka** - Anshar and Anu's vizier, who is sent to Kurnugi to deliver Ereshkigal the message that Anu wishes to deliver a gift to her via one of her messengers. Anshar sends him to round up Lahmu and Lahamu to send off Marduk for his battle with Tiamat and rally them to his side.

**Kalkal** - In Sumerian mythology, Kalkal is Enlil's door-keeper in Nippur.

**Kamrusepa(s) or Katahziwuri** (Hittite and Hurrian) - She is the goddess of magic and healing. She witnessed and announced the Moon-god's fall from heaven on to the gate complex. After Telepinus has been found, yet remains angry, she is set to cure him of his temper. She performs an elaborate magical ritual, removing his evil and malice. In another tablet, she performs the spell of fire, which removes various illnesses, changing them to a mist which ascends to heaven, lifted by the Dark Earth. The Sea-god questions the fire on its role.

**Kemosh** - National god of the Moabites, and his powers were mainly connected to war. He is depicted as a warrior between 2 torches.

**Ki** - In Sumerian mythology, Ki was the personification of the earth.

**Kingu (Quingu)**- Tiamat's general in the war against the gods. Keeper of the tablets of destiny, which hold the divine plan for all the cosmos. Ninhursag used Kingu's blood to make the first man, and from this comes the demonic, rebellious aspect of human nature.

**Khirkhib** (was thought to be Hiribi), king of summer, king of the raiding season (autumn) - He is probably a Hurrian deity. He acts as a matchmaker between Yarikh and Nikkal-and-Ib, initially trying to dissuade Yarikh from pursuing her suggesting Pidray and Ybrdmy as alternative choices.

**Kishar** - In Sumerian mythology, Kishar is the mother of Anu and the child of Tiamat and Apsu. Her name means 'whole earth',

**Kothar-and-Khasis** ('skillful and clever', also called **Chousor** and **Heyan** and identified with Ptah) He is the Caanite craftsman god and is identified with Memphis. He is ordered by El to build Yam's throne. He upbraids Yam for rising against Baal and threatens him with a magic weapon. He gives Baal the magic weapons Yagrush (Chaser) and Aymur (Driver). He crafts Baal's bribe for Athirat, a temple serving set of gold and silver. He build's Baal's second house and insists over Baal's objections on including a window. He constructs a bow and arrows set for Aqhat, presenting them first to Daniel and staying for a feast.

**Kotharat** (was thought to be Kathirat) 'skillful' - They are a group of caanite goddesses associated with conception and childbirth. '...The swallow-like daughters of the crescent moon.' They are also associated with the new moon. They attend **Daniel** for seven days to aid in the conception of Aqhat and receive his sacrifice. See Heros.

**Kubaba** (Hittite and Hurrian) - She is the chief goddess of the Neo-Hittites, she became **Cybebe** to the Phrygians and Cybele to the Romans. See **Cybele**.

**Kumarbi(s)** - 'the father of all gods' according to the Hurrians. - He is sometimes equated with Enlil and Dagan. His city is Urkis. He thinks wise thoughts and carries a staff. He served as Anus's cup-bearer for nine years and then rebelled, chased Anus, and bit off and swallowed his phallus, thereby becoming impregnated with the Storm-god, the Aranzahus (Tigris) river, and Tasmisus. With that news, he spat out Aranzahus and Tasmisus of on Mount Kanzuras. The Storm-god begins to exit through Kumarbis's 'tarnassus', causing him to moan in pain. He asks Ayas to give him his son to

devour, which he does. Ayas has 'poor' magic worked of him and his 'tarnassus' is secured, so the Storm-god exits through his 'good place' instead. He is then presumably defeated by the Storm-god, Anus, and his offspring.

During a plot to overthrow the Storm-god, he lay with a Rock as if it were a woman. He instructs Imbaluris, his messenger to send a message to the Sea, that Kumarbis should remain father of the gods. The Sea hosts a feast for him and later Kumarbis' Rock gives birth to Ullikummis. Kumarbis announces that his son will defeat the Storm-god, his city Kummiya, his brother Tasmisus and the gods from the sky. He charges Imbaluris to seek out the Irsirra deities to hide Ullikummis from the Sun-god, the Storm-god, and Ishtar.

**Kur (The Underworld)** - The underworld of the Sumerians is revealed, to some extent, by a composition about the death and afterlife of the king and warlord Ur-Nammu. After having died on the battlefield, Ur-Nammu arrives below, where he offers sundry gifts and sacrifices to the "seven gods" of the nether world: Nergal, [the deified] Gilgamesh, Ereshkigal [the queen of the underworld, who is either given to Kur in the underworld or given dominion over the underworld in the prelude to Gilgamesh, Dumuzi [the shepherd, Inanna's husband], Namtar, Hubishag, and Ningishzida - each in his own palace; he also presented gifts to Dimpimekug and to the "scribe of the nether- world."...





After arriving at his assigned spot] ...certain of the dead were turned over to him, perhaps to be his attendants, and Gilgamesh, his beloved brother, explained to him the rules and regulations of the nether world.

Another tablet indicates that the sun, moon, and their respective gods, spent time in the underworld as well. The sun journeyed there after setting, and the moon rested there at the end of the month. Both Utu and Nanna "decreed the fate" of the dead" while there. Dead heroes ate bread, drank, and quenched the dead's thirst with water. The gods of the nether world, the deceased, and his city, were prayed to for the benefit of the dead and his family.

The Sumerian version of Gilgamesh includes a trip to the nether world as well. In the prologue, Enki sails for the Kur, presumably to rescue Ereshkigal after she was given over to Kur. He is assailed by creatures with stones. The main body of the tale includes a trip to the nether world as well. Enkidu enters the "Great Dwelling" through a gate, in order to recover Gilgamesh's pukku and mikku, objects of an uncertain nature. He broke several taboos of the underworld, including the wearing of clean clothes and sandals, 'good' oil, carrying a weapon or staff, making a noise, or behaving normally towards ones family. For these violations he was "held fast by 'the outcry of the nether world'". Intervention by Enki, rescued the hero.

When Enlil visits the nether world, he must pass by a gatekeeper, followed by a "man of the river" and a "man of the boat" -all of whom act as guardians.

Inanna also visits Kur, which results in a myth reminiscent of the Greek seasonal story of Persephone. She sets out to witness the funeral rites of her sister-in-law Ereshkigal's husband Gugalanna, the Bull of Heaven. She takes precaution before setting out, by telling her servant Ninshubur to seek assistance from Enlil, Nanna, or Enki at their shrines, should she not return. Inanna knocks on the outer gates of Kur and the gatekeeper, Neti, questions her. He consults with queen Ereshkigal and then allows Inanna to pass through the seven gates of the underworld. After each gate, she is required to remove adornments and articles of clothing, until after the seventh gate, she is naked. The Annuna pass judgment against her and Ereshkigal slays her and hangs her on the wall.

Inanna is rescued by the intervention of Enki. He creates two sexless creatures that empathize with Ereshkigal's suffering, and thereby gain a gift - Inanna's corpse. They restore her to life with the Bread of Life and the Water of Life, but the Sumerian underworld has a conservation of death law. No one can leave without providing someone to stay in their stead. Inanna is escorted by galla(demons) past Ninshubur and members of her family. She doesn't allow them to claim anyone until she sees Dumuzi on his throne in Uruk. They then seize Dumuzi, but he escapes them twice by transforming himself, with the aid of Utu. Eventually he is caught and slain. Inanna spies his sister, Geshtinanna, in mourning and they go to Dumuzi. She allows Dumuzi, the shepherd, to stay in the underworld only six months of the year, while Geshtinanna will stay the other six. As with the Greek story of the kidnapping of Persephone, this linked the changing seasons, the emergence of the plants from the ground, with the return of a harvest deity from the nether world. Although he had always been a shepherd (and possibly a mortal king) he was blessed with the powers of fertility following the consummation of his marriage to Inanna in "The Courtship of Inanna and Dumuzi".

As the farmer, let him make the fields fertile,  
As the shepherd, let him make the sheepfolds multiply,  
Under his reign let there be vegetation,  
Under his reign let there be rich grain (Volkstein & Kramer p. 45)

Geshtinanna is also associated with growth, but where her brother rules over the spring harvested grain, she rules over the autumn harvested vines

**Kurunta** (Hittite and Hurrian) - This god's symbol is the stag. He is associated with rural areas.

**Lagamal** and **Ismekarab** (Elamite goddesses) - goddess of judgement of the dead.

**Lahar** - Lahar is the cattle-goddess, initially living in Duku (Dulkug). Enlil and Enki, at Enki's urging, create farms and fields for him and the grain goddess Ashnan. He was created by Enlil to provide cattle for the earth. This area has places for Lahar to take care of the animals and Ashnan to grow the crops. The two agricultural deities get drunk and begin fighting, so it falls to Enlil and Enki to resolve their conflict - how they do so has not been recovered.

**Lahmu** and **Lahamu** 'the hairy one' or 'muddy' - In Sumerian mythology, Lahmu and Lahamu were the first children of Tiamat and Apsu. They have three pairs of curls, and are naked except for a triple sash. Kappa was sent to fetch them by Anshar, to help send off Marduk on his fight with Tiamat and be rallied to his side. They complied and helped find a princely shrine for Marduk

**Lamashtu** - In Sumerian mythology, Lamashtu is a dreaded female demon known as 'she who erases'.

**Lelwanis** or **Lilwani**, Hurrian Ereshkigal, sometimes assimilated with Ishtar (Hurrian) - 'Sun of the Earth' - Goddess of the earth and the nether-world, appeasement of her through sheep sacrifices

helps remove threats from evil omens.

**Lahmu/Lakhmu** - is a deity from Akkadian mythology, first-born son of Apsu and Tiamat. He and his sister Lahamu were the kin of Anshar and Kishar, the sky father and earth mother, who begat the first gods. Lahmu was sometimes depicted as a snake, and sometimes as a bearded man with a red sash and six curls on his head. In Sumerian times Lahmu meant "the muddy one" and it was a title given to the gatekeeper of the Abzu temple of Enki at Eridu. In the latter form, he is called Lahmu the Hairy. He and Lahamu are never mentioned separately.

**Lilu, Lilitu, and Ardat-Lili** (Sumerian) Not divinities as such, this trio of closely related demons inhabited the desert wastes, and functioned largely in terms of sexual and fertility aberration. Lilu and Lilitu were male and female equivalents of each other, and were regarded as dangerous to pregnancies and newborns, while Ardat-Lili ("Maiden Lilitu") may have been their offspring, and was seen as a spirit of sexual disfunction and frustration, malevolent wives, and degeneracy in general. The general idea was imported into Hebrew mythology as Lilith, Demoness of desolation, obsession, and madness.



**Lulal and La-tarake** - one god originally, they are closely related. Associated as magically protective deities against witchcraft and sorcery. Lulal is protector of the city Badtibira. In Inanna's Descent into the Underworld he is empowered with warrior and domestic animal powers. often depicted as lion-headed figures.

**Mami** - Sumerian bird goddess and mother goddess.

**Mammetum** - In Sumerian mythology, Mammetum is the maker or mother of fate.

**Mamu** (Sumerian) - An oracular divinity of dreams and visions, child of Utu, and of ambiguous or shifting gender. Mamud is Sumerian for dream.



**Marduk** - In Sumerian mythology, Marduk is the son of Ea and Dumkina. He was of proud form and piercing stare, born mature, powerful, and perfect and superior. He has four eyes, four ears, and emits fire from his mouth when he speaks. He is a "King of the Igigi" He often works with and asks questions of his father. He is also gifted in magic. During the Kassite period, he was made the King of the Babylonian Pantheon. His cult center city was Babylon. He has fifty names many of which are those of other deities whose attributes he usurped. In a popular myth, Marduk came with his host to attack Tiamat. Qingu's strategy initially confuses him, and Tiamat tried to enspell him, hurling jibes at him. She was rebuffed and incited into single combat with Marduk. She continued to cast her spell and Marduk nets her, and throws a wind at her. She tried to swallow it and was undone - distended, shot, sliced in two and cut in the heart. Her crushed skull heralded her death, and half of her skin was used to roof up the sky. Her eyes became the sources of the Tigris and Euphrates rivers.

**Magus (Magi, Magoi, Maji)** - The origin of the word Magus (pronounced méjjes) is Latin from the Greek Magoi for an ancient Persian word for the priestly cast serving several religions. When the Zoroastrian priesthood became very popular, the word became associated with that religion. Plural form of the word is magi (pronounced méidjai). Its cognate maghdim is a Chaldean term meaning wisdom and philosophy. Also, the wise men that brought gifts and paid homage to the infant Jesus at Bethlehem. This word is also the root for magic and magick. Possibly derived from the "Me".

**Martu** (Amorite) - One source names a deity called "Martu", which is the deity that all traders bore emblems to. Martu seems to be a deity of trade and bartering. There is a love story associated with Martu, trading women or brides.

**Martu, Amurru** (Akkadian) - Child of An by Ninursaga, He was spoken of as the leveler of cities and destroyer of peoples. He was the personification of the nomad barbarians who swarmed into Mesopotamia from very early times. His name was the same as the epithet used to describe such people, and is reflected in the Old Testament description of Assyrians as "Amorites" and was associated with the west.

**Maruttash** - Kassite god associated with Ninurta.

**Me** - Godly laws or divine fates prescribed by the gods for all living things. Perhaps a code of life itself.

**Meskilak** (Dilmun) - Seemingly the patroness of the city of Dilmun proper, and probably the mother of Inzak. She seems to have been a local variant on the mainland Ninursaga.

**Mezullas** (Hittite and Hurrian) - She is the daughter of the Storm-god and the Sun-goddess of Arinna. She has influence with her parents.

**Milqart (Melqart, Baal Tsur, Milkashtart?)** - 'king of the city', the hunter, 'fire of heaven'. - Patron god of Tyre, he was the god of the Metropolis and of the monarchy at Tyre and Carthage. His cult spread throughout the Mediterranean region, but has not been found at second millennium sites. As with the Babylonian Nergal/Erra, he has been identified with Heracles archetypes. Greek sources imply that he was a dying and rising vegetation god, and that he was associated with the sacred marriage like the Sumerian god, Dumuzi. He was ritually immolated in an annual festival. He was also a god of the sea and was pictured mounted on a hippocampus. Melqart was early on the god of sea and navigation, but developed over time to become a solar god.

**Miyatanzipa** (Hittite and Hurrian) - One of the deities who sat under the Hawthorn tree awaiting the return of Telipinu. (S)he? also sat under the ippiyas tree when Hannahanna found the hunting bag.

**Molech (Melech, Malik, Milcom?, Milqart?)** - Not explicitly found in the Ugarit texts, Molech is a bit of an enigma. He shows up in the Old Testament in Leviticus 18 and 20, 1 Kings 11, 2 Kings 23, and Jeremiah 32. From that he appears to be a god of the Ammonites - a region west of the Jordan - whose worshipers sacrificed children in fires at temples, some of which were in the Valley of Hinnom, i.e. Gehenna, just south of Jerusalem. The Old Testament also names the similarly spelt "Milcom" as a god of the Ammonites leading to the suspicion that they are the same god. Molech is probably not the original name of the deity. There has been a good deal of argument as to whether Molech could be identified with another foreign deity and which deity that would be, or whether molech was simply a term which referred to child sacrifice of any sort. The Canaanite gods Mot and Milqart of Tyre, and the Mesopotamian god Nergal, whom I believe is somewhere referred to as Malik=king, are a couple of the prime candidates for being Molech.

**Moon-god** (Hurrian Kashku) - He fell upon the 'killamar', the gate complex, from heaven and disappeared. Storm-god/Taru rain-stormed after him, frightening him. Hapantali went to him and uttered the words of a spell over him. While known to bestow ill omens, he can be appeased by sheep sacrifice.

**Mot** - 'Death and Prince/Dissolution/Evil', - Mot is the Canaanite god of sterility, death, and the underworld. In one hand he holds the scepter of bereavement, and in the other the scepter of widowhood. His jaws and throat are described in cosmic proportions and serve as a euphemism for death. When he has influence over Shapshu, it is unusually hot and dry. He sits on a pit for a throne in the city of Miry in the underworld. Prior to the conception of the gracious gods, he is pruned and felled like a vine by the vine dressers. He is favored by El following Baal's defeat of Yam and Baal refuses him tribute. When Baal's messengers deliver him an invitation to feast at Baal's new palace, he is insulted that he is offered bread and wine and not the flesh he hungers for. In fact, he threatens to defeat Baal as Baal did



Leviathan, causing the sky to wilt and then eat Baal himself. Baal would then visit his palace in the underworld. He is pleased that Baal submits to him. Baal goes to the underworld and either he or his substitute is eaten by Mot. Presumably the sons of Athirat had some part in his death. After seven years of famine, Anat seizes Mot, splits, winnows, sows and grinds him like corn. Baal eventually returns and defeats Mot's allies. After seven years Mot returns and demands Baal's brother, lest he wipe out humanity. Baal rebuffs him and the two have a mighty battle, but are separated by Shapshu who declares Baal to have El's favor.

**Mukisanus** - He is Kumarbis' vizier

**Mullisu** (Assyrian) - The Assyrian version of Ninlil, in which mythos She is the wife of Assur, not Enlil

**Mummu** (Babylon) - the craftsman god. He is attendant to Ea and Apsu's vizier. He is very fond of Apsu and colludes with him to disperse the younger gods when they disturb Tiamat, even after Tiamat rejects the plan. Ea found out about his plan, enspelled him and tied him up.

**Mushdamma** - God placed in charge of foundations and houses by Enki in Sumarian myth.

**Nabu** - In Sumerian mythology, Nabu is the god of writing and wisdom. Nabu is Marduk's son. He is the patron of scribes and wisemen. His cult center was Borsippa. In Akkadian he is the god of Despoilment. Identified with the planet mercury. Eventually he became a supreme god of Babylon beside Marduk.

**Nahhunte** (Elamite) - A solar deity, one concerned with justice and the law as well.

**Nammu** - Nammu is the Goddess of the watery abyss, the primeval sea. She may be the earliest of deities within Sumerian cosmology as she gave birth to heaven and earth. She is elsewhere described both as the mother of all the gods and as the wife of An. She is Enki's mother. She prompts him to create servants for the gods and is then directed by him on how, with the help of Nimmah/Ninhursag to create man. Nammu, Goddess of the Primeval Sea, "the mother who gave birth to heaven and earth." In some traditions, the mother of An and Ki (Heaven and Earth), and a personification or Aspect of Abzu.

**Namtar** - In Sumerian mythology, Namtar is the Fate-Cutter, Ereshkigal's messenger and vizier, the herald of death. He commands sixty diseases, which are grouped by the part of the body which they affect. Offerings to him may stave off diseases. He is a 'Fate', demon responsible for death. Namtar has no hands or feet and does not eat or drink. God of the underworld of Kur. He takes Ishtar back out of the Underworld at Ereshkigal's command. He acts as her messenger to Anu.

**Nana** - In Sumerian mythology, Nana was a virgin mother goddess of the Spirit of vegetation and fertility. A beloved consort of kings.

**Nanaya** - The goddess associated with some of the sexual aspects of Inana was worshiped together with her daughter Kanisura (Akkadian Usur-amassa).

**Nanna** (Also **Ashgirbabbar**) - Nanna is another name for the moon god Sin. He is the product of Enlil's rape of Ninlil. He travels across the sky in his gufa, (a small, canoe-like

boat made of woven twigs and tar), with the stars and planets about him. Nanna was the tutelary deity of Ur - appointed as king of that city by An and Enlil. He journeyed to Nippur by boat, stopping at five cities along the way. When he arrived at Nippur, he proffered gifts to Enlil and pleaded with him to ensure that his city of Ur would be blessed, prosperous, and thus, not be flooded. Nanna was married to Ningal and they produced Inanna and Utu. He rests in the Underworld every month, and there decrees the fate of the dead. He refuses to send aid to Inanna when she is trapped in the underworld. He established Ur-Nammu as his mortal representative, establishing the third Ur dynasty.

**Nanna-Suen** (Sumerian) - The moon-God, child of Enlil and Ninlil, husband of Ningal, and in at least one tradition the father of Utu and Inanna. He is another name for Sin or Nanna which is used together. His other names are Ashimbabbar, Namrasit "Who shines forth", and Inbu "the friut", referring to the waxing and waning of the moon. His number is 30 and was sometimes referred to as 30.

**Nanshe** - a local deity of the city-state Lagash in East Sumer. Her minister was Hendersag. She is associated with divination of dreams, birds and fish as well as wights and measures.

**Napir** (Elamite) - moon god

**Nash, Nindara (Nanshe)** - one of "the pure goddesses", - Nanshe is a goddess of the city of Lagash who takes care of orphans and widows. She also seeks out justice for the poor and casts judgement on New Year's Day. She is supported by **Nidaba** and her husband, **Haia**. She is Ea's daughter. She was also an oracular divinity with the power to interpret dreams and omens. She also held a position as protectress of the common-folk.

**Nebo** (Also **Nabu**) - God of writing and speech, speaker for the gods. Nebo maintains records of men's deeds and produces them for judgment after death. His symbol is the stylus.

**Nedu** - In Sumerian mythology, Nedu is the guardian of the first gate of the underworld.

**Neti** - the chief gatekeeper, the scribe of Kur - due gifts, no palace

**Nergal (Erragal, Erra, Engidudu, Meslamtaea)** - God of the underworld, mass destruction and plague. Lord who prowls by night, the Unsparing, god of the underworld, husband of Ereshkigal, lover of Mami. As Erra he is a hunter god, a god of war and plague. He is submissive to Ea. He can Throw out of heaven, he stormed the underworld with fourteen demons until Ereshkigal consented to marry him. Nergal is perhaps the co-ruler of Kur with Ereshkigal, he is more prominent in Babylonian literature. He holds Enkidu fast in the underworld after Enkidu broke several taboos while trying to recover Gilgamesh's pukku and mikku. Nergal is the second son of Enlil and Ninlil. He is more prominent in Babylonian literature and makes a brief appearance in II Kings 17:30. He can open the doorposts to the underworld to allow the passage of a soul.

He achieved his post by refusing to stand before an address of Namtar. When Ereshkigal called him to be punished, he dragged her off of her throne by



the hair, and threatened to decapitate her. She offered him the position as her consort and he accepted.

He is an evil aspect of Shamash. He allows Enkidu's spirit to visit Gilgamesh at the behest of Ea. He is sometimes the son of Ea. Prior to his first journey to the underworld, he builds a chair of fine wood under Ea's instruction to give to Ereshkigal as a gift from Anu. He is advised not to take part of the food, drink and entertainment offered there. He is tempted by Ereshkigal and eventually succumbs, sleeping with her for seven days. He then takes his leave, angering her. The gatekeeper lets him out and he climbs the stairway to heaven. He hides from Namtar in heaven, but is discovered and returns to the underworld to marry Ereshkigal. In some versions, on the way back to the Underworld, he seizes control of Namtar's attendant demons and grabs Ereshkigal by the hair. In this position she offers marriage.

He commands the Sebitti, seven warriors who are also the Pleiades, they aid in his killing of noisy, over-populous people and animals. He rallies them when he feels the urge for war, and calls Ishum to light the way. They prefer to be used in war instead of waiting while Erra kills by disease.

He regards Marduk as having become negligent and prepares to attack his people in Babylon. He challenges Marduk in Esagila in Shuanna/Babylon. Marduk responds that he already killed most of the people in the flood and would not do so again. He also states that he could not run the flood without getting off of his throne and letting control slip. Erra volunteers to take his seat and control things. Marduk takes his vacation and Erra sets about trying to destroy Babylon. Ishum intervenes on Babylon's behalf and persuades Erra to stop, but not before he promises that the other gods will acknowledge themselves as Erra's servants.

**Nidaba/ Nanibgal/ Nisaba** - the Sumerian goddess of fertility, in particular of the date palm and the reed. In Assyrian times, she came to be regarded as the goddess of writing, learning and astrology. Her sanctuaries were E-zagin at Eresh and at Umma. On a depiction found in Lagash, she appears with flowing hair, crowned with horned tiara bearing supporting ears of corn and a crescent moon. Her dense hair is evoked in comparison in the description of similarly hairy Enkidu in the Gilgamesh epic.

While she is seen as a grain goddess, she is worshiped primarily as the goddess of learning. She is the patron goddess of writing and serves as an instructor and record keeper to both men and gods alike. She was tutor to the Babylonian Nabu, the son of Marduk. In earlier tales, she is the chief scribe of Nanshe, a goddess of social justice. It was Nisaba's task to record all who entered the temple for aid and determine whether or not they were able to stand before her mistress or not. As the goddess of writing, she was revered in scribal schools. It was custom to finish a composition by praising Nisaba, and many recovered tablets have a final line under their main body of text that honors the goddess.

She is looked upon fondly by Enki, who assisted her in establishing a place of learning. Her parentage is unknown or disputed, but as she is sometimes seen as a sister to Nanshe, it may be Enki who is her father and Ninhursag, the goddess of earth, her mother. Some texts occasionally referred to Enlil as her father. It is uncertain whether these are meant to represent blood relationships or mere association, as referring to a god as 'father' is sometimes nothing more than a title of honor and respect.

**Nimrod** - a possible biblical name for Babylonian nation. Also the name of the Babylonian god of the hunt.



Nimrod

**Nin-agal** - 'lord strong-arm' patron god of smiths. He chews copper and makes tools.

**Ninazu** - Babylonian god of magic incantations. Son of Enlil and Ninlil, his name means lord healer. His primary domain was the underworld where he kept the waters of life. In another myth he is listed as son of Ereshkigal and father of Ningishzida.

**Nin-ildu** - In Sumerian mythology, Nin-ildu is the carpenter god. He carries the pure axe of the sun.

**Ningal, Nikkal** (Sumerian)- She is Nanna's wife and the mother of Inanna and Utu. She begs and weeps before Enlil for them not to flood her city, Ur. (Also **Nikkal** of the Canaanites.)

**Ningal** (Akkadian) - the consort of Sin, the mother of Shamash Also Ishtar (Ishhara, Imini, Inanna) - She is Anu's second consort, daughter of Anu and Antum, (sometimes daughter of Sin), and sometimes the sister of Ereshkigal. She is the goddess of love, procreation, and war. She is armed with a quiver and bow. Her temples have special prostitutes of both genders. She is often accompanied by a lion, and sometimes rides it. The Eanna in Uruk is dedicated both to her and Anu. As Imini, she has a parakku (throne-base) at the cedar mountain. She loved Tammuz in her youth, although he spends half the year in the nether world wailing. She loved a lion, a stallion, a shepherd, all of whom she required great sacrifice from and abandoned. She loved Ishullanu, a gardener who offered her fruit, but was taken aback when she revealed herself to him, so she turned him into a frog. After Gilgamesh cleans himself up, following his defeat of Humbaba, she asks him to be her lover and husband, and offers him many gifts and the homage of earthly rulers and kingdoms. She is rejected, both because of her godly nature, and as a fair-weather lover. Ishtar asks Anu to send the Bull of Heaven to kill Gilgamesh, and he agrees. She determines to go to the Underworld. She threatened to smash the gate and raise the dead so that they would eat and outnumber the living unless the gatekeeper would open it for her. She holds the great keppu-toy (a whipping top). She is allowed in by the gate keeper, who takes her through seven gates to Ereshkigal's realm. By Ereshkigal's rites, she is stripped of items of clothing as she passes through each of the gates: first her crown, then her earrings, then her necklace, then her tud-ditu (breast pins), then her belt of birthstones, then her wrist and ankle bangles, and finally her garment. While in the underworld, no creatures engaged in acts of procreation. She was kept in Egalgina and brought forth by Namtar after being sprinkled with the water of life, and after 'His appearance is bright' has been cursed. She is led back out through the gates, given back her accouterments, and released in exchange for Dumuzi (Tammuz). Symbol: an eight or sixteen-pointed star Sacred number: 15 Astrological region: Dibal (Venus) and the Bowstar (Sirius) Sacred animal: lion, (dragon)

**Ningirsu** -Local form of Ninurta of old babylon. God of warriors and the fullness of civilization.

**Ningishita** - The single serpent staff also appears on a Sumerian vase of c. 2000 B.C. representing the healing god Ningishita, the prototype of the Greek Asklepios

**Ningishzida, Ningizzia** - - the god of dawn. God of the underworld of Kur. Son of Ninazu whos name means "lord of the good Tree". A lord over demons Also associated as a personal guardain. In Sumerian mythology, Ningizzia is a god of the Underworld and a guardian of the gate of heaven.



**Ninhursag** - Mother of The Gods - Queen of the mountainhead. She was the daughter of Anu but her mother was not Antu. She was on the heavens having come here before Mankind. Texts record that when Earth was divided up by the Gods - she was given Dilmon. Her lover was Enki.

**Ninhursag (Ki, Aruru, Mammi, Ninmah, Ninti, Nintu)** - Ki is likely to be the original name of the earth goddess, whose name more often appears as Ninhursag (queen of the mountains), Ninmah (the exalted lady), or Nintu (the lady who gave birth). Most often she is considered Enlil's sister, but in some traditions she is his spouse instead. She was born, possibly as a unified cosmic mountain with An, from Nammu and shortly thereafter, their union produced Enlil. In the early days, as Ki, she was separated from heaven (An) and carried off by Enlil. It seems likely that she and An were the progenitors of most of the gods. She later unites with Enlil and with the assistance of Enki they produce the world's plant and animal life. Ninhursag, Mother Earth, the source of all life: from Ninhursag came the birth of the planets; she is usually seen wearing a leafy crown and holding a branch to indicate fertility. According to Sumerian texts Man was created by Ninhursag following processes and formulas devised by Enki. She was the chief nurse, the one in charge of medical facilities. In that role that the Goddess was called **Ninti** (lady-life). She was considered the Mother Goddess. She was nicknamed 'Mammu' - now called 'mother' 'mom'. Ninhursag bore a male child to Enlil. His name was **Ninurta** (lord who completes the fountain). He was the son to do battle for his father using bolts of lightening. In Egypt she was the Goddess Maat. In another myth, from her union with Enki came Ninsar, the goddess of plants.

**Ninhursaga** - See "**Aruru**"

**Nin-ildu** - the carpenter god. He carries the pure axe of the sun.

**Ninisinna (Nininsinna)** - The patron goddess of the city Isin. She is the "hierodule of An"

**Ninkurra** - In Sumerian mythology, Ninkurra was a goddess. She was the daughter of Enki and his daughter Ninsar.

**Ninkas** - Goddess of brewing

**Ninlil, Mullissu** - Ninlil was the intended bride of Enlil and the daughter of Nunbarshegunu, the old woman of Nippur. Enlil raped her and was then banished to the nether world (kur). She follows him to the nether world, where she gives birth to the moon god Sin (also known as Nanna). They have three more children in the nether world including Meslamtaea (Nergal) and Ninazu who remain there so that Sin may be allowed to leave. In some texts she is Enlil's sister while Ninhursag is his bride. Her chief shrine was in the Tummal district of Nippur.

**Ninkasi** (The Lady who fills the mouth) - She is the goddess of brewing or alcohol, born of "sparkling-fresh water". She is one of the eight heal-



ing children born by Ninhursag for Enki She is born in response to Enki's mouth pain and Ninhursag declares that she should be the goddess who "sates the heart" or "who satisfies desire".

**Ninmah, Nintu, Ninhursaga, Belet-ili, Mami, Aruru** - She is the mother goddess and was responsible for the creation of man with the help of Enlil or Enki. She is also called the womb goddess, and midwife of the gods. On Ea's advice, she acted on his direction and mixed clay with the blood of the god Geshtu-e, in order to shape and birth seven men and seven women. These people would bear the workload of the Igigi. She also added to the creation of Gilgamesh, and, at Anu's command, made Enkidu in Anu's image by pinching off a piece of clay, throwing it into the wilderness, and birthing him there. Ea called her to offer her beloved Ninurta as the one who should hunt Anzu. She does so. See "**Aruru**"

**Ninsar** - In Sumerian mythology, Ninsar was the goddess of plants. She was the daughter of Enki and Ninhursag.

**Ninsun** - In Sumerian mythology, Ninsun or Ninsuna ("lady wild cow") is a goddess, best known as the mother of the legendary hero Gilgamesh, and as the tutelary goddess of Gudea of Lagash. In the Epic of Gilgamesh, Ninsun is depicted as a human queen who lives in Uruk with her son as king. Since the father of Gilgamesh was Lugalbanda, it stands to reason that Ninsun procreated with Lugalbanda to give birth. Also in the Epic of Gilgamesh, Ninsun is summoned by Gilgamesh and Enkidu to help pray to the god Shamash to help the two on their journey to the Country of the Living to battle Humbaba.

Ninsun is called "Rimat-Ninsun", the "august cow", the "Wild Cow of the Enclosure", and "The Great Queen". Ninsun was called Gula in Sumerian Mythology until the name was later changed to Ninisina. Gula in the latter became a Babylonian goddess. Ninsun was originally named Nininsina according to Pabilsag's journey to Nibru. According to the ancient Babylonian text, Nininsina wedded Pabilsag near a riverbank. By Pabilsag she bore Damu.

**Ninshubur** - a minor deity who functioned as minister to the god **An**. Later he was absorbed into **Papsukkal**.

**Nintu** - See "**Aruru**"

**Ninurta** (shares some characteristics with Ningrisu) - In Sumerian mythology, Ninurta is chamberlain of the Anunnaki. He is the child of Enlil and Mami. He was born in Ekur, Enlil's temple in Ekur. He is a messenger between other beings. Ninurta is also the God of war and patron of the hunt, the hero of the epic Anzu. He has a bow and arrow, sometimes they are poisoned. He also carries the mace, Sharur, which can act as a messenger between Ninurta and other beings (notably Ea). He can marshal the Seven of Battle, who can generate whirlwinds. In Babylonian lore, Ninhursag bore a male child to Enlil. His name was **Ninurta** (lord who completes the fountain). He was the son to do battle for his father using bolts of lightening and was a warrior deity, the god of the south wind. In "The Feats and Exploits of Ninurta", that deity sets out to destroy



the **Kur**. Kur initially intimidates Ninurta into retreating, but when Ninurta returns with greater resolve, Kur is destroyed. This looses the waters of the Abzu, causing the fields to be flooded with unclean waters. Ninurta dams up the Abzu by piling stones over Kur's corpse. He then drains these waters into the Tigris. The identification of Ninurta's antagonist in this passage as Kur appears to be miscast. Black and Green identify his foe as the demon Asag, who was the spawn of **An** and **Ki**, and who produced monstrous offspring with Kur. The remainder of the details of this story are the same as in Kramer's account, but with **Asag** replacing Kur. In other versions, Ninurta is replaced by **Adad/Ishkur**. He is responsible for some small scale irrigation.

In Akkadian lore, after the Tablet of Destinies was stolen, Belit-ili, at Ea's advice, instructed him to kill Anzu. Initially his assault was futile, but Sharur relayed advice from Ea to him, which, when it was carried out allowed him to slay Anzu in a great onslaught. He recovered the Tablet of Destinies for Ellil. **Nissaba** performs a purification ceremony on him and he receives the following new names and shrines: **Duku** - 'holy mound' in Sumerian, Hurabtil - an Elamite god, **Shushinak** - patron god of the Elamite city Susa, Lord of the Secret, **Pabilsag** - god of the antediluvian city Larak, **Nin-Azu** - god of Eshunna, **Ishtaran** - god of Der, **Zababa** - warrior god of Kish, **Lugalbanda** - Gilgamesh's father, **Lugal-Marada** - patron god of Marad, Warrior **Tishpak** - similar to Nin- Azu, Warrior of Uruk, **Lord of the Boundary-Arrow**, **Panigara** - a warrior god, and **Papsukkal** - vizier of the great gods. Ninurta's symbol is a rainbow.

**Numushda** - A local diety to Kazallu in the early Dynastic period. His daughter married the god Martu.

**Nunga, Manungal** - associated with Nintinuga, she was daughter of Ereshkigal and married to the minor god Birtum. A local goddess of Nippur and surrounding areas in the early second millennium BC.

**Nusku** - In Sumerian mythology, Nusku is the god of fire and Enlil's vizier. Nusku was called upon to burn soothsayers or witches. Principally worshiped at Harran. It is believed that he was referred to as Nusah in Aramaic inscriptions and his cult worshiped into the 2nd century AD. His symbol was a lamp.

**Nissaba (Nisaba)** - cereal grain harvest goddess. Her breast nourishes the fields. Her womb gives birth to the vegetation and grain. She has abundant locks of hair. She is also a goddess of writing and learned knowledge. She performs the purification ceremony on Ninurta after he has slain Anzu and is given his additional names and shrines.

**Nisroch** - possible name of the griffin-demon, or biblical corruption of Ninurta.

**Papaya** (Hittite and Hurrian) - One of the deities who sat under the Hawthorn tree awaiting the return of Telipinus.

**Papsukkal** - vizier of the Great Gods, son of Sin. While Ishtar was in the Underworld, he became gloomy and informed Sin and Ea of this plight. **Ninshubur**.

**Pazuzu** - the Mesopotamian god Pazuzu, a winged demon with a deformed head, the wings of an eagle, the sharp claws of a lion on its hands and feet, and the tail of a scorpion. This



See

demon was actually only the personification of the south-east storm wind which was believed to bring diseases. He lived in the desert and was not reported to ever have had any direct contact with humans.

**Pessu** - Sumerian dwarf-like deity associated with Bes (Egyptian) and the attributes of the later Egyptian goddess of childbearing and protection.

**Pidray** (Canaanite) - 'daughter of the mist', 'daughter of light(ning)' - Baal's daughter. She is sometimes a love interest of Athtar.

**Pi-en-en-ki-ir** (Elamite) - A Goddess of fertility, nurturance, and motherhood. Later she was renamed to **Kiririsa**.

**Qadshu** - A Syrian goddess, who has occasionally been tentatively identified with nude fertility goddess statues. Also spelled **Qodesh**, meaning 'holy', and used as an epithet of Athirat. She had been identified with the Egyptian Qetesh

**Qingu** - Tiamat's battle leader and sometime her lover. He is promoted and enhanced to a leading position from among the ranks. Tiamat places the Tablet of Destinies into his possession, giving him the Anu-power, such that his word is law and effects reality. He gives his army fire-quenching breath and paralyzing venom. His battle strategy initially confuses Marduk. He is defeated by Marduk and counted among the dead gods. Marduk uses the defeated gods to build Babylon and decided to hand the task over to a new race - man. Man is created with Qingu's blood.

**Qodesh-and-Amrur** 'fisherman of Athirat' (Canaanite) - Baal's messenger to Kothar-and-Khasis. He is also Athirat's servant and dredges up provisions to entertain her guests from the sea with a net. It is interesting to note that in Daniel 4:13(10) similar words appear to refer to an angel and have been translated as 'holy messenger' or 'holy sentinel'.

**Qudushu** (Canaanite) - the holy voluptuous goddess of love. Her symbol is lions or snakes. Associated with the Egyptian goddess Hathor.

**Radmanu (Pradmanu)** - a minor servitor of Baal. (Canaanite)

**Rephaim** (Rpum) - 'shades' - These are deities of the underworld whom Daniel meets in his journey there. They may have been involved in negotiations with him for the return of his son Aqhat. Eight of them led by Repu-Baal (Rapiu? Baal?) arrive at a feast given by El in chariots, on horseback, and on wild asses.

**Resheph**, 'prince Resheph' - Canaanite god of bad plight. Resheph was the god of fire, lightning and plague.

**Sakkan** - son of the sun god Shamash/Utu, his role was thought to be protector of the wild animals of the plains, sometimes envisioned as a shepherd. He was also responsible for their fertility. Also possibly called **Sumuqan**.

**Samana** - from the old Babylonian period this is a demon said to have a lion's head, dragon teeth, eagle claws and the tail of a scorpion. She is associated with the death of crops and insect plagues. Also possibly pronounced **Saman** or **Saman-ana**.





**Samas** (Akkadian) - A later version of Utu, the sun God. In this version, He is the child of Anu.

**Sarpanitu, Erua** - Wife of Marduk and principle goddess of Babylon. She was worshipped as **Erua**, a goddess of childbirth. Erua comes from the Akkadian word for pregnant, eru.

**The Sea, the Waters** (Hittite and Hurrian) - She is told by Imbaluris that 'Kumarbis must remain father of the gods!'. Struck with fear by this message, she makes ready here abode and prepares to act as hostess for a feast for Kumarbis. This feast may have served as a meeting of Mother-goddesses who delivered Kumarbis' child by the Rock, Ullikummis.

**The Sea-god** (Hittite and Hurrian) - He quarreled and kidnapped the Sun-god of Heaven. When Telipinu came to recover the Sun-god, the Sea-god was so intimidated that he also gave him his daughter. he later demanded a bride-price for her of the Storm-god, and was eventually given a thousand cattle and a thousand sheep. In another version, he caught the Sun-god in a net as he fell, and may have sealed him in a Kukubuvessel, allowing Hahhimas (Frost) to take hold of most of the other gods.

**The Seven Who Decreed Fate** - In addition to the four primary deities, there were hundreds of others. A group of seven "decreed the fates" - these probably included the first four, as well as Nanna, his son Utu, the sun god and a god of justice, and Nanna's daughter Inanna, goddess of love and war.

**The Seven** (Elamite) - Sisyasum, Narunte, Niarzina, goddess and sisters of Kiririsa, also called the sisters of Sebittu.

**The Seven** (Sumerian) - the offspring of **An** and **Ki**. Seven demons who assist Nergal. Also called **Iminbi**.

**Sebitti, Sebittu** - In Sumerian mythology, the Sebitti are the seven warrior gods led by Erra. In the sky they are the Pleiades. They are the children of Anu and the Earth-mother. Anu gave them fearsome and lethal destinies and put them under Erra's command. They prefer to exercise there skills instead of letting Erra stay in the cities with his diseases.

**Seris (Serisu)** (Hittite and Hurrian) - This is one of the bulls sacred to the Storm-god. In preparation for battle, the Storm-god has Tasmisus anoint his horns with oil and drive him up Mount Imgarra with Tella and the battle wagon.

**Shabar and Shalim** (Canaanite gods) - Shabar was probably the god of dawn. In the Old Testament, Shabar is mentioned, but his name is sometimes translated as "morning". Shalim is the contrary, namely the god of dusk. It is believed that Jerusalem got its name from him, with the meaning "fortress of Shalim". See **Shalim**.

**Shachar** (Canaanite god) - Meaning Dawn, Shalim's twin and one of the first, if not only, pair of gracious gods, the children and cleavers of the sea. They were born of El and Athirat or her female companion. The new family builds a sanctuary in the desert and lives there for eight years. According to Isaiah 14:12, he is the father of Helel or Lucifer, the 'light-bringer', usually taken to mean the morning-star.

**Shala** - probably Hittite/Hurrian name of an Mesopotamian goddess. Sometimes she is listed as wife of **Adad** (Ishkur) or of **Dagon**. Also listed as mother of **Gibil**. Her symbol is a stalk of barley and is associated with the constellation of Virgo.

**Shalim** (Canaanite god) - Meaning Dusk. Shachar's twin and one of the first, if not only, pair of gracious gods, the children and cleavers of the sea. They were born of El and Athirat or her female companion. The new family builds a sanctuary in the desert and lives there for eight years.

**Shamash or Babbar** (Babylonian) - (Sumerian **Utu**) - the sun god, the son of Sin and Ningal. He rises from the mountains with rays out of his shoulders. He enters and exits the underworld through a set of gates in the mountain, guarded by scorpion-people. He travels both on foot and in a chariot, pulled by fiery mules. He upholds truth, and justice. He is a lawgiver and informs oracles. Nergal is a corrupt aspect of his nature. He loves Gilgamesh, hates evil and instigates Gilgamesh's quest against Humbaba, guiding him and receiving prayers from him along the way. He tries to intercede to Ellil on Enkidu's behalf, but is unsuccessful. He rebukes Enkidu for cursing the Stalker and the temple prostitute for bringing him out of the wild. In Kish, the eagle and the serpent swore an oath to Shamash that they would not overstep the limits of Shamash. The eagle broke the oath and ate the eggs of the serpent. Shamash, 'whose net is as wide as earth', told the serpent how to serve the eagle justice. The serpent lured the eagle with a bull carcass and captured him. The eagle requested to be spared and the serpent refused, saying that Shamash's punishment would fall on him if he did not carry it out. He cut the eagle's wings and left him to die in a pit. The eagle prayed to Shamash for mercy, and Shamash refused to help personally, but sent Etana to help the eagle. He agreed to help Etana's infertility problem if Etana would help the eagle.

Symbol: Solar disk with a four point star inside with rays coming from between the points or a winged disk. His cult center cities were Sippar and Larsa. Sacred Number: 20

**Shamu (Baalshamem?)** - Syrian god not found in the Ugarit texts, this sky god was the chief of the pantheon at the Syrian city of Alalakh.

**Shapshu (Shapash)** - She is the Canaanite sun-goddess (Akkadian **Shamash**, a male deity) and is known as the torch of the gods and pale Shapshu. She often acts as messenger or representative on El's behalf. She has some dominion over the shades and ghosts of the nether-world. Kothar-and-Khasis may be her companion and protector. She tells Athtar that he will loose kingship to Yam under El's auspice and rebuffs his complaints by recalling his lack of wife and children. She is said to be under Mot's influence when Baal is preoccupied with his lack of a palace and not raining. The weather then is particularly hot. When Mot's messenger seeks Baal, she advises the thunder-god to procure a substitute, to satisfy Mot and then take his servants and daughters and venture into the underworld. At the direction of Anat, she carries Baal's body back to Mt. Zaphon. She is told by El that he dreamed Baal was alive and she searches for him. When Baal returns and fights with Mot, she separates them, declaring that Baal has El's favor.



**Shara** - Anu and Ishtar's son. She despairs and will not attack Anzu after Anzu has stolen the Tablet of Destinies from Enlil. A warrior goddess and locally worshiped at Umma.

**Sharru** - In Sumerian mythology, Sharru is the god of submission.

**Sharruma** (Hurrian name), 'the calf of Teshub' - The son of Teshub and Hebat, this god is symbolized by a pair of human legs, or a human head on a bull's body. He is later identified with the Weather-god of Nerik and Zippalanda.

**Sha'taqat** 'drives away' - She is the caanite flying demoness who drives away Keret's disease on behalf of El with a touch of her wand to his head.

**Shaushka** (Hurrian Ishtar) - She takes the form of a winged female standing on a lion. She spies her brothers, the Storm-god and Tasmisus, leaving the kuntarra following word of the appearance of Ullikummi. She leads them by hand, up Mount Hazzi, from which they can view the giant. When the Storm-god is vexed and fearful at the site of Kumarbis' son, she chides him. Later, she takes up her galgalturi/harp and sings to the blind and deaf Ullikummi, but her folly is exposed to her by a great wave from the sea, who charges her to seek out her brother who is yet to be emboldened to the inevitable battle. She was loved by the serpent **Hedammu**.

**Sheger** ('offspring of cattle') - He is the caanite god of cattle.

**Sherida** - She is the Akkadian **Aya**, a goddess of light and mate of **Utu**.

**Shullat** - In Sumerian mythology, Shullat is Shamash's servant. Associated with Ishkur.

**Shul-pa-e** - The husband to a mother goddess of indeterminate origin in the Early Dynastic Period. A minor god whose name means the planet Jupiter. God who presides over feasts.

**Shiwini** - Urartian sun god corresponding to **Shimigi**, the Hurrian sun god.

**Siduri** - In Sumerian mythology, Siduri - the barmaid is a manifestation of Ishtar who dwells at the lip of the sea, beyond which is the Land of Life, where Utnapishtim lives.

**Sin, Nannar (Seun)** - moon god, son of Enlil. His consort is Ningal. Wise and secretive, the enemy of all evil spirits. An old man with a long beard of Lapis Lazuli who flies through the sky in his sailboat every night or a winged bull. Sin is also Ishtar's and Shamash's father. He does not answer Gilgamesh's plea to restore Enkidu to life. Sin governed the passing of the months. His symbol is the crescent moon and his Sacred number is 30. His cult center cities were Ur and Harran. The later-era version of Nanna-Suen, the moon God.

**Simut** (Elamite) - a herald god and husband to Manzat

**Sumul** - She is the mother of the eagles. She ate the body of Aqhat in caanite myth.

**Sumuqan** - In Sumerian mythology, Sumuqan is the cattle god, he resides in the underworld, in Ereshkigal's court. I also found reference to The god of the plain or "king of the mountain", he is the god placed in charge of the plant and animal life on the plain of Sumer by Enki.

**Sun-god** (of Heaven) (Hittite and Hurrian) - Probably an Akkadian import, this god is one of justice and is sometimes the king of all gods. An ally of the Storm-god, he notices the giant Ullikummi in the sea and visited the Storm-god, refusing to eat until he reports his news. After he has done so, the Storm-god proclaims that the food on the table shall become pleasant, which it does, and so the Sun-god enjoys his meal and returns to his route in heaven. When Telepinus disappears, bringing a famine, he arranges a feast, but it is ineffective in assuaging their hunger. At the Storm-god's complaint, he dispatches an eagle to search for the god, but the bird is unsuccessful. After the bee discovers Telepinus, he has man perform a ritual. In another version of the missing god myth, he is one of the missing gods. He keeps several sheep. At the end of the day, he travels through the nether-world, similar to the Egyptian Ra. In a longer version of that story, the Sea-god caught him in a net, possibly putting him into a Kukubu-vessel when he fell. During his absence, hahhimas (Frost) took hold.

**Shuqamuna** - Kassite moon god equated to Shamash.

**Slain Heroes** - a bizarre group of dead monster considered to be slain by Ningirsu including: a six headed ram, a seven headed snake (Hydra), a dragon, the Plam Tree King, the Gypsum, the strong copper, the Kuliana, the Magillum boat, Lord Saman-ana, the bison bull and Imdugud. It is believed that these "things" were worshiped before in the area of Lagash and the King Gudea created this myth to absorb these things into Ningirsu's cult.



**Smiting God** - may represent the god Lulal.

Represented in the posture of the killing blow he is often paired with the lion-demon.

**Suriash** (Kassite) - Possible a solar divinity, similar in many respects to Utu.

**Suwaliyattas** (Hittite and Hurrian) - He is a warrior god and probably the brother of the Storm-god.

**Tablets of Destiny** - part of the **me** but still separate from it. The tablets are thought to contain the destinies of the world and a cosmic bond linking the dimensions of heaven, earth and the underworld.

**Takitis** (Hittite and Hurrian) - He is **Hebat's** servant. After Hebat was driven from her temple he is told of her concern for her husband and charged with convening the assembly of the gods and returning with word of her husband's fate.

**Tallay** (Canaanite) - 'she of dew', 'daughter of drizzle' - Baal's daughter.

**Tammuz (Dumuzi, Adoni, Adonis)** - In Sumerian mythology, Tammuz was a god of agriculture. He died in midsummer, and was brought back from the underworld by his lover Ishtar. Tammuz was also worshiped as a sun-god by the Akkadians, Babylonians and Phoenicians. He was also known as Adoni, and was adopted by the Greeks as Adonis. He is the brother and spouse to Ishtar, or the lover of her youth. He went into the underworld and was recovered through the intervention of Ishtar. He is sometimes the guardian of heaven's





gates and sometimes a god of the underworld. He is friends with Ningizzia. He is exchanged for Ishtar in the Underworld. He guards the Gate of Anu with Gizzida. Also see **Dumuzi**.

**Tanit** (caanite) - Known as the 'lady of Carthage' and the 'face of Baal', Tanit was the great goddess of the Carthaginians and, with Baal Hammon co-protector of that city. She is listed first of all deities in Carthage.

**Tarpatassis** (Hurrian) - Properly propitiated with ritual and the sacrifice of a buck, this demon staves off sickness and grants long, healthy life.

**Tasmisus** (Hittite and Hurrian) - A child of Anus and Kumarbis, he is conceived along with the Storm-god and Aranzahus. The brother of the Storm-god and Aranzahus, he was spat out of Kumarbis upon Mount Kanzuras. Later he colludes with Anus and the Storm-god to destroy Kumarbis. He serves as the Storm-god's attendant. He spies the Sun-god approaching and informs the Storm-god that this visit bodes ill. At the Storm-god's command he has a meal set up for their visitor. After the Sun-god's tale, he and the Storm-god depart and are met by Ishtar, who takes them to Mt. Hazzi near Ugarit, where they can see Ullikummiss. The Storm-god has him take his bulls up Mt. Ingarras and prepare them for battle. He is also ordered to bring forth the storms, rains, winds, and lightning. After their defeat, he is dispatched by the Storm-god to Hebat, to tell her that he must remain in a 'lowly place' for a term. He returns and encourages the Storm-god to seek Ea in the city Abzu/Apsu and ask for the 'tablets with the words of fate' (Tablets of Destiny? 'me?'). After Ea cleaves off Ullikummiss' feet, he spurs Tasmisus and the Storm-god on to battle the crippled giant.

**Telepinu(s)** (Hittite and Hurrian) 'the noble god' - An agricultural god, he is the favorite and firstborn son of the Storm-god. He 'harrows and plows. He irrigates the fields and makes the crops grow.' (Gurney p. 113) He flies into a rage and storms off, losing himself in the steppe and becoming overcome with fatigue. With his departure, fertility of the land, crops and herds disappears and famine besets man and god. Hannahannas's bee finds him, stings his hands and feet, and wipes his eyes and feet with wax, purifying him. This further infuriates him, and he wrecks further havoc with the rivers and by shattering houses and windows. Eventually, the evil and malice is removed through magic by Kamrusepas, but not before Telepinus thunders with lightning. Telepinus returns home, restoring fertility and tending to the life and vitality of the royal family. His prosperity and fertility is symbolized by a pole suspending the fleece of a sheep. In other versions of this myth, the Storm-god or the Sun-god and several other gods are missing instead. He is asked by his father to recover the Sun-god from the Sea-god, and so intimidates the Sea-god that he is given his daughter as a bride.

**Tella (Hurris)** (Hurrian god) - This is another bull sacred to the Storm-god. In preparation for battle, the Storm-god has Tasmisus plate his tail with gold and drive him up Mount Ingarras with Seris and the battle wagon.

**Tesheba** - storm god of Urartu or Van. Called Ararat in the Bible. Urartu was a later keeper of Hurrian traditions. Corresponds to **Teshub**.

**Teshub, Taru, Tishpak, Luwian's Tarhun(t)** (Hurrian/Hittite) - 'The Conqueror', 'The king of Kummiya', 'The Storm or Weather-god, 'King of Heaven, Lord of the land of Hatti'. He is chief among the gods and his symbol is the bull. As Teshub he has been pictured as a bearded man astride two mountains and bearing a club. He is a god of battle and victory,



especially when the battle is with a foreign power. As Taru, he is the consort of Wurusemu. He was the child of Anus and Kumarbis - conceived along with Tasmisus and the Aranzahus (Tigris) river when Kumarbis bit off and swallowed Anus' phallus. He is, however, considered Ea's son in the myth of Ullikummiss. He is informed by Anus of the possible exits from Kumarbis, and tries to exit through Kumarbis's 'tamassas', causing him great pain. With the 'tamassas' blocked, he exits through Kumarbis' 'good place'. He plots with Anus, Tasmisus, and Aranzhus to destroy Kumarbis, and apparently succeeds seizing kingship in heaven. He sent rain after the fallen Moon-god/Kashku when he fell from heaven.

Alerted to the imminent arrival of the Sun-god, who in some myths is his son, he has Tasmisus prepare a meal for their guest and listens to his report about the sudden appearance of the giant Ullikummiss. He and Tasmisus then leave the kuntarra and are led to Mount Hazzi by his sister, Ishtar, where they behold the monstrous creature. He looks upon Kumarbis' son with fear and Ishtar chides him. Later, emboldened, he has Tasmisus prepare his bulls and wagon for battle, and has him call out the thunderstorms, lightning and rains. Their first battle resulted in his incomplete defeat. He dispatches Tasmisus to his wife, Hebat, to tell her that he must remain in a 'lowly place' for a term.

When Tasmisus returns, he encourages the Storm-god to seek Ea in the city Abzu/Apsu and ask for the 'tablets with the words of fate' (Tablets of Destiny? 'me?'). After Ea cleaves off Ullikummiss' feet, he spurs Tasmisus and the Storm-god on to battle the crippled giant. Despite the diorite man's boasting, the Storm-god presumably defeats him.

He fought with the Dragon Illuyankas in Kiskilussa and was defeated. He called the gods for aid, asking that Inaras prepare a celebration. She does so and when the dragon and his children have gorged themselves on her feast, the mortal Hupasiyas binds him with a rope. Then the Storm-god, accompanied by the gods, sets upon them and destroys them. In another version of that myth, he loses his eyes and heart to Illuyankas after his first battle. He then marries a poor mortal woman and marries their son to Illuyankas daughter. He has the son ask for his eyes and heart. With their return, he attacks the dragon again. When his son sides with Illuyankas, the Storm-god kills them both.

When his son, Telepinus, is missing he despairs and complains to the Sun-god and then to Hannahannas, who tells him to search for him himself. After searching Telepinus' city he gives up. In other versions of this myth, it is the Storm-god who is missing. One is almost exactly the same, and in another, he journeys to the Dark Earth in his anger, and is returned with the help of his mother - here Wuruntemu / Ereshkigal / the Sun-goddess of Arinna. In another version he sends Telepinu to recover the Sun-god who had been kidnapped by the Sea-god. The Sea-god is so intimidated that he gives Telepinu his daughter in marriage but demands a bride-price from the Storm-god. After consulting with Hannahanna, he pays the price of a thousand sheep and a thousand cattle. He notices his daughter, Inara, is missing and sends a bee to Hannahanna to have her search for her.

**Tiamat** - In Babylonian mythology, Tiamat is the salt water Ocean. In the beginning there was only Apsu and Tiamat. Tiamat represents Primeval Chaos, bearer of the skies and the earth, mother of Lahmu, Lahamu, Anshar, and Kishar. The clamor of the younger gods disturbed her, but she continued to indulge them. When Apsu and Mummu suggested that they kill the younger gods, she grew furious, calmed down and rejected the plan. Her restless subservient gods goaded her into action after Apsu is slain. They prepared to wage war

against the other gods. As Mother Hubur, the underworld river, who fashions all things, she bore giant snakes with venom for blood, and cloaked dragons with a godlike radiance yet with a terrible visage, for the war. She rallied a horned serpent, a mushussu-dragon, a lahmu-hero, a ugallu-demon, a rabid dog, a scorpion-man, umu-demons, a fish-man, a bull-man, and eleven others underneath her champion, Qingu. She gave Qingu the Tablet of Destinies to facilitate his command and attack.



**Tiamat or Leviathan** - Goddess of the primeval depths, the chaos from which Marduk formed the world. She took the form of a dragon and swam in the primal waters. Tiamat warred on the gods, spawning a brood of dragons, sphinxes, scorpion-men and other demons and monsters for her army. Marduk slew her, defeating her with magic and powerful winds. Splitting her in two, Marduk cast one half of Tiamat into the sky to form the heavens and the other he cast down to form the Earth.

**Udug or Utukku** - a term for a particular type of demon which could be good or evil.

**Ugar** (Canaanite) - Baal's other page and messenger to both Anat and Mot. He is possibly the patron city-god of Ugarit.

**Ulliyassis** (Hittite and Hurrian) - He is a minor god who, properly attended to, removes impotence.

**Ullikummi(s), Vikummi** (Hittite and Hurrian), the diorite man - He is born of Kumarbis and the Rock. This god is made entirely of diorite. He was born to be used as a weapon to defeat the Storm-god and his allies. Kumarbis had him delivered to the Irsirra deities to keep him hidden from the Storm-god, the Sun-god, and Ishtar. After the Irsirra deities presented him to Ellil, they placed him on the shoulder of Upelluri where he grows an acre in a month. After fifteen days he grows enough so that he stands waist deep in the sea when the Sun-god and he notice each other. Alerted by the Sun-god, the Storm-god eventually prepares for battle atop Mount Imgarra, yet their first battle results in an incomplete victory. He drives Hebat from her temple, cutting off her communication with the other gods. Astaris leads seventy gods on attack against him, attempting to draw up the water from around him, perhaps in order to stop his growth. They fall into the sea and he grows to be 9000 leagues tall and around, shaking the heavens, the earth, pushing up the sky, and towering over Kummiya. Ea locates him and cuts off his feet with the copper knife that separated the heaven from the earth. Despite his wounds he boasts to the Storm-god that he will take the kingship of heaven. Presumably, he is none-the-less defeated.

**The Underworld** - 'the place of freedom'. The Aramaeans believed that the souls of the blessed dead ate with Baal-Hadad.

**Upelluri (Ubelluris)** (Hittite) - Similar to Atlas, this giant carries the world on his shoulders. The olden gods built the earth and heaven upon him though he did not notice, even when those two were separated with a cleaver. On the direction of Kumarbis' messenger Imbaluris, the Irsirra deities place Ullikummi on his right shoulder where the child grows. Ea interviews him, in search of Ullikummi and Upelluri admits to a small pain on his shoulder, although he can't identify which god is causing it.

**Urash** - a local deity to Dilbat and Ashhur. Regarded as an ancestor to **An**. In another tradition Urash is mentioned as wife of An, with her name meaning earth. Also described as wife of Ki. Said to be mother to Ninisina and Nisaba.

**Uruzimu** (Hittite and Hurrian) - A deity involved in returning the lost Storm-god of Nerik.

**Usmu** - Minister god of Enki/Ea. See **Isimud**.

**Uttu** - In Sumerian mythology, Uttu was the daughter of Enki and Ninkurra. Her mother warned her to avoid the advances of her father Enki. When Enki made advances on her she demanded cucumbers, apples and grapes as a gift. Enki supplied the fruits and as a result of their union eight plants spring forth. Enki ate the plants and was cursed by Uttu, subsequently becoming ill in eight different parts of his body. She is the goddess of weaving and clothing and was previously thought to be the goddess of plants.

**Utu** (Sumerian) - The sun-God, son of Nanna-Suen, and twin brother of Inanna. He represents all the primary solar virtues, light, warmth, and the blessed energy of growth in crops.

**Utu** (Also **Shamash** or **Babbar**) - Utu is the son of Nanna and Ningal and the god of the Sun and of Justice. He goes to the underworld at the end of every day setting in the "mountain of the west" and rising in the "mountain of the east". While there decrees the fate of the dead, although he also may lie down to sleep at night. He is usually depicted with fiery rays coming out of his shoulders and upper arms, and carrying a saw knife. When Inanna's huluppu tree is infested with unwelcome guests, he ignores her appeal for aid. He tries to set her up with Dumuzi, the shepherd, but she initially rebuffs him, preferring the farmer. He aided Dumuzi in his flight from the galla demons by helping him to transform into different creatures. Through Enki's orders, he also brings water up from the earth in order to irrigate Dilmun, the garden paradise, the place where the sun rises. He is in charge of the "Land of the Living" and, in sympathy for Gilgamesh, calls off the seven weather heroes who defend that land. He opened the "ablat" of the Underworld for the shade of Enkidu, to allow him to escape, at the behest of Enki. (Also See also **Shamash**) Utu is the sun god who lights the world with rays issuing from his shoulders: Utu was also the god of justice and carved out justice with the many-toothed saw he carried with him. Utu relates to the Babylonian god Shamash.



**Utukki** - In Sumerian mythology, the Utukki are the seven evil demons.

**Urshambi** - boatman to Utnapishtim

**Wurusemu, Wuruntemu** (Hurrian/Hittite) - 'Sun Goddess of Arrina', 'mistress of the Hatti lands, the queen of heaven and earth', 'mistress of the kings and queens of Hatti, directing the government of the King and Queen of Hatti' This goddess is later assimilated with Hebat. She made the cedar land. She is the primary goddess in Arrina, with Taru as her consort. She is a goddess of battle and is associated with Hittite military victory. She is the



mother of the Storm-god of Nerik, and thereby possibly associated with Ereshkigal. She aids in returning him from the underworld.

**Yam (Nahar, Yaw**, possibly **Lotan** or **Leviathan**) - He is caanite god of sea and rivers, he dwells in a palace under the sea. He carries a feud with Baal. He may have had in his following a dragon (tiamat) which lives in the sea, a serpent (behemoth), and/or Lotan/Leviathan, or may have been all of those creatures. He is given kingship by El. He threatens vast destruction until El names him 'beloved of El' and sends him on his way to oust Baal. Upbraided by Kothar-and-Khasis, he dispatches messengers to El to demand the delivery of Baal. Baal strikes him with Yagrush and Chaser in the chest and forehead, knocking him down. He is slain and scattered at the urging of Athtart. The battle may have been representative of rough winter sea-storms which calmed in the spring and which were preceded and accompanied by autumn rains which ended summer droughts and enabled crops to grow.

**Yarikh** - He is the caanite moon god. 'The illuminator of myriads (of stars)', 'lamp of heaven', possibly also the crescent moon and 'lord of the sickle' and thereby the father of the Kotharat. He is patron of the city Qart-Abilim. After sunset he embraces Nikkal-and-Ib and becomes determined to marry her. He seeks Khirkhib out to arbitrate the brideprice, but instead Khirkhib tries to suggest other potential mates in the daughters of Baal. Undaunted, Yarikh presents a lavish brideprice to Nikkal-and-Ib's family and the two are wed.

**Yarris** (Hittite and Hurrian) - He is a god of pestilence. A festival was held for him every autumn.

**Ybrdmy** (Caanite) - Baal's daughter.

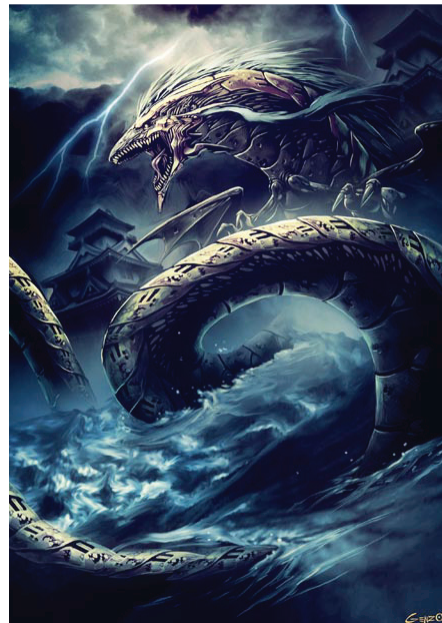
**Yellow Ones of Mot** - Mot's henchmen who are slain by Baal upon his return. See **Mot**.

**Zababa** - a local God to the city of Kish. In there local tradition he was married to Inanna/Ishtar and took on a role of "Marduk of Battle". He is identified with Ninurta. His symbol was an eagle headed staff.

**Zabib** (flame? flies?) (Caanite) - The daughter of El, an enemy of Baal, slain by Anat.

**Zaltu** - "strife", goddess created by Ea to complement Ishtar.

**Zashapuna** (Hittite and Hurrian) - He is the chief god of the town of Kastama, held in greater regard there than the Storm-god, possibly gaining such influence through drawing lots with the other gods.



**Zaliyanu** (Hittite and Hurrian) - She is the mate of Zashapuna.

**Zintuhis** (Hittite and Hurrian) - She is the granddaughter of the Storm-god and the Sun-goddess of Arinna.

### DEMIGODS, MORTAL HEROES, MONSTERS AND PLACES

**Adapa (Uan)** - the first of the seven antediluvian sages who were sent by Ea to deliver the arts of civilization to mankind. He was from Eridu. He offered food and water to the gods in Eridu, the earliest Sumerian city. He went out to catch fish for the temple of Ea and was caught in a storm. He broke the South Wind's wing and was called to be punished. Ea advised him to say that he behaved that way on account of Dumuzi's and Gizzida's absence from the country. Those gods, who tended Anu's gate, spoke in his favor to Anu. He was offered the bread and water of eternal life, but Ea advised against his taking it, lest he end his life on earth.

**Aklm** - 'the devourers' - These are some creatures who fought Baal-Hadad in the desert, they remind some of grasshoppers. See Baal.

**Anzu** - a demonic being with lion paws and face and eagle talons and wings. It was born on the mountain Hehe. Its beak is like a saw, its hide as eleven coats of mail. It was very powerful. Ellil appointed him to guard his bath chamber. He envied the Ellil-power inherent in Ellil's Tablet of Destinies and stole it while Ellil was bathing. With the Tablet of Destinies, anything he puts into words becomes reality. He takes advantage of this by causing Ninurta's arrows to never reach their target. However, once Ea's advice reached Ninurta, Anzu was slain by the hero's onslaught.

**Atrahasis and Ut-napishtim** (Akkadian), - Like the Sumerian Ziusudra (the Xisuthros of Berossus) or Noah from the Pentateuch, were the long-lived survivors of the great flood which wiped out the rest of humanity. In Atrahasis' case, Ellil had grown tired of the noise that the mass of humanity was making, and after a series of disasters failed to eliminate the problem, he had Enki release the floodgates to drown them out. Since Enki had a hand in creating man, he wanted to preserve his creation, warned Atrahasis, and had him build a boat, with which he weathered the flood. He also had kept his ear open to Enki during the previous disasters and had been able to listen to Enki's advice on how to avoid their full effects by making the appropriate offerings to the appropriate deities. He lived hundreds of years prior to the flood, while Ut-napishtim lives forever after the flood.

**Aqhat** (caanite) - The much anticipated child of Daniel and Danatay, Aqhat is presented with a bow and arrows set made by Kothar-and-Khasis early in his life by his father at a feast. Daniel reminds him to take the best of his kills to the temple for the gods. At the feast Anat offers Aqhat riches and eternal life if he would give her the bow. When he refuses, she promises to deliver vengeance upon him should he ever transgress. Presumably he fails to offer his best kills to the gods. Later he follows a disguised Anat to Qart-Abilim but presumably thwarts her new scheme to acquire his bow and lives there for a time, possibly under the favor of Yarikh. He is left on a mountain and while sitting for a meal is attacked by Anat's attendant Yatpan in the form of an eagle, along with other birds of prey, and is slain. Following his death, the land is poisoned and there is a period of famine and drought. Daniel recovers his son's remains from the eagle S.umul. Later, Daniel visits the underworld, probably in hopes of recovering Aqhat, and there encounters the Rephaim.

**Aqrabuamelu (girtablilu)** - scorpion-man, the guardians of the gates of the underworld. Their “terror is awesome” and their “glance is death”. They guard the passage of Shamash. They appraise Gilgamesh and speak with him. See **Scorpion Men**.

**Bahamut** - according to Edgerton Sykes Who's Who of Non-Classical Mythology, is “The enormous fish on which stands Kujara, the giant bull, whose back supports a rock of ruby, on the top of which stands an angel on whose shoulders rests the earth, according to Islamic myth. Our word Behemoth is of the same origin.”

**Behemoth** - the male version of Leviathon, often referred to as a large serpent or dragon but more closely associated to the hippopotamus from the book of Job. See **Bahamut**.

The **Bull of Heaven** - this creature was created by Anu to kill Gilgamesh at Ishtar's behest. At its snorting, a hole opened up and 200 men fell into it. When it fights Enkidu and Gilgamesh, it throws spittle and excrement at them. It is killed and set as an offering to Shamash.

**Daniel** (caanite) - ‘He of Haman’, a devotee of Rapiu (Baal) and a patriarchal king. Like Keret, Daniel is in mourning because unlike his brothers he had no sons. So, for several days he sacrificed food and drink to the gods. On the seventh day, Baal takes notice and successfully petitions El to allow Daniel and his wife, Danatay, to have a child, citing, among other reasons, that the child will be able to continue the contributions and sacrifices to their temples. El informs Daniel of his impending change of fortune. He rejoices and slaughters an ox for the Kotharat, pouring sacrifices to them for six days and watching them depart on the seventh. During some missing columns, Danatay gives birth to Aqhat. Later, Kothar-and-Khasis arrives with a specially crafted bow and arrows set for Aqhat. Daniel and Danatay hold a feast, inviting the god, and Daniel presents Aqhat with the bow reminding him to sacrifice the choices game to the gods. When Aqhat is slain, Daniel's daughter Pughat notices the eagles and the drought and becomes upset. Daniel prays that Baal might return the rains and travels among the fields coaxing the few living plants to grow and wishing that Aqhat were there to help harvest them. Pughat informs him of Aqhat's demise. Daniel then swears vengeance upon his son's slayer. In succession he spies some eagles, Hircab, and Sumul. He calls upon Baal to break their wings and breast-bones, then he searches their insides for Aqhat's remains. Initially not finding them, he asks Baal to restore the eagles and Hircab. Finding Aqhat's remains within Sumul, he buries him and calls upon Baal to break the bones of any eagle that my disturb them and curses the lands near which his son was slain. His court goes into mourning for seven years, at which time Daniel dismisses the mourners and burns incense in sacrifice to the gods. Pughat prays to the gods to bless her in her venture and disguises herself as Anat, intending to wreck vengeance upon those who slew Aqhat.

**Dumuzi** (demigod) (**Tammuz**) - A shepherd, he is the son of Enki and Sirtur. He is given charge of stables and sheepfolds, filled with milk and fat by Enki. He has a palace in Kur, and is due a visit by those entering Kur. He is Inanna's husband. In life, he was the shepherd king of Uruk.

**Enkidu** (Hero) - Gilgamesh's servant and friend. He assists Gilgamesh in putting back Agga's siege of Erech. He accompanies Gilgamesh and his soldiers



on the trip to the “Land of the Living”. Probably after an initial encounter with Huwawa, Gilgamesh falls asleep and Enkidu awakens him. They come upon Huwawa and Gilgamesh distracts him with flattery, then puts a nose ring on him and binds his arms. Huwawa grovels to Gilgamesh and Enkidu and Gilgamesh almost releases him. Enkidu argues against it and when Huwawa protests, he decapitates Huwawa. Gilgamesh is angered by Enkidu's rash action.

The main body of the Gilgamesh tale includes a trip to the nether-world. Enkidu enters the “Great Dwelling” through a gate, in order to recover Gilgamesh's pukku and mikku, objects of an uncertain nature. He broke several taboos of the underworld, including the wearing of clean clothes and sandals, ‘good’ oil, carrying a weapon or staff, making a noise, or behaving normally towards ones family. For these violations he was “held fast by ‘the outcry of the nether world’”. Intervention by Enki, rescued the hero or at least raised his shade for Gilgamesh to speak with.

**Etana** - the human taken to the sky by an eagle. He was the king of Kish. Ishtar and the Igigi searched for a king for Kish. Ellil found a throne for Etana and they declared him the king. He was pious and continued to pray to Shamash, yet he had no son. Shamash told him to where to find the eagle with the cut wings, who would find for him the plant of birth. He found the eagle, fed it, and taught it to fly again. Not being able to find the plant, the eagle had Etana mount on his back and they journeyed to Ishtar, mistress of birth. On flying up to heaven, Etana grew scared at the height and went down. Then after some encouraging dreams tried to ascend to heaven on the eagle again. They succeeded. Etana had a son, Balih.

**Galla** - numerous types of demons responsible for taking people off to the underworld.

**Genie** - genies existed in many forms and shapes and did not take on all the fantastic qualities until there legends were embellished over time. Usually represented in half-/half animal form with wings, these depictions were the precursors to angelic representation. A typical representation at right. Genies were the precursors to the angels historically speaking. There legends led to the biblical representations of angels.

**Geshtinanna** (demigoddess) - She is Dumuzi's sister. After his death, she visited him in the underworld with Inanna, and was allowed to take his place there for six months out of the year. Her time in the underworld and her periodic emergence from it are linked with her new divine authority over the autumn vines and wine. (see also Inanna, Dumuzi)

**Griffin** - the beautiful and ornate half-lion/half-eagle composite animal probably originated in Syria around the second millennium BC. This was most likely influenced by the Sphynx in Egypt and genie depictions as well as Assyrian temple art.

**Gugalanna** - The Bull of Heaven, according to Kramer he is Ereshkigal's husband. After Gilgamesh spurned Inanna, she sends the Bull of Heaven to terrorize Erech.







**Gugalanna (Gugal-ana)** - He is Ereshkigal's husband, and according to Kramer, the Bull of Heaven, tentatively identify him with Ennugi, god of canals and dikes, rather than the Bull of Heaven. After Gilgamesh spurned Inanna, she sends the Bull of Heaven to terrorize Erech.

**Gilgamesh** (demigod) - The son, either of a nomad or of the hero-king Lugalbanda and of the goddess Ninsun, Gilgamesh, may have been a historical King of Erech, during the time of the first Ur dynasty. His kingship is mentioned in various places, including the Sumerian King list and he was also an **en**, a spiritual head of a temple. He was also the lord of Kulab and by one account, the brother of Inanna. He was "the prince beloved of An", and "who performs heroic deeds for Inanna".

**Hanging Gardens of Babylon** - One of the seven wonders of the ancient world.. These gardens -- which may be only a fable -- are said to have been laid out on a brick terrace by King Nebuchadnezzar II for one of his wives. According to the writings of a Babylonian priest, they were approximately 400 feet square and 75 feet above the ground. His account says slaves working in shifts turned screws to lift water from the nearby Euphrates River to irrigate the trees, shrubs and flowers.

**Hedammu** (Hittite and Hurrian) - He is a serpent who loved Ishtar.

**Hupasiya(s)** (Hittite Hero)- He is a resident of Ziggarratta. He is recruited by Inaras to aid in defeating Illuyankas. He agrees to her plan after eliciting her promise to sleep with him. When Illuyankas and his children are gorged on Inaras's feast, he ties them up for the Storm-god to kill. he is set up in a house by Inaras with the instructions not to look out the window while she is away, lest he see his family. He does, and begs to go home. Here the text is broken and some researchers assume that he is killed.



**Huwawa** (monster) - Guardian of the cedar of the heart in the the "Land of the living", Huwawa has dragon's teeth, a lion's face, a roar like rushing flood water, huge clawed feet and a thick mane. He lived there in a cedar house ( a gateway to a godly meeting place). He appears to have attacked Gilgamesh, Enkidu and company when they felled the cedars. They then come upon Huwawa and Gilgamesh distracts him with flattery, then puts a nose ring on him and binds his arms. Huwawa was at a disadvantage because he was not wearing all his normal armor. Huwawa grovels to Gilgamesh and Enkidu and Gilgamesh almost releases him. Enkidu argues against it and when Huwawa protests, he decapitates Huwawa. He is known as Humbaba in Babylonian.

**Lahama** - creatures associated with or created by Enki, and later Marduk, who live in the Abzu. They are fifty in number and also seem to act as guardians to temples. Lahama probably came from the old Akkadian word of lahmum which meant hairy. Also were creatures created by Tiamat in her creation story. Keepers of god's will seems to suit them.



**Lamastu** - a kind of demon who worked evil of her own accord to cause mothers to lose their infants, before and after birth. A demon of miscarriage and cot death, she would sneak into the home and touch the stomach of a pregnant woman seven times to kill the baby. Also known as a bringer of disease and ill health. Her symbol was the donkey and she rode a boat in the underworld. She could also be turned with an amulet of Pazuzu.

**Leviathan** - Goddess of the primeval depths, the chaos from which Marduk formed the world. She took the form of a dragon and swam in the primal waters. Tiamat warred on the gods, spawning a brood of dragons, sphinxes, scorpion-men and other demons and monsters for her army. Marduk slew her, defeating her with magic and powerful winds. Splitting her in two, Marduk cast one half of Tiamat into the sky to form the heavens and the other he cast down to form the Earth. Either a Hebrew name of Tiamat or one of her close offspring.

**Lugalbanda** - a warrior-king and, with Ninsun, the progenitor of Gilgamesh. He is worshipped, being Gilgamesh's ancestor, by Gilgamesh as a god.

**Keret** (Canaanite) - Keret was a king (of Khubur?) and possibly the son of El (this may be an expression for a fortunate person) who lost his estate and his successive eight wives to death, disease, and accident before any one of them could produce an heir. Having fallen asleep in tears, he is visited by El in a dream and offered kingship and riches to assuage his sorrow. This is ineffective as Keret only desires sons and heirs. El directs him to make an animal and wine sacrifice to El and Baal on the tower and then muster an army to lay siege to the city of Udm. There, Keret is to refuse offers from the Udm's king Pabil and demand his daughter, the fair Huray. Keret does as instructed, vowing to himself to give Huray an enormous sum of wealth upon his success. Returning to his estate with Huray, Keret is blessed by El at Baal's behest and is promised eight sons, the first of which, Yassib, shall have Athirat and Anat as nursemaids. In addition, Huray will bear eight daughters all of whom as blessed as a first-born child. Athirat calls attention to Keret's promise of wealth to Huray which he has yet to fulfill. Later, Keret and Huray prepare a great feast for the lords of Khubur. Later still Keret has become deathly ill and Huray entreats guests at a feast to mourn for him and make sacrifices on his behalf. The household is tense and Keret's son Elhu, despondently visits his father. Keret tells him not to sorrow, but to send for his sympathetic sister, Keret's daughter Thitmanat ('the eighth one'). Her sympathy is heightened and Keret expects from her surprise at his state will evoke the attention of the gods during a sacrifice he intends to perform. Indeed she weeps readily when the truth is revealed. Meanwhile, the rains have ceased with Keret's illness, but return after a ceremony on Mt. Zaphon. El convenes an assembly of the gods and dispatches the demoness Sha'taqat who cures Keret. Keret's son and heir Yassib, unaware of his father's cure entreats him to surrender his throne as he has been remiss in his duties, but Yassib is rebuffed and cursed.

**Kur** - Kur literally means "mountain", "foreign land", or "land" and came to be identified both with the underworld (Ki) and, more specifically, the area which either was contained by or contained the Abzu. In the prelude to "Gilgamesh, Enkidu and the Underworld, Ereshkigal

was carried off into the Kur as its prize at about the same time as An and Enlil carried off the heaven and the earth. Later in that same passage, Enki also struggled with Kur and presumably was victorious, thereby able to claim the title "Lord of Kur" (the realm). Kramer suggests that Kur was a dragon-like creature, calling to mind Tiamat and Leviathan. The texts suggests that Enki's struggle may have been with instruments of the land of kur - its stones or its creatures hurling stones. (See also Apsu and Tiamat.)

**Melam** and **Ni** - sumarian terms for describing living things of great power. Ni denotes a kind of awesome fear or the idea that you are in the presence of a being who can smite you or has power over you. Melam is a kind of pranic energy that you can see, like a spiritual light or halo around the god. This aura can be turned off or taken off. It can even be taken if a god is killed.

**Mushusshu** - Marduk's snake dragon or pet.

**Nimrod** - a possible biblical name for Babylonian nation. Also the name of the Babylonian god of the hunt.

**Ninsun** - 'the great wild cow', the great queen, Gilgamesh's mother and Lugalbanda's mate. She is wise, 'knows everything' and interprets Gilgamesh's dreams. She offers incense and drink to Shamash and questions his decision to send Gilgamesh against Humbaba. When doing so, she wears a circlet on her head and an ornament on her breast. She adopts Enkidu prior to the quest against Humbaba.

**Pughat** (caanite) - She is one of Daniel and Danatay's daughters. When Aqhat is slain, She notices the eagles and the drought and becomes upset. Daniel prays that Baal might return the rains and travels among the fields coaxing the few living plants to grow and wishing that Aqhat were there to help harvest them. Pughat encounters Aqhat's servants and learns of his demise. After seven years of Daniel's court mourning, Daniel dismisses the mourners and burns incense in sacrifice to the gods. Pughat prays to the gods to bless her in her venture and disguises herself as Anat, intending to wreck vengeance upon those who slew Aqhat. She arrives and meets Yatpan, accepting his wine, and the rest is missing.

**Sargon of Akkad** - also known as Sargon the Great, was an Akkadian king famous for his conquest of the Sumerian city-states in the 24th and 23rd centuries BC. The founder of the Dynasty of Akkad, Sargon reigned for 56 years, c. 2333 – 2279 BC. He became a prominent member of the royal court of Kish, ultimately overthrowing its king before embarking on the conquest of Mesopotamia. Sargon's vast empire is known to have extended from Elam to the Mediterranean sea, including Mesopotamia, parts of modern-day Iran and Syria, and possibly parts of Anatolia and the Arabian peninsula. He ruled from a new capital, Akkad (Agade), which the Sumerian king list claims he built, on the left bank of the Euphrates. Sargon is regarded as one of the first individuals in recorded history to create a multiethnic, centrally ruled empire, and his dynasty controlled Mesopotamia for around a century and a half.



**Scorpion Men** - mentioned in many texts and mythological stories, they are fierce in battle and serve as guards to the gates of the underworld as well as powerful fighters for the gods of chaos and destruction.

**Queen Shub-Ad** reigned from the First Dynasty of Ur. Her grave was excavated by Sir Leonard Woolley of the British Museum in 1929. She was buried with her King in a vast tomb complex about 2900 BCE, with the accompaniment of what Woolley called "human sacrifice on a lavish scale," for along with the King and Queen, numerous male and female attendants, soldiers, grooms, hand maidens, ladies in waiting, etc. were also buried; even a harpist and her golden harp, inlaid with lapis. Chariots, carts, and their animals were also buried with them. The Queen wore the beautiful head-dress of spirals of gold, terminating in lapis-centered gold flowers (or stars). The Queen also wore large golden earrings of lunate shape which hung to her shoulders; lapis amulets of a bull and a calf, and strands of lapis, agate, carnelian and gold beads. The Queen's grave was much more elaborate than that of the King, perhaps indicating her equal or even greater importance.



**Umu dabrootu** - a creature created by Tiamat to battle against the younger gods. Its name means violent storm, and was one of the eleven monsters created by her.

**Utnapishtim** - Akkadian version of Ziusudra, Utnapishtim of Shuruppak was the son of Ubaratutu. His flood has no reason behind it save the stirrings of the hearts of the Gods. As with Atrahasis, Utnapishtim is warned to build an ark by Ea. He is also told to abandon riches and possessions and seek life and to tell the city elders that he is hated by Enlil and would go to the watery Abyss to live with Ea via the ark. He loads gold, silver, and the seed of all living creatures into the ark and all of his craftsmen's children as well. After Ea advises Enlil on better means to control the human population, (predators, famine, and plague), Enlil makes Utnapishtim and his wife immortal, like the gods.

**Ziusudra (Ziusura)** - In the Sumerian version of the flood story, the pious Ziusudra of Shuruppak, the son of Ubaratutu or of Shuruppak?, is informed of the gods decision to destroy mankind by listening to a wall. He weathers the deluge and wind-storms aboard a huge boat. The only surviving detail of the boat is that it had a window. The flood lasts for seven days before Utu appears dispersing the flood waters. After that, Ziusudra makes appropriate sacrifices and prostrations to Utu, An and Enlil. He is given eternal life in Dilmun by An and Enlil.

#### CANAANITE MYTHS

El orders that Yam be given kingship and sets Kothar-and-Khasis to build the new king a throne. The gods warn that Yam has been shamed and may wreck destruction, so El ameliorates him by renaming him mddil - 'beloved of El' and throws a feast for him. El warns though that this is contingent on his driving out of Baal, who may fight back. Following Yam's demise, he favors the god Mot.

While Baal is declared king and judge, he remains a resident of El and Athirat's palace as El refuses him permission to build an appropriate mansion, in spite of Shapash. When Baal-Hadad's monsters assail the handmaidens of Yarikh and Lady Athirat of the Sea, he advises them to give birth to beasts which will lure Baal-Hadad away on a hunt.

He favors King Keret, who may be his son, offering him riches upon the death of his many spouses and eventually promising him the princess Huray and many children, provid-



ed he make the proper sacrifices and follow his instructions. After Keret takes ill, El eventually convenes an assembly of the gods in order to ask one of them to rid Keret of his illness. Eventually, El dispatches the demoness Sha'taqat who cures Keret.

Anat brings her complaints of Aqhat before him and threatens to strike him in the head when he gives his response. He then replies that he knows how contemptuous she is and won't stand in her way.

While washing clothing with a female companion by the sea, she is spied by El, who roasts a bird and invites the two to choose between being his daughters or his wives. They choose to become his wives and in due course give birth to the gracious gods, the cleavers of the sea, including Shachar and Shalim. The new family builds a sanctuary in the desert and lives there for eight years.

Baal and Anat hope to use her to influence El on the issue of Baal's palace. Initially suspicious and fearful of them on behalf of her children, but she warms up when she sees that they have brought gifts. She and Anat successfully intercede with El on Baal's behalf for permission for Baal to build a more suitable court.

When Baal is found dead, she advocates her son **Athtar** be made king. Her sons, the "pounders" of the sea", apparently colluded with Mot and were smited by Baal with sword and mace upon his return. Baal-Hadad's creatures devour her handmaidens, so she sends them to El. El tells them to go into the wilderness and there birth horned buffalo, which will distract Baal-Hadad.

She and Anat serve as nursemaids for Keret's son Yassib, but reminds Keret of his pledge of wealth for Huray, perhaps causing his decline in health because of its lack of fulfillment.

Once when Baal-Hadad was out hunting, Anat followed him. He spotted her, fell in love and copulated with her in the form of a cow. She gave birth to 'a wild ox' or a 'buffalo', telling him of the event on Mt. Zephon. This is probably not their only affair.

### SUMERIAN MYTHS

**Biblical parallels in Sumerian literature** - Traces of Sumerian religion survive today and are reflected in writings of the Bible. As late as Ezekiel, there is mention of a Sumerian deity. In Ezekiel 8:14, the prophet sees women of Israel weeping for Tammuz (Dumuzi) during a drought. The bulk of Sumerian parallels can, however be found much earlier, in the book of Genesis. As in Genesis, the Sumerians' world is formed out of the watery abyss and the heavens and earth are divinely separated from one another by a solid dome. The second chapter of Genesis introduces the paradise Eden, a place which is similar to the Sumerian Dilmun, described in the myth of "Enki and Ninhursag". Dilmun is a pure, bright, and holy land - now often identified with Bahrain in the Persian Gulf. It is blessed by Enki to have overflowing, sweet water. Enki fills it with lagoons and palm trees. He impregnates Ninhursag and causes eight new plants to grow from the earth. Eden, "in the East" (Gen. 2:8) has a river which also "rises" or overflows, to form four rivers including the Tigris and Euphrates. It too is lush and has fruit bearing trees. (Gen. 2:9-10) In the second version of the creation of man "The Lord God formed man out of the clay of the ground and blew into his nostrils the breath of life, and so man became a living being." Enki and Ninhmah (Ninhursag) use a similar method in creating man. Nammu, queen of the abyss and Enki's mother, bids Enki to "Knead the 'heart' of the clay that is over the Abzu " and "give it form".

From there the similarities cease as the two create several malformed humans and then the two deities get into an argument.

Returning to Enki and Ninhursag, we find a possible parallel to the creation of Eve. Enki consumed the plants that were Ninhursag's children and so was cursed by Ninhursag, receiving one wound for each plant consumed. Enlil and a fox act on Enki's behalf to call back Ninhursag in order to undo the damage. She joins with him again and bears eight new children, each of whom are the cure to one of his wounds. The one who cures his rib is named Ninti, whose name means the Queen of months, the lady of the rib, or she who makes live. This association carries over to Eve. In Genesis, Eve is fashioned from Adam's rib and her name hawwa is related to the Hebrew word hay or living. (New American Bible p. 7.) The prologue of "Gilgamesh, Enkidu and the Underworld" may contain the predecessor to the tree of knowledge of good and evil. This tree not only contains a crafty serpent, but also Lilith, the legendary first wife of Adam. The huluppu tree is transplanted by Inanna from the banks of the Euphrates to her garden in Uruk, where she finds that:

...a serpent who could not be charmed  
made its nest in the roots of the tree,

The Anzu bird set his young in the branches of the tree,  
And the dark maid Lilith built her home in the trunk.

It should be noted that this interpretation that this creature is Lilith has come into question of late.

Another possible Sumerian carry-over related to the Fall of man is the lack of "pangs of childbearing" for those in Dilmun. In particular, Ninhursag gives birth in nine days, not nine months, and the pass "like good princely cream" or "fine oil".

The quarrels between herder god and farmer deity pairs such as Lahar and Ashnan or Enten and Emesh are similar in some respects to the quarrels of Cain and Abel. In the Sumerian versions death appears to be avoided, although we do not have the complete Lahar and Ashnan story.

The ten patriarchs in Genesis born prior to the flood lived very long lives, most in excess of 900 years. The seventh patriarch, Enoch, lived only 365 years before he "walked with God". (Genesis 5). The account which numbers those Patriarchs as ten is attributed to the Priestly source. The Yahwist source (J), details only seven Patriarchs prior to Noah, so that with him included, there are eight antediluvian patriarchs. (Genesis 4: 17-18) The eight antediluvian kings of in the Sumerian King List also lived for hundreds of years. S. H. Hooke notes another version of the Sumerian King list, found in Larsa details ten antediluvian kings. The clearest Biblical parallel comes from the story of the Flood. In the Sumerian version, the pious Ziusudra is informed of the gods decision to destroy mankind by listening to a wall. He too weathers the deluge aboard a huge boat. Noah's flood lasts a long time, but Ziusudra comes to rest within seven days and not the near year of the Bible. He does not receive a covenant, but is given eternal life.

As far as the New Testament goes, many also draw a parallel between Dumuzi and Jesus because Dumuzi is a shepherd-king and he is resurrected from the dead. This is perhaps appealing to some as Dumuzi's Akkadian analog, Tammuz, appears in the Bible, however Dumuzi's periodic return from the underworld is not unique even in Sumerian literature. His sister Geshtinanna also rises from the dead, and if one counts those born as deities, Inanna does as well. Periodic death and rebirth is a common theme in agricultural myths where the return of the deities from the earth mirrors a return to life of plants.



**Creation of Man-** There are several stories on the creation of man including Enlil and Ninlil creating man as a helper/slave for the gods as well as Enki and Ninki creating man at the urgings of Nammu to make food for the young gods and be caretakers of the world. Also Ninmah and Geshtu-e or Mami create man in a separate myth. My personal favorite is Marduk's creation of man from Quingu's blood after he destroys Tiamat and creates the heavens, sea and earth from her body. What is common among these is the use of clay which is animated to create man. There is also strong allusion to genetic experimentation tied to some of the stories with the god making mistakes in the attempt to create man.

**The Courtship of Inanna and Dumuzi** - Utu tries to set Inanna up with him but she initially rebuffs him, preferring the farmer. He assures her that his parents are as good as hers and she begins to desire him. The two consummate their relationship and with their exercise in fertility, the plants and grains grow as well. After they spend time in the marriage bed, Inanna declares herself as his battle leader and sets his duties as including sitting on the throne and guiding the path of weapons. At Ninshubur's request, she gives him power over the fertility of plants and animals

**The Courtship of Inanna and Dumuzi** - Her older brother Utu tries to set her up with Dumuzi, the shepherd, but she initially rebuffs him, preferring the farmer. He assures her that his parents are as good as hers and she begins to desire him. Her mother, Ningal, further assures her. The two consummate their relationship and with their exercise in fertility, the plants and grains grow as well. After they spend time in the marriage bed, Inanna declares herself as his battle leader and sets his duties as including sitting on the throne and guiding the path of weapons. At Ninshubur's request, she gives him power over the fertility of plants and animals.

**The Dispute between Cattle and Grain** - Enlil and Enki, at Enki's urging, create farms and fields for the grain goddess Ashnan and the cattle goddess Lahar. This area has places for Lahar to take care of the animals and Ashnan to grow the crops. The two agricultural deities get drunk and begin fighting, so it falls to Enlil and Enki to resolve their conflict - how they do so has not been recovered.

**Enki's Affairs** - Enki was not perfect, as god of water he had a penchant for beer and as god of semen he had a string of incestuous affairs. In the epic Enki and Ninhursag, he and his consort Ninhursag had a daughter Ninsar. When Ninhursag left him he came upon and then had intercourse with Ninsar (Lady Greenery) who gave birth to Ninkurra (Lady Fruitfulness or Lady Pasture). A second time, he had intercourse with Ninkurra, who gave birth to Uttu (= Weaver or Spider). A third time Enki succumbs to temptation, and attempts seduction of Uttu. Upset about Enki's reputation, Uttu consults Ninhursag, who, upset at the promiscuous nature of her spouse, advises Uttu to avoid the riverbanks. In another ver-

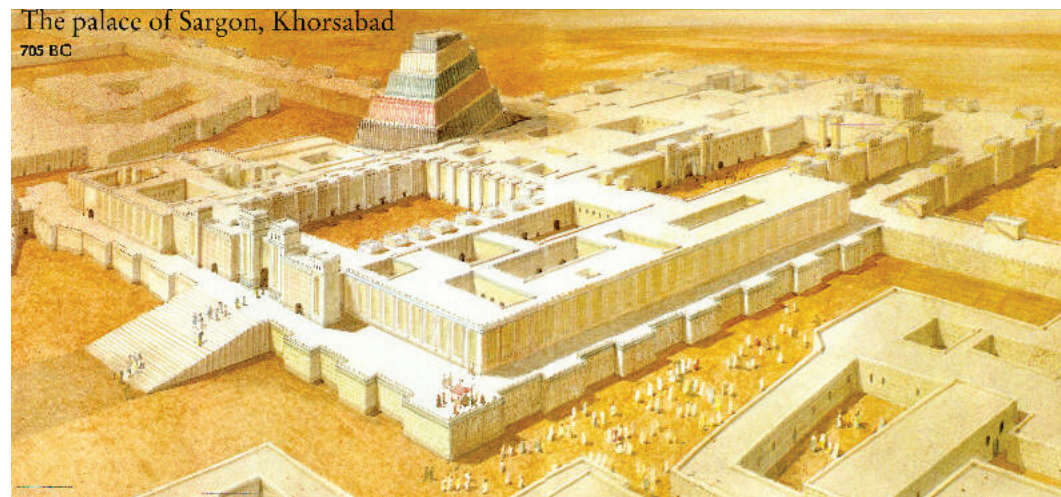
sion of this myth Ninhursag takes Enki's semen from Uttu's womb and plants it in the earth where seven plants rapidly germinate. With his two-faced servant and steward Isimud, Enki finds the plants and immediately starts consuming their fruit. Consuming his own semen he falls pregnant (ill with swellings) in his jaw, his teeth, his mouth, his throat, his limbs and his rib. The gods are at a loss to know what to do, as Enki lacks a womb with which to give birth, until Ninhursag's sacred fox fetches the goddess. Ninhursag relents and takes Enki's Ab (water, or semen) into her body, and gives birth to gods of healing of each part of the body. The last one - Ninti, Sumerian = Lady Rib, is also a pun on Lady Life, a title of Ninhursag herself. The story symbolically reflects the way in which life is brought forth through the addition of water to the land, and once it grows, water is required to bring plants to fruit. It also counsels balance and responsibility, nothing to excess. Ninti, is given the title of the mother of all living, and was a title given to the later Hurrian goddess Kheba. This is also the title given to Eve (= Hebrew Chavvah), the Aramaic Hawwah, who was supposedly made from the Rib of Adam, in a strange reflection of the Sumerian myth.

Rebert McElvaine, shows that this myth developed just before the dawn of the Patriarchal Age, where legitimating myths legitimated stories of institutionalized male dominance. The active role of Ninhursag is different than in later times when male semen became a metaphor for seed, while women were reduced to being "like the Earth, rich, fertile, but empty unless a seed took root in it." (p125) This "seed metaphor transformed man from being little more than a bystander into a God-like creator of life and women from the Goddess like creator of life into ...dirt ...In Genesis the soil has no creative power".

**Enki and Ninhursag** - In Dilmun, she (as Nintu) bears the goddess Ninsar from Enki, who in turn bears the goddess Ninkur, who in turn bears Uttu, goddess of plants. Uttu bore eight new trees from Enki. When he then ate Uttu's children, Ninhursag cursed him with eight wounds and disappears. After being persuaded by Enlil to undo her curse, she bore Enki eight new children which undid the wounds of the first ones. Enki seats her (as Nintu) on the big side of the table in Nippur at the feast celebrating his new house in Eridu.

**Enki and Ninhursag** - He blessed the paradisaical land of Dilmun, to have plentiful water and palm trees. He sires the goddess Ninsar upon Ninhursag, then sires Ninkur upon Ninsar, finally siring Uttu, goddess of plants, upon Ninkur. Uttu bore eight new types of trees from Enki. He then consumed these tree-children and was cursed by Ninhursag, with one wound for each plant consumed. Enlil and a fox act on Enki's behalf to call back Ninhursag in order to undo the damage. She joins with Enki again and bears eight new children, one to cure each of the wounds.

**Enki and Ninmah** - She is the mother goddess and, as Ninmah, assists in the creation of man. Enki, having been propted by Nammu to create servants for the gods, describes how Nammu and Ninmah will help fashion man from clay. Prior to getting to work, she and Enki





drink overmuch at a feast. She then shapes six flawed versions of man from the heart of the clay over the Abzu, with Enki declaring their fates. Enki, in turn also creates a flawed man which is unable to eat. Ninmah appears to curse him for the failed effort. (See also Aruru.)

**Enki and Eridu** - When Enki journeys to Enlil's city Nippur in order for his own city, Eridu to be blessed. He is given bread at Enki's feast and is seated next to An, after which Enlil proclaims that the Anunnaki should praise Enki.

**Enki and Eridu** - Enki raises his city Eridu from the sea, making it very lush. He takes his boat to Nippur to have the city blessed by Enlil. He throws a feast for the gods, giving Enlil, An, and Nintu special attention. After the feast, Enlil proclaims that the Anunnaki should praise Enki.

**The Dispute between Emesh and Enten** - Enlil creates the herdsman deity Enten and the agricultural deity Emesh. He settles a dispute between Emesh and Enten over who should be recognized as 'farmer of the gods', declaring Enten's claim to be stronger.

**Enki and the World Order** - The me (divine laws) were assembled by Enlil in his temple Ekur, and given to Enki to guard and impart to the world, beginning with Eridu, Enki's center of worship.

**Enki and Ninmah: The Creation of Man** - The gods complain that they need assistance. At his mother Nammu's prompting, he directs her, along with some constructive criticism from Ninmah (Ninhursag), in the creation of man from the heart of the clay over the Abzu. Several flawed versions were created before the final version was made.

**Enlil and Ninlil** - He is also banished to the nether world (kur) for his rape of Ninlil, his intended bride, but returns with the first product of their union, the moon god Sin (also known as Nanna). Ninlil follows him into exile as his wife. He tells the various underworld guardians to not reveal his whereabouts and instead poses as those guardians himself three times, each time impregnating her again it appears that at least on one occasion Enlil reveals his true self before they unite. The products of these unions are three underworld deities including Meslamtaea (aka. Nergal) and Ninazu. Later, when Nanna visits him in Nippur, he bestows Ur to him with a palace and plentiful plantlife. Enlil is also seen as the father of Ninurta.

**Enki and the World Order** - The me were assembled by Enlil in Ekur and given to Enki to guard and impart to the world, beginning with Eridu, his center of worship. From there, he guards the me and imparts them on the people. He directs the me towards Ur and Meluhha and Dilmun, organizing the world with his decrees.

**Esagil** - Marduks temple. A large ziggurat with shrines dedicated to many gods. It was the legendary tower of Babel, which stood as the "mooring post of heaven and earth". In the creation myth Esagil was an important part of Marduk's arrangement of the world. Also called E-temen-an-ki.

**The Eridu Genesis** - Jacobsen reports a more complete version of this myth than Kramer or Black and Green which is close to the Babylonian story of Atrahasis. In this account, man had been directed to live in cities by Nintur but as they thrived, the noise irritated Enlil, who thus started the flood. In this account, Enki warns Ziusudra, instructing him to build the boat for his family and for representatives of the animals. The remainder is consistent with the accounts of Kramer and Black and Green.

**Ezida** - translates as "righteous house". name of the temples of Nabu, son of Marduk.

**Gilgamesh, Enkidu and the Netherworld** - Inanna appeals to Gilgamesh, here her brother, when her huluppu tree has been occupied and he is receptive. He tears down the tree and makes it into a throne and bed for her. In return for the favor, Inanna manufactures a pukku and mikku for him. He leaves them out, goes to sleep and can't find them where he left them when he awakens. They had fallen into the underworld. Enkidu asks him what is wrong and Gilgamesh asks him to retrieve them, giving him instructions on how to behave in the underworld. Enkidu enters the "Great Dwelling" through a gate, but he broke several of the underworld taboos of which Gilgamesh warned, including the wearing of clean clothes and sandals, 'good' oil, carrying a weapon or staff, making a noise, or behaving normally towards one's family. For these violations he was "held fast by the outcry of the nether world". Gilgamesh appeals to Enlil, who refuses to help. Intervention by Enki, rescued the hero - or at least raised his shade for Gilgamesh to speak with.

**Death of Gilgamesh** - Gilgamesh is fated by Enlil to die but also to be unmatched as a warrior. When he dies, his wife and household servants make offerings (of themselves?) for Gilgamesh to the deities of the underworld. He is given a palace in the nether world and venerated as lesser god of the dead. It is respectful to pay him a visit upon arrival. If he knew you in life or is of your kin he may explain the rules of Kur to you - which he helps to regulate. His son and successor was either **Ur-lugal** or **Urnungal**. (See Babylonian Gilgamesh)

**Gilgamesh and Agga** - King Agga of Kish sent an ultimatum to Erech. Gilgamesh tried to convince the elders that Erech should sack Kish in response, but the elders wanted to submit. He responded by taking the matter to the men of the city, who agreed to take up arms. Agga laid siege to Erech and Gilgamesh resisted with the help of his servant, Enkidu. He sent a soldier through the gate to Agga. The soldier is captured and tortured with a brief respite while another of Gilgamesh's soldiers climbs over the wall. Gilgamesh himself then climbs the wall and Agga's forces are so taken aback by the sight of them that Agga capitulates. Gilgamesh graciously accepts Agga's surrender, praising him for returning his city.

After this episode, he apparently took Nippur from the son of the founder of the Ur I dynasty.

**Gilgamesh and the Bull of Heaven** - Later, Inanna seeks out Gilgamesh as her lover. When he spurns her she sends the Bull of Heaven to terrorize his city of Erech.



**Gilgamesh and the Land of the Living** - Gilgamesh, saddened by the dying he sees in his city, decides to go to the “Land of the Living” says so to Enkidu. At Enkidu’s urging, Gilgamesh makes a sacrifice and first speaks to Utu, who is in charge of that land. After he informs Utu of his motives, the god calls off his seven guardian weather heroes. Gilgamesh recruits fifty single men to accompany them and commissions swords and axes. They travel over seven mountains, felling trees along the way eventually finding the “cedar of his heart”. After some broken text Gilgamesh is in a deep sleep, presumably after an encounter with Huwawa. Enkidu or one of the others wakes him. They come upon Huwawa and Gilgamesh distracts him with flattery, then puts a nose ring on him and binds his arms. Huwawa grovels to Gilgamesh and Enkidu and Gilgamesh almost releases him. Enkidu argues against it and when Huwawa protests, he decapitates Huwawa. Gilgamesh is angered by Enkidu’s rash action.

**Tale Of Gilgamesh** - The Epic of Gilgamesh is found in the tablets from King Ashurbanipal’s Library. It tells the story of Gilgamesh, a third millennium king of Uruk in Sumer, who oppressed his people. To ease their oppression, the gods sent a champion, Enkidu, to fight Gilgamesh. However the two became very good friends and shared many adventures. The Epic of Gilgamesh is the oldest story known to us. It is known as a folk tale, because it contains many individual stories which comprise the whole. It was originally written on Sumerian clay tablets, circa 2700 BC using a type of script called “Cuneiform” which when translated means “wedge-shaped”. The story began as five individual narrative poems, and by the old Babylonian period, many additional stories and poems were compiled. It was later reconstructed by Sin-leqe-unninni of Babylon (circa 2000BC) into the twelve tablets we have today. Scholars believe that the events surrounding the Epic occurred somewhere around 3500 BC. The most complete surviving version is in the Akkadian language, and was found in the ruins of the library of Ashurbanipal, king of Assyria (669-633 BC), at Nineveh. The library was destroyed by the Persians in 612 BC, and all the tablets were damaged, so parts of the story are missing. The translations used for the interpretation of the Epic of Gilgamesh are largely from the Akkadian compilation.

### Gilgamesh: Tablet 1

The one who saw all [Sha nagba imuru ]I will declare to the world,  
The one who knew all I will tell about  
[line missing]

He saw the great Mystery, he knew the Hidden:  
He recovered the knowledge of all the times before the Flood.  
He journeyed beyond the distant, he journeyed beyond exhaustion,  
And then carved his story on stone. [naru : stone tablets ]

This great hero who had all knowledge [nemequ ], Gilgamesh, built the great city of Uruk;  
the tablet invites us to look around and view the greatness of this city, its high walls, its masonry, and here at the base of its gates, as the foundation of the city walls, a stone of

lapis lazuli on which is carved Gilgamesh’s account of his exploits, the story you are about to hear.

### The account begins:

Gilgamesh, two-thirds god and one-third human, is the greatest king on earth and the strongest super-human that ever existed; however, he is young and oppresses his people harshly. The people call out to the sky-god Anu, the chief god of the city, to help them. In response, Anu creates a wild man, Enkidu, out in the harsh and wild forests surrounding Gilgamesh’s lands. This brute, Enkidu, has the strength of dozens of wild animals; he is to serve as the subhuman rival to the superhuman Gilgamesh.

A trapper’s son, while checking on traps in the forest, discovers Enkidu running naked with the wild animals; he rushes to his father with the news. The father advises him to go into the city and take one of the temple harlots, Shamhat, with him to the forest. When she sees Enkidu, she is to offer herself sexually to the wild man. If he submits to her, the trapper says, he will lose his strength and his wildness.

Shamhat meets Enkidu at the watering-hole where all the wild animals gather; she offers herself to him and he submits, instantly losing his strength and wildness, but he gains understanding and knowledge. He laments for his lost state, but the harlot offers to take him into the city where all the joys of civilization shine in their resplendence; she offers to show him Gilgamesh, the only man worthy of Enkidu’s friendship.

Gilgamesh meanwhile has two dreams; in the first a meteorite falls to earth which is so great that Gilgamesh can neither lift it nor turn it. The people gather and celebrate around the meteorite, and Gilgamesh embraces it as he would a wife, but his mother, the goddess Rimat-Ninsun, forces him to compete with the meteorite. In the second, Gilgamesh dreams that an axe appears at his door, so great that he can neither lift it nor turn it. The people gather and celebrate around the axe, and Gilgamesh embraces it as he would a wife, but his mother, again, forces him to compete with the axe. Gilgamesh asks his mother what these dreams might mean; she tells him a man of great force and strength will come into Uruk. Gilgamesh will embrace this man as he would a wife, and this man will help Gilgamesh perform great deeds.

### Gilgamesh: Tablet 2

Enkidu is gradually introduced to civilization by living for a time with a group of shepherds, who teach him how to tend flocks, how to eat, how to speak properly, and how to wear clothes. Enkidu then enters the city of Uruk during a great celebration. Gilgamesh, as the king, claims the right to have sexual intercourse first with every new bride on the day of her wedding; as Enkidu enters the city, Gilgamesh is about to claim that right. Infuriated at this abuse, Enkidu stands in front of the door of the marital chamber and blocks Gilgamesh’s way. They fight furiously until Gilgamesh wins the upper hand; Enkidu concedes Gilgamesh’s superiority and the two embrace and become devoted friends.

Both Enkidu and Gilgamesh gradually weaken and grow lazy living in the city, so Gilgamesh proposes a great adventure: they are to journey to the great Cedar Forest in southern Iran





and cut down all the cedar trees. To do this, they will need to kill the Guardian of the Cedar Forest, the great demon, Humbaba the Terrible. Enkidu knows about Humbaba from his days running wild in the forest; he tries in vain to convince Gilgamesh not to undertake this folly.

### Gilgamesh: Tablet 3

[Most of tablet three doesn't exist]

The elders of the city protest Gilgamesh's endeavor, but agree reluctantly. They place the life of the king in the hands of Enkidu, whom they insist shall take the forward position in the battle with Humbaba. Gilgamesh's mother laments her son's fate in a prayer to the sun-god, Shamash, asking that god why he put a restless heart in the breast of her son. Shamash promises her that he will watch out for Gilgamesh's life. Ramat-Ninsun, too, commands Enkidu to guard the life of the king and to take the forward position in the battle with Humbaba. In panic, Enkidu again tries to convince Gilgamesh not to undertake this journey, but Gilgamesh is confident of success.

### Gilgamesh: Tablet 4

Tablet four tells the story of the journey to the cedar forest. On each day of the six day journey, Gilgamesh prays to Shamash; in response to these prayers, Shamash sends Gilgamesh oracular dreams during the night. These dreams are all ominous: The first is not preserved. In the second, Gilgamesh dreams that he wrestles a great bull that splits the ground with his



breath. Enkidu interprets the dream for Gilgamesh; the dream means that Shamash, the bull, will protect Gilgamesh. In the third, Gilgamesh dreams:  
The skies roared with thunder and the earth heaved,  
Then came darkness and a stillness like death.  
Lightening smashed the ground and fires blazed out;  
Death flooded from the skies.  
When the heat died and the fires went out,  
The plains had turned to ash.

Enkidu's interpretation is missing here, but like the other dreams, it is assumed he puts a positive spin on the dream. The fourth dream is missing, but Enkidu again tells Gilgamesh that the dream portends success in the upcoming battle. The fifth dream is also missing.

At the entrance to the Cedar Forest, Gilgamesh begins to quake with fear; he prays to Shamash, reminding him that he had promised Ninsun that he would be safe. Shamash calls

down from heaven, ordering him to enter the forest because Humbaba is not wearing all his armor. The demon Humbaba wears seven coats of armor, but now he is only wearing one so he is particularly vulnerable. Enkidu loses his courage and turns back; Gilgamesh falls on him and they have a great fight. Hearing the crash of their fighting, Humbaba comes stalking out of the Cedar Forest to challenge the intruders. A large part of the tablet is missing here. On the one part of the tablet still remaining, Gilgamesh convinces Enkidu that they should stand together against the demon.

### Gilgamesh: Tablet 5

Gilgamesh and Enkidu enter the gloriously beautiful Cedar Forest and begin to cut down the trees. Hearing the sound, Humbaba comes roaring up to them and warns them off. Enkidu shouts at Humbaba that the two of them are much stronger than the demon, but Humbaba, who knows Gilgamesh is a king, taunts the king for taking orders from a nobody like Enkidu. Turning his face into a hideous mask, Humbaba begins to threaten the pair, and Gilgamesh runs and hides. Enkidu shouts at Gilgamesh, inspiring him with courage, and Gilgamesh appears from hiding and the two begin their epic battle with Humbaba. Shamash intrudes on the battle, helping the pair, and Humbaba is defeated. On his knees, with Gilgamesh's sword at his throat, Humbaba begs for his life and offers Gilgamesh all the tress in the forest and his eternal servitude. While Gilgamesh is thinking this over, Enkidu intervenes, telling Gilgamesh to kill Humbaba before any of the gods arrive and stop him from doing so. Should he kill Humbaba, he will achieve widespread fame for all the times to come. Gilgamesh, with a great sweep of his sword, removes Humbaba's head. But before he dies, Humbaba screams out a curse on Enkidu: "Of you two, may Enkidu not live the longer, may Enkidu not find any peace in this world!"

Gilgamesh and Enkidu cut down the cedar forest and in particular the tallest of the cedar trees to make a great cedar gate for the city of Uruk. They build a raft out of the cedar and float down the Euphrates river to their city.

### Gilgamesh: Tablet 6

After these events, Gilgamesh, his fame widespread and his frame resplendent in his wealthy clothes, attracts the sexual attention of the goddess Ishtar, who comes to Gilgamesh and offers to become his lover. Gilgamesh refuses with insults, listing all the mortal lovers that Ishtar has had and recounting the dire fates they all met with at her hands. Deeply insulted, Ishtar returns to heaven and begs her father, the sky-god Anu, to let her have the Bull of Heaven to wreak vengeance on Gilgamesh and his city:

Father, let me have the Bull of Heaven

To kill Gilgamesh and his city.

For if you do not grant me the Bull of Heaven,

I will pull down the Gates of Hell itself,

Crush the doorposts and flatten the door,

And I will let the dead leave

And let the dead roam the earth

And they shall eat the living.

The dead will overwhelm all the living!

Anu reluctantly gives in, and the Bull of Heaven is sent down into Uruk. Each time the bull breathes, its breath is so powerful that enormous abysses are opened up in the earth and hundreds of people fall through to their deaths. Working together again, Gilgamesh and Enkidu slay the mighty bull. Ishtar is enraged, but Enkidu begins to insult her, saying that she is next, that he and Gilgamesh will kill her next, and he rips one of the thighs off the bull and hurls it into her face.

### Gilgamesh: Tablet 7

Enkidu falls ill after having a set of ominous dreams; he finds out from the priests that he has been singled out for vengeance by the gods. The Chief Gods have met and have decided that someone should be punished for the killing of Humbaba and the killing of the Bull of Heaven, so of the two heroes, they decide Enkidu should pay the penalty. Enraged at the injustice of the decision, Enkidu curses the great Cedar Gate built from the wood of the Cedar Forest, and he curses the temple harlot, Shamhat, and the trapper, for introducing him to civilization. Shamhash reminds him that, even though his life has been short, he has enjoyed the fruits of civilization and known great happiness. Enkidu then blesses the harlot and the trapper. In a dream, a great demon comes to take Enkidu and drags him to Hell, a House of Dust where all the dead end up; as he is dying, he describes Hell:

The house where the dead dwell in total darkness,

Where they drink dirt and eat stone,  
Where they wear feathers like birds,  
Where no light ever invades their everlasting darkness,

Where the door and the lock of Hell is coated with thick dust.

When I entered the House of Dust,  
On every side the crowns of kings were heaped,

On every side the voices of the kings who wore those crowns,  
Who now only served food to the gods Anu and Enlil,  
Candy, meat, and water poured from skins.

I saw sitting in this House of Dust a priest and a servant,

I also saw a priest of purification and a priest of ecstasy,

I saw all the priests of the great gods.

There sat Etana and Sumukan,

There sat Ereshkigal, the queen of Hell,

Beletseri, the scribe of Hell, sitting before her.

Beletseri held a tablet and read it to Ereshkigal.

She slowly raised her head when she noticed me

She pointed at me:

“Who has sent this man?”

Enkidu commends himself to Gilgamesh, and after suffering terribly for twelve days, he finally dies.

### Gilgamesh: Tablet 8

Gilgamesh is torn apart by the death of his friend, and utters a long lament, ordering all of creation to never fall silent in mourning his dead friend. Most of this tablet is missing, but the second half seems to be a description of the monument he builds for Enkidu.

### Gilgamesh: Tablet 9

Gilgamesh allows his life to fall apart; he does not bathe, does not shave, does not take care of himself, not so much out of grief for his friend, but because he now realizes that he too must die and the thought sends him into a panic. He decides that he can't live unless granted eternal life; he decides to undertake the most perilous journey of all: the journey to Utnapishtim and his wife, the only mortals on whom the gods had granted eternal life. Utnapishtim is the Far-Away, living at the mouth of all rivers, at the ends of the world. Utnapishtim was the great king of the world before the Flood and, with his wife, was the only mortal preserved by the gods during the Flood. After an ominous dream, Gilgamesh sets out. He arrives at Mount Mashu, which guards the rising and the setting of the sun, and encounters two large scorpions who guard the way past Mount Mashu. They try to convince him that his journey is futile and fraught with danger, but still they allow him to pass. Past Mount Mashu is the land of Night, where no light ever appears. Gilgamesh journeys eleven leagues before the light begins to glimmer, after twelve leagues he has emerged into day. He enters into a brilliant garden of gems, where every tree bears precious stones.



### Gilgamesh: Tablet 10

Gilgamesh comes to a tavern by the ocean shore; the tavern is kept by Siduri. Frightened by Gilgamesh's ragged appearance, Siduri locks the tavern door and refuses to let Gilgamesh in. Gilgamesh proves his identity and asks Siduri how to find Utnapishtim. Like the giant scorpions, she tells him that his journey is futile and fraught with dangers. However, she directs him to Urshanabi, the ferryman, who works for Utnapishtim. Gilgamesh approaches Urshanabi with great arrogance and violence and in the process destroys the “stone things” that are somehow critical

for the journey to Utnapishtim. When Gilgamesh demands to be taken to Utnapishtim, the ferryman tells him that it is now impossible, since the “stone things” have been destroyed. Nevertheless, he advises Gilgamesh to cut several trees down to serve as punting poles; the waters they are to cross are the Waters of Death, should any mortal touch the waters, that man will instantly die. With the punting poles, Gilgamesh can push the boat and never touch the dangerous waters. After a long and dangerous journey, Gilgamesh arrives at a shore and encounters another man. He tells this man that he is looking for Utnapishtim and the secret of eternal life; the old man advises Gilgamesh that death is a necessary fact because of the will of the gods; all human effort is only temporary, not permanent.

### Gilgamesh: Tablet 11

At this point, Gilgamesh realizes that he is talking to Utnapishtim, the Far-Away; he hadn't expected an immortal human to be ordinary and aged. He asks Utnapishtim how he received immortality, and Utnapishtim tells him the great secret hidden from humans: In the time before the Flood, there was a city, Shuruppak, on the banks of the Euphrates. There, the counsel of the gods held a secret meeting; they all resolved to destroy the world in a great flood. All the gods were under oath not to reveal this secret to any living thing, but Ea (one of the gods that created humanity) came to Utnapishtim's house and told the secret to the walls of Utnapishtim's house, thus not technically violating his oath to the rest of the



gods. He advised the walls of Utnapishtim's house to build a great boat, its length as great as its breadth, to cover the boat, and to bring all living things into the boat. Utnapishtim gets straight to work and finishes the great boat by the new year. Utnapishtim then loads the boat with gold, silver, and all the living things of the earth, and launches the boat. Ea orders him into the boat and commands him to close the door behind him. The black clouds arrive, with the thunder god Adad rumbling within them; the earth splits like an earthenware pot, and all the light turns to darkness. The Flood is so great that even the gods are frightened: The gods shook like beaten dogs, hiding in the far corners of heaven, Ishtar screamed and wailed:

"The days of old have turned to stone:  
We have decided evil things in our Assembly!  
Why did we decide those evil things in our Assembly?  
Why did we decide to destroy our people?  
We have only just now created our beloved humans;  
We now destroy them in the sea!"  
All the gods wept and wailed along with her,  
All the gods sat trembling, and wept.

The Flood lasts for seven days and seven nights, and finally light returns to the earth. Utnapishtim opens a window and the entire earth has been turned into a flat ocean; all humans have been turned to stone. Utnapishtim then falls to his knees and weeps.

Utnapishtim's boat comes to rest on the top of Mount Nimush; the boat lodges firmly on the mountain peak just below the surface of the ocean and remains there for seven days. On the seventh day:

I [Utnapishtim] released a dove from the boat,  
It flew off, but circled around and returned,  
For it could find no perch.

I then released a swallow from the boat,  
It flew off, but circled around and returned,  
For it could find no perch.

I then released a raven from the boat,  
It flew off, and the waters had receded:

It eats, it scratches the ground, but it does not circle around and return.

I then sent out all the living things in every direction and sacrificed a sheep on that very spot. The gods smell the odor of the sacrifice and begin to gather around Utnapishtim.

Enlil, who had originally proposed to destroy all humans, then arrives, furious that one of the humans had survived, since they had agreed to wipe out all humans. He accuses Ea of treachery, but Ea convinces Enlil to be merciful. Enlil then seizes Utnapishtim and his wife and blesses them:

At one time Utnapishtim was mortal.

At this time let him be a god and immortal;

Let him live in the far away at the source of all the rivers.

At the end of his story, Utnapishtim offers Gilgamesh a chance at immortality. If Gilgamesh can stay awake for six days and seven nights, he, too, will become immortal. Gilgamesh accepts these conditions and sits down on the shore; the instant he sits down he falls asleep. Utnapishtim tells his wife that all men are liars, that Gilgamesh will deny having fallen asleep, so he asks his wife to bake a loaf of bread every day and lay the loaf at Gilgamesh's feet. Gilgamesh sleeps without ever waking up for six days and seven nights, at which point Utnapishtim wakes him up. Startled, Gilgamesh says, "I only just dozed off for half a second here." Utnapishtim points out the loaves of bread, showing their states of decay from the most recent, fresh bread, to the oldest, moldy, stale bread that had been laid at his feet on the very first day. Gilgamesh is distraught:

O woe! What do I do now, where do I go now?

Death has devoured my body,

Death dwells in my body,

Wherever I go, wherever I look, there stands Death!

Utnapishtim's wife convinces the old man to have mercy on him; he offers Gilgamesh in place of immortality a secret plant that will make Gilgamesh young again. The plant is at the bottom of the ocean surrounding the Far-Away; Gilgamesh ties stones to his feet, sinks to the bottom, and plucks the magic plant. But he doesn't use it because he doesn't trust it; rather he decides to take it back to Uruk and test it out on an old man first, to make sure it works.

Urshanabi takes him across the Waters of Death. Several leagues inland, Gilgamesh and Urshanabi stop to eat and sleep; while they're sleeping, a snake slithers up and eats the magic plant (which is why snakes shed their skin) and crawls away. Gilgamesh awakens to find the

plant gone; he falls to his knees and weeps:

For whom have I labored? For whom have I journeyed?

For whom have I suffered?

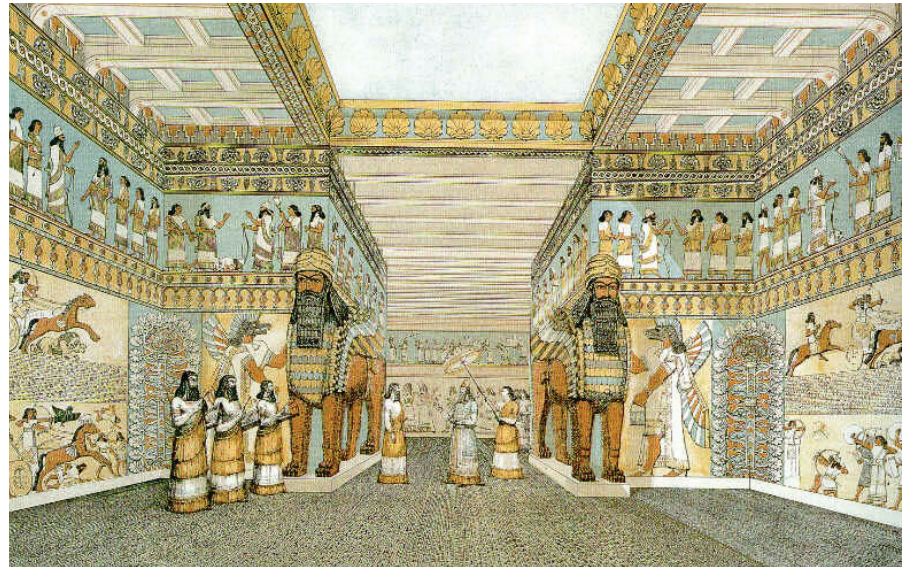
I have gained absolutely nothing for myself,

I have only profited the snake, the ground lion!

The tale ends with Gilgamesh, at the end of his journey standing before the gates of Uruk, inviting Urshanabi to look around and view the greatness of this city, its high walls, its masonry, and here at the base of its gates, as the foundation of the city walls, a stone of lapis lazuli on which is carved Gilgamesh's account of his exploits.

**Inanna's Descent to the Nether World** - He is friendly to Inanna and rescued her from Kur by sending two sexless beings to negotiate with, and flatter Ereshkigal. They gave her the Food of Life and the Water of Life, which restored her.

**Inanna's Descent to the Nether World** - Enlil refuses Ninshubur's appeal on behalf of his "grand"-daughter, Inanna to help rescue her from Ereshkigal in the underworld.



**Inanna's Descent to the Nether World** - Inanna also visits Kur, which results in a myth reminiscent of the Greek seasonal story of Persephone. She sets out to witness the funeral rites of her sister-in-law Ereshkigal's husband Gugalanna, the Bull of Heaven. She takes precaution before setting out, by telling her servant Ninshubur to seek assistance from Enlil, Nanna, or Enki at their shrines should she not return. Inanna knocks on the outer gates of Kur and the gatekeeper, Neti, questions her. He consults with queen Ereshkigal and then allows Inanna to pass through the seven gates of the underworld. After each gate, she is required to remove adornments and articles of clothing, until after the seventh gate, she is naked. The Annuna pass judgment against her and Ereshkigal killed her and hung her on the wall. (Also see **Ereshkigal**) Inanna is rescued by the intervention of Enki. He creates two sexless creatures that empathize with Ereshkigal's suffering, and thereby gain a gift - Inanna's corpse. They restore her to life with the Bread of Life and the Water of Life, but the Sumerian underworld has a conservation of death law. No one can leave without providing someone to stay in their stead. Inanna is escorted by galla(demons) past Ninshubur and members of her family. She doesn't allow them to claim anyone until she sees Dumuzi on his throne in Uruk. They then seize Dumuzi, but he escapes them twice by transforming himself, with the aid of Utu. Eventually he is caught and slain. Inanna spies his sister, Geshtinanna, in mourning and they go to Dumuzi. She allows Dumuzi, the shepherd, to stay in the underworld only six months of the year, while Geshtinanna will stay the other six. As with the Greek story of the kidnapping of Persephone, this linked the changing seasons, the emergence of the plants from the ground, with the return of a harvest deity from the nether world. Geshtinanna is also associated with growth, but where her brother rules over the spring harvested grain, she rules over the autumn harvested vines



**Inanna and Mount Ebih** - Inanna complains to An about Mount Ebih (Kur?) demanding that it glorify her and submit lest she attack it. An discourages her from doing so because of its fearsome power. She does so anyway, bringing a storehouse worth of.....

**Inanna and Mt. Ebih** - Inanna is also described in Hymns as a destroyer of Kur. If one, as Kramer does, identifies Kur with Mt. Ebih, then we learn that it has directed fear against the gods, the Anunnaki and the land, sending forth rays of fire against the land. Inanna declares to An that she will attack Mt. Ebih unless it submits. An warns against such an attack, but Inanna proceeds anyway and destroys it. Mt. Ebih seems to be a volcano personified.

**Inanna and Enki** - The me were universal decrees of divine authority - the invocations that spread arts, crafts, and civilization. Enki became the keeper of the me. Inanna comes to Enki and complains at having been given too little power from his decrees. In a different text, she gets Enki drunk and he grants her more powers, arts, crafts, and attributes - a total of ninety-four me. Inanna parts company with Enki to deliver the me to her cult center at Erech. Enki recovers his wits and tries to recover the me from her, but she arrives safely in Erech with them. (Also see Ishtar)

**Inanna and Enki** - Later, Inanna comes to Enki and complains at having been given too little power from his decrees. In a different text she gets Enki drunk and he grants her more

powers, arts, crafts, and attributes - a total of ninety-four me. Inanna parts company with Enki to deliver the me to her cult center at Erech. Enki recovers his wits and tries to recover the me from her, but she arrives safely in Erech with them. (See also Ea)

**Kudurrus** - most often large stones carved with various symbols of protection and land ownership involving the king or local leaders of the city.

**The Me (Divine laws)** - Another important concept in Sumerian theology, was that of me. The me were universal decrees of divine authority. They are the invocations that spread arts, crafts, and civilization. The me were assembled by Enlil in Ekur and given to Enki to guard and impart to the world, beginning with Eridu, his center of worship. From there, he guards the me and imparts them on the people. He directs the me towards Ur and Meluhha and Dilmun, organizing the world with his decrees. Later, Inanna comes to Enki and complains at having been given too little power from his decrees. In a different text, she gets Enki drunk and he grants her more powers, arts, crafts, and attributes - a total of ninety-four me. Inanna parts company with Enki to deliver the me to her cult center at Erech. Enki recovers his wits and tries to recover the me from her, but she arrives safely in Erech with them.

**The Feats and Exploits of Ninurta** - The deity sets out to destroy the Kur. Kur initially intimidates Ninurta into retreating, but when Ninurta returns with greater resolve, Kur is destroyed. This looses the waters of the Abzu, causing the fields to be flooded with unclean waters. Ninurta dams up the Abzu by piling stones over Kur's corpse. He then drains these waters into the Tigris. The identification of Ninurta's antagonist in this passage as Kur appears to be miscast. Black and Green identify

his foe as the demon Asag, who was the spawn of An and Ki, and who produced monstrous offspring with Kur. The remainder of the details of this story are the same as in Kramer's account, but with Asag replacing Kur. In other versions, Ninurta is replaced by Adad/Ishkur.

**Dilmun. Gilgamesh, Enkidu and the Netherworld** - When Gilgamesh looses his pukku and mikku in the nether world, and Enkidu is held fast there by demons, he appeals to Enlil for help. Enlil refuses to assist him. (See also the Babylonian Ellil)

The Sumerian King List records all the rulers of Earth back over 400,000 years. This huge stretch of time coupled with reigns into the thousands of years has caused most historians to reject its accuracy. However all the early rulers were gods - immortals. The King List does record the reign of Enmeduranki whose name meant 'ruler who connects Heaven and Earth.' These Gods were called the **Nephilim** - or **Nefiim** - the **Elohim** - the Annunaki meaning "Those who from Heaven to Earth came." In Sumerian Mythology they were a pantheon of good gods and bad gods all of who came to Earth to create the human race. The main gods are listed below - Anu, Ninhursag [female], Enlil, Enki also called Ea.

A Sumerian tablet shows Enmeduranki, a prince in Sippar, who was well loved by Anu, Enlil and Ea. Shamash, a priest in the Bright Temple, appointed him then took him to the assembly of the gods. They showed him how to observe oil on water and many other secrets



of Anu, Enlil and Ea. Then they gave him the Divine Tablet, the kibdu secret of Heaven and Earth. They taught him how to make calculations with numbers.” [This is a reference to Sacred or Creational Geometry]

The peoples of ancient civilization, Sumerians, Egyptians, Akkadians, Assyrians, Babylonians, Hittites, Hebrews etc., in their sacred writings all describe gods that physically dwelt on Earth. This was aside from their writings on philosophy and mysticism.

According to the Sumerians these gods came from the planet Nibiru ‘Planet of the Crossing.’ The Assyrians and Babylonians called it ‘Marduk’, after their chief god. Sumerians said one year or “sar” on planet Nibiru, was equivalent in time to 3600 earth years. They also said Anunnaki lifespans were 120 sars which is 120 x 3600 or 432,000 years. According to the King List 120 sars had passed from the time the Anunnaki arrived on Earth to the time of the Flood. However when the Lofty Ones came to Earth their lifespans began to sync with Earth’s faster orbit and they faced rapid aging compared to that on Nibiru.

The Sumerians never called the Anunnaki, ‘gods.’ They were called din.gir, a two syllable word. ‘Din’ meant ‘righteous, pure, bright;’ ‘gir’ was a term used to describe a sharp-edged object. As an epithet for the Anunnaki ‘dingir’ meant ‘righteous ones of the bright pointed objects.’

Sumerian texts break up history into two epochs divided by the great Deluge - the Biblical Flood. After the waters receded the great Anunnaki who decree the fate decided that the gods were too lofty for mankind. The term used - ‘elu’ in Akkadian - means exactly that: ‘Lofty Ones;’ from it comes the Babylonian, Assyrian, Hebrew, and Ugaritic El - the term to which the Greeks gave the connotation ‘god’.

From Genesis;

After the sons of God took human wives there were giants in the Earth in those days; and also after that, when the sons of God came in unto the daughters of men, and they bare children to them, the same became the mighty men which were of old, men of renown. The Nefilim were upon the Earth, in those days and thereafter too, when the sons of the gods cohabited with the daughters of the Adam, and they bore children unto them. They were the mighty ones of Eternity - the people of the shem.’ Nefilim stems from the Semitic root, ‘to be cast down.’

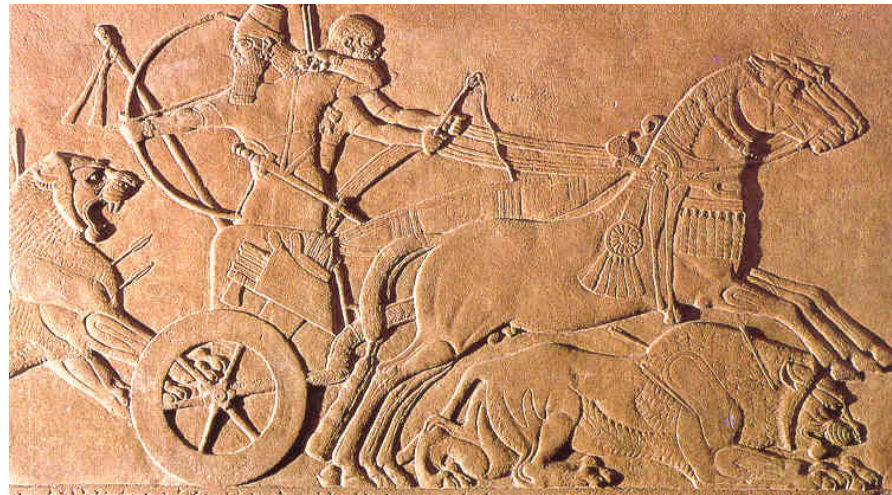
#### **Creation of first Man by Anunnaki - Laboratory vessels and Tree of Life**

Anu sent Enki and his followers to Earth to live. The sons of the gods fell in love with the daughters of men, married them and had children by them. Then not wanting their lovers to die they taught them the secrets of immortality that Ea had discovered. Those secrets were the secrets of alchemy. Enki’ youngest son was Ningizzida, Lord of the Tree of Truth, in Mesopotamia. He was revered as Thoth in Egypt and Hermes in the West. Thoth is the Scribe. As Hermes he is the Magician - the Alchemist. The ancient Mystery School

Teachings of Thoth were past down to his Initiates who became the priests. They hid the secret knowledge passed it down secretly through the ages. This knowledge of creation is now called Sacred Geometry.

**Targhizizi and Tharumagi** (Canaanite) - These are the twin mountains which hold the firmament up above the earth-circling ocean, thereby bounding the earth. The entrance to the underworld and Shapshu’s ‘grave’. It is entered by lifting up a rock to a wooded height. The entrance is bounded by a river-shore land of pasture and fields known ironically as “Pleasure” or “Delight”.

**Myths of Marduk** (largely Kassite) - Anu gave him the four winds to play with. When Anu’s peace mission to Tiamat fails, Ea urges him into action. He goes before Anshar and the divine assembly and declares that he will defeat Tiamat and lay her head at his feet, but



that the assembly must promise that he should be the one to fix fates and more or less assume the role of the leader of the pantheon. Anshar, Lahmu, Lahamu, and Anu find him a shrine and Anu instills upon him the Anu-power in which, his word decrees fate. He is proclaimed king and invested with the scepter, throne, and staff-of-office. He is given an unfaceable weapon, the flood-weapon. He takes a bow and arrow and mace. He puts lightning in front of him, marshals his winds, makes a net to encircle Tiamat, fills his body with flame. He rides his storm-chariot driven by Slayer, Pitiless, Racer, and Flyer, poison-toothed, tireless steeds. He had a spell on his lips and an anti-toxin in his hand. He led the gods to battle. Qingu’s strategy confused him. Tiamat tried to enspell him and wheedled at him. Marduk reproaches her and calls her out for

single combat. She looses her temper and they fight. He unleashes his weapons at her, dis-tended her body with winds, shot her in the belly with an arrow, split her in two and slit her heart. He defeats the rest of her forces and retrieves the Tablet of Destinies.

He smashed Tiamat’s skull to herald her death. He made half of her skin the roof of the sky. He leveled Apsu, measured it and established numerous shrines for many of the gods. He set up stands for the gods, constructed the heavens and regulated the year, giving Shamash some dominion over the months and the year. He made the Tigris and Euphrates rivers from Tiamat’s eyes and made mountains from her udders. He smashed the weapons of Tiamat’s army and put images of them at the gates to the underworld. He set up his temple at Esharra. and his seat in Babylon. The gods honored him as king. He put blood and bones together as and made early man to bear the work of the gods, as in Atrahasis. For Qingu’s part in the war he was made to provide the blood for the creation of man. He divided the Anunnaki and placed 300 to guard the sky, and six hundred to dwell in heaven and earth. He had them create Babylon building the Esagalia temple and a high ziggurat. Anshar gave him many new names: 1. Asarluhi, 2. Marduk, 3. The Son, The Majesty of the Gods, 4. Marukka, 5. Mershakushu, 6. Lugal-dimmer-ankia (King of heaven and earth), 7. Bel, 8. Nari-lugal dimmer-ankia, 9. Asarluhi, 10. Namtila, 11. Namru, 12. Asare, 13. Asar-alim, 14. Asar-alim-nuna, 15. Tutu, 16. Zi-ukkina, 17. Ziku, 18. Agaku, 19. Shazu, 20. Zisi, 21. Suhrim, 22. Suhgurim, 23. Zahrim, 24. Zahgurim, 25. Enbilulu, 26. Epadun, 27. Gugal, 28. Hegal, 29.



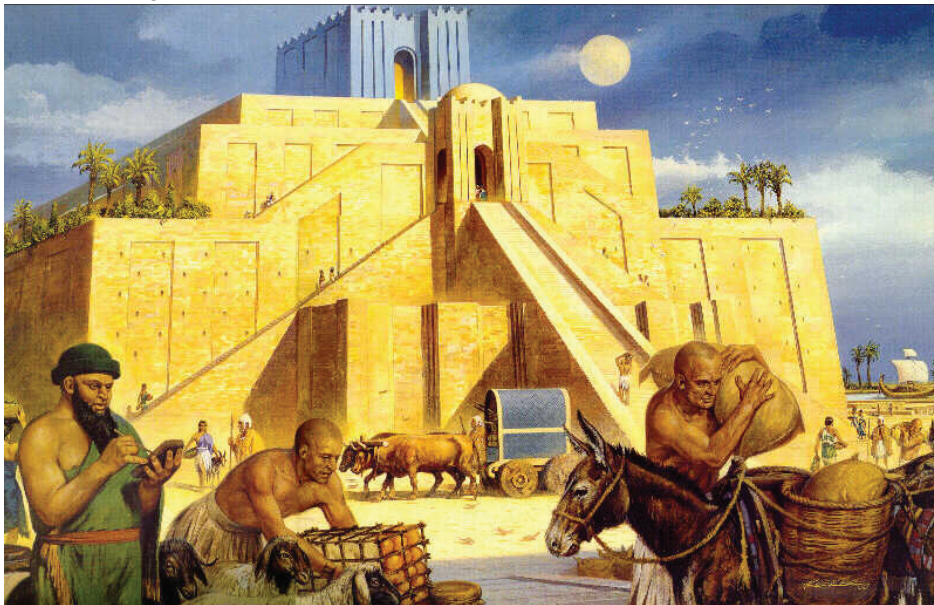
Sirsir, 30. Malah, 31. Gil, 32. Gilima, 33. Agilima, 34. Zulum, 35. Mummu, 36. Zulum-ummu, 37. Gizh- numun-ab, 38. Lugal-ab-dubur, 39. Pagal-guena, 40. Lugal-Durmah, 41. Aranuna, 42. Dumu-duku, 43. Lugal-duku, 44. Lugal-shuanna, 45. Iruga, 46. Irqingu, 47. Kinma, 48. Kinma, 49. E-sizkur, 50. Addu, 51. Asharu, 52. Neberu, 53. Enkukur. He becomes a firm law-giver and judge who, when angered is not stoppable. Later he becomes somewhat negligent and Erra challenges him by preparing to attack his people in Babylon. He responds to the challenge by saying that he already killed most of the people in the flood and would not do so again. He also states that no- one would be in control of things if he got off of his throne to work up a flood, to which Erra volunteers to run things from Marduk's throne.

**Miry - Mot's** city in the underworld, "where a pit is the throne on which he sits, filth the land of his heritage." See Mot.

**Mt. Zephon** - Either the mountain is deified and holy, godlike in proportion, or El has a pavilion there. It has recesses within which Baal holds his feast. Baal had his first house of cedar and brick there, as well as his second house of gold, silver, and lapis-lazuli.

**Mt. Lel** - where the assembly of the caanite gods meet. It is El's abode and the source of the rivers and two oceans, as well as where those waters meet those of the firmament. It lies 'two layers beneath the wells of the earth, three spans beneath its marshes.' It had been thought to be a field and not a mountain. The mansion there has eight entrances and seven chambers.

**Tower of Babel** - In the Bible the tower was built by the Babylonians to have its city "with its top in the heavens" which disturbs Yahweh, who in turn scrambles the speech of the worlds so that it cannot be completed. In reality, the Biblical imagery was inspired by the great Ziggurat in Babylon or in Hebrew Babel, a play on balal (to confuse). It was the Ziggurat of Marduk and had a base of 100 meters square in seven stages with the topmost built in cobalt glazed brick.



**Ughar or Inbab** – In caanite myth, this is the location of Anat's mansion. See Anat.

**The Zodiac** - The Babylonians systematized the heaven into quadrants and brought astrology to the western world. They were heavily influenced by vedic kingdoms in astrological learning. It is presently unknown who the original teachers of a vast and technologically based view of the stars were, but it suffices to say that the Sumerian culture were the first, in the western world to bring the knowledge to light. By about 1000 BC they recognized 18 zodiacal constellations through whose path the moon and planets move. They were: the hired man (Aries), the stars (Pleiades) - see seven gods, the bull of heaven (Taurus), the true shepard of Anu (Orion), the old man (Perseus), the crook (Auriga), the great twins (Gemini), the Crab (Cancer), the Lion (Leo), the Furrow (Virgo), the scales (Libra), the scorpion (Scorpio), Pabilsag (Sagittarius), the goat-fish (Capricorn), the great one (Aquarius), the tail and swallow and Anunitu the three forming (Pisces) and later Pegasus was added. By around 400 BC they were distributed into the twelve months of the year we are familiar with, each covering 30 degrees of the sky.



#### BABYLONIAN MYTHS

##### Enuma Elish (Babylonian Creation)

Babylonian mythology was inspired a great deal by the Sumerians. Much like Greek mythology influenced the conquering Romans. The Semitic Babylonians did however add some of their own ideas to their mythology. Lets examine the great Babylonian Creation myth, Enuma Elish, and then deal with some contradictory myths.

##### Enuma Elish begins:

"When above the heaven had not yet been named,  
And below the earth had not yet been called by name;  
When Aspu primeval, thier begetter,  
Mummu, and Tiamat, she who gave birth to them all,  
Still mingled their waters together,  
And no pasture land had been formed and not even a reed marsh was to be seen;  
When none of the other gods had been brought into being,



When they had not yet been called by their names and their destinies had not yet been fixed,  
At that time were the gods created with them”

The universe begins with the watery abyss (the god Apsu) and primeval watery chaos (the goddess Tiamat). Mummu may have been there also and he could have represented the mist that came from the two seas. From the union of Apsu and Tiamat sprang Lahmu and Lahamu. They in turn gave birth to heaven (the god Anshar) and earth (the goddess Kishar). From them sprang the rest of the gods including Ellil (Sumerian Enlil), Ea (Sumerian Enki), Ishtar (Inanna), Anu (An), Tammuz (Dumuzi) and Marduk, the head of the Pantheon. Much of the myth concerns a war between the gods and why Marduk is the head of the pantheon. As a result of the war, the earth is created and the universe is given order. After Marduk had defeated and killed Tiamat:

“Then the lord [Marduk] paused to view her dead body,  
That he might divide the monster and do artful works.  
He split her like a shellfish into two parts:  
half of her set up and ceiled it as a sky,  
Pulled down the bar and posted guards.  
He bade them to allow not her waters to escape.  
He crossed the heavens and surveyed the regions.  
He squared Apsu’s quarter, the abode of Nudimmud [Ea],  
As the lord measured the dimensions of Apsu.  
The Great Abode, its likeness, he fixed as Esharra,  
The Great Abode, Esharra, which he made as the firmament.  
Anu [heaven], Enlil [sky], and Ea [water] he made to occupy their place”

[Much of the beginning of tablet V is lost or damaged.]

“He created stations for the great gods;  
The stars, their likenesses, the signs of the zodiac, he set up.  
He determined the year, defined the divisions;  
For each of the twelve months he set up three constellations.  
After he had defined the days of the year by means of constellations,  
He founded the sation of Nibiru [planet Jupiter] to make known their duties.  
That none might go wrong and be remiss,  
He established the stations of Ea [sea] and Ellil [sky] together with it.  
He opened the gates on both sides,  
An made strong locks to the left and to the right.  
In the very center thereof he fixed the zenith.  
The moon he caused to shine forth;”

It then goes on to describe the duties of the moon.

“After he had appointed the days to Shamash [sun],  
And had established the precincts of night and day,

Taking the spittle of Tiamat Marduk created  
[line damaged]  
He formed the clouds and filled them with water.  
Putting her head into position he formed thereon the mountains,  
Opening the deep which was in flood,  
He caused to flow from her eyes the Euphrates and Tigris [line damaged]  
Stopping her nostrils he left [line damaged]  
He formed at her udder the lofty mountains,  
Therein he drilled springs for the wells to carry off the water.  
Twisting her tail he bound it to Durmah,  
[line damaged] Apsu at his foot,  
[line damaged] her crotch, she was fastened to heaven,

Thus he covered the heavens and established the earth.  
[line damaged] in the midst of Tiamat he made flow,  
[line damaged] his net he completely let out,  
So he created heaven and earth [line damaged]  
[line damaged] their bounds [line damaged] established.4”

The beginning of the epic begins much like the Sumerian. There is a watery abyss that brings forth heaven and earth. But from there the Babylonians seem to have added their own ideas. Marduk created the earth from Tiamat’s corpse. He set up half of her as the ceiling of the sky to keep “her waters” from escaping. Marduk then fashions the other half of her into the earth. Finally, Anu (heaven), Enlil (air), and Ea (sea) are made to occupy their places.

The Babylonians believed that matter was eternal. According to the first century BC historian Diodorus: “The Chaldeans (Babylonians) say that the substance of the world is eternal and that it neither had a first beginning nor that it will at a later time suffer destruction. Both the Enuma Elish and Genesis begin with

a watery abyss. Of course so does most ancient Near Eastern myths. In the Enuma Elish, the primeval water is living matter, which contains all the elements of the universe in it. In Genesis it is only inanimate matter, a much more scientific view. The Bible clearly states that the world was covered in a primeval darkness originally-”And the earth was formless and void, and darkness was over the surface of the deep; and the Spirit of God was moving over the surface of the waters.” (Genesis 1:2). Enuma Elish does not say this, but Berossus states that Tiamat was covered in darkness and that there was a time when all was darkness. This idea is present in other Near eastern myths as well. The Bible states that God created light and then divided light from dark, creating day and night. Enuma Elish similarly states that Marduk appointed the days to Shamash (sun) and established the precincts of night and day.

As for the division of heaven and earth, this is an almost universal ideal in the ancient world (including Egyptian, Canaanite, and Indian). Enuma Elish tells of Tiamat’s body being cut in two in order for the sky (heaven) and the earth to be created. This is totally different from the Biblical reference. Land was created out of the carcass of Tiamat in Enuma Elish. Her head and udders were mountains, the rivers came from her eyes, etc. Enuma Elish also does not mention the creation of vegetation. It also puts emphasis on the stars and Nibiru (prob-



ably because of their astrology) and shrouds it in mythological terms. They also mention gates at the eastern and western horizon through which the sun and moon travel into the underworld.

“That none might be wrong and be remiss,  
He established the stations on Ellil [sky/heaven] and Ea [water/underground]  
together with it.

He opened the gates on both sides,  
And made strong locks to the left and to the right.

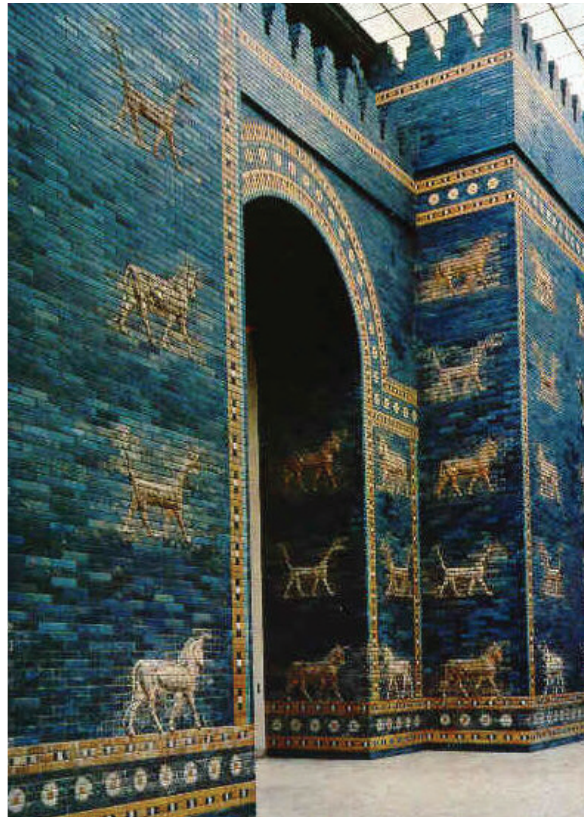
The gates mentioned are the gates to the east and west through which the sun was thought to set and rises. During the night Shamash (sun) was in the netherworld dispensing justice (Shamash was the god of justice as well as the solar deity). Sin (moon) was also thought to travel through the underworld when the moon was invisible. Genesis uses non-mythological language to describe the sun, moon and stars and does not mention gates at the horizon. This is important in comparing the two, because this was a well established idea going back to early Sumerian times and is evidence of the belief in a flat earth. The Bible makes no mention of a flat earth. The Bible next mentions the creation of animal life, which Enuma Elish does not. We also have the revolutionary omnipotent ideal that the Bible has of God. The God of the Hebrews spoke and it was done. No such example has ever been found in Sumerian, Babylonian or Assyrian myths, hymns or epics. Professor S. N. Kramer insists that the Sumerian gods had this power, but I have never seen any evidence to back up his theory. Some scholars see evidence for this in the Enuma Elish: “He (Marduk) commanded with his mouth, and the garment was destroyed. He commanded again, and the garment was restored.” This does not mean what us modern westerners think it means. Marduk did not command the garment itself to be destroyed. He commanded the other gods to do it. It was a test to see if the gods would obey him. If he really was omnipotent then he wouldn't have needed to battle Tiamat. All he would have had to do was speak to defeat her. As I said, the ancient Mesopotamians did not have the ideal of “creatio ex nihilo”.

Some things Genesis has that Enuma Elish does not: creation from nothing, the earth is just soil, the creation of plant and animal life and a blessing to man. Some things Enuma Elish has that Genesis does not: the birth of the gods, the war between the gods, the creation of the earth out of a carcass, a flat earth, the building of temples to the gods, and a hymn in honor of the creator. lastly, the Enuma Elish is full of polytheism. There are many differences and similarities between Enuma Elish and Genesis. The differences are not trivial, but are of monumental importance (such as the division of heaven and earth/Tiamat's carcass, the horizon gates/flat earth, the war of the gods, the creation of plants and animals, etc.) while the similarities are either universal (primeval sea) or parable (creation of day and night).

Finally, it has been speculated by some that Enuma Elish is actually a mythologizing of history. Babylon from shortly after the death of Hammurapi to well into the Kassite period was at war with the Sealand, a kingdom corresponding to the borders of ancient Sumer. Tiamat, the sea, may be Sealand/Sumer. Babylon, the cultural child of Sumer, warred

with and killed its parent Sumer. This parallels the patricidal notion in Enuma Elish and could explain why Tiamat was treated reverently in parts of the myth, and why the “Sumerian” gods (the gods who sided with Tiamat) were spared.

There is another myth also called the Theogony. It is a variation of the gods list called An=Anum:



When heaven above was not yet even mentioned,  
Firm-set earth below called by no name;  
When but primeval Apsu, their begetter,  
And the matrix, Tiamat-she who gave birth to them all-  
Were mingling their waters into one;  
When no bog had formed,  
And no island could be found;  
When no god whosoever had appeared,  
Had been named by name,  
Had been determined as to his lot:  
Then were gods formed within them  
In the beginning was the salt seas (Tiamat) and the underworld seas (Apsu). These mated and created the rest of the gods. Lahmu and Lahamu first, then Anshar and Kishar. They gave birth to Anu who begot Nudimmud (Enki/Ea). This is similar to Enuma Elish's genealogy.

Lastly, we have a couple of Greek-language myths from Babylonia. First we have Berossus, a Babylonian priest of Marduk who wrote about c.275-250 BC. His writings have disappeared but we have other peoples accounts of them. Some excerpts of Alexander Polyhistor's account (last century BC):

There was a time when all was darkness and water, wherein strange and peculiarly shaped creatures came into being; [goes on to describe fanciful monsters and half-man, half-animal creatures] that over all these creatures ruled a woman named Omorka. This in Chaldean (Babylonian) is Thamte, meaning the sea, but in numerical value is equal to the moon. Bel (Marduk) came and clove the woman in two; and that out of one half of her he formed the earth, but with the other half the sky; and that he destroyed the creatures with her.” [He goes on to say that Bel/

Marduk is Zeus, that he divided the darkness in two, separated heaven and earth and gave the universe order. The creatures could not stand the light and so perished.]

This corresponds well with Enuma Elish. The monsters listed are those created by Tiamat to battle Marduk and Omorka/Thamte (Tiamat) was split in two to create the universe. Berossus, being a priest of Marduk in Babylon, was able to use the cuneiform tablets to write this epic in Greek.

The last Greek source is also the latest mention of this tale. It was compiled by the last great Neo-Platonic philosopher Damascius c.500 AD:

“Of the barbarians, the Babylonians seem to pass over in silence the one principle of the universe, and they assume two, Tauthe and Apason, making Apason the husband of Tauthe and calling her the mother of the gods. Of these was born an only-begotten son Moymis, whom I conceive to be the mental word proceeding from the two principles. From



them another generation proceeded, Dache and Dachos. And again a third generation proceeded from them, Kissare and Assoros, of whom were born three, Anos, Illinos and Aos. And of Aos and Dauke was born a son called Bel, who, they say, is the fabricator of the world.”

This is a remarkable translation of the genealogy of the gods in Enuma Elish. Apason is Apsu, Tauthe is Tiamat, Moymis is Mummu, Dache and Dachos are Lahamu and Lahmu, Kissare and Assoros are Kishar and Anshar, Anos is Anu, Illinos is Ellil, Aos is Ea and Dauke is Damkina. What is interesting for us is that the Babylonians still believed in the idea that it requires two gods mating sexually in order to create even at this late date.

**Sumerian Cosmology** - From verses scattered throughout hymns and myths, one can compile a picture of the universe's (anki) creation according to the Sumerians. The primeval sea (abzu) existed before anything else and within that, the heaven (an) and the earth (ki) were formed. The boundary between heaven and earth was a solid (perhaps tin) vault, and the earth was a flat disk. Within the vault lay the gas-like 'il', or atmosphere, the brighter portions therein formed the stars, planets, sun, and moon. (Kramer, *The Sumerians* 1963: pp. 112-113) Each of the four major Sumerian deities is associated with one of these regions. An, god of heaven, may have been the main god of the pantheon prior to 2500 BC., although his importance gradually waned. Ki is likely to be the original name of the earth goddess, whose name more often appears as Ninhursag (queen of the mountains), Ninmah (the exalted lady), or Nintu (the lady who gave birth). It seems likely that these two were the progenitors of most of the gods.

The Sumerians thought that a great domed roof contained the sky, the stars, the moon, and the sun which lighted the cities beneath it; they also believed that below the earth swirled the dim netherworld, a fearsome abode of demons and the kingdom of the dead. Enlil and Enki are credited with creating the cattle, sheep, plants, the yoke and the plow to provide sustenance for themselves and less important deities, but these minor gods lacked the resolution to make use of this bounty so man was fashioned from clay and given breath so he might tend the sheep and cultivate the fields for the gods. The gods of Sumer, much like mortal men, suffered the vicissitudes of fate and many legends tell of their often ineffective exploits. According to “Gilgamesh, Enkidu, and the Netherworld”, in the first days all needed things were created. Heaven and earth were separated. An took Heaven, Enlil took the earth, Ereshkigal was carried off to the netherworld as a prize, and Enki sailed off after her.

**Canaanite Cosmology** - Little is certain about the cosmology of the Canaanites. While the Ugaritic texts tell us of El, Athirat, and Rahmay's creation of the gracious gods, for the creation of the universe we must rely on the Greek sources of Philo of Byblos, Athenaeus, and Damascius, which are thoroughly drenched in Greek cosmology. In general they relate that from gods like chaos, ether, air, wind and desire was produced the egg Mot, which was probably not the same Mot as found in Ugarit. The egg was populated with creatures who remained motionless until it was opened, whence the sky and heavenly bodies were formed. Later the waters were separated from the sky, and gods of El's generation were formed.

**Babylonian Cosmology** - When the seven tablets that contain this myth were first discovered, evidence indicated that it was used as a “ritual” myth, meaning it was recited during a ceremony or celebration. The occasion in this instance is the Babylonian new year. This myth tells of the yearly cycle of death and rebirth of Marduk, the greatest king of the gods

(some fifty different names are attributed to Marduk). The first tablet describes the beginning of the world, before earth and sky had any definition or identification. There existed two gods from which all others were descended, Apsu (male) and Tiamat (female), the sweet and salt water oceans respectively. From the union of these two were born Lahmu and Lahamu, who are believed to represent silt (such as from river deltas) and are represented as snakes. Each generation brings more gods: Lahmu and Lahamu begat Anshar and Kishar, who bore a son named Anu. Anu sired a son most often called Ea, known as the “all-wise”. Each new god born was more perfect and powerful than his predecessors. They soon became unruly and insubordinate, while Tiamat, the mother of them all, sat idly by and did nothing despite the pains their rambunctious behavior caused. They refused to heed their father's pleas to calm themselves.

In anger, Apsu decided to unmake that which he had made. But Ea learned of Apsu's plans, and so he wove a spell of sleep upon Apsu and slew him while he slept. Tiamat remained inactive while all of this occurs. Ea built a great temple upon Apsu's body, and resided there in comfort and luxury with Damkina, his lover. Damkina bore Ea a son, Marduk, the hero-king. He is described as perfect from the start, with four ears and four eyes, all of which were overlarge and his form is said to be incomprehensible in its perfection. Marduk's grandfather, Anu, created the four winds for Marduk to let loose and play with. This had the unfortunate side effect of constantly disturbing Tiamat's body (an ocean if you'll recall), and the other gods who dwelled within her. The other gods became enraged and irritable with lack of rest, and they hounded Tiamat for sitting quietly by while Ea slew Apsu. Through all their goading they pushed the great ocean goddess to action. Tiamat, who had a notably short temper, decided on war.

Tiamat assembled a great host of gods and monsters to fight for her. At the head of this monstrous horde she placed Kingu, who is variously described as her son or lover (neither translation refers to him as both, only one or the other) and affixed the Tablet of Destinies to his breast, declaring him greatest among the gods. The few remaining gods that did not join Tiamat learn of her mobilization and assembled to deliberate a course of action. The tablet describing this part of the story was damaged, and the exact happenings can only be guessed at. Both Ea and Anu attempted to turn Tiamat from her course, but both returned unsuccessful, though details are unobtainable. Then, at Ea's behest, Marduk agreed to do battle with Tiamat. After demanding that in return for his service he be named supreme god, Marduk was named the gods' champion and prepared for battle.

Marduk's arsenal for the battle was listed as a great bow, a single arrow, a mace, lightning, and a net held by the four winds. He also crafted seven windstorms and filled his body with fire. He then mounted his storm chariot and rode off to battle. The seven hurricanes trailed behind him, causing disturbances in Tiamat's ocean. Marduk challenged her to single combat. He cast the net upon her, and snared her and the army of monsters. She tried to swallow him, and he split her jaws with the hurricanes, then split her heart and body with the arrow. He reclaimed the Tablet of Destinies from Kingu and attached it to his own breast, securing his place as overlord of all. He then embarked on his destined course of creation. Among his exploits are the developing of the calendar, and the creation of man. Mankind he crafted from the blood of Kingu, and man's purpose was to toil and do physical labor so that the gods might spend their time in leisure. It is also worth noting that because of Tiamat's actions, goddesses were forever after excluded from the various councils the gods held.



Thus ends the myth of creation for the Babylonians. The entire story takes place over five tablets, though two more make the complete set. These last two are merely for the recitation of Marduk's fifty names.

**Generalized Cosmology** - Mesopotamian cosmology seems to have been seen as a genealogical system of binary opposites being considered as male and female, and, through sacred marriage or hieros gamos, giving birth to successive generations of divinities. The universe first appeared when Nammu, a presumably formless abyss, curled in upon herself, giving birth to the primary gods. According to the Babylonian Enuma Elish, the primary union divided into Tiamat, (from Sumerian Ti=Life, Ama=mother, t (Akkadian, a feminine terminal marker)) a salt water divinity, and Apsu (earlier Abzu from Ab=water, Zu=far) a fresh water divinity. These in turn gave birth to Lahamu and Lahmu, called the "muddy" or "the hairy ones", the title given to the gatekeepers of the E'Abzu temple in Eridu, who gave birth to Anshar (Sky Pivot (or Axle)) and Kishar (Earth Pivot (or Axle)) possibly referring to the celestial poles, and considered the parents of Anu (the Heavens) and Ki (the Earth). These Gods gave their name to the Mesopotamian pantheon, collectively called Anunaki.

The union of An and Ki produced Enlil, who in the Sumerian period eventually became leader of the pantheon. After the banishment of Enlil from Dilmun (the home of the gods) for raping Ninlil, Ninlil had a child, Sin (god of the moon), also known in Sumerian as Nanna - Suen. Sin and Ningal gave birth to Inanna and to Utu (Sumerian) or Shamash (Akkadian). During Enlil's banishment, he fathered three "substitute" underworld deities with Ninlil, most notably Nergal.

Nammu also gave birth to Enki. Enki also controlled the Me until Inanna took them away from Enki's city of Eridu to her city of Uruk. The "me" were holy decrees that governed such basic things as physics and complex things such as social order and law. Their transfer from Eridu to Uruk may reflect ancient political events in Southern Iraq, in the Jemdet Nasr or Early Dynastic Period of Sumer.

In the much later Enuma Elish, of Babylon, it describes the chaos status in which Tiamat and Apsu, upset by the chaos of the younger gods, attempt to take back creation, until the son of Enki, Marduk, defeated them and re-created the world out of Tiamat's bodies. These myths seem to have in earlier Sumerian versions had Enlil, as god of the Winds and head of the Sumerian pantheon, in the role of Marduk. The purpose of Enuma Elish, composed in the Kassite period was to elevate Marduk, god of the city of Babylon, and make him pre-eminent amongst the old gods, thus demonstrating Babylon's political victory over the old cultures of Sumer and Akkad. In Assyrian myth, Asshur takes the place of Marduk.

Other myths tell of the creation of humankind. The younger Igigi gods go on strike, refusing the work of keeping the creation working and the gods consulted Enki for a solution. He suggested humankind be made from clay, mixed with the blood of the captured God Kingu, son and consort of Tiamat.

The earliest known writings have no author mentioned. One of the first recorded authors was the priestess Enheduanna.

## Music and Numerology

In ancient Mesopotamia, music, mathematics, art, science, religion, and poetic fantasy were fused. Around 3000 B.C., the Sumerians simultaneously developed cuneiform writing, in which they recorded their pantheon, and a base-60 number system. Their gods were assigned numbers that encoded the primary ratios of music, with the gods' functions corresponding to their numbers in acoustical theory. Thus the Sumerians created an extensive tonal/arithmetical model for the cosmos. In this far-reaching allegory, the physical world is known by analogy, and the gods give divinity not only to natural forces but also to a "supernatural," intuitive understanding of mathematical patterns and psychological forces.

The cuneiform mathematical notation, invented by Sumer, was fully exploited by the virtuoso arithmetical calculations of Babylon, politically ascendant in the second millennium. The notation employs few symbols, which are distributed in patterns easily understood by the eye. Thus, few demands are made on memory. In Mesopotamia, mythology took concrete form; for example, important activities of the gods can be read as "events" in a multiplication table notated as a matrix of Sumerian bricks. Classical Greece abstracted all of the rational tonal concepts embedded in this Sumerian/Babylonian allegory for two thousand

years, simply waiting to be demythologized.

Moreover, because the religious mythologies of India, China, Babylon, Greece, Israel, and Europe use Sumerian sources and numerology, theology needs to be studied from a musicological perspective.

Assuming that Cro-Magnon man processed sound with the same biology we possess, humans have shared some fifty thousand years of similar auditory experiences. Musical theory as an acoustical science begins with the definition of intervals, the distance between pitches, by ratios of integers, or counting numbers, a discovery traditionally credited to Pythagoras in the sixth century B.C.

Not until the sixteenth century A.D., when Vincenzo Galilei (Galileo's father, an accomplished musician) tried to repeat some of the experiments attributed to Pythagoras, was it learned that they were apocryphal, giving either the wrong answers or none at all. Today, as the gift of modern

archaeological and linguistic studies, our awareness of cultures much older than that of Greece has been phenomenally increased; this permits us to set aside the tired inventions about Pythagoras and tell a more likely story, involving anonymous heroes in other lands. The story is centered in Mesopotamia. It demonstrates how every element of Pythagorean tuning theory was implicit in the mathematics and mythology of that land for at least a thousand years, and perhaps two thousand, before Greek rationalists finally abstracted what we are willing to recognize as science from its long incubation within mythology. What seems most astounding in ancient Mesopotamia is the total fusion of what we separate into subjects: music, mathematics, art, science, religion, and poetic fantasy. Such a fusion has never been equaled except by Plato, who inherited its forms. Socrates' statement about the general principles of scientific studies in book 7 of Plato's Republic, with the harmonical allegories that follow directly in books 8 and 9, guides the exposition here. The Mesopotamian prototypes to which they lead us fully justify Socrates' treatment of his own tale as an "ancient Muses' jest," inherited from a glorious, lost civilization. Scholars who have become too unmusical to understand mankind's share in divinity, as Plato feared might happen, still can lean on him

1		11		21		31		41		51	
2		12		22		32		42		52	
3		13		23		33		43		53	
4		14		24		34		44		54	
5		15		25		35		45		55	
6		16		26		36		46		56	
7		17		27		37		47		57	
8		18		28		38		48		58	
9		19		29		39		49		59	
10		20		30		40		50			



for understanding, for all of his many writings about harmonics and music have survived. (I must suppress here, for reasons of space, the extensive harmonical allegories of the Hebrews, whose parallel forms infuse the Bible with related musical implication from the first page of Genesis to the last page of Revelation.)

Music was as important in ancient India, Egypt, and China as it was in Mesopotamia and Greece. All these cultures had similar mythic imagery emphasizing the same numbers, which are so important in defining musical intervals; this raises doubts about whether any people ever “invented” acoustical theory. For instance, in any culture that knows the harp as intimately as it was known in Egypt and Mesopotamia, its visible variety of string lengths and economy of materials (strings require careful and often onerous preparation) encourage builders, as a sheer survival strategy, to notice the correlation between a string’s length and its intended pitch. Similarly, in China, where by 5000 B.C. the leg bones of large birds, equipped with tone holes appropriate for a scale, appear as paired flutes in ritual burials, the importance of suitable materials conditioned pipemakers to be alert to lengths. The basic ratios could have been discovered many times in many places, more likely by loving craftsmen and practitioners than by philosophers. Certainly, the discovery came no later than the fourth millennium B.C., before even the first Egyptian dynasty was founded or the Greeks had reached the Mediterranean shore.

In Mesopotamia, now the southern part of Iraq, for reasons that have been vigorously argued but remain unclear, they developed a base-60 number system. Waiting to be recognized within it (and in ways obvious to any scribal adept, although invisible to the illiterate) were the main patterns of harmonical theory that appear later in India, Babylon, and Greece. Sumerian tombs of this early period yield a harvest of harps, lyres, and pipes, and the literature surviving on clay tablets abounds in elaborate hymns. In the cuneiform writing of the Sumerians, which was invented concurrently with the base-60 number system, the pantheon of deities is rationalized by assigning to the high gods the base-60 numbers that, encode the primary ratios of music. The glyph, or symbol, for heaven or star, followed by the appropriate number, functions as a “god nickname.” The numbers reveal their significance in triangular arrays of pebble counters. Furthermore, in the mythology of their religion, the responsibilities and behavior of the gods correspond with the functions of the god numbers in base-60 acoustics. Sumerian cosmology is grounded in the metaphorical copulation of the male A and female V numerical arrays, from which the Greek “holy tetraktys” is abstracted. For example, the head of the pantheon and father of the gods is the sky god An (the than Anu), god 60, written in cuneiform as an oversize 1 sign. Because base-60 numbers enjoy potentially endless place value meanings as multiples or submultiples of 60 (like the unit, 1, in decimal arithmetic), An = 60 (written as 1) functions as the center of the whole field of rational numbers. In mathematical language, An is its geometric mean, being the mean between any number and its reciprocal. Anu/An, therefore, is essentially a do-nothing deity, as he was later accused of being a reference point, perfectly suited to represent simultaneously the middle band of the sky, the center of the number field, and the middle, reference tone in a tuning system. He was fated to be deposed by more active leaders among his children, as harmonical logic focused more clearly on structure and sheer virtuosity in computation became subordinated to deeper mathematical insight.

Theology, from its birth as “rational discourse about the gods” and in many later cultures influenced by Sumer, is mathematical allegory with a deeply musical logic. Tuning theory today remains a fossil science with no change at all in its basic parameters (structured

by the gods themselves in numerical guise) since it premiered in Sumer about 3300 B.C. To glimpse this new vision requires that we lay aside our algebra, our computers, and our pride in rational superiority and represent numbers to ourselves as the ancients did: concretely. We must learn to do musical arithmetic with a handful of pebbles in a triangular matrix, as the Pythagoreans teach us, imitating the pattern of bricks in the Sumerian glyph for mountain. Then, like Socrates, we must show ourselves the harmonical implications of that arithmetic with a circle in the sand, for that circle is the cosmos, viewed as endlessly cyclical, like the tones of the musical scale.

In what follows I am presenting Mesopotamian arithmetic as Plato still practiced it in the fourth century B.C., studying his mathematical allegories for clues to earlier examples. Plato is the last great harmonical mythographer of the European world; never again did a major philosopher so thoroughly ground his thinking in music. By following this system, decoding Sumerian-Platonic harmonics proves astonishingly simple. Anyone, even a child, who can count to ten and sing or play the scale can make self-evident the scale constructions that once modeled the cosmos.

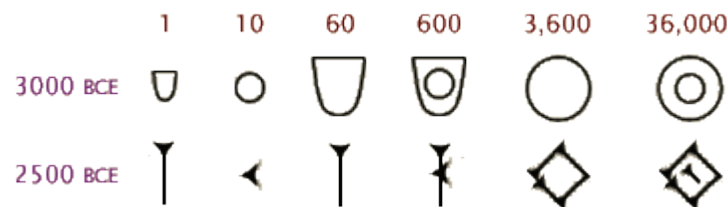
Because 60 is integrally divisible by 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 10, 12, 15, 20 and 30, base-60 arithmetic can correlate many subsystems, allowing fluent manipulation of fractions. This very early mastery of fractions ensured adequate arithmetical definition of pitch ratios: as string-

length ratios on early harps, approximate length ratios on the flutelike panpipes, tone-hole ratios on the aulos. No matter how many tones are involved and whether pitch patterns rise or fall.

About 1800 B.C., the Babylonians became politically ascendant and reorganized the Sumerian pantheon, keeping its god numbers and related mathematical terminology. They developed base-60 computation to a level of arithmetical virtuosity not equaled in Europe until

about A.D. 1600 and not understood in modern times until the middle of our own century (see Neugebauer 1957). Not until 1945, when Neugebauer and A. Sachs published the translation of cuneiform tablet YBC 7289 from the Yale collection, did the world learn that ancient Babylon (1800-1600 B.C.) possessed a base-60 formula for the square root of 2 accurate to five decimal places (1.41421+), or the formula for generating all Pythagorean triples (a triangle with sides of 3, 4, and 5 units is merely an example) a thousand years before Pythagoras explained the first one. The Greeks, still thinking in terms of Egyptian unit fractions (so that a descending whole tone of 8:9, for instance, was constructed by laboriously adding to the reference length 1/8 of itself), would have been astonished to learn that the Egyptians, whom they revered, had like themselves been far surpassed in computational facility by an ancient neighbor.

The paucity of surviving Sumerian mathematical texts requires scholars to make many inferences from later Babylonian survivals, and much Sumerian literature remains untranslated or inaccessible. Thus, as further linguistic evidence becomes available, the story here will require revision, becoming more certain in dating, clearer in meaning, and richer in detail. To look ahead in history and see the persistence of Sumerian/Babylonian methods, Ptolemy, in the second century A.D., in the *Harmonica*, recorded all of the some twenty Greek tunings known to him with sexagesimal (base-60) fractions. Between about 500 B.C. and A.D. 150, Babylonian and Greek astronomy thrived on base-60 computation. It was still used by Copernicus in the fifteenth century and endures in modern astronomy. The Chinese calendar is still reckoned by 60s. Astronomy, however, as the science of precise measurement that it later became, “was practically unknown in ancient Sumer; at least as of today we have only a list of about twenty-five stars and nothing more” (Kramer 1963).



Analog clocks and watches equipped with rotating hands for hours, minutes, and seconds are living fossils of the Sumerian arithmetical mind-set. Numbers have visible and tangible markers on the dial (representing the fixity of the recurring temporal cycle), restricting burdens on memory and permitting operations to be reduced to counting and adding. Sixty can be conceived of, when we please, as a large unit (one rotation of the second or minute hand), conversely giving the small unit the implication of  $1/60$ . The large unit, alternately, can be conceived of as a higher power of 60 (correlating the simultaneous rotations of both second and minute hands), for  $60^2 = 3,600$  seconds is also one hour, conversely giving our small unit the implication of  $1/3,600$ . Twelve hours constitutes a still larger unit (one rotation of the hour hand) of  $12 \times 60 = 720$  minutes, and  $12 \times 3,600 = 43,200$  seconds, conversely giving the smallest unit the implication of  $1/720$  or  $1/43,200$ . We avoid confusion between these alternate arithmetical meanings the same way the Sumerians did, namely, by remembering the context of the questions we are trying to answer. The existence of alternative ways of expressing a unit, as in the examples above, indicates and emphasizes the importance of reciprocals.

Musicians, following Plato, still project their tones into a circle that eliminates cyclic octave repetitions (Plato, in the *Timaeus*, insists that God makes only one model of anything). Thus today, using our modern, equal-tempered scale, we can identify any musical interval as some multiple of a standard semitone, to the envy of calendarmakers, who, having to deal with the irregularities of days, months, and years, are jealous of our perfect twelve-tone symmetry. But the nearest approximation of our twelve-tone, equal-tempered scale in small integers remains that provided by ancient base-60 arithmetic.

Sumerian numbers were impressed on small clay tablets with a stylus, at first round, later triangular, held slanted for some numbers and vertically for others. Numbers from 2 to 9 were built up by repetitions of the unit, made with the edge of the stylus. A 10 was imprinted with the end; a 60 was made as a large 1 by pressing the stylus more firmly into the clay. The equation  $60^2 = 3,600$  was scratched in as a circle (see van der Waerden 1963). Only a few symbols were needed, and repetition made them easy to decode, minimizing burdens on memory. The idea of a number was actually embodied in the strokes required to notate it. Computation was made easy by tables of "reciprocals, multiplications, squares and square roots, cubes and cube roots, ...exponential functions, coefficients giving numbers for practical computation,...and numerous metrological calculations giving areas of rectangles, circles" ... (Kramer 1963). Many copies of these tables have come down to us. The standard multiplication tables pair each number with its reciprocal and give special prominence to the favored subset of "regular" numbers, whose prime factors are limited to 2, 3, and 5 (larger prime factors necessarily lead to approximations in the reciprocals). "Regular numbers" up to 60 are shown with their reciprocals, transcribed, for instance, so that the reciprocal of  $40/60 = 2/3$  reads 1,30, meaning  $90/60 = 3/2$ . Notice that only the most important fractions of 60 are deified ( $1/6$ ,  $1/5$ ,  $1/4$ ,  $1/3$ ,  $1/2$ ,  $2/3$ , and  $5/6$ ). The tone names are nearest equivalents in modern notation. Several values require three sexagesimal "places" (indicated by commas); auxiliary tables freely employ six, seven, and even more places.

The deified Sumerian numbers, taken over by Babylon, are 10, 12, 15, 20, 30, 40, and 50, all fractional parts of "father" Anu/An = 60, head of the pantheon. Their fractional values

and god names are indicated here with a brief description of their mythological functions:

Anu/An, 60, written as a large 1, "father of the gods" and earliest head of the pantheon, is any reference unit. He is equivalent in our notation to  $60/60 = 1$ , where he functions, according to modern concepts, as "geometric mean in the field of rational numbers."

Enlil, 50 (5/6), "god on the mountain" possessing fifty names, is mankind's special guardian and was promoted to head the pantheon circa 2500 B.C. Enlil deities in base 60 what the Greeks knew as the human prime number, 5, in their base-10 harmonics. By generating major thirds of 4:5 and minor thirds of 5:6, he saved Sumerians tremendous arithmetical labor, as we shall note in due course.

Ea/Enki, 40 (2/3), "god of the sweet waters" and perhaps the busiest deity in Sumer, "organizes the earth," including the musical scale. He deities the divine prime number, 3, in the ratio of the musical fifth 2:3, the most powerful shaping force in music after the octave. (Notice that the trio of highest gods (40, 50, 60) defines the basic musical triad of 4:5:6 (do, mi, sol, rising, and mi, do, la, falling). The ratio 4:5 defines a major third and the ratio 5:6 defines a minor third, taken either upward or downward within the matrix of the musical octave.)

Sin, 30 (1/2), the Moon, establishes the basic Sumerian octave matrix as 1:2 30:60.

Shamash, 20 (1/3), the Sun, judges the gods.

Ishtar, 15 (1/4), is the epitome of the feminine as virgin, wife, and everybody's mistress.

Nergal, 12 (1/5), is god of the underworld.

Bel/Marduk, 10 (1/6), the biblical Baal, originally was a minor deity but eventually became head of the Babylonian pantheon in the second millennium B.C. He inherited all the powers of the other gods, including Enlil's fifty names, in a giant step toward a "Pythagorized" monotheism built on the first ten numbers.

Ea/Enki, god 40, defines these frames (DA falling and G:D rising) in his double role as 40:60 and 60:40 and thus literally "organizes the earth" (as represented by the string) into do, fa, sol, do, harmonic foundations of the modern scale. Enlil = 50 tones of pitch classes b and f always belong to the opposite scale, for the god shares these tones with 36 (that is,  $30:36 = 50:60$  and 30 and 60, "beginning and end," coincide); thus, Enlil is free to supervise the system by reminding us of the symmetry of opposites. Enlil's promotion to head

the pantheon possibly symbolizes this insight. He plays a very active role, also generating several intervals that actually reduce numerosity, whereas the primal procreator, Anu/An = 60, a do-nothing deity of little account in Sumer and Babylon, remains purely passive. Platonic dialectics, however, emphasize the importance of an invariant seat in the mean," thus turning Anu/An's passiveness as geometric mean into the greatest possible Socratic virtue as "the One Itself."

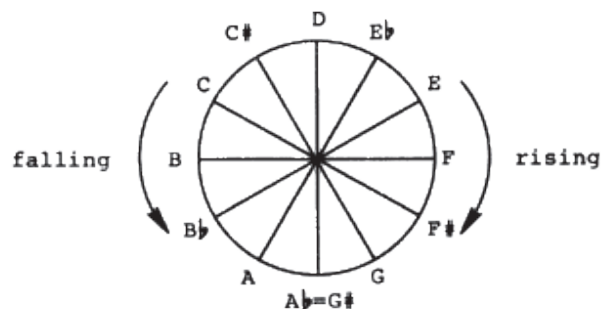
D was chosen as the reference pitch is dictated by the necessity of showing opposites simultaneously, in the Sumerian normative arithmetical habit that Plato later required of his students in dialectic. Future philosopher-guardians in idealized cities needed to become expert in weighing the merits of contradictory claims, requiring the ability to see opposites simultaneously. Music provided the opportunity to do this, par excellence, and so childhood training began with it.

If Sumerian mythology did not offer persuasive evidence that Sumerians were





conscious of tonal implications, then their establishment of a base-60 system, which included such perfect models for a lunar-oriented culture and for Pythagorean harmonics two thousand years later, would be pure serendipity, meaning that it resulted from “the gift of finding valuable or agreeable things not sought for.” But the most interesting evidence for Sumerian harmonical self-consciousness is yet to be shown via Plato’s kind of triangular matrices, functioning as “mothers” in harmonical arithmetic. In Plato’s Greece, the harmonical wisdom of Babylon and India was transformed into political theory. Men now acted out the roles once assigned to gods. Plato’s four model cities--Callipolis (in the Republic), Ancient Athens and Atlantis (both in the Critias), and Magnesia (in the Laws)--were each associated with a specific musical-mathematical model, all generated from the first ten integers. All are reducible to a study of four primes: 2, 3, 5, and 7.



In the Republic and Laws, idealized citizens--represented as number--generate only in the prime of life. For Plato, this means that 2 never really generates anything beyond the model octave 1:2, for this “virgin, female” even number--with all of its higher powers--designates the same pitch class as any reference 1. (Multiplication by 4, 8, 16... generates only cyclic identities, different octaves of tones we already possess. They are Plato’s “nursemaids,” carrying tone children until they are old enough to “walk” as integers; hence, as he says, his “nurses” require exceptional physical strength.) The multiplication table for the 3 x 5 male odd numbers, however, generates endless spirals of musical fifths (or fourths) and thirds; within the female octave 1:2, new pitches are generated at the same invariant ratios. The Greek meaning of symmetry is to be in the same proportion. Thus, a “continued geometric proportion” (like 1, 3, 9, 27,...or 1, 5, 25,...) constitutes “the world’s best bonds,” maximizing symmetry, which is obscured by mere appearances when these values are doubled to put them into some preferred scale order. The multiplication table for 3 x 5 graphs multiple sets of geometric tonal symmetries (Plato’s only reality) as far as imagination pleases. Greece inherited its arithmetical habits from Egypt, including an affection for unit fractions in defining tunings (the ratio 9:8 was thought of as “eight plus one-eighth of itself,” and so on). It awoke to number theory only when it became acquainted with Mesopotamian methods. Thus, the travels of Pythagoras, whether legendary or not, played an important role. Those methods apparently were new enough in Plato’s fourth century B.C. to invite his extensive commentary, yet old enough so any novelty on Plato’s part was absolutely denied by Aristoxenus (fl. circa 330 B.C.) within fifty years. Plato is responsible for an astonishing musical generalization of the base-60 tuning formula as 4:3 mated with the 5. His 3, 4, and 5 correspond with Sin = 30, Ea = 40, and Enlil = 50 and remind us that all tones are linked by perfect fourths, 4:3, which define possible tetrachord frames, or by perfect thirds, 4:5. The last Pythagorean who really understood Platonic “marriages” may have been Nicomachus in the second century A.D.; he promised an exposition but none survives.

In the second millennium B.C., the Babylonians reorganized the inherited Sumerian

pantheon in a way that very strongly points toward its Pythagorean future. To avoid destruction by Enlil, who is disturbed by their confusion and noise, the gods reorganize under the leadership of Marduk, god 10, the biblical Baal, to whom all the other gods cede their powers. Herein lies a beautiful reduction of Sumerian expertise with reciprocal fractions to a more philosophical overview of harmonics as being generated exclusively by the first ten integers (Socrates’ “children up to ten,” in the Republic, beyond which age he doubted citizens were really fitted for ideal communities).

To celebrate their survival after Marduk defeats the female serpent Tiamat, sent to destroy them, the gods decree him a temple; the bricks require two years ( $2 \times 360 = 720$ ) to fabricate. This mythologizes 720, the Sumerian unit of brick measure, and the smallest tonal index able to correlate seven-tone opposites into a twelve-tone calendrical octave. When Marduk’s tonal/arithmetical bricks are aligned in matrix order, we see that the general shape of his temple (with an index of 720) is an enlarged form of Enlil’s temple (with an index of 60); Enlil now confers his fifty names on Marduk. This temple makes Marduk’s face shine with pleasure, we are told.

To conclude our discussion of Marduk’s victory over the dragon Tiamat, it is now a normal part of a child’s musical education to learn to view the scale as a spiral of musical fifths and fourths, as they are actually tuned and to be shown those tones in a tone circle. That up-and-down, alternating cycle of pitches inspires, I propose, the dragon and great serpent lore of ancient mythology. Serpentine undulations are visible to any harpist in the lengths of successive strings when taken in tuning order (as they still necessarily are), and the undulations can be seen in any set of pitch pipes when similarly aligned, as in China. Because the same tone numbers function reciprocally as multiples of frequency and of wavelength, they have the same double meanings today that they enjoyed in Sumerian times. It is entirely appropriate, therefore, to represent this spiral both forward and backward, simultaneously, with intertwined serpents.

In the mythological account, Marduk slays the dragon (which is presumably the continuum of possible pitches represented by the undivided string) by first cutting it in half to establish the octave 1:2. Further cutting presumably “sections” the other pitches. No numbers larger than Marduk’s--meaning 10--play any role in geometrical sectioning of the string. This “serpentine” double meaning (rising and falling musical fifths and fourths) lies at the very heart of our consciousness of musical structure. Sumer did not hesitate to make the double serpent the center of symmetry.

The ultimate origins of music theory, as opposed to the Sumerian codification that are deduced here, remain lost in the far more distant past, like the origin of our sense for number. They are grounded in a common aural biological heritage, some of which we share with other animals, and are by no means dependent, as Aristotle noted, on precise numerical definition. As eminent contemporary musicologist William Thompson explained,

“In adapting to our complex environment, our sensory ingestive systems have become...forgiving filters, enabling us to generalize....This, I’m convinced, is a product of very early adaptive behavior, a part of our survival good fortune...in that our neural



system has developed myriads of networks which are overachievers when it comes to doing some simple jobs.”

There remains a certain fuzziness about a scientific definition of musical intervals and art has turned that into something for which we all can be grateful. Sumerian “overachievers” these “black-headed people,” as they called themselves, proved historically to be as aggressive as the great heroes they knew or invented, achieved a tremendous synthesis of cultural values.

### Death and the Afterlife

The underworld of the Sumerians is revealed, to some extent, by a composition about the death and afterlife of the king and warlord Ur-Nammu. After having died on the battlefield, Ur-Nammu arrives below, where he offers sundry gifts and sacrifices to the “seven gods” of the nether world:

...Nergal, [the deified] Gilgamesh, Ereshkigal [the queen of the underworld, who is either given to Kur in the underworld or given dominion over the underworld in the prelude to Gilgamesh, the shepherd, Inanna’s husband], Namtar, Hubishag, and Ningishzida - each in his own palace; he also presented gifts to Dimpimekug and to the “scribe of the nether-world.”... [After arriving at his assigned spot] ...certain of the dead were turned over to him, perhaps to be his attendants, and Gilgamesh, his beloved brother, explained to him the rules and regulations of the nether world.

Another tablet indicates that the sun, moon, and their respective gods, spent time in the underworld as well. The sun journeyed there after setting, and the moon rested there at the end of the month. Both Utu and Nanna “decreed the fate’ of the dead” while there. Dead heroes ate bread, drank, and quenched the dead’s thirst with water. The gods of the nether world, the deceased, and his city, were prayed to for the benefit of the dead and his family.

Inanna is rescued by the intervention of Enki. He creates two sexless creatures that empathize with Ereshkigal’s suffering, and thereby gain a gift - Inanna’s corpse. They restore her to life with the Bread of Life and the Water of Life, but the Sumerian underworld has a conservation of death law. No one can leave without providing someone to stay in their stead. Inanna is escorted by galla/demons past Ninshubur and members of her family. She doesn’t allow them to claim anyone until she sees Dumuzi on his throne in Uruk. They then seize Dumuzi, but he escapes them twice by transforming himself, with the aid of Utu. Eventually he is caught and slain. Inanna spies his sister, Geshtinanna, in mourning and they go to Dumuzi. She allows Dumuzi, the shepherd, to stay in the underworld only six months of the year, while Geshtinanna will stay the other six.

### Sumerian gods

The Sumerian gods enjoyed an extended lifetime - on the average of three thousand years - as compared to our brief mortal existence. This pantheon of gods was the first pantheon, and civilizations that followed (Assyria, Babylonia, Persia, Egypt, Greece, Rome etc.) simply made modifications and name changes to these gods. As with these younger cultures, the gods were often affiliated with cities, where special temples were constructed to honor them. For instance, in the Epic of Gilgamesh, Uruk was the city of the goddess Inanna, hence her infatuation with Gilgamesh.

When you begin to look into these incredible cultures, you will find that the gods of Sumeria, Assyria and Babylon are identical except for their names. For instance, the Sumerian goddess Innana is known to the later Babylonian and Akkadian cultures as Ishtar.

The most striking difference between the Sumerians and later cultures lies in the Sumerian concept of the after life.

They believed that when people died, they went to an awful place where the spirits of men ate dust and crawled on their bellies. This place was known as the “house of dust” - and after a years time of ghostly existence, the soul of the deceased would fade away into oblivion.

The Sumerians had four leading deities, known as “creating gods”. Here is a brief description of these immortals:

An was the sky god, father and king of the Sumerian pantheon. He was the god of the kings (much like Horus was to the Pharaohs of Egypt) and was not friendly to the common people. He was the son of Anshar and Kishar who were beings who preceded the gods. According to Sumerian legend, An took over Heaven when it was separated from Earth, creating the universe as we know it. Although he was known as the “leader” of the Sumerian pantheon, he was the most obscure of all the gods, with very little information and no images or depictions in the various temples throughout Mesopotamia remaining.

Enlil was known as the “wind/storm-god” and the god of the lands and of the earth. He was initially the leader of the pantheon, but relinquished his position to An. Enlil was the most important god of the Sumerian pantheon, however he had a short fuse and was responsible for the great flood (here is one of the many similarities between the Sumerian mythology and our Bible). He was also credited with the creation of mankind. His wife was Ninlil. He was the “King of the Annunaki”, and acted as their counselor warrior.

Inanna was the goddess of love, procreation, and war. She is often accompanied by a lion, and sometimes rides it. She was known to fly around in her “sky chamber” in the cedar mountains. She is a type of “black widow spider” - in that she finds a mate and then kills him when she is finished. She attempts to entice Gilgamesh and is refused by him, at which point she asks her father An to unleash the “Bull of Heaven” upon Gilgamesh and Enkidu. The Sumerian goddess Lillith, draws parallels to the woman who preceded Eve in the Bible. Lillith could also be affiliated with Inanna. She has been resurrected currently as a woman who is independent and not requiring the assistance of a man.

Enki was known as the god of the subterranean waters. He was in charge of the bolt which bars the sea. He was the “Lord of Wisdom” and “Lord of Incantations”. Enki’s words came to life - what he spoke became reality. He was the son of An.

Other Sumerian gods included those in charge of rivers, mountains, and plains; of cities, fields, and farms; and of tools such as pickaxes, brick molds, and plows.

The Sumerians thought that a great domed roof contained the sky, the stars, the moon, and the sun which lighted the cities beneath it; they also believed that below the earth swirled the dim nether world, a fearsome abode of demons and the kingdom of the dead. Enlil and Enki are credited with creating the cattle, sheep, plants, the yoke and the plow to provide sustenance for themselves and less important deities, but these minor gods lacked the resolution to make use of this bounty so man was fashioned from clay and given breath so he might tend the sheep and cultivate the fields for the gods.

### ASSYRO-BABYLONIAN - PRIMARY DEITIES

Name	Function/Identity
An (Babylonian: Anu)	god of heaven; may have been the main god before 2500 B.C.
Ninhursag (Babylonian: Aruru, Mammi)	mother goddess; progenitor with An of the gods; assists in creation of man.
Enlil (Babylonian: Ellil)	god or air; pantheon leader from 2500 B.C.; father of the gods; king of heaven & earth.



<b>Name</b>	<b>Function/Identity</b>
Enki (Babylonian: Ea)	lord of the abyss, semen & wisdom; god of water, creation, fertility. moon god. love and war.
Nanna (Babylonian: Sin)	
Inanna (Babylonian: Ishtar)	
Utu (Babylonian: Shamash)	god of the sun and justice.
Ninlil (Babylonian: Mullitu, Mylitta )	bride of Enlil.
Apsu	underworld ocean; begetter of the skies and earth, life giving water.
Tiamat	primeval chaos; bearer of the skies and earth, Lahmu & Lahamu Anshar Kishar
Anu	sky god, father & king of the gods.
Antu(m)	1st consort of Anu.
Aruru (Ninmah, Mami)	mother goddess; midwife of the gods.
Mammetum	maker or mother of fate.
Nammu	associated with water.

## CANNITE GODS - BENEFICIAL GODS

<b>Name</b>	<b>Function/Identity</b>
El	father of gods, mankind.
Athirat	El's consort.
Kothar-and-Khasis	craftsman.
Shachar & Shalim	twins.
Shamu	a sky god.
Baal	god of fertility, 'rider of the clouds', and god of lightning and thunder.
Athtart	consort of Baal, lesser god of war & the chase.
Anat	goddess of war, the hunt, and savagery.
Baalat	fertility goddess.
Tanit	lady of Carthage.
Shapshu	sun goddess.
Yarikh	moon god.
Kotharat	conception and childbirth.
Athtar	possibly a god of the desert or of artificial irrigation.
Sheger	god of cattle.
Ithm	god of sheep.
Hirgab	father of eagles.
Elsh	steward.
Sha'taqat	a healing demoness.
Nikkal-and-Ib	goddess of fruit.
Khirkhib	king of summer & raiding season.
Dagon of Tuttul	god of wheat, inventor of the plow.
Baal - Shamen	lord of the Assembly of the gods.
Milqart	god of the monarchy.
Eshmun	god of healing.

## CANNITE GODS - CHAOS GODS

<b>Name</b>	<b>Function/Identity</b>
Yam	sea & rivers.
Arsh	monstrous attendant of Yam.
Atik	calf of El, enemy of Baal.
Ishat	enemy of Baal.
Zabib	an enemy of Baal.
Mot	sterility, death, and underworld.
Horon	chthonic deity.
Resheph	pestilence.
Aklm	like grasshoppers.
Rephaim	deities of the underworld.
Molech	may have been a Canaanite deity to whom children were sacrificed; cult similar to that of Yahweh's; may have been simply a title.

## HITTITE/HURRIAN GODS

<b>Name</b>	<b>Function/Identity</b>
Alalu(s)	former king of heaven before Anu.
Anu(s)	first among the gods; spent some time as king of heaven.
Kumarbi(s)	father of all gods.
Hannahannas (Nintu, Mah)	mother of all the gods.
Upelluri (Ubelluris)	giant; carries world on his shoulders.
Storm/Weather-god (Hurrian's Teshub, Taru, Luwian's Tarhun(t))	chief god; battle & victory.
Hebat	wife of storm god.
Telepinu	agricultural god.
Ullikummi(s)	weapon to defeat the Storm-Gods.
Sun-god	god of justice; sometimes king of all gods.
Illuyankas	dragon.
Hedammu	serpent.
Irsirra deities	live in the earth; charged by Kumarbis to hide Ullikummis from the sky gods, the Sun-god, the Storm-god, and Ishtar.
Astabis (Zamama, Akkadian Ninurta)	warrior god.
Ulliyassiss	removes impotence.
Kubaba	chief goddess.
Yarris	pestilence.
Hasamelis	protect travelers.

## SUMERIAN ANUNNAKI GODS - YOUNGER GODS

Name	Function/Identity
Ellil (Enlil)	initially, leader of the pantheon.
Ea (Enki, Nudimmud)	god of the waters.
Mummu	craftsman.
Qingu	battle leader
Sin (Nannar)	moon god.
Ningal	the consort of Sin.
Ishtar (Irimini, Inanna)	goddess of love, procreation, and war.
Siduri	barmaid.
Shamash (Babbar, Utu)	sun god.
Aia	Shamash's consort.
Kakka	Anshar and Anu's vizier
Ninlil	Elil's consort.
Nusku	god of fire and Ellil's vizier.
Gerra (Gibil)	god of fire.
Ishum	god of fire.
Kalkal	Ellil's doorkeeper
Nash	a pure goddess.
Zaltu	strife.
Ninurta	chamberlain of the war god.
Ninsun	great queen.
Marduk	supplants other Babylonian deities to become central figure.
Bel (Canaanite Baal)	cleverest; sage of the gods.
Ashur	god of Assyria and war.
Shullat	Shamash's servant.
Papsukkal	vizier of the great gods.
Hanish	weather god's servant
Adad	a storm god.
Shara, Nin-ildu	carpenter.
Gushkin-banda	creator of god and man, goldsmith god.
Nin-agal	patron of smiths.

## SUMERIAN CHTLONIC DEITIES

Name	Function/Identity
Ereshkigal (Allatu)	supreme goddess of underworld.
Belit-tseri	tablet-scribe of the underworld.
Namtar(a)	the fate-cutter, herald of death.
Sumuqan	cattle god.
Nergal (Erragal, Erra, Engidudu)	underworld, god of war and plague.
Irra	plague god.
Enmesharra	underworld god
Lamashtu	dread female demon
Nabu	god of writing and wisdom.
Ningizzia	guardian of the gate of heaven;
Tammuz (Dumuzi, Adonis)	a god of the underworld.
Belili (Geshtinanna)	vegetation. spring, beauty
	goddess of grief

Name	Function/Identity
Gizzida (Gishzida)	consort of Belili, doorkeeper of Anu.
Nissaba (Nisaba)	cereal grain harvest.
Dagan	fertility and the underworld.
Birdu	an underworld god.
Sharru	god of submission
Urshambi	boatman to Utnapishtim.
Ennugi	controller of the Anunnaki.
Geshtu-e	god whose blood and intelligence are used by Mami to create man.





