

PAGAN-CHRISTIANITY TODAY

Part 1

All Bible texts are from the King James Version unless otherwise stated.

I have broken this study up into four parts (four separate files):-

1. How the ancient mythological gods are depicted, and how many of them we still use today.
2. A brief description of most of the ancient gods, giving their counterparts in other mythologies.
3. A list of names of ancient gods which represent Nimrod, his wife, Semiramis, her illegitimate son, and several people mentioned in the Bible.
4. Pagan festivals and forms of worship still prevalent today in Christianity.

This complete document zipped can be downloaded [here](#).

The information for this study has been taken from "The Two Babylons" by Rev. Alexander Hislop, and from several encyclopedias.

Some may ask the question "Why is it necessary to know all of this?"

Answer, because if we are to root out all paganism in our lives so that we can worship the Lord our God, and Him only shall we serve (Matthew 4:10), and love the Lord our God with all our heart, and with all our soul, and with all our mind, and with all our strength (Mark 12:30), we must know what is pagan, and then we are to get rid of it as much as possible from our lives.

Some may argue that these symbols, festivals and forms of worship are no longer pagan, for they have been Christianised as stated in the following quotes.

"The folklores of the Polish, Czech, Slovak, Balkan, and Hungarian peoples have some elements in common. These peoples' strong sense of the supernatural and deep religious faith have resulted in a folk literature that often combines Christian beliefs with some of pagan origin. Wisely, the church in those countries respected the love of the people for their ancient folkways, and gradually some of the old folktales and folk festivals became associated with the beliefs and rituals of the church. It is therefore quite natural that Cinderella should lose her slipper on the steps of a church and that saints should appear as characters in folktales." Crompton's Interactive Encyclopedia article on Story Telling - Other Eastern European Countries.

"Even in predominantly Christian areas, it was not uncommon for pagan traditions of previous times to work their way into folk art depictions. The decorated Easter egg of Eastern Europe, for instance, is a step in the evolution of the egg as a symbol for renewal of life. This renewal was visible to all in the new growths of springtime, and Easter has always been a festival that occurred in spring. Lying at the root of human experience, such ancient themes have never been abandoned, and they continue to appear together with Christian themes of later origin. Buddhist societies have had a similar experience. Originally Buddhism was a religion without a god, but in its later proliferation it accumulated a large host of deities and saints that have been depicted by folk artists. In this way the older Hindu tradition from which Buddhism emerged worked its way back into the newer religion." Crompton's Interactive Encyclopedia article on Folk Art.

"November 1 may have been chosen (for All Saints' Day) because it was the day of one of the four great festivals of the pagan nations of the north, and it was church policy to supplant pagan with Christian observances." Australian Infopedia article on All Saints' Day.

"Among European peasants, All Souls' Day is a time for reviving many pre-Christian folk customs." Australian Infopedia article on All Souls' Day.

"Sun worship persisted in Europe even after the introduction of Christianity, as is evidence by its disguised survival in such traditional Christian practices as the Easter bonfire and the Yule log on Christmas." Australian Infopedia article on Sun Worship.

"Mithraism (sun worship) was similar to Christianity in many respects, for example, in the ideals of humility and brotherly love, baptism, the rite of communion, the use of holy water, the adoration of the shepherds at Mithra's birth, the adoption of Sundays and of December 25 (Mithra's birthday) as holy days, and the belief in the immortality of the soul, the last judgment, and the resurrection. Mithraism differed from Christianity in the exclusion of women from its ceremonies and in its willingness to compromise with polytheism. The similarities, however, made possible the easy conversion of its followers to Christian doctrine." Australian Infopedia article on Mithraism.

If we accept this line of thought with "Christian" beliefs, then we should never try to convert someone who is in paganism, for their beliefs may be absorbed into "Christianity" at some later date making our work unnecessary. Also it removes the distinction between right and wrong, good and evil and causes confusion - babylon. According to the book "The Two Babylons" by Alexander Hislop, the roots of every pagan religion known today, as well as that of the Roman Catholic Church, are from ancient Babylon and its sun worship system revolving around Nimrod, Semiramis and her son.

But, the Word of God tells us:-

"Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness of any thing that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth: Thou shalt not bow down thyself to them, nor serve them: for I the LORD thy God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate me;" Exodus 20:4, 5.

"And the children of Israel did secretly those things that were not right against the LORD their God, and they built them high places in all their cities, from the tower of the watchmen to the fenced city. And they set them up images and groves in every high hill, and under every green tree: And there they burnt incense in all the high places, as did the heathen whom the LORD carried away before them; and wrought wicked things to provoke the LORD to anger: For they served idols, whereof the LORD had said unto them, Ye shall not do this thing. Yet the LORD testified against Israel, and against Judah, by all the prophets, and by all the seers, saying, Turn ye from your evil ways, and keep my commandments and my statutes, according to all the law which I commanded your fathers, and which I sent to you by my servants the prophets." 2 Kings 17:9 - 13.

"Ponder the path of thy feet, and let all thy ways be established. Turn not to the right hand nor to the left: remove thy foot from evil." Proverbs 4:26, 27.

"Thou shalt not bow down to their gods, nor serve them, nor do after their works: but thou shalt utterly overthrow them, and quite break down their images." Exodus 23:24.

"This people draweth nigh unto me with their mouth, and honoureth me with their lips; but their heart is far from me. But in vain they do worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men." Matthew 15:8,9.

"Because that, when they knew God, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened. Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools, And changed the glory of the uncorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man, and to birds, and fourfooted beasts, and creeping things. Wherefore God also gave them up to uncleanness through the lusts of their own hearts, to dishonour their own bodies between themselves: Who changed the truth of God into a lie, and worshipped and served the creature more than the Creator, who is blessed for ever. Amen." Romans 1:21 - 25.

"This evil people, which refuse to hear my words, which walk in the imagination of their heart, and walk after other gods, to serve them, and to worship them, shall even be as this girdle, which is good for nothing." Jeremiah 13:10.

Time and time again we read of the children of Israel turning to idols and idolatrous worship and the prophets calling upon them to turn from their evil ways, and worship God. In Ezekiel 8:8 - 18 we read of people worshipping the sun and idols, and weeping for Tammuz. Jeremiah 7:18; 44:17 - 25 tells us about people burning incense, making cakes and offering drink offerings to the queen of heaven. Ashtoreth and Ashtaroth are mentioned several times as goddess of worship - 1 Kings 11:5, 33; 2 Kings 23:13; Judges 2:13; 10:6; 1 Samuel 7:3,4; 12:10; 31:10; 1 Chronicles 7:71. The making of altars to Baal, burning of incense to him, setting up groves to him, and following the worship of his followers is frequently mentioned in the Old Testament. In all of these cases it was considered an abomination before the Lord, and Israel was taken captive numerous times because they refused to abandon this type of worship and follow the one and true God.

God is the same yesterday, today, and tomorrow (Hebrews 13:8), He does not change (Malachi 3:6), so what was pagan worship and what was used as pagan symbols for gods, not the real God, in ancient times is still considered pagan by God today. If we are to be His followers we should follow His example and also consider these things pagan and abandon their use no matter what other people claim about them.

Part 1. How the ancient mythological gods are depicted, and how many of them we still use today.

In this part of the study we will have a look at how some of the ancient mythological gods are depicted and some of their symbols. Some are depicted as monsters, yet others as lovely beings. But how many of these ancient gods do we see depicted in our everyday lives, without us giving them a second thought. Even some of those depicted as monsters have made their way into quite a few so-called cartoons for children, while many others are depicted in many and assorted movies for all ages. Still others are now considered "Christian", but have only had their names changed.

As you read through them keep in mind that a symbol can be a shortcut to communication and can imply information. Take, for instance, a sign along the highway with a shell on it. When we see this sign we instantly know that there is a petrol station up ahead. But what does a shell have to do with petrol? Nothing! It is, in fact, a symbol of the sun god. Therefore it has implied irrelevant information and has been used as a communication shortcut. There are two ways of interpreting symbols. The first way is intuitively - by experience, feeling and emotions. The second way is rational - original intended meaning. Those who use symbols want people to use the first method, because the fathers of symbolism believe that symbols can do the same thing as hypnosis. They can bypass the power of the conscious, to the subconscious transmitting any information they want to you, the same as NLP and psychology.

I have made some comments in italics comparing some of the depictions of ancient gods to what we use today.

ANUBIS, Egyptian mythology, god of the dead, in art he is represented as jackal-headed or in the form of a dog. **He is also depicted with the scales of justice.**

APIS, sacred bull of the ancient Egyptians, is represented as a man with the head of a bull.

APOLLO, Greek mythology, god of light and song, is depicted as driving a chariot of the sun across the skies.

ARISTAEUS, Greek Mythology, son of the god Apollo and the nymph Cyrene, was often represented as **a youthful shepherd carrying a lamb.**

How many of us have pictures of a young shepherd carrying a lamb, thinking it is Jesus? Yes, Jesus is the good shepherd, but he carried the lamb or sheep on his shoulders not in his arms as the god Aristaeus does.

ARTEMIS, Greek mythology, goddess of the moon, is often pictured with a stag or a hunting dog.

ATHENS, Greek mythology, goddess of war, often called Pallas Athena or simply Pallas. The Romans identified her as Minerva. She was usually shown wearing a helmet and carrying a spear and shield. Like her father, Zeus, she wore the magic *aegis* a goatskin breastplate, fringed with snakes, that produces thunderbolts when shaken.

BACCHUS, Greek and Roman mythology, god of wine, identified with Dionysus, the Greek god of wine, and Liber, the Roman god of wine. The distinguishing mark of his priests was either the shaving of the crown or the whole of the head.

Today, there are many religious and non-religious people who shave their heads, most of which are probably not aware of the pagan significance of it.

CUPID, Roman mythology, son of Venus, goddess of love. His Greek counterpart was Eros, god of love. He is commonly represented in art as **a naked infant, often blind-folded, and carrying both a bow and a quiver of arrows.**

This little fellow is everywhere, especially during February, and even in so called Christian paintings and cards.

CYBELE, Babylonian mythology, is usually depicted as a woman with a mural or small tower crown or with a fortification on her head.

DAGON, Philistines fish-god. He was either depicted as top half man and bottom half fish, or **with the head of the fish forming a mitre above the head of the man**, while its scaly, fan-like tail fell as a cloak behind, leaving the human limbs and feet exposed.

The head of the fish forming a mitre above the head of a man, representing the fish god Dagon, is the same mitre which the Pope and other religious leaders frequently wear.

DAPHNE, Greek mythology, nymph, daughter of the river god Peneus. The god Apollo fell in love with Daphne, and when she refused his advances, he pursued her through the woods. She prayed to her father for help, and as Apollo advanced upon her, she was changed into a laurel tree. Grief-stricken at her transformation, Apollo made **the laurel his sacred tree**.

DIANA, goddess of the Ephesians, is depicted with a tower crown on her head. Her constant symbol is the bee. The chief priest himself was called Essen, or the king-bee.

EROS, Greek mythology, the god of love and counterpart of the Roman Cupid. He was depicted as a **winged youth, slight but beautiful, often with eyes covered to symbolise the blindness of love. Sometimes he carried a flower, but more commonly the silver bow and arrows**.

FAUNS, Greek mythology, attendants of Faunus, **creatures half men and half goats**, the counterparts of the Greek Satyrs. *

GENIUS, Roman mythology, a protecting or guardian spirit. In art, the genius of a person was depicted as a winged youth; the genius of a place as a serpent.

GORGON, Greek mythology, one of the three monstrous daughters of the sea god Phorcys and his wife, Ceto. The Gorgons were terrifying, dragon like creatures, covered with golden scales and having snakes for hair.

HATHOR, Egyptian mythology, the queen of heaven as well as the goddess of the sky, love, laughter, beauty, fertility and the patron of women and marriage. Daughter of the sun god Ra and wife and the sky god Horus, she was depicted as a woman with the head of a cow, or as a star-studded cow. Her name also appears as Athor or Athyr. She was identified with the Greek goddess Aphrodite.

HECATE, Greek mythology, goddess of darkness, often represented with either three bodies or three heads and with serpents entwined about her neck.

HEPHAESTUS, Greek god of fire, whose express symbol was the burning torch. His Roman counterpart was Vulcan, in Chaldea Zoroaster, and in Palestine Moloch. The Greek goddess Hestia and Roman goddess Vesta were also associated with fire.

When thinking of the burning torch, which we use widely today, the main one that stands out is the Olympic torch, which is never allowed to go out, and is carried by athletes around the country which will hold the next games.

HERCULES, Greek mythology, the Roman name of the Greek hero Heracles, who is usually represented as strong and muscular, clad in a lion skin and carrying a club.

HERMES, Greek mythology, messenger of the gods, is often depicted with **winged sandals, and a winged hat and bore a golden Caduceus, or magic wand, entwined with snakes and surmounted by wings**.

How many times do we see pictures of men with a winged hat, winged sandals carrying a torch in adds on T.V., without realising that this figure represents Hermes?

HORUS, Egyptian mythology, god of the sky and of light and goodness, was a god in the form of a falcon; an infant with a finger held to his lips (known as Harpocrates by the Greeks and Romans); or as an infant in the arms of his mother, Isis. **

HUITZILOPOCHTLI, in Aztec religion, the god of war and of the sun, usually depicted either as a hummingbird or a warrior wearing hummingbird feathers for armour.

INDRA, in Vedic myth, god of the atmosphere, storms, rain, and battle. In Hindu art Indra is portrayed as golden or red. Numerous divine attendants generally accompany him, joined sometimes by his dog Sarma. When not travelling on foot, he rides wither on his celestial elephant Airavata or on a white horse. Frequently, he is represented as having four arms: one hand holds a thunderbolt (his special weapon); a second wields a spear; a third holds a quiver of arrows; and the fourth carries a net of illusions and a hook to entrapping and tripping of foes.

IO, Greek mythology, daughter of the river god Inachus, whom Zeus changed into a white Heifer.

IRIS, Greek mythology, goddess of the rainbow, although she was a sister of the winged monsters the Harpies, Iris was represented as a **beautiful maiden, with wings and robes of bright colours and a halo of light on her head, tailing across the sky with a rainbow in her wake**.

We might not always have her with the rainbow in her wake, but how many times do we have beautiful maidens, with wings and robes of bright colours and a halo of light on her head depicted in pictures?

ISHTAR, chief goddess of the Babylonians and the Assyrians and the counter part of Astarte, a Phoenician goddess. Also known as Athtar in Arabia, Astar in Abyssina (now Ethiopia), and Ashtar in Cannan and Israel. As a goddess Ishtar was the Great Mother, the goddess of fertility and the queen of heaven. She was considered a goddess of hunting and war by the Assyrians, and was depicted with sword, bow and quiver of arrows. Among the Babylonians, Ishtar was distinctly the mother goddess and was portrayed either naked and with prominent breasts, or as a mother with a child at her breast. **

ISIS, Egyptian mythology, goddess of fertility and motherhood, was frequently pictured with her infant son, Horus. She was also represented in human form wearing cow's horns, since the cow was considered sacred to her. **

JUNO, Roman mythology, queen of the gods or the queen of heaven. She was also worshipped as the incarnation of the holy spirit as a dove, and was depicted as a **dove, sometimes with an olive branch in her mouth**.

A dove, sometimes with an olive branch in its mouth, which is supposed to represent peace or the Holy Spirit today, and which supposedly was taken from either the story of when Noah sent the dove from the ark and it came back with the olive twig; or the Dove descending on Christ at His baptism, when in fact it represents Juno, the queen of heaven, the third person of the pagan trinity, the mother of harlots.

KHNEMU, Egyptian mythology, was depicted as human with the head of a ram.

MINOTAUR, Greek mythology, a monster with the head of a bull and the body of a man.

MOLOCH, Cannanite god of barbarity and blood, whose image bore, as a symbol of majesty, a whip. At some festivals his worshippers were to unmercifully scourge themselves.

NIKE, Greek mythology, goddess of victory. In Greek art she is sometimes represented as a **winged female and carrying a wreath or palm of victory**.

NYMPHS, in Greek and Roman mythology, lesser divinities or spirits of nature, dwelling in groves and fountains, forests, meadows, streams and the sea, represented as young and beautiful maidens, fond of music and dancing.

OSIRIS, Egyptian mythology, god of the sun, agriculture and health and of the dead, took the form of the sacred bull, Apis. He was also represented wrapped in mummy cloths and wearing a crown.

PAN, Greek mythology, was depicted with **goat's horns, hoofs and tail, but his head was like that of man.** *

PEGASUS, Greek mythology, a **winged horse**, son of Poseidon, god of the sea, and the Gorgon Medusa.

There are several children's programs on T.V. depicting winged horses which has resulted in the production of toys of the same.

POSEIDON, Greek mythology, god of the sea, he is represented as a **bearded and majestic figure, holding a trident (a three-pronged instrument or weapon)** and often accompanied by a dolphin. The Romans identified Poseidon with their god of the sea, Neptune.

Quite a few fish and chip shops have this fellow as their symbol or patron, but how many of us know that it is because he was the ancient god of the sea or acknowledge him as such.

PRIAPUS, Greek mythology, god of fertility, protector of gardens and herds. He was usually represented as a grotesque individual with a huge phallus (an image of the erect male reproductive organ, symbolising in certain religious systems the generative power in nature). The Romans set up crude images of Priapus in their gardens **as scarecrows**.

A scarecrow seems harmless enough even if they don't scare the crows away, until we find out that it originated in Rome as a crude depiction of Priapus.

PTAH, Egyptian mythology, one of the greatest gods, and usually represented as a mummy bearing the symbols of life, power, and stability.

How many movies and children's programs on T.V. depict mummies? Yet this is how the god Ptah of Egypt was depicted.

RA or RE, Egyptian mythology, the sun god and was depicted as human with the head of a hawk. His chief symbols being the **sun disk or circle; the obelisk which represents an erect male reproductive organ; the sacred scarab beetle also called the dung beetle because it lived in and formed balls of dung, the ball of dung represented the earth and the beetle represented the sun; and the uraeus cobra.**

The sun disk or halo, with or without rays coming from it, which to those who are initiated in the mystic system of Chaldea know means "the seed"; the obelisk so commonly placed on top of churches and called steeples, or hidden in the architecture on the front of the churches (see Part 4, Phallicism); scarab beetles and the uraeus cobra are all depicted in many churches and supposedly Christian paintings.

SATURN, Roman mythology, ancient god of agriculture, later identified with the Greek god Cronus. In art Saturn is usually shown bearded, carrying a sickle or an ear of corn.

SATYRS, Greek mythology, attendants of Dionysus were depicted with bodies of animals and had small horns and tails like a goat's. *

SERAPIS, also SARAPIS, Greek and Egyptian mythology, a deity, variously associated with Osiris, Hermes and Hades. Serapis was believed by Egyptians to be a human manifestation of Apis, a sacred dead bull that symbolised Osiris.

SHAKTI, Hindu mother goddess, like Shiva, she can be either beneficial or fierce, depending on her form. As Parvati she is depicted as a beautiful woman in middle age. As Kali she is a giantess with black skin, a blood-red tongue and large tusks. Kali carries an assortment of weapons and wears a garland of human skulls around her neck. The mother goddess thus stands for all aspects of nature from birth to death.

SHIVA, Hindu god, is depicted in a number of forms such as a wandering beggar, half man and half female, or a dancer.

State LARES, ancient Rome, patrons and protectors of the city who were depicted as men wearing military cloaks, carrying lances, and seated with a dog (the symbol of watchfulness) nearby.

TAMMUZ, Phoenician and Assyrian god, whose chief emblem was the first letter of his name "t" or the cross. This was sometimes placed with a circle either on top of it or encircling it, to identify him with the sun. The cross was marked on the official garments of his priests, worn by believers suspended from a necklace, and featured widely on depictions of him.

How many today believe the cross to be a sacred or holy symbol, but do not realise that by accepting and using it they are acknowledging, not the true Saviour, but the false saviour of this world, Nimrod. When crucified upon the cross, our Lord and Saviour was being offered, by the Romans, as a human sacrifice to Nimrod.

THEMIS, Greek mythology, one of the Titans and goddess of divine justice and law, was represented in art **as holding aloft a pair of scales** on which she weighs the claims of opposing parties.

On most court houses today we see the representation of this ancient god, holding aloft a pair of scales.

THOTH, Egyptian mythology, was depicted as a human with the head of an ibis.

UNICORN, fabled beast, pure white in colour, having the head and legs of a horse and a long, twisted horn set in the middle of its forehead. Symbolic of holiness and chastity.

The unicorn is widely used in our modern society, which is a symbol of pagan holiness and chastity.

VESTA, Roman mythology, the goddess of the hearth, worshipped by Roman families as a household deity. In form the goddess was **associated with the flames of her fire**. Her Greek counterpart was Hestia.

Fireworks and bonfires seem really nice, until you realise that they are associated with the worship of Vesta or Hestia as works of fire in her honour.

ZEUS, Greek mythology, god of the sky and ruler of the Olympian gods. Zeus corresponds to the Roman god Jupiter. Zeus' image was represented in sculptural works as a kingly, bearded figure.

** How often do we see the devil depicted similar to the Fauns or Satyrs or Pan, half men and half goats? Yet the Bible tells us that he was one of the most magnificent creatures that God made (Ezekiel 28:13). Though he would have aged, his appearance would not have changed.*
[Return to Fauns.](#) [Return to Pan.](#)

*** What about an infant in the arms of his mother? This symbol is used widely all around the world as images of worship supposedly of Jesus & Mary, yet they represent pagan gods and goddesses, whose origin can be traced back to Semiramis and Nimrod, way back around the time of the Tower of Babel.*
[Return to Horus.](#) [Return to Ishtar.](#) [Return to Isis.](#)

We may not be able to eliminate all of these things from our lives, but when we know the truth, instead of admiring or carelessly using them, we will abhor them, just as the only true God abhors them. For this He will bless us.

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PAGAN-CHRISTIANITY TODAY

Part 2

A brief description of most of the ancient gods, giving their counterparts in other mythologies.

The information for this study has been taken from "The Two Babylons" by Rev. Alexander Hislop, and from several encyclopedias.

ADONIS, in Greek mythology, beautiful youth beloved by the goddesses Aphrodite and Persephone. Born of the incestuous union of King Cinyras of Cyprus and his daughter, Adonis was placed in the custody of Persephone, queen of the underworld. When Adonis was slain by a wild boar while hunting, Aphrodite pleaded with the god Zeus to restore him to her. Zeus decreed that Adonis should spend the winter months with Persephone in Hades and the summer months with Aphrodite. The story of his death and resurrection is symbolic of the natural cycle of death and rebirth.

AMON (Egypt, "hidden"), also spelled Ammon, Amen, or Amun, ancient Egyptian deity, originally a local Theban god of reproductive forces, represented as a ram. Amon, his wife, Mut (Egypt, "the mother"), and his son, the moon god Khon (Egypt, "to traverse the sky"), formed the divine triad of Thebes. Later Amon was identified with the sun god Ra of Heliopolis, and was known as Amon-Ra, "the father of the gods, the fashioner of men, the creator of cattle, the lord of all being." As a universal god he became the god of the Egyptian nation and the empire. The power of his high priest rivalled that of the pharaoh, provoking political problems similar to modern church-state rivalry. The biggest temple ever built was for Amon-Ra at al-Karnak. Amon was worshipped in the ancient Greek colonies of Cyrene, where he was identified with Zeus, and in Rome, where he was associated with Jupiter.

ANUBIS, in Egyptian mythology, god of the dead. He was considered the inventor of embalming, the guardian of tombs, and a judge of the dead. The Egyptians believed that at the judgment he weighed the heart of the dead against the feather of truth.

APHRODITE, in Greek mythology, the goddess of love and beauty and the counterpart of the Roman Venus. In Homer's Iliad she is said to be the daughter of Zeus and Dione, one of his consorts, but in later legends she is described as having sprung from the foam of the sea and her name may be translated "foam-risen." In Homeric legend Aphrodite is the wife of the lame and ugly god of fire, Hephaestus. Among her lovers was Ares, god of war, who in later mythology became her husband. She was the rival of Persephone, queen of the underworld, for the love of the beautiful Greek youth Adonis. Probably Oriental in origin, Aphrodite was identified in early Greek religious beliefs with the Phoenician Astarte and was known as Aphrodite Urania, queen of the heavens, and as Aphrodite Pandemos, goddess of the people.

APIS, sacred bull of the ancient Egyptians. It was known to them as Hapi and was regarded as the incarnation of Osiris or of Ptah. A court was set apart for Apis in the temple of Ptah at Memphis. It was believed that when Apis died, a new Apis appeared and had to be searched out; he would be recognisable by certain sacred marks upon his body, such as his colour (mainly black) and a knot under his tongue.

ARISTAEUS, in Greek mythology, son of the god Apollo and the nymph Cyrene. He was worshipped as the protector of hunters, herdsmen, and flocks and as the inventor of bee keeping and olive culture. When Aristaeus tried to seduce Eurydice, the wife of the celebrated musician Orpheus, she fled from him and received a fatal snake bite. The nymphs punished him by causing all of his bees to die; but he appeased the nymphs with a sacrifice of cattle, from whose carcasses emerged new swarms of bees. Aristaeus was learned in the arts of healing and prophecy, and he wandered over many lands sharing his knowledge and curing the sick. He was widely honoured as a beneficent god and was often represented as a youthful shepherd carrying a lamb.

ARTEMIS, in Greek mythology, one of the principal goddesses, counterpart of the Roman goddess Diana. She was the daughter of the god Zeus and Leto and the twin sister of the god Apollo. She was chief hunter to the gods and goddess of hunting and of wild animals,

especially bears. Artemis was also the goddess of childbirth, of nature, and of the harvest. As the moon goddess, she was sometimes identified with the goddess Selene and Hecate.

ASTARTE, Greek and Roman name of Ashtoreth, the supreme female divinity of the Phoenician nations, the goddess of love and fruitfulness. Like that of Baal, the corresponding male divinity, the name is frequently found in the earlier books of the Old Testament in the plural form Ashtaroth; not until the time of King Solomon of Israel (10th cent. BC) did the singular form Ashtoreth occur. She symbolised the female principle, as Baal symbolised maleness. Astarte has been identified with various Greek goddesses: the goddess of the moon, Selene; the goddess of wild nature, Artemis; and the goddess of love and beauty, Aphrodite. The Babylonian and Assyrian counterpart of Astarte was Ishtar.

BACCHUS, in Greek and Roman mythology, the god of wine, identified with Dionysus, the Greek god of wine, and Liber, the Roman god of wine.

BALDER or BALDUR, in Norse mythology, the god of light and joy, son of Odin and Frigga, king and queen of the gods. Having dreamed that Balder's life was threatened, Frigga extracted an oath from the forces and objects in nature, animate and inanimate, that they would not harm Balder, but she forgot the mistletoe. The gods, thinking Balder safe, cast darts and stones at him. The malicious giant Loki put a twig of mistletoe in the hands of Balder's twin, the blind Hoder, god of darkness, and directed his aim against Balder, who fell pierced to the heart. After the death of Balder, Odin sent another son, the messenger Hermod, to the underworld to plead for Balder's return. The god would be released only if everything in the world would weep for him. Everything wept except one old woman in a cave, and Balder could not return to life.

BEL, supreme god of the Babylonians (see Isa. 46). Bel is the Chaldea form of Baal and is believed by some to be identical with that god. Like the equivalent Hebrew ba'al, the name Bel was used also in the sense of "lord" or "owner." Bel presided over the air. His consort was Belit. Bel was identified with the Greek god Zeus by the Greek historian Herodotus.

BELLONA, in Roman mythology, the goddess of war. She is often identified with the Greek war goddess Enyo. In later mythology, Bellona was described as the sister, daughter, or wife of the Roman god of war, Mars, and sometimes as his charioteer or muse.

CERES, in Roman mythology, the goddess of agriculture. She and her daughter Proserpine were the counterparts of the Greek goddesses Demeter and Persephone. The Greek belief that her joy at being reunited with her daughter each spring caused the earth to bring forth an abundance of fruits and grains was introduced into Rome in the 5th century BC, and her cult became extremely popular, especially with the plebeians. The word cereal is derived from her name. Her chief festival, the Cerealia, was celebrated from April 12 to 19.

CHAOS, in the ancient Greek theory of creation, the dark, silent abyss from which all things came into existence. Chaos gave birth to the black Night and to Erebus, the dark, fathomless region where death dwells. These two children of the primeval darkness in turn united to produce Love, who brought forth Light and Day. Into this universe of formless natural forces, Chaos generated the solid mass of Earth, from which arose the starry, cloud-filled Heaven. Mother Earth and Father Heaven, personified respectively as Gaea and her husband, Uranus, were the parents of the first creatures in the universe. In later mythology Chaos is the formless matter from which the cosmos, or harmonious order, was created.

CUPID (Lat. cupido, "desire"), in Roman mythology, son of Venus, goddess of love. His counterpart in Greek mythology was Eros, god of love. He is best known as the handsome young god who falls in love with the beautiful maiden Psyche. This story is told in *The Golden Ass*, a romance by the Roman writer Lucius Apuleius. In other tales he appears as a mischievous boy who indiscriminately wounds both gods and humans with his arrows, thereby causing them to fall deeply in love.

CYBELE, Latin name of a goddess native to Phrygia in Asia Minor and known to the Greeks as Rhea, the wife of the Titan Cronus and mother of the Olympian gods. Cybele was a goddess of nature and fertility who was worshipped in Rome as the Great Mother of the Gods. Because Cybele presided over mountains and fortresses, her crown was in the form of a city wall, and she was also known to the Romans as Mater Turrita. The cult of Cybele was directed by eunuch priests called Corybantes, who led the faithful in orgiastic rites accompanied by wild cries and the frenzied music of flutes, drums, and cymbals.

DAPHNE, in Greek mythology, nymph, daughter of the river god Peneus. She was a hunter who dedicated herself to Artemis, goddess of the hunt, and, like the goddess, refused to marry. The god Apollo fell in love with Daphne, and when she refused his advances, he pursued her through the woods. She prayed to her father for help, and as Apollo advanced upon her, she was changed into a laurel tree (Gr. daphne). Grief-stricken at her transformation, Apollo made the laurel his sacred tree.

DEMETER, in Greek mythology, goddess of corn and the harvest, and daughter of the Titans Cronus and Rhea. When her daughter Persephone was abducted by Hades, god of the underworld, Demeter's grief was so great that she neglected the land; no plants grew, and famine devastated the earth. Dismayed at this situation, Zeus, the ruler of the universe, demanded that his brother Hades return Persephone to her mother. Hades agreed, but before he released the girl, he made her eat some pomegranate seeds that would force her to return to him for four months each year. In her joy at being reunited with her daughter, Demeter caused the earth to bring forth bright spring flowers and abundant fruit and grain for the harvest. However, her sorrow returned each fall when Persephone had to go back to the underworld. The desolation of the winter season and the death of vegetation were regarded as the yearly manifestation of Demeter's grief when her daughter

was taken from her. Demeter and Persephone were worshipped in the rites of the Eleusinian Mysteries. The cult spread from Sicily to Rome, where the goddesses were worshipped as Ceres and Proserpine.

DEUCALION, in Greek mythology, son of the Titan Prometheus. Deucalion was king of Phthia in Thessaly when the god Zeus, because of the wicked ways of the human race, destroyed them by flood. For nine days and nights Zeus sent torrents of rain. Only Deucalion and his wife, Pyrrha, survived drowning. They were saved because they were the only people who had led good lives and remained faithful to the laws of the gods. Having been warned by his father, Prometheus, of the approaching disaster, Deucalion built a boat, which carried him and Pyrrha safely to rest atop Mount Parnassus. The oracle at Delphia commanded them to cast the bones of their mother over their shoulders. Understanding this to mean the stones of the earth, they obeyed, and from the stones sprang a new race of people.

DIONYSUS, in Greek mythology, god of wine and vegetation, who showed mortals how to cultivate grapevines and make wine. He was good and gentle to those who honoured him, but he brought madness and destruction upon those who spurned him or the orgiastic rituals of his cult. According to tradition, Dionysus died each winter and was reborn in the spring. To his followers, this cyclical revival, accompanied by the seasonal renewal of the fruits of the earth, embodied the promise of the resurrection of the dead. The yearly rites in honour of the resurrection of Dionysus gradually evolved into the structured form of the Greek drama, and important festivals were held in honour of the god, during which great dramatic competitions were conducted. The most important festival, the Greater Dionysia, was held in Athens for five days each spring. It was for this celebration that the Greek dramatists Aeschylus, Sophocles, and Euripides wrote their great tragedies. After the 5th century BC, Dionysus was known to the Greeks as Bacchus.

ERINYES, also Furies, in Greek mythology, the three avenging deities Tisiphone (the avenger of murder), Megaera (the jealous one), and Alecto (unceasing in anger). In most accounts the Erinyes are the daughters of Gaea and Uranus; sometimes they are called the daughters of Night. They lived in the world below, from which they ascended to earth to pursue the wicked. They were just but merciless and without regard for mitigating circumstances. They punished all offences against human society such as perjury, violation of the rites of hospitality, and, above all, the murder of blood relatives. These goddesses were hideous to behold; they had writhing snakes for hair, and blood dripped from their eyes. They tormented wrongdoers, pursuing them relentlessly and driving them mad. One of the most famous legends about the Erinyes concerns their pursuit of the Theban prince Orestes for the murder of his mother, Queen Clytemnestra. Orestes had been commanded by the god Apollo to avenge the death of his father, King Agamemnon, whom Clytemnestra had murdered. The Erinyes, however, heedless of his motives, pursued and tormented him. Orestes finally appealed to the goddess Athena, who persuaded the avenging goddesses to accept Orestes' plea that he had been cleansed of his guilt. When they were thus able to show mercy, they became changed themselves. From the Furies of frightful appearance, they were transformed into the Eumenides, protectors of the suppliant.

EROS, in Greek mythology, the god of love and counterpart of the Roman Cupid. In early mythology he was represented as one of the primeval forces of nature, the son of Chaos, and the embodiment of the harmony and creative power in the universe. Soon, however, he was thought of as a handsome and intense young man, attended by Pothos ("longing") or Himeros ("desire"). Later mythology made him the constant attendant of his mother, Aphrodite, goddess of love. In Greek art Eros was depicted as a winged youth, slight but beautiful, often with eyes covered to symbolise the blindness of love. Sometimes he carried a flower, but more commonly the silver bow and arrows, with which he shot darts of desire into the bosoms of gods and men. In Roman legend and art, Eros degenerated into a mischievous child and was often depicted as a baby archer.

EUMENIDES, in Greek mythology, ancient earth spirits or goddesses, associated with fertility but also having certain moral and social functions. Traditionally three in number, the Eumenides were worshipped in Athens, at Colonus, and in lands outside Attica. Although their name is variously described as meaning "the kindly ones," "the reverend ones," and "the gracious ones," the goddesses were usually portrayed as Gorgon like creatures with snakes for hair and eyes that dripped blood. Their appearance stems from their identification in later legends with the Erinyes, the three avenging goddesses from the underworld. According to tradition, when the Erinyes showed mercy to the Theban prince Orestes, whom they had been pursuing, they underwent a spiritual transformation. In their new aspect they showed kindness to humans rather than vengeance and were, therefore, renamed Eumenides.

FATES, in Greek mythology, the three goddesses who determined human life and destiny. Known as Moirae in Greek and Parcae in Latin, the Fates apportioned to each person at birth a share of good and evil, although one might increase the evil by one's own folly. Portrayed in art and poetry as stern old women or as somber maidens, the goddesses were always thought of as weavers. Clotho, the Spinner, spun the thread of life; Lachesis, the Dispenser of Lots, decided its span and assigned to each person his or her destiny; and Atropos, the Inexorable, carried the dread shears that cut the thread of life at the proper time. The decisions of the Fates could not be altered, even by the gods.

FAUNUS, in Roman mythology, the grandson of the god Saturn, worshipped as the god of the fields and of shepherds. He was believed to speak to people through the sounds of the forest and in nightmares. Faunus is the Roman counterpart of the Greek god Pan. He was attended by the fauns, creatures half men and half goats, the counterparts of the Greek satyrs. In some legends Faunus was identified as an early king of Latium, who taught his people how to plant crops and breed stock. He was also credited with introducing the religious system of the country and was honoured after his death as a god.

GAEA or GE, in Greek mythology, the personification of Mother Earth, and the daughter of Chaos. She was the mother and wife of Father Heaven, who was personified as Uranus. They were the parents of the earliest living creatures, the Titans, the Cyclopes, and the Giants the Hecatoncheires (Hundred-Headed Ones). Fearing and hating the monsters, although they were his sons, Uranus imprisoned them in a secret place in the earth, leaving the Cyclopes and Titans at large. Gaea, enraged at this favouritism, persuaded her son, the Titan Cronus, to

overthrow his father. He emasculated Uranus, and from his blood Gaea brought forth another race of monsters, the Giants, and the three avenging goddesses the Erinyes. Her last and most terrifying offspring was Typhon, a 100-headed monster, who, although conquered by the god Zeus, was believed to spew forth the molten lava flows of Mount Etna.

GANYMEDE, in Greek mythology, a handsome young Trojan prince whom the god Zeus, in the guise of an eagle, snatched from the midst of his companions and bore up to Mount Olympus. He was granted immortality and replaced Hebe, goddess of youth, as cupbearer to the gods. Ganymede was later identified with the constellation Aquarius, "the Water Bearer."

GENIUS, in Roman mythology, a protecting, or guardian, spirit. It was believed that every individual, family, and city had its own genius. The genius received special worship as a household god because it was thought to bestow success and intellectual powers on its devotees. For this reason, the word came to designate a person with unusual intellectual powers. The genius of a woman was sometimes referred to as a *juno*.

GOLDEN FLEECE, in Greek mythology, the fleece of the winged ram Chrysomallus. The ram was sent by the god Hermes to rescue Phrixus and Helle, the two children of the Greek king Athamas and his wife, Nephele. Athamas had grown indifferent to his wife and had taken Ino, the daughter of King Cadmus, for his second wife. Ino hated her stepchildren, especially Phrixus, because she wanted her own son to succeed to the throne. Realising that her children were in grave danger because of the jealousy of their stepmother, Nephele prayed to the gods for help. Hermes sent her Chrysomallus, the winged ram, whose fleece was made of gold. The ram snatched the children up and bore them away on his back. Soaring into the air, he flew eastward, but as he was crossing the strait that divides Europe and Asia, Helle slipped from his back and fell into the water. The strait where she was drowned was named for her: the Sea of Helle, or the Hellespont. The ram safely landed Phrixus in Colchis, a country on the Black Sea that was ruled by King Aeëtes. There he was hospitably received and, in gratitude to the gods for saving his life, sacrificed Chrysomallus at the temple of the god Zeus. Phrixus then gave the precious Golden Fleece to Aeëtes, who placed it in a sacred grove under the watchful eye of a dragon that never slept. Many years later the Argonauts, led by Phrixus's cousin the Greek hero Jason, recovered the Golden Fleece with the help of the daughter of King Aeëtes, the sorceress Medea, who out of love for Jason put the dragon to sleep.

GORDIAN KNOT, in Greek mythology, complex knot tied by Gordius, king of Phrygia and father of Minos. Gordius was a Phrygian peasant who became king because he was the first man to drive into town after an oracle had commanded his countrymen to select as ruler the first person who would drive into the public square in a wagon. In gratitude, Gordius dedicated his wagon to the god Zeus and placed it in the grove of the temple, tying the pole of the wagon to the yoke with a rope of bark. The knot was so intricately entwined that no one could undo it. A saying developed that whoever succeeded in untying the knot would rule all of Asia. According to legend, not even Alexander the Great was able to untie it, so he had to cut it with his sword. The expression "to cut the Gordian knot" refers to a situation in which a difficult problem is solved only by a decisive and forceful action.

GORGON, in Greek mythology, one of three monstrous daughters of the sea god Phorcys and his wife, Ceto. The Gorgons were terrifying, dragon like creatures, covered with golden scales and having snakes for hair. They lived on the farthest side of the western ocean, shunned because their glance turned people to stone. Two of the Gorgons, Stheno and Euryale, were immortal; Medusa alone could be killed. The hero Perseus killed Medusa and brought back her head, with the help of the deities Hermes and Athena. From her blood sprang the winged horse Pegasus, her son by the god Poseidon.

GRACES, in Greek mythology, the three goddesses of joy, charm, and beauty. The daughters of the god Zeus and the nymph Eurynome, they were named Aglaia (Splendor), Euphrosyne (Mirth), and Thalia (Good Cheer). The Graces presided over banquets, dances, and all other pleasurable social events, and brought joy and goodwill to both gods and mortals. They were the special attendants of the divinities of love, Aphrodite and Eros, and together with companions, the Muses, they sang to the gods on Mount Olympus, and danced to beautiful music that the god Apollo made upon his lyre. In some legends Aglaia was wed to Hephaestus, the craftsman among the gods. Their marriage explains the traditional association of the Graces with the arts; like the Muses, they were believed to endow artists and poets with the ability to create beautiful works of art. The Graces were rarely treated as individuals, but always together as a kind of triple embodiment of grace and beauty. In art they are usually represented as lithe young maidens, dancing in a circle.

HADES, in Greek mythology, god of the dead. He was the son of the Titans Cronus and Rhea and the brother of Zeus and Poseidon. When the three brothers divided up the universe after they had deposed their father, Cronus, Hades was awarded the underworld. There, with his queen, Persephone, whom he had abducted from the world above, he ruled the kingdom of the dead. Although he was a grim and pitiless god, unappeased by either prayer or sacrifice, he was not evil. In fact, he was known also as Pluto, lord of riches, because both crops and precious metals were believed to come from his kingdom below ground. The underworld itself was often called Hades. It was divided into two regions: Erebus, where the dead pass as soon as they die, and Tartarus, the deeper region, where the Titans had been imprisoned. It was a dim and unhappy place, inhabited by vague forms and shadows and guarded by Cerberus, the three-headed, dragon-tailed dog. Sinister rivers separated the underworld from the world above, and the aged boatman Charon ferried the souls of the dead across these waters. Somewhere in the darkness of the underworld Hades' palace was located. It was represented as a many-gated, dark and gloomy place, thronged with guests, and set in the midst of shadowy fields and an apparition-haunted landscape. In later legends the underworld is described as the place where the good are rewarded and the wicked punished.

HARMONIA, in Greek mythology, daughter of Ares, god of war, and Aphrodite, goddess of love, and wife of Cadmus, founder of Thebes. At Harmonia's wedding, which was attended by the gods, Aphrodite gave her a beautiful necklace made by Hephaestus, god of

metalwork. Although the gift brought her good fortune, it brought only death and misery to her family. In their old age Harmonia and Cadmus were transformed into serpents.

HARPIES, in Greek mythology, foul creatures with the heads of old women and the bodies, wings, beaks, and claws of birds. They could fly with the speed of the wind, and their feathers, which could not be pierced, served as armor. They snatched up mortals and carried them to the underworld, leaving behind a sickening odour.

HATHOR, in Egyptian mythology, goddess of the sky and queen of heaven. Daughter of the sun god Ra and wife of the sky god Horus, she was the goddess of fertility and patron of women and marriage. She was also the goddess of love and beauty; for this reason, she was identified often with the Greek goddess Aphrodite. Worshipped throughout Egypt, she was often represented as a star-studded cow or as a woman with a cow's head. Her name also appears as Athor or Athyr.

HEBE, in Greek mythology, the goddess of youth, the daughter of Zeus and Hera. Hebe served for a long time as cupbearer to the gods, serving them their nectar and ambrosia. She was replaced in this office by the Trojan prince Ganymede. According to one story, she resigned as cupbearer to the gods upon her marriage to the hero Hercules, who had just been deified. In another, she was dismissed from her position because of a fall she suffered while in attendance on the gods.

HECATE, in Greek mythology, goddess of darkness, and the daughter of the Titans Perses and Asteria. Unlike Artemis, who represented the moonlight and splendour of the night, Hecate represented its darkness and its terrors. On moonless nights she was believed to roam the earth with a pack of ghostly, howling dogs. She was the goddess of sorcery and witchcraft and was especially worshipped by magicians and witches, who sacrificed black lambs and black dogs to her. As goddess of the crossroads, Hecate and her pack of dogs were believed to haunt these remote spots, which seemed evil and ghostly places to travellers. In art Hecate is often represented with either three bodies or three heads and with serpents entwined about her neck.

HEL, in Norse mythology, the goddess of the dead. She dwelt beneath one of the three roots of the sacred ash tree Yggdrasil and was the daughter of Loki, the spirit of mischief or evil, and the giantess Angerbotha (Angerboda). Odin, the All-Father, hurled Hel into Niflheim, the realm of cold and darkness, itself also known as Hel, over which he gave her sovereign authority.

HELLEN, ancestor of the Hellenes or Greeks. He was the son of Pyrrha and Deucalion, who were spared because of their piety in a devastating flood that destroyed all creation. Hellen was believed to be the father of the principal nations of Greece. From his sons Aeolus and Dorus sprang the Aeolians and Dorians, and from his son Xuthus came the Achaeans and Ionians.

HEPHAESTUS, in Greek mythology, god of fire and metalwork, the son of the god Zeus and the goddess Hera, or sometimes the son of Hera alone. In contrast to the other gods, Hephaestus was lame and awkward. Shortly after his birth, he was cast out of heaven, either by Hera, who was repelled by his deformity, or by Zeus, because Hephaestus had sided with Hera against him. In most legends, however, he was soon honoured again on Olympus and was married to Aphrodite, goddess of love, or to Aglaia, one of the three Graces. As the artisan among the gods, Hephaestus made their armor, weapons, and jewellery. His workshop was believed to lie under Mount Etna, a volcano in Sicily. Hephaestus is often identified with the Roman god of fire, Vulcan.

HERA, in Greek mythology, queen of the gods, the daughter of the Titans Cronus and Rhea, and the sister and wife of the god Zeus. Hera was the goddess of marriage and protector of married women. She was the mother of Ares, god of war; Hephaestus, god of fire; Hebe, goddess of youth; and Ilithyia, goddess of childbirth. A jealous wife, she often persecuted Zeus's mistresses and children, and was known for her vindictive nature. Angry with the Trojan prince Paris for preferring Aphrodite, goddess of love, Hera aided the Greeks in the Trojan War and was not appeased until Troy was finally destroyed. Hera is often identified with the Roman goddess Juno.

HERCULES, in Greek mythology, Roman name of the Greek hero Heracles, noted for his strength and courage and for his many legendary exploits. He was the son of the god Zeus and Alcmena, wife of the Theban general Amphitryon. Hera, the jealous wife of Zeus, was determined to kill her unfaithful husband's offspring, and shortly after Hercules' birth she sent two great serpents to destroy him. Hercules, although still a baby, strangled the snakes. As a young man Hercules killed a lion with his bare hands. As a trophy of his adventure, he wore the skin of the lion as a cloak and its head as a helmet. . . . Death of the Hero. Hercules later married Deianira, whom he won from Antaeus, son of the sea god Poseidon. When the centaur Nessus attacked Deianira, Hercules wounded him with an arrow that he had poisoned in the blood of the Hydra. The dying centaur told Deianira to take some of his blood, which he said was a powerful love charm but was really a poison. Believing that Hercules had fallen in love with the princess Iole, Deianira later sent him a tunic dipped in the blood. When he put it on, the pain caused by the poison was so great that he killed himself on a funeral pyre. After death he was brought by the gods to Olympus and married to Hebe, goddess of youth. Hercules was worshipped by the Greeks as both a god and as a mortal hero. He is usually represented as strong and muscular, clad in a lion skin and carrying a club. The most famous statue of the mythical hero is in the National Museum in Naples.

HERMES, in Greek mythology, messenger of the gods, the son of the god Zeus and of Maia, the daughter of the Titan Atlas. As the special servant and courier of Zeus, Hermes had winged sandals and a winged hat and bore a golden Caduceus, or magic wand, entwined with snakes and surmounted by wings. He conducted the souls of the dead to the underworld and was believed to possess magical powers over sleep and dreams. Hermes was also the god of commerce, and the protector of traders and herds. As the deity of athletes, he protected gymnasiums and stadiums and was believed to be responsible for both good luck and wealth. Despite his virtuous characteristics, Hermes was also a dangerous foe, a trickster, and a thief. On the day of his birth he stole the cattle of his brother, the sun god Apollo, obscuring their

trail by making the herd walk backward. When confronted by Apollo, Hermes denied the theft. The brothers were finally reconciled when Hermes gave Apollo his newly invented lyre. Hermes was represented in early Greek art as a mature, bearded man; in classical art he became an athletic youth, nude and beardless.

HESTIA, in Greek mythology, virgin goddess of the hearth, the eldest daughter of the Titans Cronus and Rhea. She was believed to preside at all sacrificial altar fires. Prayers were offered to her before and after meals, and most cities had a common hearth where her sacred fire burned. In Rome, Hestia was worshipped as Vesta; her fire was attended by six virgin priestesses known as the vestals.

HORUS, in Egyptian mythology, god of the sky and of light and goodness. One of the major Egyptian deities, Horus was the son of Isis, the nature goddess, and Osiris, the god of the underworld. After Osiris was murdered by his evil brother Set, the god of darkness and evil, Horus avenged his father's death by killing his uncle. Worshipped throughout Egypt, Horus was usually depicted as a falcon or a falcon-headed man. Another representation of him, an infant with a finger held to his lips, was known as Harpocrates by the Greeks and Romans.

HUITZILOPOCHTLI, in Aztec religion, the god of war and of the sun. According to tradition, he guided the Aztecs during their long migration from Aztlán, their mythical homeland, to the valley of Mexico. His name, from the Aztec *huitzilin*, meaning "hummingbird," expresses the Aztec belief that dead warriors were reborn as hummingbirds. His mother, the earth goddess Coatlicue, conceived him after keeping in her bosom a ball of hummingbird feathers that is, the soul of a fallen warrior that dropped from the sky. As the sun god, Huitzilopochtli was born anew each morning from Coatlicue's womb. He was also thought to require human hearts and blood for nourishment. Sacrificial victims included prisoners of war and warriors who had perished in battle; after their death and sacrifice, such warriors became part of the sun's brilliance until, after four years, they were incarnated permanently in the bodies of hummingbirds. Huitzilopochtli was usually depicted either as a hummingbird or as a warrior wearing hummingbird feathers for armor. The temple built in his honour at Tenochtitlán (on the site of present-day Mexico City) was a great architectural achievement in pre-Columbian America

INDRA, in Vedic myth, god of the atmosphere, storms, rain, and battle. Indra is the most celebrated Vedic god (more than 250 hymns of the Veda are addressed to him). Ancient legends depict him as the most powerful foe of various demonic powers preventing the rain and the dew from fructifying the earth; of these evil beings the demon Vritra, who imprisons the waters before Indra slays him, is foremost. Some of the many powers reputedly overcome by Indra, for example, the Asuras (demons or titans who are sworn enemies of the Vedic gods), are now regarded by scholars as representations of the original Dravidian inhabitants of India. In later Hinduism, Indra is subordinate to the gods Brahma, Siva, and Vishnu.

IO, in Greek mythology, daughter of the river god Inachus. She was loved by the god Zeus, who changed her into a white heifer to protect her from the jealousy of his wife, Hera. Suspecting that the animal was really Zeus's mistress, Hera asked for the heifer as a gift and set the 100-eyed monster Argus to guard it. Because the monster never slept with all his eyes shut, Io was unable to escape until Zeus sent his son, the messenger god Hermes, to rescue her. Hermes managed to kill the monster after he had put Argus's 100 eyes to sleep with a series of boring stories. Hera was still angry, however, and next sent a gadfly to torment Io, who wandered over the earth in misery. Io finally swam across the sea that was later named for her (the Ionian Sea) and at last reached Egypt. There she was restored to her original physical form, and she bore Zeus a son, Epaphus, who was an ancestor of the Greek hero Hercules.

IRIS, in Greek mythology, goddess of the rainbow, the daughter of the Titan Thaumias and Electra, daughter of the Titan Oceanus. As messenger of the god Zeus and his wife, Hera, Iris left Olympus only to convey the divine commands to humankind, by whom she was regarded as an adviser and guide. Travelling with the speed of the wind, she could go from one end of the earth to the other, and to the bottom of the sea or to the depths of the underworld. Although she was a sister of the winged monsters, the Harpies, Iris was represented as a beautiful maiden, with wings and robes of bright colours and a halo of light on her head, trailing across the sky with a rainbow in her wake.

ISHTAR, chief goddess of the Babylonians and the Assyrians and the counterpart of Astarte, a Phoenician goddess. The name appeared in different forms in every part of the ancient Semitic world; thus it was Athtar in Arabia, Astar in Abyssinia (now Ethiopia), and Ashtar in Canaan and Israel. The sex of the divinity also varied: Athtar and Astar were male deities. Ishtar of Erech (in Babylonia) was a goddess worshipped in connection with the evening star, but Ishtar of Akkad (also in Babylonia) was a god identified with the morning star. As a goddess, Ishtar was the Great Mother, the goddess of fertility and the queen of heaven. On the other hand, her character had destructive attributes; she was considered, especially by the Assyrians, a goddess of hunting and war and was depicted with sword, bow, and quiver of arrows. Among the Babylonians, Ishtar was distinctly the mother goddess and was portrayed either naked and with prominent breasts or as a mother with a child at her breast. As goddess of love she brought destruction to many of her lovers, of whom the most notable was her consort Tammuz, the Babylonian counterpart of Adonis.

ISIS, in Egyptian mythology, goddess of fertility and motherhood. According to the Egyptian belief, she was the daughter of the god Keb ("Earth") and the goddess Nut ("Sky"), the sister-wife of Osiris, judge of the dead, and mother of Horus, god of day. Ancient stories described Isis as having great magical skill, and she was represented as human in form though she was frequently described as wearing the horns of a cow. Her personality was believed to resemble that of Athor, or Hathor, the goddess of love and gaiety. The cult of Isis spread from Alexandria throughout the Hellenistic world after the 4th century BC. It appeared in Greece in combination with the cults of Horus, her son, and Serapis, the Greek name for Osiris. The Greek historian Herodotus identified Isis with Demeter, the Greek goddess of earth, agriculture, and fertility. The tripartite cult of Isis, Horus, and Serapis was later introduced (86 BC) into Rome in the consulship of Lucius Cornelius Sulla and became one of the most popular branches of Roman religion. It later received a bad reputation through the licentiousness of some of its priestly rites, and subsequent consuls made efforts to suppress or limit Isis worship.

JINNI, in Middle Eastern and Islamic folklore and mythology, a spirit or demon lower than an angel. The plural form of the name is jinn, the feminine form jinniyah. Composed of fire or air, jinn can assume both animal and human form. They may be either good or evil: If good, they are beautiful; if wicked, they are ugly. They exist in air, in flame, under the earth, and in inanimate objects, such as rocks, trees, and ruins. In some ways they resemble humans: They have the same bodily needs; they reproduce their kind; and they die, although they live longer. Jinn are mischievous spirits who enjoy punishing humans for wrongs done them, even unintentionally. Thus, accidents and diseases are considered to be their work. With the proper knowledge, however, humans can control jinn for their own purposes. Popular in the folklore of Egypt, Syria, Iran, Turkey, and North Africa, jinn are familiar in the West as characters in *The Thousand and One Nights*. They are frequently known by the Anglicised form genie.

JOCASTA, in Greek mythology, wife of Laius, king of Thebes, and mother of Oedipus, king of Thebes. When an oracle foretold that Jocasta's son would kill his father, Laius abandoned the child on a mountain. The infant, rescued by a shepherd and given the name Oedipus, was adopted by Polybus, king of Corinth. Later, when an oracle proclaimed that he would kill his father, Oedipus, not wanting any harm to come to Polybus, left Corinth. On the road to Boeotia, Oedipus quarrelled with and killed a stranger he mistook for a robber. The victim was his true father, Laius. Believing her son dead, Jocasta did not recognise Oedipus when he reappeared in Thebes as a young man. The youth saved the city from a dread monster and, as a reward, was married to Jocasta. When she learned that Oedipus was her son as well as her husband, Jocasta committed suicide in horror and despair at their incestuous relationship.

JUNO, in Roman mythology, queen of the gods, the wife and sister of the god Jupiter. She was the protector of women and was worshipped under several names. As Juno Pronuba she presided over marriage; as Juno Lucina she aided women in childbirth; and as Juno Regina she was the special counsellor and protector of the Roman state. Her special festival, the Matronalia, was celebrated on March 1. Juno is the Latin counterpart of the Greek queen of the gods, Hera. The month of June was named after her.

JUPITER or **JOVE**, in Roman mythology, the ruler of the gods, the son of the god Saturn, whom he overthrew. Originally the god of the sky and king of heaven, Jupiter was worshipped as god of rain, thunder, and lightning. As the protector of Rome he was called Jupiter Optimus Maximus ("the best and most high") and was worshipped in a temple on the Capitoline hill. As Jupiter Fidius he was guardian of law, defender of truth, and protector of justice and virtue. The Romans identified Jupiter with Zeus, the supreme god of the Greeks, and assigned to the Roman god the attributes and myths of the Greek divinity; the Jupiter of Latin literature, therefore, has many Greek characteristics, but the Jupiter of Roman religious worship remained substantially untouched by the Greek influence. With the goddesses Juno and Minerva, Jupiter formed the triad whose worship was the central cult of the Roman state.

LARES, in Roman mythology, tutelary deities of the crossroads and country districts; also, and more commonly, the gods of the household. The lares compitales were worshipped at the compitum, or "crossroads" where four pieces of property joined. The lares familiares, or "household gods," which were distinguished from the lares compitales, are considered by some modern scholars to have been the deified spirits of dead ancestors, which were worshipped as good spirits in contrast to the malevolent tormentors, the larvae; according to a more accepted theory, the household Lares were also originally spirits of the tilled fields and only later invested with domestic functions. The lar familiaris, or guardian spirit of the household, was the center of family worship, and the word lar was often used by Roman writers to mean "home."

LETHE, in Greek mythology, the river of forgetfulness, situated in the underworld. The spirits of the dead drank from its waters to forget the sorrows of their earthly life before entering Elysium. When the Trojan prince Aeneas visited the world of the dead, he found a great number of souls wandering on the banks of the stream. His father, Anchises, with whom he was joyously reunited, told him that before these spirits could live again in the world above, they must drink of the river of oblivion to forget the happiness they had experienced in Elysium.

LOKI, in Norse mythology, the handsome giant who represented evil and was possessed of great knowledge and cunning. He was indirectly responsible for the death of Balder, god of light and joy. According to the Poetic Edda, a collection of Scandinavian myths, Loki and Hel, goddess of the underworld, will lead the forces of evil against the Aesir, or gods, in the titanic struggle of Ragnarok, the end of the world.

MANES, in Roman mythology, spirits of the dead, apparently hostile, and therefore euphemistically termed di manes, the "kindly ones." Sometimes the Manes were identified with di parentes, or "dead ancestors" living in the underworld, who came forth only on certain days, at which time propitiatory offerings were made to them.

MARDUK, in Babylonian religion, the supreme god. Originally, he was a god of thunderstorms. According to *Enuma elish*, an ancient epic poem of creation, Marduk defeated Tiamat and Kingu, the dragons of chaos, and thereby gained supreme power. Acknowledged as the creator of the universe and of humankind, the god of light and life, and the ruler of destinies, he rose to such eminence that he claimed 50 titles. Eventually, he was called simply Bel, meaning "Lord."

MARS, in Roman mythology, god of war, the son of Jupiter, king of the gods, and of his wife, Juno. One of the most important Roman deities, Mars was regarded as the father of the Roman people, because he was the father of Romulus, the legendary founder of Rome. Originally a god of the year, especially of the spring, Mars was identified by the Romans with the Greek god of war, Ares. The month of March was named for him.

MEMNON, in Greek mythology, king of Ethiopia, the son of the Trojan prince Tithonus and of Eos, goddess of the dawn. In the tenth year of the Trojan War, Memnon brought his army to the assistance of Troy. He fought bravely but was eventually killed by the Greek hero

Achilles. To comfort Memnon's mother, however, the god Zeus made him immortal. The two colossal statues of Amenhotep III near Thebes in Egypt were thought to be of Memnon.

MENTOR, in Greek mythology, elderly friend and counsellor of the hero Odysseus and tutor of his son Telemachus. In the *Odyssey* of Homer, the goddess Athena frequently assumes the form of Mentor when she appears to Odysseus or Telemachus. In modern English the tutor's name has become an eponym for a wise, trustworthy counsellor or teacher.

MERCURY, in Roman mythology, messenger of the gods, the son of the god Jupiter and of Maia, the daughter of the Titan Atlas. Mercury was also the god of merchants and of trading and shared many of the attributes of the Greek god Hermes. The worship of Mercury was introduced into Rome in 495 BC when a temple was dedicated to him near the Circus Maximus. His festival was celebrated on May 15.

MINERVA, in Roman mythology, goddess of wisdom, the daughter of Jupiter, king of the gods. The Roman counterpart of the Greek goddess Athena, Minerva sprang from the head of Jupiter, fully grown and in full armor. Fierce and warlike, she was the patron of warriors, the defender of the home and the state, and the embodiment of wisdom, purity, and reason. Minerva was also the patron of the arts, handicrafts, and trades. With her father and Juno, she was one of the three principal deities of the Roman state.

MINOS, in Greek mythology, legendary ruler of Crete. Minos was the son of Zeus, father of the gods, and of the princess Europa. From the city of Knossos he colonised many of the Aegean islands, and he was widely considered a just ruler. In the most famous story about Minos, he refused to sacrifice a certain bull. The god Poseidon punished him by making his wife Pasiphaë fall in love with the animal, and she subsequently gave birth to the Minotaur. According to Attic legend, Minos was a tyrant who took harsh measures to avenge the death of his son Androgeous at the hands of the Athenians. At stated intervals he exacted a tribute from Athens of seven youths and seven maidens to be sacrificed to the Minotaur. Minos eventually met his death in Sicily, and he then became one of the judges of the dead in the underworld.

MINOTAUR, in Greek mythology, monster with the head of a bull and the body of a man. It was the offspring of Pasiphaë, queen of Crete, and a snow-white bull the god Poseidon had sent to Pasiphaë's husband, King Minos. When Minos refused to sacrifice the beast, Poseidon made Pasiphaë fall in love with it. After she gave birth to the Minotaur, Minos ordered the architect and inventor Daedalus to build a labyrinth so intricate that escape from it without assistance would be impossible. Here the Minotaur was confined and fed with young human victims Minos forced Athens to send him as tribute. The Greek hero Theseus was determined to end the useless sacrifice and offered himself as one of the victims. When Theseus reached Crete, Minos's daughter Ariadne fell in love with him. She helped him escape by giving him a ball of thread, which he fastened to the door of the maze and unwound as he made his way through it. When he came upon the sleeping Minotaur, he beat the monster to death and then led the other sacrificial youths and maidens to safety by following the thread back to the entrance.

MNEMOSYNE, in Greek mythology, the goddess of memory. She and Zeus, father of the gods, were the parents of the nine Muses. Mnemosyne was one of the pre-Olympian Titans, who were the children of the god of the heavens, Uranus, and the goddess of the earth, Gaea.

MUSES, in Greek mythology, nine goddesses and daughters of the god Zeus and of Mnemosyne, the goddess of memory. The Muses presided over the arts and sciences and were believed to inspire all artists, especially poets, philosophers, and musicians. Calliope was the muse of epic poetry, Clio of history, Euterpe of lyric poetry, Melpomene of tragedy, Terpsichore of choral songs and the dance, Erato of love poetry, Polyhymnia of sacred poetry, Urania of astronomy, and Thalia of comedy. They were said to be the companions of the Graces and of Apollo, the god of music. They sat near the throne of Zeus, king of the gods, and sang of his greatness and of the origin of the world and its inhabitants and the glorious deeds of the great heroes.

NEMESIS, in Greek mythology, personification of divine justice and the vengeance of the gods, sometimes called the daughter of Night. She represented the righteous anger of the gods against the proud and haughty and against breakers of the law; she distributed good or bad fortune to all mortals. No one could escape her power.

NIKE, in Greek mythology, goddess of victory, daughter of the Titan Pallas and the river Styx. Nike fought with the god Zeus in his battle against the Titans, and in Greek art is sometimes represented as winged and carrying a wreath or palm of victory. The Nike of Samothráki, or Winged Victory (Louvre, Paris), is one of the finest pieces of Hellenistic sculpture.

NYMPHS, in Greek and Roman mythology, lesser divinities or spirits of nature, dwelling in groves and fountains, forests, meadows, streams, and the sea, represented as young and beautiful maidens, fond of music and dancing. The nymphs were distinguished according to the part of nature they personified, and included the Oceanids, or daughters of Oceanus, the ocean that flows around the earth; the Nereids, or daughters of the sea god Nereus, nymphs of the Mediterranean Sea; the Potameides, river nymphs; the Naiads, nymphs of springs and freshwater streams; the Oreads, nymphs of mountains and grottoes; and the Dryads, nymphs of the forests.

ORACLE, response delivered by a deity or supernatural being to a worshipper or inquirer; also, the place where the response was delivered. The responses were supposed to be given by divine inspiration and were manifested through the medium of human beings; through their effect on certain objects, as in the tinkling, at the ancient Greek town of Dodona, of a cauldron when hit by a chain impelled by the wind; or by the actions of sacred animals. Oracles date from the greatest antiquity. Among the ancient Egyptians all the temples were probably oracular. In later days one of the most renowned oracles was that of Amon, in the oasis of Siwah, Egypt. Oracles were used by the Hebrews, as in the consultation of the Urim and Thummin by the high priest. The oracles in Phoenicia were associated with the deities

Baalzebul and other Baalim. Oracles were also common throughout Babylonia and Chaldea. The most renowned Greek oracle was that of Apollo at Delphi. In Asia Minor the most celebrated was the one at Didyma, near Miletus.

ORPHISM, in classical religion, mystic cult of ancient Greece, believed to have been drawn from the writings of the legendary poet and musician Orpheus. Fragmentary poetic passages, including inscriptions on gold tablets found in the graves of Orphic followers from the 6th century BC, indicate that Orphism was based on a cosmogony that centered on the myth of the god Dionysus Zagreus, the son of the deities Zeus and Persephone. Furious because Zeus wished to make his son ruler of the universe, the jealous Titans dismembered and devoured the young god. Athena, goddess of wisdom, was able to rescue his heart, which she brought to Zeus, who swallowed it and gave birth to a new Dionysus. Zeus then punished the Titans by destroying them with his lightning and from their ashes created the human race. As a result, humans had a dual nature: the earthly body was the heritage of the earth-born Titans; the soul came from the divinity of Dionysus, whose remains had been mingled with that of the Titans.

OSIRIS, in Egyptian mythology, one of the principal deities. Originally the local god of Abydos and Busiris, Osiris, who represented the male productive force in nature, became identified with the setting sun. Thus he was regarded as the ruler of the realm of the dead in the mysterious region below the western horizon. Osiris was the brother and husband of Isis, goddess of the earth and moon, who represented the female productive force in nature. According to legend, Osiris, as king of Egypt, found his people plunged in barbarism and taught them law, agriculture, religion, and other blessings of civilisation. He was murdered by his evil brother, Set, who tore the body to pieces and scattered the fragments. Isis found and buried his scattered remains, however, and each burial place was thereafter revered as sacred ground. Their son Horus, sired by a temporarily regenerated Osiris, avenged his father's death by killing Set and then ascended the throne. Osiris lived on in the underworld as the ruler of the dead, but he was also, through Horus, regarded as the source of renewed life.

PANATHENAEA, oldest and most famous festival of Athens, celebrated in honour of Athena, patron goddess of the city. Ancient writings tell of a Lesser and Greater Panathenaea, the former held annually, the latter every fourth year. A patriotic as well as religious festival, the Panathenaea included processions, dances, sacrifices, poetry, recitations, and musical and athletic contests. One of these processions, a march by the people to the temple of Athena, is depicted on the frieze of the Parthenon.

PANDORA, in Greek mythology, first woman on earth, created by the god Hephaestus at the request of the god Zeus. Zeus wished to counteract the blessing of fire, which had been stolen from the gods by the Titan Prometheus and given to human beings. Endowed by the gods with every attribute of beauty and goodness, Pandora was sent to Epimetheus, who was happy to have her for his wife, although he had been warned by his brother Prometheus never to accept anything from Zeus. In bestowing their gifts on Pandora, the gods had given her a box, warning her never to open it. Her curiosity finally overcame her, however, and she opened the mysterious box, from which flew innumerable plagues for the body and sorrows for the mind. In terror, she tried to shut the box, but only Hope, the one good thing among many evils the box had contained, remained to comfort humanity in its misfortunes. In another legend, the box contained blessings that would have been preserved if Pandora had not allowed them to escape.

PEGASUS, in Greek mythology, winged horse, son of Poseidon, god of the sea, and the Gorgon Medusa. Pegasus sprang from Medusa's neck when she was killed by the hero Perseus. Shortly after its birth, the magic steed struck the ground on Mount Helicon, and on the spot a spring, later sacred to the Muses and believed to be a source for poetic inspiration, began to flow.

PERSEPHONE, in Greek mythology, daughter of Zeus, father of the gods, and of Demeter, goddess of the earth and of agriculture. Hades, god of the underworld, fell in love with Persephone and wished to marry her. Although Zeus gave his consent, Demeter was unwilling. Hades, therefore, seized the maiden as she was gathering flowers and carried her off to his realm. As Demeter wandered in search of her lost daughter, the earth grew desolate. All vegetation died, and famine devastated the land. Finally Zeus sent Hermes, the messenger of the gods, to bring Persephone back to her mother. Before Hades would let her go, he asked her to eat a pomegranate seed, the food of the dead. She was thus compelled to return to the underworld for one third of the year. As both the goddess of the dead and the goddess of the fertility of the earth, Persephone was a personification of the revival of nature in spring. The Eleusinian Mysteries were held in honour of her and her mother. Proserpine was the Latin counterpart of Persephone.

PHILEMON AND BAUCIS, in Roman mythology, peasant couple of Phrygia, remarkable for their mutual love. When Jupiter, father of the gods, and his messenger, Mercury, wandered through Phrygia in human form seeking food and lodging, they were turned away by all except the aged Philemon and his wife, Baucis, who hospitably entertained them. As a reward for their kindness, Jupiter saved them from a flood that he sent to punish the Phrygians for their cruelty and changed Philemon and Baucis's humble cottage into a temple. He also swore to grant them anything they might wish, but they asked only to be priest and priestess of his temple and to die at the same time. Jupiter fulfilled his promise, and in their extreme old age he transformed Philemon and Baucis into an oak and linden tree, which grew from one trunk so they would never be separated. This marvellous tree stood for many years before the temple and was honoured by the people.

PLEIADES, in Greek mythology, seven daughters of Atlas and of Pleione, the daughter of Oceanus. Their names were Electra, Maia, Taygete, Alcyone, Celaeno, Sterope, and Merope. According to some versions of the myth, they committed suicide from grief at the fate of their father, Atlas, or at the death of their sisters, the Hyades. Other versions made them the attendants of Artemis, goddess of wildlife and of hunting, who were pursued by the giant hunter Orion, but were rescued by the gods and changed into doves. After their death, or metamorphosis, they were transformed into stars, but are still pursued across the sky by the constellation Orion.

PLUTO, in Roman mythology, god of the dead, the husband of Proserpine. The Latin counterpart of the Greek god Hades, Pluto assisted his two brothers, Jupiter and Neptune, in overthrowing their father, Saturn. In dividing the world among them, Jupiter chose the earth

and the heavens as his realm, Neptune became the ruler of the sea, and Pluto received as his kingdom the lower world, in which he ruled over the shades of the dead. He was originally considered a fierce and unyielding god, deaf to prayers and unappeased by sacrifices. In later cults and popular belief the milder and more beneficent aspects of the god were stressed. Believed to be the bestower of the blessings hidden in the earth, such as mineral wealth and crops, Pluto was also known as Dis or Orcus, the giver of wealth.

POSEIDON, in Greek mythology, god of the sea. In art, Poseidon is represented as a bearded and majestic figure, holding a trident and often accompanied by a dolphin. Every two years the Isthmian Games, featuring horse and chariot racers, were held in his honour at Corinth. The Romans identified Poseidon with their god of the sea, Neptune.

PRIAPUS, in Greek mythology, god of fertility, protector of gardens and herds. He was the son of Aphrodite, goddess of love, and of Dionysus, god of wine, or, according to some accounts, of Hermes, messenger of the gods. He was usually represented as a grotesque individual with a huge phallus. The Romans set up crude images of Priapus in their gardens as scarecrows.

PROMETHEUS, in Greek mythology, one of the Titans, known as the friend and benefactor of humanity, the son of the Titan Iapetus by the sea nymph Clymene or the Titaness Themis. Prometheus and his brother Epimetheus were given the task of creating humanity and providing humans and all the animals on earth with the endowments they would need to survive. Epimetheus (whose name means afterthought) accordingly proceeded to bestow on the various animals gifts of courage, strength, swiftness, and feathers, fur, and other protective coverings. When it came time to create a being who was to be superior to all other living creatures, Epimetheus found he had been so reckless with his resources that he had nothing left to bestow. He was forced to ask his brother's help, and Prometheus (whose name means forethought) took over the task of creation. To make humans superior to the animals, he fashioned them in nobler form and enabled them to walk upright. He then went up to heaven and lit a torch with fire from the sun. The gift of fire that Prometheus bestowed upon humanity was more valuable than any of the gifts the animals had received. Because of his actions Prometheus incurred the wrath of the god Zeus. Not only did he steal the fire he gave to humans, but he also tricked the gods so that they should get the worst parts of any animal sacrificed to them, and human beings the best. In one pile, Prometheus arranged the edible parts of an ox in a hide and disguised them with a covering of entrails. In the other, he placed the bones, which he covered with fat. Zeus, asked to choose between the two, took the fat and was very angry when he discovered that it covered a pile of bones. Thereafter, only fat and bones were sacrificed to the gods; the good meat was kept for mortals. For Prometheus's transgressions, Zeus had him chained to a rock in the Caucasus, where he was constantly preyed upon by an eagle. Finally he was freed by the hero Hercules, who slew the eagle.

PROTEUS, in Greek mythology, son of Poseidon, god of the sea, or his attendant and the keeper of his seals. Proteus knew all things past, present, and future but was able to change his shape at will to avoid the necessity of prophesying.

PTAH, in ancient Egyptian mythology, one of the greatest of gods. Ancient inscriptions describe him as "creator of the earth, father of the gods and all the being of this earth, father of beginnings." He was regarded as the patron of metalworkers and artisans and as a mighty healer. He is usually represented as a mummy bearing the symbols of life, power, and stability. The main center of his worship was in Memphis.

QUIRINUS, in early Roman mythology, god of war worshipped by the Sabines.

RA or **RE**, in ancient Egyptian mythology, sun god depicted with a human body and the head of a hawk. Ra was usually considered the creator and controller of the universe, his chief symbols being the sun disk and the obelisk. Originally a local cult, the worship of Ra first became widespread during the Old Kingdom in Egypt. The chief temple of Ra was at the city of Heliopolis, which became an important center when the cult was adopted as a state religion. Ra later became associated with other important deities, particularly Amon and Horus.

RHEA, in Greek mythology, mother of the gods, a Titan, the daughter of Uranus and Gaea, Heaven and Earth, and the sister and wife of the Titan Cronus. For many ages, Cronus and Rhea ruled the universe. Cronus, having been warned that one of their children was destined to seize his throne, tried to avert this fate by swallowing his offspring as soon as they were born. After the birth of her sixth child, the god Zeus, Rhea outwitted her husband by giving him a stone wrapped in swaddling clothes, which he swallowed, thinking it was the baby. In the meantime, she had hidden the child in Crete. Later, when Zeus was grown, he forced his father to disgorge the stone, along with the five other children who had been born to Rhea: Poseidon, god of the sea; Hades, god of the dead; Demeter, goddess of the earth; Hestia, goddess of the hearth; and Hera, goddess of marriage, who became the wife of Zeus. In Roman mythology, Rhea was identified with Cybele, the great mother of the gods.

SATURN, in Roman mythology, ancient god of agriculture. In later legends he was identified with the Greek god Cronus, who, after having been dethroned by his son Zeus (in Roman mythology, Jupiter), fled to Italy, where he ruled during the Golden Age, a time of perfect peace and happiness. Beginning on December 17 of each year, during the festival known as the Saturnalia, the Golden Age was restored for seven days. All business stopped and executions and military operations were postponed. It was a period of goodwill, devoted to banquets and the exchange of visits and gifts. A special feature of the festival was the freedom given to slaves, who during this time had first place at the family table and were served by their masters. Saturn was the husband of Ops, goddess of plenty. Besides Jupiter, who was ruler of the gods, Saturn's children also included Juno, goddess of marriage; Neptune, god of the sea; Pluto, god of the dead; and Ceres, goddess of the grain. In art Saturn is usually shown bearded, carrying a sickle or an ear of corn.

SATYRS, in Greek mythology, deities of the woods and mountains, with horns, tails, and, sometimes, the legs of a goat. The satyrs were the companions of Dionysus, god of wine, and spent their time pursuing nymphs, drinking wine, dancing, and playing the syrinx, flute, or bagpipes.

SERAPIS, also Sarapis, in Greek and Egyptian mythology, a deity, variously associated with Osiris, Hermes, and Hades, introduced in the 3d century BC as a state god for both Greeks and Egyptians. Serapis was believed by Egyptians to be a human manifestation of Apis, a sacred dead bull that symbolised Osiris; in Greek mythology, Serapis was represented as a god of fertility and medicine and the ruler of the dead in Tartarus. The worship of Serapis spread throughout the ancient world and the Roman Empire.

SPHINX, in Greek mythology, monster with the head and breasts of a woman, the body of a lion, and the wings of a bird. Lying crouched on a rock, she accosted all who were about to enter the city of Thebes by asking them a riddle, "What is it that has four feet in the morning, two at noon, and three at night?" If they could not solve the riddle, she killed them. When the hero Oedipus solved the riddle by answering, "Man, who crawls on four limbs as a baby, walks upright on two as an adult, and walks with the aid of a stick in old age," the sphinx killed herself. For ridding them of this terrible monster, the Thebans made Oedipus their king. In ancient Egypt, sphinxes were statues representing deities, with the body of a lion and the head of some other animal or of man, frequently a likeness of the king. The most famous of all Egyptian sphinxes is the Great Sphinx of Giza, near the pyramids.

TANTALUS, in Greek mythology, king of Lydia and son of Zeus, ruler of the gods. Tantalus was honoured above all other mortals by the gods. He ate at their table on Olympus, and once they even came to dine at his palace. To test their omniscience, Tantalus killed his only son, Pelops, boiled him in a cauldron, and served him at the banquet. The gods, however, realised the nature of the food. They restored Pelops to life and devised a terrible punishment for Tantalus. He was hung forever from a tree in Tartarus and afflicted with tormenting thirst and hunger. Under him was a pool of water, but when he stooped to drink, the pool would sink from sight. The tree above him was laden with pears, apples, figs, ripe olives, and pomegranates, but when he reached for them the wind blew the laden branches away. The word *tantalise* is derived from this story.

TARTARUS, in Greek mythology, the lowest region of the underworld. According to Hesiod and Vergil, Tartarus is as far below Hades as the earth is below the heavens and is closed in by iron gates. In some accounts Zeus, the father of the gods, after leading the gods to victory over the Titans, banished his father, Cronus, and the other Titans to Tartarus. The name Tartarus was later employed sometimes as a synonym for Hades, or the underworld in general, but more frequently for the place of damnation where the wicked were punished after death. Such legendary sinners as Ixion, king of the Lapiths, Sisyphus, king of Corinth, and Tantalus, a mortal son of Zeus, were placed in Tartarus.

THEMIS, in Greek mythology, one of the Titans, the daughter of Uranus and Gaea, Heaven and Earth, and the mother of the three Fates and the Seasons. The goddess of divine justice and law, Themis was the constant companion of the god Zeus and sat beside him on Olympus. In ancient art she is represented holding aloft a pair of scales on which she weighs the claims of opposing parties.

THOR, in Norse mythology, the god of thunder, eldest son of Odin, ruler of the gods, and Lord, the earth goddess. Thor was the strongest of the Aesir, the chief gods, whom he helped protect from their enemies, the giants. He had a magic hammer, which he threw with the aid of iron gloves and which always returned to him. Thunder was supposed to be the sound of the rolling of his chariot. Thursday is named after Thor.

TITANS, in Greek mythology, 12 children of Uranus and Gaea, Heaven and Earth, and some of the children of the 12. Often called the Elder Gods, they were for many ages the supreme rulers of the universe and were of enormous size and incredibly strong. Cronus, the most important of the Titans, ruled the universe until he was dethroned by his son Zeus, who seized power for himself. The other important Titans were Oceanus, the river that flowed around the earth; Tethys, his wife; Mnemosyne, the goddess of memory; Themis, the goddess of divine justice; Hyperion, the father of the sun, the moon, and the dawn; Iapetus, the father of Prometheus, who created mortals; and Atlas, who carried the world on his shoulders. Of all the Titans only Prometheus and Oceanus sided with Zeus against Cronus. As a result, they were honoured and the others were bound in Tartarus. Eventually, however, Zeus was reconciled with the Titans, and Cronus was made ruler of the Golden Age.

TRIPTOLEMUS, in Greek mythology, the original priest of the corn goddess Demeter and founder of the Eleusinian Mysteries celebrated in Demeter's honour. The son of King Celeus of Eleusis, Triptolemus herded his father's cattle. One day he observed the daughter of Demeter, Persephone, being carried off in the chariot of her abductor, Hades, god of the underworld. Persephone was restored to her mother, and Demeter gave Triptolemus the wooden plow and seed corn, and then sent him to instruct mortals in the art of agriculture. She also taught him the rites that became the most famous of all Greek religious festivals.

UNICORN, fabled beast, pure white in colour, having the head and legs of a horse and a long, twisted horn set in the middle of its forehead. Symbolic of holiness and chastity, the unicorn was prominent in tapestries of the Middle Ages. It has been widely used in heraldic signs.

URANUS, in Greek mythology, the god of the heavens and husband of Gaea, the goddess of the earth. Uranus was the father of the Titans, the Cyclopes, and the 100-headed giants. The Titans, led by their ruler, Cronus, dethroned and mutilated Uranus, and from the blood that fell upon the earth sprang the three Erinyes, or Furies, who avenge crimes of patricide and perjury. Although Uranus may have been worshipped as a god by earlier inhabitants of Greece, he was never an object of worship by the Greeks of the historical period.

VENUS, in Roman mythology, originally a goddess of gardens and fields but later identified with Aphrodite, the Greek goddess of love and beauty. In imperial times she was worshipped under several aspects. As Venus Genetrix, she was worshipped as the mother of the hero Aeneas, the founder of the Roman people; as Venus Felix, the bringer of good fortune; as Venus Victrix, the bringer of victory; and as Venus Verticordia, the protector of feminine chastity. Venus was the wife of Vulcan, god of metalwork, but she was often unfaithful to him. Among her many lovers were Mars, the god of war; the handsome shepherd Adonis; and Anchises, the father of Aeneas. Venus was also the mother of Cupid, god of love.

VESTA, in Roman mythology, the goddess of the hearth, worshipped by Roman families as a household deity. The most important public shrine to Vesta was her round temple in the Forum at Rome, where her fire was said to have been brought from Troy by Aeneas, the legendary founder of Rome. The shrine was symbolic of the safety of the city and was watched continually by six vestal virgins, priestesses who kept the fire burning and who served for terms of 30 years according to severe rules. In early June of each year a festival honouring Vesta, called Vestalia, was held. In form the goddess was associated with the flames of her fire. Her Greek counterpart was Hestia.

ZEUS, in Greek mythology, the god of the sky and ruler of the Olympian gods. Zeus corresponds to the Roman god Jupiter. Zeus was considered, according to Homer, the father of the gods and of mortals. He did not create either gods or mortals; he was their father in the sense of being the protector and ruler both of the Olympian family and of the human race. He was lord of the sky, the rain god, and the cloud gatherer, who wielded the terrible thunderbolt. His breastplate was the aegis, his bird the eagle, his tree the oak. Zeus presided over the gods on Mount Olympus in Thessaly. His principal shrines were at Dodona, in Epirus, the land of the oak trees and the most ancient shrine, famous for its oracle, and at Olympia, where the Olympian Games were celebrated in his honour every fourth year. The Nemean games, held at Nemea, northwest of Argos, were also dedicated to Zeus. Beginning with the writings of the Greek poet Homer, Zeus is pictured in two very different ways. He is represented as the god of justice and mercy, the protector of the weak, and the punisher of the wicked. As husband to his sister Hera, he is the father of Ares, the god of war; Hebe, the goddess of youth; Hephaestus, the god of fire; and Eileithyia, the goddess of childbirth. At the same time, Zeus is described as falling in love with one woman after another and resorting to all kinds of tricks to hide his infidelity from his wife. Stories of his escapades were numerous in ancient mythology, and many of his offspring were a result of his love affairs with both goddesses and mortal women. It is believed that, with the development of a sense of ethics in Greek life, the idea of a lecherous, sometimes ridiculous father god became distasteful, so later legends present Zeus in a more exalted light.

NIMROD

OR

NINUS

(as he liked to be called)

A might hunter before the Lord (Gen 10:9)

Nimrod was a leopard tamer, and wore a leopard skin as his distinctive dress. He was known as the “Subduer of the Spotted one” and later he was called “the spotted one” himself. As a youth he was often depicted as holding a cup, called khus, denoting him as the son of Cush. Another hieroglyphic connection with Bacchus (Nimrod), is the Ivy branch.

EGYPT

Bar.

Harpocrates, the infant divinity, whose sacred symbol was the heart.

Horus, god of day, depicted as piercing the head of a snake with a spear.

Khons or Khonso, the god of the chase, whose name comes from a word that signifies “to chase”.

Osiris, god of the sun, force of nature, ruler of the dead. Osiris represented the male productive force in nature, and became identified with the setting sun.

Sarapis, combine the names Osiris and Apis to get this. Another name for Osiris. See also Greek, Serapis.

Seb, whose symbol was the goose, part of the Egyptian Trinity.

GREEK

Adonis, beautiful youth beloved by the goddesses Aphrodite and Persephone. He was slain by a wild boar while hunting.

Apollo, god of light and song, drove a chariot of the sun across the skies. He is also represented as slaying the serpent Pytho.

Ares, god of war.

Atlas, he fought with the Titans in the war against the Olympic deities. As punishment, he was condemned to bear forever on his back the earth and the heavens on his shoulders the great pillar that separates them.

Bacchus, in Greek and Roman mythology, god of wine, identified with Dionysus, the Greek god of wine, and Liber, the Roman god of wine. The distinguishing mark of his priests was either the shaving of the crown or the whole of the head.

Bassareus, meaning 'the houser of grapes or the vintage gatherer' and 'The Encompasser with a wall'.

Cronus or Kronos, one of the 12 Titans, who deposed his father and became ruler. He is identified with the Roman god Saturn.

Dionysus, god of wine, fertility, and vegetation. After the 5th century BC, Dionysus was known to the Greeks as Bacchus.

Eros, god of love.

Hades, god of the underworld.

Hephaestus, god of fire.

Heracles, whose Roman name was Hercules, is said to have strangled serpents while yet in his cradle.

Hermes, messenger of the gods.

Kissos, the Greek name for the Ivy plant.

Mithra, was worshipped as the mediator.

Nebrod, the Greek name for Nimrod, whose symbol was the spotted fawn.

Orpheus, legendary poet and musician. Orphism, in classical religion, mystic cult of ancient Greece, believed to have been drawn from his writings.

Poseidon, god of the sea.

Serapis, also Sarapis, in Greek and Egyptian mythology, a deity, variously associated with Osiris, Hermes, and Hades. Serapis was believed by Egyptians to be a human manifestation of Apis, a sacred bull that symbolised Osiris; in Greek mythology, Serapis was represented as a god of fertility and medicine and the ruler of the dead in Tararus.

Zeus, god of the sky and ruler of the Olympian gods. Zeus corresponds to the Roman god Jupiter.

ROMAN

Cupid, son of Venus, goddess of love. His counterpart in Greek is Eros, god of love.

Epidaurus snake, the serpent that represented the sun-divinity incarnate, in other words, the 'serpent of fire'.

Janus, the god of gods, who bore one key, Cybele the other, which opened the gates of the invisible world. He also bore a club or hammer. Quite often he is depicted as having two heads facing in opposite directions, which represented Nimrod and Cush.

Jupiter-fer or Jupiter (or Jove), the ruler of the gods, the son of the god Saturn, whom he overthrew. Originally the god of the sky and king of heaven, Jupiter was worshipped as god of rain, thunder, and lightning. The Romans identified Jupiter with Zeus, the supreme god of the Greeks.

Liber, god of wine.

Mars, god of war, king of the gods, and of his wife, Juno. He is identified with the Greek god of war, Ares. Mars in the Roman form of the Chaldea name 'Mar' or 'Mavor,' 'the rebel.'

Mercury, the messenger of the gods.

Neptune, god of the sea.

Pluto, god of the dead. His Greek counterpart was Hades.

Saturn, god of agriculture. He identified with the Greek god Cronus, and was the husband of Ops, goddess of plenty.

Vulcan, god of fire.

INDIA

Agni, god of fire.

Crishna, the incarnation of Vishnu, who slayed the serpent Calyia.

Isvara, the son of Isi.

Siva, the husband of Kali.

Shiva.

Souro, 'the seed'.

Surya, god of the sun.

ASIA

Deoius, the son of Cybele.

BABYLON

Baal, signifies 'the lord'.

Beel-samen, 'lord of heaven', 'lord of oil', the sun god.

Belus, meaning 'the Lord'. This name Nimrod inherited from his father.

El-Bar, 'god the son'.

Momis or Moumis, in Chaldea signified 'the spotted one'.

PHOENICIAN AND ASSYRIAN

Tammuz.

ANGLO-SAXON

Zernebogus, Zer-Nebo-gus in almost pure Chaldea and denotes 'The seed of the prophet Cush.'

LATIN

Consus, the god of horse races and of the hidden counsels, or the concealer of secrets. In one aspect he is identified with Neptune.

PERSIA

Tahmurs, 'who built Babylon'.

Zoroaster, 'the seed of fire'.

CHINA

Wat-yune.

SCANDINAVIA AND ICELAND

Balder.

Thor, god of thunder, is said to have bruised the head of the great serpent with his mace.

CANNAN

Moloch, the god of barbarity and blood, a god to whom children were sacrificed.

MODERN CHALDEA

Sheikh Shems, or the sun, and the Sheika Adi, or 'prince of eternity'.

KOORDISTAN

Sheikh Shems, sun god.

PHILISTINE

Dagon, meaning 'the merman', the fish-god.

AFRICA

Fetiche, who is represented in the form of a crosier or pastoral staff.

THE ILLEGITIMATE CHILD OF SEMIRAMIS

This child, according to mystic legends made up by Semiramis, was the new incarnation of Nimrod, to avenge his death on his murderers. This posthumous child, is identified with his father, and inheriting all his father's glory, yet possessing more of his mother's complexion, came to be the favourite type of the Madonna's divine son. He was called by almost all the names of the promised Messiah as well as those of his alleged father, Nimrod.

EGYPT

Horus, part of the Egyptian Trinity.

GREEK

Adon or Adonis.

Bacchus.

ROMAN

Oannes or Joannes.

Saturn, god of agriculture, later identified with Greek god Cronus.

INDIA

Souro, 'the seed'.

Vishnu, the preserver or Saviour of men.

MITHRAS

Baal-berish - lord of the covenant.

The Mediator.

ARABIA

Meni or Manai, the lord moon, and signifies 'the numberer'.

SAXON

Mane or Mani, the name given to the 'man of the moon' in the 'Edda' and in the 'Voluspa'.

HINDOO

Surya, or the Sun, is represented as being incarnate, and born for the purpose of subduing the enemies of the gods.

SCANDINAVIA

Odin.

MEXICO

Wodan.

ASSYRIA

Bar, 'the son' and 'the corn'.

SEMIRAMIS

The wife of Nimrod.

The worship of the goddess-mother with the child in her arms continued to be observed in Egypt till Christianity entered. Instead of the Babylonian goddess being cast out, in too many cases her name only was changed. She was called the Virgin Mary, and, with her child, was worshipped with the same idolatrous feeling by professing Christians, as formerly by open and avowed Pagans. This Babylonian queen of heaven is now said to be the third person of the godhead, the holy spirit. She is also worshipped as the incarnation of the spirit of god under the name of the 'Dove', with whom she was identified. Until Raphael somewhat departed from the beaten track, there was nothing either Jewish or Italian in the Romish Madonna. In almost all lands the great goddess has been described with golden or yellow hair, blue eyes and fair skin, which really stands from the Jewish dark-eyed beauties, with raven locks. The disk or circle of light that frequently encompasses the head is a well known symbol of the Sun-divinity, and figured largely in the symbolism of the East and Pagan Rome as well as the modern day Madonna's.

EGYPT

Athor, 'the habitation of god'.

Isis, goddess of fertility and motherhood. According to the Egyptian belief, she was the sister-wife of Osiris, judge of the dead, and mother of Horus, god of day. She was part of the Egyptian Trinity.

Maut, the goddess-mother, who was adorned in such a way as to identify her with Rhea, the great goddess-mother of Chaldea.

GREEK

Aphrodite, the 'wrath-subduer', goddess of love and beauty and the counterpart of the Roman Venus.

Ariadne, wife of Bacchus, was yellow-haired.

Artemis, goddess of wild nature. She was one of the principal goddesses, counterpart of the Roman goddess Diana. Artemis is also identified with the goddesses Selene and Hecate.

Astarte, Greek and Roman name of the supreme female divinity of the Phoenician nations, the goddess of love and fruitfulness. She is mentioned in the Old Testament in the plural form Ashtaroth. She is identified with various Greek goddesses: Selene, goddess of the moon; Artemis, goddess of wild nature; and Aphrodite, goddess of love and beauty. Her Babylonian and Assyrian counterpart was Ishtar.

Ceres, the great mother, with the babe at her breast.

Diana, of the Ephesians, was depicted as a virgin, but had the attributes of the mother of the gods. Her constant symbol is the bee. The chief priest himself was called Essen, or the king-bee.

Hestia, virgin goddess of the hearth. Hestia was worshipped as Vesta in Rome.

Irene, the goddess of peace, was worshipped as the mother, with the boy Plutus in her arms.

Persephone, was the Greek counterpart of the Latin Proserpine. The Eleusinian Mysteries were held in honour of her and her mother.

Rhea, mother of the gods, a Titan, and sister and wife of the Titan Cronus. In Roman mythology, Rhea was identified with Cybele, the great mother of the gods.

Selene, goddess of the moon.

ROMAN

Amarusia, 'the mother of gracious acceptance', worshipped in Athens.

Bellona, goddess of war. She is often identified with the Greek war goddess Enyo.

Bona Dea, 'The good goddess'.

Cybele, Latin name of the goddess native to Phrygia in Asia Minor and known to the Greeks as Rhea, the wife of the Titan Cronus and mother of the Olympian gods. Cybele was the goddess of nature, fertility, and of fortifications, who was worshipped in Rome as the Great Mother of the Gods. She bore a key like Janus, which opened the gates of the invisible world.

Europa, whom Jupiter carried away in the form of a bull, is called 'the yellow-haired Europa'.

Fortuna, worshipped as the mother of Jupiter-*puer*, or Jupiter, the boy.

Gaea or Ge, the personification of mother earth, the mother of the gods and men.

Juno, (means the Dove) queen of the gods, the wife and sister of the god Jupiter. Juno is the Latin counterpart of the Greek queen of the gods, Hera. She was also worshipped as the incarnation of the holy spirit as a dove.

Libera, wife of Liber. Libera was also one of the names of Proserpine.

Minerva, goddess of wisdom, the counterpart of the Greek goddess Athena. Homer called her 'the blue-eyed Minerva' and by Ovid 'the yellow-haired'.

Proserpine, whose Greek counterpart was Persephone.

Ops, (means the flutterer) goddess of plenty, wife of Saturn, god of agriculture.

Venus, originally a goddess of gardens and fields but later identified with Aphrodite, the Greek goddess of love and beauty. One of the institutions of her followers was the prostitution of virgins.

Vesta, goddess of the hearth. Vestal Virgins were selected by the High Priest, who were to guard and annually renew the sacred fire of Vesta's public shrine. They were virgins of 6 to 10 years of age, and served for 30 years.

INDIA

Isi or Parvati, the mother of Iswara.

Kali, goddess of destruction.

Sacti, 'Tabernacle'.

Sati.

Laksahmi, 'mother of the universe', the consort of Vishnu.

TIBET, CHINA & JAPAN

Ma Tsoops, mother goddess, queen of heaven, worshipped by seafaring people in the province of Fuh-kien.

Shing Moo, the holy mother in China being represented with a child in her arms, and a glory around her, exactly as if a Roman Catholic artist had been employed to set up a Madonna.

Virgo Deipara, 'the virgin mother of god'.

Kuanyin, Chinese goddess of mercy.

BABYLON

Beltis, meaning 'my lady', queen of heaven.

Dione, the heavenly dove.

Ishtar, the chief goddess of the Babylonians and the Assyrians and the counter part of Astarte, a Phoenician goddess.

Melkat-ashemin, 'queen of heaven', the moon goddess.

Mylitta, that is 'The mediatrix'. Mylitta is the same as Melitta, the feminine of Melitz, 'a mediator'. She is identified with the Roman goddess Venus, goddess of gardens and fields, and Greek goddess Astarte, goddess of love and fruitfulness. One of the institutions of her followers was the prostitution of virgins.

Sacca, 'the tabernacle'.

Semele, which means 'the image'.

SYRIA

Semeion, who's image was richly habited and had a golden dove on her head.

Atergatis, the fish goddess who had long yellow hair. The mermaid that figures so much in the romantic tales of the north, was borrowed from the story of Atergatis.

SCANDINAVIA

The Ellewoman, the Scandinavian name for mermaid, is often depicted as sitting on the surface of the waters, and combing her long golden hair with a golden comb.

BRITAIN

Ceridwen, the great mother, with the babe at her breast, which took the form of a black-crested hen.

ARABIA

Urania, wife of Bacchus, the queen of heaven, also the 'heavenly dove'.

PHILISTINE

Derketo, means 'the mermaid'.

ADAM

First Man on this Earth.

BABYLON

E-anush, as 'principium deorum' - 'The fountains and father of the gods', is fallen Adam.

EGYPT

Phanesh, 'the man', Egyptian form of Eanush.

ROMAN

Saturn, the father of gods and men.

NOAH

9th

Generation

from

Adam

Great Grandfather of Nimrod

EGYPT

Osiris, when he was shut up in his coffin and set afloat on the Nile river on 17th day of the month Athyr for twelve months. See Genesis 7:10-12; 8:3-6, 14 & 15 for the equivalent story.

ROMAN

Saturn, 'the hidden one', on account on his having been 'hidden' in the ark.

Oannes or Janus, 'man of the sea'.

BABYLON

Diphues, meaning 'twice born', because he had lived in two worlds, both before and after the flood. He was represented as a god with two heads looking in opposite directions, the one old, and the other young.

INDIA

Vishnu, 'the preserver', who is celebrated as having miraculously preserved one righteous family at the time when the world was drowned. Vishnu is just the Sanscrit form of the Chaldea 'Ish-nuh', 'the man Noah', or the 'man of rest'.

Indra, 'king of the gods', god of rain.

CUSH

Father of Nimrod.

BABYLON

Baal-aberin, 'lord of the mighty ones'.

Baal-abirin, 'the winged one'.

Baal, 'the lord'.

Bel or Belus.

Chaos, (Chaldaic pronunciation of Chus or Cush) god of confusion.

Hercules, the Assyrian Hercules is depicted without any weapon at all, attacking a bull. Upon killing it he placed the horns on his head and then attacked a lion.

Nebo. (Isaiah 46:1)

EGYPTIAN

Hermes, is the Egyptian synonym for the 'son of Ham'. His well known title is 'the interpreter of the gods'.

ROMAN

Mercury, messenger of the gods and god of merchants and of trading and shared many of the attributes of the Greek god Hermes.

Vulcan, god of fire, and the father of the gods. His symbol was the hammer.

Janus, whom the ancients called Chaos, whose symbol was the club. He was often depicted as having two heads facing in opposite directions, representing Cush and Nimrod.

GREEK

Hephaesus, (Hephaits, Hebrew word from Gen 11:1, which in Greek is Hephazit, the origin of this name) god of fire and metalwork, often identified with the Roman god of fire, Vulcan.

SHEM

One of Noah's sons.

EGYPT

Hercules, not the Greek or Roman one, but the truly primitive one, who was known in Egypt as having, 'by the power of the gods' (i.e. by the Spirit) fought against and over come the Giants (Nimrod and his party). Later this hero for truth and God, was adapted to Nimrod, whom pagans worshipped as the grand deliverer or messiah.

Sem, one of the names of the primitive Hercules.

Typho, whose Greek counterpart was Python.

GREEK

Python.

CELTS

Hercules Ogmios, which in chaldee is 'Hercules the Lamentor'. Due to the fact that after the flood man's life span was drastically shortened, Shem or Hercules Ogmios outlived no less than seven generations of his lineal descendants.

EVE

First Woman on this Earth.

GREEK

Ge or Gaea, the original mother of the gods (Genesis 3:5), the mother of mankind. This name was later applied to Semiramis.

ROMAN

Rhea, meaning 'the gazer' (Genesis 3:6). This name was later applied to Semiramis.

Part 4

Pagan festivals and forms of worship still prevalent today in Christianity.

The information for this study has been taken from 'The Two Babylons' by Rev. Alexander Hislop, and from several encyclopedias.

In this part of the study I have collected information about certain doctrines and beliefs which are generally classed as Christian, as well as information about pagan religions which show where some of the so called Christian beliefs came from. After each topic, the heading of which is in capital letters, I have written a comment which is in italics.

ABSOLUTION, term in Christian theology, most often used to refer to sacramental absolution, the judicial act in the sacrament of penance, by which the priest, as the minister of God, grants to confessing penitents forgiveness of their sins. In the Roman Catholic and Orthodox churches, the practice is based on John 20:22-23. To be effective, absolution supposes a true contrition for sin and a firm purpose of amendment on the part of the penitent. Absolution is also a part of the Anglican ritual, but penance is not considered one of the sacraments instituted by Christ. Most Protestant denominations do not regard penance as a sacrament and therefore do not acknowledge the necessity for sacramental absolution. They recognise a broader interpretation of absolution, that is, the remission of the sins of a repentant sinner. They believe this remission is achieved, not by the mediating judicial act of a minister or priest, but only through the direct acknowledgment of transgressions by the penitent to God and humble entreaty for his forgiveness. Although the term absolution is confined to Christian theology, the practice of penitently beseeching a deity's forgiveness for individual offences is common to almost all religions.

In 1 John 1:9,10; 2:1-3 we are told that if we sin we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ who will cleanse us from all unrighteousness, IF we confess our sins to HIM. There is only one mediator between God and all mankind, the man Christ Jesus (1 Timothy 2:5), and no man cometh to the Father, but by Jesus Christ(John 14:6). Jeremiah 17:5, 7 tells us that blessed is the man that trusteth in the Lord, but cursed is the man that trusteth in man.

ALL SAINTS' DAY, also Allhallows or Hallowmas, festival celebrated on November 1 in the Roman Catholic and Anglican churches in honour of God and all his saints, known and unknown. It became established as a church festival early in the 7th century when the Pantheon in Rome was consecrated as the Church of the Blessed Virgin and All Martyrs. November 1 may have been chosen because it was the day of one of the four great festivals of the pagan nations of the north, and **it was church policy to supplant pagan with Christian observances.**

There is nothing in the Bible that says we should worship or venerate saints, but this practice is prevalent throughout all paganism. The pagans had patron saints for every occasion, house, city, the elements, trades and professions, along with many other things. Today we find that so called Christians have patron saints for countries, trades and professions and diseases. Is there really any difference? No! Only that now days they are called names like St Peter, St Andrew, St Denis, St George, St Nicholas, St Patrick, St James, etc, etc. instead of names like Bacchus god of wine, Astarte goddess of love and fruitfulness, Aphrodite goddess of love and beauty, etc. These are all humans which have sinned and come short of the glory of God (Romans 3:23) and need Christ's blood to justify them to fit them for heaven (Romans 3:24). These people have been put up on a pedestal and made, more of less, into gods.

ALL SOULS' DAY, in the Roman Catholic church, a festival falling on November 2, the object of which is, by prayers and almsgiving, to assist souls in purgatory. First instituted in the monasteries of Cluny, France, in 998, the observance soon became general, without any ordinance at large on the subject. Among European peasants, All Souls' Day is a time for reviving many pre-Christian folk customs.

When people become Christians, they are supposed to give up the old paganism and start a new life in Jesus Christ, but here we see that lots of people try to combine the two. This not only drags Christianity down into paganism, but is blaspheme against God as He is not truly being served. Praying for the dead can be traced in every religious system except the Bible. Paganism leaves hope after death for sinners, who, at the time of their departure, were consciously unfit for the abodes of the blest, and those who are left behind are supposed to not only pray for them but give large amounts of money to the Church for these 'souls that have not quite made it'. But the Bible tells us that 'the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin' (1 John 1:7).

AMULET, any object worn as a charm. An amulet is most often a stone, or piece of metal, with either an inscription or figures engraved on it. Usually suspended from the neck, it is worn as a guard against sickness or witchcraft. The ancient Egyptians wore amulets, sometimes in the form of necklaces. Among the Greeks, such a protective charm was called phylakterion. The use of amulets was inherited by the Christian church, the usual inscription on them being ichthys (the Greek word for "fish"), because it contained the initials of the Greek words for Jesus Christ, Son of God, Saviour. Among Gnostic sects, abraxas stones, gems with the Greek word abraxas engraved on them, were often used. Amulets became so common among Christians that, in the 4th century, the clergy were forbidden to make or sell them on pain of deprivation of holy orders; in 721 the wearing of amulets was solemnly condemned by the church. With the spread of Arabian astronomy, the astrological amulet, or talisman, became increasingly popular. Throughout the Middle East today, the practice of wearing amulets is almost universal.

Amulets are obviously a pagan charm which has been accepted by 'Christians'. It is interesting to note the usual inscription on them is the Greek word for fish. One of the names for Nimrod was Dagon, the fish god.

ANTHROPOMORPHISM, attribution of human form or qualities to that which is not human. Specifically, anthropomorphism is the depiction of God in a human image, with human bodily form and emotions, such as jealousy, wrath, or love. In art and literature, anthropomorphism is the depiction of natural objects, such as animals or plants, as talking, reasoning, sentient, human like beings.

When this is done with animals, plants, trees, and inanimate objects, it can be called amalgamation. This was the base crime that the antediluvians committed, for which God sent the flood was sent to destroy them.

ASSUMPTION OF THE VIRGIN, in the Roman Catholic church and the Orthodox church, the doctrine that after her death the body of Mary, the mother of Christ, was taken into heaven and reunited with her soul. Defined as an article of faith by Pope Pius XII in 1950, the assumption was first commemorated as the Feast of the Dormition (falling asleep) of Mary in the 6th century; this feast later developed into the Feast of the Assumption, now celebrated in the Roman Catholic church on August 15.

There is no shred of evidence for this doctrine in the Scripture. But, we do find evidence of it in the ancient Babylonian system. There it is taught that Bacchus went down to hell, rescued his mother from the infernal powers, and carried her with him in triumph to heaven. Now, when the mother (who represented Semiramis) of the Pagan Messiah (Bacchus who represented Nimrod), came to be celebrated as been thus 'assumed,' then it was that, under the name of the 'Dove,' she was worshipped as the Incarnation of the Spirit of God, with whom she was identified. The Chinese festival, founded on a similar legend, and celebrated with lanterns and chandeliers, is also celebrated in the month of August.

BABYLONIAN RELIGION. Temple services were generally conducted in open courts containing fountains for ablution and altars for sacrifices. The cella, or inner part of the temple, in which the statue of the deity stood on a pedestal in a special niche, was the holy of holies, and only the high priest and other privileged members of the clergy and court were permitted to enter it. Sacrifices, which were offered daily, consisted of animal and vegetable foods, libations of water, wine, and beer, and the burning of incense. Numerous annual and monthly festivals were held, including a feast to celebrate the new moon. The most important festival of all was the celebration of the new year at the spring equinox; it was known as the Akitu festival because some of its more esoteric ritual was enacted in the Akitu, Marduk's shrine outside of Babylon. The festival lasted 11 days and included such rites as purification, sacrifice, propitiation, penance, and absolution, but it also involved colourful processions. For the Babylonians, death was indeed the consuming dread and a source of great despair. The Babylonian generally believed that at death the disembodied spirit descends to the dark nether world, and that human existence beyond the grave is at best only a dismal, wretched reflection of life on earth. Any hope of an eternal reward for the righteous and deserving was absent; everyone was impartially consigned to the world below. It is not strange that the most popular, dramatic, and creative Babylonian literary work, the Gilgamesh Epic, centers on a vain and pathetic quest for eternal life.

It is interesting to read what the beliefs of this pagan system are, and see how many have been adopted by so called Christians.

BAPTISTERY, in Christian churches, name given to a separate building or portion of the church in which the ceremony of baptism is performed. Beginning during the reign of the Roman emperor Constantine the Great in the 4th century, many large baptisteries were erected. These baptisteries usually were circular or polygonal and usually were dedicated to John the Baptist. The baptismal basin itself was surrounded by columns, between which hangings were drawn that concealed from the public the actual scene of baptism, which was by immersion. This central section usually was roofed with a dome of masonry or wood; often around it was an encircling aisle, or sometimes two aisles, to accommodate spectators. Early examples of such baptisteries are found in Italy and Asia Minor, notably the 6th-century baptistery of Hagia Sophia (Church of the Holy Wisdom) in Istanbul, Turkey. As immersion was replaced by sprinkling, such large baptisteries became unnecessary.

From this statement it is clear that baptism by immersion was the normal way of being baptised, which can be proved from the Bible. It is interesting to note that this was replaced with sprinkling, which cannot be found in the Bible. But one of the ceremonies of ancient Babylon was the sprinkling of babies which was supposed to cleanse them from their original sin, which was performed after an exorcism was done by a praying priest.

Related topics:

- [Baptism](#)
- [Infant Baptism](#)

BIBLE, The order as well as the number of books differs between the Jewish Bible and the Protestant and Roman Catholic versions of the Bible. The Protestant and Roman Catholic versions of the Old Testament place the books in the same sequence, but the Protestant version includes only those books found in the Bible of the Judaism. The following books have been added to the Roman Catholic version:- Tobit, Judith, 1 & 2 Maccabees, Wisdom and Sirach. Like other Christian churches, the Roman Catholic church accepts the Bible as the basis for its teaching. This was an unquestioned assumption until the Reformation, and great theologians such as the 13th-century Italian St. Thomas Aquin as taught that "Scripture alone" was the source for Theology. Even while maintaining a "Scripture-alone" position, however, theologians also held that certain truths or practices (such as infant baptism), although not found in Scripture, were validated by the tradition of the church. They agreed, moreover, that the solemn decisions of the church, especially those that were arrived at by the ecumenical councils, were authentic interpretations of Christian doctrine and therefore irrevocably binding on the church. In reaction to the Protestant insistence during the Reformation on a seemingly unqualified "Scripture-alone" principle, the Council of Trent affirmed (Fourth Session) that Christian Revelation was contained in "written books" and in "unwritten traditions." Although this decree speaks at length and almost exclusively about the Bible, the insertion of the phrase about "unwritten traditions" was interpreted until recently as indicating a "two-source" theory.

The books which the Roman Catholic Church have added contradict the rest of the Bible in several places and their authenticity is very questionable. While the Roman Catholic Church claims to accept the Bible as true, her doctrines are clearly condemned or are in opposition

to the Bible. All of her rites, rituals, ceremonies and services have their roots firmly in pagan tradition. The K.J.V. is the true word of God and is the only version of the Bible that can be trusted.

Related topics:

- [The Bible - God's Word](#)
- [Which Is The Real Word Of God?](#)
- [New Versions Of The Bible](#)

CANDLEMAS, Christian festival observed on February 2 in honour of the presentation of the infant Christ in the Temple and the purification of the Virgin Mary. The festival was probably meant to replace the great feast of expiation and purification (Februa) that was held in ancient Rome in mid-February. The date of the pagan feast was then transferred to February 2, the 40th day after Christmas; the 40-day period was in accordance with the Jewish law that required the ritual purification at the Temple of every mother of a male child 40 days after the child's birth. The Candlemas festival is believed to have been instituted in 541 or 542 by the Byzantine emperor Justinian I.

Again we see that a pagan festival is supposedly replaced with a Christian one. The main problem with this one is that the 25th of December, Christmas, is a ancient Babylonian pagan festival celebrating the incarnation birth of Nimrod, actually Semiramis's illegitimate son, not that of Jesus Christ which could not have taken place at this time of year. So if this ceremony is about the presentation of an infant at the temple and the purification of his mother, the mother was Semiramis and the child was, what she claimed to be, the incarnation of her dead husband Nimrod, but was her illegitimate son.

CROSS, ancient symbol found in many cultures. The cross, as a basic design motif, appears in the pottery, weaving, carving, and painting of many cultures. It may be simply decorative, or it may have symbolic meaning. The tau cross, for example, was a symbol of life to the ancient Egyptians, when combined with the circle (as in the crux ansata), it stood for eternity. For most ancient peoples the Greek cross was a metaphor for the four indestructible elements of creation (air, earth, fire, and water), thus symbolising permanence. The swastika, with the ends of its cross bars bent to the right, was common in both the Old World and the New. It originally represented the revolving sun, fire, or life and later, by extension, good luck. To Buddhists, a swastika represented resignation; to the Jains, it symbolised their seventh saint. To Hindus, a swastika with arms bent to the left symbolised night, magic, and the destructive goddess Kali. In early 20th-century Germany, the right-facing swastika was the Nazi party emblem.

The cross as a letter 't' is one of the symbols of Tammuz, as it was the first letter of his name. When Christ was crucified on the cross, the Romans were actually sacrificing Him and the two thieves to Tammuz. This symbol was used widely when depicting Tammuz and his priests, and should have no place whatsoever in Christian circles.

Related Topic:-

- [Another Jesus](#)

EUCCHARIST, the development of Eucharist doctrine centers on two ideas: presence and sacrifice. In the New Testament, no attempt is made to explain Christ's presence at the Eucharist. The theologians of the early church tended to accept Jesus' words "This is my body" and "This cup . . . is the new covenant in my blood" (Luke 22:19-20) as sufficient explanation of the miraculous transformation of the bread and wine into the body and blood of Christ, although some interpretations reflect the influence of Platonic philosophy on the early church. According to Scholastic speculation, the substance of the Eucharistic bread is, by the power of God, wholly transformed into the body of Christ. This view of the presence of Christ, called Transubstantiation, was most elaborately formulated by the 13th-century Italian theologian St. Thomas Aquinas. It has been the official teaching of the Roman Catholic church since the Middle Ages.

The Eucharist of the Roman Catholic church is required to be a perfect circle, or it is disguarded. The importance which Rome attaches to the roundness of the wafer, must have a reason, and that reason can be found at the altars of Egypt, on which were thin, round cakes. The round disk, so frequently in the sacred emblems of Egypt, symbolised the sun. Now, when Osiris, the sun-divinity, became incarnate, and was born, it was not merely that he should give his life as a sacrifice for men, but that he might also be the life and nourishment of the souls of men. The letters on the Eucharist are worth noting. They are I.H.S. To a Christian these letters are represented as signifying, 'Jesus Hominum Salvator,' 'Jesus the Saviour of men.' But let a Roman worshipper of Isis read them and he will tell you they stand for 'Isis, Horeb, Seb,' that is 'The Mother, the Child and the Father of the gods,' or put simply the Egyptian Trinity.

The bread our Lord used, when He instituted the Lord's Supper, was unleavened bread. This He broke into pieces and gave to the disciples. These would not have been perfect circles, nor did it have any letter on them. By saying that priest actually turns the bread and wine into the actual body and blood of Christ, makes the priest a creator of His Creator. It is obvious in both Matthew and Mark that the wine did not become Christ's blood, for in the verse after giving it to His disciples Christ then says He will not drink of the fruit of the vine until He drinks it new in His Father's Kingdom.

FIRE WORSHIP, religious devotion to fire as a divine or sacred element. Like sun worship, from which it cannot always be distinguished, the veneration of fire is one of the earliest forms of religion. The flame itself may be the object of adoration, or it may be regarded as the material manifestation of a divinity or fire spirit. Fire worship occupied a central position in the religious rites of the early Indo-European peoples. Among the pre-Hindus, sacrifice to the fire was one of the first acts of morning devotion, and the hymns addressed to the fire god Agni outnumbered those in praise of any other divinity. The ancient Greek cults of Hestia, goddess of the hearth, and Hephaestus, god of fire, like those of their Roman counterparts, Vesta and Vulcan, were integral features of the religion of classical times. Fire worship also was generally practiced among the ancient Slavic peoples, and the Celts offered prayers to Bridget, the patroness of fire, hearth, and fertility.

The worship of fire had its fullest development, however, in ancient Persia, where from earliest times the ceremonial keeping of the flame was the chief characteristic of the Zoroastrian religion. Fire was believed to be the earthly manifestation of the Divine, the heavenly light. The term for a "priest" in the Zoroastrian Scriptures is *athravan*, "belonging to the fire." Closely associated with fire worship is the religious ceremony of fire walking. Practiced by many peoples in all ages, it is still performed in Tahiti, Trinidad, Mauritius, the Fiji Islands, India, and Japan. The ceremony involves the procession of a priest and other celebrants barefoot across large stones that have been heated upon a bed of burning logs. In ancient times, particularly in India, the rite is said to have involved passing through the flames, rather than walking upon them.

One of the symbols used to supposedly represent the Holy Spirit, the Third Person of the Godhead, is a flame. But as we have just read above it dates back to paganism and actually represents Hestia or Vesta, both of which are just another name for Semiramis. We also hear of people going to Business Management Courses and expected to participate in fire walking. Why? I have no answer to this, but most Business Management Courses use NLP a form of hypnosis, just like the pagans use a type of hypnosis before they participate in such ritual events.

GREEK RELIGION AND MYTHOLOGY, the basic elements of classical Greek religion were, in the Hellenistic and Roman periods, somewhat modified and supplemented by the influences of philosophy, Middle Eastern cults, and changes in popular belief. The main outlines of the official religion, however, remained unchanged. Principal Divinities.

The celestial gods were thought to dwell in the sky or on Mount Olympus in Thessaly. The earth, or chthonic (Gr. *chtho n*, "earth"), deities were thought to dwell on or under the earth, and were closely associated with the heroes and the dead. The lines separating these divine orders were indefinite, and the deities of one order were not infrequently found in another. The gods were held to be immortal; yet they were also believed to have had a beginning. They were represented as exercising control over the world and the forces of nature. This control, however, was limited by Ananke, the personification of necessity, to which even the gods bowed.

When a thorough investigation has been done, it cannot be said the Greek Religion was not influenced by Middle Eastern cults, but was extensively based on the Babylonian system of religion of Nimrod, Semiramis, and her son. This pagan religion of Babylon went world wide and traces of it can be seen in every pagan culture.

HALLOWEEN, name applied to the evening of October 31, preceding the Christian feast of Hallowmas, Allhallows, or All Saints' Day. The observances connected with Halloween are thought to have originated among the ancient Druids, who believed that on that evening, Saman, the lord of the dead, called forth hosts of evil spirits. The Druids customarily lit great fires on Halloween, apparently for the purpose of warding off all these spirits. Among the ancient Celts, Halloween was the last evening of the year and was regarded as a propitious time for examining the portents of the future. The Celts also believed that the spirits of the dead revisited their earthly homes on that evening. After the Romans conquered Britain, they added to Halloween features of the Roman harvest festival held on November 1 in honour of Pomona, goddess of the fruits of trees. The Celtic tradition of lighting fires on Halloween survived until modern times in Scotland and Wales, and the concept of ghosts and witches is still common to all Halloween observances. Traces of the Roman harvest festival survive in the custom, prevalent in both the U.S. and Great Britain, of playing games involving fruit, such as ducking for apples in a tub of water. Of similar origin is the use of hollowed-out pumpkins carved to resemble grotesque faces and lit by candles placed inside.

Halloween has been celebrated in the U.S. and Great Britain for years, and is becoming more popular in Australia each year. But this festival is mixed up with spiritualism and witchcraft, and the Bible condemns both.

HEAVEN, in religion, place where God, gods, or other spiritual beings dwell, and the place or condition of perfect supernatural happiness for the redeemed in the afterlife. In simple societies the concept of life after death was substantially that of a shadowy continuation of life on earth. Even in that concept, however, the principle of the necessity for vindication of divine justice was manifested. This principle is illustrated in the distinction between Elysium (a place of reward for the virtuous dead) and Tartarus (a place of damnation where the wicked were punished) in the Greek and Roman religions. The general belief of Christians is that, since the resurrection of Christ, the souls of the just who are free from sin are admitted immediately after death into heaven, where their chief joy consists in an unclouded vision of God known as the beatific vision. Their bliss is eternal, but at the general resurrection their souls are to be reunited to their perfected, or glorified, bodies. Some Christians believe that, before entering heaven, souls first pass through a state of purification called Purgatory.

Although God, the Creator of everything, is in heaven very few humans have made it there yet. There are Enoch, Moses, Elijah and those who rose from the grave when Christ rose, which He took to heaven with Him. The rest, from Adam to now, are resting in their tomb whatever shape or form this may take. They will not be resurrected till Jesus Christ returns to take His people home, at which time only those ready for heaven will be raised, along with those who crucified Jesus Christ who will die when He takes His saints to heaven. The rest, the wicked, will have to wait till the end of the 1,000 years before they are resurrected, only to die the second death in the lake of fire as punishment for their sins, never to live again. The first death is but a sleep, and only God can raise the dead from their sleep, which he does simply by speaking. Related Topics:-

- [Another Jesus](#)
- [Where Are The Dead?](#)
- [1,000 years](#)
- [Eternal Hell Fire?](#)
- [Is The Secret Rapture Scriptural?](#)

HOLIDAY, day set apart for religious observance or for the commemoration of some extraordinary event or distinguished person, or for some other public occasion. Holidays are characterised by a partial or total cessation of work and normal business activities and are generally accompanied by public and private ceremonies, including feasting (or fasting), parades and carnivals, or displays of flags and speech making. Originally, in ancient times, holidays were predominantly religious in character and linked to natural events such as the annual course of the sun or the phases of the moon. The word holiday, in fact, is derived from "holy day." Subsequently, secular holidays commemorating historical occasions or distinguished persons outnumbered holy days, although many ancient religious rituals and customs have been carried

over into modern times and incorporated into both secular and religious observations. Today, the outstanding holiday is one of religious observance and abstinence from normal work routines, taking place on Sunday for Christians, Friday for Muslims, and Saturday for Jews. In the U.S., Sunday is not only a religious holiday but is also the only common-law holiday.

God gave to His people annual Holy Days upon which they were to do no work (see Leviticus 23). These were part of the ceremonial law that Jesus Christ fulfilled as the Lamb of God, and which was nailed to the cross (Col 2:14). God also gave a weekly Holy Day, the 7th day of the week. This was, is and will be a perpetual Holy Day for God's people in this world and in the world to come.

Related studies:-

- [The Ten Commandments](#)
- [The Sabbath Of The Lord](#)
- [The Sabbath - Has Time Been Lost?](#)
- [Proper Sabbath Observance](#)
- [The Mark of the Beast](#)

HOLY ORDERS Priesthood. Individual Christian ministers were not called priests until the 3d century, when the term was first applied to bishops because of their role as celebrants of the Eucharist. The term priest (Lat. sacerdos) implies a sacrificial ministry, and the Eucharist was regarded as sacrificial because of its mystical relation to the sacrifice of Christ. When presbyters were authorised to celebrate the Eucharist in the 4th century, they too were called priests. Today, the Orthodox, Roman Catholic, and Anglican churches regard bishops, priests, and deacons as constituting holy orders. Because both bishops and presbyters function as priests, the Roman Catholic church, until the Second Vatican Council, considered priests (including bishops and presbyters), deacons, and subdeacons as the three orders.

The disciples, who following the example of Jesus Christ, performed the Lord's Supper many times, were never called or considered priests. They were only ever called apostles or elders (1 Peter 5:1, 2 Corinthians 11:5). The human priesthood was done away with by Jesus who "Blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross." Colosians 2:14 and ". . . the veil of the temple was rent in twain from the top to the bottom. . ." Matthew 27:51. Jesus Christ is our High Priest who is officiating if the Temple made without hands on the behalf of every sinner who calls upon Him, confessing and repenting of their sins (Hebrews 4:14-16, Hebrews 8:1-6.)

HOLY WEEK, in the Christian liturgical year, the week immediately preceding Easter, beginning with Palm Sunday. Solemn rites are observed commemorating the passion, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. Special observances recalling the institution of the Eucharist are held on Maundy Thursday; Scripture readings, solemn prayers, and veneration of the cross recall the crucifixion of Christ on Good Friday. Holy Saturday commemorates the burial of Christ; midnight vigil services inaugurate the Easter celebration of the resurrection. Holy Week is sometimes called the "Great Week" by Roman Catholic and Orthodox Christians because it commemorates the great deeds of God for humankind.

Apart from the fact that Easter is a totally pagan festival of the death of the pagan messiah, Nimrod, the time that certain events are celebrated is totally different from when they occurred according to the Bible. Let us have a look at two of these:- Holy Saturday commemorates the burial of Christ - Jesus Christ was buried on the preparation day (Friday) as the Sabbath (Saturday) drew on Matthew 27:59-62; Mark 15:42-47; Luke 23:52-54; John 19:42. Midnight vigil services inaugurated the Easter celebration of the resurrection - Jesus Christ rose early on the first day of the week, Sunday, Mark 16:9.

Related studies:-

- [Easter](#)
- [Wednesday Crucifixion?](#)

IMMACULATE CONCEPTION, Roman Catholic dogma holding that from the first instant of its creation, the soul of the Virgin Mary was free from original sin; this doctrine is not to be confused with that of the Virgin Birth, which holds that Jesus Christ was born of a virgin mother. Despite divergent scholarly opinions, the Roman Catholic church has consistently favoured belief in the Immaculate Conception; a festival of that name, the significance of which is now indefinite, was celebrated in the Eastern church as early as the 5th century and in the Western church from the 7th century. . . Finally in 1854, Pope Pius IX issued a solemn decree declaring the Immaculate Conception to be a dogma essential for the belief of the universal church. Under the title Immaculate Conception, the Virgin Mary is invoked as the patron of the U. S., Brazil, Portugal, and Corsica. The feast of the Immaculate Conception is December 8.

"What then? are we better than they? No, in no wise: for we have before proved both Jews and Gentiles, that they are all under sin; As it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one." Romans 3:9, 10. "For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God." Romans 3:23. "For if by one man's offence death reigned by one; much more they which receive abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness shall reign in life by one, Jesus Christ. . . For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous." Romans 5:17, 19. According to the Bible there is only one person who lived a perfect life without sinning and that was our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. Every single other person who has, is and will live on this earth are unrighteous and in need of a Saviour, this includes Mary the mother of Jesus. When Jesus was told that His mother and brethren were outside looking for Him, did He show any special respect to her? No! " And he answered them, saying, Who is my mother, or my brethren? And he looked round about on them which sat about him, and said, Behold my mother and my brethren! For whosoever shall do the will of God, the same is my brother, and my sister, and mother." Mark 3:33-35. Jesus Christ always honoured His mother as the Ten Commandments tells us to do, but apart from this he showed her no special respect like so many so called Christians today.

IMMORTALITY, unending existence of the soul after physical death. The doctrine of immortality is common to many religions; in different cultures, however, it takes various forms, ranging from ultimate extinction of the soul to its final survival and the resurrection of the body. In the religion of ancient Egypt, entrance to immortal life was dependent on the results of divine examination of the merits of an individual's life. Early Greek religion promised a shadowy continuation of life on earth in an underground region known as Hades.

Any belief that says there is an unending existence of the soul relies heavily on Satan's lie to Eve in the garden of Eden, "e;And the serpent said unto the woman, Ye shall not surely die:" Genesis 3:4. Ecclesiastes 9:5 tells us that the dead know not anything; and in Acts 2:29 - 34 it tells us that David is dead and buried and did not ascend into the heavens, even though God said he was a man after His own heart (1

Samuel 13:14). Nowhere in the Bible does it say that the soul lives forever. Paul says that, "The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death." 1 Corinthians 15:26, and John tells us "And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them: and they were judged every man according to their works. And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire." Revelation 20:13-15. Hell, which most people believe is a place of eternal fire, is just another word for the grave, and it's ending is in the lake of fire along with those whose names are not in the book of life.

Related studies:-

- [Where Are The Dead?](#)
- [Eternal Hell fire?](#)

INFANT BAPTISM - Infants were probably baptised in the early church, following the Jewish understanding that even the youngest children belong to the covenant community. Indeed, the Apostolic Tradition explicitly provides for it. Nonetheless, because post baptismal sins were regarded as unforgivable (or could be forgiven only once), baptism was often postponed as long as possible. Between the 4th and 6th centuries, however, as the attitude toward post baptismal sin relaxed (because of the development of the penitential system), and the fear of dying unbaptised increased, infant baptism began to be required.

"Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost." Acts 2:38. "Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. Amen." Matthew 28:19, 20. To be baptised we must be taught the Gospel message, accept Jesus Christ, be able to observe all the commands and repent of sins. As infants can do none of these things, they are not eligible for baptism which is supposed to be by immersion. Baptism is the ceremony we are told to observe to celebrate Christ's death, burial and resurrection:- "Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death? Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection." Romans 6:3-5.

Related topics:-

- [Infant Baptism](#)
- [Baptism](#)

LENT, period of fasting and penitence traditionally observed by Christians in preparation for Easter. The length of the Lenten fast, during which observants eat sparingly, was established in the 4th century as 40 days. In the Eastern churches, were both Saturday and Sunday are regarded as festival days, the period of Lent is the eight weeks before Easter; In the Western churches, where only Sunday is regarded as a festival, the 40-day period begins on Ash Wednesday and extends, with the omission of Sundays, to the day before Easter. The observance of fasting or other forms of self-denial during Lent varies within Protestant and Anglican churches. These bodies emphasise penitence. The Roman Catholic church has in recent years relaxed its laws on fasting. According to an apostolic constitution issued by Pope Paul VI in February 1966, fasting and abstinence during Lent are obligatory only on Ash Wednesday and Good Friday.

As we have already pointed out several times Easter is nothing short of a pagan festival, and any service or ritual associated with it must also be pagan. Besides these facts where do we find in the Bible that a certain number of days should be set aside for fasting? Nowhere! It is a man made ritual that is classified as Tradition.

MASS, the prayers and rites that constitute the central act of worship in the Roman Catholic Church. The Mass is a performance of the sacrament of the Holy Eucharist, in which, Catholics believe, bread and wine used in the service are miraculously transformed into the body and blood of Jesus Christ. Through the offering of the transformed elements, each celebration of the Mass reenacts the crucifixion of Christ at Calvary. The sacrifice of the cross and the Mass, the sacrifice of the altar, differ only in the manner of immolation. On the cross Christ suffered a bloody death. After his resurrection he was glorified, and death could not touch him. The shedding of his blood is, therefore, impossible, and the Mass must be a bloodless offering.

1 Corinthians 11:26 says "For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do show the Lord's death till he come." So the service instituted by our Lord Jesus at the last supper shows or reminds us of his death till he comes to take His people home to heaven. But there is a service which we are to participate in that reenacts His death, burial and resurrection. It is baptism by immersion. "Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death? Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life." Romans 6:3, 4. So where did this bloodless offering come from? It can be traced back to the bloodless offerings to the Roman goddess Paphian Venus and the Babylonian goddess Mylitta, which are both just other names for Semiramis.

Related topics:-

- See Eucharist above
- [The Lord's Supper](#)
- [Baptism](#)

MARDI GRAS (Fr., "fat Tuesday"), pre-Lenten festival celebrated in Roman Catholic countries and communities. In a strict sense, Mardi Gras, or Shrove Tuesday, is celebrated by the French as the last of the three days of Shrovetide and is a time of preparation immediately before Ash Wednesday and the start of the fast of Lent. It is thus the last opportunity for merrymaking and indulgence in food and drink. In practice, Mardi Gras is generally celebrated for a full week before Lent. It is marked by spectacular parades featuring floats, pageants, elaborate costumes, masked balls, and dancing in the streets. Mardi Gras originated as one of the series of carnival days held in all Roman Catholic countries between Twelfth Night, or Epiphany, and Ash Wednesday; these carnivals had their origin in pre-Christian spring fertility rites. The most famous modern Mardi Gras festivities are those held in New Orleans, La.; Rio de Janeiro, Brazil; Nice, France; and Cologne, Germany.

The origin of the Mardi Gras is from the pagan spring fertility rites, yet today many people see nothing wrong with them.

MARY, As early as the 2d century Christians venerated Mary by calling her Mother of God, a title that primarily stresses the divinity of Jesus. During the 4th-century controversies concerning the divine and human natures of Jesus, the Greek title Theotokos ("Mother of God") came to be used for Mary in devotional and theological writing. Closely allied with the title Mother of God is the title Virgin Mary, affirming the virginal conception of Jesus (see Luke 1:35). Initially, this title stressed the belief that God, not Joseph, was the true Father of Jesus. In the Marian devotion that developed in the East in the 4th century Mary was venerated not only in the conception, but also in the birth of Jesus. Beginning in the 2d and 3d centuries Mary was called Holy or Blessed Virgin to express the belief that, because of her intimate union with God through the Holy Spirit in the conception of Jesus (see Luke 1:35), Mary was completely free from any taint of sin. In both the Eastern and Western churches, feast days in honour of the events of Mary's life came into existence between the 4th and 7th centuries. They celebrate her miraculous conception and her birth, narrated in the apocryphal protogospel of James (September 8), the Annunciation (q.v.; March 25), her purification in the Temple (February 2), and her death (called the Dormition in the Eastern church) and bodily assumption into heaven (August 15). As Christ became an awe-inspiring, judgmental figure, Mary came to be depicted as the one who interceded for sinners. As the fear of death and the Last Judgment intensified following the Black Plague in the 14th century, Mary was increasingly venerated in popular piety as mediator of the mercy of Christ. Her prayers and pleas were seen as the agency that tempered the stern justice of Christ. Among the popular devotions that came into being at this time were the rosary; the angelus recited at sunrise, noon, and sunset; and litanies, invocations of Mary using such biblical titles as Mystical Rose, Tower of David, and Refuge of Sinners. Doctrine of Immaculate Conception. This doctrine maintains that Mary was conceived without original sin. Some people vigorously opposed the doctrine, maintaining that it detracted from Christ's role as universal Saviour. Pope Sixtus IV, however, defended it, establishing (1477) a feast of the Immaculate Conception with a proper mass and office to be celebrated on December 8. This feast was extended to the whole Western church by Pope Clement XI in 1708. In 1854 Pope Pius IX issued a solemn decree defining the Immaculate Conception for all Roman Catholics, but the doctrine has not been accepted by Protestants or by the Orthodox churches. In 1950, Pope Pius XII solemnly defined as an article of faith for all Roman Catholics the doctrine of the bodily assumption of Mary into heaven.

It is interesting to note that the worship of Mary did not start, according to encyclopedias, till around the 2nd century. If we were supposed to worship her, than there should be something in the Bible about it. But there is nothing. However if we again go back to Babylon we see that Nimrod was worshipped as an awe-inspiring, judgmental figure, while Semiramis was depicted as the one who interceded for man. How can anyone accept that Jesus is anything but a loving, forgiving, merciful and fair judge when they consider that He left His throne in heaven where He was worshipped and obeyed by countless numbers of angels; was born into a poor family in a lowly stable; lived a life of poverty; was hated, despised and rejected all His life by the people whom He had come to save; and finally asking God to forgive the people who killed Him, before He unselfishly laid down His life and suffered the Second Death, which is total separation from God, to save each and everyone of us that we might share the life He now has in heaven? If we truly wish to express Jesus Christ's divinity why not just call Him the Son of God, or the Lord Jesus Christ, terms that the Bible uses over and over.

Related topics:-

- See Assumption of the Virgin above.

MAY DAY, name popularly given to the first day of May, which for centuries has been celebrated among the Latin and Germanic peoples. May Day festivals probably stem from the rites practiced in honor of Flora, the Roman goddess of spring. May Day is currently celebrated as a festival for children marking the reappearance of flowers during the spring. It is traditionally greeted with joyous dancing around a garlanded pole, called a maypole, from which hang streamers held by the dancers. May Day is also celebrated in many European countries as a labour holiday, comparable to Labour Day in the U.S. and Australia.

Here is another pagan festival that has been assimilated into everyday life.

MESSIAH, in theology, the Anointed One, the Christ. It was the Hebrew name for the promised deliverer of humankind, assumed by Jesus and given to him by Christians. The English word is derived from the Hebrew mā shiah, meaning "anointed." In the Greek version of the Hebrew Bible, the Septuagint, this word is translated by the word Christos, from which "Christ" is derived. Hence the name Jesus Christ identifies Jesus as the Messiah.

The Messiah can be identified by the time prophecy given by Daniel (Daniel 9:24-27); by Isaiah's description of His life and death (Isaiah 53:3-9); by studying the Sanctuary and its services given to Moses on Mount Sinai, which all pointed forward to Christ and was the law that was nailed to the cross when Christ died. These any many other things in the Bible all point to Jesus Christ of Nazareth as the Messiah, the Saviour of mankind.

Related topics:-

- [2300 Day Prophecy](#)
- [Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ](#)

MIDSUMMER EVE, also Saint John's Eve, June 23, night before the festival of the nativity of John the Baptist. Throughout Europe it was often celebrated by bonfires; although the fires were blessed by priests, the celebration was generally conducted by the laity. Midsummer eve celebrations were a continuance of the Teutonic solar ceremonies and fertility rites associated with agriculture at the time of the summer solstice. The presence of supernatural beings, love magic, and merrymaking are some of the characteristics of this feast that inspired Shakespeare's masterpiece, A Midsummer Night's Dream, which in turn inspired the music of Felix Mendelssohn.

As the birth of Christ did not take place at Christmas time (See Christmas), then the birth of John the Baptist, which was 6 months before Christ (Luke 1:34-38) was not around June. It is simply just another pagan festival that has been given a Christian name.

MITHRAISM, one of the major religions of the Roman Empire, the cult of Mithra, the ancient Persian god of light and wisdom. In the Avesta, the sacred Zoroastrian writings of the ancient Persians, Mithra appears as the chief yazata (Avestan, "beneficent one"), or good spirit, and ruler of the world. He was supposed to have slain the divine bull, from whose dying body sprang all plants and animals beneficial to humanity. After the conquest of Assyria in the 7th century BC and of Babylonia in the 6th century BC, Mithra became the god of the sun, which was worshipped in his name. The Greeks of Asia Minor, by identifying Mithra with Helios, the Greek god of the sun, helped to spread the cult. It was brought to Rome about 68 BC by Cilician pirates whom the Roman general Pompey the Great had captured, and during the early empire it spread rapidly throughout Italy and the Roman provinces. It was a rival to Christianity in the Roman world. Mithraism was similar to Christianity in many respects, for example, in the ideals of humility and brotherly love, baptism, the rite of communion, the use of

holy water, the adoration of the shepherds at Mithra's birth, the adoption of Sundays and of December 25 (Mithra's birthday) as holy days, and the belief in the immortality of the soul, the last judgment, and the resurrection. Mithraism differed from Christianity in the exclusion of women from its ceremonies and in its willingness to compromise with polytheism. The similarities, however, made possible the easy conversion of its followers to Christian doctrine.

The reason that Mithraism is so similar to 'Christianity' is that the Roman Catholic church's doctrines, rites and rituals all come from Mithraism which is the worship of Nimrod, Semiramis and her son. If one is to compare the Bible with all these doctrines, rites and rituals you will see many differences between true Christianity and Mithraism.

NATURE WORSHIP, religious devotion paid either to nature as a deified collective entity or to all things in nature, including the elements, celestial bodies, plants, animals, and humanity. The worship of the elements does not seem to occur in the most rudimentary religions but frequently arises in later stages of religious development. The worship of fire, found among many primitive peoples, reached its highest development in the ancient Parsis sect of Persia. Celestial bodies have been deified in the religious systems of primitive and highly civilised peoples alike. The Khoikhoi of South Africa worship the moon; sun worship was practiced by the Iroquois, the Plains Indians, and the Tsimshian Indians of North America and reached a high state of development among the Indians of Mexico and Peru. The sun was also a Hindu deity, regarded as maleficent by the Dravidians of southern India, but considered benevolent by the Munda of the central parts. The Babylonians were sun worshippers, and in ancient Persia worship of the sun was an integral part of the elaborate cult of Mithras. The ancient Egyptians worshipped the sun god Ra; they also apotheosised the moon and the star Sirius. Other Egyptian deities included the constellations and the circumpolar stars. Plants and trees have been worshipped as totems or because of their usefulness, beauty, or fear-inspiring aspect. They are considered either as holy in themselves or as the dwelling places of spirits. Both the soma plant of India and the coca shrub of Peru have been worshipped for the intoxicating properties of products derived from them. Field crops, regarded as harbouring spirits of fertility, have been worshipped both by primitive tribes and by the peasants of Europe, among whom traces of the cult may still be found.

In today's modern civilisation no one really worships nature, do they? Well let us think for just a moment. How many of us, without thinking, use the term 'Mother Nature'? Nature is not our mother, unless we believe in evolution for which there is no real evidence, instead of creation. God is the one who created us and controls nature. And how many people are putting the rights of plants and animals before the rights and lives of people. We are to care for nature, this was the original job of Adam and Eve - to tend the garden of Eden (Genesis 2:15), but not at the expense of human life. There is a warning in Revelation 11:18 that just before Jesus Christ returns He will "destroy them which destroy the earth.", but all through the Bible and Jesus Christ's ministry especially we see that human welfare should come first. We are not just a higher form of animal life, we, human beings, were created in the image of God and were given dominion over all the animals.

NOVENA, in Roman Catholic practice, nine days of public or private prayer. The custom of extending a devotion nine days is of Roman origin: The parentalia novendialia was a nine-day observance celebrated by the ancient Romans in honor of deceased family members. The custom was adopted for Christian usage during the 17th century, although its prototype is sometimes seen in the period of prayer spent by the disciples of Jesus prior to the descent of the Holy Spirit (see Acts 1-2). Private novenas are frequently made in honor of the Virgin Mary. Perhaps the best-known liturgical novena is in honor of the Holy Spirit, celebrated as a preparation for Pentecost Sunday. Although the practice can appear superstitious, it is considered a legitimate devotional aid to extended prayer.

This pagan ritual was adopted into so called Christianity for no other reason than to so called Christianise another pagan rite. If it were truly a prototype of the disciples just before the Holy Spirit's descent, then it should be for members only, in a closed room, for 40 days not 9, and all who participate should, at it's conclusion, be of one accord and so filled with power from God that many should be converted to a new way of life by their witnessing thereafter. This would be a true prototype of what happened in Acts 1-2. Nowhere does the Bible give us instructions to pray to or honor Mary, the mother of Jesus (see Mary above) or to pray for the dead (see All Souls' Day above, and Purgatory below.). We are to pray to Our Father in heaven, through His Son Jesus Christ, for the outpouring of the Holy Spirit in our lives that we may be true witness for God.

Related topics:

- [Prayer](#)
- [The Gift Of Tongues](#)
- [Where Are The Dead?](#)
- [Eternal Hell Fire](#)

ORIGINAL SIN, in Christian theology, the universal sinfulness of the human race, traditionally ascribed to the first sin committed by Adam. Sin, in Christian doctrine, is considered a state of alienation or estrangement from God. Scriptural Foundation. The term original sin is not found in the Bible. Theologians who advocate the doctrine of original sin argue, however, that it is strongly implied by Paul (see Rom. 7), by John (see 1 John 5:19), and even by Jesus himself (see Luke 11:13). Behind this New Testament teaching lies the world view of late Jewish Apocalyptic writings. Some of these writings attribute the corrupt state of the world to a prehistoric fall of Satan, the subsequent temptation of Adam and Eve, and the immersion of human history thereafter in disorder, disobedience, and pain (see 2 Esdras 7). In this apocalyptic framework, Paul and other New Testament writers interpreted the work of Christ as overcoming the tremendous power of inherited sin and evil once and for all, reconciling humanity to God, and thus making peace. The decline and fall of Rome in the late 4th and early 5th centuries produced a similar apocalyptic atmosphere of crisis and despair. In his controversy with the Romano-British monk Pelagius (c. 355-c. 425) over the nature of sin and grace, Augustine was able to appeal powerfully and effectively to the Pauline-apocalyptic understanding of the forgiveness of sin. In his elaboration of the doctrine, however, Augustine imported an idea foreign to the Bible: the notion that the taint of sin is transmitted from generation to generation by the act of procreation. He took this idea from the 2d-century theologian Tertullian, who actually coined the phrase original sin.

Because of Adam's sin, all mankind must die the first death, but by the obedience of Jesus Christ we may all have salvation and not participate in the second death (Romans 5, Revelation 20:12-15). This does not mean we are born sinners. The Bible tells us that "Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the law: for sin is the transgression of the law." 1 John 3:4. "The fathers shall not be put to

death for the children, neither shall the children be put to death for the fathers: every man shall be put to death for his own sin." Deuteronomy 24:16. "Behold, all souls are mine; as the soul of the father, so also the soul of the son is mine: the soul that sinneth, it shall die. . . The soul that sinneth, it shall die. The son shall not bear the iniquity of the father, neither shall the father bear the iniquity of the son: the righteousness of the righteous shall be upon him, and the wickedness of the wicked shall be upon him." Ezekiel 18:4, 20. "So then every one of us shall give account of himself to God." Romans 14:12. When it comes to our salvation we do have to rely upon implied meaning, the Bible is clear. Adam sinned and plunged this world into sin, death, and separation from God. A way of escape was made immediately for all mankind in the promise of a Saviour, the Lamb of God which taketh away the sins of the world (John 1:29). Every single person is accountable for his/her own sins and not that of another person, shall be judged accordingly, and rewarded with either eternal death or life according to their works. This is mankind's second and last chance, there is no other.

PALM SUNDAY, in Christianity, Sunday before Easter, so called from the custom of blessing palms and of carrying portions of branches in procession, in commemoration of the triumphal entry of Jesus into Jerusalem. The custom may be traced back at least to the 4th century.

Jesus Christ did make a triumphant entry into Jerusalem, riding an ass, with the crowds laying their garments down for Him to ride over and waving palm branches crying 'Hosanna to the son of David: Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord; Hosanna in the highest." Matthew 21:9, but why are the palms blessed before they are carried in a procession? The following quote may give us a clue. "The Christmas tree, now so common among us, was equally common in Pagan Rome and Pagan Egypt. In Egypt that tree was the palm-tree; in Rome it was the fir; the palm-tree denoting the Pagan Messiah, as Baal-Tamar, the fir referring to him as Baal-Berith." *The Two Babylons* by Rev Alexander Hislop. In blessing the palms, they are in fact blessing the pagan messiah, Baal-Tamar, which is just another name for Nimrod.

PAPACY, office of the pope, the supreme head of the Roman Catholic church. The word is derived from the medieval Latin papa ("pope," or "father"), a term originally applied to bishops in general. Roman Catholics believe that the pope is the successor of St. Peter, to whom Christ entrusted the leadership of the church as recorded in Matt. 16:18-19: "You are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church. . . ." The pope has many official titles: bishop of Rome, vicar of Christ, successor to the prince of the apostles, supreme pontiff of the universal church, patriarch of the West, primate of Italy, archbishop and metropolitan of the Roman province, sovereign of the state of Vatican City, servant of the servants of God.

There are three important facts here that need to be looked at.

1. Acknowledging the authority of the papacy or the pope, both of which mean father, is in direct conflict with the Bible. Jesus Christ Himself told us to call no man Rabbi, master or father, for one is your Father, which is in heaven (Matthew 23:8,9).

2. Christ is the Rock upon which the church was built, which Peter Himself acknowledges, as well as Paul.

"Then Peter, filled with the Holy Ghost, said unto them, Ye rulers of the people, and elders of Israel, If we this day be examined of the good deed done to the impotent man, by what means he is made whole; Be it known unto you all, and to all the people of Israel, that by the name of **Jesus Christ of Nazareth**, whom ye crucified, whom God raised from the dead, even by him doth this man stand here before you whole. **This is the stone which was set at nought of you builders, which is become the head of the corner.** Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved." Acts 4:8-12.

"If so be ye have tasted that the Lord is gracious. To whom coming, as unto a living stone, disallowed indeed of men, but chosen of God, and precious, Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ. Wherefore also it is contained in the scripture, Behold, I lay in Sion a chief corner stone, elect, precious: and he that believeth on him shall not be confounded." 1 Peter 2:3-6.

"And did all drink the same spiritual drink: for they drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them: and that Rock was Christ." 1 Corinthians 10:4.

It is also interesting to note that even after Matthew 16 the disciples still disputed as to who was the greatest and who would sit on Christ's right and left. If Christ had appointed Peter as their leader there would have been no argument as to who would sit at His right hand, or who was the greatest.

3. Last, but certainly not least, is the fact that when you take the roman title "Vicarius Filli Dei" which means "Vicar of Christ or the Son of God", and add up the value of the Roman numerals in that name, you get the number 666. This is the number of the beast of Revelation 13 which gives power to the image of the beast and causes all "both small and great, rich and poor, free and bond, to receive a mark in their right hand, or in their foreheads: And that no man might buy or sell, save he that had the mark, or the name of the beast, or the number of his name." Revelation 13:17, 18.

Related topics:

- [Call No Man Father](#)
- [Mark Of The Beast And 666](#)

PENANCE, in ecclesiastical usage the outward expression of repentance for sin, in response to which the assurance of forgiveness is given in the act of absolution.

Although the Bible does tell us we must repent of our sins, it does not even hint of doing penance. But, paganism does! Over and above the scourgings, there were also slashings and cuttings of the flesh required as propitiatory rites on the part of Apollo's worshippers. Osiris was cut in pieces, therefore, to imitate his fate, so far as living men might do so, they were required to cut and would their own bodies. This was also done by the worshippers of Baal, Hindu divinities, Bellona, Saturn. This was practised also in the most savage form in the gladiatorial shows, in which the Roman people, with all their boasted civilisation, so much delight. Penances were intended to propitiate and please their god, and so to lay up a stock of merit that might tell in their behalf in the scales of Anubis. In the Papacy, the penance are not only intended to answer the same end, but, to a large extent, they are identical.



PHALLICISM, in anthropology and comparative religion, the worship of the generative power as expressed by the adoration of the phallus, or male organ of procreation. It is a characteristic element of most primitive religions. In ancient times it was practiced by the early Semites and Greeks, among many other peoples, and became an important part of the worship of the Greek god Dionysus. Phallicism and its counterpart, the adoration of symbols of female fertility (as typified in the worship of the ancient goddess Cybele, a deification of the female generative or mother principle), are both manifestations of nature worship. In present-day India a female symbol, the yoni, and a phallic symbol, the linga, are employed in the worship of the Hindu god Siva.

Phallicism is very much a part of so called Christianity today. This may seem a very outlandish statement until we see that obelisks, steeples and shapes representing these two are actually phallis. Now look around and what do we see on nearly every church and in St. Peter's square in Rome, phallus everywhere. We even have many churches who try to hide this symbol by building a church with a high pitched roof and on the end having either windows or protruding bricks, making an obelisk shape (see picture right).

PRIEST, one especially consecrated to the service of a divinity and through whom worship, prayer, sacrifice, or other service is offered to the object of worship, and pardon, blessing, or deliverance is obtained by the worshipper. In earliest history the functions of priest were discharged by the head of the family; later the office became a public one, in many instances associated with that of the sovereign. Under the ceremonial law given to Moses, priests especially consecrated to the service of the Temple and the altar were selected from the tribe of Levi. The actual priesthood of Israel, however, was reserved for the male descendants of Aaron, who were authorised to offer sacrifice, supervise hygiene, and instruct the people in the Law of Moses. In the Roman Catholic and Eastern Orthodox churches and in the Church of England and other Anglican churches, the priest is a member of the sacerdotal ministry. The priest has the power to celebrate Mass and to administer the sacraments, except holy orders (reserved for the bishop), matrimony (administered to one another by the couple and witnessed by the priest), and, in the Roman Catholic church and the Church of England, confirmation (usually performed by a bishop). Most Protestant churches acknowledge no specific priesthood. They believe in the universal priesthood of all believers and do not recognise the need for a mediator between themselves and God.

Jesus Christ is our High Priest, and all true believers are a royal priesthood (Hebrews 4:14-16, Hebrews 8:1-6, 1 Peter 2:9). Also see Holy Orders above.

PURGATORY, in Christian theology, state of purgation, in which, according to the Roman Catholic and Eastern churches, souls after death either are purified from venial sins or undergo the temporal punishment that, after the guilt of mortal sin has been remitted, still remains to be endured by the sinner. The ultimate happiness of their souls is supposed to be thus secured. On the existence of purgatory Greek and Latin churches are agreed; they also agree that it is a state of suffering. Although the Latins hold that this is by fire, the Greeks do not determine the manner of the suffering, but regard it as being caused by tribulation. The medieval doctrine and practice regarding purgatory were among the grounds for the protest of the Waldenses and were rejected by the Reformers. Protestants held that salvation had been achieved for humankind by Christ and was obtained by faith in Christ alone.

This doctrine can only be accepted if you accept the lie that Satan through the serpent told Eve in the garden of Eden "Ye shall not surely die." Genesis 3:4. The Bible teaches that the dead know nothing (Genesis 3:19; Psalm 146:4; Job 14:10-12, 21; Ecclesiastes 9:5-7,10; Psalm 6:4,5; Acts 2:29, 34) and that they remain in the grave until Jesus Christ returns to take the redeemed home to heaven (1 Thessalonians 4:13-17; 1 Corinthians 15:50-53). "In every system, therefore, except that of the Bible, the doctrine of a purgatory after death, and prayers for the dead, has always been found to occupy a place. Go wherever we may, in ancient or modern times, we shall find that Paganism leaves hope after death for sinners, who, at the time of their departure, were consciously unfit for the abodes of the blest. For this purpose a middle state has been feigned, in which, by means of purgatorial pains, guilt unremoved in time may in a future world be purged away, and the soul be made meet for final beatitude. . . . The doctrine of purgatory is purely Pagan, and cannot for a moment stand in the light of Scripture. For those who die in Christ no purgatory is, or can be, needed; for 'the blood of Jesus Christ, God's Son, cleanseth from ALL sin.' If this be true, where can there be the need for any other cleansing? On the other hand, for those who die without personal union to Christ, and consequently unwashed, unjustified, unsaved, there can be no other cleansing; for, while 'he that hath the son hath life, he that hath not the Son hath not life,' and never can have it. Search the Scripture through, and it will be found that, in regard to all who "die in their sins," the decree of God is irreversible: 'Let him that is unjust be unjust still, and let him that is filthy be filthy still.' Thus the whole doctrine of purgatory is a system of pure bare-faced Pagan imposture, dishonouring to God, deluding men who live in sin with the hope of atoning for it after death, and cheating them at once out of their property and their salvation." The Two Babylons by Rev. Alexander Hislop pages 167, 169.

RELICS, in Christian usage, remains of the bodies of saints, or objects connected with the life of Jesus Christ or with the lives of the saints. Christians are known to have venerated the relics of martyrs at least as early as the 2d century. The influx of relics from the Middle East at the time of the Crusades and the development of superstitious cults around them led to doubts about their authenticity and value. The practice of veneration was effectively defended, however, by the 13th-century theologian St. Thomas Aquinas, who contended that the bodies of the saints are vessels of the Holy Spirit. The practice was reaffirmed by the Council of Trent after Protestant reformers rejected it. In the Orthodox church, the veneration of relics was sanctioned by the Council of Constantinople (1084), but the veneration of icons has always had a greater importance in the East. Relics of Muhammad and of Muslim religious teachers are preserved in the holy cities of Mecca and Medina, but the veneration of relics has never been officially approved by Muslim authorities, who have sometimes condemned it as idolatry. The veneration of relics has been traditional in Buddhism, and relics attributed to the Buddha and to the great Buddhist teachers are displayed in several places.

*The worship of relics or the instruction to do so cannot be found in the Bible, but it was a part of the ceremonies instituted to commemorate the tragic death of Nimrod who was divided into fourteen pieces, which were sent into so many different regions infected by his apostasy and false worship, to cause terror upon all who might seek to follow his example. When the apostates regained their power, the very first thing they did was to seek for these dismembered **relics** of the great ringleader in idolatry, and to entomb them with the very mark of devotion. Thus was the superstitious rite of the veneration of relics instilled in paganism, which is just another rite that has been so called Christianised.*

ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH, the largest single Christian body, composed of those Christians who acknowledge the supreme authority of the bishop of Rome, the pope, in matters of faith. Although the Roman Catholic church holds certain doctrines that distinguish it from other Christian churches, it is most characteristic in the breadth and comprehensiveness of its doctrinal tradition. Although this doctrinal comprehensiveness may sometimes seem to lack internal coherence, it helps vindicate the church's claim to 'catholicity' (universality), even in doctrinal matters. The church does not in principle exclude any theological method, and since Pope Pius XII's encyclical *Divino Afflante Spiritu* (1943) it has officially sanctioned modern principles of exegesis for interpreting the Bible. Like other Christian churches, the Roman Catholic church accepts the Bible as the basis for its teaching.

While the Roman Catholic Church claims to accept the Bible as true, her doctrines are clearly condemned or are in opposition to the Bible. All of her rites, rituals, ceremonies and services have their roots firmly in pagan tradition, therefore she cannot truly be called a Christian church and should be called a pagan church, which is what she really is.

ROSARY, a string of beads or a knotted cord used to count prayers. The term is also applied to the prayers themselves. Rosaries are used in many religions: Buddhism, Hinduism, Islam, and Christianity. Most often associated with Roman Catholics, the rosary is also used by the Orthodox, for whom it is almost exclusively a Monastic devotion, and by some Anglicans. In Roman Catholic practice, the rosary is a string of beads made in the form of a circle, with a pendant crucifix. The standard rosary consists of five sets of beads called decades, each composed of one large and ten smaller beads. On the large beads, the Lord's Prayer, or Our Father, is said; on the smaller beads, the Hail Mary, or Ave Maria. In between the decades the 'Glory be,' a Doxology, is recited.

The rosary is almost universally found among pagan nations and is used for repetitive prayers. Apart from it being just another pagan tradition that has been so called Christianised, the Lord Jesus forbade vain repetitions in prayer. "But when ye pray, use not vain repetitions, as the heathen do: for they think that they shall be heard for their much speaking." Matthew 6:7.

SACRAMENTAL, in Christian theology, a sacred sign instituted by the church as a devotional aid. It is similar to a Sacrament in that it is a sacred sign; it differs from a sacrament in not having been instituted by Christ. Sacramentals span the whole range of words and actions, objects and gestures, and times and places. Included are various blessings, religious objects (such as holy water, crucifixes, and rosaries), liturgical ceremonies and seasons, and sacred places.

If these sacramental things were not instituted by Christ or supported by the Bible, how can they be Christian? Quite simply they are not. They are pagan sacramentals that have been adopted by so called Christians.

SAINTS, With greater enthusiasm than other Western churches, Roman Catholicism fosters the veneration of the saints and especially of Mary. Often criticised for letting veneration of the saints obscure the worship due God, the church has tried to limit it, for instance by reducing the number of saints whose feasts are observed in the Liturgy. Catholics also believe that they can help by their prayers and good works those who have died without being fully purified of their sins. This belief is closely associated with the doctrines of Purgatory and Indulgence.

Veneration of images or idols is practised by all heathens but is clearly condemned in the Bible (1 Thessalonians 1:9; Leviticus 26:1; 1 John 5:21; Revelation 21:8, 22:14,15; Exodus 20:4-6). Idolatry is always associated with paganism.

SAINT VALENTINE'S DAY, a holiday honouring lovers. It is celebrated February 14 by the custom of sending greeting cards or gifts to express affection. The cards, known as valentines, are often designed with hearts to symbolise love. The holiday probably derives from the ancient Roman feast of Lupercalis (February 15). The festival gradually became associated with the feast day (February 14) of two Roman martyrs, both named St. Valentine, who lived in the 3d century. St. Valentine has traditionally been regarded as the patron saint of lovers.

Here is a pagan festival that's name has been changed and accepted into our everyday life. Associated with this day is Cupid with his bow and arrows, which in none other than Nimrod. It is also interesting to note that St. Valentine is the patron saint of lovers, which is exactly the way pagan gods are described - patron god of love, for example.

STATIONS OF THE CROSS, series of 14 crosses, usually accompanied by images, representing events in the Passion of Christ and its immediate aftermath. Each station, in addition to representing an event, signifies the actual station, or site, of the event in Jerusalem or on Calvary, or Golgotha, and the series as a whole is, in effect, a model of the Via Dolorosa, the route along which Christ was taken to Calvary. The devout meditate and pray at each station successively. Seven of the events represented (the first, second, eighth, tenth, eleventh, twelfth, and fourteenth) are described in one or more of the Gospels, and the others are traditional. The 14 stations represent the following: (1) Christ's condemnation by Pilate (see Matt. 27:15-26; Mark 15:6-15; Luke 23:17-25; John 18:38-40, 19:4-16); (2) his receiving of the cross (see John 19:17); (3) his first fall under its weight; (4) the meeting with his mother, Mary; (5) the carrying of the cross by a passerby, Simon of Cyrene (the Gospels, however, place this event at the beginning of the Via Dolorosa; see Matt. 27:32; Mark 15:21; Luke 23:26); (6) the wiping of Christ's face by Veronica; (7) Christ's second fall; (8) his exhortation to the women of Jerusalem (see Luke 23:27-31); (9) his third fall; (10) the stripping of his garments (see Matt. 27:28); (11) the crucifixion; (12) the death (see Matt. 27:45-56; Mark 15:33-41; Luke 23:44-49; John 19:30); (13) the presentation of the body to Mary; and (14) the burial (see Matt. 27:57-61; Mark 15:42-47; Luke 23:50-56; John 19:38-42).

It is interesting to see that tradition seems to hold as much weight as does the Bible for this ceremony. Another problem with this ceremony is that the road that Christ walked upon when He was on this earth was many feet below today's street level, and with the destruction of Jerusalem in 70 A.D. and the rejection of Christ by most of the Jews, who really knows where He walked, fell or was crucified? Besides this does it really matter? The city of Jerusalem is no longer a sacred place. The curse of God is upon it because of the rejection and crucifixion of God's only Begotten Son, Jesus Christ. Never again will it be a sacred place until it is cleansed, along with the rest of this world, by the purifying fires of heaven. Making a site holy, so to speak, only turns ones attention away from our Lord Saviour Jesus Christ and accepting what He did for us by faith that works, to a part of His creation.

SUMERIAN RELIGION, religious beliefs of the peoples of ancient Sumer. The Sumerians believed that the universe was ruled by a pantheon comprising a group of living beings, human in form, but immortal and possessing superhuman powers. These beings, they believed, were invisible to mortal eyes and guided and controlled the cosmos in accordance with well-laid plans and duly prescribed laws. The Sumerians had four leading deities, known as creating gods. These gods were An, the god of heaven; Ki, the goddess of earth; Enlil, the god of air; and Enki, the god of water. Heaven, earth, air, and water were regarded as the four major components of the universe. The act of creation, it was held, was accomplished through utterance of the divine word; the creating deity had merely to make plans and pronounce the name of the thing to be created. To keep the cosmos in continuous and harmonious operation and to avoid confusion and conflict, the gods

devised the me, a set of universal and unchangeable rules and laws that all beings were obliged to obey. Next in importance to the creating deities were the three sky deities, Nanna, the god of the moon; Utu, the sun god; and Inanna, the queen of heaven. Inanna was also the goddess of love, procreation, and war. Nanna was the father of Utu and Inanna. Sumerian poets composed numerous myths about the exploits of Inanna. Another god of great importance was Ninurta, the deity in charge of the violent and destructive south wind. One of the most beloved deities was the shepherd god Dumuzi, the biblical Tammuz. Dumuzi was originally a mortal ruler whose marriage to Inanna ensured the fertility of the land and the fecundity of the womb. This marriage, however, according to a myth whose denouement has only recently come to light, ended in stark tragedy when the goddess, offended by her husband's unfeeling behaviour toward her, decreed that he be carried off to the netherworld for six months of each year hence the barren, sterile months of the hot summer. At the autumnal equinox, which marked the beginning of the Sumerian new year, Dumuzi returned to the earth. His reunion with his wife caused all animal and plant life to be revitalised and made fertile once again. Each new year the Sumerians celebrated the marriage between Dumuzi and Inanna. The high point of the celebration was a ritual wherein the king impersonated Dumuzi; Inanna was impersonated by one of her leading priestesses. Other Sumerian gods included those in charge of rivers, mountains, and plains; of the cities, fields, and farms; and of tools such as pickaxes, brick molds, and plows. Each of the important deities was the patron of one or more Sumerian cities. Large temples were erected in the name of the deity, who was worshipped as the divine ruler and protector of the city. Temple rites were conducted by many priests, priestesses, singers, musicians, sacred prostitutes, and eunuchs. Sacrifices were offered daily. The Sumerians believed that human beings were fashioned of clay and were created for the purpose of supplying the gods with food, drink, and shelter, so that the gods might have full leisure for their divine activities. Life was considered humanity's most precious possession, even though it is beset with uncertainty and haunted by insecurity; for when human beings die, it was believed, their spirits descend to the netherworld, where life is more wretched than on earth.

In this pagan religion the worship of Nimrod and Semiramis under different names can be seen. It is also of interest to note the similarities to the what most people today call Christianity.

SUN WORSHIP, religious devotion paid to the sun either as a deity or as the symbol of a deity. Sun worship was practiced by the Iroquois, Plains Indians, and Tsimshian Indians of North America and reached a high state of development among the Indians of Mexico and Peru. The sun was also a Hindu deity, regarded as maleficent by the Dravidians of southern India and as benevolent by the Munda of the central parts. The Babylonians were sun worshipers, and in ancient Persia worship of the sun was an integral part of the elaborate cult of Mithras. The ancient Egyptians worshipped the sun god Ra. In ancient Greece the deities of the sun were Helios and Apollo. The worship of Helios was widespread; temples were built in Corinth, Argos, Troezen (no longer in existence), and many other cities, but the principal seat was on the island of Rhodes, in the Dodecanese, where four white horses were sacrificed annually to the god. A similar sacrifice was offered on the summit of Mount Hagios Elias, in the Taygetos Mountains, in Laconia. In time virtually all the functions of Helios were transferred to the god Apollo, in his identity as Phoebus. Sun worship persisted in Europe even after the introduction of Christianity, as is evidenced by its disguised survival in such traditional Christian practices as the Easter bonfire and the Yule log on Christmas.

Many more pagan traditions can be added to this list - rosary, crucifixes, wax candles, idol worship, and infant baptism along with all the symbols the ancient sun worshippers used to use.

TRANSFIGURATION, the Feast of the Transfiguration originated in the Eastern church before the 7th century and was gradually introduced into the Western church. Its general observance in the Western church was established in 1456 by Pope Callistus III (r. 1455-58), who fixed its date as August 6 to commemorate a Christian victory over the Ottoman Turks at Belgrade. It is a major feast in the Orthodox and Armenian churches.

Here we have a feast to commemorate a victory of war with a Christian name. So what is Christian about this feast? Apparently nothing.

VESTAL VIRGINS, in Roman antiquity, priestesses of Vesta, goddess of the hearth. Originally two and then four vestals were selected by the king; later the number was increased to six, and they were selected by the Pontifex Maximus, the high priest in the Roman religion. The vestals were vowed to 30 years of service as virgins: 10 of learning, 10 of performance, and 10 of teaching. A vestal who broke her vow of chastity was buried alive. To be eligible, a girl had to be over six and under ten years of age and without physical or mental defects; she had to be the daughter of a freeborn citizen resident of Italy; and both her mother and father had to be living. Among the duties of the vestals was the guarding and annual renewing of the sacred fire at the public shrine to Vesta and preparation of the sacrifices. They enjoyed many privileges, including the right to wear bridal dress.

When pagan Rome went underground the vestal virgins seemed to disappear, but they reemerged, as did everything else from pagan Rome, with a different name - Nuns. Although there are some differences, it is plain that the principle behind these two orders is the same and have the same origin, ancient Babylon.

In conclusion this quote from Prescott's *Peru* vol. I. page 103 seems very appropriate.

"It can be proved that the idolatry of the whole earth is one, that the sacred language of all nations is radically Chaldean--that the GREAT GODS of every country and clime are called by Babylonian names--and that all the Paganisms of the human race are only a wicked and deliberate, but yet most instructive corruption of the primeval gospel first preached in Eden, and through Noah, afterwards conveyed to all mankind. The system, first concocted in Babylon, and thence conveyed to the ends of the earth, has been modified and diluted in different ages and countries. In Papal Rome only is it now found nearly pure and entire. But yet, amid all the seeming variety of heathenism, there is an astonishing oneness and identity, bearing testimony to the truth of God's Word. The overthrow of all idolatry cannot now be distant. But before the idols of the heathens shall be finally cast to the moles and to the bats, I am persuaded that they will be made to fall down and worship "the Lord the king," to bear testimony to His glorious truth, and with one loud and united acclaim, ascribe salvation, and glory, and honour, and power unto Him that sitteth upon the throne, and to the Lamb, for ever and ever." Taken from the *Two Babylons* by Rev. Alexander Hislop.