

**Sumerian & Mesopotamian Pantheon for Initiates and Members
of
Circulos Tenebris Matrem Arcanas
Circle of the Dark and Mysterious Mother**



Sumerian & Mesopotamian Pantheon




Sumerian religion was the religion practiced and adhered to by the people of Sumer, the first literate civilization of ancient Mesopotamia. The Sumerians regarded their divinities as responsible for all matters pertaining to the natural and social orders.




Before the beginning of kingship in Sumer, the city-states were effectively ruled by theocratic priests and religious officials. Later, this role was supplanted by kings, but priests continued to exert great influence on Sumerian society. In early times, Sumerian temples were simple, one-room structures, sometimes built on elevated platforms. Towards the end of Sumerian civilization, these temples developed into ziggurats—tall, pyramidal structures with sanctuaries at the tops.

The Sumerians believed that the universe had come into being through a series of cosmic births. First, Nammu, the primeval waters, gave birth to An (the sky) and Ki (the earth), who mated together and produced a son named Enlil. Enlil separated heaven from earth and claimed the earth as his domain. Humans were believed to have been created by Enki, the son of An and Nammu. Heaven was reserved exclusively for deities and, upon their deaths, all mortals' spirits, regardless of their behavior while alive, were believed to go to Kur, a cold, dark cavern deep beneath the earth, which was ruled by the goddess Ereshkigal and where the only food available was dry dust. In later times, Ereshkigal was believed to rule alongside her husband Nergal, the god of death.




The major deities in the Sumerian pantheon included An, the god of the heavens, Enlil, the god of wind and storm, Enki, the god of water and human culture, Ninhursag, the goddess of fertility and the earth, Utu, the god of the sun and justice, and his father Nanna, the god of the moon. During the Akkadian Period and afterward, Inanna, the goddess of sex, beauty, and warfare, was widely venerated across Sumer and appeared in many myths, including the famous story of her descent into the Underworld.





Sumerian religion heavily influenced the religious beliefs of later Mesopotamian peoples; elements of it are retained in the mythologies and religions of the Hurrians, Akkadians, Babylonians, Assyrians, and other Middle Eastern culture groups. Scholars of comparative mythology have noticed many parallels between the stories of the ancient Sumerians and those recorded later in the early parts of the Hebrew Bible.



Deity	Image	Functions and attributes
Anu		An (in Sumerian), later known as Anu or Ilu (in Akkadian), is the supreme God and "prime mover in creation", embodied by the sky. He is the first and most distant ancestor, theologically conceived as the God of Heaven in its "transcendental obscurity". All the deities were believed to be the offspring of An and his consort Ki (cf. Anunnaki), While An was the utmost God, at least by the time of the earliest written records the cult was largely devoted to Enlil.
Enlil		Enlil, later known as Ellil, is the god of wind, air, earth, and storms and the chief of all the gods. He is theologically conceived as the "transcendent" facet of An. The Sumerians envisioned Enlil as a benevolent, fatherly deity, who watches over humanity and cares for their well-being. One Sumerian hymn describes Enlil as so glorious that even the other gods could not look upon him. His cult was closely tied to the holy city of Nippur and, after Nippur was sacked by the Elamites in 1230 BC, his cult fell into decline. He was eventually paralleled in his role as chief deity by Marduk, the national god of the Babylonians.
Enki		Enki, later known as Ea, and also occasionally referred to as Nudimmud or Ninšiku, is the god of the subterranean freshwater ocean, who is also closely associated with wisdom, magic, incantations, arts, and crafts. He is either the son of An, or the goddess Nammu, and is the twin brother of Ishkur. He is theologically conceived as the "immanent" facet of An. His wife is the goddess Damgalnuna (Ninhursag) and his sons include the gods Marduk, Asarluhi, Enbilulu, the sage Adapa, and the goddess Nanshe. His sukkal, or minister, is the two-faced messenger god Isimud. Enki is the divine benefactor of humanity, who helped humans survive the Great Flood. In Enki and the World Order, he organizes "in detail every




		feature of the civilised world." In Inanna and Enki, he is the holder of the sacred mes, the tablets concerning all aspects of human life.
Marduk		Marduk is the national god of the Babylonians. The expansion of his cult closely paralleled the historical rise of Babylon and, after assimilating various local deities, including a god named Asarluhi, he eventually came to parallel Enlil as the chief of the gods. His wife was the goddess Sarpānītu.
Ninurta		Ninurta, also known as Ningirsu, was a Mesopotamian warrior deity who was worshipped in Sumer from the very earliest times. He was the champion of the gods against the Anzû bird after it stole the Tablet of Destinies from his father Enlil and, in a myth that is alluded to in many works but never fully preserved, he killed a group of warriors known as the "Slain Heroes". Ninurta was also an agricultural deity and the patron god of farmers. In the epic poem Lugal-e, he slays the demon Asag and uses stones to build the Tigris and Euphrates rivers to make them useful for irrigation. His major symbols were a perched bird and a plow.
Nergal		Nergal was associated with the Underworld and is usually the husband of Ereshkigal. He was also associated with forest fires (and identified with the fire-god, Gibil), fevers, plagues, and war. In myths, he causes destruction and devastation.




<p>Inanna / Ishtar</p>		<p>Inanna, later known as Ishtar, is "the most important female deity of ancient Mesopotamia at all periods." She was the Sumerian goddess of love, sexuality, prostitution, and war. She was the divine personification of the planet Venus, the morning and evening star. Accounts of her parentage vary; in most myths, she is usually presented as the daughter of Nanna and Ningal, but, in other stories, she is the daughter of Enki or An along with an unknown mother. The Sumerians had more myths about her than any other deity. Many of the myths involving her revolve around her attempts to usurp control of the other deities' domains. Her most famous myth is the story of her descent into the Underworld, in which she attempts to conquer the Underworld, the domain of her older sister Ereshkigal, but is instead struck dead by the seven judges of the Underworld. She is only revived due to Enki's intervention and her husband Dumuzid is forced to take her place in the Underworld. Alongside her twin brother Utu, Inanna was the enforcer of divine justice.</p>
<p>Nabu</p>		<p>Nabu was the Mesopotamian god of scribes and writing. His wife was the goddess Tashmetu and he may have been associated with the planet Mercury. He later became associated with wisdom and agriculture.</p>
<p>Nanna-Suen</p>		<p>Nanna, Enzu or Zuen ("Lord of Wisdom") in Sumerian, later altered as Suen and Sin in Akkadian, is the ancient Mesopotamian god of the Moon. He was the son of Enlil and Ninlil and one of his most prominent myths was an account of how he was conceived and how he made his way from the Underworld to Nippur. The Moon-god has an important role among the major gods; in Assyrian esoteric literature, he is regarded as symbolizing the pleroma, i.e. the sum of all the gods' powers, and thus An itself. The crescent of the Moon-god was featured on the top of the cusps of Mesopotamian temples.</p>



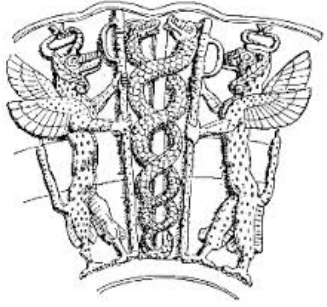
Utu		<p>Utu, later known as Shamash, is the ancient Mesopotamian god of the Sun, who was also revered as the god of truth, justice, and morality. He was the son of Nanna and the twin brother of Inanna. The Sun-god was believed to see all things that happen during the day and to aid mortals in distress. Alongside his sister Inanna, Utu was the enforcer of divine justice.</p>
Abzu		<p>In the Babylonian creation epic, the Enûma Eliš, Abzu is primordial undeterminacy, the consort of the goddess Tiamat who was killed by the god Ea (Enki). Abzu was the personification of the subterranean primeval waters.</p>
Anshar and Kishar		<p>In some East Semitic myths, Anshar and Kishar are a primordial couple, who are male and female respectively. In the Babylonian Enûma Eliš, they are the second pair of offspring born from Abzu and Tiamat and the parents of the supreme An.</p>
Ki		<p>Ki is the Sumerian goddess personifying the earth itself. In some Sumerian accounts, she is a primordial being who copulates with An to produce a variety of plants. Ki is the mother of Enlil and the Sumerians believed that the world began when Enlil separated her from An. She may be another name for Ninhursag, the earth goddess.</p>




Nammu		Nammu is the primordial goddess who, in some Sumerian traditions, was said to have given birth to both An and Ki. She eventually came to be regarded as the mother of Enki and was revered as an important mother goddess. Because the cuneiform sign used to write her name is the same as the sign for engur, a synonym for abzu, it is highly probably that she was originally conceived as the personification of the subterranean primeval waters.
Tiamat		Neo-Assyrian cylinder seal impression from the eighth century BC identified by several sources as a possible depiction of the slaying of Tiamat from the Enûma Eliš. In the Babylonian creation epic, the Enûma Eliš, after the separation of heaven and earth, the goddess Tiamat and her consort Abzu are the only deities in existence. A male-female pair, they mate and Tiamat gives birth to the first generation of gods. Ea (Enki) slays Abzu and Tiamat gives birth to eleven monsters to seek vengeance for her lover's death. Eventually, Marduk, the son of Enki and the national god of the Babylonians, slays Tiamat and uses her body to create the earth. In the Assyrian version of the story, it is Ashur who slays Tiamat instead. Tiamat was the personification of the primeval waters and it is hard to tell how the author of the Enûma Eliš imagined her appearance.
Ashur		Ashur is the national god of the Assyrians, who was syncretized with Enlil. He may have originally been a local deity associated with the city of Assur, but, with the growth of the Assyrian Empire, his cult was introduced to southern Mesopotamia.
Dagan		Dagan is a West Semitic god of grain who came to be worshipped across the entire Near East, including in Mesopotamia. According to one tradition, Dagan was the inventor of the plough. Dagan was assimilated into the Sumerian pantheon at an early date as a minor attendant deity to Enlil. His cult was extensively promoted by the Babylonian king Hammurabi, who claimed that Dagan had allowed him to conquer all of Mesopotamia. In an Assyrian poem, Dagan is one of the judges of the Underworld. Although Dagan was once mistakenly assumed to appear in artwork as a fish-garbed figure, this is now known to be inaccurate.




<p>Tammuz / Dumuzid</p>		<p>Dumuzid, later known by the corrupted form Tammuz, is the ancient Mesopotamian god of shepherds and the primary consort of the goddess Inanna. His sister is the goddess Geshtinanna. In addition to being the god of shepherds, Dumuzid was also an agricultural deity associated with the growth of plants. Ancient Near Eastern peoples associated Dumuzid with the springtime, when the land was fertile and abundant, but, during the summer months, when the land was dry and barren, it was thought that Dumuzid had "died". During the month of Dumuzid, which fell in the middle of summer, people all across Sumer would mourn over his death. An enormous number of popular stories circulated throughout the Near East surrounding his death.</p>
<p>Ereshkigal</p>		<p>Ereshkigal is the queen of the Mesopotamian Underworld. She lived in palace known as Ganzir. In earlier stories, her husband is Gugalanna, but, in later myths, her husband is the god Nergal. Her gatekeeper was the god Neti and her sukkal is the god Namtar. In the poem Inanna's Descent into the Underworld, Ereshkigal is described as Inanna's "older sister".</p>


Geshtinanna		<p>Geshtinanna is a rural agricultural goddess sometimes associated with dream interpretation. She is the sister of Dumuzid, the god of shepherds. In one story, she protects her brother when the galla demons come to drag him down to the Underworld by hiding him in successively in four different places. In another version of the story, she refuses to tell the galla where he is hiding, even after they torture her. The galla eventually take Dumuzid away after he is betrayed by an unnamed "friend", but Inanna decrees that he and Geshtinanna will alternate places every six months, each spending half the year in the Underworld while the other stays in Heaven. While she is in the Underworld, Geshtinanna serves as Ereshkigal's scribe.</p>
Gilgamesh		<p>Most historians generally agree that Gilgamesh was a historical king of the Sumerian city-state of Uruk, who probably ruled sometime during the early part of the Early Dynastic Period (c. 2900–2350 BC). It is certain that, during the later Early Dynastic Period, Gilgamesh was worshipped as a god at various locations across Sumer. In the twenty-first century BC, Utu-hengal, the king of Uruk adopted Gilgamesh as his patron deity. The kings of the Third Dynasty of Ur were especially fond of Gilgamesh, calling him their "divine brother" and "friend". During this period, a large number of myths and legends developed surrounding him. Probably during the Middle Babylonian Period (c. 1600 BC – c. 1155 BC), a scribe named Sîn-lēqi-unninni composed the Epic of Gilgamesh, an epic poem written in Akkadian narrating Gilgamesh's heroic exploits. The opening of the poem describes Gilgamesh as "one-third human, two-thirds divine".</p>
Gula		<p>Gula, also known as Nintinugga, Ninkarrak, Meme, Bau, and Ninisina, is the Mesopotamian goddess of healing and the divine patroness of doctors and medicine-workers. Dogs were considered sacred to her and she is often shown in art with a dog sitting beside her. She is sometimes the wife of Ninurta or Pabilsaĝ, but is also sometimes described as being married to the minor vegetation god Anu.</p>

Ishur		<p>Ishkur, later known as Adad, is the Mesopotamian god of storms and rain. He was sometimes syncretized with the Hurrian god Teshub and the Kassite god Buriash. His wife is the goddess Shala. He is usually the son of An, but, in older traditions, he is the son of Enlil.</p>
Istaran		<p>Ištaran is a local god of the Sumerian city-state of Der, which was located east of the Tigris river on the border between Mesopotamia and Elam. His wife is the goddess Šarrat-Dēri, whose name means "Queen of Der", and his sukkal was the snake-god Nirah. A text from the late Early Dynastic Period invokes Ištaran to resolve a boundary dispute between the cities of Lagash and Umma. In one of his inscriptions, King Gudea of Lagash mentions himself having installed a shrine for Ištaran in the temple of Ningirsu at Girsu and describes Ištaran as a god of justice. On kudurrus (boundary stones), Ištaran is often represented by a serpent, which may be Nirah or Ištaran himself. In a ritual associated with the Ekur temple in Nippur, Ištaran is a "dying god" and is equated with Dumuzid. His cult fell into decline during the Middle Babylonian Period, after which point he no longer appears in personal names.</p>
Nanshe		<p>Nanshe is a local goddess associated with the city of Lagash. She is the daughter of Enki and the sister of Ningirsu. She is associated with divination and the interpretation of dreams. She was also believed to assist the poor and the impoverished and ensure the accuracy of weights and measurements.</p>

Ninazu		<p>Ninazu is the son of Ereshkigal and the father of Ningishzida. He is closely associated with the Underworld. He was mostly worshipped in Eshnunna during the third millennium BC, but he was later supplanted by the Hurrian storm god Tishpak. A god named "Ninazu" was also worshipped at Enegi in southern Sumer, but this may be a different local god by the same name. His divine beast was the mušḫuššu, a kind of dragon, which was later given to Tishpak and then Marduk.</p>
Ningal		<p>Ningal, later known by the corrupted form Nikkal, was the wife of Nanna-Suen, the god of the moon, and the mother of Utu, the god of the sun.</p>
Ninishzida		<p>Ningishzida is a god who normally lives in the Underworld. He is the son of Ninazu and his name may be etymologically derived from a phrase meaning "Lord of the Good Tree". In the Sumerian poem, The Death of Gilgamesh, the hero Gilgamesh dies and meets Ningishzida, along with Dumuzid, in the Underworld. Gudea, the Sumerian king of the city-state of Lagash, revered Ningishzida as his personal protector. In the myth of Adapa, Dumuzid and Ningishzida are described as guarding the gates of the highest Heaven. Ningishzida was associated with the constellation Hydra.</p>

Ninhursag		<p>Ninhursag, also known as Damgalnuna and Ninmah, is the Sumerian mother goddess, who was associated with agricultural fertility. Many of the gods are her offspring, and many mortal rulers claimed her as their mother as well. She is also Enki's primary consort. In the myth of Enki and Ninhursaga, Enki and Ninhursag have sex and Ninhursag gives birth to a daughter, whom Enki rapes, resulting in a string of daughters, each of whom is raped by Enki. Her main temple was the E-Mah in Adab, but she was also associated with the city of Kesh and she is sometimes referred to as the "Bēlet-ilī of Kesh" or "she of Kesh". One of her main symbols is a divine emblem resembling the later Greek letter omega.</p>
Ninlil		<p>Ninlil was the wife of Enlil, the ruler of the gods. She was probably an artificially created deity, invented as a female equivalent to Enlil. She was regarded as having power on par with Enlil; in one poem, Ninlil declares, "As Enlil is your master, so am I also your mistress!"</p>
Ninshubur		<p>Ninshubur is the sukkal, or personal attendant, to the goddess Inanna. She is portrayed as "unshakably loyal" in her devotion to her mistress. In the Sumerian myth of Inanna and Enki, Ninshubur rescues Inanna from the monsters that Enki sends to capture her. In the Sumerian myth of Inanna's Descent into the Underworld, Ninshubur pleads with all the gods in effort to persuade them to rescue Inanna from the Underworld. In addition to being a source of great wisdom and knowledge, Ninshubur was also a warrior goddess. She was the guardian and messenger of the god An. She is said to have walked in front of An wherever he went, a position traditionally reserved for a bodyguard. In later Akkadian mythology, Ninshubur was syncretized with the male messenger deity Papsukkal.</p>

<p>Nisaba</p>		<p>Nisaba, also known as Nanibgal, was originally a goddess of grain and agriculture, but, starting in the Early Dynastic Period, she developed into a goddess of writing, accounting, and scribal knowledge. She was the daughter of Enlil and the sister of Ningirsu. In earlier times, her husband was the god Haya, but, in later times, she came to be regarded as the wife of Nabu, the god of scribes.</p>
<p>Astarte / Astoreth</p>		<p>Astarte (Greek: Ἀστάρτη, Astártē) is the Hellenized form of the Middle Eastern goddess Astoreth (Northwest Semitic), a form of Ishtar (East Semitic), worshipped from the Bronze Age through classical antiquity. The name is particularly associated with her worship in the ancient Levant among the Canaanites and Phoenicians. She was also celebrated in Egypt following the importation of Levantine cults there. The name Astarte is sometimes also applied to her cults in Mesopotamian cultures like Assyria and Babylonia.</p>
<p>Lilith \ Lilitu</p>		<p>Samuel Noah Kramer (1932, published 1938) translated ki-sikil-lil-la-ke as Lilith in "Tablet XII" of the Epic of Gilgamesh dated c.600 BC. "Tablet XII" is not part of the Epic of Gilgamesh, but is a later Assyrian Akkadian translation of the latter part of the Sumerian poem of Gilgamesh, Enkidu, and the Netherworld. The ki-sikil-lil-la-ke is associated with a serpent and a zu bird. In Gilgamesh, Enkidu, and the Netherworld, a huluppu tree grows in Inanna's garden in Uruk, whose wood she plans to use to build a new throne. After ten years of growth, she comes to harvest it and finds a serpent living at its base, a Zu bird raising young in its crown, and that a ki-sikil-lil-la-ke made a house in its trunk. Gilgamesh is said to have killed the snake, and then the zu bird flew away to the mountains with its young, while the ki-sikil-lil-la-ke fearfully destroys its house and runs for the forest. Identification of ki-sikil-lil-la-ke as Lilith is stated in Dictionary of Deities and Demons in the Bible (1999). According to a new source from Late Antiquity, Lilith appears in a Mandaic magic story where she is considered to represent the branches of a tree with other demonic</p>

		figures that form other parts of the tree, though this may also include multiple "Liliths". For more on Lilith – see the Judeo-Gnostic Study Guide.
Ba'al		<p>Baal (/ˈbeɪəl, ˈbɑːəl/), properly Baʿal, was a title and honorific meaning "owner," "lord" in the Northwest Semitic languages spoken in the Levant during antiquity. From its use among people, it came to be applied to gods. Scholars previously associated the theonym with solar cults and with a variety of unrelated patron deities, but inscriptions have shown that the name Baʿal was particularly associated with the storm and fertility god Hadad and his local manifestations.</p> <p>The Hebrew Bible, compiled and curated over a span of centuries, includes generic use of the term in reference to various Levantine deities, and finally pointed application towards Hadad, who was decried as a false god. That use was taken over into Christianity and Islam, sometimes under the opprobrious form Beelzebub in demonology.</p>

*This is not meant to be an exhaustive list of Sumerian and Mesopotamian deities but a sampling. Further research can be done to find out more about each deity or others in the Sumerian and Mesopotamian Pantheon.