

Cradle of Civilization

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A Blog about the Birth of Our Civilisation and Development

Do you serve Mammon (money) or God (everlasting values)?

Posted by [Sjur Cappelen Papazian](#) on January 21, 2016

Jesus said: “No one can serve two masters; for a slave will either hate the one and love the other, or be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and wealth.”

Mammon in the New Testament of the Bible means money or material wealth and is associated with the greedy pursuit of gain. In German, the word “Mammon” is a colloquial term for “money”.

In the Middle Ages it was often personified as a deity and sometimes included in the seven princes of Hell. In the 4th century Cyprian and Jerome relate mammon to greed and greed as an evil master that enslaves, and John Chrysostom even personifies mammon as greed.

Albert Barnes in his Notes on the New Testament states that Mammon was a Syriac word for an idol worshipped as the god of riches, similar to Plutus among the Greeks, but he cited no authority for the statement.

According to the Bible, the golden calf was an idol (a cult image) made by the Israelites during Moses’ absence, when he went up to Mount Sinai. In Hebrew, the incident is known as “The Sin of the Calf”. It is first mentioned in Exodus 32:4.

The bronze bull statue of Wall Street represents the golden calf that Aaron – the brother of Moses – erected for the children of Israel soon after they escaped from Egypt. They wanted Aaron to make an idol for them to worship. They did not want to worship God. Instead, they worshiped the golden calf.

The ancient Israelites declared that the golden calf was to be their “gods”. The calf was intended to be a physical representation of the God of Israel, and therefore was doubly wrong for involving Israel in idolatry and for ascribing physicality to God. Bulls constructed from various metals to represent other pagan gods are littered throughout the old testament.

Bull worship was common in many cultures. In Egypt, whence according to the Exodus narrative the Hebrews had recently come, the Apis Bull was a comparable object of worship, which some believe the Hebrews were reviving in the wilderness; alternatively, some believe the God of Israel was associated with or pictured as a calf/bull deity through the process of religious assimilation and syncretism.

Among the Egyptians’ and Hebrews’ neighbors in the Ancient Near East and in the Aegean, the Aurochs, the wild bull, was widely worshipped, often as the Lunar Bull and as the creature of El, a Northwest Semitic word meaning “god” or “deity”.

A metaphoric interpretation emphasizes the “gold” part of “golden calf” to criticize the pursuit of wealth. This usage can be found in Spanish where Mammon, the Gospel personification of idolatry of wealth, is not so current.

The Golden Age denotes a period of primordial peace, harmony, stability, and prosperity. During this age peace and harmony prevailed, people did not have to work to feed themselves, for the earth provided food in abundance. They lived to a very old age with a youthful appearance, eventually dying peacefully, with spirits living on as “guardians”.

In Greek mythology, Cronus was the leader and youngest of the first generation of Titans, the divine descendants of Uranus, the sky, and Gaia, the earth. He overthrew his father and ruled during the mythological Golden Age, until he was overthrown by his own son Zeus and imprisoned in Tartarus.

Cronus was usually depicted with a harpe, scythe or a sickle, which was the instrument he used to castrate and depose Uranus, his father. Cronus was also identified in classical antiquity with the Roman deity Saturn.

In Norse mythology, Njörðr is a god among the Vanir. Njörðr (God-Boötes), father of the deities Freyr (Jesus-Leo.) and Freyja (Mary-Virgo) by his unnamed Vanir sister, was in an ill-fated marriage with the goddess Skaði, lives in Nóatún and is associated with sea, seafaring, wind, fishing, wealth, and crop fertility.

Enlil (EN = Lord + LÍL = Wind, “Lord (of the) Storm”) is the god of breath, wind, loft and breadth (height and distance). Enlil was known as the inventor of the mattock (a key agricultural pick, hoe, ax or digging tool of the Sumerians) and helped plants to grow. The name is perhaps pronounced and sometimes rendered in translations as “Ellil” in later Akkadian, Hittite, and Canaanite literature.

Ekur is a Sumerian term meaning “mountain house”. It is the assembly of the gods in the Garden of the gods, parallel in Greek mythology to Mount Olympus and was the most revered and sacred building of ancient Sumer. This was carried-on into later tradition in the Bible by the prophet Micah who envisions “the mountain of the temple of Yahweh”.

The Ekur was seen as a place of judgement and the place from which Enlil’s divine laws are issued. The ethics and moral values of the site are extolled in myths, which Samuel Noah Kramer suggested would have made it the most ethically-oriented in the entire ancient Near East.

Ekur was the centre of the earth and location where heaven and earth were united. It is also known as Duranki and one of its structures is known as the Kiur (“great place”). In the Hymn to Enlil, the Ekur is closely linked to Enlil whilst in Enlil and Ninlil it is the abode of the Annanuki, from where Enlil is banished. The fall of Ekur is described in the Lament for Ur.

Astraea or Astrea (Ancient Greek: Ἀστραῖα; “star-maiden”), in ancient Greek religion, was a daughter of Astraeus and Eos. She was the virgin goddess of Innocence and purity and is always associated with the Greek goddess of justice, Dike (daughter of Zeus and Themis and the personification of just judgement).

Astraea, the celestial virgin, was the last of the immortals to live with humans during the Golden Age. According to Ovid, Astraea abandoned the earth during the Iron Age. Fleeing from the new wickedness of humanity, she ascended to heaven to become the constellation Virgo. The nearby constellation Libra reflected her symbolic association with Dike, who in Latin culture as Justitia is said to preside over the constellation.

According to legend, Astraea will one day come back to Earth, bringing with her the return of the utopian Golden Age of which she was the ambassador.

The Spring Triangle is an astronomical asterism involving an imaginary triangle drawn upon the celestial sphere, with its defining vertices at Arcturus, Spica, and Regulus. This triangle connects the constellations of Boötes, Virgo, and Leo. It is visible rising in the south eastern sky of the northern hemisphere between March and May.

George Lovi of Sky & Telescope magazine had a slightly different Spring triangle, including the tail of Leo, Denebola, instead of Regulus. Denebola is dimmer, but the triangle is more nearly equilateral.

One of the most important goddesses of reconstructed Proto-Indo-European religion is the personification of dawn as a beautiful young woman. Her name is reconstructed as Hausōs, besides numerous epithets. The name indicates that the goddess was imagined as a beautiful nubile woman, who also had aspects of a love goddess.

The name is derived from a root *h₂wes / *aues “to shine”, thus translating to “the shining one”. Both the English word east and the Latin auster “south” are from a root cognate adjective *aws-t(e)ro-. Also cognate is aurum “gold”, from *awso-. The name for “spring season”, *wes-r- is also from the same root.

The dawn goddess was also the goddess of spring, involved in the mythology of the Indo-European new year, where the dawn goddess is liberated from imprisonment by a god (reflected in the Rigveda as Indra, in Greek mythology as Dionysus and Cronus).

The abduction and imprisonment of the dawn goddess, and her liberation by a heroic god slaying the dragon who imprisons her, is a central myth of Indo-European religion, reflected in numerous traditions.

Besides the name most amenable to reconstruction, *h₂ewsōs, a number of epithets of the dawn goddess may be reconstructed with some certainty. Among these is *wenos- (also an s-stem), whence Sanskrit vanas “loveliness; desire”, used of Uṣas in the Rigveda, and the Latin name Venus and the Norse Vanir.

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