

The  
Hebrew  
letters מלך  
(*mlk*)  
usually  
stands for  
**melek**



## Encyclopaedia Britannica Library 2005: Moloch

### Moloch

Also spelled **Molech**, a deity to whom **child sacrifices** were made throughout the **ancient Middle East**.

The name derives from combining the consonants of the Hebrew *mel)ch* (“**king**”) with the vowels of *boshet* (“**shame**”), the latter often being used in the Old Testament as a variant for the popular **god Baal (“Lord”)**.

The laws given to Moses by God expressly forbade the Jews to do what was done in Egypt or in Canaan.

**“You shall not give any of your children to devote them by fire to Moloch, and so profane the name of God.”**

**Bible Leviticus 18: 21**

**Contemporary scholars now debate whether the law is a prohibition against the possibility that they might take up this custom.**

Later **kings Ahaz (2 Kings 16:3)** and **Manasseh (2 Kings 21:6)**, having been influenced by the Assyrians, worshipped **Moloch** at the **hilled site of Topheth, outside the walls of Jerusalem**.

**[Note:** Associating the Assyrians with **Moloch** is questionable when it was the deity of the Phoenicians and Ammonites and the “Hyksos” Hebrews of the Egyptian Captivity. **gws]**

This site [the **hilled site of Topheth, outside the walls of Jerusalem**] flourished under **Manasseh’s son King Amon** but was destroyed during the reign of **Josiah, the reformer**.

**“And he defiled Topheth, which is in the valley of the sons of Hinnom, that no one might burn his son or daughter as an offering to Moloch.”**

**Bible 2 Kings 23:10**

# Moloch

From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

**Moloch** or **Molech** or **Molekh** representing Hebrew מלך **mlk** is either the name of a god or the name of a particular kind of sacrifice associated historically with Phoenician and related cultures in north Africa and the Levant.

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## Ba'al

### Moloch the God Ba'al,

the Sacred Bull, was widely worshipped in the ancient Near East and wherever Carthaginian culture extended. Baal Moloch was conceived under the form of a calf or an ox or depicted as a man with the head of a bull.

*Hadad*, *Baal* or simply *the King* identified the god within his cult. The name *Moloch* is not the name he was known by among his worshippers, but a Hebrew translation. The written form *Moloch* (in the Septuagint Greek translation of the Old Testament), or *Molech* (Hebrew), is no different than the word *Melech* or *king*, transformed by interposing the vowels of *bosheth* or 'shameful thing'.

He is sometimes also called Milcom in the Old Testament.

## Forms and grammar

### Ancient Mideastern deities

#### Levantine deities

Adonis | Anat | Asherah | Ashima | Astarte | Atargatis | Ba'al | Berith | Dagon | Derceto | El | Elyon | Eshmun | Hadad | Kothar | **Moloch** | Mot | Qetesh | Resheph | Shalim | Yarikh | Yam

#### Mesopotamian deities

Adad | Amurru | An/Anu | Anshar | Asshur | Abzu/Apsu | Enki/Ea | Enlil | Ereshkigal | Inanna/Ishtar | Kingu | Kishar | Lahmu & Lahamu | Lilith | Marduk | Mummu | Nabu | Nammu | Nanna/Sin | Nergal | Ninhursag/Damkina | Ninlil | Tiamat | Utu/Shamash

The Hebrew letters מלך (*mlk*) usually stands for **melek**



Moloch

'king' (Proto-Northwest Semitic *malku*) but when vocalized as *mōlek* in Masoretic Hebrew text, they have been traditionally understood as a proper name Μολοχ (*molokh*) (Proto-Northwest Semitic *Mulku*) in the corresponding Greek renderings in the Septuagint translation, in Aquila, and in the Greek Targum. The form usually appears in the compound *lmlk*. The Hebrew preposition *l-* means 'to', but it can often mean 'for' or 'as a(n)'. Accordingly one can translate *lmlk* as "to Moloch" or "for Moloch" or "as a Moloch", or "to the Moloch" or "for the Moloch" or "as the Moloch", whatever a "Moloch" or "the Moloch" might be. We also once find *hmlk* 'the Moloch' standing by itself.

Because there is no difference between *mlk* 'king' and *mlk* 'moloch' in unpointed text, interpreters sometimes suggest *mōlek* should be understood in certain places where the Masoretic text is vocalized as *melek*, and vice versa.

*Moloch* has been traditionally interpreted as the name of a god, possibly a god titled *the king*, but purposely misvocalized as *Mōlek* instead of *Melek* using the vowels of Hebrew *bosheth* 'shame'.

Moloch appears in the Hebrew of 1 Kings 11.7 (on Solomon's religious failings):

Then did Solomon build a high place for Chemosh, the abomination of Moab, in the hill that is before Jerusalem, and *lmlk*, the abomination of the Sons of Ammon.

But in other passages the god of the Ammonites is named Milcom, not Moloch (see 1 Kings 11.33; Zephaniah 1.5). The Septuagint reads *Milcom* in 1 Kings 11.7 instead of Moloch which suggests a scribal error in the Hebrew. Many English translations accordingly follow the non-Hebrew versions at this point and render *Milcom*.

(The form *mlkm* can also mean 'their king' as well as Milcom and therefore one cannot always be sure in some other passages whether the King of Ammon is intended or the god Milcom.) It has also been suggested that the Ba'al of Tyre, Melqart 'king of the city' (who was probably the Ba'al whose worship was furthered by Ahab and his house) was this supposed god Moloch and that Melqart/Moloch was also Milcom the god of the Ammonites and identical with other gods whose names contain *mlk*. But nothing particularly suggests these identifications other than *mlk* in the various names.

Amos 5.27 reads in close translation:

But you shall carry Sikkut your king,  
and Kiyyun, your images, the star-symbol of your god  
which you made for yourself.

The Septuagint renders 'your king' as *Moloch*, perhaps from a scribal error, whence the verse appears in Acts 7.43:

You have lifted up the shrine of Molech  
and the star of your god Rephan,  
the idols you made to worship.

Accordingly this association of Moloch with these other gods is probably spurious.

All other references to *Moloch* use *mlk* only in the context of "passing children through fire *lmlk*", whatever is meant by *lmlk*, whether it means "to Moloch" or means something else. It has traditionally been understood to mean burning children alive to the god Moloch. But some have suggested a rite of purification by fire instead, though perhaps a dangerous one. References to passing through fire without mentioning *mlk* appear in Deuteronomy 12.31, 18.10–13; 2 Kings 21.6; Ezekiel 20.26,31; 23.37. So the existence of this practice is well documented. For a comparable practice of rendering infants immortal by passing them through the fire, indirectly attested in early Greek myth, see the entries for Thetis and also the myth of Demeter as the nurse of Demophon.

## Biblical texts

The pertinent Biblical texts follow in very literal translation. The word here translated literally as 'seed' very often means *offspring*. The forms containing *mlk* have been left untranslated. The reader may substitute either "to Moloch" or "as a

*molk*".

Leviticus 18.21

And you shall not let any of your seed pass through Mo'lech, neither shall you profane the name of your God: I am the Lord.

Leviticus 20.2–5:

Again, you shall say to the Sons of Israel: Whoever he be of the Sons of Israel or of the strangers that sojourn in Israel, that gives any of his seed Mo'lech; he shall surely be put to death: the people of the land shall stone him with stones. And I will set my face against that man and will cut him off from among his people; because he has given of his seed Mo'lech, to defile my sanctuary, and to profane my holy name. And if the people of the land do at all hide their eyes from that man, when he gives of his seed Mo'lech, and do not kill him, then I will set my face against that man, and against his family, and will cut him off, and all that go astray after him, whoring after Mo'lech from among the people.

2 Kings 23.10 (on King Josiah's reform):

And he defiled the *Tophet*, which is in the valley of Ben-hinnom, that no man might make his son or his daughter pass through the fire Mo'lech.

Jeremiah 32.35:

And they built the high places of the Ba'al, which are in the valley of Ben-hinnom, to cause their sons and their daughters to pass through the fire Mo'lech; which I did not command them, nor did it come into my mind that they should do this abomination, to cause Judah to sin.

Moloch has also been referred to simply as a rebel angel.

## Traditional accounts and theories

The 12th century rabbi Rashi, commenting on Jeremiah 7.31 stated:

Tophet is Moloch, which was made of brass; and they heated him from his lower parts; and his hands being stretched out, and made hot, they put the child between his hands, and it was burnt; when it vehemently cried out; but the priests beat a drum, that the father might not hear the voice of his son, and his heart might not be moved.

A different rabbinical tradition says that the idol was hollow and was divided into seven compartments, in one of which they put flour, in the second turtle-doves, in the third a ewe, in the fourth a ram, in the fifth a calf, in the sixth an ox, and in the seventh a child, which were all burnt together by heating the statue inside.

Later commentators have compared these accounts with similar ones from Greek and Latin sources speaking of the offering of children by fire as sacrifices in the Punic city of Carthage, which was a Phoenician colony. Cleitarchus, Diodorus Siculus and Plutarch all mention burning of children as an offering to Cronus or

Saturn, that is to Ba'al Hammon, the chief god of Carthage. Issues and practices relating to Moloch and child sacrifice may also have been overemphasized for effect. After the Romans finally defeated Carthage and totally destroyed the city, they engaged in post-war propaganda to make their arch enemies seem cruel and less civilised.

Paul G. Mosca in his thesis (described below) translates Cleitarchus' paraphrase of a scholia to Plato's *Republic* as:

There stands in their midst a bronze statue of Kronos, its hands extended over a bronze brazier, the flames of which engulf the child. When the flames fall upon the body, the limbs contract and the open mouth seems almost to be laughing until the contracted body slips quietly into the brazier. Thus it is that the 'grin' is known as 'sardonic laughter,' since they die laughing.

Diodorus Siculus (20.14) wrote:

There was in their city a bronze image of Cronus extending its hands, palms up and sloping toward the ground, so that each of the children when placed thereon rolled down and fell into a sort of gaping pit filled with fire.

Diodorus also relates relatives were forbidden to weep and that when Agathocles defeated Carthage, the Carthaginian nobles believed they had displeased the gods by substituting low-born children for their own children. They attempted to make amends by sacrificing 200 children at once, children of the best families, and in their enthusiasm actually sacrificed 300 children.

Plutarch wrote in *De Superstitiones* 171:

... the whole area before the statue was filled with a loud noise of flutes and drums so that the cries of wailing should not reach the ears of the people.

It seemed to many commentators that this Cronus or Saturn must also be Moloch. However, disturbingly, nineteenth century and early twentieth century archaeology found almost no evidence of a god called something like Moloch or Molech. Rabbinical traditions about other gods mentioned in the Tanach appeared to be unreliable, just Jewish legends which raised reasonable doubt about what was said about Moloch. The descriptions of Moloch might be simply taken from accounts of the sacrifice to Cronus and from the tale of the Minotaur. No bull-headed Phoenician god was known. This did not hold back some from identifying Moloch with Milcom, with the Tyrian god Melqart, with Ba'al Hammon to whom children were purportedly sacrificed, and with any other god called 'Lord' (*Ba'al*) or (*Bel*). These various suggested equations combined with the popular solar theory hypotheses of the day generated a single theoretical sun god Baal, a modern meta-mythical being who was otherwise whatever the theorist wished him to be.

## **Moloch in medieval texts**

Like some other gods and demons found in the Bible, Moloch appears as part of

medieval demonology, as a Prince of Hell. This Moloch finds particular pleasure in making mothers weep; for he specialises in stealing their children. According to some 16th century demonologists Moloch's power is stronger in October.

It is likely that the motif of stealing children was inspired by the traditional understanding that babies were sacrificed to Moloch. The ancients would heat this idol up with fire until it was glowing, then they would take their newborn babies, place them on the arms of the idol, and watch them burn to death.

## Modern accounts and theories

### Eissfeldt's theory: a type of sacrifice

In 1921 Otto Eissfeldt, excavating in Carthage, discovered inscriptions with the word *mlk* which in the context meant neither 'king' nor the name of any god. He concluded that it was instead a term for a particular kind of sacrifice, one which at least in some cases involved human sacrifice. A relief was found showing a priest holding a child. Also uncovered was a sanctuary to the goddess Tanit comprising a cemetery with thousands of burned bodies of animal and of human infants, dating from the 8th century BC down to the destruction of Carthage in 146 BC. Eissfeldt identified the site as a *tophet*, using a Hebrew word of previously unknown meaning connected to the burning in some Biblical passages. Most of the children's bodies appeared to be those of newborns, but some were older, up to about six years of age.

Eissfeldt further concluded that the Hebrew writings were not talking about a god Moloch at all, but about the *molk* or *mulk* sacrifice, that the abomination was not in worshipping a god Molech who demanded children be sacrificed to him, but in the practice of sacrificing human children as a *molk*. Hebrews were strongly opposed to sacrificing first-born children as a *molk* to Yahweh himself. The practice may have been conducted by their neighbors in Canaan. The relevant Scriptural passages depict Yahweh condemning such practices in harsh terms. Hebrews who made such a sacrifice were executed by stoning. Any who knew about such a sacrifice, and did not act to prevent it, were ejected from the community along with their family. [1] (<http://www.gnpceb.org/esv/search/?q=Leviticus+20>)

Similar "tophets" have since been found at Carthage and other places in North Africa, and in Sardinia, Malta, Sicily . In late 1990 a possible *tophet* consisting of cinerary urns containing bones and ashes and votive objects was retrieved from ransacking on the mainland just outside of Tyre in the Phoenician homeland [2] (<http://almashriq.hiof.no/ddc/projects/archaeology/berytus-back/berytus39/seeden-tophet/>).

Further discussion of Eissfeldt's theories unfolded.

### Discussion of Eissfeldt's theory

From the beginning there were some who doubted Eissfeldt's theory but opposition

was only sporadic until 1970. Prominent archaeologist Sabatino Moscati (who had accepted Eissfeldt's idea, like most others) changed his opinion and spoke against it. Others followed.

The arguments were that classical accounts of the sacrifices of children at Carthage were not numerous and were only particularly described as occurring in times of peril, not necessarily a regular occurrence. Might not the burned bodies of infants be mostly those of stillborn children or of children who had died very young of natural causes? Might not the burning of their bodies be a religious practice applied in such cases? Need one assume the burning of live children? Could the accounts be anti-Punic propaganda? Why were accusations of human sacrifice in Carthage found only among a small number of authors and not mentioned at all by many other writers who dealt with Carthage in greater depth or were more openly hostile to Carthage? Some accounts of the sacrifices described the children as lads and lasses, hardly infants.

Texts referring to the *molk* sacrifice mentioned animals more than they mentioned humans. Of course, those may have been animals offered instead of humans to redeem a human life. And the Biblical decrying of the sacrificing of one's children as a *molk* sacrifice doesn't indicate one way or the other that all *molk* sacrifices must involve human child sacrifice or even that a *molk* usually involved human sacrifice.

It was pointed out the phrase *whoring after* was elsewhere only used about seeking other gods, not about particular religious practices. And should one so casually turn aside from the Greek translation made by those who may have known far more about such things than we will ever know to say that *lmlk* must mean 'as a *molk* offering' and not 'to Moloch'?

Eissfeldt's use of the Biblical word *tophet* was criticized as arbitrary. Even those who believed in Eissfeldt's general theory mostly took *tophet* to mean something like 'hearth' in the Biblical context, not a cemetery of some kind.

The detractors gained in numbers.

John Day, in his book *Molech: A God of Human Sacrifice in the Old Testament* (Cambridge, 1989; ISBN 0-521-36474-4), again put forth the argument that there was indeed a particular god named Molech, citing a god *mlk* from two Ugaritic serpent charms, and an obscure god Malik/Malku from some god lists who in two texts was equated with Nergal, the Mesopotamian god of the underworld. A god of the underworld is just the kind of god one might worship in the *valley* of Ben-Hinnom rather than on a hill top.

The debate remains hung, waiting for more evidence, some still strongly supporting Eissfeldt's theory and others decrying it as an erroneous interpretation of what has been found. It is for some a touchy issue with accusations of racial bias occasionally being made.

## Flaubert's conception

*Salammbô*, a sensationalist semi-historical novel about Carthage by Gustave Flaubert published in 1888 was extraordinarily successful. Flaubert imaginatively and not without reasonable scholarship, created his own version of the Carthaginian religion, including known Carthaginian gods such as Ba'al Hammon, Khamon, Melkarth and Tanith. But he also included the god Moloch, and made Moloch rather than Khamon to be the god to whom the Carthaginians offered children. Flaubert described this Moloch mostly according to the Rabbinic descriptions but with his own additions. From chapter 7:

Then further back, higher than the candelabrum, and much higher than the altar, rose the Moloch, all of iron, and with gaping apertures in his human breast. His outspread wings were stretched upon the wall, his tapering hands reached down to the ground; three black stones bordered by yellow circles represented three eyeballs on his brow, and his bull's head was raised with a terrible effort as if in order to bellow.

Chapter 13 describes luridly how, in desperate attempt to call down rain, the image of Moloch was brought to the center of Carthage, how the arms of the image were moved by the pulling of chains by the priests (apparently Flaubert's own invention), and then describes the sacrifices made to Moloch. First grain and animals of various kinds were placed in compartments within the statue (as in the Rabbinic account). Then the children were offered, at first a few, and then more and more.

The brazen arms were working more quickly. They paused no longer. Every time that a child was placed in them the priests of Moloch spread out their hands upon him to burden him with the crimes of the people, vociferating: "They are not men but oxen!" and the multitude round about repeated: "Oxen! oxen!" The devout exclaimed: "Lord! eat!" and the priests of Proserpine, complying through terror with the needs of Carthage, muttered the Eleusinian formula: "Pour out rain! bring forth!" The victims, when scarcely at the edge of the opening, disappeared like a drop of water on a red-hot plate, and white smoke rose amid the great scarlet colour. Nevertheless, the appetite of the god was not appeased. He ever wished for more. In order to furnish him with a larger supply, the victims were piled up on his hands with a big chain above them which kept them in their place. Some devout persons had at the beginning wished to count them, to see whether their number corresponded with the days of the solar year; but others were brought, and it was impossible to distinguish them in the giddy motion of the horrible arms. This lasted for a long, indefinite time until the evening. Then the partitions inside assumed a darker glow, and burning flesh could be seen. Some even believed that they could descry hair, limbs, and whole bodies. Night fell; clouds accumulated above the Baal. The funeral-pile, which was flameless now, formed a pyramid of coals up to his knees; completely red like a giant covered with blood, he looked, with his head thrown back, as though he were staggering beneath the weight of his intoxication.

Director Giovanni Pastrone's very popular silent film *Cabiria* released in 1914 was largely based on *Salammbô* and included an enormous image of Moloch modeled on Flaubert's description. Elizabeth Dilling quoted Flaubert's descriptions as factual in her notorious anti-Jewish *The Plot Against Christianity* re-released under the title *The Jewish Religion: Its Influence Today*. Information from the novel and film still finds its way into serious writing about Moloch, Melqart, Carthage, Ba'al Hammon

and so forth.

## Moloch as metaphor in art

"Moloch" features prominently in the second part of Allen Ginsberg's poem *Howl*. In that work, Moloch is generally interpreted as representing American consumerism. In Alexandr Sokurov's 1999 film *Moloch* about Adolf Hitler, Moloch is of course a metaphor for the German *Führer*.

## Paradise Lost

In Milton's *Paradise Lost*, Moloch is one of the greatest warriors of the rebel angels, vengeful and militant,

"besmeared with blood  
Of human sacrifice, and parents' tears."

He is listed among the chief of Satan's angels in Book I, and is given a speech at the parliament of Hell in Book 2:43 - 105, where he argues for immediate warfare against God. He later becomes revered as a pagan god on Earth.

## Moloch in popular culture

- The idol Moloch that devours its follower's children has appeared in at least two modern works of art. In Fritz Lang's 1927 dystopian film *Metropolis*, the hero, Freder, when he first witnesses the proletariat workers horrible conditions and watches an accident occur, has a delusion where the enormous machines of the city become anthropomorphic, with flaming mouths. The workers carry their children to the machines and cast them in, and Freder calls "Moloch!", recognizing the ancient god.
- Moloch is prominent in the second section of Allen Ginsberg's poem, *Howl*.
- Sacrifices to Molech are a major plot element in James Michener's 1967 novel, *The Source*. In 2200 B.C.E., at Tell Makor, the farmer Urbaal is forced to sacrifice his younger wife Timna's first-born child to Molech. At the public ceremony, Urbaal covers Timna's mouth with his hand so no one will hear her weep.
- Janko Kač, a Slovene writer, has written *Moloh* ("Moloch") in which he allegorically presented a textile factory in Prebold, which has been devouring poor workers, pushing them as far as attempting to burn it, but the woman who tried to do that, ended her agony in a small lake.
- In *Golden Sun: The Lost Age*, a game for Nintendo's Game Boy Advance, Moloch is a Summoned Spirit requiring the power of two Mercury Djinn and one Jupiter Djinn to summon. Here, Moloch is a big, white, furry, horned ice monster.

- An episode of the popular television show *Buffy the Vampire Slayer* named "I Robot... You Jane" (Season 1) featured a demon named Moloch. In this episode, the character Moloch "The Corruptor" came to inhabit the internet, built a robot body for himself and was eventually defeated by Buffy.
- In the video game *Mortal Kombat: Deadly Alliance*, the boss-character Moloch is a powerful Oni, an ally of Shang Tsung as insurance against betrayal by Quan Chi.
- Moloch was a member of the Spookhouse organization along with your character, The Stranger, in the 1999 PC game, *Nocturne (Game)*. He was portrayed as a large, dark red demon with three horns, two shredded wings, and hooved feet. He fought other supernatural threats alongside humans because his fellow demons cast him out of hell centuries before, and he claims to have been cast out of Heaven as well.
- *Moloch*: is a novel by Henry Miller
- Moloch appears in Dean Koontz's novel, *The Face*. The antagonist, Corky Laputa, is referred to as Moloch by a deceased character who communicates with Channing's child, Aelfric, by phone.
- Molochs feature as powerful demonic enemies in the roguelike computer game *ADOM*.
- In *Nethack*, the game revolves around the task of recovering the Amulet of Yendor, "the most powerful of the artifacts of the Gods", which was stolen by Moloch and hidden in the dark cavities of Gehennom.
- In the core *Dungeons & Dragons* campaign setting and other settings, including the *Forgotten Realms* and *Planescape*, Moloch is a deposed archdevil of the Nine Hells of Baator. Originally ruler of the mountainous sixth layer *Malbolge*, he unsuccessfully rebelled against Asmodeus in the Reckoning. Moloch's advisor and consort The Hag Countess was installed as ruler of Malbolge in his place.
- In modern Hebrew language the expression *sacrifice something/someone to the Molech* means to give up something valuable or harm someone for an utterly worthless cause.
- The episode of *The Outer Limits* named Resurrection features a story where mankind and all other mammal life becomes extinct, with androids left to rule the world. The android in charge of keeping the robot community safe is named Moloch. In the episode a robot clones a human 'Cain' from a strand of hair, and Moloch tries to find and destroy the human.
- In the Wizards of the Coast TCG Hecatomb base set, Moloch is one of the rare God cards. The name also appeared in the Ravnica set as "Torpid Moloch" and in the Dissension set as "Whiptail Moloch", lizard creatures not unlike Stygimoloch. The Ravnica block takes place within a sprawling city, so perhaps this is a reference to Lang's Metropolis.

- Moloch is one of the antagonists in the Hellboy novel "On Earth As It Is In Hell".
- Moloch the Mystic, real name Edward Jacobi, is a fictional character in the 1987 graphic novel Watchmen.
- Moloch appears in John McIntyre-Grimau's epic, Matt the Zombie, as a soul-consuming demon.
- In the PC game FreeSpace 2, the Moloch is a class of Shivan corvettes.
- Current 93's 2000 album "Sleep Has His House" features a song titled "Good Morning Great Moloch."
- In the PSP game Death Jr., Moloch is the game's main villain - a demon who DJ and his friends accidentally set free. In the graphic novel based on the game, he is the elder brother of DJ's father, Death, and also the villain of the story.
- Moloch appears in the comic Proposition Player where he appears as a fat old god who has been looking for a new pantheon. by Fables creator Willingham.
- Ronnie James Dio, of the heavy metal band Black Sabbath, recalls his grandmother referring to Moloch when she made the sign for the 'evil eye', index finger and pinky finger extended, that he then popularized during concerts and has now become the universal sign of heavy metal in pop culture.

## References

- Grena, G.M. (2004). *LMLK--A Mystery Belonging to the King vol. 1*. Redondo Beach, California: 4000 Years of Writing History. ISBN 0-9748786-0-X.

## External links

- **Old articles on Moloch**
  - *Encyclopædia Biblica: Minni – Mordecai* ([http://www.cwru.edu/univlib/preserve/Etana/encyl\\_biblica\\_1-p/minni-mordecai.pdf](http://www.cwru.edu/univlib/preserve/Etana/encyl_biblica_1-p/minni-mordecai.pdf)) (Contains a very long but now outdated article on Moloch from 1899.)
  - Jewish Encyclopedia: Moloch (<http://www.jewishencyclopedia.com/view.jsp?artid=718&letter=M&search=Moloch>) and Chiun (<http://www.jewishencyclopedia.com/view.jsp?artid=468&letter=C&search=Chiun>) (Short examples of older discussion.)
  - Catholic Encyclopedia: Moloch

(<http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/10443b.htm>) (A short but quite good article, in part denying that Moloch sacrifices were offered to Yahweh as argued in the *Encyclopædia Biblica* and *Jewish Encyclopedia*.)

- **On the *Molk* sacrifice**

- Hannibal Barca: The God in Stone (<http://www.barca.fsnet.co.uk/carthage-god-stone.htm>) (A strong statement of the *molk* sacrifice theory.)
- Phoenicia: Child Sacrifice (<http://phoenicia.org/childsacrifice.html>) (Arguments for and against child sacrifice in Carthage and elsewhere.)
- A Preliminary Report on the Incirli Stele (<http://www.humnet.ucla.edu/humnet/nelc/stelasite/report.html>) (Discussion of a stele with Phoenician text which may equate *molk/mulk* to first-born son).
- Helga Seeden, "A tophet in Tyre?" 1991. (<http://almashriq.hiof.no/ddc/projects/archaeology/berytus-back/berytus39/seeden-tophet/>) from *Berytus 39* (American University of Beirut).

- **Modern conspiracy theories**

- *Infowars.com* (<http://www.infowars.com/>)
- Entry at *DeliriumsRealm.com* (<http://www.deliriumsrealm.com/delirium/mythology/moloch.asp>)

Retrieved from "<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Moloch>"

Categories: Articles with unsourced statements | Ammon | Demons in Christianity | Solar gods | Tanakh | Torah events | West Semitic deities | Conspiracy theories | Characters in Paradise Lost

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## Moloch

posted by Krista | 4/4/2004 10:15:49 AM | [Permalink](#)



### **Moloch, the Abomination of the Children of Ammon**

Molech, whose name probably derived from Melech "king" and Bosheth, "shame", was one of the deities worshipped by the idolatrous Israelites. He was referred to as "the abomination of the children of Ammon" (1 Kings 11:7) and the primary means of worshipping him appears to be child sacrifice or "to pass through the fire." Solomon was said to have built a temple to him.

"Then did Solomon build an high place for Chemosh, the abomination of Moab, in the hill that is before Jerusalem, and for Molech, the abomination of the children of Ammon." (1 Kings 11:7)

Sacrificing children was not uncommon, but the practice died down around the time of Jeremiah when the King defiled Tophet, the place where Moloch was worshipped.

"He also defiled Topheth, which is in the valley of the son of Hinnom, that no man might make his son or his daughter pass through the fire for Molech." (2 Kings 23:10)

"For the sons of Judah have done that which is evil in My sight,' declares the LORD, 'they have set their detestable things in the house which is called by My name, to defile it. They have built the high places of Topheth, which is in the valley of the son of Hinnom, to burn their sons and their daughters in the fire, which I did not command, and it did not come into My mind. Therefore, behold, days are coming,' declares the LORD, 'when it will no longer be called Topheth, or the valley of the son of Hinnom, but the valley of the Slaughter; for they will bury in Topheth because there is no other place.'" (Jer 7: 30-32)

Moloch has often been identified with Milcom, the god of the Ammonites. He was probably also identified with Baal, and as a sun or fire god, as he was also identified with the Assyrian/Babylonian "Malik", and at Palmyra "Malach-bel". Moloch is also identified with Baal Hammon in Carthaginian religion.

### **Moloch in Paradise Lost**

Milton writes of him in Paradise Lost

"First, Moloch, horrid King, besmeared with blood  
Of human sacrifice, and parents' tears;  
Though, for the noise of drums and timbrels loud,  
Their children's cries unheard that passed through fire  
To his grim idol. Him the Ammonite  
Worshiped in Rabba and her watery plain,

In Argob and in Basan, to the stream  
Of utmost Arnon. Nor content with such  
Audacious neighbourhood, the wisest heart  
Of Solomon he led by fraud to build  
His temple right against the temple of God  
On that opprobrious hill, and made his grove  
The pleasant valley of Hinnom, Tophet thence  
And black Gehenna called, the type of Hell."  
- Paradise Lost, i. 391-405

### **Dictionnaire Infernal - Collin de Plancy (1863) (paraphrased)**

Moloch was the god of the Ammonites, portrayed as a bronze statue with a calf's head adorned with a royal crown and seated on a throne. His arms were extended to receive the child victims sacrificed to him. Milton wrote that Moloch was a frightening and terrible demon covered with mothers' tears and children's blood.

Rabbis claim that in the famous statue of Moloch, there were seven kinds of cabinets. The first was for flour, the second for turtle doves, the third for an ewe, the fourth for a ram, the fifth for a calf, the sixth for a beef, and the seventh for a child. It is because of this, Moloch is associated with Mithras and his seven mysterious gates with seven chambers. When a child was sacrificed to Moloch, a fire was lit inside the statue. The priests would then beat loudly on drums and other objects so that the cries would not be heard.

### **Reference**

- DeliriumsRealm Store: [Buy Moloch Merchandise](#)
- Book: [Dictionary of Angels Including the Fallen Ones](#)
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