

# **Gods and Goddesses: Moloch**

## **Other names**

**Melech, Molech, Milcom, Melkom, Moloch, Molek, Malec, Malik, Melek, Malkum, Melqart, Melkart, Milk, Melqarth, Kronos, Cronus.**

## **Background**

**Moloch, Molech, Molekh, or Molek, representing Hebrew מלך mlk, (translated directly into king) is either the name of a god and the name of a particular kind of sacrifice associated historically with that god in cultures throughout the Middle East, including but not limited to the Jewish, Egyptian, Caananite, Phoenician and related cultures in North Africa and the Levant.**

**Moloch went by many names including, but not limited to, Ba'al, Moloch, Apis Bull, Golden Calf, Chemosh, as well as many other names, and was widely worshipped in the Middle East and wherever Punic culture extended (including, but not limited to, the Ammonites, Edomites and the Moabites). 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 the name he was known by among his worshippers, but is a Hebrew translation. (MLK has been found on stele at the infant necropolis in Carthage.) The written form Μολῶχ Moloch (in the Septuagint Greek translation of the Old Testament), or Molech (Hebrew), is the word Melech or king, transformed by interposing the vowels of bosheth or 'shameful thing'.**

## **The Golden Calf (Moloch) Idol**

**The Molech idol was a large, hollow brass statue with the head of a bull and the bulging belly of a man. It was designed like an old fashioned pot-bellied stove, with the belly as the firebox.**

**A child sacrifice laid on the hands, would roll into the fire in the belly cavity. Scripture describes this practice as 'passing through the fire to Molech,' Leviticus 18:21.**

**Cleitarchus, an ancient historian, around 315 BC, gives this description of a fire god at Carthage. (Kronos is the north African name for Molech).**

**"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."**

**Diodorus Siculus, 90-30 BC, gives this description of a Carthaginian fire god.**

**"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."**

**Plutarch, AD 46-127, senior priest of the oracle at Delphi, gives this description of the fire god.**

**"The whole area before the statue was filled with a loud noise of flutes and drums so that the cries of wailing [of the children being sacrificed] should not reach the ears of the people."**

**Molech worship is essentially identical with worship of Chemosh of Moab, Cronos-Cronos of Carthage and Melkart-Melqart of Tyre. The general name, used throughout Palestine and in the Bible, for this type of fire god, was Baal.**