

## A CHRISTIAN MYTHOS

by

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Here is an idea for a mythos that I may use in the future. Please be sure to read all of it since it does get pretty complex and I realize there is room for misinterpretation if it is not thoroughly read.

### INTRODUCTION

It is assumed that for all intensive purposes, the gods of every known religion of man exist or have existed: Egyptian, Greco-Roman, Norse, Native American, Jewish, Christian, Muslim, etc.

In the case of the Greeks and Romans, they merely have different names for the same gods, and deities of the two cultures are interchangeable with one another. The Greco-Roman pantheon would be considered to have dominion over both cultures so long as those cultures followed them, up to the point where their followers might be converted to worship another god or the Supreme Being as in the case of Rome's conversion to Christianity, in which case their dominion would be lost.

Please note that these are only my ideas of what might have been possible if it is true that, as some historians and archaeologists say, myth is based on fact. To repeat, this is just a \*mythos\* and I'm not trying to propose this as a real life theory...

### THE FIVE ORDERS OF LIFE

There are five orders of life forms, from the least to the greatest:

FIRST ORDER: ANIMALS, PLANTS, FUNGI, NONSENTIENT LIVING THINGS, ANIMATED OBJECTS (NONSENTIENT LIFE):

Things that are classified as 'alive' but have an average intelligence of 4 or less are considered to be nonsentient. Whatever is nonsentient also lacks a soul, meaning that an ooze would have a soul whereas a hydra would not. Also note that creatures which are mythological or invented but which have average intelligence of 4 or less are also counted as 1st order beings.

The only exception to this INT rule is whether a being is on the low end of the bell curve of INT for his race, but his race's average INT is greater than 4. For example, a human with 3 INT is still considered to have a soul while an intelligent sword would never have one (spirit possession notwithstanding), since swords have an average INT of 0.

SECOND ORDER: HUMANS, DEMIHUMANS, HUMANIDS, SENTIENT MONSTERS (MORTALS):

Anything that has consciousness and is self-aware, and begins its existence as a corporeal being. Mythological monsters such as minotaurs, centaurs, harpies, medusae, etc., are considered 2nd-order beings if they

are subservient to the pantheon of the culture that they belong to. In other words, if it is limited to a finite corporeal existence, and is sentient, it belongs to the second order of life.

THIRD ORDER: IMMORTALS, NEPHILIM, DEMIGODS, ANGELIC-MORTAL HYBRIDS:

Anything that has immortality or is naturally a spirit being is part of the 3rd order.

Humans (and by inference to the image of God, demihumans and humanoids as well) are by nature spiritual beings, but since they are born as corporeal beings, they are "slightly less than the angels", and any creature limited to a corporeal existence, although super-powerful, would be considered to be lower than the 4th order.

The beings known as the "mighty men of old and renown" mentioned in Genesis 6:4 also belong to this category, the offspring of the daughters of men who were taken by the "sons of God" elsewhere in that chapter.

The 3rd order of lifeforms also includes beings that are the offspring of mortals who mated with beings of the fourth order: The demigod Hercules (Heracles) is one example of a 3th order being. The man known as Goliath, if his description was accurate, could also have been a 3rd order being or at least a mortal descendant of a third-order immortal. The Canaanites as observed by the twelve spies of Israel during their journey to the Promised Land in the book of Exodus might well have been a whole race of or contained a large population of immortals, for immortals are generally thought to be of superhuman size.

In some realms, giantkind might be considered to belong to the third order, and certainly dragons, which are very powerful indeed, might be assigned to this higher status.

Most of the 3rd order beings are corporeal, some can alternate between corporeal and spiritual existence, and a very few have achieved complete spiritual conversion from being a second-order being to being one of the third order, with aid from a more powerful being.

The beings of the 3rd order were generally superhumanly strong, intelligent, and tall. Some of the most powerful giant races are 3rd order beings, although very weak compared to other 3rd order races. Giant-kin are considered to be descendants of immortals or demigods who mated with mortals; these creatures do not have the immortality of 3rd order entities but retain much of the great power their ancestors possess.

FOURTH ORDER: ANGELS; DEMONS; THE GODS OF THE GREEK, ROMAN, NORSE, EGYPTIAN, AND HINDU RELIGIONS; THE GODS OF THE PANTHEONS OF THE AD&D WORLDS, THE GODS OF ANY OTHER PANTHEON OR PANTHEISTIC RELIGION:

The beings of the fourth order are the gods of the pantheistic religions, who represented deities as much more powerful than mortals, but not all-powerful.

Gods specifically mentioned in the Bible such as Baal, Moloch, and Dagon also belong to this category, as well as any other gods ever worshipped by humans.

This mythos could be applied to an already-existing mythos of a role-playing game. In such cases, the gods of that mythos of the game would be considered of the 4th order and be subject to the Supreme Being; if there is a faith resembling Judaism, Christianity, or Islam, the deity of that faith is considered to be an aspect of the Supreme Being (i.e.,

the same being but under a different name and perhaps looked at with varying beliefs and doctrines).

It is possible that a being such as Satan could be classified under this category, and for that matter, archangels. I guess it depends on what theory of Satan's origin you believe in.

In Greek mythology, the Cyclopes and Titans are grouped into this category.

Calling angels and demons 'gods' may grate against some people, but I want to assure them that these 'gods' are only deities insofar as the pantheistic cultures are concerned: Not extremely powerful, but not omnipotent; not omniscient, and not existing throughout all space and time. The beings of the 4th order while extremely powerful entities, are still "limited" in their ability to influence the universe. Their natural existence is spiritual rather than corporeal.

In this mythos I speculate that all the gods of the pantheons were once angels, but they rebelled against the Supreme Being and created empires of mortals who would be persuaded and sometimes coerced to worship and obey them. Satan certainly belongs to this category, and he is among the few fourth-order beings who have not sought to settle down into one area of mankind to flourish. Rather, he moves throughout the world to gain worshippers; other fourth-order beings have since followed his example.

Angels, too, belong to this classification. They differ of course from the rest of the fourth order because they have remained subservient to the Supreme Being, have not tried to make followers of mortalkind, have not sought to abuse their powers, and have not encroached upon the corporeal world unless directed to do so (these were the primary "standing orders" that the Supreme Being gave to all angels in the Beginning). Angels act as envoys to the corporeal world and sometimes as administrators of policy, and even justice on the behalf of the Supreme Being (though direct punishment is and will be a rare occurrence, until the Age of the Apocalypse).

FIFTH ORDER: GOD, THE GOD OF JUDAISM, CHRISTIANITY, ISLAM, AND SOME NATIVE AMERICAN RELIGIONS; THE CREATOR, YAHWEH, JEHOVAH, ALLAH, THE LORD, THE GREAT SPIRIT:

The 5th order consists of only one being, referred to in Judeo-Christian-Islamic cultures as "God", "Yahweh", "Jehovah", or "Allah". Christianity has always considered itself to worship the God of the Jews, while the Muslims consider themselves to worship the God of Abraham, though not necessarily the God of Isaac or Jacob or Moses. Each religion considers itself to have the correct view of the world and of the Supreme Being.

In this mythos, throughout most of history, the Supreme Being has remained mysterious and somewhat aloof in terms of dealing with mankind - - except in the earliest of ages, he never spoke to all of them directly, and even then that was possible only because mortalkind was still sinless (but no more).

Regarding almost any philosophy/religion that believes in a single omnipotent god which is the creator of the universe, their one deity will equate to the one 5th order being.

The Creator is elevated above the 4th order beings, and is even more powerful than the god-kings of the respective pantheons. Throughout history, the Supreme Being has sought to draw the world away from

worshipping the lesser beings of the 4th order, and considers Himself the one true God.

Judaism, Christianity and Islam all believe in the God of Abraham, although they have different ideas of theology and have different practices. Each conflicts with the others in their teachings of the nature of the Supreme Being and what He requires of his followers (regarding such doctrines as whether The Supreme Being is One, or whether He is 3-in-1; whether the Messiah has come or even whether a Messiah is coming; whether Christ was the avatar of the Supreme Being, another Prophet of God, or a blasphemer who was crucified, among other things).

While some people consider Mormonism a religion separate from Christianity, the God that Mormons worship is considered to be identified with the Supreme Being, although they have beliefs that are not thought to be part of general Christianity or may conflict with other beliefs held by Christians.

The Supreme Being, while the gods of the 4th circle contend with Him for supremacy, nonetheless retains his position of highest authority. They may struggle against Him, and believe that they possess the mortals that worship them, in reality the Supreme Being owns everything and rules everything. It is only by His desire to gain the worship of mortals by their own volition that He refrains from utterly and completely destroying the third- and fourth-order beings that oppose Him.

In earlier times, His prevalence was small compared to the domains of the 4th order gods. But as the ages dragged on, their realms vanished, the worship they desired faded away or was stolen, and by the present day they are considered to be of little consequence, merely demons without power to influence the world or servants of Satan.

#### RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN BEINGS OF THE FOURTH ORDER

Gods are limited in influence to whatever areas of the world in which they have a widespread following. In essence, it is like gang culture -- each pantheon is a gang, each pantheon has its own "turf" that it owns, and intrusion into another gang's turf could cause a gang war. Thus, no pantheon ever directly intrudes into the turf of another pantheon, else a war of the gods would result and result in the mass devastation of the mortal world. So the gods of Egypt rule and do as they wish with the Egyptians, but have no power over those who don't live in Egypt and don't believe the Egyptian religion. There is no "diplomatic immunity": A worshipper of Zeus can and would be subject to the will of Baal if he travelled in land owned and occupied by worshippers of Baal. Zeus won't help him if he violates the laws of Baal. Powerful priests of most gods are usually not permitted to leave their homes, because unlike laymen, they carry some of the divine powers and might put his deity in a bad situation if he were to upset the god of another pantheon while in that god's territory. In rare and dire occasions, however, this common courtesy among gods might be violated out of necessity.

This situation of the ban against divine warfare, however, is not without loopholes. Instead of gods fighting gods, it comes down to mortals converting (or fighting holy wars with) mortals. Followers of one pantheon try to convert members of other religions, thus expanding the "turf" of that pantheon. The "turf", in reality, is the mortals whose worship and adoration the gods desire and demand, rather than land or

ocean. The Greek gods gained a LOT of turf by converting the Romans to their pantheon, for example. Each pantheon, of course, has its chief god, who rules the other gods and the mortals beneath them. Some gods do not have turf, and are considered to be 'free agents' (see below).

As a rule, no god of one pantheon ever interacts with a god of another pantheon. It is a big no-no (virtually every pantheon king from Zeus to Osiris has outlawed it). It simply isn't done. Were such a thing to occur, it would be like "West Side Story" on a divine scale, and that, as they say, would be bad. Neither would a god-king, like Odin, would ever interact with a small-time Greek deity like Tethys. Interactions between gods or demigods of differing pantheons do not occur for any reason, in order to prevent a war of the gods from occurring.

Mortals, in effect, become the "go-betweens" in addition to being the "turf" and "armies", as followers of one god may meet and convey information or a message to followers of a god of another pantheon, who will then relay the information to his superiors and so on up the divine ladder.

#### BIBLICAL PARALLELS

Here are a few Biblical accounts which might be fictionally interpreted in the perspective of this mythos. (Of course, the Bible considers that the God of the Bible is the only god that exists and that other gods that men have believed in are merely idols made of stone.)

The Old Testament records some cases in which the Jewish people were led away from the Supreme Being, becoming followers of such 4th order beings as Moloch and Baal. The New Testament records that Paul talked to the people of Athens about the "Unknown God" (Acts 17); many followers of Diana in Ephesus resisted the evangelizations of Paul (ch. 19); He teaches those who follow Him that there "shall be no other gods before me", referring to those beings who would presume to write the Supreme Being entirely out of the picture as far as gaining the worship of the mortal world is concerned.

#### THE POWER OF HIERARCHY

In terms of the supernatural orders (3rd, 4th, and 5th), the powers of any given order will always overrule the powers of the lesser orders. For example, a god can do anything to a demigod, mortal, or animal. The Supreme Being can do anything the 'gods' can do, and more, and His power always overrules theirs. Compare this to the magicians of Egypt being able to make serpents from rods, but Moses had the authority to counter them every time.

If we were to consider the Exodus in terms of this Christian mythos, God's casting of the plagues upon Egypt was a demonstration of His authority and power over the Egyptian gods to do whatever He pleased, and the Egyptian gods were shut up and could do nothing to aid their followers.

However, this unlimited authority over lesser orders extends only to the 5th and 4th orders (godlike power). In the cases of the 1st, 2nd, and 3rd orders, they must rely on their own natural ungodlike abilities or by

granted powers of the gods or the Supreme Being to overpower others completely.

Beings of the 2nd order have no guarantee of power over 1st order creatures, although they might overpower them physically, magically, psionically, etc. Likewise, members of the 3rd order do not have godlike authority over the orders beneath them, though they will almost certainly have 'superhuman' strength, intelligence, magic, etc.

The gods may perhaps give power to a dedicated worshipper to be able to do as they wished to anything that the god himself could have taken on. This might mean a mortal could destroy a demigod, but such grants of power are rare in the extreme. (Would a god trust a mortal with his power, would he trust the mortal not to make a huge mess of things, or betray him, or have the power go to the mortal's head and go insane?)

Also, no god's (or Supreme Being's) power can be used against him directly (Zeus can't be killed by his own thunderbolt, for example, and the Supreme Being can always counter power that He has once granted). The Supreme Being could grant a mortal power over any member of the 4th order, and in Biblical history it has happened on occasion: Moses (against Pharaoh and his magicians), Elijah (against the pagan gods worshipped by Ahab and Jezebel), and Jesus Christ (against Satan) -- though Jesus was the Supreme Being in the flesh.

#### OTHER POINTS OF THIS MYTHOS

It may well be considered that the man known as Jesus Christ was in truth the avatar of the Supreme Being, the Lord incarnate as flesh. All 3rd and 4th order beings know this, since any of them who might have existed at the time were certainly aware of who Jesus was, especially those whose powers Jesus controlled, revoked, countered, or otherwise prevented from interfering with the Scheme of Redemption.

The behavior of the beings of the 4th and 5th orders may be generalized (but sometimes with exceptions and deviations) as follows:

The pantheistic gods: Pretty much as mythology portrays them. As the show "Hercules: Legendary Journeys" says in its introduction, "the gods were petty and cruel, and plagued mankind with suffering..." These gods were once angelic beings, but they rebelled and attempted to usurp divine authority and establish personal empires of mortal worshippers. Led by the first rebel, Satan, they gave in to evil and their own arrogance and their desire for power.

The Demons: They exist in the same fallen state as the pantheistic gods, but for some reason they were unable to break into the "major leagues" of Zeus, Diana, Ra, Thor, Baal, Vishnu, etc. Some demons have simply chosen not to try to challenge the big guys as formerly mentioned, being satisfied with just being free to do as they wish apart from divine decrees (a kind of angelic free agent).

The Angels: They are the angelic beings who remained loyal to the Supreme Being, who never attempted to dominate mortals or to usurp divine authority. They retain power equal to the gods, but will apply such power in accordance with their assigned tasks, no more, no less.

Satan: Satan is thought of to be on par with the more powerful of the pantheistic gods. Starting out as a free agent himself, he went the route of acquiring followers from throughout the world, but he

(conveniently or pathetically) counts anyone who does not worship the Supreme Being to be his follower. Satan is one of the most charismatic of the 4th order beings and is 'chummy' with most of them, thereby enjoying a kind of indirect form of power over the followers of his colleagues ('say, could you have so-and-so do this-and-that for me? I'd really appreciate it!' and such). He was one of the oldest 4th order beings and the first to rebel, and was in fact the leader of the first insurrection against the Supreme Being. Satan was more privy than any of his fellows regarding who the coming Messiah would be, what the Supreme Being was going to do, and secrets like that (having formerly being one of the higher-ups in the angelic hierarchy). Satan's behavior is pretty much as the Biblical accounts portray him: very sly, slick, smooth, but insincere and seeking only his own interests and agreeing only to what will come out for the better for him in the long run... (as shown in Dr. Faust.)

#### THE AGES OF SPIRITUAL PROGRESSION

This mythos has three ages of spirituality to choose from, depending on the point at which mortalkind (all sentient beings) is being redeemed from sin.

At some point before the First Age (which could be considered the second age), some angels fell and became the precursors to the 'gods' of the various pantheons, while others decided to be independent (like Satan). After the initial war with the Supreme Being, these fallen angels warred among one another in conflicts that would have shaken the mortal world to pieces, had it been in existence by that time. Some of the 'gods' or demons became rulers of their various factions, becoming the kings of their pantheons. Other gods were so subjugated as to become bound to an limited, weak existence, their power sapped and stolen by their conquerors. Later on, such beings made up part of the 3rd Order and were called immortals, nephilim, or giants. These beings eventually gave rise to the stories of overly powerful and strong individuals (by mortal standards), such as Hercules and Goliath.

The First Age begins with the fall of mortals, and ends with the first institution of law by the Supreme Being. Before the First Age, the Supreme Being walked on earth among men, and their relationship with Him was completely free. After the Fall, the Supreme Being withdrew and left mortalkind alone, until He returned and handed down the Law, a contract between Him and mortalkind allowing some kind of "patching-up" of the relationship. During this period, the gods grow from total non-presence to being much more visible than the Supreme Being, who during this period does not visit the mortal world as He once did, but does occasionally speak to certain individuals who have caught His attention (Abraham, Moses, the Prophets). In the real world, the First Age would run from the days of Genesis to the end of the Pentateuch and the beginning of the days of Joshua.

The Second Age begins with the acceptance of the Law by those mortals who had not yet become worshippers of the false gods, and ends with the Avatar of God (Jesus Christ) visiting earth for the first time since the Fall of Mortalkind. During this age, the Supreme Being makes His presence known through miracles among His Chosen Ones. The pantheons of the gods become organized and institutionalized, and worship of the Supreme Being becomes almost nonexistent (except among His Chosen Ones,

proselytes, and other people whose family line was devoted to worship of the Supreme Being from long ago.) In the real world, the Second Age would begin with the beginning of Judaism to the end of the Old Testament.

The Third Age begins with the visit of Christ and ends with the Second Return of the Avatar of God. At this point in history, the pantheons have declined and in time are destroyed by two developments: the overwhelming power of the Avatar's first coming shakes the religious world from its foundation, and the rise of the Scientific Age, removing superstition and reducing belief in many religions in favor of Christianity or in the belief in the nonexistence of a spiritual world or in spiritual beings.

In post-Avatar (A.D.) times Satan manages to become the leader of the opposition the Supreme Being, when the other gods eventually lose their power, by (1) fading into mythological obscurity, (2) having their followers completely wiped out -- by the Israelites for example, (3) joining Satan -- and with lots of empty promises and bribes, of course, or (4) having their 'organization' suffer a 'hostile takeover' by Satan, like #3 except involuntarily. Prior to his ascent, Satan simply had too many powerful brethren to contend with to be effective, although he nevertheless accomplished many things and was still very well-known in the spirit world.

Sometime in the future, there will be a final age, the ages of the Apocalypse, when there will be a final confrontation between the Supreme Being and the fallen angels who were allowed by the Supreme Being to enjoy the freedom from divine authority they gained by their insurrection so long ago. This age will begin only by decree of the Supreme Being, who has already chosen the time and has kept his decision a secret. It is only known that some day, the corporeal world will be destroyed in a war whose like has never before been seen, much less can be imagined. It is thought by the sages that this will occur when the gods of the pantheons will finally ally with one another to attempt to destroy the Supreme Being outright, using the power they will have gained by the worship of their mortal empires and their own godlike powers. It has been foretold that any such attempt will fail, and that such a great war will only lead to their certain destruction, but as time progresses, this warning becomes superstition, then legend, then myth, then finally disbelief, as the gods who were once defeated and thrown out of Heaven believe they can accomplish what they failed to do the first time around. Many believe that when this Armageddon occurs that the Supreme Being may say that all bets are off and end the world then and there, and call to order the Last Judgment.

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