

*a message to recount to you;
the word of the tree and the whisper of the stone,
the murmur of the heavens to the earth,
of the seas to the stars.
I understand the lightning that the heavens
do not know,
the word that people do not know,
and earth's masses cannot understand.
Come, and I will reveal it."*

—The storm god Baal

"I have a word to tell you,

These lines were written more than three thousand years ago, when the mystery sang alive still in the water and singing birds. This campaign seeks to recreate the sense of boundless possibility, resonant myth, and familiar strangeness that imbues the oldest stories ever told.

The world of Ashshirru is young. Grandsons of gods sit on the thrones of city-states. The written word, carved in stone and impressed in clay, is a secret known only to magicians, priests, and sages. The great and the noble ride chariots to war, and steel is rarer than gold; Everywhere, battle is lit by the gleam of bronze.

The spirit world is terrifyingly close. Great evil does not dwell beyond a gate, awaiting the chants of cultists to loose it on the world; It is present in dark graveyards, abandoned towns, and wild places, and slinks into homes by night to bedevil mortalkind. No town is afflicted with plague, no well befouled with poison, no child beset with nightmares, save by malign, otherworldly forces.

The greatest magic comes not from within oneself, but by manipulating the demons, ghosts, and spirits that are omnipresent in the world. Some magicians bargain with or even serve those more powerful than they, while others subjugate hordes of lesser spirits and control them through hidden knowledge or by right of birth.

The gods themselves are real, and those who travel to the highest mountains can touch Heaven, or descend into the depths and wander the caverns of Hades. The hierophants of holy sites see gods face-to-face.

By turning back the clock, everything old is new again—literally. Do you want to be the first in the world to do something most campaign settings take for granted? Now is your chance.

Ashshirru draws on (but is by no means bound by) the history and mythology of the Ancient Near East, which includes Sumer, Akkad, Babylonia, Elam, Israel and Judah, the Hittites, the Medes, Ugarit, Tyre and Sidon, and Old Kingdom Egypt.

End spiel

I'm sure many of you have questions. If you're interested, tell me! If there are questions you'd need answered before deciding if you are interested, be sure to post them. Even if you're already hooked by concept and description alone, give a sentence or two (or three or four or five or...) about what you expect from such a campaign.

Questions:

1) *What game system will we use?*

I'm most experienced with Pathfinder, though we can do 3.5 if there is demand.

2) *Is 3PP material allowed?*

Since this isn't Pathfinder Society, I don't have a stick up my GI tract about houserules or 3PP, but if it's not freely available, is old, is very complex, or is difficult to balance without roleplaying constraints, there may be problems. I'd prefer if we stuck to Paizo and WotC, but I promise to at least give a thorough look to things by Necromancer Games and Green Ronin. Also, I give even odds that the lead designer for Legendary Games will pop into the thread at some point, so I'll end up giving them a good look too.

3) *What races are allowed?*

Preliminary list: changeling (+2 *Int*, +2 Cha, -2 Con), dwarf, elf, halfling, half-elf, half-kulullû*, half-orc, human, ifrit, oread, sulî, sylph, undine

*As gillmen, but without the water dependent trait or vulnerability to aboleth enchantments

4) *What classes will be allowed?*

The following classes are allowed with no significant changes:

CLASS	AKKADIAN NAME	notes
Barbarian	urshānu	Unchained version; bonus to Will saves also applies to Fortitude saves. Treats Int as at least 13 for purposes of qualifying for combat feats.
Bard	nuāru	
Bloodrager	maḥḥû	Uses the Unchained barbarian rage; remove Aberrant and Infernal from list of bloodlines, treats Int as at least 13 for purposes of qualifying for combat feats.

Brawler	umāshu	Short swords count as either close weapons or swords, whichever is most advantageous at a given time
Druid	nēshakku	
Fighter	zakkû	Treats Int as at least 13 for purposes of qualifying for combat feats
Hunter	māḥiṣu	
Medium	mushshipu	
Mesmerist	mupashshir shunāti	
Occultist	shagammāḥu	
Oracle	shā'ilu	
Psychic	shabrû	
Ranger	dayyālu	Treats Int as at least 13 for purposes of qualifying for combat feats
Shaman	kāribu	
Slayer	ṭābiḥu	Treats Int as at least 13 for purposes of qualifying for combat feats
Spiritualist	kashshāpu	
Sorcerer	kalû	Bloodline list: Abyssal, Accursed, Aerial*, Aquatic, Arcane, Bedrock*, Boreal, Brutal*, Celestial, Deep Earth, Destined, Djinni, Draconic, Dreamspun, Efreeti, Elemental, Empyreal*, Envenomed*, Fey, Marid, Primal*, Protean, Rime-Blooded*, Sanguine*, Seaborn*, Serpentine, Shadow, Shaitan, Stormborn, Sylvan*, Umbral*, Undead, Visionary* *Wildblooded

The following classes are allowed, with some changes:

CLASS	AKKADIAN NAME	
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Magus	multēpishu	Must take the Eldritch Scion archetype. Treats Int as at least 13 for purposes of qualifying for combat feats
Rogue	guzallu	As the Unchained rogue. They also gain the poison use, no trace, light steps, and hidden master class features as a ninja of the same level. At 2nd level, they gain the katmu (“trickery”) pool class feature, which functions identically to the ki pool class feature of the ninja, but with bonus points based on Intelligence rather than Charisma. They can select ninja tricks whenever they could select rogue talents, and can select master tricks whenever they could select advanced talents. Saving throws against tricks taken as talents are based on Intelligence rather than Charisma.
Skald	ṭabbālu	Spell kenning accesses the bard, druid, ranger, shaman, and witch lists. If the spell also appears on the cleric and/or sorcerer/wizard list, use whichever spell level is lowest. Treats Int as at least 13 for purposes of qualifying for combat feats
Summoner	sha-shipti	Uses the Unchained spell list (except for summoning and calling spells, which retain the APG spell levels), but uses the APG eidolon system. The glowing rune only appears on the eidolon.
Warpriest	arīru	Paladin and antipaladin spells that are not on the cleric list are added to the warpriest list at the same spell level. They also treat their Int as at least 13 for the purpose of qualifying for combat feats.
Witch	āshiptu	Add <i>permanency</i> to the witch list as a 5th-level spell. At their option, a witch can choose to learn and cast spells as an unlettered arcanist. A witch that has selected this option still uses the spells per day values listed in Table 2-10: The Witch (APG 67) for spell levels 1 through 9, but uses the table below to determine spells prepared per level. A witch using this option can prepare their patron spells without counting against the values on the table, and can apply metamagic to their patron spells without increasing the casting time.

Semi-spontaneous witch casting:

	0	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	5th	6th	7th	8th	9th
1st	4	2	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
2nd	5	2	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
3rd	5	3	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
4th	6	3	2	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
5th	6	4	2	1	—	—	—	—	—	—
6th	7	4	3	2	—	—	—	—	—	—
7th	7	5	3	2	1	—	—	—	—	—
8th	8	5	4	3	2	—	—	—	—	—
9th	8	5	4	3	2	1	—	—	—	—
10th	9	5	5	4	3	2	—	—	—	—
11th	9	5	5	4	3	2	1	—	—	—
12th	9	5	5	4	4	3	2	—	—	—
13th	9	5	5	4	4	3	2	1	—	—
14th	9	5	5	4	4	4	3	2	—	—
15th	9	5	5	4	4	4	3	2	1	—
16th	9	5	5	4	4	4	3	3	2	—
17th	9	5	5	4	4	4	3	3	2	1
18th	9	5	5	4	4	4	3	3	3	2
19th	9	5	5	4	4	4	3	3	3	2
20th	9	5	5	4	4	4	3	3	3	3

5) *What level of magic/fantasy will there be? High? Low?*

It won't be substantially different from the baseline D&D campaign; What *will* be different is how it *feels* and *behaves*.

For example, long-range teleportation magic doesn't exist (unless, perhaps, you manage to invent it), but when speedy supernatural travel is required, [things can be arranged](#). "Magic marts" won't exist, but systems will be in place that you'll never be left thinking "Damn, I wish I had bought a *scroll of water breathing*; Then we wouldn't have blown 5 spell slots in one encounter."

6) *What gods will be used? How does religion work?*

For the purposes of being a cleric or other divine character, you can select whichever domains you wish, which will impact the deities with which you empathize most, though monotheism and even [henotheism](#) are foreign concepts.

Adad/Ishkur: The Lord of the South Wind, of thunderstorms, hail, and floods, but also renewing rain. His beast is the lion-dragon

Ashimbabbar/Nanna-Suen/Namrasit: Moon god

Damgalnuna: Wife of Enki, mother goddess who helped shape the first mortals from clay with the aid of Enki and the Fourteen Midwives (the Shassuratu).

Dumuzi/Tammuz: First a god of shepherds, lover of Inanna, he became a figure of the Underworld, for when Inanna descended into it, she could not return unless another took her place. Dumuzi became one of the two gatekeepers of the door to the Underworld, the other being Ningishzida.

Enki/Ea: Lord of the subterranean freshwater ocean (the Abzu), associated with wisdom, magic, and incantations, and the arts and crafts of civilization. Always beneficent toward mortalkind.

Enlil/Elil/El Shaddai/El Elyon: The Most High, the Kind, the Compassionate, Creator of Creatures, head of the Divine Assembly, Enlil is He of glory so blinding that not even other gods can behold it. He holds the Tablet of Destinies, bears the divine *mē* (Word), wears a crown of light, and is seated on a throne of glory. If he reminds you of anyone in later literature, Pat Robertson says that it's just your imagination

Ereshkigal: Queen of the Underworld and wife of Nirgal, she is judge of the dead.

Gibil/Girra/Girru: God of fire as both a creative (metalsmithing, pottery baking) and destructive force. Son of Nusku.

Inanna/Ishtar: Power-hungry, warlike, sexually promiscuous. Winged, nude, her beast was the lion and her symbols were the star, the rosette, and the stellar disk. Daughter of Enlil, sister of Ereshkigal and Shamash.

Marduk/Marutuk/Amarutu: The Rider on the Clouds, Lord of Storms, the god who slew the primordial chaos monster Tehwom/Tihamat

Nabu/Nebo: Divine scribe of the destinies, god of wisdom, patron of scribes. Husband of Nisaba.

Namtar: Son of and minister to Ereshkigal, harbinger of death and ultimate fate, leader of the demons that foretell demise.

Ninurta/Ningirsu: A warlike god, whose martial exploits against the Rebel Lands at the edge of the world are the stuff of legend. He retrieves the Tablet of Destiny when Imdugud steals it from Enlil, and slays Imdugud. Ninurta is a son of Enlil.

Ningishzida: The "Lord of the Good Tree," the lord and custodian guarding over the

demons that live in the Underworld. Also a steward of the Tree of Life and associated with reprieves from deathly illness and injury. His symbol has twin serpents wrapped around a tree.

Ninhursanga/Aruru: Once named Ninmah, she became Ninhursanga ("Lady of the Mountain") when her son Ninurta slew Asag and his rock-demons, building the mountains from their bones.

Nirgal/Erra: Underworld deity, husband of Ereshkigal, warlike, associated with forest fires, fever, and plagues. He is also associated with the summer sun, but not in a positive context, and rather as a scorching and destructive power of drought and famine that provokes scarcity and conflict.

Ninlil: Wife of Enlil, the Merciful Mother.

Nisaba/Nidaba: Goddess of grain, granaries, accounting, and scribal records, wife of Nabu.

Nusku: Son of Ashimbabbar, father of Gibil, and minister of Enlil, Nusku is a god of fire and light, and is called upon when burning witches and sorcerers. His symbol is the lamp.

Shamash/Utu: The sun god, whose light brings beneficial warmth and allows plants to grow. He rides across the heavens each day, with his son Bunenē as his charioteer. Just as the sun sees everything under heaven, Shamash is a god of truth and justice, protector of right and destroyer of wrongdoers.