

DAILY PRAYER

Religion played an important part in daily life. Greek families began the day with prayers at an altar in the courtyard of their house. During the prayers, they poured a libation (an offering of wine) over the altar.

Who they prayed to depended on what they were doing that day. For example, someone going on a journey would pray to Hermes, god of voyagers. A person with a special request would go to the temple of the appropriate god to make an offering.



This carving shows a procession of people making offerings to Demeter, goddess of harvests.

FOLLOWING THE RULES



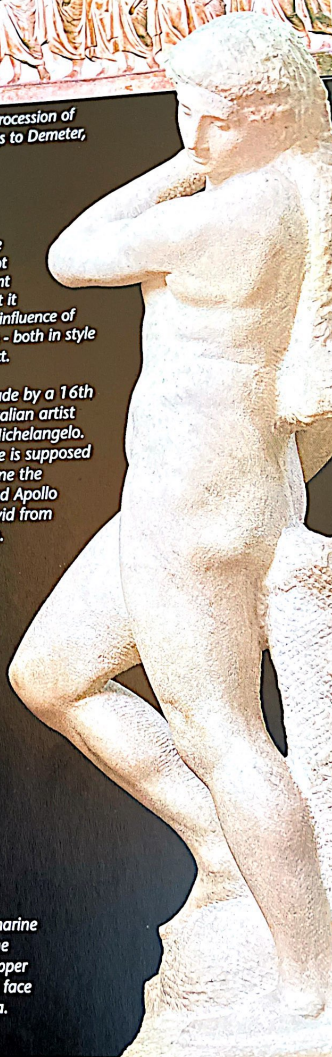
Most gods were addressed with raised arms and hands turned up toward Heaven.

Although religion was informal, there were strict rules on how to pray. Gods and goddesses had their own priests, who made sure the rules were followed correctly. If they weren't, the god might be offended, and the prayers rejected.

Different gods preferred offerings of different animals, and the rules about how the animal was to be killed, or sacrificed, varied too. For praying, the right appearance and gesture were of great importance.

This marble statue is not from ancient Greece, but it shows the influence of the Greeks - both in style and subject.

It was made by a 16th century Italian artist named Michelangelo. The figure is supposed to combine the Greek god Apollo with David from the Bible.

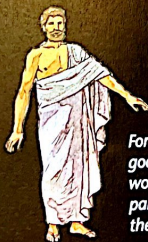


INTERNET LINK

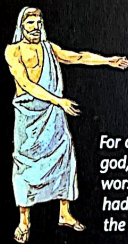
For links to websites where you can make a model temple and see an animation, go to www.usborne-quicklinks.com



To address a sky god, the worshipper had to face the East.



For Underworld gods the worshipper's palms had to face the ground.



For a marine god, the worshipper had to face the sea.