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a·nath·e·ma  (ə-năth ə-mə)

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n. pl. **a·nath·e·mas**

1. A formal ecclesiastical ban, curse, or excommunication.
2. A vehement denunciation; a curse: *"the sound of a witch's anathemas in some unknown tongue"* (Nathaniel Hawthorne).
3. One that is cursed or damned.
4. One that is greatly reviled, loathed, or shunned: *"Essentialism—a belief in natural, immutable sex differences—is anathema to postmodernists, for whom sexuality itself, along with gender, is a 'social construct'"* (Wendy Kaminer).

[Late Latin, doomed offering, accursed thing, from Greek, from *anatithenai*, *anathe-*, to dedicate : *ana-*, *ana-* + *tithenai*, to put; see **dhē-** [in the Appendix of Indo-European roots](#).]

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Indo-European & Semitic Roots Appendices

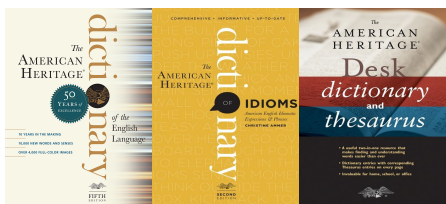
Thousands of entries in the dictionary include etymologies that trace their origins back to reconstructed proto-languages. You can obtain more information about these forms in our online appendices:

[Indo-European Roots](#)

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The Indo-European appendix covers nearly half of the Indo-European roots that have left their mark on English words. A more complete treatment of Indo-European roots and the English words derived from them is available in our [Dictionary of Indo-European Roots](#).

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