

Egyptian Religion

The Afterlife

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Preparation for the Afterlife

Egyptian Religion: The Afterlife

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Preparation for the Afterlife

- The ancient Egyptians believed that when they died their spiritual body would continue to exist in an afterlife very similar to their living world.
- However, entry into this afterlife was not guaranteed. The dead had to negotiate a dangerous underworld journey and face the final judgment before their soul was reborn and they were granted access.
- If successful, they were required to provide eternal sustenance for their spirit. These things could be achieved if proper preparations were made during a person's lifetime.

<https://australian.museum/learn/cultures/international-collection/ancient-egyptian/preparation-for-death-in-ancient-egypt/#:~:text=The%20ancient%20Egyptians%20believed%20that,before%20they%20were%20granted%20access.>

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Preparation for the Afterlife

Funerary Items

- Funerary items such as furnitures and jewelry were placed in the tombs.
- Some, such as amulets, stelae and the Book of the Dead, were protection and guidance on the underworld journey and in the afterlife.
- Others, such as food, clothing and statuettes, were for the provision of essential nourishment, leisure and comfort for their eternal spirit.
- Granted a plot of land in the afterlife, they were expected to maintain it, either by performing the labor themselves or getting their shabtis to work for them.
- Shabtis were small funerary statuettes inscribed with a spell that miraculously brought them to life, enabling the dead person to relax while the shabtis performed their physical duties.

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Preparation for the Afterlife

Amulets

- The Egyptians believed that amulets endowed the wearer with magical powers of protection and healing and also brought good fortune.
- From an early age, they would wear a variety of these charms around the neck, wrists, fingers and ankles. Most were symbols related to a god or goddess so placed the wearer under their specific protection.
- Protection and healing, especially in the context of resurrection, were especially important in the afterlife so amulets were placed on various parts of the body during the wrapping process.
- The heartscarab was the most widely used amulet. It was placed over the dead person's heart to preserve it for the 'weighing of the heart ceremony' in the hall of judgment.

<https://australian.museum/learn/cultures/international-collection/ancient-egyptian/preparation-for-death-in-ancient-egypt/>:-text-The%20ancient%20Egyptians%20believed%20that%20before%20they%20were%20granted%20access.

Preparation for the Afterlife

Book of the Dead

- The Book of the Dead was an extensive collection of spells that included material from both the pyramid texts and the coffin texts.
- In the New Kingdom period, the Book of the Dead was normally recorded on papyrus. However, it could also be found on the tomb walls, coffins and the wrappings of mummies.
- The spells illustrated within the Book of the Dead offered advice, protection and knowledge to the dead as they journeyed through the netherworld.

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ancient_Egyptian_afterlife_beliefs

Preparation for the Afterlife

Mummification

- Egyptians believed that the body needed to be preserved for rebirth in the afterlife.
- The body was wrapped in bandages to safeguard it, if the soul decided to return.
- Except for the heart, which was needed by the deceased in the Hall of Judgment, the embalmers removed all of the internal organs from the body.
- These were placed into four "Canopic Jars." The lids formed the shape of the Four Sons of Horus.
 - The liver was associated with Imset who was depicted with a human head.
 - The lungs were associated with Hapi who was depicted with a baboon's head.
 - The stomach was associated with Duamutef with the head of a jackal.
 - The intestines and viscera of the lower body was associated with the falcon headed Kebechsenef.

<https://discoveringegypt.com/egyptian-mummification/>

Preparation for the Afterlife

Mummification

- The body was treated with natron, a naturally occurring white, crystalline mineral salt which absorbs water.
- After seventy days the dried out was washed and rubbed with oil and fragrant spices. The inside was packed with cloth before being wrapped in linen. The face was painted to make it look lifelike and the hair neatly arranged.
- The chief embalmer, dressed as Anubis (god of embalming), would bless the diseased and priests said prayers to help the dead person on his way into the next world.
- Finally, the body was wrapped in linen bandages which were soaked in resin and magical amulets were placed within the bandages as symbols of power, protection, and rebirth. The body was then placed it in a wooden coffin.

<https://discoveringegypt.com/egyptian-mummification/>



Preparation for the Afterlife

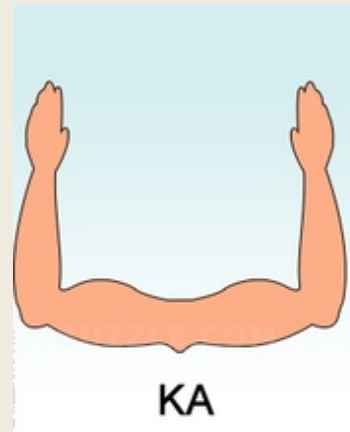
Coffins and Tombs

- Coffins were “chests of life” with every aspect designed to protect the physical body in this world and the spiritual body in the afterlife.
- Coffin surfaces were covered with prayers and spells from funerary texts, important religious symbols, and scenes of various gods and goddesses associated with death, protection and the underworld.
- The “inner coffin” was then placed in a sarcophagus was the stone or wooden outer container.
- Tombs, to the ancient Egyptians, were ‘houses of eternity’. Built on the western bank of the Nile, in the land of the dead, they were made from non-perishable material such as stone. Built and designed properly, a tomb had the power to restore life and give immortality to the dead owner.

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The Journey of the Soul

Egyptian Religion: The Afterlife



Ka and Ba

- Egyptians believed that everyone had a soul that survived after death, composed of two parts: the “Ka” the physical soul, and “Ba” the conscience nonphysical.
- Believed to be a spiritual twin born with every person that lived on after he died, it was represented as a second image of the person with two upraised arms on his head.
- It was believed to be independent of the earthly body so it could move, eat and drink at will. For this reason food offerings were buried with the dead.
- he Ka needed the body after death. If the body decomposed, the person's spiritual twin would die and the deceased would lose their chance for eternal life.

Image source: <https://www.mosaicreeschool.com/mosaic-minutes/category/all/23>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sNvq4nb7-M>



Image source: <https://www.mosaicfreeschool.com/mosaic-minutes/category/all/23>

Ka and Ba

- The Ba was represented by a man-headed hawk often depicted as hovering over the bodies of kings and commoners alike.
- The most important function of the Ba during a person's life was to guide them to follow conscience, virtue, kindness, compassion and honor.
- After death the Ba made it possible for the deceased person to leave his tomb and rejoin his Ka.
- Then the Ba and Ka would fly together into the next step of the person's journey in afterlife.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sWq4anb7-M>



Ka hovering over mummified body

Image source: <https://paleoglot.blogspot.com/2010/11/etruscan-soul-through-egyptian-eyes.html>

Journey of the Soul

The Underworld

- The underworld, also known as the *Duat*, had only one entrance that could be reached by traveling through the tomb of the deceased.
- Throughout the underworld journey, the deceased's spirit would have to contend with gods, strange creatures and gatekeepers to reach Osiris and the Hall of Final Judgment.
- Since the Egyptian sun god Ra was believed to travel to the underworld by boat as the sun set, the Egyptians constructed model boats which they would bury alongside their pharaohs.
- Osiris was the god and chief judge of the underworld. He was also god of vegetation and the annual Nile flood and was closely associated with death, resurrection and fertility.
- The ancient Egyptians believed him to be a dead king, a former ruler who had been miraculously restored to life after being murdered by his brother Seth. For this reason he came to symbolize the hope for eternal life that every Egyptian held.

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Journey of the Soul

The Hall of Judgment

- Upon completion of the underworld journey, the deceased reached the Hall of Final Judgment.
- Standing before 42 divine judges, they would plead their innocence of any wrongdoing during their lifetime.
- The Book of the Dead provided them with the correct words to use for each of the judges.
- Referred to as the "42 negative confessions," each was an affirmation of having not performed a particular act. (42 Negative Confessions)

<https://australian.museum/learn/cultures/international-collection/ancient-egyptian/preparation-for-death-in-ancient-egypt/#:~:text=The%20ancient%20Egyptians%20believed%20that,before%20they%20were%20granted%20access.>

42 Negative Confessions (*Papyrus of Ani*) [\[edit \]](#)

The negative confessions one would make after death could be individualized, that is, vary from person to person. These were the confessions found in the *Papyrus of Ani*.

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1. I have not committed sin | 22. I have not (wrongly) copulated. |
| 2. I have not committed robbery with violence. | 23. I have not struck terror. |
| 3. I have not stolen. | 24. I have not transgressed the Law. |
| 4. I have not slain men or women. | 25. I have not been hot(-tempered). |
| 5. I have not destroyed the grain. | 26. I have not been neglectful of truthful words. |
| 6. I have not reduced measures. | 27. I have not cursed. |
| 7. I have not stolen the god's property. | 28. I have not been violent. |
| 8. I have not told lies. | 29. I have not confounded (truth). |
| 9. I have not stolen food. | 30. I have not been impatient. |
| 10. I was not sullen. | 31. I have not discussed. |
| 11. I have not committed adultery, I have not lain with men. | 32. I have not been garrulous about matters. |
| 12. I have not caused (anyone) to weep. | 33. I have wronged none, I have done no evil. |
| 13. I have not dissembled. | 34. I have not disputed the king. |
| 14. I have not transgressed. | 35. I have not waded in the water. |
| 15. I have not done grain-profiteering. | 36. My voice was not loud (spoken arrogantly, or in anger). |
| 16. I have not robbed a parcel of land. | 37. I have not cursed a god. |
| 17. I have not discussed (secrets). | 38. I have not made extollings (bragged). |
| 18. I have brought no lawsuits. | 39. I have not harmed the bread-ration of the gods. |
| 19. I have not disputed at all about property. | 40. I have not stolen the <i>khenfu</i> cakes from the blessed (dead). |
| 20. I have not had intercourse with a married woman. | 41. I have not stolen Hefnu-cakes of a youth, (nor) have I fettered the god of my town. |
| 21. I have not had intercourse with a married woman. (Repeats the previous affirmation but addressed to a different god.) | 42. I have not slain sacred cattle. ^{[63][64]} |

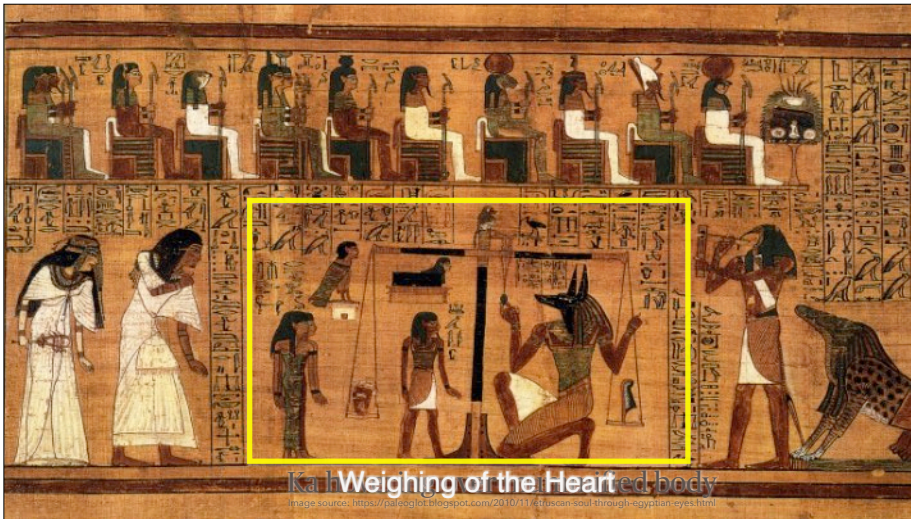
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Journey of the Soul

The Hall of Judgment

- Next would come the “weighing of the heart”. The heart, which contained a record of all the deceased’s actions in life, was weighed against the feather of the goddess Ma’at: a symbol of truth and justice.
- If the heart was heavier than the feather, it was fed to Ammut, the ‘Devourer’, and the soul was cast into darkness.
- If the scales balanced, the deceased had passed the test and was taken before Osiris who welcomed them into the afterlife.

<https://australian.museum/learn/cultures/international-collection/ancient-egyptian/preparation-for-death-in-ancient-egypt/#:~:text=The%20ancient%20Egyptians%20believed%20that,before%20they%20were%20granted%20access.>



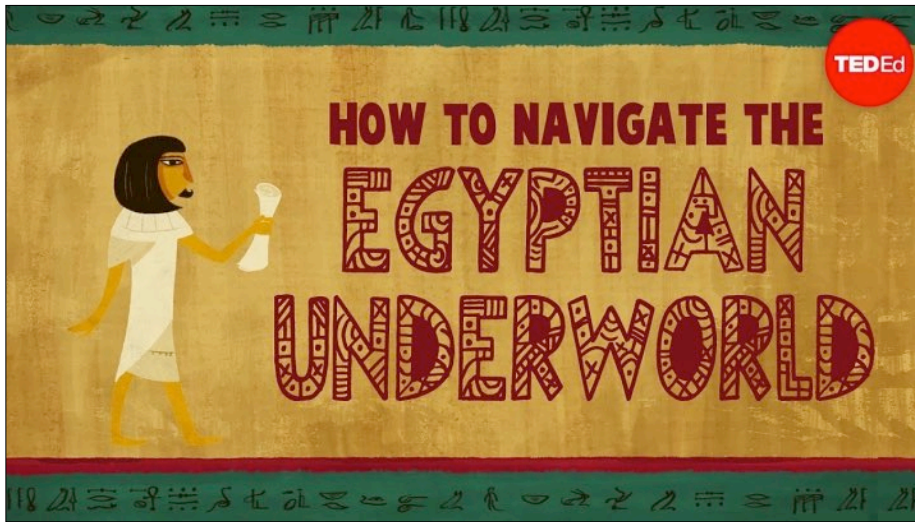
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Journey of the Soul

Paradise

- For the Egyptian, the goal was to reach the a paradise called the Field of Rushes or Reeds.
- Life in the Field of Reeds was a reflection of the real world they had just left with blue skies, rivers and boats for travel, gods and goddesses to worship and fields and crops that needed to be plowed and harvested.
- The dead were granted a plot of land in the Field of Reeds which they would maintain themselves of their shabtis would maintain for them.

<https://australian.museum/learn/cultures/international-collection/ancient-egyptian/preparation-for-death-in-ancient-egypt/#:~:text=The%20ancient%20Egyptians%20believed%20that,before%20they%20were%20granted%20access.>



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The Scent of Eternity

Ingredients of the Egyptian Mummification Balm Revealed

- In the September 15, 2023 *Bible History Daily*, Nathan Steinmeyer reported that a team of researchers had discovered the ingredients of the ancient Egyptian mummification balm.
- Analyzing residue from two canopic jars from the 3,500-year-old tomb of Senetnay, the wet nurse of Pharaoh Amenhotep II, the team identified over half a dozen different substances.
- The balm was a blend of beeswax, plant oil, fats, bitumen, larch resin, a balsamic substance, and dammar or pistachio tree resin.
- The results from the two jars were slightly different, indicating that each organ was treated individually, with different recipes used for each.
- “These complex and diverse ingredients... offer a novel understanding of the sophisticated mummification practices and Egypt’s far-reaching trade routes,” said Egyptologist and museum curator Christian Loeben.
- Coined the “scent of eternity,” the ancient aroma will be presented at the Moesgaard Museum in Denmark in an upcoming exhibition

[Bible History Daily, 2023-09-15](#)

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The Role of the Gods

Egyptian Deities

Egyptian Religion

Egyptian Deities

Role of the Gods

- Egyptian gods were an integral part of ancient Egyptian religion and mythology. The ancient Egyptians believed in a complex pantheon of gods, and their religious beliefs permeated all aspects of their daily lives.
- The gods were seen as powerful beings who controlled various aspects of the world, and the ancient Egyptians sought their favor through rituals, offerings, and prayers. The gods were considered both benefactors and protectors, providing guidance, blessings, and assistance to their worshippers.
- The Egyptians pantheon reflected a hierarchy of gods, with certain deities considered more powerful than others. The most well-known Egyptian gods are Osiris, Ra, Isis, Horus, and Anubis.
- Each god had a specific role and associated symbols that helped the people identify and connect with the gods and their roles in the cosmic order. They served as visual representations of the gods' characteristics, attributes, and spheres of influence.

<https://www.havefunwithhistory.com/facts-about-egyptian-gods/>

Role of the Gods

- Gods ruled over natural and social phenomena, as well as abstract concepts.
- Some gods held specific roles associated with various natural phenomena, such as Ptah (creator god), Hathor (goddess of love and joy), and Thoth (god of wisdom and writing).
- Many gods were associated with animals and were depicted with animal heads or had animal forms. For instance, Bastet (goddess of home, fertility, and protection) was frequently depicted with the head of a lioness or as a lioness.
- Sobek (god of the Nile and fertility) was depicted with the head of a crocodile, symbolizing the ferocity and power of the Nile.
- Temples were considered the dwelling places of the gods and were constructed with intricate architectural designs and decorations.
- There, the Egyptians worshiped their gods through elaborate rituals and ceremonies performed by priests.

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Role of the Gods

- Egyptian mythology often included stories and legends about the gods and their interactions with humans. These myths explained the creation of the world, the origin of the gods, and various natural phenomena.
- The Egyptian gods were not immortal in the same way as some other mythological deities. They had a finite lifespan and could experience birth, growth, decline, and death. However, they also possessed the power of rebirth.
- The pharaoh was believed to be a living embodiment of the god Horus during his reign., bestowing upon him a divine status and authority over the kingdom.
- As the intermediary between the gods and the people, the pharaoh was responsible for upholding ma'at (cosmic order) and ensuring the well-being of the kingdom.

<https://www.havefunwithhistory.com/facts-about-egyptian-gods/>

Role of the Gods

- These gods and goddesses appear in virtually every aspect of ancient Egyptian civilization.
- More than 1,500 of them are known by name.
- Egyptian texts mention deities' names without indicating their character or role, while other texts refer to specific deities without even stating their name, so a complete list of them is difficult to assemble.
- Wikipedia has an assembled list of the known deities, divided into major and minor deities and with links to detailed articles on each: [List of Egyptian Deities](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_Egyptian_deities)

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_Egyptian_deities

Families of Gods

Egyptian Deities

Families of Gods

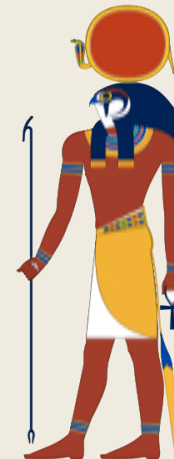
- Egyptian deities were divided into families.
- Universal gods Osiris, his wife Isis and son Horus.
- Local deities also were arranged in families:
- Ptuh, his wife Sekhmet and son Nefertem were worshipped at Memphis.
- Amun, wife Mut and son Khonsu were worshipped at Thebes.
- Khnum, his wife Satet and daughter Anuket were worshipped at Aswan.

Melinda Hartwig, A Guided Tour of Ancient Egypt

Primary Egyptian Deities

Egyptian Deities

Ra



- Ra was the sun god.
- He was creator of life and ruler of the heavens, often pictured as a man with a falcon or sun disk on his head.
- He was believed to travel through the sky during the day, descending into the underworld at night, where he fought the forces of chaos and darkness and be reborn in the morning.
- In this process he became associated with other deities. He was later merged with the god Amun to become Amun-Ra.

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Ra

- At sunrise he was associated with the scarab beetle Khepri who was believed to push the sun out of the underworld at dawn.
- During the day he would sail his solar boat across the sky.
- At sunset he became the ram-headed god Atum who would fight off the forces of the underworld.
- His basic form was represented by the sun disk.

Melinda Hartwig, A Guided Tour of Ancient Egypt

Amun

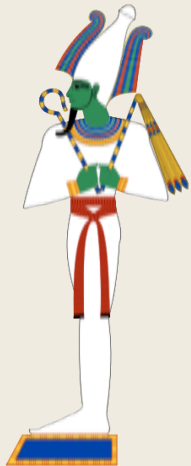


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- Amun was one of the eight primordial Egyptian deities and eventually merged with Ra to become Amun-Ra.
- Worshipped as the monarch of all gods and the creator and protector of the universe, he was identified with the sun cycle of day and night, and thought to control the cycles of life and death.
- He is most often represented as a human wearing a double plumed crown.
- Theban triad included Amun-Ra, wife Mut, and son Khonsu. They were paraded during the Opet ritual at the Karnak Temple.

Osiris

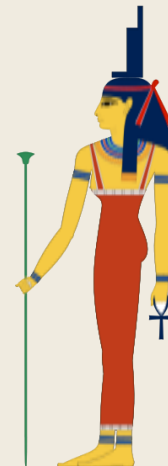


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- Osiris was god of the afterlife and the ruler of the underworld. He represented resurrection and eternal life.
- Murdered by his brother Set who spread the body pieces over Egypt, he was magically reassembled by his sister-wife Isis. The story provided the basis for his association with rebirth and the promise of an afterlife for the deceased.
- He was often depicted wearing an atef—a combination of the hedjet crown, two ostrich feathers, and two horns—and holding a crook and flail, symbolizing authority.

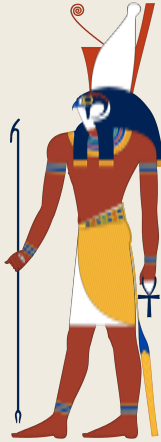
Isis



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- Isis was the sister-wife of Osiris, the goddess of magic, motherhood, and fertility. She was known for her powerful role in resurrecting Osiris and conceiving their son Horus. Osiris, Isis, and Horus together avenged Osiris' death and became the gods of kingship the sky.
- Thought to have the ability to heal illness and protect from harm, she was frequently invoked during childbirth.
- Represented with cow horns, a solar disk, and a serpent on her head, as well as spread wings, she was shown nursing her son, the god Horus, who represented monarchy and protection.



Horus

- Horus was the son of Osiris and Isis, avenger of his father's death and god of the sky and kingship.
- He was depicted with the head of a falcon or as a falcon-headed man. The Eye of Horus, a symbol resembling an eye with markings, represented healing, protection, and royal power.
- Horus was strongly identified with Egypt's pharaohs, who were regarded as his earthly representatives. He was frequently depicted in artwork and iconography as defending the pharaohs from danger, and he was thought to have the power to protect Egypt from its foes.



Set (Seth)

- Set (Seth or Sutekh) was a god of disorder, violence, and the desert, which in ancient Egypt was perceived to be chaotic and deadly. He had the ability to control storms and natural calamities.
- Associated with the star Sirius, which rose shortly before the yearly flooding of the Nile, he was also regarded as a symbol of the arrival of new life.
- He was frequently shown as a man with an animal's head, generally a donkey or a jackal, and holding a long staff or spear.
- In mythology, he was envious of his brother Osiris, who he murdered. Set was eventually defeated by Osiris' son Horus.

Underworld Deities

Egyptian Deities

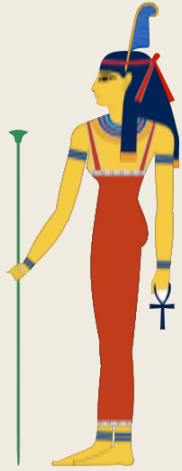


Anubis

- Anubis was the god of embalming (mummification) and the protector of the dead.
- His most prominent role was to usher souls into the afterlife and the "weighing of the heart."
- He was depicted with the head of a jackal or as a full jackal. The jackal symbolized his association with cemeteries and the ability to guide souls to the afterlife.
- He was also depicted in black a color that symbolized the soil of the Nile and the discoloration of the corpse after embalming.

Ma'at

- Ma'at was the goddess of truth, justice and balance.
- She was represented by as a young woman with wings on her arms or with an ostrich feather on her head. She was the goddess that would weigh the deceased heart against the feather of Maat, to determine if the person had lead a decent life and could enter into the Field of Reeds.
- As such, Ma'at represents the ethical and moral principles that all Egyptian citizens were expected to follow throughout their daily lives.



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<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Maat>

Ammit

- Ammit is the underworld goddess who devoured the souls of the unworthy dead.
- The Egyptians would refer to her as a demon, yet she destroyed evil as a force for the good. She was also depicted as a guard for a lake of fire, where the unworthy hearts were cast.
- She is depicted as part lion, crocodile, and hippopotamus.



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<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Maat>

Gods of Natural Phenomena

Egyptian Deities

Sobek

- Sobek was an ancient Egyptian god linked with the Nile River, fertility, and protection. In Egyptian mythology, he created the Nile River.
- Revered for his ferocity and quick movements; he was an unpredictable deity (as were his crocodile counterparts), but he frequently invoked to defend against the perils of the Nile, such as crocodiles and other wild creatures.
- He was frequently represented as a man with the head of a crocodile or as a crocodile himself, wearing a crown or headgear.

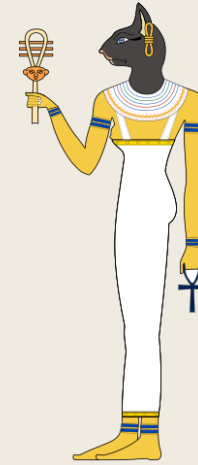


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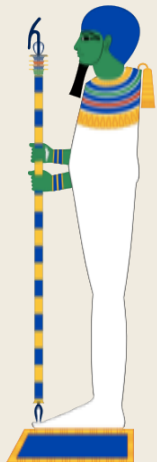
Gods of Social Order

Egyptian Deities



Bastet

- Bastet is the goddess of fertility, conception, childbirth, and defender of the home.
- She was frequently depicted with the head of a lioness or as a lioness. Lions were seen as fierce protectors, and Bastet embodied these qualities. She also carried a sistrum, a musical instrument symbolizing love and pleasure, or a basket of kittens.
- In some mythology she was summoned to protect against the anger of Sekhmet, goddess war and devastation.

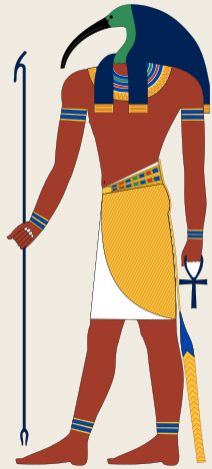


Ptah

- Ptah was an ancient Egyptian god connected with craftsmanship, creation, and fertility.
- He was frequently shown as a man wrapped in bandages, wearing a skull helmet and holding a scepter, and with a blue beard or a mummified bull sign.
- In the triad of Memphis, he is the husband of Sekhmet and the father of Nefertem

Gods of Abstract Ideas

Egyptian Deities



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Thoth

- Thoth was the god of knowledge, wisdom, writing and the moon. Scribe of the gods, he gave the Egyptians the gift of writing and hieroglyphics, the ancient Egyptian writing system.
- Also associated with the moon, he was thought to have the ability to manipulate time.
- He was represented as a man with the head of an ibis or a baboon, with a lunar disk and crescent moon on his head, often also holding a writing palette and reed pen, symbolizing his role as the inventor of writing and the patron of scribes.

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Moses as “God”

Moses as Pharaoh’s Equal

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Moses as “God”

Moses as Pharaoh’s Equal

- In the September 20, 2023 issue of *Bible History Daily*, Gary A. Rendsburg presents another example of Egyptian influence in the Bible, specifically related to Moses as “god”.
- He explains that one of the main objectives of the book of Exodus is to present Moses as Pharaoh’s equal.
- Though biblically no person can achieve divine status, in this instance, Moses is elevated to the level of deity:

“[Aaron] shall speak for you to the people, and he shall be your mouth, and you shall **be as God to him.**” (Exodus 4:16 ESV)

And the LORD said to Moses, “See, I have made you **like God to Pharaoh**, and your brother Aaron shall be your prophet.” (Exodus 7:1 ESV)

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- In both verses, Moses is called an elohim (“god”) in the first to his brother Aaron and in the second to Pharaoh.
- The imminent summit with Pharaoh will require that Moses meet with his opposite as equal. And since the pharaoh in Egypt was considered divine, God promotes Moses to the level of deity, for this singular occasion.
- Indeed, these passages are remarkable, for they indicate the extent to which the biblical author was willing to reflect the Egyptian background of the story.
- There are additional elements to this comparison.

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- The Moses birth narrative is connected to a foundational myth of ancient Egypt: the Horus birth story.
- Both infants are hidden by their mothers (Isis and Jochebed) among the reeds of the Nile Delta in papyrus baskets to protect them from those who seek their death (Seth and Pharaoh).
- Both mothers nurse their children. This is stated explicitly in the case of Moses' mother, while numerous statuette of Isis show her suckling baby Horus.
- Horus was the god of kingship, and Pharaoh was considered the living embodiment of Horus: Horus stories essentially applied to Pharaoh.
- So the goal of the Moses birth story is to portray the Israelite leader as the equal to Pharaoh.
- Carefully crafted, the narrative of Exodus 2 undermines the core belief of ancient Egypt. Moses becomes the god of Pharaoh, and Pharaoh (the guarantor of order in Egyptian society) becomes Seth, the deity of chaos.

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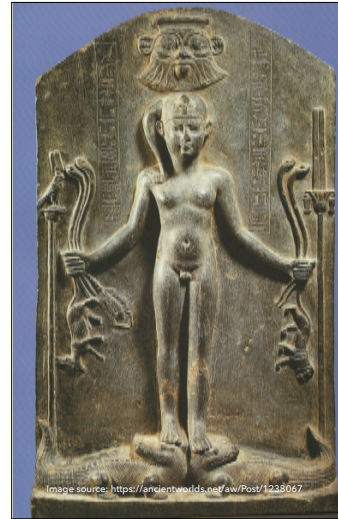


Image source: <https://ancientworlds.net/aw/Post/1238067>

Moses as “God”

Atop Mt. Horeb, God commands Moses to hold the staff-turned-snake by the tail, an action compared with many portrayals of the young Horus holding snakes by the tail. Once again, so Horus, so Moses, as the latter becomes the equal to the former (and by extension to Pharaoh).

The LORD said to him, “What is that in your hand?” He said, “A staff.” And he said, “Throw it on the ground.” So he threw it on the ground, and it became a serpent, and Moses ran from it. But the LORD said to Moses, “Put out your hand and catch it by the tail”—so he put out his hand and caught it, and it became a staff in his hand— “that they may believe that the LORD, the God of their fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, has appeared to you.” (Exodus 4:2-5 ESV)

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Moses as “God”

- One previously confusing issue related to Moses can now be understood more clearly: the “horns of Moses.”
- Modern translations of Exodus 34:30 translate: **Aaron and all the people of Israel saw Moses, and behold, the skin of his face shone, and they were afraid to come near him.** (Exodus 34:30 ESV)
- However the Latin Vulgate translated “the skin of his face shone” as “the skin of his face was horned.”
- This is the reason Michelangelo’s famous sculpture of Moses portrays him as having horns.

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Image source: https://twitter.com/weird_hist/status/84532773621853788/photo/1

Moses as “God”

Moses as Pharaoh's Equal

- The Hebrew root is קָרַן | qāran | kaw-ran’ and indeed it can mean to have horns.
- **This will please the LORD more than an ox or a bull with horns (קָרַן) and hoofs.** (Psalm 69:31 ESV)
- Support for understanding Exodus 34:29-30 as “the skin of his face was horned” derives from ancient Egyptian artwork.
- Two wall reliefs at the Luxor Temple depict two different pharaohs with ram’s horns on the skin of their cheeks.
- Both Amenhotep III (r. 1386-1348 BCE) and Ramesses II (r. 1290-1224 BCE) are portrayed with the ram’s horns no doubt representative of the power of the god Amun, who was associated with the ram in Egyptian iconography.
- Just as the facial skin of Egyptian kings was horned, so was the facial skin of Israel’s leader. So Pharaoh, so Moses. Again, the biblical narrative directs the reader to understand Moses as the equal to his Egyptian counterpart.

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