

Contemporary Mystic Christianity

Bible Self-Study Supplement

The Egyptian Bible: The Book Of The Dead

Indefinite time, without beginning and without end, hath been given to me; I inherit eternity, and everlastingness hath been bestowed upon me.

I am the divine Heir, the Exalted One, the Mighty One, the Resting One. I have made my name to germinate, I have delivered it, and thou shalt live through me day by day.

Behold the staff which blossometh, and which cometh forth when a man crieth out in your names!

— Book of the Dead

The fact, moreover, which the present priests cautiously hint at . . . that this god is ruler and king of the dead . . . in that they do not know how it is true confuses the multitude, who suppose that the truly sacred and holy Osiris lives on earth and under earth, where the bodies of those who seem to have ended are hidden. But he himself is far, far from the earth, unspotted and unstained, and pure of every essence that is susceptible of death and decay. Nor can the souls of men here, swathed as they are with bodies, and wrapped in passions, commune with the god, except so

far as they can reach some dim sort of dream, with the perception of a mind trained in philosophy. For, when freed, passing to the Formless and Invisible and Passionless and Pure, this god becomes their guide and king, as though they hung on him, and gazed insatiate upon his beauty and longed after that which no man can declare or speak about.

— Plutarch

Egypt: the Land of Gemini

The second great migration of Aryana was the stream which went down into Mesopotamia and Egypt, and which produced in those lands their characteristic cultures. The Sumerians were the progeny of this second migratory group in Chaldea; the old Egyptians were their spiritual twin for both are Mercury nations. Chaldean astrologers said their nation was ruled by Virgo and Egypt by Gemini, and Egypt shows from the first her dual Geminian nature. Nebo in Chaldea and Thot-Hermes in Egypt are Gods correlated to the planet Mercury. When ascending to the throne, every Chaldean king "took the hand of the god" in the great Temple of Nebo near Babylon.

The Egyptians were a mercurial people, handsome and distinguished in appearance. Among them beauty and elegance of person were not confined to the upper classes; even the peasants were slender, tall, proud of mien. They

were broad of shoulder, narrow of hip, and had well formed hands and feet. Their faces were delicately modeled, with either straight or aquiline noses, large lustrous eyes, beautiful white teeth, the ensemble topped by dark wavy hair. Their manners were charming — which was, perhaps, natural in a nation where women enjoyed real power. For example, an inheritance always passed from mother to eldest daughter; also, the Queen, together with the Pharaoh himself, made important decisions of state. Egyptian women must have possessed all the persuasive charm of the "witch Isis."

In such a gay and laughter-loving nation severe forms of asceticism had little encouragement; however, the man or woman who sought wisdom walked a much narrower path than did the masses. There were certain things "the wise" did not do. Plutarch writes that Egyptian kings neither drank wine nor offered it in libation to the Gods — for wine was the blood of beings who once fought against the Gods, the grapevine having sprung from their rotting bodies. It was believed that the frenzy of intoxication was due to a drunken person's being filled with the blood of the Gods' enemies. An Egyptian legend tells of the man who discovered the Book of Thoth and who "had no other occupation in the world than to spread out the roll and to read it, it mattered not to whom;" and of a prince who, while reading Chapter Forty-four of the Book of the Dead,

"saw no more, heard no more, so much did he recite this pure and holy chapter; he did not approach women, he ate neither flesh nor fish."

Hermes Trismegistus

The great teacher, Thoth-Hermes, is the Elder Brother from Mercury who established and guided the initiatory Schools of Egypt. There is a legend to the effect that Hermes Trismegistus came to Egypt from Chaldaea; this is a reference to the fact that the Chaldean and Egyptian civilizations were of the same cultural stream — the culture of the second Aryan Race, as that of the Indian was of the first.

The collection of texts called by Egyptologists The Book of the Dead is actually part of the Mercurian Wisdom of Thoth-Hermes originally contained in the world-famous Books of Thoth. These consisted of forty-two rolls, some of which were carried in processions in ritual order. One such procession has been described about as follows: First came a singer holding two rolls, one of which contained hymns; the other, the rules for the conduct of the monarch. After this came the horoscopist with with four books on astrology: one book on the fixed stars, one on solar and lunar eclipses, two on the rising of the Sun and Moon. Next came the bearer of ten books containing rules relating to Gods and religion: the laws of sacrifice, hymns,

processions, holy days and similar matters. Last of all came the Prophet bearing ten sacredotal books dealing with sacredotal laws, the Gods, and rules for the priesthood. Of these Books of Thoth, thirty-six related to philosophy; six treated of medicine, anatomy and the cure of diseases. The Egyptians also possessed books on history. They had the deepest reverence for learning of all sorts, secular as well as religious, as demonstrated by the marvelous University Temple at Heliopolis from which trained Sages went forth to the entire ancient world.

The Egyptians were accustomed to enclose their books in boxes made of wood or stone, and the Library of Thoth consisted of many such book-boxes. Legend has it that "There is a block of sandstone in ... the Room of the Rolls at Onu (Heliopolis), and the caskets of books of the crypt of Thoth are in the block."

The great Heliopolis School, where Moses became learned in Egyptian Wisdom-Teachings, had many chambers. Each chamber had its own distinctive name inscribed above the door-names such as the Golden Chamber, the Chamber of Perfumes, the Chamber of Water, or one indicative of ceremonies held in the room. Many secret chambers were constructed with blocks of stone at the entrance, the exact location of some being unknown to even the lower orders of the priesthood serving in the Temple. It was declared that

"the door is unknown to the profane; if they seek for it, no one finds it except the prophets of the goddess."

Maspara, the Egyptologist, wrote: "By raising a stone of which nothing was known by the vulgar, they disclosed the opening of a passage; into this they crawled, and in a few moments arrived at the treasury. When the block was replaced, the most experienced eye could not distinguish the precise spot where the passage opened." Hermetic books which have come down through the Greeks are merely a remnant of this ancient Library of Thoth.

It has been observed by scholars that the powers conferred by the second part of the Book of Thoth are the same as those mentioned in the funerary Ritual. For example, Chapter XVIII gives the power of passing through fire; Chapter XXIII, personal security and power to animate a mummified body. The second also gives a vision of the Sun God and his retinue of Archangels, Angels and Spirits, for it was believed that the purified dead ascended to Osiris, the solar orb.

Hermopolis was the Greek for Kamamo, the city of Thoth and the abiding place of Hermes Thismegistus, the divine magician who knew the names of all things and the formulae by which they might be controlled: "Thou, Thoth, didst create magic by spells, thou didst suspend the

heavens, establish the earth and Hades, and place the gods with the stars."

— ***Corinne Heline***