

GODS AND GODDESSES

Ancient Egyptian Religion

There were more than 2000 gods in ancient Egypt. Most took human form but some had the heads of animals. Here is a selection of the more important gods that Egyptians would have worshipped.

1. Ra - Ra was god of the sun and the lord of the gods. He is shown to have the body of a human and the head of a falcon. Above his head sits a sun disc with a sacred cobra twisted round it. It is said that Ra sailed the heavens in a boat called 'Barque of Millions of Years'. At the end of every day, many thought Ra had died as he sailed through the night in the Underworld leaving the moon to light the night sky until he was born again at dawn.

2. Amun - Amun was an important god because it is said that he created all things. However, there are not many stories or pictures of him as he was invisible. Many of the pictures of him come from when he mixes with another god like Ra, when he becomes Amun-Ra. Amun is usually in human form but sometimes has a ram's head.

3. Horus - Horus has the head a hawk which makes him look similar to Ra, but Horus has a crown made to look like the two parts of Egypt, the red and the white to show that he ruled all of the land. Horus was the god of the sky and it was believed that the pharaohs were a living version of Horus making them godlike.

4. Thoth - Thoth was the god of wisdom, writing, time and the moon. The ancient Egyptians believed that Thoth created hieroglyphics and kept a record of all knowledge. He has the head of an ibis bird, a long-beaked bird common in Egypt.

5. Ma'at - Ma'at was the goddess of truth, justice and harmony and the wife of Thoth. A pharaoh had to promise to follow Ma'at and to be a fair and honest leader.

6. Isis - Isis is the mother of Horus and the queen of the goddesses. Sometimes she is shown to have a throne on her head and other times she has a sun disk similar to Hathor.

7. Osiris - Osiris is the god of the dead and husband of Isis. He is shown wearing the white linen wrapping from a mummy. He wears a white crown with large feathers. Although he was the god of the underworld, Egyptians still liked him for helping people pass on to the next life.

8. Hathor - Hathor was the goddess of love, music and dance. She looked after all women in life and death. Hathor sometimes took the form of a cow with a sun disk above her head.

9. Anubis - Anubis was the god of embalming, the mummification ritual. It is believed he made the first mummy, Osiris. Anubis was the guide of the dead, he helped them pass to the next life. It was said that Anubis would wait for you in the hall of the dead to weigh your heart. If your heart was lighter than Ma'at's feather, you would live forever. If it was heavier, your heart would be eaten by the demon Ammit. Anubis had the head of a jackal.

10. Sekhmet - Sekhmet was goddess of war, fire and medicine. She has a head of a lion, the best hunter known to the Egyptians, and her breath is said to have created the desert.

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EGYPTIAN PHARAOHS

Who Were They?

Who were they? The pharaohs were the kings and queens of all of Egypt. Most were men but there were some famous female pharaohs like Nefertiti and Cleopatra. The pharaoh was the most important person in the kingdom and was in charge of the government and every temple. The Egyptians believed that the pharaoh was half-man, half-god. The god half of them was thought to be taken from Horus, the God of the sky. It was thought that after a pharaoh died, they would be joined with the sun and a new Horus would be sent to rule on earth.

The First Pharaoh

Egypt used to be split into two kingdoms, the Upper Egypt (known as the white crown) and the Lower Egypt (known as the red crown). We know that at some time around 3100BC the north took the south and joined them together and the first true pharaoh, King Narmer, ruled over it. Narmer created the new capital of Egypt, known as Memphis, which sat on the border of the north and south.

Quick Fact!

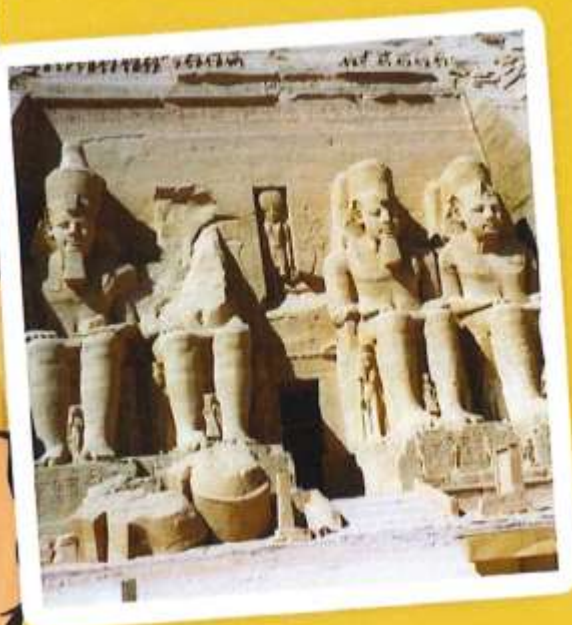
The ancient Egyptians did not call their king a pharaoh. The word pharaoh is first used in the ancient Greek language.



IMPORTANT PHAROHS

Ramses II (Ramses the Great)

Born: 1303 BC. **Died:** 1213. **Reign:** (1279 – 1213 BC)
Ramses II is one of the most famous pharaohs because of his achievements over his long life. He was a great war leader and he led the Egyptian army against many different enemies like the Hittites, Syrians and Libyans. Ramses is known for creating one of the first peace treaties with the Hittites to allow peace. Many of the statues still standing today were built for him including the four statues of himself outside of the temple of Abu Simbel (below).



Thutmose III

Born: 1481 **Died:** 1425 **Reign:** 1479-1425 BC
Thutmose was too young to rule at first so he had his Aunt Hatshepsut rule with him. He was not fond of Hatshepsut even though she was a good ruler and it is thought that he had her killed. Thutmose took the throne and went on to be a famous warrior king, not afraid to go first into battle. He never lost a war and he became very well-liked by all for his bravery and strength. In his time as pharaoh, he took back the countries of Syria and Canaan into Egyptian rule which created the largest kingdom at that point.

Cleopatra VII, the Last True Pharaoh

Born: 69BC **Died:** 30BC **Reign:** 51 - 30 BC
Cleopatra was born a princess, her father was Pharaoh Ptolemy XII. The Ptolemy family was actually Greek but had ruled Egypt for over 300 years. Cleopatra ruled with her brother who then made her leave the palace. In 48 BC, Julius Caesar came to Egypt and they fell in love. Cleopatra got Caesar's army to take back Egypt and they defeated her brothers' army so she could rule as pharaoh. Even though she was Greek, Cleopatra loved Egyptian culture and spoke the language. She made a lot of money for the Egyptian kingdom and the people loved her for it.



TUTANKHAMUN

THE BOY KING

Who Was He?

Born: 1341 BC Died: 1323 BC

Reign: 1332-1323 BC

Tutankhamun became the pharaoh at the age of nine and ruled at a time when the Egyptian empire was at its strongest. He ruled for about 9 years until his death at the age of about 18. We are still not sure how he died but there are many opinions about this. Some people say it was from an accident and others say it was from a disease that he suffered from after he broke his leg. We do know now that his death was a surprise for many as he was buried in a tomb which had been built very fast and messily.

Who Found His Tomb?

The tomb was found by a group of researchers lead by Howard Carter (below). The reason why Tutankhamun is one of the most famous and talked about pharaohs is because his tomb was only found in 1922 which means that all of the treasures and the body inside have been left in very good condition. Carter knew where to look because he worked out from other important finds that the tomb would be in the Valley



of the Kings. A cup found by a man named Theodore Davis with Tutankhamun and his wife on it was a clue that Carter said helped him find the area of the tomb of the Boy King.



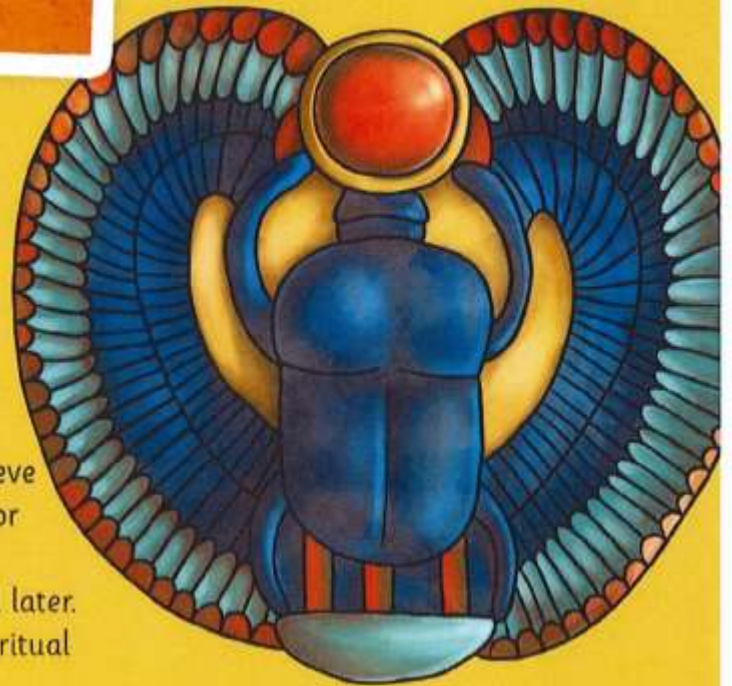


What They Found

Inside the tomb, they found over 3000 treasures that were put in for Tutankhamun to take with him into the afterlife. Many of the items were made or covered in gold, only fitting for a king to own. The tomb itself was split into many different rooms. Most of the rooms were for the objects apart from the burial chamber which just held his sarcophagus.

Decoration

The burial chamber with the body is the only decorated room in the tomb which is very unusual for the resting place for a king. Normally, all the walls would be carved or painted which is how we know that Tutankhamun died very suddenly. Many historians also believe that the tomb itself was not made for him in the first place and the burial chamber and decorations were added later. The images on the walls were from a ritual called the 'opening of the mouth' (an example of it can be seen below).



The Curse of the Mummy!

The curse of the mummy started after Tutankhamun's tomb was opened. Mummies have been thought to have magical powers over any who disturb them. It started with Lord Carnarvon, the man who paid for the dig of King Tut's tomb, died soon after it was opened. As soon as he died, all the lights in Cairo went out mysteriously. Other stories are that Carter's pet canary was killed by a cobra and Carnarvon's dog died the same night. Some think it was a germ but others say it was magic.



ANCIENT EGYPT TIMELINE

Upper and Lower Egypt
were two separate lands



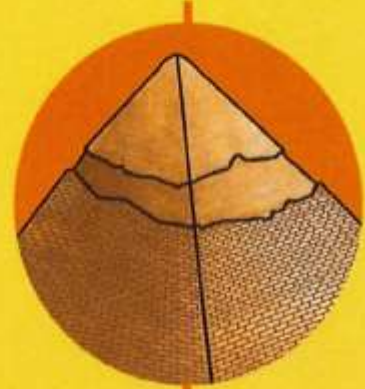
Pre-dynastic Egypt
5500 - 3100 BC

3100 BC
Hieroglyphics starts



Early Egypt
3100 - 2600 BC

2551-2472 BC
Pyramids of Giza



2600 BC
Mummification begins



Old Kingdom
2600 - 2100 BC



3100 BC
The first pharaoh
(Pharaoh Narmer)



2558-2532 BC
Great Sphinx is built