

Ancient Egyptian Gods and Goddesses

The ancient Egyptians worshipped a range of different gods and goddesses because they believed that they were responsible for different aspects of life. They also believed that the pharaoh was a human version of one of the gods.



Anubis

Anubis was the god of mummification and the afterlife. His jackal head is thought to have been influenced by the way jackals and wild dogs often lurked around cemeteries. Priests often wore jackal-headed Anubis masks while carrying out the mummification process.



Ra

Ra, the sun god, was considered to be the most important of all of the gods. He was often shown with a human body and the head of a falcon. Ra wore a headdress of a sun surrounded by a cobra. The ancient Egyptians believed that Ra sailed across the sky on a boat each day. It was thought that Ra died every evening and sailed through the underworld while the Moon lit the sky and was then reborn every morning.



Osiris

Osiris was the god of the dead and ruler of the underworld. He was also the judge of the dead. Osiris was married to the goddess Isis and was the father of the god Horus.

In addition to this, Osiris was also the god of agriculture (farming to produce food) because it was said that Osiris taught the Egyptians how to grow crops.



Isis

Isis was the goddess of the Moon, magic, love and healing. She was the wife of Osiris and the mother of Horus. It was said that after Osiris was killed by his brother, Isis brought Osiris back to life. Isis' headdress is a symbol of the throne of Egypt.



Horus

Horus was the god of the sky. He was the son of Isis and Osiris. Horus was the protector of the rulers of Egypt. The ancient Egyptians believed that the pharaoh was the living Horus. Horus wears a double crown, the red crown (Deshret) symbolises Upper Egypt and the white crown (Hedjet) symbolises Lower Egypt.



Thoth

Thoth was the god of wisdom, writing and time. The ancient Egyptians believed Thoth gave them the gift of hieroglyphics, languages and music. Thoth has the head of an ibis (a bird that was sacred in ancient Egypt). Sometimes, he appeared as an ibis or a baboon.



Set (sometimes known as Seth)

Set was god of war, chaos and storms. The ancient Egyptians believed that he was connected to solar eclipses and earthquakes. Set killed Osiris (his brother) because he was jealous of his power in Egypt.



Hathor

Hathor was the goddess of many things including love, the sky, music and dance. She sometimes appeared in the form of a cow. The ancient Egyptians believed that Hathor had power to help women with different things, such as childbirth, love and health problems.



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Sekhmet

Sekhmet was the goddess of war and of fire and was associated with medicine and healing. She was often shown with the head of a lion. Sekhmet holds an ankh (the ancient Egyptian symbol of life resembling a cross with a loop instead of a top arm). Sekhmet was the daughter of the sun god, Ra.



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Nut and Geb

Nut was the goddess of the sky and Geb was the god of the earth. They were the parents of Osiris and Set. The ancient Egyptians believed that each evening, Nut swallowed the sun god Ra, before he was reborn every morning.



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Ma'at

Ma'at was the goddess of truth, justice, balance and harmony. She was married to Thoth. Ancient Egyptians believed that after a person died, their heart was weighed on a scale and balanced against Ma'at's feather. This was done in order to decide if they were sent to the afterlife or the underworld.



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