

RELIGION AND MYTHOLOGY

The Egyptians were very religious people. They believed in over 2,000 gods. Their religion was a type of polytheism much like the Mesopotamians. However, many of the Egyptian gods had the head of an animal. Each village had their own god/goddess, but some were worshiped throughout all of Egypt. Cats and Crocodiles were also sacred animals to the Egyptians and were treated royally.

Some of the major gods and goddesses were:

1. Ra or Re (later Amon-Re) - sun god
2. Osiris - underworld
3. Isis - moon, wife of Osiris
4. Anubis - embalming
5. Thoth - wisdom & learning
6. Horus - sky
7. Bes - family

The Egyptians believed strongly in the afterlife. They focused their whole existence in preparing for their death. They knew their life on earth would later be judged by the god of the underworld who would decide their fate. After the person was mummified, their corpse was taken across the Nile to be

buried in the western desert. Right before the burial,

The Opening of the Mouth ceremony took place so the person's Ka could return to the body and the person could eat, speak, and move in the afterlife.

Pharaohs as well as ordinary people were buried with magical amulets that were to protect them in the afterlife. Also

buried with the dead was papyrus scroll known as

The Book of the Dead. This contained about 200 magical chants and spells that would help the person enter the underworld unharmed. This scroll was expensive and many people would save up for it.

Once the soul reached the Hall of Judgment, it's

heart would be weighed against the feather of truth. If the scales balanced, the person could move onto a peaceful afterlife. If not, the heart of the person would be devoured by Ammut, the monster, causing the soul to be destroyed.