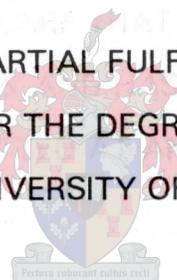


A COMPARISON OF ANCIENT EGYPTIAN  
AND ANCIENT HEBREW RELIGIOUS COSMOGONIES

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## ABSTRACT

The phenomenological approach employed in this comparative study of ancient Egyptian and ancient Hebrew religions cosmogonies, takes care of the gaps between the various cosmogonies. This is also true of the gaps in **time** between the ancient Egyptian cosmogonies and those of the Hebrew Bible. The study indicated that Ancient Egypt and the ancient Israelites did not exist in isolation, although each community was unique in its own context. Myth as one of the most central concepts in the study of cosmogonies, has fundamental value both in ancient Egyptian understanding as well as that of the ancient Israelites.

Examples of ancient Egyptian cosmogonies as well as different versions of ancient Hebrew cosmogonies were discussed. Three types of ancient Egyptian cosmogonies (Heliopolitan, Theban and Hermopolis) explained in this paper were shown to be complementary to each other; the same idea (i.e. complementary) was not foreign in the ancient Hebrew cosmogonies (Genesis 1 and 2). God and the gods played a very significant role with regard to human beings, being either a servant of or owing his or her allegiance to God/the gods as his or her creator.

There are significant **similarities** in the way these two communities understood the notion of cosmogony, but in the same breath, remarkable **differences** were also witnessed throughout the discussion of these various cosmogonies, hence the use of the term "distinctive **and** common ground in the ancient Near East" with special reference to ancient Egypt and the Hebrew Bible.

## OPSOMMING

Die fenomenologiese benadering wat in hierdie vergelykende studie van die ou Egiptiese en ou Hebreuse religieuse kosmogonieë gevolg is, oorkom die gapings tussen die verskillende kosmogonieë. Dit is ook waar van die gapings in tyd tussen die ou Egiptiese kosmogonieë en dié van die Hebreuse Bybel. Die studie toon aan dat ou Egipte en die ou Israeliete nie in isolasie bestaan het nie, alhoewel elke gemeenskap uniek was in sy eie konteks. Mite, as een van die mees sentrale konsepte in die studie van kosmogonieë, was van fundamentele betekenis in sowel die ou Egiptiese denke as in die van die ou Israeliete.

Voorbeelde van ou Egiptiese kosmogonieë sowel as verskillende weergawes van ou Hebreuse kosmogonieë is bespreek. Drie Egiptiese tipes (Heliopolis, Thebe en Hermopolis) is verduidelik en daar is aangetoon dat hulle mekaar aangevul het; 'n idee wat ook nie vreemd is aan die ou Hebreuse kosmogonieë van Gen 1 en 2 nie. God en die gode het 'n baie belangrike rol met betrekking tot menslike wesens gespeel, die mens was of 'n dienaar, of het sy onderdanigheid aan God/die gode as sy skepper erken.

Daar is groot **ooreenkomste** in die maniere waarop hierdie twee gemeenskappe die gedagte van kosmogonie verstaan het, maar in dieselfde asem moet erken word dat groot **verskille** in die bespreking van die verskillende kosmogonieë gevind is, vandaar die gebruik van die term "distinctive **and** common ground" in die ou Nabye Ooste met besondere verwysing na ou Egipte en die Hebreuse Bybel.

## ISISHWANKATHELO

Indlela yokuzithabatha izinto ngale ndlela zihamba ngayo esetyenziswe kwizifundo zokuthelekisa indlela ama - Yiphutha amandulo ayeyiqiqqa ngayo indalo kunye naleyo yama - Hebhere ilungiselela izikhewu ezikhoyo phakathi kwezi ndalo. Le ndlela iphinda kwakhona ilungiselele izikhewu ngokwamaxesha phakathi kwendalo yase - Yiphutha yamandulo kunye naleyo yesiBhalo sama - Hebhere. I - Yiphutha yamandulo kunye nesiBhalo sama - Hebhere zibonisa ukuba zaihlali kwiziqithi ezahlukeneyo nangona indawo nganye inezinto ezizezayo kuphela. Intsomi (myth) ilelinye lamagama abalulekileyo, kwaye ifumana ukubaluleka kakhulu kwingqiqo yama-Yiphutha kunye naleyo yama - Hebhere amandulo.

Imizekelo yendalo yam - Yiphutha amandulo kunye ne zonguqulelo zohlukeneyo zendalo yama - hebhere amandulo zixoxwe kakhulu. Iindidi ezintathu sendalo yase - Yiphutha yamandulo (eyama - HeLiopolitan, eyama - Theban kunye naleyo yam - Hermopolis) ezixoxiweyo kweli phepha zibonise ukuba ziyancedisana, oko kukuthi enye incedisa enye; le ngcamango yokuncedisana iqhelekile kwindalo yam - Hebhere amandulo (Genesis I Kunye No 2).

U-Thixo kunye nexithixo badlale indima enkulu, umntu yena esisicaka sezithixo okaye umntu enothuku lokunqula u-Thixo njengomdali wakhe.

Kukho ukufana okuphawulekayo kwindlela ezi ndawo zombini eziqiqqa ngayo imeko ye-ndalo, kodwa kwangalo ndlela inye, iyantlukwano ezicacileyo nazo ziyangqineka kuyo yonke ingxoxo ngentlobo ezininzi zendalo, yilonto kusetyenziswe amazwi athi, "Indawo ezahlukeneyo kunye nezifanayo kwi - Mpuma engaNeno yamandulo (ancient Near East) ngokubhekiselele kwi-Yiphutha yamandulo kunye nesiBhalo sama - Hebhere.

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ABBREVIATIONS

CLP CORINTHIANS

EXO EXODUS

EZE EZEKIEL

FIG FIGURE

**GEN THIS WORK IS DEDICATED TO MY BELOVED WIFE, NOSIPHO, EUDORA**

HEB HEBREW

ISA ISAIAH

JER JEREMIANH

JUD JUDGES

MAT MATTHEW

MT MAJORITY TEXT

NIV NEW INTERNATIONAL VERSION

NKJV NEW KING JAMES VERSION

**OT AND OUR TINY CHILD, MZONZIMA (JNR)**

PS PSALM

REV REVELATION

REB THE NEW ENCYCLOPEDIA BRITANNICA

TECH TECHNIAN

**ABBREVIATIONS**

COR	-	CORINTHIANS	
EXO	-	EXODUS	
EZEK	-	EZEKIEL	2
FIG	-	FIGURE	4
GEN	-	GENESIS	4
HAB	-	HABAKKUK	5
ISA	-	ISAIAH	5
JER	-	JEREMIAH	8
JUDG	-	JUDGES	8
MATT	-	MATTHEW	8
MT	-	MASORETIC TEXT	8
NIV	-	NEW INTERNATIONAL VERSION	8
NKJV	-	NEW KING JAMES VERSION	8
OT	-	OLD TESTAMENT	8
PS	-	PSALM	8
REV	-	REVELATION	8
TNEB	-	THE NEW ENCYCLOPAEDIA BRITANNICA	8
ZECH	-	ZECHARIAH	8

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## CHAPTER 1

### 1.1 INTRODUCTION:

Cosmogony, which is currently one of the basic issues in ancient Near Eastern Studies, is also one of the most debated topics. The study of cosmogony has proved itself to be one of the most fascinating as well as interesting issues in the ancient Near East. In order to come to a clearer understanding of this aspect, the phenomenological method has been chosen as an effective approach that will give equal meaning and sense to ancient Egyptian as well as Hebrew cosmogony. As one comes to a deeper understanding of cosmogony, one gradually puts aside the prejudice of one society being superior to that of the other community. One should realize that each community has its own strengths and weaknesses, each community is unique in its context.

This study is divided into four parts. The first section deals with the approach. The approach of the **Phenomenology of Religion**, which has been chosen, is a dynamic approach and includes both non-philosophical as well as philosophical phenomenologies. The factors that distinguish this approach from the other approach will be discussed. Other matters to be discussed are, statement of the problem, purpose of study and methodological approach, significance, limitations and finally definition of terms.

The second section deals with the worldviews of both ancient Egypt and the Hebrew Bible. The aim of this part is to familiarize the reader with these two communities and their peculiarities. In highlighting the worldview of these two communities, the following issues will have to be discussed: the religious nature of the worldview, cosmological understanding of the ancient Egyptians and ancient Hebrews (Hebrew Bible), Cultic practices and institutions, sacred time and space, conceptions of God, conceptions of man and finally the significance of myth.

The third section forms the main part of this study i.e. the religious **cosmogonies** as understood by the ancient Egyptians as well as the ancient Hebrews in the Hebrew Bible. In this section a general overview of cosmogony in the ancient Near East will be given. The idea of cosmogony as it was understood by the ancient Egyptians as well as the Hebrews will be dealt with.

The last section outlines the findings and **compares** these cosmogonies from two different societies. Some recommendations for future research on the topic will be given.

## 1.2 **PHENOMENOLOGY OF RELIGION:**

The approach of the **Phenomenology of Religion** as a major **field of study** has had an **extremely influential effect** on the study of religion. In this study, a better branch, i.e. an extremely influential approach to religion (Allen 1987: 272 and 273) has been adopted. In order for one to understand the phenomenological approach, one must first understand the etymological development of the term **phenomenology**.

The term, "phenomenology" has become very popular and it has at the same time, been utilized by numerous scholars, who seem to share little if anything common (see Allen 1987:273). The term, "phenomenology" comes from a Greek word **phainomenon** which means that "which shows itself" or "that which appears". One must realize that this term has both philosophical and non-philosophical roots.

There are also major contributors to the phenomenology of religion, but only a few will be mentioned. W. Brede Kristensen was a specialist in Egyptian and ancient histories' religions, he illustrated an extreme formulation of the descriptive approach within phenomenology (Allen 1987:276). Rudolf Otto put his emphasis on the experiential approach which involves the phenomenological description of the universal, essential structure of religious experience, and also on antireductionism which respects the unique, irreducible, numinous quality of all religious experience (Allen 1987:277). Gerardus van der Leeuw defined the assumptions, concept and stages of his phenomenological approach in his book entitled **Religion in Essence and Manifestation** (1963). He also proposed a subtle and complex phenomenological method with which the phenomenologist goes far beyond a descriptive phenomenology (Allen 1987:277). C Jouco Bleeker mentioned three schools of phenomenology of religion i.e. the descriptive, the typological and the phenomenological and he concluded that phenomenology of religion has a double meaning: it is an independent science that creates monographs and handbooks, but it is also a scholarly method that utilizes such principles as the phenomenological epoché and eidetic vision (Allen 1987:278).

Mircea Eliade understood religion as the experience of the sacred, although he has been heavily criticized because of his so-called uncritical methodology, he still has many supporters (Allen 1987:279).

#### 1.2.1 NON-PHILOSOPHICAL PHENOMENOLOGIES:

This type of phenomenology is best understood when one deals with the Natural Sciences especially the field of Physics. It is also applicable to the comparison employed in this study because it emphasizes the **descriptive** approach to phenomenological events. Natural scientists emphasize the descriptive part as contrasted with the explanatory one. One should also keep in mind that the phenomenologists of religion admit that their approach describes, but that it does not explain the nature of the religious phenomena. It is indeed evident that this type of phenomenology as well as the comparative religion approach have roots independent of philosophical phenomenology.

#### 1.2.2 PHILOSOPHICAL PHENOMENOLOGIES:

A German philosopher by the name of Johann Lambert, defined phenomenology as "the theory of illusion" (Allen 1987:273). Just on the opposite note, Kant describes the phenomenology as the data of experience, things that appear to and are constructed by one's mind, i.e. the study of such a phenomenology must be natural, scientific as well as objective. In the eighteenth century, Hegel defined phenomenology as the science by which the mind becomes aware of the development of Spirit and comes to know its essence, i.e. Spirit as it is in itself - this is done through a study of its appearances and manifestations. In the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, philosophers like William Hamilton and others indicated that phenomenology is a mere descriptive study of a subject matter. This clearly indicates that this type of phenomenology is not static but is dynamic.

### 1.2.3 CHARACTERISTICS OF THE PHENOMENOLOGICAL APPROACH:

When one deals with the concept of phenomenology, whether philosophical or non-philosophical, one realizes that it is distinguished from all other methodologies in different disciplines. In distinguishing it, five factors show the uniqueness of this approach. Some of these distinguishing factors are:

(a) DESCRIPTIVE NATURE:

This is an attempt of the phenomenological approach to describe the nature of the phenomena, i.e. the way appearances manifest themselves, and the essential structures at the foundation of human experience (Allen 1987:274).

(b) OPPOSITION TO REDUCTIONISM:

Reductionism is a principle that prevents people from becoming aware of the specificity and diversity of phenomena. The idea of approaching your study with an objective mind is almost impossible hence an idea of a **descriptive** approach.

(c) INTENTIONALITY:

This is a way of describing how consciousness constitutes phenomena. Any study that has been pursued without any intention is a futile exercise.

(d) BRACKETING:

This characteristic does not advocate for a presuppositionless position, but it does suggest a goal of freeing phenomenologists from unexamined presuppositions or rather of rendering explicit and clarifying our presuppositions rather than completely denying their existence.

(e) EIDETIC VISION:

In describing this characteristic, Allen (1987:275) says, the central aim of the phenomenological method is to disclose the essential "whatness" or "structure" embodied in the particular data.

### 1.3 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM:

The ancient Egyptians and the ancient Hebrews are two different groups of people. They differ in their languages and also have different value systems. These two communities differ in basic concepts and even in their world views. It is therefore very difficult for one to understand one community in the light of the other. It is important that these communities be treated equally, this simply means that each community is unique, distinct and peculiar. It is therefore of utmost importance to deal with the **cross cultural understanding** of these communities with a special reference to their cosmogonies. These communities are not an exception, because even in South Africa there are different cultures that differ in many respects. The idea of a cross cultural understanding should not end with the ancient Egyptians and ancient Hebrews, but it should also be a concept that is also applicable even in the South African situation.

### 1.4 PURPOSE OF STUDY AND METHODOLOGICAL APPROACH:

The purpose of this study is to describe and try to grasp something of the meaning of the ancient Egyptians as well as the ancient Hebrew's understanding of the notion of **cosmogony**. In dealing with the ancient Hebrew cosmogonies, one is able to discern that it is a problematic exercise to start dating the creation stories of Gen 1 and 2 since the two stories themselves may be from different sources, and therefore it may be presumed that these stories belong to two different time periods. One will also notice that the difference in time between the ancient Egyptian and the ancient Hebrew cosmogonies may be thousands of years. Therefore, in order to avoid the problem of dating, the phenomenological approach has been chosen as the best approach to this study.

## 1.5 SIGNIFICANCE:

This study is probably the greatest opportunity to understand more clearly the world views of the ancient Egyptians and the ancient Hebrews with special reference to cosmogony. Understanding the cultural perspectives as well as the different worldviews of the ancient Near East is a tremendous work.

## 1.6 LIMITATIONS:

The above statement, a comparison of ancient Egyptian as well as the ancient Hebrew religious cosmogonies, is a limitation as well as a definition of terms. It will be constantly necessary in this research to define the sense in which the various authorities are using the term. It is not anticipated that this will be an unmanageable problem, but due to time constraints, it is a limitation one must keep in mind. There are also gaps in terms of time periods in the communities that are being compared, therefore that is a limitation as well as a problem that should be presupposed.

## 1.7 DEFINITION OF TERMS:

### COSMOGONY:

This term simply refers to the record of origins.

### MYTH:

It is a story about deities.

### WORLDVIEW:

In defining the worldview, the clear understanding of a worldview presented by Deist is adopted where he says it is a way which a person or a group interprets the world, makes sense of the events of history, and conceives of man's nature and destiny (Deist 1984: 279).

## CHAPTER 2

COSMOLOGY:

It defines how the basic orders and principles are understood. This concept may also deal with the theological treatment of creation in the light of biblical and other religious teachings on this, but which does not form part of this study.

EGYPT:

It refers to the ancient North-Eastern African Kingdom - i.e. the time of the pharaohs, c.3000 - 300 B.C. Cosmogonic texts from different periods and sites will be discussed, including the Nubian dynasty.

HEBREW BIBLE:

It refers to the Masoretic Text published in the **Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia** which differs in respect of the number and order of books from, for instance, the Greek Septuagint or the Vulgate Old Testament. Special attention will be given to the cosmogonic ideas in Gen. 1 and 2.

## **CHAPTER 2**

### **THE WORLD VIEW**

#### **2.1 INTRODUCTION:**

This chapter deals with the entire idea of the world view. The reader will recall that in the previous chapter the phenomenological methodological approach has been discussed. The term world view here is used interchangeable with the term cosmology. Before one could delve into the minute details of cosmology, it is wise to first have a general view of how things came and developed as time went by. In this chapter issues like the religious nature of the world view and a general view of cosmological understanding perceived by both ancient Egyptians and ancient Hebrews are discussed. The cultic idea is also looked at, sacred time as well as sacred space and the conceptions of both man and God have been briefly discussed. Since the following chapter hangs heavily on the idea of **myth**, myth in this chapter has been discussed as a gateway that leads to chapter three. We start with the religious nature of the world view.

#### **2.2 THE RELIGIOUS NATURE OF THE WORLD VIEW:**

In religious ideology, cultural and social activities are permeated with religious ideas. There is no contrast between the divine and the world. The basic feature of the religious feeling is optimism. In the ancient Near Eastern world view, gods could become mortal and men could become gods e.g. the deification of Utnapishtim. According to the ancient Near Eastern point of view (with special reference to the Enuma Elish and Atrakhasis epics), man was created to serve the gods.



It was believed that the national policy went hand in hand with theology, and the divinity of kings evoked certain functions. Safety was always found among the God fearing men, that was the understanding of all nations. Myths, seemingly, were developed to account for the cosmos. It is believed that primeval man was one creature, subsequently divided into two parts i.e. male and female, and these are attracted to each other to retain their pristine unity. In Genesis we also find a text similar to that. Myths are also invoked in magic. There were five levels of religion i.e. personal, familial, local, national and international.

According to Eliade (1959:10) the first and easy definition of the **sacred** is the opposite of the profane. In describing the manifestation of the sacred, a term **hierophany** has been adopted. This term etymologically simply means something sacred shows itself to man. Sacred realities have been manifested in different ways, but the climax of this manifestation for a christian is the incarnation of God in Christ Jesus. In the pre-modern historical societies, sacred, power and reality were used synonymously.

### 2.2.1 ISRAEL:

The central concern for the history of religion generally and certainly the religion of Israel in its environment, is God. Schmidt (1983:13) advocates that the name of the deity reveals his true nature. The God of Israel is characterized by his relationship to man, while Canaanite deities bear the name of the place where they appeared. It is believed that the God of the fathers was worshipped without image or statue.

The two contradictory ideas that express an important theological or religious reality, should be discussed at this moment. These contradictory ideas are:

- (1) God has a beginning, and at the same time;
- (2) God has no beginning.

These two contradictory ideas express what is meant by the phrase: "Yahweh out of the gods" (Miller 1973:48). It is generally accepted by scholars that the God Yahweh worshipped by Israel as Lord and Creator of heaven and earth has His roots and origins deep in the polytheistic world of Canaanite religion. This is a hypothetical reconstruction, but it builds on a broad base of data and in a holistic way makes the best sense of both biblical and extra-biblical material. According to Frank Cross (Miller 1973:48) in the patriarchal traditions in the Pentateuch, the God worshipped by a patriarch is identified by the patriarchs e.g. the God of Abraham. This idea is clearly portrayed in Exo. 3:15 and 6:2-3. Cross understands that Yahweh was originally a cultic name of El. The Bible has always mentioned that beginning is only a stage in a historical development and it is fully continuous with religious expressions and developments even in the non-Israelite history before it.

According to Cross (Miller 1973:50) understanding of his hypothesis, Yahweh is a split from El and therefore El now is a Yahweh although there are dimensions and functions of El that are carried over into the character of Yahweh. The sanctuary in Israel reflected old Canaanite models, and more specifically the Tent of El and his **cherubim** throne.

It is indeed evident that a growing discontinuity with Baal is a task for the history of the religion of Israel. There are some basic fundamental dimensions that are also applicable to Yahweh i.e.:

- (i) the patterns and motifs of Baal as **storm god** who rides the clouds and whose theophany has such powerful effects on the natural world are all present in the numerous hymnic and traditions of the theophany of Yahweh.
- (ii) the imagery of Yahweh as the **divine warrior** character of El, other gods and goddesses, but most particularly of Baal.

The God of Israel stands over against all other gods, claiming a unity and exclusiveness that rules them out (Ps 82). It carries with it a theological perspective on the nature of the divine reality that is of far-reaching significance in the history of Israelite religion. Deut. 6:4-5 states that "the Lord our God is one Lord". This term "one" may signify inclusiveness, comprehensiveness and all in one.

It is believed that the worship of Yahweh began in the course of the Sinai event with the revelation to Moses. The origin of the first commandment cannot clearly be established, but the self-revelation of God is a basic characteristic of the biblical understanding of God. The identity of God is shown by his actions. The idea of self-introduction as well as the giving of commandments appears to be unknown to Israel's neighbours. One will recall that only the king can prefix his "I" to the proclamation of the law, just as Hammurabi introduces his collection of laws (Pritchard 1969:164 ff.). The name betrays something of the essential character of the deity and declares his characteristics or the place of his appearance.

The root of the word Yahweh (YHWH) is in the third person singular imperfect meaning either existence or development (Harris: 1980:210), this idea is also understood in this way by the Bible itself. It looks like the name of Yahweh is probably earlier than the Israelites and taken over by them, most probably coming from the Midianites (cite the following references, Exo.2:1,2:18,3:1,18:1,4:18, Judg 4:11,1:16, etc).

There was a link between the Israelites and the Midianites, because before the Sinai pericope one finds an account of a common sacrifice of these two nations, Exo.18. Exo.24:11 clearly states the sacrificial ceremony where both the elders of Israel as well as the Midianites took part in that ceremony. The Kenites too seem to have been worshippers of Yahweh. Nevertheless, Yahwistic faith become historically significant in Israel.

The nation of Israel is distinctly separated from its environment by the first and the second commandments. In contrast, the ancient Near East can show no comparable prohibition which excludes the worship of foreign gods and allows no image of God. There seems however, to be one exception - during the time of Akhenaten, Egypt moved from polytheism to a solar "monotheism". The first two commandments show the exclusiveness of creed and is a phenomenon unique only to Israel. Hosea does not put the first commandment as a demand, but as an assurance. If one needs the subject matter of the first commandment, one will find that it is not primarily God Himself, but man's relationship to God. The history of Israel could be written as a history of the first commandment and the effective element in it is its character as a demand, this idea is also portrayed by Schmidt (1983: 83 and 84).

The essence of the second commandment is that man may not portray God in an image, because man is the image of God, God creates an image of Himself in man, but man may not create an image of God. The exclusive worship of Yahweh was not a reality everywhere and at all times, but remained a demand upon Israel, and the same was true with the absence of images from the cult of Yahweh. God has never been visible in His appearances but always audible. Linguistic images do not fall under the prohibition, for the Bible permits to hearing what it forbids to seeing (Schmidt 1983:84).

The demand for exclusiveness and the relationship to history should indeed be closely connected, because by contrast with mythological thought, which tells of a relationship of the gods among themselves. Because of the striking close connection of faith and history in Israel the view might be put forward with J.L. Seeligmann (Schmidt 1983:84-86) that for man in the Bible, history is the mode of thought of faith. There is absolutely no evidence that the Sabbath commandment was borrowed from any of the neighbouring nations of Israel. The essential characteristic of the Sabbath is the rest and is also characterized as a form of worship of Yahweh the God of Israel. After exile, the Sabbath had a tremendous meaning to Israel, for it was a confessional indicator of an eternal covenant.

### 2.2.2 **EGYPT:**

In determining what the early Egyptians understood as divine is not a simple task. The funerary inscriptions from the Pyramid Texts contain enough descriptive, narrative, and conversational data which allow scholars to form some idea of the concepts of divinity during the pharaonic times. It is interesting to note that during the dynastic times, the Egyptians composed and recorded many theologies detaching the origin of their universe and the origin of duties, and recently these theologies have attracted much commentary and interpretation.

According to Shafer (1991:12), Egyptian beliefs were fluid even during the historic period, and they were never consolidated into a single source that remain constant throughout history. In Egypt there is no book called, "the sacred book". It seems appropriate to speculate that the divine was originally conceived of as amorphous and it gradually come to be envisioned in its relation to the world i.e. in relation to natural phenomena. It is evident that most duties in Egyptian pantheon are represented in a combination of animal and human forms. The religious and literary texts describe the gods as possessing mainly human characteristics. During the historic period duties associated with cosmic elements attested to the importance of this period. Divine names can sometimes be useful in identification since they are usually descriptive. The designation of Horus clearly reflects his association with the sky. In the Egyptian context the gods had their birthdays which were celebrated on a yearly basis. It is noted that references to the death of the gods are not always constant.

The Egyptians worshipped numerous gods for thousands of years. Some gods were associated with the cosmic function and yet others were associated with the elements of the ancient Egyptian's environment. According to the Egyptian understanding, three powers have to be present which represent the energy necessary for the creation i.e. Hu (divine utterance), Heka (magic or divine energy) and Sia (divine knowledge).

If one pictures ancient Egypt, one would discover that it was a composite of many local areas, each area having its own particular traditions and customs. During the early pharaonic period these administrative units were called nomes. It is also noticeable that these local deities from time to time, transcended their original provincialism and gained national prominence e.g. Montu was a Theban nome deity, but during the eleventh Dynasty, he became pre-eminent throughout Egypt.

Amun-Ré was considered as King of the Gods throughout Egyptian history. In Egyptian religion, the local deity was not the only deity worshipped in that particular area.

The gods of the mortuary religion are the most recognizable groupings of deities nowadays. As far as the earliest beliefs are concerned, Anubis was clearly the ruler of the underworld while Osiris was associated with the Delta, earth and vegetation. Shafer (1991:44) puts this issue this way, in the two gods, i.e. Osiris as well as Ré, is manifest the Egyptians' understanding of a dual eternal existence, and one related to Osiris and reflecting his infinite everlasting existence and one related to Ré and reflecting his cyclical rejuvenation.

Shafer (1991:44) indicates that most ancient Egyptians had only limited access to the state gods in the temple. Ancient Egyptians could express personal devotion to a divinity by acquiring and possessing small amulets, stelaes, and votive images of gods. It was a common belief that high ranking gods like Amun as well as Ptah could hear the prayers of individual persons. The god Bes was associated with other protective situations and he also appeared as a decorative element on household items and furnishings. The deified individual belonged to the category of household and personal goods. Gods who had non-Egyptian names, primary cults outside the boundaries of Egypt (e.g. Baal) were also included in the Egyptian pantheon.

The perception of the king in ancient Egypt was not static. The names of the kings were treated differently from those of their subjects of gods. The king was considered to be both human and divine. A king unlike the gods had to earn his or her immortality. In the Egyptian understanding the King was the **parakletos** (mediator) between gods and men. Pharaoh could not claim his divinity or divine birth unless his coronation had already taken place. Akhenaten is the only pharaoh who closed a gap between the living king and the supreme power. Akhenaten's new theology died with him.

### 2.3 COSMOLOGICAL UNDERSTANDING OF THE ANCIENT EGYPTIANS & ANCIENT HEBREWS:

The geographical orientation of Egypt was towards the South which was the source of the Nile. Upper Egypt was in the South and Lower Egypt in the North. These two lands were symbolized by the sedge plant, papyrus or the bee. Underworld or Netherworld was rendered as Rosetau, Imhet, and Duet. The sun was conceived as a sphere. The description of the cosmos reflected in Egyptian lexicography was in some ways consistent with the mythological descriptions of the heavenly cow and of the sky goddess Nut. Duet and Imhet were separate locations in the sky. Ptah, in Egyptian cosmological concept, provides a further symbolic link between the Ennead (i.e. heaven and Nut, earth and Geb) and the Ogdoad (i.e. Nun, Naunet).

The O.T. tells the origins of Israel as specific historical events e.g. Psalm 136. Israel had presumed her nomadic heritage unlike other neighbouring nation. Schmidt (1983:8) states that the people of the twelve tribes developed only after the settlement in Canaan from individual tribes or even smaller units and clans, who apparently migrated into the land at widely separated dates and from different directions. Therefore, the first section of the history of Israel is defined as pre-history, and this pre-history is not a religio-historical unity. He continues to put it this way, there was a worship of Yahweh before Moses, as the Yahwist indicates, but Israel herself first learnt to know Yahweh at Sinai, as the Elohist and the Priestly writer tell us (Schmidt 1983:9).

#### **2.4 CULTIC PRACTICE AND INSTITUTIONS:**

In Hebrew understanding priests were temple servants in the Israelite religion. Three feasts were required by the Lord to be commemorated. Those feasts were the feast of Passover and Unleavened Bread, the feast of the Harvest or Weeks and finally the feast of Ingathering or Tabernacles.

The feast of Passover and Unleavened Bread go back to a nomadic origin. According to Schmidt (1983:119) the Passover was not intended to create fellowship with the deity nor to store for sin. The feast of the Unleavened Bread traces its origin to Canaanite agricultural pilgrimage feast, which was performed at the beginning of the grain harvest, after the first cutting of the barley, they ate the first bread of the year unleavened. The name of the feast-pesah- remains uncertain. Exo.12, Deut.16 and so forth clearly mention that the Passover is explicitly understood as a day of remembrance reminding man and women of the Exodus.

Schmidt (1983:122) points out that the Passover lost the original meaning for it no longer convey protection through its own power and the blood on the door-steps is only a sign of God's passing by, as the rainbow and circumcision are signs of the covenant. In the history of religion, the practice is presented while the interpretation changes.

The feast of Harvest or Weeks complements the first, it marked the end of the grain harvest in summer (Exo.23:16; Lev.23:17). This feast of Weeks took place seven weeks after the sickle was put to the standing grain. The exact period of fifty days (**pentecost** in Greek) was apparently later adopted to the Israelites sabbath numeration. It does not have a Canaanite origin.

The feast of Ingathering or Tabernacles was celebrated in Autumn, when the harvest was brought in. This feast, too, was connected with the stay in Egypt. This feast was observed in the seventh month along with two other feasts i.e. the feast of trumpets and the Day of Atonement.

In the Egyptian context, the temple was considered as the house of the gods where they (gods) lived in the form of cult statues. These statues were decorated and also dressed, food and drinks were offered to them and in a daily ritual the shrine was opened (Fig. 1a Vergote 1987:Fig. 39). In the Egyptian understanding, priests were political rather than religious, and therefore rituals were performed by them as the representatives of the king. There were four main priests in the large temples, numerous minor priests, singers, musicians, scribes and temple employees. The ritual acts were elevated to a mythical level and drawn into manifold connection with mythical ideas (T.N.E.B. 24, 1986:69).

Egyptian festivals were partly of local and partly of general importance. These festivals were held as the gods' birthdays were celebrated, also on special calendar days, seasonal events, king's ceremonies and finally victory ceremonies. Those festivals which were regarded as important festivals used to last for several days. One will notice that it is evident that on these occasions the god was visible to the public and gave oracles. Therefore, these events were of utmost importance in Egypt.

## 2.5 SACRED TIME AND SPACE:

Eliade, as one of the main exponents of the Phenomenological approach, clearly states that the nature of a sacred time is reversible because it is a primordial mythical time made present (1959:68). It is believed that gods themselves founded sacred time, for the time contemporary with creation was necessarily sanctified by the presence and activity of the gods. A non-religious man experiences a certain discontinuity and heterogeneity of time. It is also understood that the church constitutes a break in plane in the profane space i.e. the service celebrated inside the church marks a break in profane temporal duration. Within the concept of liturgical times, Christianity affirms the historicity of the person of Christ. According to Eliade, the sacred time periodically reactualizes in pre-Christian religions is a mythical time. The term "cosmos" also designate a year. The term **doktos** means "the year is a circle around the world" (Eliade 1959:72). Eliade in interpreting the terms *templum* as well as *tempus* takes *templum* to designate the spatial and *tempus* to designate the temporal aspect of the notion of the horizon in space and time.

The idea of the sacred place or space was endorsed by God in Exo.3:5, indicating that some parts of space are more qualitative than others, when someone or something supernatural at that moment, is in that space or place. In discussing the notion of the sacred, there must be a discovery of a fixed point e.g. if a township is to be inhabited, it must first be established or founded. Eliade (1959:23) suggests that the profane experience maintains the homogeneity, hence the relativity of space. In this type of experience, the idea of a fixed point does not enjoy a unique ontological status and it depends on the needs of the day.

Sacred sites were not chosen by men but they were sought and found by the help of mysterious signs. For a believer, the sacred is pre-eminently real. According to Eliade (1959:30) the world is a universe within which the sacred has already manifested itself, in which, consequently, the break-through from plane to plane has become possible and repeatable. The researcher likes the idea that goes like this, our world must first be created and every creation has a paradigmatic model (Eliade 1959:31). When you talk of territory, you talk of it in terms of consecration first. The cross in a Christian context is equivalent to consecrating the country (2 Cor. 5:17). In nomadic Australian context a gum tree which fashioned the sacred pole, (normally called - pole of heaven) made the territory to be habitant and it transformed it into a world. In the ancient Orient it was believed that human beings cannot live in chaos.

In different cultures one hears of mountains, either real or mythical which are situated in the centre. These mountains are Meru in India, Horaberezaiti in Iran, the mythical Mount of lands in Mesopotamia, Gerizim (i.e. navel of the earth) in Palestine (Jerusalem). According to the understanding of Christians, Golgotha is on the summit of the cosmic mountain. Cosmological images as well as religious beliefs are explained by the symbolism of the centre, i.e. holy sites and sanctuaries situated in the centre, temples being the replicas of the cosmic mountain and finally the foundations of temples descend deep into lower regions (Eliade 1959:39). Eliade suggests that a sanctuary, a city and the entire country, all equally well present an **imago mundi**, (1959:42). It is believed that the world was created beginning with Zion.

Eliade continues to say, any destruction of a city is equivalent to a retrogression to chaos, any victory over the attackers reiterates the paradigmatic (work) victory of the gods over the dragon which is chaos. A snake symbolizes chaos, the formless and unmanifested, and the beheading of it means an act of creation. A house is the universe that man constructs for himself by imitating the paradigmatic creation of the god, the cosmogony (Eliade 1959:56 & 57). The sanctuary which Moses and the Israelites built, was a pattern of the sanctuary in heaven made or created by God himself.

## 2.6 THE CONCEPTION OF GOD:

There is nothing amazing in the Egyptian's belief that certain animals and plants were sacred or that certain objects possessed sacred value. The ancient Egyptian religion always had a polytheistic character, where a believer approaches the divine in a number of ways. All ancient peoples looked upon the snake as a mysterious animal and the oldest pair of the primeval gods is Nun and Naunet. The common name of the sun-god is Ré, with the sun-disk as determinative in hieroglyphic writing. During the creation, the sun-god was assisted by Hu and Sia. Sokaris is a most mysterious figure which appears in human form and falcon-headed and he is also the god of death. Osiris is the wise monarch that enjoyed great popularity, he is the god of vegetation. Thoth is both the moon and the moon god. Ptah is the Lord of Memphis with Chthonic features and he is connected with the fertile soil. Min is a symbol of divine power and fertility. Hathor is both a goddess of trees and a goddess of the dead. Seshat is the goddess of the arts of writing and arithmetic. This is what ancient Egyptians understood by the word "god".

According to the Hebrew Bible, the Israelites believed in one God. They believed that their God is distinct and personal, hence their monotheism was exclusive. Israelites believed that the God who is mentioned in Deut 6:4 was an incomparable, wholly other, spiritual and a transcendent God. Monotheism was viewed in a practical sense as a relationship to an active, self-revealing and demanding God. Israelites believed that God was omnipresent, omniscient and omnipotent. In Gen. 1 God was viewed as Elohim, a God who is distant from His people, a God who is exalted and sovereign. But in Gen. 2 God is understood as YAHWEH, a God who is close to His people, a God who understands, cares and loves His people. Israelites perceived the Bible as the revelation or self manifestation of God. This is how the Israelites understood God.

## 2.7 THE ORIGIN OF MAN:

The closing phase of a song sung by Ré alludes to the conception that, mankind derived from the tears of Ré or rather of the sun-eye. All came into being because a thought arose in the heart of Ptah and the tongue voiced. Khnum can be accounted as a creator in only certain respects. All that is created sexually enters the world because of his work.

The concept of an invisible "soul" was alien to the Egyptian. The deceased is therefore repeatedly assured that his body is completely intact. The soul was not conceived as being purely spiritual and the body purely material. According to the Babylonian myth of creation, man was created to serve the gods, he is the slave of the sovereign gods. The Egyptian was convinced that man can escape from sin by living in harmony with **ma-at**. The Egyptian view of man was optimistic and did not entertain a fatalistic conception of life.

Israelites had their own understanding regarding the origin of man. They were of the opinion that the creation cited in Genesis (1:1-2:25) establishes the notion of a unique, omnipotent and sovereign God. Man is constituted at the same time as the rest of creation, but is, at the same time, distinguished from it by certain special qualities e.g. the image of God and the freedom of choice. The doctrine of immortality is opposed to the idea of resurrection which is spread throughout the Bible. For thinkers historical messianism was a major concern.

## 2.8 **MYTH:**

Myth, as an English word, comes from a Greek word, **muthos** which means word or speech. The word **muthos** when translated to myth means a story concerning gods and superhuman beings (Bolle 1987:261). According to Bolle (1987:261) a myth is an expression of sacred realities and events from the origin of the world, and (as it is said) that it remained valid for the basis and purpose of all things. If one cites Gen. 1:1, one will agree that the language of myth presents rather than pursues an argument. A myth always has the idea of a "**beginning**". Sacred speech, sacred acts and sacred places are called forms of religious expression. Sacred speech refers to a myth, and a differentiation among the three forms is external, conceptual and also formal. According to Bolle myths do not only vary from culture to culture, but each one is itself open to transformation.

There are four basic concepts that one must bear in mind when one deals with the concept of myth, i.e.:

- (a) the dimming opposites;
- (b) a depiction of an inverse effect;
- (c) subjective reservedness; and finally
- (d) grotesque understood as sacred traditions.

In the classical texts, it is understood that explanations are distinguished in three ways, that is **allegorical** explanations which account for the meaning of a myth; **rational** explanations that call for rational analysis; **euhemerism** interprets religious myths and legends about historical figures and events.

In Genesis, narratives are myth-like and they also reflect an old Israelite mythological tradition (Otzen 1980:23). But von Rad does not agree with Otzen, because according to von Rad myths lack their essential framework in Israel (Otzen 1980:24). It is believed that the first creation narrative (Gen.1:1-2:4a) belongs to the Priestly source because of the use of two priestly linguistic verbs i.e. **bara** meaning "to create" and **bdl** (hif.) which means "to make division" or "to separate". One may notice that the last verb is always used in priestly legislation, where things which do not belong together will not get mixed up (Otzen 1980:28). The second creation narrative (Gen.2:4a-25) is understood as belonging to the Yahwistic source because of its use of the divine name Yahweh. The main focus in the second narrative is on man's relationship to God and man's relationship to the world in which he lives (Otzen 1980:40). In order for one to understand the notion of creation, it is very important for one to first understand myth and its use in both ancient Egypt and the Hebrew Bible.

## 2.9 SUMMARY:

This chapter is an attempt to familiarize the reader with the world view of these two communities. Certain characteristics in both communities have been discussed and these identifying marks have endorsed the uniqueness of each of these communities. The last portion of this chapter has dealt with myth as a fundamental issue that opens the way for the following chapter, because the cosmogonic texts in themselves are viewed as "myth". It is clearly understood that the word "myth" finds itself both in Egyptian understanding as well as that of the ancient Israelites. Therefore this chapter leads us to the core chapter of this study.

## **CHAPTER 3**

### **EXAMPLES OF ANCIENT EGYPTIAN AND ANCIENT HEBREW COSMOGONIES**

#### **3.1 INTRODUCTION:**

This chapter serves as the main core of this research. In chapters one and two, the ground was laid so that a general understanding of the two communities could be reached. This chapter deals with the examples of ancient Egyptian cosmogonies as well as different versions of Hebrew cosmogonies. Before one gets into deeper understanding of the various cosmogonies under discussion, one must first touch on the issue of myth. It is also very important to discuss briefly the origin of humankind, plants, animals as well as deities (with special emphasis on ancient Egyptian cosmogonies).

When the two versions of the Hebrew cosmogonies are discussed, the following bible versions will be cited: an English translation of the Septuagint Bible, the NIV, the new king James Version and the Hebrew Bible i.e. Biblia Hebraica. In order for the reader to have a broader understanding of the ancient Egyptian cosmogonies, different Egyptian texts will be cited. First of all an overview of different kinds of cosmogonies is given.

#### **3.2 A BRIEF OVERVIEW OF DIFFERENT KINDS OF COSMOGONY:**

The question of cosmogony or the origin of the world is a very old one, which continues to be encountered worldwide. In answering this question, mythologies have been developed.

A myth is not a tale of fantasy in which gods and special people appear and act, rather it is the form in which the ancients embodied their **explanation** of the striking things about men, and the incomprehensibility of life and nature. People, at least, have some explanation concerning the origin of the world. If one focusses on the mythical explanations, one discovers that among Israel's neighbours, for the most part, these explanations were mixed. It was believed that more than one deity is involved in the process of creation. It does not seem that there was a uniform manner at which things came into being. As the mythical explanations are briefly explored, one must bear in mind that the words **creation** and **cosmogony** are used interchangeable as well as the words **Israel** and **Hebrew Bible** are also used interchangeable in this particular section.

### 3.2.1 **CREATION BY BIRTH:**

This first form of creation is related mostly to the origin of the gods. Creation by birth means that the gods, however, were the personification of some or other aspect of the universe, e.g. the heaven, the earth, the air, the seas, the rivers, the sun, the moon, the wind etc. The explanation of the myths as the origin of the universe by way of the process of birth has been encountered in Egypt as well as in the entire ancient Near East. This mythical explanation is opposed to the Biblical understanding of creation. The Biblical understanding is that before all else, stands the majesty and sovereignty of God.

Therefore, this God does not need other gods to assist Him with the process of creation. In the Bible, it is believed that He is the Only one, the Almighty, outside of Him there is nothing and nobody else. According to Van Zyl (1989:8) there is no ontological affinity between Him and His creation. God is eternal as well as immortal but His creation is time bound and at the same time changeable. God's creation is His passive instrument. In God Himself, there is no question of darkness or evil, but His creation possesses the possibility of doing evil. In ancient "Israel" there could not be any genealogical link between creator and creation. (Pritchard 1969:60ff.)

The Enuma Elish, the Babylonian creation epic which is inscribed in cuneiform characters on clay tablets, was discovered in Niniveh in 1853 as part of the library of Ashurbanipal, published in 1876. This epic describes how the gods came into existence one after the other by a process of birth. The primeval water mass has played a remarkable role in tales about the origin of the universe both in Egypt and Mesopotamia. The idea of the "deep" has led many scholars to think that the same trend was to be found in Gen. 1-2. The Hebrew word **tehom** (translated as "deep") was associated with Tiamat (the Babylonian personification of the seas), but this link should, however, be treated with caution. Van Zyl (1989:9) says, even though the mass of water is spoken of in Gen. 1, it cannot simply be identified with the personified mass of water of the Babylonian myth. The contrast is, in the Babylonian story, it is not only the manifestation of a living deity only, but also the primeval beginning of all things whereas in the biblical account the mass of water is not the first principle of life, i.e. God Himself is the origin of all that exists. The waters (in which God is not) are an instrument in God's hand and these waters are not a living reality with will and thought.

### 3.2.2 CREATION BY BATTLE:

If one views the Babylonian creation epic (Pritchard 1969:60ff.), one discovers that it further describes how the heavens and the earth came about as a result of a strife between the primeval pair, Apsu and Tiamat, and the other gods. Van Zyl (1989:9) clearly states that the primeval pair was disturbed by the noise and behaviour of their progeny and Apsu decided to kill all of them. It is believed that the gods chose Marduk, chief god of Babylon, as their commander and gave to him absolute authority as king. He defeated Tiamat and divided her body into two parts. It is understood that from the first half of Tiamat, he made the firmament, and it is not clear what he did with the other half, but one can infer that he formed the earth from it. It is also clear that Marduk determined the cycle of nature. It is interesting how man was formed, he was made by mixing the blood of the rebellious Kingu with clay. Creation by battle is not unknown in the Bible. The following texts are usually quoted: Isa. 37:16; 51:9ff; Ps. 71:12 - 17; 74:12ff; 104; Job 12; 38:4ff. One should not forget that one is dealing with poetic language which is rich in all kinds of imagery stemming from the common culture of the ancient Near East. The idea that is portrayed in the Babylonian creation epic is never entertained in Israel. In fact, according to Podella (1989:230) creation in Genesis does not necessarily follow a chaos battle pattern.

### 3.2.3 CREATION BY FORMATION:

This creation is, for the most part, restricted to the creation of men. One will discover that there are some texts which could give the impression that other things were also made out of clay. Khnum is regarded throughout Egypt as the god who fashioned man on his potter's wheel. It is understood that an entire series of gods are mentioned as if they were made out of clay (cf 3.4.3).

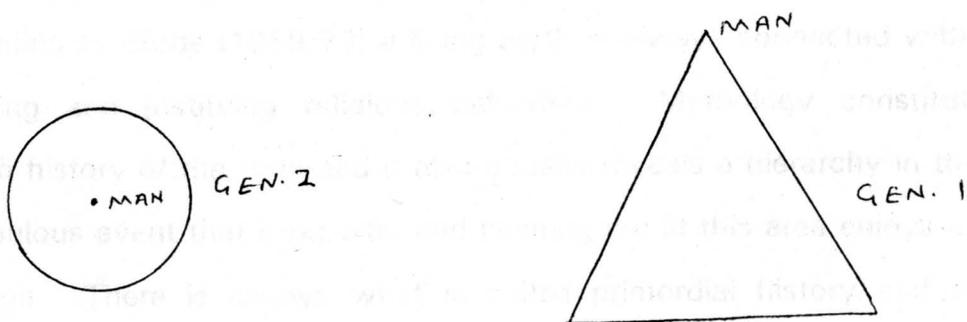
### 3.2.4 CREATION BY THE WORD:

In the ancient Near East, the spoken word was filled with power. The best examples of this notion probably are blessings and curses. In the Bible, the blessings of Isaac (Gen. 27), Jacob (Gen. 48 and 49) and Moses (Deut. 33) are well known, as are the curses of Balaam which were changed into blessings (Num. 22).

This notion of the power of a person's word was sure to influence man's conception of the gods. Marduk, prior to his acknowledgement as a king, was subjected to a test of authoritative utterance. Therefore, it is to be expected that creation by way of an authoritative word would also be encountered. The best known example of this, is the so-called "Shabaka Stone" which was discovered in Egypt. This stone describes, inter alia, how the god Ptah created all things by way of thought and word. It is worth noting that after his created work he rested.

### 3.2.5 CREATION IN THE BIBLE:

It is worth noting that the traditions of creation are found in many places in the Bible, but the most important ones are those of Gen. 1 and 2. It is generally understood that Gen. 1 and 2 are dealing with two versions, i.e. Gen. 1:1 - 2:4a and Gen. 2:4-25. According to Van Zyl (1989:11) it is generally said that Genesis 1 was committed to writing at a much later stage in the history of Israel by a Priestly writer and Genesis 2 was written much earlier, perhaps by the hand of a prophetic author. These separate traditions both reflect ancient traditions. It is clear that the intention was that they should be mutually complementary. It is evident that the story of Gen. 1 gives a universal view with the sovereignty of God as the overriding motif and culminates in the creation of man as the event of creation while in Gen. 2 the creation of man and his habitat is once again at the core, but it is at the same time the point of departure for the description of the nadir of man, which in turn, gives rise to the entire series of redemptive acts which God wishes to perform for man. In Gen.1 God is central with man as the goal; in Gen. 2 man is central with God as the end.



The creation of man is not merely an afterthought, but it has created a close bond between man and God. God creates in order to achieve fellowship with man.

Genesis 2 cannot be considered without Genesis 1 because the creation of the universe is the necessary prerequisite for the unfolding of the drama which begins in Genesis 2:4b. Genesis 1 and 2 is a poetic section, therefore it is not intended to provide precise details, as some would argue about "evening and morning" as well as the term "day". The creation story in Genesis is not a scientific description of how the world came into being. Because of the conclusiveness of Genesis 1:28 in describing man and his domain, there can, therefore, be no conflict between the Bible and natural science with regard to the origin of the world. If one compares the biblical story of creation and that of Israel's neighbours, one discovers that there are some concurrences and at the same time, some striking differences in these creation stories. The concurrences show that Israel did not exist in isolation.

### 3.3 COSMOGONIC MYTH AND SACRED HISTORY:

In most European languages, the word myth denotes a fiction, this is so because the Greeks proclaimed it to be so, almost twenty five centuries ago. According to Eliade (1969:73) a living myth is always connected with a cult, inspiring and justifying religious behaviour. Mythology constitutes the sacred history of the tribe and it also equally reveals a hierarchy in the series of fabulous event that it reports, and cosmogony in this area enjoys a special prestige. There is always what is called primordial history and it has a beginning. Myth is considered as true history because it relates how things came into being providing an exemplary model and also justifications of man's activities.

The myth unveils the religious thought of the community in all its depth and complexity, but the individual in collective life also has a cosmological structure. Eliade (1969:81) says if one examines a mythology in its totality, one learns the judgement of the particular people upon its sacred history.

On the very same page, Eliade continues to say every mythology presents a successive and coherent series of primordial events, but different peoples judge these fabulous acts in different ways, underlining the importance of some of them, casting aside or even completely neglecting others. One can distinguish two types of primordialities, i.e.:

- (i) a pre-cosmic, unhistorical primordiality, and
- (ii) a cosmogonic or historical one.

According to Eliade (1969:87) the cosmogonic myth opens the sacred history, it is a historical myth though not in the Judeo-Christian sense of the word, for the cosmogonic myth has the function of an exemplary model and as such it is periodically reactualized.

#### 3.4 **ANCIENT EGYPTIAN COSMOGONIES:**

In Egypt, just like in the Hebrew Bible, there are various versions of cosmogonies, to mention a few there are the Heliopolitan cosmogony, the Hermopolis cosmogony, the Theban cosmogony as well as the Shabaka text.

The Egyptians did not follow one pattern of cosmogony, but instead they had different versions of cosmogony and each was unique in its context.

Some versions will be discussed.

### 3.4.1 HELIOPOLITAN COSMOGONY:

Before one deals with the notion of Heliopolitan cosmogony, one must first be aware of the word **Heliopolis**. **Heliopolis** which is also called the "city of the Sun", lay under the suburbs of north-east Cairo and it was once counted among the foremost and most ancient sanctuaries in Egypt (Hart 1992:11). When Upper and Lower Egypt was unified, some wise people began to formulate a cosmogony which would stress the significance of the Pyramid Texts of Dynasties V and VI (c.2500 - 2150 B.C). In this cosmogony, it is believed that before the existence of a structured cosmos, there existed what is called primeval water, and this primeval water is termed **Nu** or **Nun** who came by himself (Hart 1992:11). From **Nun** originated the gods (Fig.1-Keel 1978:Fig.37).

Atum, which is connected with the Egyptian word **tm** meaning complete, universal and perfect (Gardner 1927:563), is portrayed as "Lord of Heliopolis" and also "Lord to the limits of the sky". There is an indication that Atum has a beginning (Hart 1992:11). Atum as the sun god became the supreme being i.e. a Monad indicating that within himself the lifeforce of every other deity is inherent, hence the theogony of Isis as well as Seth the god of chaos and confusion. Atum as well as the sun are always identical in both the Pyramid Texts and Coffin Texts (Allen 1988:10).

Atum is also portrayed as the biological father of Shu (male) and Tefnut (female) (Te Velde 1984:249) and it is believed that he begot them through masturbation (Allen 1988: Text 3). But Text 4 in Allen (1988:13) actually answers the question that states how can one parent beget children, and this text also shows or deals with the transmission of lifeforce (living soul) from the first being.

These two deities, which are mentioned in Allen's Text 3, gave birth to another two deities i.e. Geb (an earth male) and Nut (a sky female). They are usually depicted as being separated by Shu (Fig.2 in Hart 1992:14 and Keel 1978:Fig.32). Geb and Nut gave birth to Osiris and Seth and also two daughters (i.e. Isis and Nephthys), for more clarity, cf. Fig.3 (in Hart 1992:15). The story portrays a struggle between Osiris and Seth and even represents a conflict between **kemet** (Nile) and **deshret** (desert). In later texts this struggle has been directed to the kings of the North and those of the South for control of the country.

It is indeed evident that Egyptian religion entertained the idea of polytheism, and it is also noted that the deities had a mutual relationship of either a positive or a negative nature (Te Velde 1984:239). The deities in a local area had a vague colleagueship relationship, and this relationship between deities develops and lasts especially on this level. It is also recognizable that prominent gods like Ptah, Sokaris and Osiris could be cojoined to form a single god although they still preserve their individuality (Te Velde 1984:240).

In the Pyramid Texts dealing with creation (Doria & Lenowitz 1976:8 and 9) there is mention of a group of nine gods and goddesses called the Ennead. This group of nine gods and goddesses, as it is extracted from the Papyrus Bremner-Rhind, is fully responsible for the fruitfulness of the entire land. Figure 4 (Hart 1992:17) illustrates the sun god i.e. "Atum" creator of Heliopolis.

Atum is always used interchangeable with "Ré" or the sun. The word Ré indicates three aspects, i.e.:

- (i) the physical presence of the sun in the sky;
- (ii) the name of the sun god shining in his disk; and
- (iii) Khepri is the image of the new sun in the morning propelled by a scarab beetle i.e. an analogy taken from nature (Hart 1992:17).

In the final analysis, one discovers that Atum in the **Heliopolitan** cosmogony, is the principal or main creator.

#### 3.4.2 **HERMOPOLIS COSMOGONY:**

In Middle Egypt there is at El-Ashmunein an impressive temple which was built in honour of Thoth. Thoth was considered the god of wisdom and moon. According to Hart (1992:20), in the Egyptian language, **Hermopolis** is called **Khemnu**, from which the modern Arabic name of El-Ashmunein ultimately derives, via Coptic. The **Hermopolitan** cosmogony which involves the Ogdoad has a scientific approach when it is dealing with physical composition of primeval water, although it lacks the imagery that surrounds the myth of the sun god of Heliopolis as well as the precision of the Memphite theology (Hart 1992:20). This cosmogony began with the Ogdoad i.e. four couples of male and female gods who seem to represent elements of procreative chaos. Shafer (1991:95) classifies these gods in the following manner: Amun and Amaunet were hiddenness; (according to Hart 1992:20) they were concealed dynamism; Huh and Hauhet were formless, Hart says they were the flood force, Nun and Naunet were the watery abyss, (according to Hart the primeval waters). Kuk and Kauket were darkness. It is clear that the formulators of the Hermopolitan cosmogony were convinced that the Ogdoad predated the Ennead of Heliopolis and were responsible for the origin of the sun.

From the Ogdoad came an egg bearing the god responsible for creating all other gods, humans, plants and other facets of creation. It is not clearly indicated whether this god (responsible for creation) is Thoth or Atum. Fig.5 (Keel 1978:Fig.83) portrays Thoth as the head of the Ogdoad of creator deities of Hermopolis in his role as mediator of the outcome of the judgement of the dead in front of Osiris..

One will notice that all these cosmogonies represent the Memphite theology. In the Memphite text (Allen 1988:43 and 44) it is indicated that Ptah, the Memphite god, created by his mouth (speech) and this is a possible antecedent both of ancient Israel's concept that God created by speaking (Gen. 1) and also of Christianity's doctrine of the Logos in John 1. In the final analysis, Thoth seems to be the principal god after assuming responsibility delegated to him by the sun god Ré.

#### 3.4.3 THEBAN COSMOGONY:

Amun is praised as a creator by the Theban priests during the New Kingdom (1500-1100 B.C.). Whenever the Egyptian poet priests tried to interpret Amun's inexplicability, they discovered that his mystery was contained in his name. The term **Amun** itself has the underlying notion of hiddenness. It seems Amun was synonymous with the growth of Thebes as a major religious capital (Hart 1992:22). He is portrayed as a god with procreative powers which is similar to the ancient ithyphallic deity Min (the primeval god of Coptos).

Amun's title as a universal ruler, was "Lord of the thrones of the Two Lands" and "King of the gods" (Hart 1992:23). The true impression of Amun's superiority is manifested on columned halls, obelisks, colossal statues, wall-reliefs and hieroglyphic inscriptions of the Theban temples. If one cites the Theban creation myth, one discovers that Amun is considered as a god who fashioned himself into existence prior to any other matter that existed. According to Hart (1992:24) every god is a projected image of Amun, and three gods in particular form a unity which is "Amun". Ré is his face, Ptah his body and Amun his hidden identity. The Greek writer Plutarch (in creation Legends, Hart 1992:25), described the snake as "Kneph" (a symbol of Amun i.e. created power and continual cycle of renewal of life), mentioning that the inhabitants of Thebes worshipped it to the exclusion of all other gods.

When one follows the development of the Theban theogony, one discovers that Khnum also plays an integral part in this myth. Fig. 6 (Hart 1992:25) portrays how the creator god Khnum moulds the human form on a potter's wheel. Khnum is a ram headed god, the ram itself (the representation of Khnum's sacred creature) is a symbol of procreativity in the natural world. Khnum as creator and god of the potter's wheel is clearly stated in the calender liturgies and hymns carved at Esna. This episode, an interesting commission that the god Amun entrusted to Khnum at Thebes is known as the Theban theogony. It has also been pressed into the Khonsu cosmogony in a surviving Ptolemaic text.

### 3.4.4 THE ORIGIN OF HUMANKIND AND DEITIES:

#### Origin of Deities:-

Nun the primeval water (Fig.1) is one of the principal gods mentioned in the ancient Egyptian culture. It is believed that Nun begot Atum. Atum in turn masturbated and begot other gods, and these other gods multiplied and brought forth other gods. The Ogdoad (the four couples of gods representing or reflecting different aspects of creation) is also understood as a god that brought forth other gods. The Ogdoad represents the following aspects: Hiddenness, formless, watery abyss, and darkness. Out of this Ogdoad came an egg bearing the god responsible for creating all other gods. This god is indicated as Thoth. It is also understood that Amun is another principal god that is responsible for creating other gods. Although it has been indicated that all other gods emanated from the three principal gods i.e. Nun, the Ogdoad and Amun, there is no indication as to where these principal gods originated from, except for Nun because Nun is said to be self-existent (pre-existed).

#### Origin of Humankind:-

The Ogdoad is not only responsible for bringing forth other gods but also responsible for creating human beings, plants and other facets of creation. One will also discover that in the Theban Theogony, Khnum is the god responsible for the creation of the human form. It is believed that Khnum orientated the blood stream to flow over the bones and attached the skin to the body's frame. According to Hart (1992:26) Khnum installed a respiratory system in the body, vertebrae to support it and an apparatus for digestion. He also designed sexual organs in order to allow maximum comfort without loss of efficiency during intercourse. Khnum is portrayed as a creator as well as a god of the potter's wheel, and this record survived as a detailed anatomical record. Therefore, the Ogdoad and Khnum are considered as deities responsible for the origin of humankind.

### 3.5 THE "HEBREW" COSMOGONIES:

The reader must bear in mind that in this portion, the terms "creation" and "cosmogony" will be used interchangeably. A belief in a creator is the main legacy Christianity received from the Israelites who made a confession from early times of YHWH's power over nature.

According to von Rad (1966:131-43), the creation theology plays mostly a secondary and supportive role in Hebrew religion, because the people viewed the land as the gift of God, the great blessing which YHWH bestowed on them not as a creator but as the redeemer in specific historical events. He continues to argue that the stories of Genesis 1 to 3 show the closeness, deliverance, uniqueness and the superiority of Hebrews compared to other nations. The author begs to differ with von Rad as well as D.A. Knight on this issue because among the Hebrews, cosmogony was a central idea. The notion of creation is interspersed throughout the Hebrew Bible (cite Isa. 37:16; Ps 71:12-17; Job. 12; 38:4ff).

#### 3.5.1 THE TYPOLOGY OF THE HEBREW COSMOGONIES:

The different cosmogonies in the Hebrew Bible differ from each other in terms of three factors i.e. the symbolic form, the dominant socio-historical location, and the intention. According to Genesis 1:1-2:4a; Ps. 104, 74:12-17 God created the entire cosmos and all life within it and everything was structured orderly according to the divine plan. Here this cosmogonic picture intends to call the believers to worship and to praise this deity who has been responsible for creating the whole well-structured world.

It looks like Exo. 25-31; 35-40 and Ezek. 40-48 include the creation of the cult in the Hebrew cosmogony. Gen. 2:4b-25; 3:1ff; Ezek 28:12-19 clearly state that God focussed attention on the creation of humanity. Knight (1985:135) says the story's intention is to probe the nature and meaning of human existence, both the beauty and the brokenness of it. Proverbs, Job, Qoheleth, Psalms and both the prophetic as well as the narrative collections, state clearly that God created a just system of cause and effect in the world, according to which any given action will necessarily lead to its appropriate consequence depending on whether the act maintains or subverts the created harmony of all reality. This typology finds its roots in the wisdom school which has deep roots in ancient Near Eastern culture. The intention here, is both didactic as well as contemplative.

2 Samuel 7 as well as Deutero-Isaiah promote the idea of soteriological symbolism where God created a people, chosen from among all other nations, for a special divine human relationship. The salvation image portrayed in this typology is promulgated also in monarchic and prophetic circles. The intention here, is to indicate that the Hebrew people had special cultic and moral requirements to fulfil.

Exo. 15; Judg. 5:4-5; Ps 68:7-8; Hab. 3:3-15; Isa. 40:3-5 and Ps 24:7-10 portray God being engaged in a warfare against the opponent, (whether this be chaos, other gods, or enemies of the people), and out of this divine war emerges an orderly creation over which the divine warrior then rules as king. It is evident that the mythic cosmic war and the historical wars of the Hebrews can be correlated because the theophany of the divine warrior is accompanied by disturbances of nature, but he rules in peace after the battle. This typology is aligned with the view of other ancient Near Eastern religions. The intention here, is to establish YHWH's sanctuary and kingship, to interpret Israel's deliverance from foreign rule and also to legitimize the Israelite cult and monarchy.

Isaiah 65:17; 66:22; 60:1ff; 65:18-19; Zech. 2:1-5; Amos 9:13-115; Ezek. 36:26; Jer. 31:33 clearly state that once conquered chaos has broken forth again, and God will intervene at some future point to subdue chaos or dissolve the present creation and will then recreate the world and the chosen people. This typology draws its roots from the groups which have their roots in the prophetic or sapiential traditions which were living in a time of powerlessness or oppression. The intention here, is to envisage an alternate world in which God will vindicate their suffering and establish them in peace.

### 3.5.2 GENESIS 1:1-2:4a:

The book of Genesis is often called or described as the Book of Hebrew origins **Bērēsît**. Skinner (1910:iii) strongly believes that this book falls under legendary history because of its first three chapters which are pre-historical in nature. The idea of the legend is very close to "Saga", but as Benedikt Otzen (1980:7) would say, its destructive characteristic is that it has an edifying thrust.

It is actually not a mistake that the name God is made the subject of the very first sentence of the Hebrew Bible because this word dominates the entire chapter and also appears at every point of the page. According to Kidner (1976:43) the passage, indeed the Book of Genesis, is about Him first of all, to read it with any other primary interest is to misread it.

Some commentators of Genesis 1 understand the word **bērēsît** as the absolute, although there are some who claim that this word is in a construct state and therefore depends on the contents in verse 2 and all of the first verse is independent and complete. Those commentators that are advocating for the construct state believe that this first verse is a temporal clause subordinated to verse 3, with verse 2 taken as a parenthesis. The first verse of Genesis 1 is a controversial sentence and there is absolutely no doubt that both translations are syntactically possible (von Rad 1963:46).

The Hebrew Bible uses the word **bārā** translated as "to create". This word, as Kidner (1976:44) would put it, is best determined from the Hebrew Bible as a whole and its subject is invariably God and its products may be either things or situations. Nichol (1953:208) continues to say, the verb *bara* has been used in the statement to describe an activity of God and never of men, whereas verbs like **'āsā** and **'sh** are used in connection with human activities. According to Jamieson, Fausset and Brown (1961:17) this first verse is a general introduction, declaring the great and important truth that all things had a beginning, that nothing throughout the wide extent of nature existed from eternity, originated by chance, or from the skill of any inferior agent, but that the whole universe was produced by the **creative power of God**.

Hamilton (1990:110) strongly believes that even if the etymological equivalence of **tehôm** (in verse 2) and Babylonian Tiamat, can be granted, this does not mean that it is identical to the Babylonian concept. It is understood that almost all ancient peoples believed in a primeval watery mass out of which the orders of creation emerged (cf.Egypt), but if one compares the **deep** of Genesis 1 and that of Tiamat, one discovers that they are so far removed in function that any possible relationship is blurred beyond recognition. In the biblical Genesis account, the **deep** is not personified, and in no way is it viewed as some turbulent, antagonistic force. Genesis 1:1 and 2 are considered by the proponents of the gap hypothesis as a perfect creation performed by God, but after that, the fall of Satan from Heaven marred God's creation in such a way that it resulted in a chaotic state hence the idea of recreation is introduced in Genesis 1:3. But a closer look at verse 2 denies the argument of a gap hypothesis because of the use of the verb "was" (**hyh**) with an active rather than a stative force and therefore this indicates that verse 2 is sequential to verse 1. This same verse uses the phrase *desert, formless, and empty* and this is an opposite of creation instead it describes a chaotic stage (**tôhû wābōhû**). Out of four ways that describe creation stories throughout, the biblical account has adopted two aspects i.e. creation through **action** of some deity/deities and creation through **speech**.

On the first day God created, "light and darkness". Kidner (1976:43) argues that the "light" appropriately marked the first step from chaos to order, and it also precedes the sun, so as in the final vision it outlasts it (Rev. 22:5). According to the 24 hour day pattern, the "dark" part of the day is the first portion and the "light" part of the day is the last portion of the day.

Light was necessary as a symbol of the divine presence and a visible form of energy, which by its action in plants transforms inorganic elements and compounds into food for both man and beast and also to control many other natural processes which are necessary to life. Harris, Archer and Waltke (1980:25) are convinced that the concept of light in Scripture is important, dealing with personal and impersonal forces on both literal and metaphorical level. The activities that were performed on the first day of the week are recorded in verses 3-5.

Verses 6-8 describe the activities that were performed on the second day. The Hebrew word used in this passage designates heaven (*šamayim*) both as the place where God dwells and the place where birds fly (Harris, Archer and Waltke 1980:862). Literally the word *rāqia* means to beat or stamp and this word is often used in connection with beaten metal (Kidner 1976:47). The word heaven in this passage refers clearly to the atmospheric heaven where birds fly. The firmament is that element that divides heavenly waters from terrestrial or primeval waters (Elwell 1989:11). Atmosphere is vital for all living creatures as well as the vegetation, hence it preceded the creation of vegetation and creatures.

The creation activities for the third day are mentioned in verses 9-13 of Genesis 1. Verse 9 is a command in a jussive form, and the report of its fulfilment therefore follows shortly. One will notice that God continues to give form to the world, by the process of differentiation. According to Jamieson, Fausset and Brown (1961:17) the world was to be rendered a terraqueous globe, and this was effected by a volcanic convulsion on its surface, the upheaving of some parts, the sinking of others and the formation of vast hollows, into which the waters impetuously rushed, as is graphically described.

Nichol (1953:212) describes this phenomenon in this manner, it must have been a grand spectacle to any heavenly observer to see hills rise up out of the water that had so completely covered the face of the earth. But the emphasis begins to shift towards the theme of fullness which will be prominent in the rest of the chapter (Kidner 1976:48).

A second divine order/command was passed on the same day. Kidner (1976:48) portrays God empowering the earth to bring forth what is proper to it. The bare soil was clothed with verdure, and it is noticeable that the trees, plants, and grasses, and the three great divisions of the vegetable kingdom here mentioned were not called into existence in the same way as the light and the air. They were made to grow, and they grew as they do still out of the ground but not by the slow process of vegetation but through the divine power, without rain, dew, or any process of labour i.e. sprouting up and flourishing in a single day (Jamieson, Fausset and Brown 1961:17). This is also echoed by Guthrie and Motyer (1988:82). There are three characteristics of fruit bearing trees that are mentioned here, i.e.:

- (1) the bearing of fruit,
- (2) the enclosing of seed within the fruit, and
- (3) the bearing of this fruit upon or above the earth.

Nichol (1953:212) says the idea of spontaneous generation is as alien to Scripture as it is to science. Kidner (1976:48) argues that fertility, which is so often deified in the ancient world, is a created capacity, from the hand of the one God.

Verses 14-19 describe the activities performed on the fourth day. The lights that are actually mentioned here are totally different from the light of verses 3 and 4, because this was a temporal arrangement. The word Mē'ōrōt means the source of light or light holders. Nichol (1953:212) argues that the expression that they are set in firmament, or expanse of heaven, is chosen because it is there that the earthly inhabitant sees them. Kidner (1976:48) claims that the view expressed here brings verse 14 into a simple relation with verse 4 by regarding the sun as the divider of day from night in each verse, veiled in verse 4, visible in verse 14. These celestial bodies marked special acts of God's favour or displeasure as in Joshua's (Joshua 10:12 and 13) and Hezekiah's times (2 Kings 20:11) , on the crucifixion day (Matt. 24:45). The stars are mentioned as one of the signs of Christ's second coming i.e. **parousia** (Matt. 24:29).

Nichol (1953:213) claims that yearly returning festival periods and other definite times were to be regulated by the movement of the celestial bodies (Ps 104:19; Zech. 8:19); and these bodies have, moreover, a definite periodical influence upon agriculture, navigation, and other human occupations, as well as upon the course of animal and vegetable life, as for instance the breeding time of animals and the migration of birds (Jer. 8:7). The years, months and days are fixed by the movements of the sun around its orbit which in conjunction with that of the moon has provided men of all ages with basis for calendars i.e. both lunar and solar. The lights that are mentioned here are not introduced for the first time to this world, for God decreed light on the first day, but to serve as a permanent arrangement for the distribution of light for this world. Verse 18 expresses a statement of divine approval.

To sum up, there are four functions i.e.:

- (1) to separate;
- (2) to indicate;
- (3) to give light; and
- (4) to rule and each is mentioned twice except, "to indicate" which is mentioned once.

The activities of the fifth day are discussed in verses 20-23 of Genesis 1. According to von Rad (1963:54) all the conditions for life have been given, therefore on the fifth day begins the creation of living creatures. Westermann (1984:134) points out that the structure of this part differs from the preceding by the introduction of a new element - the blessing. The pattern that is now followed has a twofold manner i.e. God created and God blessed. This passage especially verse 20 clearly mentions the bringing forth from water of abundant living creatures that move. Nichol (1953:213) argues that the original of this phrase, **Nepes<sup>v</sup> haya**, makes a clear distinction between the animals and vegetation created two days earlier. The sequence of creation on this day is the winged creatures according to their kind first and then follows the sea or water creatures according to their kind.

Genesis 1:24-31 describe the activities that were performed on the sixth day. The activities of this day can be divided into two, i.e. verses 24-25 and 26-31. The structure of the first part is distinguished as follows: verse 24 is a command - account where God clearly says, "Let the earth bring forth... and it concludes with the phrase, "and it was so"; verse 25 is an action - account which begins with, "and God made..." Westermann (1984:141). The words translated (NIV) "living creature" in verse 20 is in the same Hebrew as "living being" (NIV) in Genesis 2:7 (Kidner 1976:50).

This first part of the day, according to Jamieson, Fausset and Brown (1961:183), mentions three classes of animals created i.e.:

- (1) cattle, the herbivorous kind capable of labour or domestication;
- (2) wild animals, whose ravenous natures were then kept in check; and finally
- (3) all the various forms of creeping things i.e. from the huge reptiles to the insignificant caterpillars. Nichol (1953:215) argues that the order of creation of living creatures here given (Gen. 1:25) differs from that of verse 24, the last group of the previous verse being the first one here enumerated and this arrangement in Hebrew speech is called "inverted parallelism". The statement "after his kind" refers to all three classes of living creatures, each of which has its distinct kind.

The second part of the day deals with the creation of human beings which is recorded in verses 26-31. Westermann (1984:143) proposes a structure which is followed by verses 26-29 as follows:-

- 26a Introduction (as in the preceding works)
- 26b Decision to create people together with their determination
- 27 Creation of humans with two more detailed characteristics
- 28 Blessing of humans and the commission (28b corresponds to 26b)
- 29 Provision for the people.

The plural "us" was regarded by the early Church theologians almost unanimously as indicative of the three persons of the Godhead. White (1958:45) points out that man was to bear God's image, both in outward resemblance and in character. Nichol (1956:216) says this nature reflected the divine holiness of its Maker until sin shattered the divine likeness.

The relationship of man to the rest of the creation was to be one of rulership. Nichol (1953:216) discusses the account of the accomplishment of the divine purposes as expressed in a form of Hebrew poetry in which the thought expressed in the first part of a stanza is repeated with slight variations in words but not in meaning in the second or even in the third part of the stanza, as in this verse:-

"So God created man in his own image;  
in the image of God created he him;  
male and female created he them".

The mere mention of the words, "male" and "female" indicate the institution of a family which is discussed in the second chapter of Genesis. Kidner (1976:52) states that to "bless" in verse 28 is to bestow not only a gift but a function, and to do so with warm concerns. Westermann (1984:161) concludes that the command to rule over the animals in verse 28b agrees with verse 26b; and he also mentions that there is a difference in the vegetarian food provided for humans and for the animals that echoes the classification in 1:11f; to humans is assigned mainly grain and fruit, to the animals grass and plants. Verse 31 closes with a divine approval.

The description of the seventh day is highlighted in Gen. 2:1-3. This passage is very different from what has gone before. The structure of Gen. 2:1-3 according to Westermann (1984:168 and 169), is as follows:-

- (a) The first verse is a self-contained conclusion to the work of the creator which goes back to a stage in the tradition when the works were not yet part of the seven-day structure.
- (b) Verse 2a - And on the seventh day God finished his work which he had done.
- Verse 3a - So God blessed the seventh day and hallowed it.

(c) Verse 2b - And he rested on the seventh day from all his work which he had done.

Verse 3b - Because on it God rested from all his work which he had done in creation.

According to Kidner (1976:53) God's finished task is sealed in the words he rested, this is the rest of achievement, not inactivity, for He nurtures what He creates. This first verse does not mean that God completed his still unfinished work on the seventh day but that the work by now (seventh day) was completed. The notion of blessing as well as that of sanctification must be viewed in relation to the Sabbath. Nichol (1953:221) claims that the Sabbath calls for abstention from common bodily labour and for the devotion of the mind and heart to holy things.

In summing up the Genesis 1-2:4a creation, there are seven significant points:-

- (a) The fiat (instant) introduces each of the eight works of creation.
- (b) "And it was so" occurred 7 times (in connection with all the works except the sixth).
- (c) The execution of the fiat is recorded 7 times (NIV) except in MT where it is recorded 6 times.
- (d) The sentence of divine approval (and God saw it was good) is pronounced over each work except the second and in the last instance it is with significant variation.
- (e) The naming of objects created is peculiar to the three acts of separation.
- (f) The term "and God blessed" is said of the sixth act, eighth act and also of the Sabbath day.
- (g) The division of the day is marked by a closing formula, "and it was evening and morning", and it occurred six times although it is omitted after the third (and here it shows that two works were performed on the same day), and the seventh works. The several days scheme of work in Genesis 1 has no resemblance in the ancient Near East.

### 3.5.3 GENESIS (2:4b - 25)

This chapter covers a number of issues. It deals with the manner of creation, the planting of the garden of Eden, and the rivers thereof. It also portrays the tree of knowledge which was forbidden, the naming of the creatures, the making of a woman and finally the institution of marriage. Kidner (1976:58) argues that man is "now" the pivot of the history, as in chapter 1 he was the climax and it is misleading to call chapter 2 a second creation account, for it hastens to localize the scene, passing straight from the world at large to a garden in the east, all that follows is played out on this narrow stage. Most commentators include chapter 3 in the Genesis 2 creation story, but in this research the discussion is limited to chapter 2:4b-25.

Genesis 2:4b-8 discusses the prologue and the making of man. Westermann (1984:197) argues that the structure of this first part is clear and easy to explain i.e. verses 4b to 6 comprise the antecedent, verse 7 is the main statement, which is continued in verse 8. The words "in the day" (NKJV) introduce the account of Genesis 2. Nichol (1953:222) discusses that verses 4-6 anticipate the creation of man in verse 7 by describing briefly the appearance of the surface of the earth, particularly with respect to vegetation, just prior to the time when he was brought into being upon the sixth day of creation week. The word **-ēd** translated as mist is compared by many scholars to an Assyrian word **ēdû** meaning flood but unfortunately this Assyrian word does not fit the context of Genesis 2. The fact that people at Noah's time scoffed at the idea that rain from heaven could bring destruction to this earth, indicates that rain was unknown to the antediluvians (White 1958:97). Kidner (1976:60) explains that this verse (7) with profound simplicity, matches and completes the classic 1:27. Von Rad (1963:74) argues that chapter 2 is the man's world and the world of his life, which God in what follows establishes around man, and this forms the primary theme of the entire narrative **ādām ʾādāmā** (man-earth).

The word, "to form", (**yaşar**) implies an act of molding and fashioning into a form corresponding in design and appearance to the divine plan. Westermann (1984:203) argues that the formation of human beings from the dust of the earth in Genesis 2:7 is often explained with reference to the potter's craft. The final result of a person created by God is a living (soul) person.

In chapter 2 of Genesis, much attention is given to the description of the **garden** as a beautiful home of the created human being(s). The statement that, "The Lord God planted the garden and put man there", has been uttered twice and significant differences. The garden, as it is indicated, is planted in the east, in Eden and the word **éden** appears to be a specific place, which is unfortunately unknown, but meaning delight (Wallace 1992:281). It is therefore assumed that the name was intended to evoke a picture of idyllic delight and rest. The notion of **eastward** in Genesis is associated with judgement and separation from God, the same picture is depicted by the placing of Cherubim when the man and woman were expelled from the garden (Gen. 3:24). It seems the garden was not the garden **of** Eden but rather the garden **in** Eden. Therefore it should be understood that the phrase "in the east" is taken with reference to Eden itself, then the garden was on its eastern side.

Genesis 2:9 describes three kinds of trees i.e.:-

- (1) the trees that bear fruit for everyday food;
- (2) the tree of **life** which was in the midst and finally
- (3) the tree of **knowledge** of good and evil.

The question that one may pose is, referring to the tree of life and that of knowledge of good and evil, does one have two or one tree and secondly are these/is this tree(s) figurative or literal? According to the Hebrew text, there seems to be two trees joined together by **wē** (and). Westermann (1984:213) states that the tree of life appears in the introduction-chapter 2:9 and in the conclusion - chapter 3:22-24. Gordis (cited in Kidner 1976:63) explains that the phrase, "the knowledge of good and evil", can stand for moral or aesthetic discernment, yet Adam and Eve are already treated as morally responsible and generally percipient before they touch the tree.

In Genesis 2:10-14 the rivers in the garden are being discussed fully. It is uncertain as to whether the river takes its source from inside or outside the garden, although it can be assumed that it began in Eden and passed through the garden watering it in its course. Westermann (1984:216) states that the difficulties that arise in this passage disappear when one realizes that the author does not want to describe in detail any geographical area, but the transition from the river of paradise to the four rivers of the world; they begin at the point where the river of paradise divides itself. It must be mentioned that it is almost impossible to identify the antediluvian geographical terms with the present day surface features of the earth. There are at least four rivers mentioned here, i.e. Pison, Gihon, Heddekel and Euphrates.

Pison is the first river that is mentioned here. Almost all the Bible commentators agree on one thing that the name Pison is unknown from any non-biblical sources as well as in the Bible itself, and nowhere else has it been mentioned except in this passage. Some are saying it is just a descriptive name which do not appear any where and at the same time does not represent any river.

Gihon is also unknown and follows exactly the trend of Pison. The word Gihon, means the "turbulent one" (Westermann 1984:218). There are also two more rivers i.e. Heddekel which is understood as the Tigris and finally the Euphrates. According to von Rad (1963:77) this interpretation presupposes that Eden lay somewhere in the north, high in the mountains from whence the great rivers come.

The passage of Genesis 2:15-17 describes man commanded to work the garden and a warning not to partake of the tree of knowledge of good and evil. There is mutual agreement between verse 8b and 15a; verse 15 is actually a necessary link with verses 16 & 17, and the prohibition (Westermann 1984:219). Nichol (1953:225) claims that the commandment related in these verses presupposes that man understood the language God spoke and the distinction between "thou shalt" and "thou shalt not"; the command begins positively, granting permission to eat freely from all the trees of the garden with the exception of one. Westermann (1984:223) highlights that the form of both sentences in verse 17 confirms that this is what is meant - the prohibition has the form of the commandments of the Decalogue and the second sentence that of apodictic law consisting of condition (case) and consequence (punishment).

There was no other purpose evident, to be served by refraining from eating the fruit of this tree than to give clear proof of allegiance to God. Nichol (1953:225) claims that the same principles are valid, punishment and death are the certain (sure) results of man's free choice to indulge in rebellion against God.

In Genesis 2:18-24 a woman who is a helper is also formed from the ground. A woman is not just a help, but someone appropriate to the man's needs and also to complement him. God saw that "one" is the lonely number and He considered it being quite negatively. It is obvious that Adam saw and realized that all the animals have been formed in pairs i.e. they were in a position to deal with issues pertinent to them, but he was the only one that could not share his feelings. After naming each animal, Adam discovered that there was no helper for him. God formed a woman out of a rib that was taken out of Adam while he was in a deep sleep. After Adam named his wife Eve, comes verse 24. Some Bible commentators claim that verse 24 is a prophetic utterance made by Adam and others claim that the words of verse 24 come directly from God. This verse does not promote a forsaking of filial duty and respect towards father and mother but refer primarily to the fact that a man's wife is to be first in his affections and that his first duty is towards her. Christ in Matt. 19:5 uses this passage in His strong condemnation of divorce.

The 25th verse of chapter 2 in Genesis states clearly that Adam and Eve were both naked. Nichol (1953:227) claims that Adam and Eve had no need of material clothing, for around them the Creator had placed a robe of light, a robe symbolic of His own righteous character, which was reflected perfectly in them. Von Rad (1963:83) explains that shame is the correlative of sin and guilt.

#### 3.5.4 THE ORIGIN OF HUMANKIND:

The ancient Hebrews were constantly convinced of the close bond between God (Creator) and man. This notion has been highlighted in the first chapters of the Hebrew Bible in various ways i.e. man is the purpose and crown of creation. The creation of man was a deliberate act and the creation of man is aimed at the individual.

The creation of the first woman appears to be described as a direct, personal act of God. The point of contact between God and man is one original creature - Adam. According to Genesis 2:7 the intention is to indicate that man received his wife from God's hand and he owes his whole living existence to Him. In the understanding of the Hebrew Bible, man is more than the other earthly beings and even the neighbours of the Hebrews were aware of the difference. Genesis viewed man not as partly God, but as the "image", the "likeness" of God.

According to Van Zyl (1989:18), created in the image and likeness of God means that God made man a creature that has the possibility to enter into fellowship with Him. There is a communication between God and man on a rational-moral level, hence the Hebrews can be drawn into a covenant with her God. In the Hebrew neighbour's understanding, man was made to release or relieve the gods from their routine work (e.g. Atrakhasis Epic). In the Hebrew Bible service to God thus becomes an unmistakable part of the task of man and thus part of the purpose of his creation. It is clear that the ancient Hebrews always regarded this fellowship in communication, love, worship, adoration, trust, and obedience, as the purpose of the creation of man, and therefore man becomes truly man.

### 3.6 **SUMMARY:**

The cosmogonies of both the Hebrew Bible and that of ancient Egypt were discussed. In both communities there are issues that are unique to each community. The issues that are common in both communities as well as those that are different will be highlighted in the following chapter. In this section, it has been shown that God and the gods played a very significant role with regard to human beings, being either a servant of the gods or owing his or her allegiance to God as his or her creator.

### CONCLUSIONS:

In the course of the study, it has been important that each community is viewed in its own right. In the chapters that ensue, one can get some glimpse of the different cosmogonies. There are a few points that have been pointed out in the process of conducting. These points are the following:

- (1) Genesis 1:1-9 describes the separation of water from the expanse where the waters above it. The idea of water separation is not foreign at all in Egyptian cosmogony. The waters that were separated are referred to as the waters of chaos in a number of cosmogonies. The Egyptian cosmogony describes the separation as the separation of firm land from the primordial water. (See also the work of Manu, 1984:117).

**CHAPTER 4****COMPARISONS****4.1 INTRODUCTION:**

This portion of the research paper deals with what the researcher has discovered when he was discussing the cosmogonies of Hebrew Bible and ancient Egypt. There are grounds that are **distinctive** in each community, those grounds will be highlighted here. But these communities also form a part of what is called the ancient Near East, therefore there should be some **common** ground, and that **common** ground is also dealt with here. Some wise men usually say, "the sky is the limit", therefore some recommendations for the future study will also be outlined here. At the end of this chapter there is an Appendix. Finally, all the sources that have been cited will be given.

**4.2 FINDINGS:**

In the main introduction of this study, it has been highlighted that each community is unique in its context. Despite the differences and similarities, one can get some glimpse of the principle of uniqueness. There are a few points that have come up as a result of the research conducted. These points are the following:-

- (1) Genesis 1:6-8 discusses the idea of **water separation** i.e. waters under the expanse were separated from the waters above it. The idea of water separation is not foreign at all in Egyptian cosmogonies as well. The waters that were separated are termed the waters of chaos in a number of cosmogonies. The Egyptian cosmogonies describe this separation as the separation of firm land from the primeval deep. One can also cite Westermann (1984:117).

- (2) The **sun** in the Egyptians context is personified in certain gods i.e. Ré or/and Atum. In other words in ancient Egypt the sun was deified. In Genesis 1:14-19 there is no indication of the deification of the sun, although it might be alluded in one's mind that the idea of ruling the day "of the sun" may be personified. Therefore, the sun is mentioned in both communities but the difference is in their roles and emphasis.
- (3) Genesis 1:26 states clearly that **man** was created in the image of God. This concept spreads throughout the Bible. It is interesting to note that the concept of "the image of" is not foreign at all in the Egyptian cosmogony. One can also cite Gardiner (1914:417).
- (4) Schmidt quotes the hymn to Amun-Ré (Westermann 1984:163) which advocates the idea of **vegetarianism**. The hymn mentions animals and their food which was herbs, the fish of the river and also what they can feed on. This passage follows exactly the vegetarian dietary pattern in Genesis 1:29 & 30. This hymn points out that the vegetarian diet is not foreign in Egypt.
- (5) Genesis 2:1-3 mentions the idea of a **rest** which God had after six days of work. He saw that everything He had created was good and in order. He sanctified and blessed the seventh-day. In the theology of Memphis Ptah rested after he had made everything, as well as all the divine order (Pritchard 1969:5). This idea of rest can be attributed to the older tradition.
- (6) Khnum is portrayed as **fashioning** the King's son Amenhotep and his **Ka** on the potter's wheel (Westermann 1984:203). In Genesis 2:7 God is portrayed as forming (ysr) man out of the dust. The concept of potter's wheel is not foreign in the Hebrew Bible, in fact, the idea is interspersed throughout, for example Jer.18.

#### 4.2.1 DISTINCTIVE GROUND IN ANCIENT "ISRAEL" AND EGYPT:

##### ANCIENT "ISRAEL":

One will notice that "Israel" has been made distinct by her appearance. There are four important points that confirm this idea. These points are as follows:-

- (a) Hebrew Monotheism has made Israel to differentiate between cosmogony and antropogony in any theogony.
- (b) The Hebrew myths dealing with the birth of the cosmos envision no struggle between the creator and any other beings or substances.
- (c) The Hebrew tradition preserves two different styles of creation activity, each of which separately has an ancient Near Eastern counterpart but which together are not found elsewhere.
- (d) In the Hebrew myths, one meets a view of humanity which at one and the same time presents one with a task, a liberation, and an indictment (Knight 1985:142).

It is interesting to note that in the Priestly creation (Gen.1), God brings all things into existence in an orderly manner, assigns each its place and proper role. The ancient Hebrews were not disturbed by the differences between Genesis 1 and 2 because they understood that each narrative interprets the other, adding details and perceptions where the other is silent. Knight (1985:145) comments that the myth of the act - consequence syndrome underscores the sense that the good creation is functional, reliable and moral at its most basic level, hence people complain to God in the case of disfunction of the global entity.

It is a clear understanding of "Israel" and her neighbours that natural disorder is, as a rule, attributed to the action of the deity, and this also extends to disorders in human behaviour e.g. that of Saul, etc. The idea of Caesura with more ethical immediacy is the experience of moral disorder hence the problem of evil. According to Hebrew tradition, moral disorder is considered to be a lasting existent, until the New Jerusalem is established.

### **ANCIENT EGYPT:**

Ancient Egypt has also been made distinct by her appearance. There are a few points that strengthen this idea. They are the following:-

- (a) The creation of the gods often figures quite integrally in the cosmogonies of ancient Egypt.
- (b) In the ancient Egyptian cosmogonies, there is a struggle between gods and other beings or substances.
- (c) Ancient Egyptian tradition preserves a number of cosmogonic texts which are not found elsewhere.
- (d) In the ancient Near East it is common for the universe and humanity to be created especially for the benefit of the gods (Knight 1985:143).

### **4.2.2 COMMON GROUND IN THE ANCIENT NEAR EAST:**

There are about six points that are shared throughout the conceptions of cosmogony. These points are as follows:-

- (1) The cosmos is viewed as a closed, three-storied whole, all parts are under the control of divinity either polytheistically or monotheistically conceived.
- (2) The cosmos and humanity did not come into existence by chance or without intention, for some creator God or gods is/are directly responsible for its existence (Knight 1985:138).

- (3) There is virtually creation whether ex nihilo or not.
- (4) The creation act is not limited to bringing the physical world into existence, rather it establishes the proper order of things in this world (Knight 1985:139).
- (5) The underlying theological pattern of the various creation accounts is the sovereignty of the gods, and also the identification of the creator or high god with the one who ultimately maintains and judges the world.
- (6) Throughout the ancient Near East, there appears to be no single literary form which above is considered especially proper for speaking about the creative activity of the gods, rather the believers draw on the full arsenal of literary means in order to give it expression (Knight 1985:140).
- (7) One discovers that in both traditions, creation marked the beginning of time (Hoffmeier 1983:42).

#### 4.3 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE STUDIES:

The notion of cosmogony is fascinating and it also captures one's interest. The nations and countries of the world subscribe to different cultural societal norms. The idea of cosmogony when viewed through ancient Near Eastern eyes may seem to be insignificant to black South Africans who live on a farm in a far remote area. They are only concerned with their own cultural norms, customs and traditions. But when we take note of the differences between the **ancient Near Eastern** world view with regard to cosmogony or the origin of man, nature and the gods and that of **Africa**, we could also argue that the "rainbow people" of South Africa does not share the same ideas either a study of a Near Eastern religion may be applicable to grasp this element of plurality of meaning.

However, at this stage it may be necessary for the researcher to limit himself to one of the cultures of the South African community. A suggested theme for the future study may read as follows:-

"A Nguni perspective on ancient Hebrew religious cosmogonies". The methodological approach employed in this paper will be replaced by the reader response reception approach in the proposed future study.

#### 4.4 CONCLUSION:

The comparative study done on some ancient Egyptian and ancient Hebrew religious cosmogonies has shown that this is one of the most important issues in the study of the ancient Near East. The phenomenological approach which was used as a vehicle transporting these ancient cosmogonies from both ancient Egypt and the Hebrew Bible to the reader seems to have been the best tool, especially in a study of this nature where there is uncertainty about the dates and gaps between the cosmogonies. All the terms that were used in this research paper, were clearly defined.

The idea of the divine varied from one culture or religion to another. It is evident that in all these religions, God or the gods are the source of divinity, hence a discussion of sacred time, space, cultic practices and institutions was undertaken. One finds it very difficult to accept the idea of one "original" myth with different rescensions as Herman Gunkel and others would argue. Take for instance, the flood stories. In the Biblical account, the focus is God's providence and yet in the Babylonian epic, Utnapishtim is the focus of the epic. If one follows these stories well, one would say these are two different myths that are comparable.

The main section of this work dealt with the examples of ancient Egyptian and ancient Hebrew cosmogonies. There are different kinds of cosmogonies that open the way to these two ancient cultures' cosmogonies. The ancient Egyptian cosmogonies when viewed as a unit have an element of complementing each other. This complimentary element is also not foreign in the ancient Hebrew cosmogonies. The purpose of the origin of humankind in these communities differs a great deal. In ancient Egyptian cosmogonies, man was created to serve the gods, while in ancient Hebrew cosmogonies, man was created as the image of God who owes his allegiance to God.

In the final section the uniqueness of each community was displayed. Although uniqueness is stressed beyond reasonable doubt, one cannot deny that any community is not an island, therefore there is a common ground between ancient Egypt and the Hebrew Bible.

In the appendix, items like the Genesis 1 and 2 texts from the Hebrew Bible, New King James Version and the New International version have been included. These are texts that have been cited in the discussion of different items in this work.

Maps and figures have also been included in this research paper. Ancient Egyptian cosmogonic events are clearly portrayed in figures. Egyptian cosmogonies deal with specific names of places, therefore the use of an ancient Near Eastern map and that of ancient Egypt itself add light in the discussion of these various Egyptian texts.

In the final analysis, a comparative study of ancient religious cosmogonies will always be a fascinating and a challenging work both to the reader as well as the researcher.

**APPENDIX**

**GENESIS 1:1-2:26**

- (a) BIBLIA HEBRAICA
- (b) NEW INTERNATIONAL VERSION WITH BIBLE COMMENTARY
- (c) NEW KING JAMES VERSION

**EGYPTIAN TEXTS**

**MAPS**

- (a) ANCIENT NEAR EAST
- (b) ANCIENT EGYPT

**FIGURES:**

- 1
- 1(a)
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5
- 6

תורה נביאים וכתובים  
BIBLIA HEBRAICA  
STUTTGARTENSIA

quae antea cooperantibus

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4

בראשית

2,21—3,13

1 לְכַל־הַבְּהֵמָה וְלָעוֹף־הַשָּׁמַיִם וְלִכְלֵל תֵּינֵת הַשָּׂדֶה וְלָאָדָם<sup>1</sup> לֶאֱמָצָא  
 21 עוֹר כְּנָגְדוֹ: 21 וַיִּפֹּל יְהוָה אֱלֹהִים וַתִּרְדְּמָה עַל־הָאָדָם וַיִּישָׁן וַיִּקַּח  
 22 אֶחַת מִצַּלְעֹתָיו וַיִּסְגֵר בָּשָׂר תַּחְתָּנָה: 22 וַיִּבֶן יְהוָה אֱלֹהִים וְאֶת־הַצֶּלַע  
 23 אֲשֶׁר־לָקַח מִן־הָאָדָם לְאִשָּׁה וַיְבָאָהּ אֶל־הָאָדָם: 23 וַיֹּאמֶר הָאָדָם  
 זֹאת הִפְעַם עָצָם מִעֲצָמִי וּבָשָׂר מִבְּשָׂרִי  
 לְזֹאת יִקְרָא אִשָּׁה כִּי מֵאִישׁ<sup>2</sup> לְקָחָהּ זֹאת:  
 24 עַל־כֵּן יַעֲזֹב אִישׁ אֶת־אָבִיו וְאֶת־אִמּוֹ וְדָבַק בְּאִשְׁתּוֹ וְהָיוּ לְבָשָׂר  
 25 אֶחָד: 25 וַיְהִי שְׁנֵיהֶם עֶרְוֹמִים הָאָדָם וְאִשְׁתּוֹ וְלֹא יִתְבַּשְׁשׁוּ:  
 3 וַהֲנַחֵשׁ הָיָה עָרוֹם מִכָּל תֵּינֵת הַשָּׂדֶה אֲשֶׁר עָשָׂה יְהוָה אֱלֹהִים  
 2 וַיֹּאמֶר אֶל־הָאִשָּׁה אַרְפָּה כִּי־אָמַר אֱלֹהִים לֹא תֹאכְלוּ מִכָּל עֵץ הַגֵּן:  
 2 וַתֹּאמֶר הָאִשָּׁה אֶל־הַנַּחֵשׁ מִפְּרִי עֵץ־הַגֵּן נֹאכָל: 3 וּמִפְּרִי הָעֵץ  
 2 אֲשֶׁר בְּתוֹךְ־הַגֵּן אָמַר אֱלֹהִים לֹא תֹאכְלוּ מִמֶּנּוּ וְלֹא תִגְעוּ בּוֹ פֶּן־  
 4 תִּמָּתוּן: 4 וַיֹּאמֶר הַנַּחֵשׁ אֶל־הָאִשָּׁה לֹא־מוֹת תָּמוּתוּן: 5 כִּי יָדַע  
 אֱלֹהִים כִּי בְיוֹם אֲכַלְכֶם מִמֶּנּוּ וּנְפַקְחוּ עֵינֵיכֶם וַהֲיִיתֶם כְּאֱלֹהִים יָדְעִי  
 טוֹב וָרָע: 6 וַתֵּרָא הָאִשָּׁה כִּי טוֹב הָעֵץ לְמֹאכָל וְכִי תֹאנֶח־הוּא  
 לְעֵינַיִם וַנְּחַמֵּד הָעֵץ לְהַשְׁכִּיל וַתִּקַּח מִפְּרִיו וַתֹּאכַל וַתֵּתֵן גַּם־לְאִשָּׁה  
 עִמָּה וַיֹּאכְלוּ: 7 וַתִּפְקְדֶנָּה עֵינֵי שְׁנֵיהֶם וַיִּדְעוּ כִּי עִרְוָם הֵם וַיִּתְפָּרוּ  
 עֲלֵיהֶם תְּאֵנָה וַיַּעֲשׂוּ לָהֶם חֲגָרֹת: 8 וַיִּשְׁמְעוּ אֶת־קוֹל יְהוָה אֱלֹהִים  
 מִתְּהַלְּקֵי בִּגְדֵי לְרוּחַ הַיּוֹם וַיִּתְחַבְּא הָאָדָם וְאִשְׁתּוֹ מִפְּנֵי יְהוָה אֱלֹהִים  
 בְּתוֹךְ עֵץ הַגֵּן: 9 וַיִּקְרָא יְהוָה אֱלֹהִים אֶל־הָאָדָם וַיֹּאמֶר לוֹ אַיֶּכָּה:  
 10 וַיֹּאמֶר אֶת־קוֹלְךָ שָׁמַעְתִּי בִּגְן וְאִירָא כִּי־עִירַם אֲנֹכִי וְאֶחְבֵּא:  
 11 וַיֹּאמֶר מִי הִנִּיד לְךָ כִּי עִירַם אַתָּה הַמֶּן־הָעֵץ אֲשֶׁר צִוִּיתִיךָ לֵבַלְתִּי  
 אֲכָל־מִמֶּנּוּ אֲכַלְתָּ: 12 וַיֹּאמֶר הָאָדָם הָאִשָּׁה אֲשֶׁר נָתַתָּה עִמָּדִי הִוא  
 13 נָתַתָּה־לִּי מִן־הָעֵץ וְאָכַל: 13 וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוָה אֱלֹהִים לְאִשָּׁה מַה־זֹּאת

<sup>20</sup> Mm 16. <sup>21</sup> Mm 15. <sup>22</sup> Mm 3861. <sup>23</sup> Mm 527. <sup>24</sup> Mm 17. <sup>25</sup> Mm 18. Cp 3 <sup>1</sup> Mp sub loco. <sup>1</sup> Mm 19.  
<sup>3</sup> Mm 3184. <sup>4</sup> Mm 20. <sup>5</sup> Mm 21. <sup>6</sup> Mm 2059. <sup>7</sup> Mm 3598. <sup>8</sup> Mm 3174. <sup>9</sup> Mm 3083. <sup>10</sup> Mm 3541. <sup>11</sup> Mm  
 1571. <sup>12</sup> Mm 949. <sup>13</sup> Mm 867.

20 <sup>a</sup> | c nonn Mss ⚭⚭⚭ עוף וְלְכַל־עוֹף || וְלֹא־<sup>b</sup> || 23 <sup>a</sup> ⚭⚭⚭ || 24 <sup>a</sup> ⚭⚭⚭ +  
 oi duo = שְׁנֵיהֶם cf ⚭ || 25 <sup>a</sup> L 1 min || Cp 3,1 <sup>a</sup> | הָאָדָם? || 2 <sup>a</sup> ⚭⚭⚭ ἀπὸ παντός || <sup>b</sup> S  
 'jln' ... klhwn = כָּל־עֵץ || 3 <sup>a</sup> ⚭⚭⚭ + הזה || 6 <sup>a</sup> > ⚭⚭⚭ || <sup>b</sup> ⚭⚭⚭ = כָּלוּ ⚭⚭⚭ || 7 <sup>a</sup> nonn Mss ⚭⚭⚭  
 ⚭⚭⚭ || 10 <sup>a</sup> S whzjt = וְאִירָא.

## GENESIS 1:1

6

*The Beginning*

**1** In the beginning<sup>a</sup> God created<sup>b</sup> the heavens<sup>c</sup> and the earth.<sup>d</sup> <sup>2</sup>Now the earth was<sup>a</sup> formless<sup>e</sup> and empty,<sup>f</sup> darkness was over the surface of the deep,<sup>g</sup> and the Spirit of God<sup>h</sup> was hovering<sup>i</sup> over the waters.

<sup>3</sup>And God said,<sup>j</sup> "Let there be light," and there was light.<sup>k</sup> <sup>4</sup>God saw that the light was good,<sup>l</sup> and he separated the light from the darkness.<sup>m</sup> <sup>5</sup>God called<sup>n</sup> the light "day," and the darkness he called "night."<sup>o</sup> And there was evening, and there was morning<sup>p</sup>—the first day.

<sup>6</sup>And God said,<sup>q</sup> "Let there be an expanse<sup>r</sup> between the waters<sup>s</sup> to separate water from water."<sup>t</sup> <sup>7</sup>So God made the expanse and separated the water under the expanse from the water above it.<sup>u</sup> And it was so.<sup>v</sup>

1:1 <sup>a</sup>Ps 102:25; Pr 8:23; Isa 40:21; 41:4, 26; Jn 1:1-2 <sup>b</sup>ver 21,27; Ge 2:3 <sup>c</sup>ver 6; Ne 9:6; Job 9:8; 37:18; Ps 96:5; 104:2; 115:15; 121:2; 136:5; Isa 40:22; 42:5; 51:13; Jer 10:12; 51:15 <sup>d</sup>Ge 14:19; 2Ki 19:15; Ne 9:6; Job 38:4; Ps 90:2; 136:6; 146:6; Isa 37:16; 40:28; 42:5; 44:24; 45:12,18; Jer 27:5; 32:17; Ac 14:15; 17:24; Eph 3:9; Col 1:16; Heb 3:4; 11:3; Rev 4:11; 10:6 <sup>e</sup>1:2 <sup>f</sup>Isa 23:1; 24:10; 27:10; 32:14; 34:11 <sup>g</sup>Isa 45:18; Jer 4:23 <sup>h</sup>Ge 8:2; Job 7:12; 26:8; 38:9; Ps 36:6; 42:7; 104:6; 107:24; Pr 30:4 <sup>i</sup>Ge 2:7;

<sup>8</sup>God called<sup>v</sup> the expanse "sky."<sup>w</sup> And there was evening, and there was morning<sup>x</sup>—the second day.

<sup>9</sup>And God said, "Let the water under the sky be gathered to one place,<sup>y</sup> and let dry ground<sup>z</sup> appear." And it was so.<sup>a</sup> <sup>10</sup>God called<sup>b</sup> the dry ground "land," and the gathered waters<sup>c</sup> he called "seas."<sup>d</sup> And God saw that it was good.<sup>e</sup>

<sup>11</sup>Then God said, "Let the land

Job 33:4; Ps 104:30; Isa 32:15 <sup>d</sup>Dr 32:11; Isa 31:5 1:3 <sup>f</sup>ver 6 <sup>g</sup>Ps 33:6,9; 148:5; Heb 11:3 <sup>h</sup>2Co 4:6; 1Jn 1:5-7 1:4 <sup>i</sup>ver 10,12,18,21,25,31; Ps 104:31; 119:68; Jer 31:35 <sup>j</sup>ver 14; Ex 10:21-23; Job 26:10; 38:19; Ps 18:28; 104:20; 105:28; Isa 42:16; 45:7 1:5 <sup>k</sup>ver 8,10; Ge 2:19,23 <sup>l</sup>Ps 74:16 <sup>m</sup>ver 8, 13,19,23,31 1:6 <sup>n</sup>ver 3 <sup>o</sup>ver 1; Isa 44:24; 2Pe 3:5 <sup>p</sup>ver 9; Ps 24:2; 136:6 1:7 <sup>q</sup>Ge 7:11; Job 26:10; 38:8-11,16; Ps 68:33; 148:4; Pr 8:28 <sup>r</sup>ver 9,11,15,24 1:8 <sup>s</sup>ver 5 <sup>t</sup>Job 9:8; 37:18; Ps 19:1; 104:2; Isa 40:22; 44:24; 45:12; Jer 10:12; Zec 12:1 <sup>u</sup>ver 5 1:9 <sup>v</sup>Job 38:8-11; Ps 33:7; 104:6-9; Pr 8:29; Jer 5:22; 2Pe 3:5 <sup>w</sup>Ps 95:5; Jnh 1:9; Hag 2:6 <sup>x</sup>ver 7 1:10 <sup>y</sup>ver 5 <sup>z</sup>Ps 33:7 <sup>a</sup>Job 38:8; Ps 90:2; 95:5 <sup>b</sup>ver 4

<sup>a</sup>2 Or possibly *became*

**1:1** A summary statement introducing the six days of creative activity. The truth of this majestic verse was joyfully affirmed by poet (Ps 102:25) and prophet (Isa 40:21). *In the beginning God.* The Bible always assumes, and never argues, God's existence. Although everything else had a beginning, God has always been (Ps 90:2). *In the beginning.* Jn 1:1-10, which stresses the work of Christ in creation, opens with the same phrase. *God created.* The Hebrew noun *Elohim* is plural but the verb is singular, a normal usage in the OT when reference is to the one true God. This use of the plural expresses intensification rather than number and has been called the plural of majesty, or of potentiality. In the OT the Hebrew verb for "create" is used only of divine, never of human, activity. *the heavens and the earth.* "All things" (Isa 44:24). That God created everything is also taught in Ecc 1:5; Jer 10:16; Jn 1:3; Col 1:16; Heb 1:2. The positive, life-oriented teaching of v. 1 is beautifully summarized in Isa 45:18.

**1:2** *earth.* The focus of this account. *formless and empty.* The phrase, which appears elsewhere only in Jer 4:23, gives structure to the rest of the chapter (see note on v. 11). God's "separating" and "gathering" on days 1-3 gave form, and his "making" and "filling" on days 4-6 removed the emptiness. *darkness . . . the waters.* Completes the picture of a world awaiting God's light-giving, order-making and life-creating word. *and.* Or "but." The awesome (and, for ancient man, fearful) picture of the original state of the visible creation is relieved by the majestic announcement that the mighty Spirit of God hovers over creation. The announcement anticipates God's creative words that follow. *Spirit of God.* He was active in creation, and his creative power continues today (see Job 33:4; Ps 104:30). *hovering over.* Like a bird that provides for and protects its young (see Dt 32:11; Isa 31:5). The imagery may also suggest the winged sun disk, which throughout the ancient Near East was a symbol of divine majesty.

**1:3** *God said.* Merely by speaking, God brought all things into being (Ps 33:6,9; 148:5; Heb 11:3). *Let there be light.* God's first creative word called forth light in the midst of the primeval darkness. Light is necessary for making God's creative works visible and life possible. In the OT it is also symbolic of life and blessing (see 2Sa 22:29; Job 3:20; 30:26; 33:30; Ps 49:19; 56:13; 97:11; 112:4; Isa 53:11; 58:8,10; 59:9; 60:1,3). Paul uses this word to illustrate

God's re-creating work in sin-darkened hearts (2Co 4:6).

**1:4** Everything God created is good (see vv. 10,12,18,21, 25); in fact, the conclusion declares it to be "very good" (v. 31). The creation, as fashioned and ordered by God, had no lingering traces of disorder and no dark and threatening forces arrayed against God or man. Even darkness and the deep were given benevolent functions in a world fashioned to bless and sustain life (see Ps 104:19-26; 127:2).

**1:5** *called.* See vv. 8,10. In ancient times, to name something or someone implied having dominion or ownership (see 17:5,15; 41:45; 2Ki 23:34; 24:17; Da 1:7). Both day and night belong to the Lord (Ps 74:16). *first day.* Some say that the creation days were 24-hour days, others that they were indefinite periods.

**1:6** *expanse.* The atmosphere, or "sky" (v. 8), as seen from the earth. "Hard as a mirror" (Job 37:18) and "like a canopy" (Isa 40:22) are among the many pictorial phrases used to describe it.

**1:7** *And it was so.* The only possible outcome, whether stated (vv. 9,11,15,24,30) or implied, to God's "Let there be."

**1:9** *one place.* A picturesque way of referring to the "seas" (v. 10) that surround the dry ground on all sides and into which the waters of the lakes and rivers flow. The earth was "formed out of water" (2Pe 3:5) and "founded . . . upon the seas" (Ps 24:2), and the waters are not to cross the boundaries set for them (Ps 104:7-9; Jer 5:22).

**1:11** *God said.* This phrase is used twice on the third day (vv. 9,11) and three times (vv. 24,26,29) on the sixth day. These two days are climactic, as the following structure of ch. 1 reveals (see note on v. 2 regarding "formless and empty"):

*Days of forming*

1. "light" (v. 3)
2. "water under the expanse . . . water above it" (v. 7)
- 3a. "dry ground" (v. 9)
- b. "vegetation" (v. 11)

*Days of filling*

4. "lights" (v. 14)
5. "every living and moving thing with which the water teems . . . every winged bird" (v. 21)
- 6a. "livestock, creatures that move along the ground, and wild animals" (v. 24)
- a. "man" (v. 26)
- b. "every green plant for food" (v. 30)

produce vegetation:<sup>f</sup> seed-bearing plants and trees on the land that bear fruit with seed in it, according to their various kinds.<sup>g</sup>” And it was so.<sup>h</sup> <sup>12</sup>The land produced vegetation: plants bearing seed according to their kinds<sup>i</sup> and trees bearing fruit with seed in it according to their kinds. And God saw that it was good.<sup>i</sup> <sup>13</sup>And there was evening, and there was morning<sup>k</sup>—the third day.

<sup>14</sup>And God said, “Let there be lights<sup>l</sup> in the expanse of the sky to separate the day from the night,<sup>m</sup> and let them serve as signs<sup>n</sup> to mark seasons<sup>o</sup> and days and years,<sup>p</sup> <sup>15</sup>and let them be lights in the expanse of the sky to give light on the earth.” And it was so.<sup>q</sup> <sup>16</sup>God made two great lights—the greater light<sup>r</sup> to govern<sup>s</sup> the day and the lesser light to govern<sup>t</sup> the night.<sup>u</sup> He also made the stars.<sup>v</sup> <sup>17</sup>God set them in the expanse of the sky to give light on the earth,<sup>18</sup> to govern the day and the night,<sup>w</sup> and to separate light from darkness. And God saw that it was good.<sup>x</sup> <sup>19</sup>And there was evening, and there was morning<sup>y</sup>—the fourth day.

<sup>20</sup>And God said, “Let the water teem with living creatures,<sup>z</sup> and let birds fly above the earth across the expanse of the sky.”<sup>a</sup> <sup>21</sup>So God created<sup>b</sup> the great creatures of the sea<sup>c</sup> and every

1:11 /Ps 65:9-13; 104:14 <sup>g</sup>ver 12, 21,24,25; Ge 2:5; 6:20; 7:14; Lev 11:14,19,22; Dt 14:13,18; 1Co 15:38 <sup>h</sup>S ver 7  
1:12 /S ver 11 /S ver 4  
1:13 <sup>i</sup>S ver 5  
1:14 /Ps 74:16; 136:7 <sup>m</sup>S ver 4  
/Jer 10:2  
<sup>o</sup>Ps 104:19  
<sup>p</sup>Ge 8:22;  
Jer 31:35-36; 33:20,25  
1:15 <sup>q</sup>S ver 7  
1:16 /Dt 17:3; Job 31:26;  
Jer 43:13;  
Eze 8:16  
<sup>s</sup>Ps 136:8  
<sup>t</sup>Ps 136:9  
<sup>u</sup>Job 38:33;  
Ps 74:16; 104:19;  
Jer 31:35;  
Jas 1:17 <sup>v</sup>Dt 4:19;  
Job 9:9; 38:7;  
31-32; Ps 8:3;  
33:6; Ecc 12:2;  
Isa 40:26; Jer 8:2;  
Am 5:8  
1:18 <sup>w</sup>Jer 33:20,  
25 <sup>x</sup>S ver 4  
1:19 <sup>y</sup>S ver 5  
1:20 <sup>z</sup>Ps 146:6  
<sup>a</sup>Ge 2:19  
1:21 <sup>a</sup>S ver 1  
<sup>c</sup>Job 3:8; 7:12;  
Ps 74:13; 148:7;  
Isa 27:1; Eze 32:2  
<sup>d</sup>Ps 104:25-26  
<sup>e</sup>S ver 11 /S ver 4  
1:22 <sup>e</sup>ver 28;  
Ge 8:17; 9:1,7,  
19; 47:27;  
Lev 26:9;  
Eze 36:11  
1:23 <sup>h</sup>S ver 5  
1:24 <sup>h</sup>Ge 2:19  
/S ver 11 <sup>i</sup>S ver 7  
1:25  
<sup>f</sup>Ge 7:21-22;  
Jer 27:5 <sup>m</sup>S ver

living and moving thing with which the water teems,<sup>d</sup> according to their kinds, and every winged bird according to its kind.<sup>e</sup> And God saw that it was good.<sup>f</sup> <sup>22</sup>God blessed them and said, “Be fruitful and increase in number and fill the water in the seas, and let the birds increase on the earth.”<sup>g</sup> <sup>23</sup>And there was evening, and there was morning<sup>h</sup>—the fifth day.

<sup>24</sup>And God said, “Let the land produce living creatures<sup>i</sup> according to their kinds:<sup>i</sup> livestock, creatures that move along the ground, and wild animals, each according to its kind.” And it was so.<sup>k</sup> <sup>25</sup>God made the wild animals<sup>l</sup> according to their kinds, the livestock according to their kinds, and all the creatures that move along the ground according to their kinds.<sup>m</sup> And God saw that it was good.<sup>n</sup>

<sup>26</sup>Then God said, “Let us<sup>o</sup> make man<sup>p</sup> in our image,<sup>q</sup> in our likeness,<sup>r</sup> and let them rule<sup>s</sup> over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air,<sup>t</sup> over the livestock, over all the earth,<sup>b</sup> and over all the creatures that move along the ground.”

11 <sup>h</sup>S ver 4 1:26 <sup>o</sup>Ge 3:5,22; 11:7; Ps 100:3; Isa 6:8  
/Psa 45:18 <sup>q</sup>ver 27; Ge 5:3; 9:6; Ps 8:5; 82:6; 89:6;  
1Co 11:7; 2Co 4:4; Col 1:15; 3:10; Jas 3:9 <sup>a</sup>Ac 17:28-29  
<sup>c</sup>Ge 9:2; Ps 8:6-8 <sup>f</sup>Ps 8:8

<sup>b</sup>26 Hebrew; Syriac *all the wild animals*

Both the horizontal and vertical relationships between the days demonstrate the literary beauty of the chapter and stress the orderliness and symmetry of God's creative activity. *kinds*. See vv. 12,21,24–25. Both creation and reproduction are orderly.

**1:14** *serve as signs*. In the ways mentioned here, not in any astrological or other such sense.

**1:16** *two great lights*. The words “sun” and “moon” seem to be avoided deliberately here, since both were used as proper names for the pagan deities associated with these heavenly bodies. They are light-givers to be appreciated, not powers to be feared, because the one true God made them (see Isa 40:26). Perhaps because of the emphasis on the greater light and lesser light, the stars seem to be mentioned almost as an afterthought. But Ps 136:9 indicates that the stars help the moon “govern the night.” *to govern*. The great Creator-King assigns subordinate regulating roles to certain of his creatures (see vv. 26,28).

**1:17–18** The three main functions of the heavenly bodies.

**1:21** *creatures of the sea*. The Hebrew word underlying this phrase was used in Canaanite mythology to name a dreaded sea monster. He is often referred to figuratively in OT poetry as one of God's most powerful opponents. He is pictured as national (Babylon, Jer 51:34; Egypt, Isa 51:9; Eze 29:3; 32:2) or cosmic (Job 7:12; Ps 74:13; Isa 27:1, though some take the latter as a reference to Egypt). In Genesis, however, the creatures of the sea are portrayed not

as enemies to be feared but as part of God's good creation to be appreciated. *winged bird*. The term denotes anything that flies, including insects [see Dt 14:19–20].

**1:22** *Be fruitful and increase in number*. God's benediction on living things that inhabit the water and that fly in the air. By his blessing they flourish and fill both realms with life (see note on v. 28). God's rule over his created realm promotes and blesses life.

**1:26** *us . . . our . . . our*. God speaks as the Creator-King, announcing his crowning work to the members of his heavenly court (see 3:22; 11:7; Isa 6:8; see also 1Ki 22:19–23; Job 15:8; Jer 23:18). *image . . . likeness*. No distinction should be made between “image” and “likeness,” which are synonyms in both the OT (5:1; 9:6) and the NT (1Co 11:7; Col 3:10; Jas 3:9). Since man is made in God's image, every human being is worthy of honor and respect; he is neither to be murdered (9:6) nor cursed (Jas 3:9). “Image” includes such characteristics as “righteousness and holiness” (Eph 4:24) and “knowledge” (Col 3:10). Believers are to be “conformed to the likeness” of Christ (Ro 8:29) and will someday be “like him” (1Jn 3:2). *rule*. Man is the climax of God's creative activity, and God has “crowned him with glory and honor” and “made him ruler” over the rest of his creation (Ps 8:5–8). Since man was created in the image of the divine King, delegated sovereignty (kingship) was bestowed on him. (For redeemed man's ultimate kingship <sup>c</sup> notes on Heb 2:5–9.)

## GENESIS 1:27

## 8

<sup>27</sup>So God created <sup>u</sup> man <sup>v</sup> in his own image, <sup>w</sup> in the image of God <sup>x</sup> he created him; male and female <sup>y</sup> he created them. <sup>z</sup>

<sup>28</sup>God blessed them and said to them, <sup>a</sup> "Be fruitful and increase in number; <sup>b</sup> fill the earth <sup>c</sup> and subdue it. Rule over <sup>d</sup> the fish of the sea and the birds of the air and over every living creature that moves on the ground. <sup>e</sup>"

<sup>29</sup>Then God said, "I give you every seed-bearing plant on the face of the whole earth and every tree that has fruit with seed in it. They will be yours for food. <sup>f</sup> <sup>30</sup>And to all the beasts of the earth and all the birds of the air and all the creatures that move on the ground—everything that has the breath of life <sup>g</sup> in it—I give every green plant for food. <sup>h</sup>" And it was so.

<sup>31</sup>God saw all that he had made, <sup>i</sup> and it was very good. <sup>j</sup> And there was evening, and there was morning <sup>k</sup>—the sixth day.

1:27 <sup>u</sup>S ver 1  
<sup>v</sup>Ge 2:7;  
Ps 103:14;  
119:73 <sup>w</sup>S ver 26  
<sup>x</sup>Ge 5:1 <sup>y</sup>Ge 5:2;  
Mt 19:4\*;  
Mk 10:6\*;  
Gal 3:28 <sup>z</sup>Dt 4:32  
1:28 <sup>a</sup>Ge 33:5;  
Jos 24:3;  
Ps 113:9; 127:3,5  
<sup>b</sup>S Ge 17:6 <sup>c</sup>S ver  
22; Ge 6:1;  
Ac 17:26 <sup>d</sup>ver 25;  
Ps 115:16  
<sup>e</sup>Ps 8:6-8  
1:29 <sup>f</sup>Ge 9:3;  
Dt 12:15;  
Ps 104:14;  
1Ti 4:3  
1:30 <sup>g</sup>Ge 2:7;  
7:22 <sup>h</sup>Job 38:41;  
Ps 78:25; 104:14;  
27:111:5;  
136:25; 145:15;  
147:9  
1:31 <sup>i</sup>Ps 104:24;  
136:5; Pr 3:19;  
Jer 10:12 <sup>j</sup>S ver 4;  
1Ti 4:4 <sup>k</sup>S ver 5  
2:1 <sup>l</sup>Dt 4:19;  
17:3; 2Ki 17:16;  
21:3; Ps 104:2;  
Isa 44:24; 45:12;  
48:13; 51:13  
2:2 <sup>m</sup>Dt 5:14  
<sup>n</sup>ver 2-3;  
Ex 20:11; 31:17;  
34:21; In 5:17;  
Heb 4:4\*  
2:3 <sup>o</sup>Ex 16:23;  
20:10; 23:12;  
31:15; 35:2;  
Lev 23:3;  
Ne 9:14;  
Isa 58:13;

2 Thus the heavens and the earth were completed in all their vast array. <sup>l</sup>

<sup>2</sup>By the seventh day <sup>m</sup> God had finished the work he had been doing; so on the seventh day he rested <sup>c</sup> from all his work. <sup>n</sup> <sup>3</sup>And God blessed the seventh day and made it holy, <sup>o</sup> because on it he rested <sup>p</sup> from all the work of creating <sup>q</sup> that he had done.

## Adam and Eve

<sup>4</sup>This is the account <sup>r</sup> of the heavens and the earth when they were created. <sup>s</sup>

When the LORD God made the earth and the heavens— <sup>5</sup>and no shrub of the field had yet appeared on the earth <sup>d</sup> and no plant of the field had yet sprung up, <sup>t</sup> for the LORD God had not sent rain on the earth <sup>u</sup> and there was no man to work the ground, <sup>6</sup>but streams <sup>e</sup> came up from the earth and watered the whole surface of the ground— <sup>7</sup>the LORD God formed <sup>v</sup> the

Jer 17:22 <sup>p</sup>Ps 95:11; Heb 4:1-11 <sup>q</sup>S Ge 1:1 2:4 <sup>r</sup>Ge 5:1; 6:9; 10:1; 11:10,27; 25:12,19; 36:1,9; 37:2 <sup>s</sup>Ge 1:1; Job 38:8-11 2:5 <sup>t</sup>S Ge 1:11 <sup>u</sup>Job 38:28; Ps 65:9-10; Jer 10:13 2:7 <sup>v</sup>Isa 29:16; 43:1,21; 44:2

<sup>c</sup>2 Or *ceased*; also in verse 3 <sup>d</sup>5 Or *land*; also in verse 6 <sup>e</sup>6 Or *mist*

1:27 This highly significant verse is the first occurrence of poetry in the OT (which is about 40 percent poetry). *created*. The word is used here three times to describe the central divine act of the sixth day (see note on v. 1). *male and female*. Alike they bear the image of God, and together they share in the divine benediction that follows.

1:28 *God blessed them . . . fill . . . subdue . . . Rule*. Man goes forth under this divine benediction—flourishing, filling the earth with his kind, and exercising dominion over the other earthly creatures (see v. 26; 2:15; Ps 8:6-8). Human culture, accordingly, is not anti-God (though fallen man often has turned his efforts into proud rebellion against God). Rather, it is the expression of man's bearing the image of his Creator and sharing, as God's servant, in God's kingly rule. As God's representative in the creaturely realm, he is steward of God's creatures. He is not to exploit, waste or despoil them, but to care for them and use them in the service of God and man.

1:29-30 People and animals seem to be portrayed as originally vegetarian (see 9:3).

1:31 *very good*. See note on v. 4. *the sixth day*. Perhaps to stress the finality and importance of this day, in the Hebrew text the definite article is first used here in regard to the creation days.

2:2 *finished . . . rested*. God rested on the seventh day, not because he was weary, but because nothing formless or empty remained (see NIV text note). His creative work was completed—and it was totally effective, absolutely perfect, "very good" (1:31). It did not have to be repeated, repaired or revised, and the Creator rested to commemorate it.

2:3 *God blessed the seventh day and made it holy . . . rested*. Although the word "Sabbath" is not used here, the Hebrew verb translated "rested" (see v. 2) is the origin of the noun "Sabbath." Ex 20:11 quotes the first half of v. 3, but substitutes "Sabbath" for "seventh," clearly equating the

two. The first record of obligatory Sabbath observance is of Israel on her way from Egypt to Sinai (Ex 16), and according to Ne 9:13-14 the Sabbath was not an official covenant obligation until the giving of the law at Mount Sinai.

2:4 *account*. The word occurs ten times in Genesis—at the beginning of each main section (see Introduction: Literary Features). *the heavens and the earth*. See note on 1:1. The phrase "the account of the heavens and the earth" introduces the record of what happened to God's creation. The blight of sin and rebellion brought a threefold curse that darkens the story of Adam and Eve in God's good and beautiful garden: (1) on Satan (3:14); (2) on the ground, because of man (3:17); and (3) on Cain (4:11). 1:1-2:3 is a general account of creation, while 2:4-4:26 focuses on the beginning of human history. *LORD God*. "LORD" (Hebrew *YHWH*, "Yahweh") is the personal and covenant name of God (see note on Ex 3:15), emphasizing his role as Israel's Redeemer and covenant Lord (see note on Ex 6:6), while "God" (Hebrew *Elohim*) is a general term. Both names occur thousands of times in the OT, and often, as here, they appear together—clearly indicating that they refer to the same one and only God.

2:7 *formed*. The Hebrew for this verb commonly referred to the work of a potter (see Isa 45:9; Jer 18:6), who fashions vessels from clay (see Job 33:6). "Make" (1:26), "create" (1:27) and "form" are used to describe God's creation of both man and animals (v. 19; 1:21,25). *breath of life*. Humans and animals alike have the breath of life in them (see 1:30; Job 33:4). *man became a living being*. The Hebrew phrase here translated "living being" is translated "living creatures" in 1:20,24. The words of 2:7 therefore imply that people, at least physically, have affinity with the animals. The great difference is that man is made "in the image of God" (1:27) and has an absolutely unique relation both to God as his servant and to the other creatures as their divinely ap-

man<sup>f</sup> from the dust<sup>x</sup> of the ground<sup>y</sup> and breathed into his nostrils the breath<sup>z</sup> of life,<sup>a</sup> and the man became a living being.<sup>b</sup>

<sup>8</sup>Now the LORD God had planted a garden in the east, in Eden;<sup>c</sup> and there he put the man he had formed. <sup>9</sup>And the LORD God made all kinds of trees grow out of the ground—trees<sup>d</sup> that were pleasing to the eye and good for food. In the middle of the garden were the tree of life<sup>e</sup> and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.<sup>f</sup>

<sup>10</sup>A river<sup>g</sup> watering the garden flowed from Eden;<sup>h</sup> from there it was separated into four headwaters. <sup>11</sup>The name of the first is the Pishon; it winds through the entire land of Havilah,<sup>i</sup> where there is gold. <sup>12</sup>(The gold of that land is good; aromatic resin<sup>j</sup> and onyx are also there.) <sup>13</sup>The name of the second river is the Gihon; it winds through the entire land of Cush.<sup>k</sup> <sup>14</sup>The name of the third river is the Tigris;<sup>k</sup> it runs along the east side of Asshur. And the fourth river is the Euphrates.<sup>l</sup>

<sup>15</sup>The LORD God took the man and put him in the Garden of Eden<sup>m</sup> to work it and take care of it. <sup>16</sup>And the LORD God commanded the man, "You are free to eat from any tree in the garden;<sup>n</sup> <sup>17</sup>but you must not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil,<sup>o</sup> for when you eat of it you will surely die."<sup>p</sup>

<sup>18</sup>The LORD God said, "It is not good for the man to be alone. I will make a helper suitable for him."<sup>q</sup>

2:7 \*S Ge 1:27  
\*Ge 3:19; 18:27;  
Job 4:19; 10:9;  
17:16; 34:15;  
Ps 90:3; Ecc 3:20;  
12:7 \*Ge 3:23;  
4:2; Ps 103:14;  
Jer 18:6;  
1Co 15:47  
\*S Ge 1:2;  
Job 27:3; Isa 2:22  
\*S Ge 1:30;  
Isa 42:5;  
Ac 17:25  
\*Job 12:10; 32:8;  
33:4; 34:14;  
Ps 104:29;  
Isa 57:16;  
Eze 37:5;  
1Co 15:45  
2:8 \*ver 10, 15;  
Ge 3:23, 24; 4:16;  
13:10; Isa 51:3;  
Eze 28:13; 31:9,  
16; 30:35;  
Joel 2:3  
2:9 \*Eze 31:8  
\*Ge 3:22, 24;  
Pr 3:18; 11:30;  
S Rev 2:7  
/Eze 47:12  
2:10 \*Nu 24:6;  
Ps 46:4; Eze 47:5  
\*S ver 8  
2:11 /Ge 10:7;  
25:18  
2:12 /Nu 11:7  
2:14 /Ge 41:1;  
Da 10:4  
/Ge 15:18; 31:21;  
Ex 23:31;  
Nu 22:5; Dt 1:7;  
11:24; Jos 1:4;  
2Sa 8:3; 1Ki 4:21;  
2Ki 23:29; 24:7;  
1Ch 5:9; 18:3;  
2Ch 35:20;  
Jer 13:4; 46:2;  
51:63; S Rev 9:14  
2:15 \*S ver 8  
2:16 \*Ge 3:1-2  
2:17 \*Ge 3:11, 17  
\*Ge 3:1, 3; 5:5;  
9:29; Dt 30:15,  
19; Jer 42:10;  
Eze 3:18;

<sup>19</sup>Now the LORD God had formed out of the ground all the beasts of the field<sup>r</sup> and all the birds of the air.<sup>s</sup> He brought them to the man to see what he would name them; and whatever the man called<sup>t</sup> each living creature,<sup>u</sup> that was its name. <sup>20</sup>So the man gave names to all the livestock, the birds of the air and all the beasts of the field.

But for Adam<sup>v</sup> no suitable helper<sup>w</sup> was found. <sup>21</sup>So the LORD God caused the man to fall into a deep sleep;<sup>w</sup> and while he was sleeping, he took one of the man's ribs<sup>j</sup> and closed up the place with flesh. <sup>22</sup>Then the LORD God made a woman from the rib<sup>k</sup> he had taken out of the man, and he brought her to the man.

<sup>23</sup>The man said,

"This is now bone of my bones  
and flesh of my flesh;<sup>y</sup>  
she shall be called<sup>z</sup> 'woman,'<sup>1</sup>  
for she was taken out of man."<sup>2</sup>

<sup>24</sup>For this reason a man will leave his fa-

S Ro 5:12; S 6:23 2:18 \*Pr 31:11; 1Co 11:9; 1Ti 2:13 2:19  
\*Ps 8:7 \*S Ge 1:20 \*S Ge 1:5 \*Ge 1:24 2:20 \*Ge 3:20; 4:1  
2:21 \*Ge 15:12; 1Sa 26:12; Job 33:15 2:22 \*1Co 11:8, 9, 12;  
1Ti 2:13 2:23 \*Ge 29:14; Eph 5:28-30 \*S Ge 1:5 \*1Co 11:8

<sup>1</sup> The Hebrew for *man* (*adam*) sounds like and may be related to the Hebrew for *ground* (*adamah*); it is also the name *Adam* (see Gen. 2:20). <sup>2</sup> *Or good; pearls*  
<sup>h</sup> *3* Possibly southeast Mesopotamia <sup>1</sup> *Or the man*  
<sup>1</sup> *Or took part of the man's side* <sup>2</sup> *Or part*  
<sup>1</sup> *23* The Hebrew for *woman* sounds like the Hebrew for *man*.

pointed steward (Ps 8:5–8).

**2:8** *in the east.* From the standpoint of the author of Genesis. The garden was perhaps near where the Tigris and Euphrates rivers (see v. 14) meet, in what is today southern Iraq. *Eden.* A name synonymous with "paradise" and related to either (1) a Hebrew word meaning "bliss" or "delight" or (2) a Mesopotamian word meaning "a plain." Perhaps the author subtly suggests both.

**2:9** *tree of life.* Signifying and giving life, without death, to those who eat its fruit (see 3:22; Rev 2:7; 22:2, 14). *tree of the knowledge of good and evil.* Signifying and giving knowledge of good and evil, leading ultimately to death, to those who eat its fruit (v. 17; 3:3). "Knowledge of good and evil" refers to moral knowledge or ethical discernment (see Dt 1:39; Isa 7:15–16). Adam and Eve possessed both life and moral discernment as they came from the hand of God. Their access to the fruit of the tree of life showed that God's will and intention for them was life. Ancient pagans believed that the gods intended for man always to be mortal. In eating the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, Adam and Eve sought a creaturely source of discernment in order to be morally independent of God.

**2:11** *Pishon.* Location unknown. The Hebrew word may be a common noun meaning "gusher." *Havilah.* Location unknown; perhaps mentioned again in 10:29. It is probably to be distinguished from the Havilah of 10:7, which was in Egypt.

**2:13** *Gihon.* Location unknown. The Hebrew word may be

a common noun meaning "spurter." Both the Pishon and the Gihon may have been streams in Lower Mesopotamia near the Persian Gulf. The names were those current when Moses wrote.

**2:14** *Asshur.* An ancient capital city of Assyria ("Assyria" and "Asshur" are related words). *Euphrates.* Often called simply "the River" (1Ki 4:21, 24) because of its size and importance.

**2:15** *work . . . take care.* See note on 1:28. Man is now charged to govern the earth responsibly under God's sovereignty.

**2:16** *any tree.* Including the tree of life (v. 9).

**2:17** *surely die.* Despite the serpent's denial (3:4), disobeying God ultimately results in death.

**2:18–25** The only full account of the creation of woman in ancient Near Eastern literature.

**2:18** *not good . . . to be alone.* Without female companionship and a partner in reproduction, the man could not fully realize his humanity.

**2:19** *name them.* His first act of dominion over the creatures around him (see note on 1:5).

**2:24** *leave his father and mother.* Instead of remaining under the protective custody of his parents a man leaves them and, with his wife, establishes a new family unit. *united . . . one flesh.* The divine intention for husband and wife was monogamy. Together they were to form an inseparable union, of which "one flesh" is both a sign and an expression.

## GENESIS 2:25

ther and mother and be united<sup>b</sup> to his wife, and they will become one flesh.<sup>c</sup>

<sup>25</sup>The man and his wife were both naked,<sup>d</sup> and they felt no shame.

*The Fall of Man*

**3** Now the serpent<sup>e</sup> was more crafty than any of the wild animals the LORD God had made. He said to the woman, "Did God really say, 'You must not eat from any tree in the garden?'"<sup>f</sup>

<sup>2</sup>The woman said to the serpent, "We may eat fruit from the trees in the garden,<sup>g</sup> but God did say, 'You must not eat fruit from the tree that is in the middle of the garden, and you must not touch it, or you will die.'"<sup>h</sup>

<sup>4</sup>"You will not surely die," the serpent said to the woman.<sup>i</sup> <sup>5</sup>"For God knows that when you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God,<sup>j</sup> knowing good and evil."

<sup>6</sup>When the woman saw that the fruit of the tree was good for food and pleasing to the eye, and also desirable<sup>k</sup> for gaining wisdom, she took some and ate it. She also gave some to her husband,<sup>l</sup> who was with her, and he ate it.<sup>m</sup> <sup>7</sup>Then the eyes of both of them were opened, and they realized they were naked;<sup>n</sup> so they sewed fig leaves together and made coverings for themselves.<sup>o</sup>

<sup>8</sup>Then the man and his wife heard the sound of the LORD God as he was walk-

**2:24** <sup>b</sup>Mal 2:15  
<sup>c</sup>Mt 19:5;  
<sup>d</sup>Mk 10:7-8;  
<sup>e</sup>1Co 6:16;  
<sup>f</sup>Eph 5:31  
**2:25** <sup>a</sup>Ge 3:7;  
10-11; Isa 47:3;  
<sup>g</sup>La 1:8  
**3:1** <sup>e</sup>Job 1:7; 2:2;  
2Co 11:3;  
Rev 12:9; 20:2  
<sup>h</sup>Ge 2:17  
**3:2** <sup>a</sup>Ge 2:16  
**3:3** <sup>b</sup>S Ge 2:17  
**3:4** <sup>c</sup>Jn 8:44;  
2Co 11:3  
**3:5** <sup>d</sup>S Ge 1:26;  
14:18,19; Ps 7:8;  
Isa 14:14;  
Eze 28:2  
**3:6** <sup>d</sup>Isa 1:14-15;  
1Jn 2:16  
<sup>e</sup>Nu 30:7-8;  
<sup>f</sup>Jer 44:15,19,24  
<sup>g</sup>2Co 11:3;  
1Ti 2:14  
**3:7** <sup>h</sup>Ge 2:25  
over 21

**3:8** <sup>a</sup>Lev 26:12;  
Dt 23:14  
<sup>b</sup>Job 13:16; 23:7;  
31:33; 34:22,23;  
Ps 5:5; 139:7-12;  
Isa 29:15;  
Jer 16:17; 23:24;  
49:10;  
Rev 6:15-16  
**3:9** <sup>c</sup>Ge 4:9;  
16:8; 18:9;  
1Ki 19:9,13  
**3:10** <sup>d</sup>Ex 19:16;  
20:18; Dt 5:5;  
1Sa 12:18  
<sup>e</sup>Ge 2:25  
**3:11** <sup>e</sup>Ge 2:25  
<sup>f</sup>S Ge 2:17  
**3:12** <sup>g</sup>Ge 2:22  
**3:13** <sup>h</sup>Ro 7:11;  
2Co 11:3;  
1Ti 2:14  
**3:14**  
<sup>i</sup>Dt 28:15-20  
<sup>j</sup>Ps 72:9;  
<sup>k</sup>Isa 49:23; 65:25;

ing<sup>p</sup> in the garden in the cool of the day, and they hid<sup>q</sup> from the LORD God among the trees of the garden. <sup>9</sup>But the LORD God called to the man, "Where are you?"<sup>r</sup>

<sup>10</sup>He answered, "I heard you in the garden, and I was afraid<sup>s</sup> because I was naked;<sup>t</sup> so I hid."

<sup>11</sup>And he said, "Who told you that you were naked?<sup>u</sup> Have you eaten from the tree that I commanded you not to eat from?"<sup>v</sup>

<sup>12</sup>The man said, "The woman you put here with me<sup>w</sup>—she gave me some fruit from the tree, and I ate it."

<sup>13</sup>Then the LORD God said to the woman, "What is this you have done?"

The woman said, "The serpent deceived me,<sup>x</sup> and I ate."

<sup>14</sup>So the LORD God said to the serpent, "Because you have done this,

"Cursed<sup>y</sup> are you above all the livestock

and all the wild animals!

You will crawl on your belly

and you will eat dust<sup>z</sup>

all the days of your life.

<sup>15</sup>And I will put enmity

between you and the woman,

and between your offspring<sup>aa</sup> and hers;<sup>b</sup>

Mic 7:17 **3:15** <sup>a</sup>Jn 8:44; Ac 13:10; 1Jn 3:8 <sup>b</sup>Ge 16:11; Jdg 13:5; Isa 7:14; 8:3; 9:6; Mt 1:23; Lk 1:31; Gal 4:4; Rev 12:17

<sup>m</sup> 15 Or seed

**2:25** *naked*. . . *no shame*. Freedom from shame, signifying moral innocence, would soon be lost as a result of sin (see 3:7).

**3:1** *serpent*. The great deceiver clothed himself as a serpent, one of God's good creatures. He insinuated a falsehood and portrayed rebellion as clever, but essentially innocent, self-interest. Therefore "the devil, or Satan," is later referred to as "that ancient serpent" (Rev 12:9; 20:2). *crafty*. The Hebrew words for "crafty" and "naked" are almost identical. Though naked, the man and his wife felt no shame (2:25). The craftiness of the serpent led them to sin, and they then became ashamed of their nakedness (see v. 7). *Did God really say* . . . ? The question and the response changed the course of human history. By causing the woman to doubt God's word, Satan brought evil into the world. Here the deceiver undertook to alienate man from God. In Job 1-2 he, as the accuser, acted to alienate God from man (see also Zec 3:1).

**3:3** *and you must not touch it*. The woman adds to God's word, distorting his directive and demonstrating that the serpent's subtle challenge was working its poison.

**3:4** *You will not surely die*. The blatant denial of a specific divine pronouncement (see 2:17).

**3:5** *God knows*. Satan accuses God of having unworthy motives. In Job 1:9-11; 2:4-5 he accuses the righteous man of the same. *your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God*. The statement is only half true. Their eyes were opened, to be sure (see v. 7), but the result was quite different from what the serpent had promised. *knowing good*

and evil. See note on 2:9.

**3:6** *good for food* . . . *pleasing to the eye* . . . *desirable for gaining wisdom*. Three aspects of temptation. Cf. 1Jn 2:16; Lk 4:3,5,9.

**3:7** *they realized they were naked*. No longer innocent like children, they had a new awareness of themselves and of each other in their nakedness and shame. *they* . . . *made coverings*. Their own feeble and futile attempt to hide their shame, which only God could cover (see note on v. 21).

**3:8** *the garden*. Once a place of joy and fellowship with God, it became a place of fear and of hiding from God.

**3:9** *Where are you?* A rhetorical question (see 4:9).

**3:12** *The woman you put here* . . . *gave me*. The man blames God and the woman—anyone but himself—for his sin.

**3:13** *The serpent deceived me*. The woman blames the serpent rather than herself.

**3:14** *Cursed*. The serpent, the woman and the man were all judged, but only the serpent and the ground were cursed—the latter because of Adam (v. 17). *dust*. The symbol of death itself (v. 19) would be the serpent's food.

**3:15** *he will crush your head, and you will strike his heel*. The antagonism between people and snakes is used to symbolize the outcome of the titanic struggle between God and the evil one, a struggle played out in the hearts and history of mankind. The offspring of the woman would eventually crush the serpent's head, a promise fulfilled in Christ's victory over Satan—a victory in which all believers will share (see Ro 16:20).

The First Book of Moses Called  
**GENESIS**

The History of Creation

1 In the beginning God created the heavens and  
2 the earth.

3 The earth was without form, and void, and  
darkness was on the face of the deep. And the  
spirit of God was hovering over the face of the  
waters.

4 Then God said, "Let there be light," and  
there was light.

5 And God saw the light, that it was good,  
and God divided the light from the darkness.

6 God called the light Day, and the darkness  
he called night. So the evening and the morn-  
ing were the first day.

7 Then God said, "Let there be firmament in  
the midst of the waters, and let it divide the  
waters from the waters."

8 And God made the firmament, and divided  
the waters which were above the firmament  
from the waters which were below the firmament.

9 And God called the firmament Heaven. And  
the evening and the morning were the second  
day.

10 And God said, "Let the waters under the  
heaven be gathered together into one place,  
and let the dry land appear." And it was so.

11 And God called the dry land Earth, and the  
gathered together waters he called Seas. And  
God blessed the Earth, and said, "Be fruitful  
and multiply, and fill the earth with cattle,  
and let birds multiply on the earth."

12 So the evening and the morning were the  
third day.

13 And God said, "Let there be lights in the  
firmament of heaven to divide the day from  
the night; and let them be for signs, and for  
seasons, and for days, and for years; and let  
them give light upon the earth." And it was  
so.

14 And God made two great lights; the greater  
light to govern the day, and the lesser light  
to govern the night; and he made the stars.

15 And God set them in the firmament of  
heaven to give light upon the earth, to govern  
the day and the night, and to separate the  
light from the darkness. And God blessed  
them, and said, "Be fruitful, and multiply, and  
fill the earth, and subdue it; and have  
dominion over the fish of the sea, and over  
the birds of the heaven, and over every  
living creature that creepeth upon the  
earth."

16 And God said, "Let the earth bring forth  
the living creature according to its kind, and  
let the earth bring forth cattle according to  
its kind, and every creeping thing of the  
earth according to its kind; and God  
blessed them, and said, "Be fruitful, and  
multiply, and fill the earth, and subdue it;  
and have dominion over the fish of the sea,  
and over the birds of the heaven, and over  
every living creature that creepeth upon  
the earth."

17 And God made the great whales, and every  
living creature that creepeth upon the earth,  
according to its kind, and every winged  
bird of the heaven according to its kind, and  
every beast of the earth according to its  
kind. And God blessed them, and said, "Be  
fruitful, and multiply, and fill the earth,  
and have dominion over the earth."

18 And God said, "Let the earth bring forth  
the living creature according to its kind, and  
let the earth bring forth cattle according to  
its kind, and every creeping thing of the  
earth according to its kind; and God  
blessed them, and said, "Be fruitful, and  
multiply, and fill the earth, and have  
dominion over the earth."

19 And God made the great whales, and every  
living creature that creepeth upon the earth,  
according to its kind, and every winged  
bird of the heaven according to its kind, and  
every beast of the earth according to its  
kind. And God blessed them, and said, "Be  
fruitful, and multiply, and fill the earth,  
and have dominion over the earth."

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the living creature according to its kind, and  
let the earth bring forth cattle according to  
its kind, and every creeping thing of the  
earth according to its kind; and God  
blessed them, and said, "Be fruitful, and  
multiply, and fill the earth, and have  
dominion over the earth."

21 So God created the great whales, and every  
living creature that creepeth upon the earth,  
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bird of the heaven according to its kind, and  
every beast of the earth according to its  
kind. And God blessed them, and said, "Be  
fruitful, and multiply, and fill the earth,  
and have dominion over the earth."

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dominion over the earth."

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living creature that creepeth upon the earth,  
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bird of the heaven according to its kind, and  
every beast of the earth according to its  
kind. And God blessed them, and said, "Be  
fruitful, and multiply, and fill the earth,  
and have dominion over the earth."

26 And God said, "Let the earth bring forth  
the living creature according to its kind, and  
let the earth bring forth cattle according to  
its kind, and every creeping thing of the  
earth according to its kind; and God  
blessed them, and said, "Be fruitful, and  
multiply, and fill the earth, and have  
dominion over the earth."

27 So God created the great whales, and every  
living creature that creepeth upon the earth,  
according to its kind, and every winged  
bird of the heaven according to its kind, and  
every beast of the earth according to its  
kind. And God blessed them, and said, "Be  
fruitful, and multiply, and fill the earth,  
and have dominion over the earth."

28 And God said, "Let the earth bring forth  
the living creature according to its kind, and  
let the earth bring forth cattle according to  
its kind, and every creeping thing of the  
earth according to its kind; and God  
blessed them, and said, "Be fruitful, and  
multiply, and fill the earth, and have  
dominion over the earth."

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and have dominion over the earth."

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its kind, and every creeping thing of the  
earth according to its kind; and God  
blessed them, and said, "Be fruitful, and  
multiply, and fill the earth, and have  
dominion over the earth."

31 So God created the great whales, and every  
living creature that creepeth upon the earth,  
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bird of the heaven according to its kind, and  
every beast of the earth according to its  
kind. And God blessed them, and said, "Be  
fruitful, and multiply, and fill the earth,  
and have dominion over the earth."

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its kind, and every creeping thing of the  
earth according to its kind; and God  
blessed them, and said, "Be fruitful, and  
multiply, and fill the earth, and have  
dominion over the earth."

and multiply, and fill the waters in the seas, and  
let birds multiply on the earth.

22 So the evening and the morning were the  
fifth day.

23 Then God said, "Let the earth bring forth  
the living creature according to its kind: cattle  
and creeping thing and beast of the earth, each  
according to its kind," and it was so.

24 And God made the beast of the earth ac-  
cording to its kind, cattle according to its kind,  
and everything that creepeth upon the earth ac-  
cording to its kind. And God saw that it was good.

25 Then God said, "Let us make man in Our  
image, according to Our likeness; let them have  
dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds  
of the heaven, over the cattle, and over all the  
earth that creepeth upon the earth."

26 And God created man in His own image,  
in the image of God created He him, male  
and female created He them.

27 And God blessed them, and said, "Be fruitful,  
and multiply, and fill the earth, and have  
dominion over the fish of the sea, and over  
the birds of the heaven, and over every  
living creature that creepeth upon the  
earth."

28 And God said, "Behold, I have given you  
every herb that bringeth forth seed upon the  
earth, and every tree which beareth fruit, the  
fruit thereof shall be to you for food."

29 And to the beast of the earth, and to every  
bird of the heaven, I have given every green  
herb for food." And it was so.

30 And God said, "Behold, I have given you  
every herb that bringeth forth seed upon the  
earth, and every tree which beareth fruit, the  
fruit thereof shall be to you for food."

31 And to the beast of the earth, and to every  
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fruit thereof shall be to you for food."

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bird of the heaven, I have given every green  
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every herb that bringeth forth seed upon the  
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fruit thereof shall be to you for food."

39 And to the beast of the earth, and to every  
bird of the heaven, I have given every green  
herb for food." And it was so.

40 And God said, "Behold, I have given you  
every herb that bringeth forth seed upon the  
earth, and every tree which beareth fruit, the  
fruit thereof shall be to you for food."

41 And to the beast of the earth, and to every  
bird of the heaven, I have given every green  
herb for food." And it was so.

42 And God said, "Behold, I have given you  
every herb that bringeth forth seed upon the  
earth, and every tree which beareth fruit, the  
fruit thereof shall be to you for food."

43 And to the beast of the earth, and to every  
bird of the heaven, I have given every green  
herb for food." And it was so.

44 And God said, "Behold, I have given you  
every herb that bringeth forth seed upon the  
earth, and every tree which beareth fruit, the  
fruit thereof shall be to you for food."

45 And to the beast of the earth, and to every  
bird of the heaven, I have given every green  
herb for food." And it was so.

46 And God said, "Behold, I have given you  
every herb that bringeth forth seed upon the  
earth, and every tree which beareth fruit, the  
fruit thereof shall be to you for food."

47 And to the beast of the earth, and to every  
bird of the heaven, I have given every green  
herb for food." And it was so.

48 And God said, "Behold, I have given you  
every herb that bringeth forth seed upon the  
earth, and every tree which beareth fruit, the  
fruit thereof shall be to you for food."

49 And to the beast of the earth, and to every  
bird of the heaven, I have given every green  
herb for food." And it was so.

50 And God said, "Behold, I have given you  
every herb that bringeth forth seed upon the  
earth, and every tree which beareth fruit, the  
fruit thereof shall be to you for food."

51 And to the beast of the earth, and to every  
bird of the heaven, I have given every green  
herb for food." And it was so.

52 And God said, "Behold, I have given you  
every herb that bringeth forth seed upon the  
earth, and every tree which beareth fruit, the  
fruit thereof shall be to you for food."

53 And to the beast of the earth, and to every  
bird of the heaven, I have given every green  
herb for food." And it was so.

54 And God said, "Behold, I have given you  
every herb that bringeth forth seed upon the  
earth, and every tree which beareth fruit, the  
fruit thereof shall be to you for food."

55 And to the beast of the earth, and to every  
bird of the heaven, I have given every green  
herb for food." And it was so.

56 And God said, "Behold, I have given you  
every herb that bringeth forth seed upon the  
earth, and every tree which beareth fruit, the  
fruit thereof shall be to you for food."

57 And to the beast of the earth, and to every  
bird of the heaven, I have given every green  
herb for food." And it was so.

58 And God said, "Behold, I have given you  
every herb that bringeth forth seed upon the  
earth, and every tree which beareth fruit, the  
fruit thereof shall be to you for food."

59 And to the beast of the earth, and to every  
bird of the heaven, I have given every green  
herb for food." And it was so.

60 And God said, "Behold, I have given you  
every herb that bringeth forth seed upon the  
earth, and every tree which beareth fruit, the  
fruit thereof shall be to you for food."

61 And to the beast of the earth, and to every  
bird of the heaven, I have given every green  
herb for food." And it was so.

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## The First Book of Moses Called

**GENESIS****The History of Creation**

**I**N the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.

2 The earth was without form, and void; and darkness was on the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God was hovering over the face of the waters.

3 Then God said, "Let there be light"; and there was light.

4 And God saw the light, that it was good; and God divided the light from the darkness.

5 God called the light Day, and the darkness He called Night. So the evening and the morning were the first day.

6 Then God said, "Let there be a firmament in the midst of the waters, and let it divide the waters from the waters."

7 Thus God made the firmament, and divided the waters which were under the firmament from the waters which were above the firmament; and it was so.

8 And God called the firmament Heaven. So the evening and the morning were the second day.

9 Then God said, "Let the waters under the heavens be gathered together into one place, and let the dry land appear"; and it was so.

10 And God called the dry land Earth, and the gathering together of the waters He called Seas. And God saw that it was good.

11 Then God said, "Let the earth bring forth grass, the herb that yields seed, and the fruit tree that yields fruit according to its kind, whose seed is in itself, on the earth"; and it was so.

12 And the earth brought forth grass, the herb that yields seed according to its kind, and the tree that yields fruit, whose seed is in itself according to its kind. And God saw that it was good.

13 So the evening and the morning were the third day.

14 Then God said, "Let there be lights in the firmament of the heavens to divide the day from the night; and let them be for signs and seasons, and for days and years;

15 "and let them be for lights in the firmament of the heavens to give light on the earth"; and it was so.

16 Then God made two great lights: the greater light to rule the day, and the lesser light to rule the night. He made the stars also.

17 God set them in the firmament of the heavens to give light on the earth,

18 and to rule over the day and over the night, and to divide the light from the darkness. And God saw that it was good.

19 So the evening and the morning were the fourth day.

20 Then God said, "Let the waters abound with an abundance of living creatures, and let birds fly above the earth across the face of the firmament of the heavens."

21 So God created great sea creatures and every living thing that moves, with which the waters abounded, according to their kind, and every winged bird according to its kind. And God saw that it was good.

22 And God blessed them, saying, "Be fruitful

and multiply, and fill the waters in the seas, and let birds multiply on the earth."

23 So the evening and the morning were the fifth day.

24 Then God said, "Let the earth bring forth the living creature according to its kind: cattle and creeping thing and beast of the earth, each according to its kind"; and it was so.

25 And God made the beast of the earth according to its kind, cattle according to its kind, and everything that creeps on the earth according to its kind. And God saw that it was good.

26 Then God said, "Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over the cattle, over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth."

27 So God created man in His own image; in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them.

28 Then God blessed them, and God said to them, "Be fruitful and multiply; fill the earth and subdue it; have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over every living thing that moves on the earth."

29 And God said, "See, I have given you every herb that yields seed which is on the face of all the earth, and every tree whose fruit yields seed; to you it shall be for food.

30 "Also, to every beast of the earth, to every bird of the air, and to everything that creeps on the earth, in which there is life, I have given every green herb for food"; and it was so.

31 Then God saw everything that He had made, and indeed it was very good. So the evening and the morning were the sixth day.

**2** Thus the heavens and the earth, and all the host of them, were finished.

2 And on the seventh day God ended His work which He had done, and He rested on the seventh day from all His work which He had done.

3 Then God blessed the seventh day and sanctified it, because in it He rested from all His work which God had created and made.

4 This is the history of the heavens and the earth when they were created, in the day that the LORD God made the earth and the heavens.

5 before any plant of the field was in the earth and before any herb of the field had grown. For the LORD God had not caused it to rain on the earth, and there was no man to till the ground;

6 but a mist went up from the earth and watered the whole face of the ground.

7 And the LORD God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living being.

**Life in God's Garden**

8 The LORD God planted a garden eastward in Eden, and there He put the man whom He had formed.

9 And out of the ground the LORD God made every tree grow that is pleasant to the sight and good for food. The tree of life was also in the midst of the garden, and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.

10 Now a river went out of Eden to water the garden, and from there it parted and became four riverheads.

## GENESIS 2:11

2

11 The name of the first is Pishon; it is the one which encompasses the whole land of Havilah, where there is gold.

12 And the gold of that land is good. Bdellium and the onyx stone are there.

13 The name of the second river is Gihon; it is the one which encompasses the whole land of Cush.

14 The name of the third river is Hiddekel;<sup>1</sup> it is the one which goes toward the east of Assyria. The fourth river is the Euphrates.

15 Then the LORD God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to tend and keep it.

16 And the LORD God commanded the man, saying, "Of every tree of the garden you may freely eat;

17 "but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die."

18 And the LORD God said, "It is not good that man should be alone; I will make him a helper comparable to him."

19 Out of the ground the LORD God formed every beast of the field and every bird of the air, and brought them to Adam to see what he would call them. And whatever Adam called each living creature, that was its name.

20 So Adam gave names to all cattle, to the birds of the air, and to every beast of the field. But for Adam there was not found a helper comparable to him.

21 And the LORD God caused a deep sleep to fall on Adam, and he slept; and He took one of his ribs, and closed up the flesh in its place.

22 Then the rib which the LORD God had taken from man He made into a woman, and He brought her to the man.

23 And Adam said: "This is now bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh; she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man."

24 Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and they shall become one flesh.

25 And they were both naked, the man and his wife, and were not ashamed.

## The Temptation and Fall of Man

**3** Now the serpent was more cunning than any beast of the field which the LORD God had made. And he said to the woman, "Has God indeed said, 'You shall not eat of every tree of the garden?'"

2 And the woman said to the serpent, "We may eat the fruit of the trees of the garden:

3 "but of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, God has said, 'You shall not eat it, nor shall you touch it, lest you die.'"

4 And the serpent said to the woman, "You will not surely die.

5 "For God knows that in the day you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil."

6 So when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree desirable to make one wise, she took of its fruit and ate. She also gave to her husband with her, and he ate.

7 Then the eyes of both of them were opened, and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig leaves together and made themselves coverings.

8 And they heard the sound of the LORD God walking in the garden in the cool of the day,

1 Or Tigris

and Adam and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the LORD God among the trees of the garden.

9 Then the LORD God called to Adam and said to him, "Where are you?"

10 So he said, "I heard Your voice in the garden, and I was afraid because I was naked; and I hid myself."

11 And He said, "Who told you that you were naked? Have you eaten from the tree of which I commanded you that you should not eat?"

12 Then the man said, "The woman whom You gave to be with me, she gave me of the tree, and I ate."

13 And the LORD God said to the woman, "What is this you have done?" And the woman said, "The serpent deceived me, and I ate."

14 So the LORD God said to the serpent: "Because you have done this, you are cursed more than all cattle, and more than every beast of the field; on your belly you shall go, and you shall eat dust all the days of your life.

15 "And I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your seed and her Seed; He shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise His heel."

16 To the woman He said: "I will greatly multiply your sorrow and your conception; in pain you shall bring forth children; your desire shall be for your husband, and he shall rule over you."

17 Then to Adam He said, "Because you have heeded the voice of your wife, and have eaten from the tree of which I commanded you, saying, 'You shall not eat of it': Cursed is the ground for your sake; in toil you shall eat of it all the days of your life.

18 "Both thorns and thistles it shall bring forth for you, and you shall eat the herb of the field.

19 "In the sweat of your face you shall eat bread till you return to the ground, for out of it you were taken; for dust you are, and to dust you shall return."

20 And Adam called his wife's name Eve, because she was the mother of all living.

21 Also for Adam and his wife the LORD God made tunics of skin, and clothed them.

22 Then the LORD God said, "Behold, the man has become like one of Us, to know good and evil. And now, lest he put out his hand and take also of the tree of life, and eat, and live forever"—

23 therefore the LORD God sent him out of the garden of Eden to till the ground from which he was taken.

24 So He drove out the man; and He placed cherubim at the east of the garden of Eden, and a flaming sword which turned every way, to guard the way to the tree of life.

## Cain Murders Abel

**4** Now Adam knew Eve his wife, and she conceived and bore Cain, and said, "I have gotten a man from the LORD."

2 Then she bore again, this time his brother Abel. Now Abel was a keeper of sheep, but Cain was a tiller of the ground.

3 And in the process of time it came to pass that Cain brought an offering of the fruit of the ground to the LORD.

4 Abel also brought of the firstlings of his flock and of their fat. And the LORD respected Abel and his offering,

ANCIENT  
TRANSLATOR JOHN C. WILSON

# ANCIENT NEAR EASTERN TEXTS

*Relating to the Old Testament*

EDITED BY  
JAMES B. PRITCHARD

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# Egyptian Myths, Tales, and Mortuary Texts

TRANSLATOR: JOHN A. WILSON

## Creation and Myths of Origins

### THE CREATION BY ATUM

The following text served in the dedication ritual of a royal pyramid by recalling the first creation, when the god Atum of Heliopolis was on a primeval hillock arising out of the waters of chaos and there brought the first gods into being. In like manner, the god is now asked to bless the rising pyramid, an analogue of the hillock.

The text was carved inside the pyramids of Mer-ne-Re and Pepi II (Nefer-ka-Re) of the Sixth Dynasty (24th century B.C.), from which the following translation is made. Parts of the text were popular in later times, to promote the immortality of individuals.<sup>1</sup>

The hieroglyphic text appears in K. Sethe, *Die altägyptischen Pyramidentexten*, II (Leipzig, 1910), §1652-56. Extracts from the whole utterance have occasionally been translated, for example, J. H. Breasted, *Development of Religion and Thought in Ancient Egypt* (New York, 1912), 76 f.\* (See Addenda).

O Atum-Kheperer, thou wast on high on the (primeval) hill; thou didst arise as the *ben*-bird of the *ben*-stone in the *Ben*-House in Heliopolis;<sup>2</sup> thou didst spit out what was Shu, thou didst sputter out what was Tefnut.<sup>3</sup> Thou didst put thy arms about them as the arms of a *ka*, for thy *ka* was in them.<sup>4</sup>

(So also), O Atum, put thou thy arms about King Nefer-ka-Re, about this construction work, about this pyramid, as the arms of a *ka*. For the *ka* of King Nefer-ka-Re is in it, enduring for the course of eternity. O Atum, mayest thou set thy protection over this King Nefer-ka-Re, over this his pyramid and this construction work of King Nefer-ka-Re. Mayest thou guard lest anything happen to him evilly throughout the course of eternity, as thou didst set thy protection over Shu and Tefnut.

O Great Ennead which is in Heliopolis, Atum, Shu, Tefnut, Geb, Nut, Osiris, Isis, Seth, and Nephthys,<sup>5</sup> whom Atum begot, spreading wide his heart (in joy) at

<sup>1</sup> For example, it appears in the 13th century B.C., in extracts, in Papyrus Chester Beatty IX, recto, viii 3-21 (*Hieratic Papyri in the British Museum. Third Series. Chester Beatty Gift*, ed. by A. H. Gardiner, Vol. 1 [London, 1935], 91).

<sup>2</sup> The god of Heliopolis was compounded of two phases of the sun, Atum and Kheperer (later Atum and Re). The sanctuary at Heliopolis had a stone of sacred recognition. Associated with this stone was a bird, which was much later to be taken as the phoenix. This part of the texts is full of plays on words, such as *waben* "arise," and *ben*-bird, etc.

<sup>3</sup> The creation of Shu, god of air, and of Tefnut, goddess of moisture, was as explosive as a sneeze. cf. p. 6 below.

<sup>4</sup> The *ka* was the *alter ego*, or the guardian spirit, or—perhaps better—the vital force of a personality. Pictorially it was depicted as the sheltering arms. The creator-god Atum put his own vital force into his first creatures.

<sup>5</sup> The first nine gods, the Great Ennead, are here given, in their four generations: (1) Atum, the creator; (2) Shu, god of air, and Tefnut, goddess of moisture; (3) Geb, god of earth, and Nut, goddess of the sky; (4) the god Osiris and the goddess Isis; the god Seth and the goddess Nephthys. cf. p. 6 below.

his begetting (you) in your name of the Nine Bows,<sup>6</sup> may there be none of you who will separate himself from Atum, as he protects this King Nefer-ka-Re, as he protects this pyramid of King Nefer-ka-Re, as he protects this his construction work—from all gods and from all dead, and as he guards lest anything happen to him evilly throughout the course of eternity.

### ANOTHER VERSION OF THE CREATION BY ATUM

An ancient Egyptian's title to eternal happiness was often asserted by associating him with various superhuman forces, including the greatest gods of the land. Thus he secured their invincible immortality. The following extract from the popular 17th chapter of the Book of the Dead sets the deceased Egyptian in juxtaposition with the creator-god Atum, implicitly securing renewed creation of life.

This text was used all over Egypt for many centuries. The following translation is taken from the Eighteenth to Twenty-First Dynasties version of the Book of the Dead (1500-1000 B.C.). The text goes back at least as far as the Middle Kingdom (2000 B.C.), when it was inscribed in the coffins of nobles. By the Eighteenth Dynasty, the text had been amplified with explanatory and confirmatory glosses.

The current translation of the opening lines of the 17th chapter is made from H. Grapow, *Religiöse Urkunden (Urk. v, Leipzig, 1915-17)*, 4-13, including a translation into German. Translations into English are needed for the Book of the Dead.\* A rendering into German will be found in G. Roeder, *Urkunden zur Religion des alten Aegypten* (Jena, 1923), 237 ff.

#### Title

The beginning of exaltations and beatifications; going up and down in the necropolis; being an effective spirit in the beautiful west; being in the retinue of Osiris; being satisfied with the food of Wen-*nofer*.<sup>1</sup> The spell for coming forth<sup>2</sup> by day, assuming any forms that he may wish to assume, playing at the draughtboard, sitting in the arbor, and coming forth as a living soul, by X, after he moors.<sup>3</sup> It is of benefit to him who may do it on earth,<sup>4</sup> when the speech of the Lord of All takes place:

#### Speech of the Creator, with Glosses

"I am Atum when I was alone in Nun;<sup>5</sup> I am Re in his (first) appearances, when he began to rule that which he had made."

<sup>6</sup> The Nine Bows were the nine traditional, potential enemies of Egypt. There is a play on the "Nine (Gods)" and the "Nine (Bows)" here. The magic of the spell protects against the potential enmity of these gods.

<sup>1</sup> Osiris.

<sup>2</sup> The magic spell which enables the dead to come forth from the tomb.

<sup>3</sup> At X are inserted the title and name of the deceased. "Moors" is a euphemism for "dies."

<sup>4</sup> There is a promise of benefit to any living person who recites this spell on behalf of the deceased.

<sup>5</sup> The waters of chaos, out of which life arose.

## EGYPTIAN MYTHS, TALES, AND MORTUARY TEXTS

Who is he? This "Re, when he began to rule that which he had made" means that Re began to appear as a king, as one who was before the liftings of Shu had taken place, when he was on the hill which is in Hermopolis.<sup>4</sup>...

"I am the great god who came into being by himself."  
Who is he? "The great god who came into being by himself" is water; he is Nun, the father of the gods. Another version: He is Re.

"He who created his names, the Lord of the Ennead."  
Who is he? He is Re, who created the names of the parts of his body. That is how these gods who follow him came into being.<sup>5</sup>

"I am he among the gods who cannot be repulsed."  
Who is he? He is Atum, who is in his sun disc. Another version: He is Re, when he arises on the eastern horizon of heaven.<sup>6</sup>

"I am yesterday, while I know tomorrow."  
Who is he? As for "yesterday," that is Osiris. As for "tomorrow," that is Re on that day on which the enemies of the All-Lord are annihilated and his son Horus is made ruler.<sup>7</sup>...

## THE THEOLOGY OF MEMPHIS

When the First Dynasty established its capital at Memphis, it was necessary to justify the sudden emergence of this town to central importance. The Memphite god Ptah was therefore proclaimed to have been the First Principle, taking precedence over other recognized creator-gods. Mythological arguments were presented that the city of Memphis was the "place where the Two Lands are united" and that the Temple of Ptah was the "balance in which Upper and Lower Egypt have been weighed."

The extracts presented here are particularly interesting, because creation is treated in an intellectual sense, whereas other creation stories (like pp. 34 above) are given in purely physical terms. Here the god Ptah conceives the elements of the universe with his mind ("heart") and brings them into being by his commanding speech ("tongue"). Thus, at the beginning of Egyptian history, there was an approach to the Logos Doctrine.

The extant form of this document dates only to 700 B.C., but linguistic, philological, and geopolitical evidence is conclusive in support of its derivation from an original text more than two thousand years older.

The so-called "Shabaka Stone" is No. 498 in the British Museum. It was published by S. Sharpe, *Egyptian Inscriptions from the British Museum and Other Sources* (London, 1837), I, Pls. 36-38. The first understanding of its contents was that of J. H. Breasted, in *Z.AeS.*, xxxix (1901), 39-54, followed by A. Erman, *Ein Denkmal memphitischer Theologie* (SPAW, 1911,

<sup>4</sup> Before the air-god Shu had lifted heaven apart from earth.

<sup>5</sup> Atum-Re began his creation upon a primeval hillock arising out of the abyssal waters, Nun. In this version this hillock is located in the ancient cult-center of Hermopolis. Any important cult-center was regarded by the Egyptians as potentially a place of creation and therefore had its own hill of creation, symbolized in its holy of holies. cf. pp. 3; 8; 31, n. 10.

<sup>6</sup> The first utterance of a name is an act of creation. When Atum-Re named the parts of his body, his Ennead, the nine gods of his immediate family, came into being.

<sup>7</sup> The eternally rising sun cannot be destroyed.

<sup>8</sup> The "yesterday" of death is associated with Osiris, the god of the dead. The "tomorrow" of rebirth is associated with the ever-rising sun and with the accession of Horus to the rule of his father Osiris. The continuation of the text is not translated here.

916-50). K. Sethe devoted a masterly study to its contents, *Dramatische Texte zu ägyptischen Mysterienspielen* (*Untersuch.*, x, Leipzig, 1928), followed by H. Junker, *Die Götterlehre von Memphis* (APAW, 1939, Nr. 23, Berlin, 1940). The present part of the text has been studied by J. H. Breasted, *The Dawn of Conscience* (New York, 1933), 29-42, and in H. Frankfort et al., *The Intellectual Adventure of Ancient Man* (Chicago, 1946), 55-60.

(1) Live the Horus: Who Prospers the Two Lands; the Two Goddesses: Who Prospers the Two Lands; the Horus of Gold: Who Prospers the Two Lands; the King of Upper and Lower Egypt: Nefer-ka-Re: the Son of Re: Sha-[ba-ka], beloved of Ptah-South-of-His-Wall, living like Re forever. His majesty copied this text anew in the House of his father Ptah-South-of-His-Wall. Now his majesty had found (it) as (something) which the ancestors had made but which was worm-eaten.<sup>8</sup> It was unknown from beginning to end. Then [his majesty] copied [it] anew, (so that) it is better than its state formerly, in order that his name might endure and his memorial be made to last in the House of his father Ptah-South-of-His-Wall in the course of eternity, through that which the Son of Re: [Sha-ba-ka] did for his father Ptah-tenen, so that he might be given life forever. . . .

(7) The Ennead gathered themselves to him, and he judged Horus and Seth.<sup>9</sup> He prevented them from quarreling (further), and he made Seth the King of Upper Egypt in the land of Upper Egypt, at the place where he was (born), *Shu*. Then Geb made Horus the King of Lower Egypt in the land of Lower Egypt, at the place where his father<sup>10</sup> was drowned, Pezshet-Tawi. Thus Horus stood in (one) place, and Seth stood in (another) place, and they were reconciled about the Two Lands. . . .

<sup>10</sup> Words spoken (by) Geb (to) Seth: "Go to the place in which thou wert born." Seth—Upper Egypt.

Words spoken (by) Geb (to) Horus: "Go to the place in which thy father was drowned." Horus—Lower Egypt.

Words spoken (by) Geb (to) Horus and Seth: "I have judged you." Lower and Upper Egypt.

(But then it became) ill in the heart of Geb that the portion of Horus was (only) equal to the portion of Seth. So Geb gave his (entire) inheritance to Horus, that is, the son of his son, his first-born.<sup>11</sup> . . . (Thus) Horus stood over the (entire) land. Thus this land was united, proclaimed with the great name: "Ta-tenen, South-of-His-Wall, the Lord of Eternity."<sup>12</sup> The two Great Sor-

<sup>8</sup> The original, rediscovered in the time of Sha-ba-ka, was presumably on papyrus, wood, or leather.

<sup>9</sup> The nine great gods attended Geb, the earth-god, for his judicial ruling on the contest between Horus and Seth for the rule of Egypt.

<sup>10</sup> Osiris.

<sup>11</sup> Here the text exhibits most clearly its form for dramatic purposes. A notation is used for speakers and for stage directions. "Seth—Upper Egypt" meant either that the priestly actor playing the part of Geb points out the direction to the actor who played Seth or that the Seth-actor was to go off to the south.

<sup>12</sup> Geb revised his first decision to divide and gave all of his dominion, the earth, to Horus.

<sup>13</sup> A form of Ptah was Ta-tenen, "the land arising" (out of the primeval waters, so that creation might take place).

## EGYPTIAN MYTHS, TALES, AND MORTUARY TEXTS

cereses grew upon his head.<sup>7</sup> So it was that Horus appeared as King of Upper and Lower Egypt, who united the Two Lands in Wall Nome,<sup>8</sup> in the place in which the Two Lands are united.

(15c) It happened that reed and papyrus were set at the great double door of the House of Ptah.<sup>9</sup> That means Horus and Seth, who were reconciled and united, so that they associated and their quarreling ceased in the place which they reached, being joined in the House of Ptah, "the Balance of the Two Lands," in which Upper and Lower Egypt have been weighed. . . .

(48) The gods who came into being as Ptah:—<sup>10</sup>

Ptah who is upon the Great Throne . . . ;  
Ptah-Nun, the father who [begot] Atum;  
Ptah-Naunet, the mother who bore Atum;  
Ptah the Great, that is, the heart and tongue of the Ennead;  
[Ptah] . . . who gave birth to the gods; . . .<sup>11</sup>

(53) There came into being as the heart and there came into being as the tongue (something) in the form of Atum. The mighty Great One is Ptah, who transmitted *life* to all gods,<sup>12</sup> as well as (to) their *ka*'s, through this heart, by which Horus became Ptah, and through this tongue, by which Thoth became Ptah.<sup>13</sup>

(Thus) it happened that the heart and tongue gained control over [every] (other) member of the body, by teaching that he<sup>13</sup> is in every body and in every mouth of all gods, all men, [all] cattle, all creeping things, and (everything) that lives, by thinking and commanding everything that he wishes.

(55) His Ennead is before him in (the form of) teeth and lips. That is (the equivalent of) the semen and hands of Atum. Whereas the Ennead of Atum came into being by his semen and his fingers, the Ennead (of Ptah), however, is the teeth and lips in this mouth, which pronounced the name of everything, from which Shu and Tefnut came forth, and which was the fashioner of the Ennead.<sup>14</sup>

The sight of the eyes, the hearing of the ears, and the smelling the air by the nose, they report to the heart. It is this which causes every completed (concept) to come forth, and it is the tongue which announces what the heart thinks.<sup>15</sup>

<sup>7</sup> The crowns of Upper and Lower Egypt.

<sup>8</sup> The province (nome) of Memphis was named "White Wall."

<sup>9</sup> The intertwining tutelary plants of Upper and Lower Egypt, the reed(?) and the papyrus, symbolize the reconciliation of the two parts of Egypt and of their gods.

<sup>10</sup> Or, with Junker: "who have (their) form in Ptah."

<sup>11</sup> Three other forms of Ptah appear in badly broken context. These forms of Ptah apply to the statement that follows, Ptah was both Nun, the abyssal waters, and his consort Naunet, and in these capacities he brought forth Atum, the creator-god of the Heliopolitan theology.

<sup>12</sup> Ptah thought of and created by speech the creator-god Atum ("Totality"), thus transmitting the divine power of Ptah to all other gods. The gods Horus and Thoth, a commonly associated pair, are equated with the organs of thought and speech.

<sup>13</sup> Ptah, as heart and tongue.

<sup>14</sup> A distinction is made between the act of creation by Atum through onanism (cf. p. 6 below) and the creation by Ptah through commanding speech with teeth and lips. Pronouncing a name was creative. Shu and Tefnut were the first deities to be spoken.

<sup>15</sup> The senses report to the heart. With this reported material, the

Thus all the gods were formed and his Ennead was completed. Indeed, all the divine order<sup>16</sup> really came into being through what the heart thought and the tongue commanded. Thus the *ka*-spirits were made and the *hemsut*-spirits were appointed, they who make all provisions and all nourishment, by this speech. (*Thus justice was given to*) him who does what is liked, (*and injustice to*) him who does what is disliked.<sup>17</sup> Thus life was given to him who has peace and death was given to him who has sin. Thus were made all work and all crafts, the action of the arms, the movement of the legs, and the activity of every member, in conformance with (this) command which the heart thought, which came forth through the tongue, and which gives value to everything.<sup>18</sup>

(Thus) it happened that it was said of Ptah: "He who made all and brought the gods into being." He is indeed Ta-tenen, who brought forth the gods, for everything came forth from him, nourishment and provisions, the offerings of the gods, and every good thing. Thus it was discovered and understood that his strength is greater than (that of the other) gods. And so Ptah was satisfied,<sup>19</sup> after he had made everything, as well as all the divine order.<sup>20</sup> He had formed the gods, he had made cities, he had founded nomes, he had put the gods in their shrines, (60) he had established their offerings, he had founded their shrines, he had made their bodies like that (with which) their hearts were satisfied. So the gods entered into their bodies of every (kind of) wood, of every (kind of) stone, of every (kind of) clay, or anything which might grow upon him,<sup>21</sup> in which they had taken form. So all the gods, as well as their *ka*'s gathered themselves to him, content and associated with the Lord of the Two Lands.

The Great Seat, which rejoices the heart of the gods, which is in the House of Ptah, *the mistress of all life*, is the Granary of the God,<sup>22</sup> through which the sustenance of the Two Lands is prepared,<sup>23</sup> because of the fact that Osiris drowned in his water, while Isis and Nephthys watched. They saw him and they were distressed at him. Horus commanded Isis and Nephthys repeatedly that they lay hold on Osiris and prevent his drowning. (63) They turned (their) heads in time. So they brought him to land.<sup>24</sup> He entered the mysterious portals in the glory of the lords of eternity, in the steps of him who heart conceives and releases thought, which the tongue, as a herald, puts into effective utterance.

<sup>16</sup> Literally, "every word of the god."

<sup>17</sup> Following previous translators, we supply something which seems to have dropped out of the text. The exact words are uncertain.

<sup>18</sup> "The dignity (or worth c. reverence) of everything."

<sup>19</sup> Or, "so Ptah rested."

<sup>20</sup> Cf. n.16 above.

<sup>21</sup> Upon Ptah, in his form of the "rising land." Note that divine images were not the gods themselves, but only places in which they might assume appearance.

<sup>22</sup> The determinative shows that "the God" was Ptah Ta-tenen.

<sup>23</sup> The temple of Ptah at Memphis was called the "Great Seat," or throne, and the granary which kept Egypt alive.

<sup>24</sup> The rescue of Osiris, the grain-god, from drowning is given in explanation of the position of Memphis as the granary of Egypt. In the following context, one must understand that Osiris's son was Horus and that Horus was the king of Egypt. Hence Horus was correctly located at Memphis.

shines forth on the horizon, on the ways of Re in the Great Seat. He joined with the court and associated with the gods of Ta-tenen Ptah, the lord of years.

Thus Osiris came to be in the land in the "House of the Sovereign" on the north side of this land, which he had reached. His son Horus appeared as King of Upper Egypt and appeared as King of Lower Egypt, in the embrace of his father Osiris, together with the gods who were in front of him and who were behind him.

#### THE REPULSING OF THE DRAGON AND THE CREATION

This text employed myth for ritual and magical recitation. In Egyptian belief the ship of the sun-god Re made a journey through the skies above by day and the skies below by night. Every night this ship faced the peril of destruction from a demon lurking in the underworld, Apophis. An important part of the ritual of Egyptian temples was the repulsing of this dragon, and thus the repulsing of the perils which might face nation or people. The following ritual is an extract from a papyrus containing a group of texts, for which the general heading is: "THE BEGINNING OF THE BOOK OF OVERTHROWING APOPHIS, THE ENEMY OF RE AND THE ENEMY OF KING WEN-NOFER—life, prosperity, health!—the justified, performed in the course of every day in the Temple of Amon-Re, Lord of the Thrones of the Two Lands, Presiding over Karnak."<sup>1</sup> The particular interest of the section given below is that it adds to these spells against Apophis a statement about creation.

The text is preserved in the Papyrus Bremner-Rhind (British Museum 10188), which may have come from Thebes. The present manuscript is dated about 310 B.C., but the text makes a deliberate attempt to preserve a language two thousand years older than that date. There is no doubt that the basic material derives from a relatively early period.

Photographic facsimiles of the papyrus were published by Budge in *Egyptian Hieratic Papyri in the British Museum. First Series* (London, 1910), Pls. I-XIX. Faulkner gave a transcription from hieratic into hieroglyphic in *The Papyrus Bremner-Rhind* (*Bibliotheca Aegyptiaca*, III, Brussels, 1933). The latest study and translation of the entire papyrus was given by Faulkner in *JEA*, xxxii (1936), 121 ff.; xxxiii (1937), 10 ff., 166 ff.; xxiv (1938), 41 ff.; with the section below (xxvi 21—xxviii 20) treated in xxxiii, 172 ff.

For another reference to the repulsing of a monster at creation, see p. 417, n.49. For another account of the Repulsing of the Dragon, see pp. 11-12.

(xxvi 21) . . . THE BOOK OF KNOWING THE CREATIONS OF RE AND OF OVERTHROWING APOPHIS. THE WORDS TO BE SPOKEN.<sup>2</sup>

The All-Lord said, after he had come into being:

I am he who came into being as Khepri.<sup>3</sup> When I had come into being, being (itself) came into being, and all beings came into being after I came into being. Many were the beings which came forth from my mouth,<sup>4</sup> before heaven came into being, before earth came into being, before the ground and creeping things had been created in this place. I put together (some)

<sup>1</sup> Papyrus Bremner-Rhind xxii 1. Wen-nofer is a name for Osiris.

<sup>2</sup> Capital letters show words rubricized in the manuscript. The following words are to be spoken as the magical ritual.

<sup>3</sup> Khepri was the morning sun-god, conceived as a scarab beetle. In the following context there is a play on the name Khepri and the word *kheper* "come into being."

<sup>4</sup> Creation was effected by the commandlike utterance of Re.

of them in Nun as weary ones,<sup>5</sup> before I could find a place in which I might stand.<sup>6</sup> It (seemed) advantageous to me in my heart; I planned with my face; and I made (in concept) every form when I was alone, before I had spat out what was Shu, before I had sputtered out what was Tefnut,<sup>7</sup> and before (any) other had come into being who could act with me.

I planned in my own heart, and there came into being a multitude of forms of beings, the forms of children and the forms of their children. I was the one who copulated with my fist, I masturbated (xxvii 1) with my hand. Then I spewed with my own mouth:<sup>8</sup> I spat out what was Shu, and I sputtered out what was Tefnut. It was my father Nun who brought them up, and my Eye followed after them since the ages when they were distant from me.<sup>9</sup>

After I had come into being as the sole god, there were three gods beside me.<sup>10</sup> I came into being in this land, whereas Shu and Tefnut rejoiced in Nun, in which they were. They brought to me my Eye with them. After I had joined together my members, I wept over them.<sup>11</sup> That is how men came into being from the tears which came forth from my Eye. It was angry with me, after it returned and found that I had made another in its place, having replaced it with the Glorious Eye, which I had made. Then I advanced its place on my head,<sup>12</sup> and after it had ruled this entire land, *its rage fell away to its roots*, for I had replaced what had been taken away from it. I came forth from the roots,<sup>13</sup> and I created all creeping things and whatever lives among them. Then Shu and Tefnut brought forth (5) Geb and Nut. Then Geb and Nut brought forth Osiris, Horus Khenti-en-irti, Seth, Isis, and Nephthys from the body, one of them after another; and they brought forth their multitudes in this land.<sup>14</sup>

When (these gods) rich in magic spoke, it was the

<sup>5</sup> There is a play on the name Nun, the primordial waters in which creation took place, and *nenu* "the weary," usually a designation of the dead, but here those in inchoate pause.

<sup>6</sup> Other texts locate the creation on a primeval hillock arising out of the waters of Nun, cf. pp. 3, 4, and 8.

<sup>7</sup> The first two children of the creator-god were Shu, the air-god, and Tefnut, the goddess of moisture. The statement of their ejection into being contains plays on the words *ishesh* "spit" and Shu, and *tef* "sputter" and Tefnut, cf. p. 3 above.

<sup>8</sup> There is here a fusion of two myths, creation by self-pollution and creation by ejection from the mouth, cf. p. 5 above.

<sup>9</sup> Reference to another myth, in which, however, it was Shu and Tefnut who went out after the wandering Eye of Re. See H. Junker, *Die Onuris-legende* (Vienna, 1917).

<sup>10</sup> Nun, Shu, and Tefnut.

<sup>11</sup> Apparently Re wept when he found that his Eye was missing from his body. He made a substitute eye, which displeased his missing Eye when it returned to him. The labored point of the context is a play on the words *remet* "tears," and *remet* "mankind," in explanation of human creation, cf. pp. 8a, n.6; 11, n.6; 366, n.17.

<sup>12</sup> Re appeased his wrathful Eye by making it the uraeus on his brow, the symbol of rule.

<sup>13</sup> An obscure or corrupt statement on the creation of vegetation. In the next sentence, the "among them" may refer to plant life.

<sup>14</sup> Shu and Tefnut, the children of Atum-Re, were miraculously brought into being. But their children, Geb (earth) and Nut (sky), were normally born "from the body," as were also the divine children of Geb and Nut. Thus we have the Ennead, the nine ruling gods, with Horus as an added member, cf. p. 3 above. The context now continues by pointing out how these created beings were to use their magic against the demon enemy of Re.



8

## EGYPTIAN MYTHS, TALES, AND MORTUARY TEXTS

"I made the great inundation that the poor man might have rights therein like the great man. That is (one) deed thereof.

"I made every man like his fellow. I did not command that they do evil, (but) it was their hearts which violated what I had said.<sup>4</sup> That is (one) deed thereof.

"I made their hearts to cease from forgetting the West, in order that divine offerings might be given to the gods of the nomes.<sup>5</sup> That is (one) deed thereof.

"I brought into being the four gods from my sweat, while men are the tears of my eye."<sup>6</sup>

## THEBES AS THE PLACE OF CREATION

Every important cult-center of Egypt asserted its primacy by the dogma that it was the site of creation. The following is an extract from a long hymn extolling Thebes and its god Amon-Re. It is dated shortly after the Amarna Revolution and is a renewed confirmation of Theban domination. The manuscript is dated to the reign of Ramses II (about 1301-1234 B.C.).

The hieratic text of Leyden Papyrus I 350 was published by C. Leemans, *Monuments égyptiens du musée d'antiquités des Pays-Bas à Leyde* (Leyden, 1841-82), II, Pls. CLIX-CLXIII. The text was studied by A. H. Gardiner in *Z.AeS*, XLII (1905), 12-42, and by A. Erman, *Der Leidener Amonshymnus (SPAW)*, 1923, 62-81). It is translated in Erman, *LAE*, 293-302.

TENTH STANZA.<sup>1</sup>

Thebes is *normal* beyond every (other) city. The water and land were in her from the first times. (Then) (ii 11) sand came to *delimit* the fields and to create her ground on the hillock; (thus) earth came into being.<sup>2</sup>

*Then men* came into being in her, to found every city with her real name, for their name is called "city" (only) under the oversight of Thebes, the Eye of Re.<sup>3</sup>

Her majesty came as the Sound Eye and the Beneficial Eye,<sup>4</sup> to bind the land thereby together with (her) *kā*, coming to rest and alighting in Ishru in her form as Sekhmet, the Mistress of the Two Lands.<sup>5</sup> "How rich

<sup>1</sup> The juxtaposition of this statement of god's equalitarian creation and this statement of man's disobedience of god's command means that man—and not god—is responsible for social inequality.

<sup>2</sup> The pious service of local gods would provide credit for continued life in the West, the realm of the dead. This idea is related to the equalitarian statements which precede it. By the Middle Kingdom, the full and powerful afterlife, which had previously been the prerogative of kings alone, had been extended to all worthy men and might be won locally, without attachment to the royal court. "The nomes" were the Egyptian provinces.

<sup>3</sup> There are two puns: *fedu* "four" and *fedet* "sweat"; and *romet* "men" and *remis* "tears." cf. p. 6, n.11 above. In somewhat uncertain terms there is a relation of the creation of gods to the creation of humans, both exudations of the creator-god. The attempt is clumsy, because one pun calls for four gods, instead of the usual nine. These may be the four gods who assist the dead man on his arrival in the next world (e.g. K. Sethe, *Die altägyptischen Pyramidentexte*, II, §1456-57).

<sup>4</sup> The manuscript is divided into a series of numbered "houses," i.e. "chapters" or "stanzas." The present stanza is II 10-15 of the papyrus. Each stanza begins and ends with a pun based on the number. Here the word *med* "ten" is picked up by the word *metet*, which probably means "normal" or "standard."

<sup>5</sup> Thus the primeval hillock, upon which creation took place, is located in Thebes. cf. pp. 3-4 above.

<sup>6</sup> One designation of Thebes was "The City" (biblical No), resulting in this curious claim that all other cities were permitted to use that title under her domination.

<sup>7</sup> Allusion to the myth of the restored eye of the sun-god.

<sup>8</sup> Ishru, near Karnak, was a cult-seat of the goddess Mut, here equated with the goddess Sekhmet.

she is," they say about her, "in her name of Thebes!"<sup>7</sup> She remains sound in her name of the Sound Eye, *the eye within*, which is in his sun disc; Opposite-her-Lord, appearing and appointed in her place in her name of Appointed-of-Places, without her peer.<sup>8</sup> Every (other) city is under (her) shadow, to magnify themselves through Thebes. She is the *norm*.

## THE ASSIGNMENT OF FUNCTIONS TO THOTH

The Egyptians, like the Hebrews, were fond of punning explanations of names and phenomena. The following text provides the explanation of a number of cosmological or mythological phenomena. The sun-god Re here assigns responsibility for the moon to the god Thoth, who thus becomes the "place-taker" for the sun, an adjutant of the gods.

The text is found on the Tut-ankh-Amon shrine, now in the Cairo Museum, and in the Theban tombs of Seti I, Ramses II, and Ramses III. It thus ranges from the middle of the 14th century to the middle of the 12th century B.C. However, its original was probably much earlier. The parallel texts are presented by Ch. Maystre in *BIFAO*, XI (1941), 93-98. The line numbers, 62-74, follow the Seti I version. There is a translation in G. Roeder, *Urkunden zur Religion der alten Ägypten* (Jena, 1923), 147-48\* (See Addenda).

Then the majesty of this god<sup>1</sup> said: "Pray, summon to me Thoth!" Then he was brought immediately. Then the majesty of this god said to Thoth: "Behold ye,<sup>2</sup> I am here in the sky in my (proper) place. Inasmuch as I (65) shall act so that the light may shine in the Underworld and the Island of Baba,<sup>3</sup> thou shalt be scribe there and keep in order those who are in them,<sup>4</sup> *those who may perform deeds of rebellion . . . against me*, (70) the followers of *this dissatisfied being*.<sup>5</sup> Thou shalt be in my place, a place-taker. Thus thou shalt be called: "Thoth, the place-taker of Re." Moreover, (I) shall have thee tread upon those greater than thou." That is how the ibis of Thoth came into being.<sup>6</sup> "Moreover, I shall have thee stretch out thy hand<sup>7</sup> in the face of the primeval gods, who are greater than thou. *My speech is good*, if thou actest (so)." That is how the ibis of Thoth came into being.<sup>8</sup> "Moreover, I shall have thee encompass the two heavens with thy beauty and with thy rays." That is how the moon of Thoth came into being.<sup>9</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Pun: *weser* "rich" and *weset* "Thebes."

<sup>2</sup> "Opposite-her-Lord" (i.e. Amon) was an epithet of Thebes. "Appointed-of-Places" was the name of the Temple of Karnak.

<sup>3</sup> Re.

<sup>4</sup> Re's commands are for all the attendant gods.

<sup>5</sup> An otherwise unknown designation for a part of the Underworld. It may mean a subterranean cavern.

<sup>6</sup> Re cannot do full justice to the denizens of the world and to the denizens of the Underworld. Since he feels a responsibility to illumine the latter, he assigns the moon, Thoth, to be his deputy there.

<sup>7</sup> A corrupt passage. In the first part there may be reference to mankind's rebellion, as in the passage on the destruction of mankind, pp. 10-11. The second part may refer to the Apophis demon, the enemy of the sun-god; cf. pp. 6-7, 11-12.

<sup>8</sup> A play on words: *hab*: "tread upon" and *hib* "ibis" the bird sacred to Thoth.

<sup>9</sup> In command. The gods of primeval chaos were associated with the underworld.

<sup>10</sup> Another play on words: *kāen* "speech" and *tekhēni*, another term for the ibis.

<sup>11</sup> Another play on words: *ineh* "encompass" and *iah* "moon."

"Moreover, I shall have thee go *all the way around* the Hau-nebut." That is how the baboon of Thoth came into being.<sup>10</sup> That is how he became the vizier.<sup>11</sup> "Moreover, thou shalt be my place-taker, and the faces of all who see thee shall be opened through thee,<sup>12</sup> so that the eye of every man praises god for thee."<sup>13</sup>

#### THE PRIMEVAL ESTABLISHMENT OF ORDER

A responsibility of the creator-god Atum was to bring the world into order and to assign places and functions. The conquest of hostile forces and the delimitation of the next world are themes of the following text. Insofar as it deals with the place and functions of Osiris, it has been used as a magic spell for the preservation of the dead man, himself an Osiris.<sup>1</sup>

Here translated from the 175th chapter of the Book of the Dead, as in the Eighteenth Dynasty (1550-1350 B.C.) Papyrus of Ani (British Museum 10470; *The Papyrus of Ani*, ed. by E. A. W. Budge [London, 1913], III, Sheet 29).

#### Title

(1) SPELL FOR NOT DYING A SECOND TIME. WORDS TO BE SPOKEN BY ANI, THE TRIUMPHANT.

#### Atum's Question

"O Thoth, what is it that has happened? It is among the children of Nut.<sup>2</sup> They have made an uproar; they have seized upon quarreling; they have done evil deeds; they have created rebellion; they have made slaughtering; (5) they have created imprisonment. Moreover, in everything which we might do, they have made the great into the small. Give thou greatly, Thoth!" Thus spoke Atum.

#### Thoth's Reply

"Thou shalt not see (such) evil deeds, thou shalt not suffer, (for) their years are cut short and their months are curbed, inasmuch as the destruction of hidden things was made for them through all that thou hast done."<sup>3</sup>

#### Words of the Deceased

"I am thy palette, O Thoth, and I have offered up to thee thy inkwell. I am not among those whose hidden things should be damaged. Damage should not be done to me."<sup>4</sup>

WORDS SPOKEN BY THE OSIRIS ANI (10): "O Atum, what is it? I am departing to the desert, the silent land!"<sup>5</sup>

<sup>10</sup> Another play, *anan* "turn back," possibly "go around," and *anan* the baboon sacred to Thoth. The Hau-nebut were peoples to the north of Egypt, thus in an outer range of circuit.

<sup>11</sup> The play on words which led to this identification has dropped out. Thoth was the vizier of the gods.

<sup>12</sup> In the absence of the sun, men can see because of the moon.

<sup>13</sup> Men are grateful.

<sup>1</sup> The concept was originally related to the kingship, the dead pharaoh becoming Osiris, while his son and successor became Horus.

<sup>2</sup> That is, among the partisans of Seth, who was the "son of Nut."

<sup>3</sup> This seems to be the answer of Thoth, assuring Atum that the punishment of evil resides in the system which Atum created.

<sup>4</sup> By identifying himself with the scribal equipment of Thoth, the deceased dissociates himself from the rebellious beings.

<sup>5</sup> The deceased asks the creator-god to describe the land of burial.

#### Atum's Answer

"It has no water, it has no air—deep, deep, dark, dark, boundless, boundless—in which thou livest in the peace of heart of the silent land. Sexual pleasures are not enjoyed in it, (but) a blessed state<sup>6</sup> is given to (thee)<sup>7</sup> in recompense for water, air, and sexual pleasure, and peace of heart in recompense for bread and beer." Thus spoke Atum.

#### Protest of the Deceased

"In the sight of thy face? Indeed, I cannot bear the lack of thee!<sup>8</sup> Every (other) god has *assumed* his place in the forefront of (the sun barque) Millions-of-Years!"

#### Atum's Reply

"Thy place belongs to thy son Horus"—thus spoke Atum—"Indeed, it shall be that he sends forth the great, (15) while he also shall rule thy place, and he shall inherit the throne which is in the Island of Flame.<sup>9</sup> It is further decreed that a *man* shall see his fellow, (so that) my face shall see *thy* face."<sup>10</sup>

#### Question of the Deceased, as Osiris

"O Atum, what is (my) duration of life?"—thus he spoke.

#### Atum's Answer

"Thou art (destined) for millions of millions (of years), a lifetime of millions. I have caused that *he send out* the great ones.<sup>11</sup> Further, I shall destroy all that I have made, and this land will return into Nun, into the floodwaters, as (in) its first state.<sup>12</sup> I (alone) am a survivor, together with Osiris, when I have made my form in another state, serpents which men do not know and gods do not see."<sup>13</sup>

"How good is what I have done for Osiris, distinct from all (other) gods! I have given (20) him the desert, the silent land, with his son Horus as heir upon his throne which is in the Island of Flame. *Further*, I have made his place in the barque of Millions-of-Years. Horus remains upon his throne, for the purpose of founding his monuments also. The soul of Seth has been sent apart from all (other) gods, because I have caused the restraint of his soul, which is in the (sun) barque, because he wishes to fear the divine body."<sup>14</sup>

<sup>6</sup> *Atk*, a state of "effective being," or "beatitude."

<sup>7</sup> Text: "to me."

<sup>8</sup> Osiris—here in the person of the deceased—is being assigned to the region of the dead. He objects that he will not see the face of the sun there. In the reply Atum offers him compensations.

<sup>9</sup> The place where the sun was born at dawn.

<sup>10</sup> The last sentences uncertain, since the literal runs: "Further it is decreed that I see his fellow, my face to see the face of the lord." Atum seems to promise Osiris that they two will not be cut off from each other, even though Horus takes over the rule of his father in the upper world.

<sup>11</sup> So literally, but uncertain of meaning and perhaps corrupt.

<sup>12</sup> Atum's purpose in destroying his creation and returning it to primeval chaos is not stated here. It probably has to do with the same kind of a destruction of mankind as in the text of pp. 10-11 below. The point here is that Osiris, in the realm of the dead, escapes such destruction.

<sup>13</sup> Atum, "Totality," included the gods of primeval chaos, who were depicted in serpent form.

<sup>14</sup> Atum assures Osiris that the latter need not fear his enemy Seth, because Seth is sufficiently under the authority of the supreme god to

*Words of Horus*

"O my father Osiris, mayest thou do for me what thy father Re did for thee! I remain upon earth, so that I may establish my place."<sup>13</sup>

*Words of Osiris*

"My heir is healthy, my tomb endures; they are my adherents (still) on earth. (25) My enemies have been given into *woes*, for Selqet is binding them.<sup>14</sup> I am thy son, my father Re. Thou dost these things for me for the sake of life, prosperity, and health, while Horus remains upon his throne. Mayest thou cause that this my time of passing to a state of reverence may come."<sup>15</sup>

THE MYTHOLOGICAL ORIGIN  
OF CERTAIN UNCLEAN ANIMALS

The Egyptians viewed certain animals as devoted for a definite purpose and therefore taboo for other purposes, specifically as unclean for eating. The following text is a mythological explanation of a taboo against eating pork. Not all of the text is clear, but it does involve two well-known elements: the conflict of Horus and Seth for the rule, and a damage to one of Horus' eyes, which were the two heavenly luminaries.

The text first occurs in the coffins of the Middle Kingdom, from which it is here translated, and is continued into the Book of the Dead, being used for many centuries.

The hieroglyphic text is given by Arde Buck, *The Egyptian Coffin Texts*, II (*OIP*, XLIX, Chicago, 1938), Spell 157, pp. 326 ff. It later became the 112th chapter of the Book of the Dead and is studied and translated by K. Sethe et al. in *ZAS* (1923), LVIII, 1 ff. "One Middle Kingdom coffin, which treats Spells 157 and 158 consecutively without break, has an instruction at the end of Spell 158: "Not to be spoken while eating pork."<sup>16</sup>

*The Efficacy of This Text*

BEING DESTINED FOR FOOD IN THE NECROPOLIS. BEING FAVORED AND LOVED UPON EARTH. BEING AMONG THE FOLLOWERS OF HORUS AND HIS RETINUE. A MYSTERY WHICH ONE LEARNED IN THE HOUSE. KNOWING THE SOULS OF BUTO.<sup>2</sup>

*The Claim of Exceptional Knowledge*

O Batit of the evening, ye swamp-dwellers, ye of Mendes, ye of the Mendes nome, ye of the Butine House of Praise, ye of the Shade of Re which knows not praise, ye who brew stoppered beer<sup>3</sup>—do ye know why Buto was given to Horus? Ye do not know it, (but) I know

remain in the sun barque, where he had the important duty of fighting the Apophis demon. cf. pp. 6-7 above and pp. 11-12 below.

<sup>13</sup> Horus, the son and successor of the deceased, assents to the dispositions of the supreme god.

<sup>14</sup> Just how Selqet, a scorpion goddess, functioned is uncertain.

<sup>15</sup> May Horus, the successor on earth, aid in the beatification of Osiris, the deceased. In this speech, Osiris accepts the dispositions made by Atum-Re.

<sup>16</sup> De Buck, *op. cit.*, 362.

<sup>1</sup> The initial statement is rubricized. Each of the spells, Coffin Texts, Spell 154-60, carries a title. "Knowing the Souls of X," X being a cult-center or a region. These "Souls" were the reverted dead, often the ancient kings who had ruled at a cult-center. Acquaintance with such high personalities would facilitate the reception of the deceased Egyptian in the next world. cf. pp. 11-12, 33.

<sup>2</sup> Apparently all forces in or around Buto in the Egyptian Delta, who should have known the mythological history of that site.

it. It was Re who gave it to him in recompense for the injury in his eye. I know it.

*The Myth*

It was Re—he said to Horus: "Pray, let me see thy eye since this has happened to it." Then he saw it. He said: "Pray, look at that (*black*) part, while thy hand is a covering over the sound eye which is there."<sup>4</sup> Then Horus looked at that (*black*) part. Then Horus said: "Now I see it quite white." That is how the oryx came into being.<sup>5</sup>

Then Re said: "Pray, look another time at that black pig."<sup>6</sup> Thereupon Horus looked at this pig. Thereupon Horus shrieked because of the state of his eye, which was stormy.<sup>7</sup> He said: "Behold, my eye is as (at) that first blow which Seth made against my eye!" Thereupon Horus swallowed his heart before him.<sup>8</sup> Then Re said: "Put ye him upon his bed until he has recovered."

It was Seth—he had assumed form against him as a black pig; thereupon he shot a blow into his eye. Then Re said: "The pig is an abomination to Horus." "Would that he might recover!" said the gods.

THAT IS HOW THE PIG BECAME AN ABOMINATION TO THE GODS, AS WELL AS THEIR FOLLOWERS, FOR HORUS' SAKE.<sup>10</sup> . . .

Deliverance of Mankind  
from Destruction

The themes of this myth are the sin of mankind, the destructive disappointment of their creator, and the deliverance of mankind from annihilation. However, the setting of the present text shows that its purpose was magical protection rather than moral teaching. On the walls of three royal tombs of the Empire, it accompanies certain charms to protect the body of the dead ruler. This implies that the former deliverance of mankind from destruction will be valid also in this individual case.

The text appears on the walls of the tombs of Seti I, Ramses II, and Ramses III at Thebes. Its date is thus 14th-12th centuries B.C., although the language used and the corrupted state of the text show that it followed an older original. The texts were published together by Ch. Maystre in *BIFAO*, XL (1941), 53-73. The line numbers below are those of the Seti I version. There is a translation in Erman, *LAE*, 47-49.<sup>9</sup>

Other reference to man's rebelliousness and the god's punishment of men will be found in pp. 8-10, 217.

<sup>4</sup> Horus' eye was injured in the fight with Seth for the rule. The destroyed and restored eye came to be identified with the moon.

<sup>5</sup> Following the reasoning of Sethe, an old sign for "black" has degenerated into a mere stroke, following the word for "part" or "mark." It is not clear how Horus, covering his uninjured eye, could see the injury in his wounded eye.

<sup>6</sup> Homonyms, *ma-hedj* "see-white" and *ma-hedj* "oryx." The oryx was a beast of Seth, and thus also unclean to Horus. The sense of the passage must be that Horus failed to see what Re saw.

<sup>7</sup> The words "another time" perhaps mean that Re directed Horus' attention to the same black mark, but with a more specific statement that the mark of injury looked like a pig, Seth's beast.

<sup>8</sup> Probably inflamed.

<sup>9</sup> In view of what follows, this must mean that Horus lost consciousness in Re's presence.

<sup>10</sup> More literally: "that is how the pig became abominated for Horus by the gods, like their followers," all rubricized. The omitted conclusion of the myth states that the pig had previously been a sacrificial animal for Horus and relates the myth about Horus to the Souls of Buto, with whom the deceased is so well acquainted.

It happened that . . . Re, the god who came into being by himself, when he was king of men and gods all together. Then mankind plotted something in the (very) presence of Re. Now then, his majesty—life, prosperity, health!—was old. His bones were of silver, his flesh of gold, and his hair of genuine lapis lazuli.

Then his majesty perceived the things which were being plotted against him by mankind. Then his majesty—life, prosperity, health! said to those who were in his retinue: "Pray, summon to me my Eye,<sup>1</sup> Shu, Tefnut, Geb, and Nut, as well as the fathers and mothers who were with me when I was in Nun,<sup>2</sup> as well as my god Nun also. He is to bring his court (5) with him. Thou shalt bring them *secretly*: let not mankind see; let not their hearts escape.<sup>3</sup> Thou shalt come with them to the Great House, that they may tell their plans, since *the [times] when I came from Nun to the place in which I came into being.*"

Then these gods were brought in, and these gods [*came*] beside him, putting their heads to the ground in the presence of his majesty, so that he might make his statement in the presence of the father of the eldest, he who made mankind, the king of people.<sup>4</sup> Then they said in the presence of his majesty: "Speak to us, so that we may hear it."

Then Re said to Nun: "O eldest god, in whom I came into being, O ancestor gods, behold mankind, which came into being from my Eye<sup>5</sup>—they have plotted things against me. Tell me what ye would do about it. Behold, I am seeking; I would not slay them until I had heard what (10) ye might say about it." Then the majesty of Nun said: "My son Re, the god greater than he who made him and mightier than they who created him, sitting upon thy throne, the fear of thee is great when thy Eye is (directed) against them who scheme against thee!" Then the majesty of Re said: "Behold, they have fled into the desert, their hearts being afraid because I *might* speak to them." Then they said in the presence of his majesty: "May thy Eye be sent, that it may *catch* for thee them who scheme with evil things. (But) the Eye is not (*sufficiently*) prominent therein to smite them for thee.<sup>6</sup> It should go down as Hat-Hor."

So then this goddess came and slew mankind in the desert. Then the majesty of this god said: "Welcome, Hat-Hor, who hast done for me *the deed for which I came!*" Then this goddess said: "As thou livest for me,<sup>7</sup> I have prevailed over mankind, and it is pleasant in my heart!" Then the majesty of Re said: "I shall prevail over them *as a king* (15) by diminishing them!"<sup>8</sup> That

<sup>1</sup> The eye of the sun-god was an independent part of himself, with a complicated mythological history.

<sup>2</sup> The abyssal waters, in which creation took place.

<sup>3</sup> Was Re unwilling that mankind repent its rebellious purposes?

<sup>4</sup> Uncertain. The translation assumes that Re is asking advice on the changed conditions since creation.

<sup>5</sup> Nun.

<sup>6</sup> Mankind originated as the tears of the creator-god. See pp. 6, 8, 366.

<sup>7</sup> It seems to be argued that the Eye in its normal form is not adequate to the work of destruction, so that it should assume its form as Hat-Hor.

<sup>8</sup> The introductory formula of an oath.

<sup>9</sup> Uncertain. The translation assumes the sense that Re can rule man-

is how Sekhmet came into being, the (beer)-mash of the night, to wade in their blood from Herakleopolis.<sup>9</sup>

Then Re said: "Pray, summon to me swift and speedy messengers, so that they may run like the shadow of a body." Then these messengers were brought immediately. Then the majesty of this god said: "Go ye to Elephantine and bring me red ochre very abundantly."<sup>10</sup> Then this red ochre was brought to him. Then the majesty of this great god caused . . . , [and He-With]-the-Side-Lock who is in Heliopolis<sup>11</sup> ground up this red ochre. When further maidservants crushed barley to (make) beer, then this red ochre was added to this mash. Then (it) was like human blood. Then seven thousand jars of the beer were made. So then the majesty of the King of Upper and Lower Egypt: Re came, together with these gods, to see this beer.

Now when day broke for (20) the slaying of mankind by the goddess at their season of going upstream,<sup>12</sup> then the majesty of Re said: "How good it is! I shall protect mankind with it!" Then Re said: "Pray, carry it to the place in which she expected to slay mankind." Then the majesty of the King of Upper and Lower Egypt: Re went to work early in the depth of the night to have this sleep-maker poured out. Then the fields were filled with liquid *for* three palms,<sup>13</sup> through the power of the majesty of this god.

Then this goddess went at dawn, and she found this (place) flooded. Then her face (looked) beautiful therein. Then she drank, and it was good in her heart. She came (back) drunken, without having perceived mankind.

(The remainder of this story has to do with the origin of certain names and customs, such as the use of strong drink at the Feast of Hat-Hor.)

## Heroic Tales—Exploits of Gods and Human Beings

### THE REPULSING OF THE DRAGON

When the boat of the sun entered the western darkness at evening, it faced the peril of a serpent or dragon, which might destroy the sun; cf. pp. 6-7 above. Then it was the function of the god Seth to repel this beast, so that the sun might cross the underworld by night and be reborn in the morning. In like manner, man should survive death and be reborn.

kind if they are fewer in number. It is also possible to translate: "I shall prevail over them. *But do not diminish them (any further).*" At any rate, it soon becomes clear that Re wishes the destruction to cease, whereas Hat-Hor is unwilling to halt her lustful annihilation.

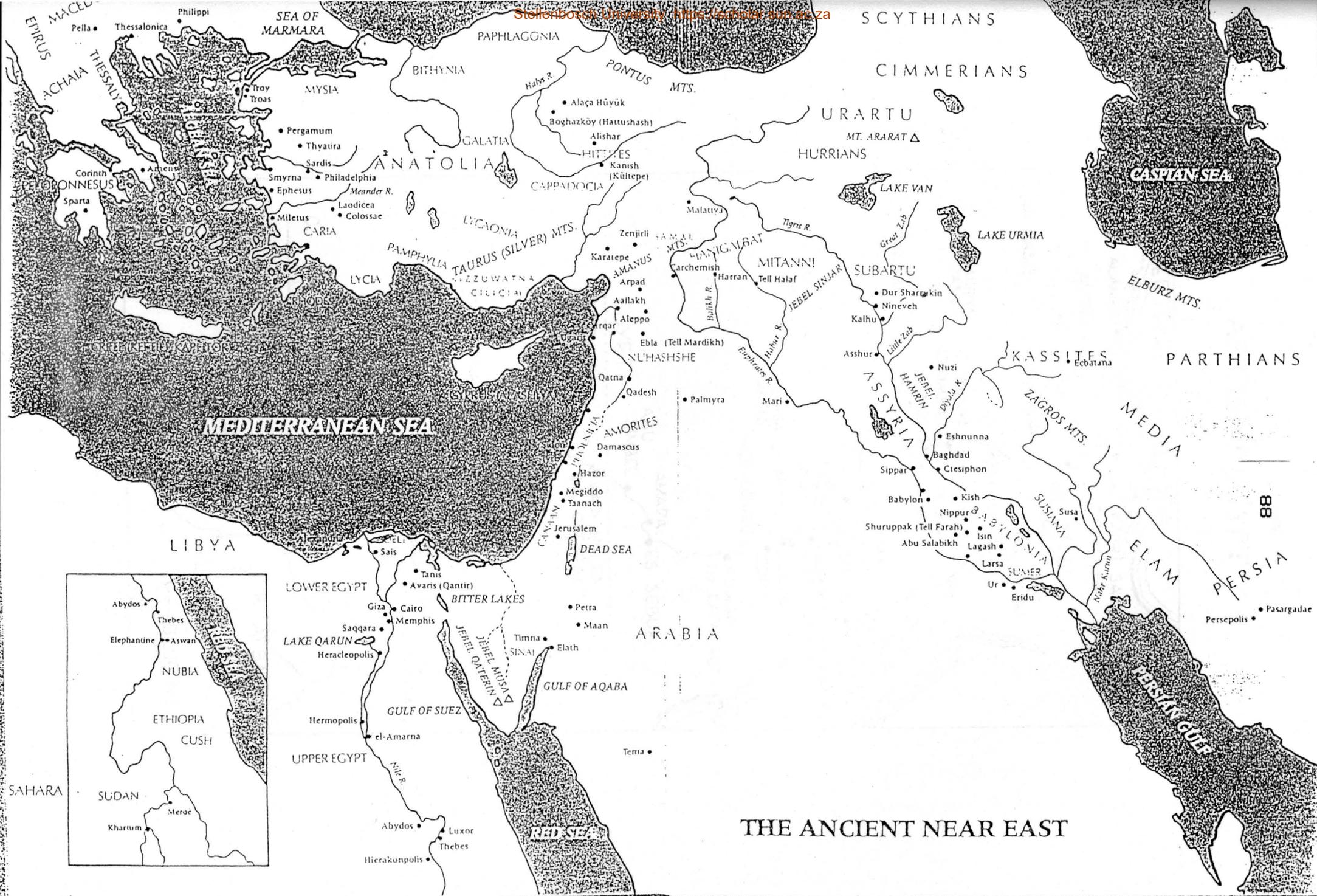
<sup>10</sup> The formula by which the origin of a name was explained. Sekhmet, "She Who Prevails," the goddess of violence, is here given as a form of Hat-Hor. Herakleopolis, "the Child of the King," seems to be in punning relation to the previous word, "king." "The mash of the night" is used in meaningless anticipation here, as it belongs to that part of the story which follows.

<sup>11</sup> *Didi* was a red coloring material, but it is not certain whether it was mineral or vegetable. Red ochre has been found in the region of Elephantine, and hematite in the eastern desert.

<sup>12</sup> An epithet of the High Priest of Re.

<sup>13</sup> The meaning of this phrase is not clear.

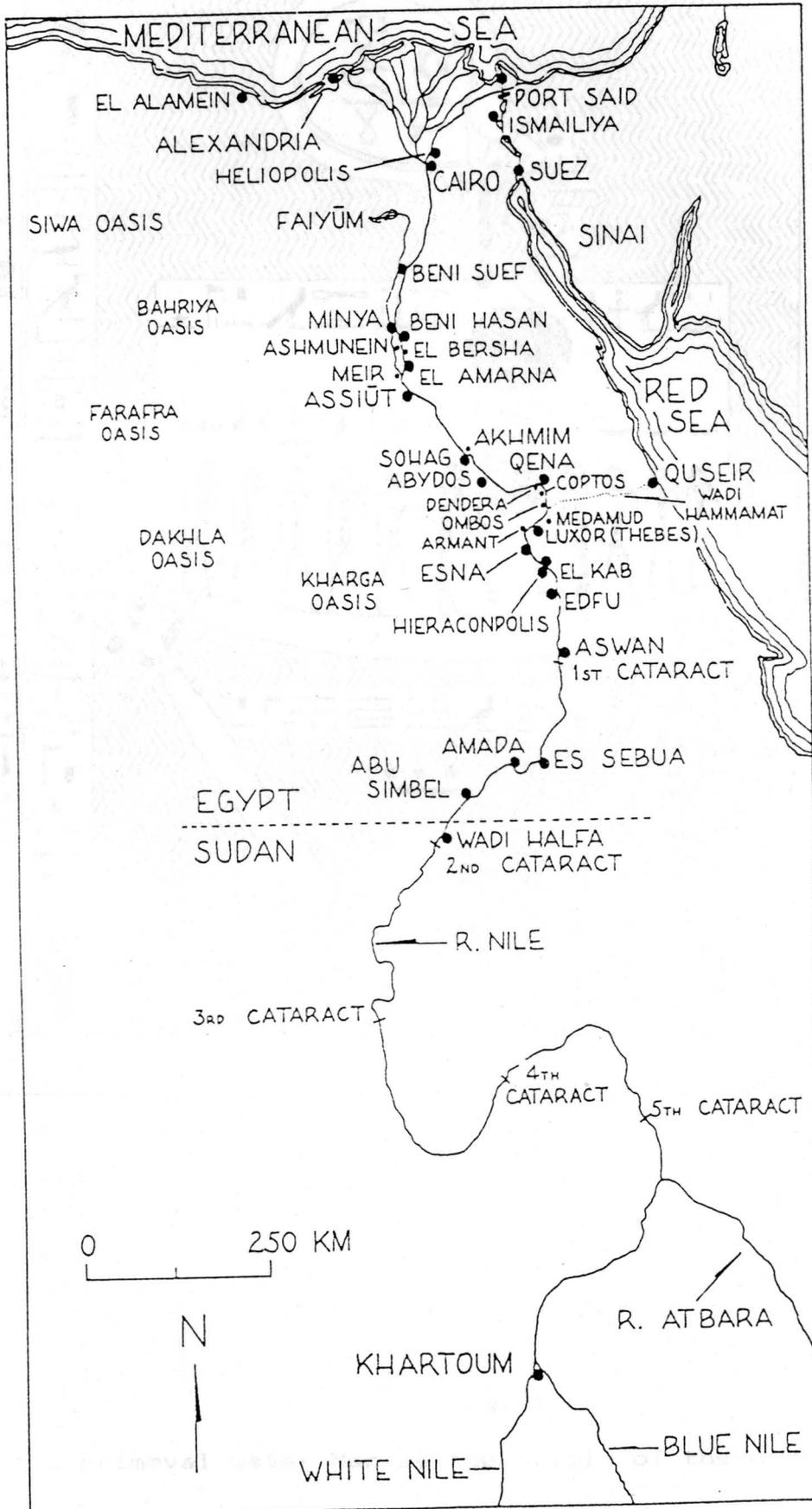
<sup>14</sup> The fields were covered with the blood-red beer, the "sleep-maker," to a height of about 9 inches.



Stellenbosch University - Pinar Jambouk Arikawa

# THE ANCIENT NEAR EAST

# ANCIENT EGYPT



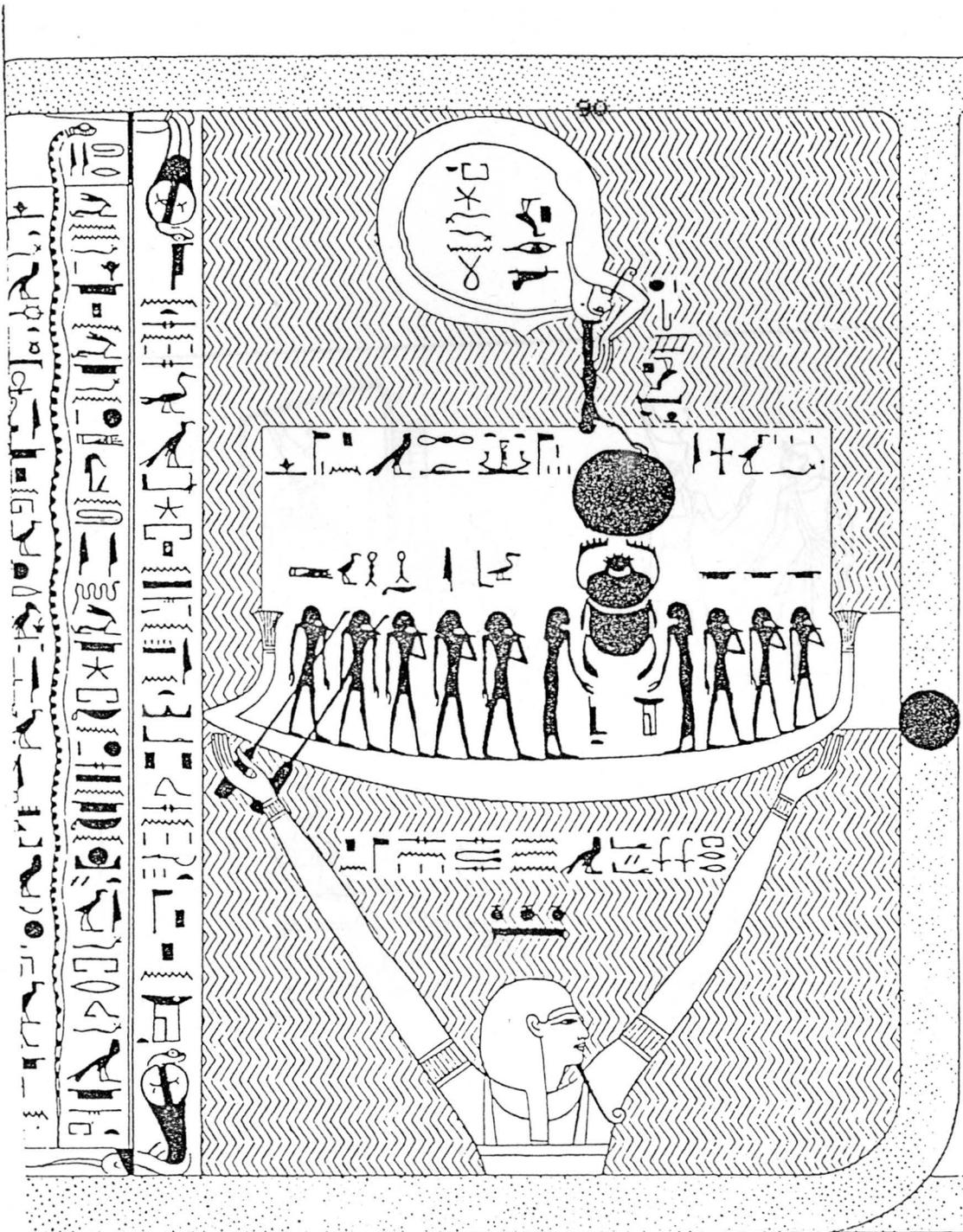


Fig. 1

The primeval water Nun as the origin of the gods of Egypt.

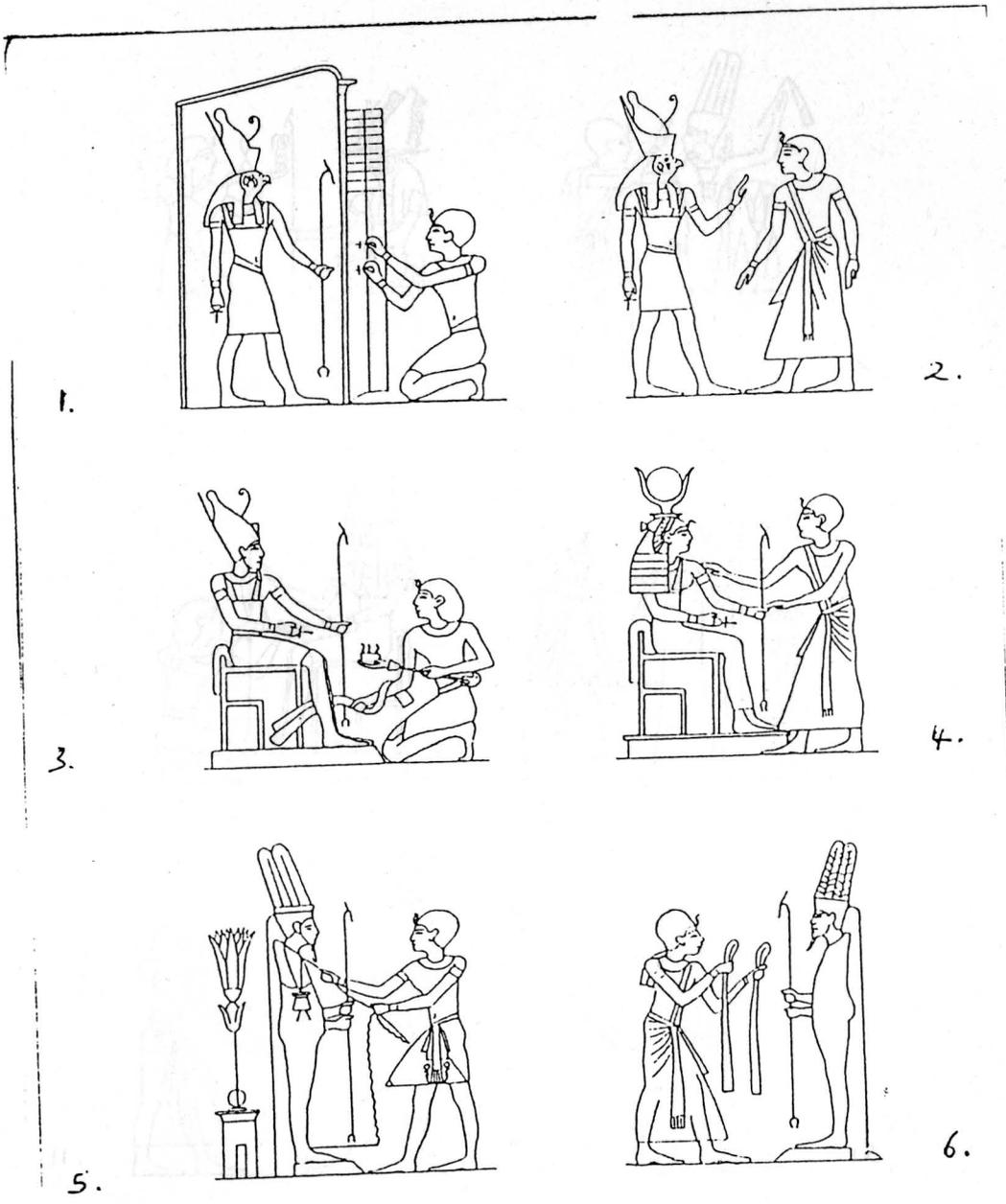


Fig. 1(a)

Daily ritual at Abydos

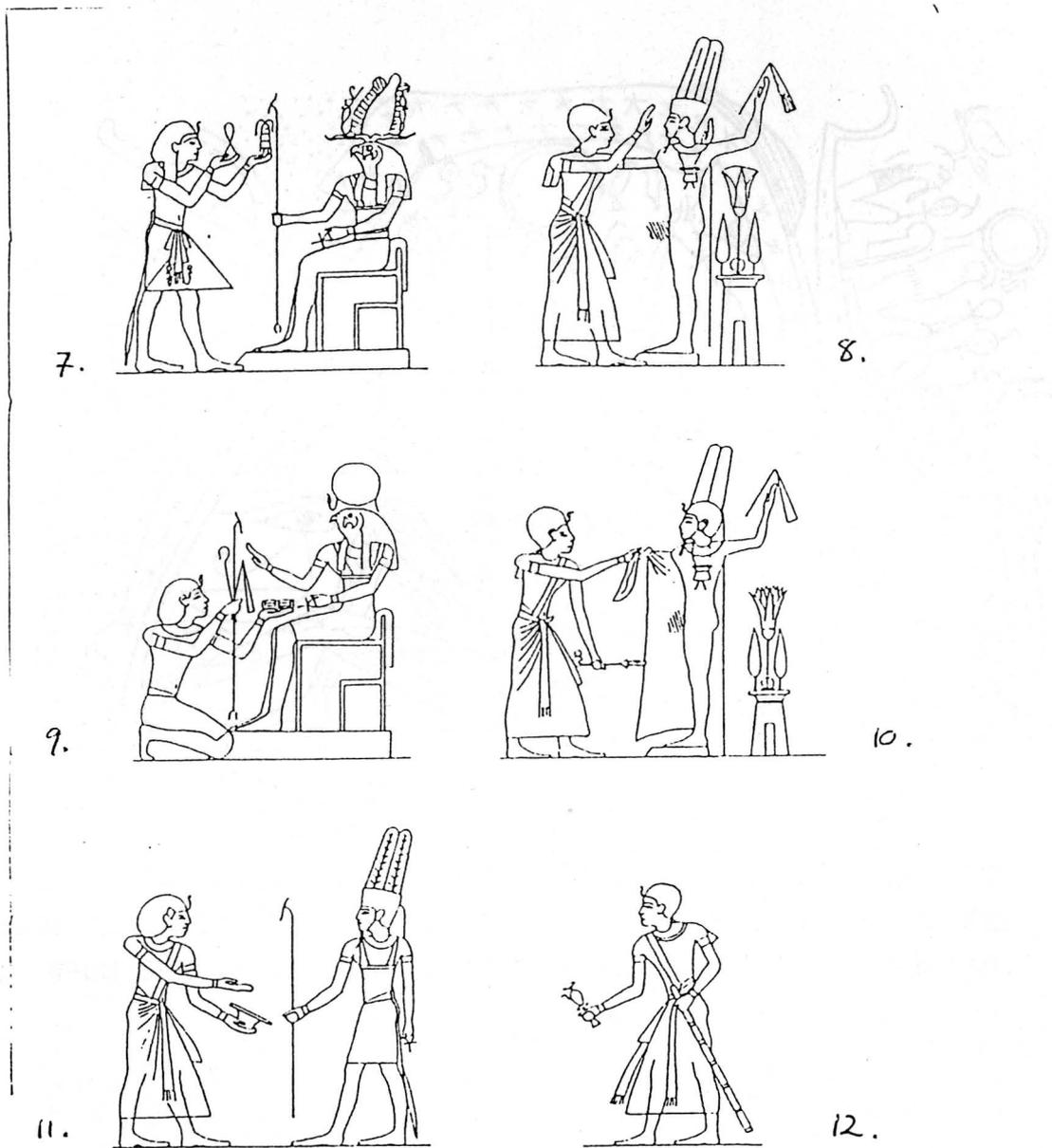


Fig. 1(a) cont.

Daily ritual at Abydos

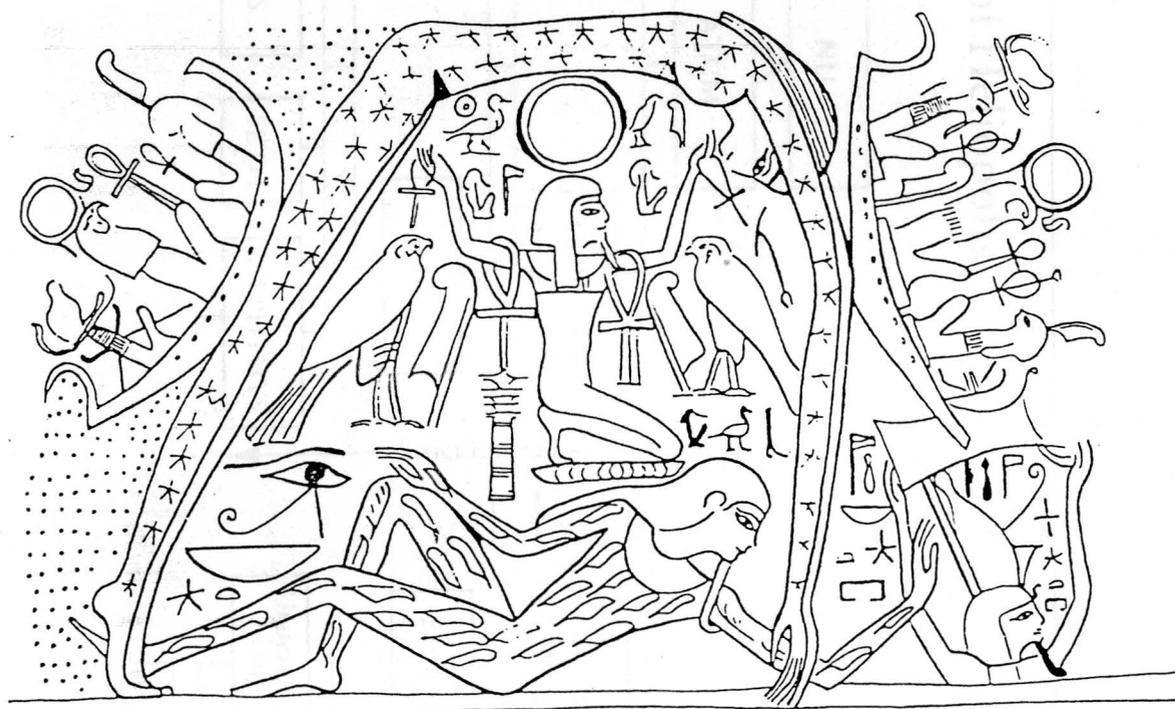
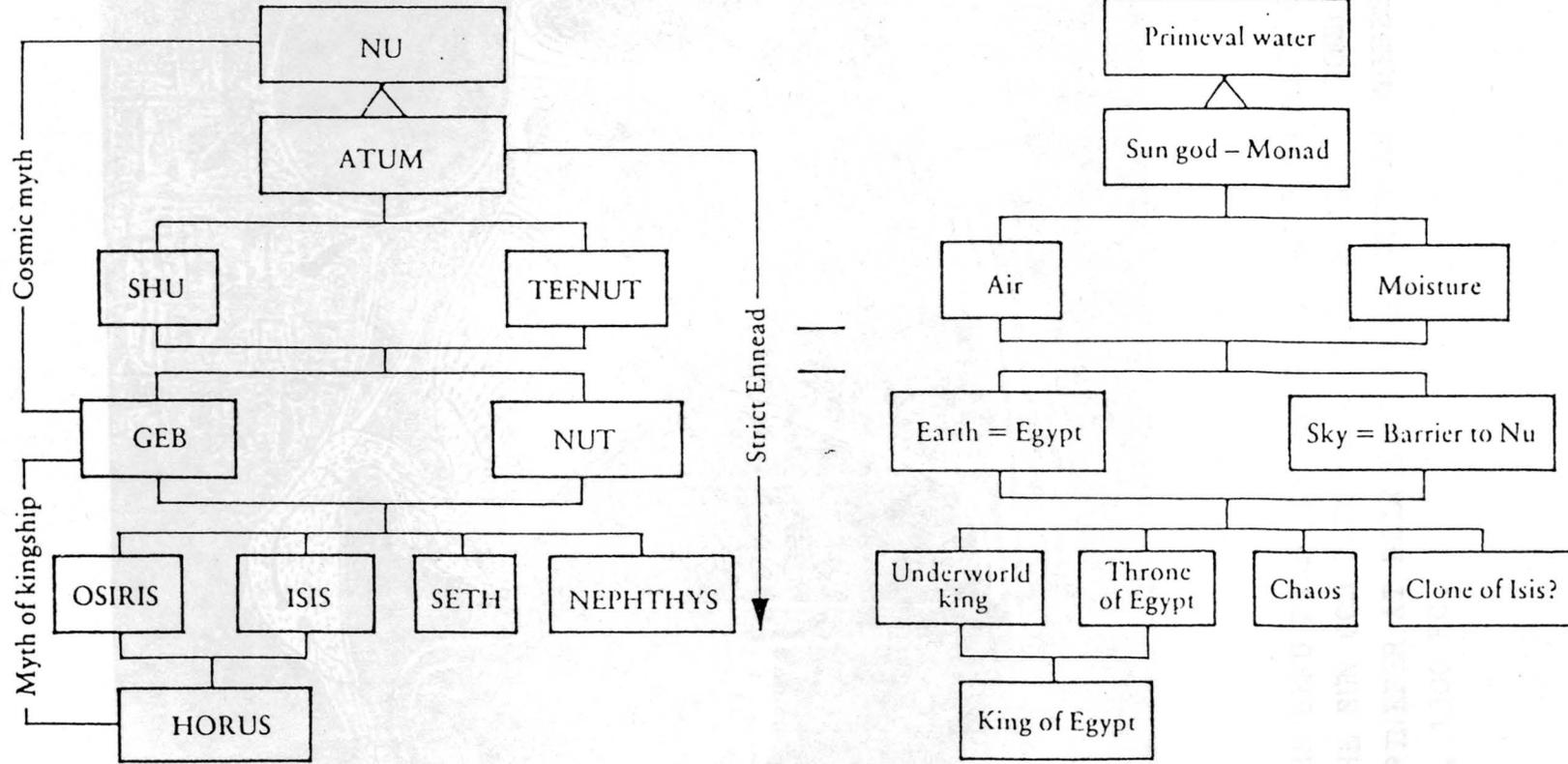


FIG. 2

THE HELIOPOLITAN VIEW OF THE COSMOS: THE SKY GODDESS NUT ARCHES HER BODY OVER HER SUPINE CONSORT THE EARTH GOD GEB FROM WHOM SHE IS SEPARATED BY THE AIR GOD SHU, c. 1300BC.

# The theogony of Heliopolis



THE THEOGONY OF HELIOPOLIS

FIG. 3

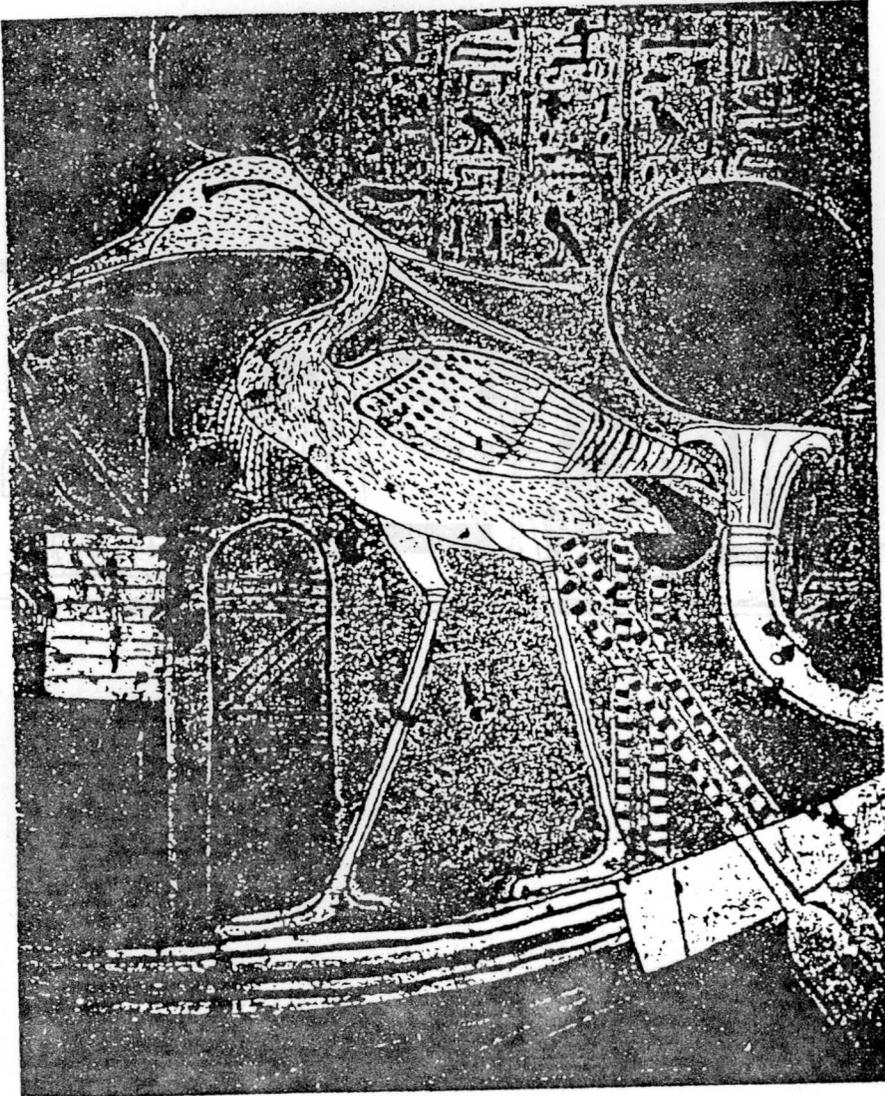


FIG. 4

THE BENU BIRD, OR PHOENIX, MANIFESTATION OF  
THE SUN GOD CREATOR OF HELIOPOLIS. TOMB OF  
ARINEFER AT DEIR EL-MEDINA, WESTERN THEBES,  
c. 1300 BC.

The Ibis-headed god, Anubis, the God of the Dead, was the  
deities of Heliopolis, the city of the living, was the  
judgement of the dead, and the god of the underworld,  
hearts and lungs, and the god of the underworld.

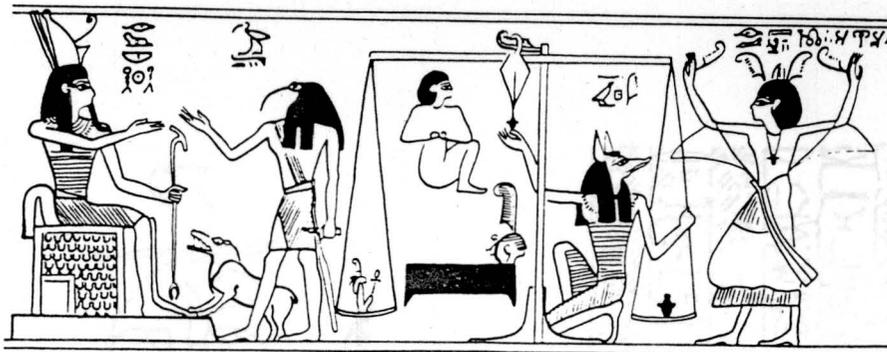


FIG. 5

The Ibis-Headed god Thoth, head of the Ogdoad of creator deities of Hermopolis, in his role of divine scribe at the judgement of the dead. Before him is the devourer of evil hearts and Osiris god of the underworld.

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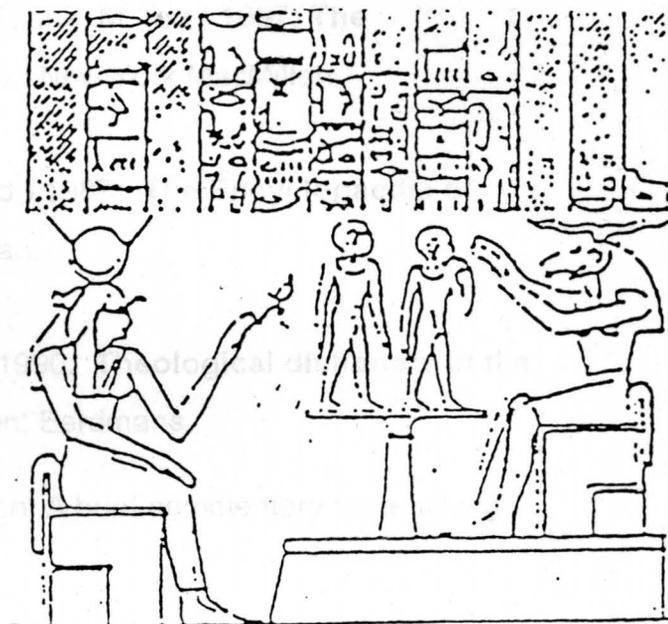
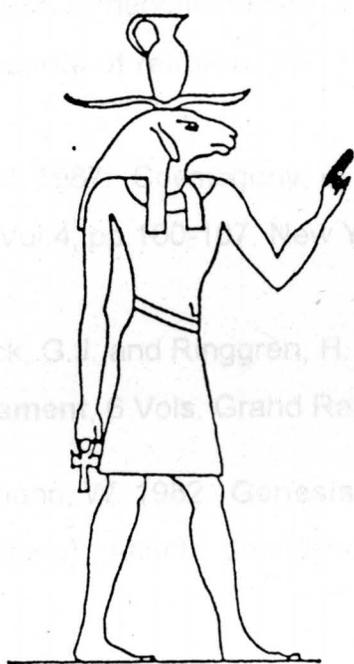


FIG. 6

Khnum, a ram headed creator god, on a potter's wheel.

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