

# OF GOD AND MAN

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# 1. ABOUT GOD

## 1.1 Introduction

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The people of **Kemet** (Middle Egyptian *kmt*; Coptic *kēme*), or ancient Egypt, have passed down many insightful teachings regarding God. The following excerpt comes from stanza 300 of the document called Leiden I350. This document is a hymn to *Amun*, written on a papyrus that is now in the Netherlands National Museum of Antiquities in Leiden.

ḥmtw pw nṯr nbw: imn, rꜥ, pth ○ nn snnw.sn ○

It is three (3) that all the divine entities are: *Amun*, *Re*, *Ptah*. Their second does not exist (that is, there is none to consider after them).

imn rn.f m imn ○ ntf rꜥ m ḥr ○ dt.f pth ○

His identity is hidden in *Amun*. He is *Re* in the face. His body is *Ptah*.

Here we learn that there is only one divine entity, which we will refer to as God. Moreover, God exists in three fundamental aspects: **Amun** (Middle Egyptian *imn*; Coptic *amoun*: ‘hidden’), **Re** (Middle Egyptian *rꜥ*; Coptic *rē*: ‘sun’), and **Ptah** (Middle Egyptian *pth*; Coptic *ptah*: ‘carver’).

## 1.2 Amun

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According to the Kemites (ancient Egyptians), pre-creation God is an undifferentiated formative substance having consciousness and will. This divine formative substance has four essential qualities: wateriness, infiniteness, darkness, and hiddenness.

In order to bring forth the diversity of beings in the universe, the divine formative substance must be like water – being capable of assuming any form conceivable, but being itself formless. The divine formative substance is infinite because it is unbounded by the limitations of space and time. Because the divine formative substance lacks differentiation, God’s consciousness has no forms to perceive. In other words, the divine formative substance is dark; it offers nothing for God’s consciousness to ‘see’. The divine formative substance is transcendent (that is, above and apart from the universe). In other words, it is hidden from the view of the created world.

Just as a male and female are necessary for making a child, the Kemites believed that masculine and feminine essences are necessary for creating the universe. In this regard, the Kemites personified each essential quality of the divine formative substance as a divine couple. From the noun *nwy* (which denotes a great quantity of water), we get *Nun* and *Nunet* as the couple representing wateriness. From the noun *ḥḥ* (Coptic *eneh*: ‘eternity’), we get *Heh* and *Hehut* as the couple representing infiniteness. From the noun *kkw* (Coptic *kake*: ‘darkness’), we get *Keku* and *Kekut* as the couple representing darkness. From the adjective *imn* (Coptic *amoun*: ‘hidden’), we get *Amun* and *Amunet* as the couple representing hiddenness.

According to Leiden I350, *Amun* is the identity (that is, essential nature) of God. In this regard, *Amun* represents the four essential qualities (wateriness, infiniteness, darkness, and hiddenness) of pre-creation God.

## 1.3 Re

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The following excerpts come from Incantation 17 of *Rw nw prt em hrw*, ‘Utterances of coming forth by day’ (which is a Kemite funerary text). Incantation 17 is a descendant of Incantation 335 of the Coffin Texts.

**ink itm m wnt ○ wꜥ.kw ○ hpr.n.i m nwn ○ ink rꜥ m hꜥ.f m šꜥꜥ hqꜥ pn n.f ○**

I am *Atum* on the move. I am alone (that is, one and only). I came into existence out of *Nun*. I am *Re* in his appearing radiantly in the beginning of this rulership of his.

**ink ntr ꜥ hpr ds.f ○ nwn pw qmꜥ rn.f pꜣwt ntrw m ntr ○**

I am the great divine entity who came into existence by himself. It is *Nun* who gave form to his identity ‘formative substance of divine entities’ as a divine entity.

**ink iwti hsf.f m ntrw ○**

I am one not having his opposition from divine entities.

The following excerpts come from a creation story written on the document BM EA 10188 (British Museum, Egyptian Antiquities, #10188). This document is also known as the Bremner-Rhind Papyrus.

**mdꜣt nt rh hprw nw rꜥ shr ꜥpp – ddw nb-r-dr ddw.f m ht hpr.f ○**

(Here is) the book of knowing the becomings of *Re* (and) overthrowing *Apop* – the words of *Neberdjer* that he spoke after he came into existence.

**ink pw hpr m hpri ○ hpr.n.i, hpr hprw ○ hpr hprw nb m ht hpr.i ○ ꜥꜣt hprw m prt m r.i ○**

It is I who came into existence as *Khepri*. (When) I came into existence, differentiated existence happened. Every differentiated form of existence came into existence after my coming into existence. A multitude of beings were emerging from my mouth.

Creation is the differentiation of a portion of the underlying divine formative substance (*Nun*) from its undifferentiated state into the diversity of forms making up the universe. When the inactive undifferentiated formative substance was acted on by the divine will, Creator God (*Atum*, *Khepri*, *Neberdjer*, *Re*) came into existence.

The Kemites did not view Creator God as being separate from what was created. Creator God is *Atum* (Middle Egyptian *itm*; Coptic *atoum*: ‘the all’), the totality of all differentiated forms of existence). Creator God is *Khepri* (Middle Egyptian *hpri*: ‘the becomer’), the one who becomes all differentiated forms of existence. Creator God is *Neberdjer* (Middle Egyptian *nb-r-dr*: ‘lord-to-the-utmost’), the owner of all differentiated forms of existence. Creator God is *Re* (Middle Egyptian *rꜥ*; Coptic *rē*: ‘sun’), the one who emanates all differentiated forms of existence. It is God’s consciousness/will that is the consciousness/will of all differentiated forms of existence. It

is God's underlying formative substance that is the substance of all differentiated forms of existence.

According to Leiden I350, *Re* is the face of God. In this regard, *Re* is Creator God, which is the topmost aspect of God being present in the universe.

## 1.4 Ptah

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The following excerpts are from the document BM EA 10188 (British Museum, Egyptian Antiquities, #10188). This document is a creation story written on the Bremner-Rhind Papyrus.

**md3t nt rh hprw nw r<sup>c</sup> shr 3pp – ddw nb-r-dr ddw.f m ht hpr.f ○**

(Here is) the book of knowing the becomings of *Re* (and) overthrowing *Apop* – the words of *Neberdjer* that he spoke after he came into existence.

**ink pw hpr m hpri ○ hpr.n.i, hpr hprw ○ hpr hprw nb m ht hpr.i ○ 33t hprw m prt m r.i ○**

It is I who came into existence as *Khepri*. (When) I came into existence, differentiated existence happened. Every differentiated form of existence came into existence after my coming into existence. A multitude of beings were emerging from my mouth.

**ni hpr pt ○ ni hpr t3 ○ ni qm3 z3tw ddfwt m bw pwi ○ tz.n.i im.sn m nwn m nnw ○**

The firmament had not come into existence. The earth had not come into existence. The ground and the snakes had not been given form in that place. I raised them out of *Nun* from a state of inactivity.

**ni gm.n.i bw 4h<sup>c</sup>.n.i im ○ 3h<sup>c</sup>.n.i m ib.i ○ snt.n.i m m3<sup>c</sup>t ○ ir.n.i irw nbt ○**

I could not find a place where I could stand therein. I spoke words of power from my heart. I laid a foundation by means of a lawful order. I made every nature.

**w<sup>c</sup>.kw ○ ni i33.n.i m 3w ○ ni tf.n.i m tfnt ○ ni hpr ky ir.n.f hn<sup>c</sup>.i ○**

I was alone (that is, one and only). I had not yet sneezed out as *Shu*. I had not yet spit out as *Tefnut*. There did not come into existence another one who could work together with me.

**hpr 33t hprw nw hprw – m hprw nw msw, m hprw nw msw.sn ○**

A multitude of beings came into existence out of those that came into existence – as those that came into existence as offspring, as those that came into existence as their offspring.

**i33.n.i m 3w ○ tf.n.i m tfnt ○ w3.sn r.i m ht hpr.i m ntr w<sup>c</sup> ntrw hmtnw ○ pw r.i hpr.n.i m t3 pn ○**

I sneezed out as *Shu*. I spit out as *Tefnut*. They went forth from me after my becoming from one divine entity, three divine entities. This is how I came into existence in this world.

Creator God established *maat* (Middle Egyptian *m3<sup>c</sup>t*; Coptic *m3e*: ‘truth; righteousness’), which is the lawful order that has been laid as the foundation of the universe. Operating within this divine order is the principle of duality, which is represented by the divine couple *Shu* (Middle Egyptian

šw; Coptic šōi: ‘sun-dried’) and *Tefnut* (Middle Egyptian *tfnt*; Coptic *tfēne*). The divine entity *Shu* (who is associated with dry air) personifies masculine energy, which is centrifugal, expansive, or externalizing. The divine entity *Tefnut* (who is associated with moist air) personifies feminine energy, which is centripetal, contractive, or internalizing.

According to Leiden I350, *Ptah* is the body of God. In this regard, *Ptah* (the patron of architects and craftsmen) is the body of divine ministerial agents who shape the universe according to *maat*.

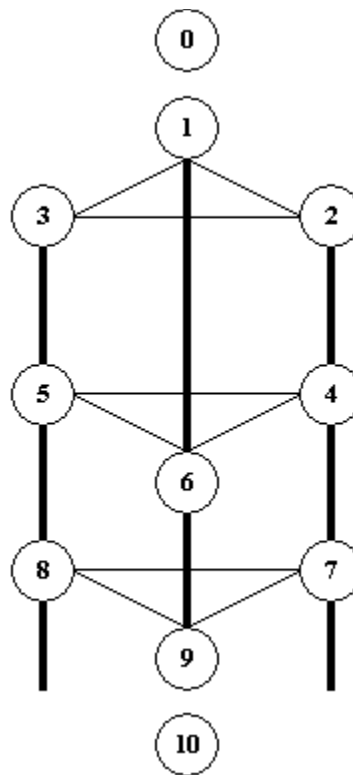
## 2. ABOUT MAN

### 2.1 The Tree of Life

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The Tree of Life is a hierarchical presentation of Man's key abilities. These abilities are represented by eleven **spheres** that are ranked from 0 to 10 as shown in FIGURE 2.

**FIGURE 2: The Tree of Life**



Spheres 0 and 10 both stand out from the others. Spheres 1 through 9 are arranged into three triangles. The top triangle points upward toward Sphere 0, implying that Triangle 1-2-3 is focused on Sphere 0. The bottom triangle points toward Sphere 10, implying that Triangle 7-8-9 is focused on Sphere 10. The middle triangle occupies a position close to the upper triangle, but points in the same direction as the lower triangle. The visual message here is that Triangle 4-5-6 has the role of mediating between the realms of Spheres 0 and 10.

Spheres 1 through 9 are arranged into three **pillars**. The right-hand pillar (consisting of Spheres 2, 4, and 7) corresponds to the right-brain. The left-hand pillar (consisting of Spheres 3, 5, and 8) corresponds to the left-brain. The right hemisphere of the brain is in charge of noticing the similarities between things, by which it relates them as parts of a whole. The left hemisphere of the brain is in charge of noticing the differences between things, by which it separates something

whole into parts. Moreover, the right-brain leads us to introversion, while the left-brain leads us to extroversion. The middle pillar, consisting of Spheres 1, 6, and 9, is the axis through which the other two pillars are united on different levels. More specifically, Sphere 1 unifies the functions of Spheres 2 and 3; Sphere 6 unifies the functions of Spheres 4 and 5; and Sphere 9 unifies the functions of Spheres 7 and 8.

In the *Miqrā* (Hebrew Bible), *Bərēšīt* (Genesis) 1:26 states:

**Wayyōmer 'Elōhīm, "Na'ašē 'adam bəšalmenū, kidmūtenū, wəyirdū bidəgat hayyam ūbə'ōp haššamayim ūbabbəhemā ūbəkāl ha'areš ūbəkāl haremeš haromeš 'al ha'areš."**

And *'Elohim* (Creator God and her/his ministerial agents) said, "Let us make humankind as an image (that is, visible representation) of us, as a resemblance (that is, similarity in nature) of us, and let them have dominion over fishes of the sea and over flying creatures of the sky and over beasts and over all the earth and over every creeping creature that creeps upon the earth."

With regard to Leiden I350, we may associate *Amun* with Sphere 0, *Re* with Spheres 1, 2, and 3, and *Ptah* with Spheres 4 through 10.

## 2.2 The divine faculties

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Sphere 0 and Triangle 1-2-3 constitute Man's divine faculties.

Sphere 0 represents Man's ability to be peaceful, even in the face of the greatest gain or the greatest loss. This ability is rooted in God's pre-creation state, in which consciousness is enveloped in an absolute stillness in which even the sense of space and time is absent. The attainment of unshakable inner peace is the foundation of true happiness.

Sphere 1 represents Man's ability to experience oneness with God and consequently with all creatures of the world. This ability is rooted in God's omnipresence. It is God's consciousness/will that is the consciousness/will of all beings. It is God's formative substance that is the substance of all beings.

Sphere 2 represents Man's ability to receive divine guidance from our own being. This ability is rooted in God's omniscience. Consciousness operating at Sphere 2 enables Man to know what is right or true so that he may judge soundly.

Sphere 3 represents Man's ability to affect entities and events as God sees fit. This ability is rooted in God's omnipotence. Consciousness operating at Sphere 3 enables Man to transcend the limitations of available physical resources and to get all that is lawful to have in life.

Triangle 1-2-3 constitute **Man's godself**, which is the part of Man's being that shares in the divine attributes of omnipresence, omniscience, and omnipotence.

## 2.3 The higher human faculties

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Triangle 4-5-6 constitutes Man's higher human faculties.

Sphere 4 represents Man's moral sense – our intuitive ability to distinguish right from wrong. It is through astrological Jupiter that we have the noble-mindedness that is necessary at Sphere 4 to be morally upright, to judge rightly, and to exhibit loving-kindness. The huge and gaseous planet Jupiter represents virtuous optimism (that is, the belief that virtuous action eventually brings the best outcome) and expansion (material and spiritual). Astrological Jupiter is the energy associated with being optimistic, adventurous, generous, and judicious.

Sphere 5 represents Man's sense of justice. Being just with all people in all situations requires us to have a warrior's courage and zeal for righteousness, even at the cost of personal loss. It is through astrological Mars that we have the fearlessness, energetic action, and all-consuming intensity of purpose that are necessary at Sphere 5 to be a warrior for righteousness. The blood-red planet Mars represents courage, enthusiasm, assertiveness, and pioneering. Astrological Mars is the energy associated with being courageous, ambitious, assertive, and risk-taking.

Sphere 6 represents Man's will – our ability to deliberately decide on a course of action, our freedom to choose between right and wrong. It is through astrological Sun that we have the vitality, self-assurance, and dignity that are necessary at Sphere 6 to use the personal will to rise above course and unsavory things. The radiant and solar-system ruling Sun represents vitality, self-esteem, volition, and leadership. Astrological Sun is the energy associated with being self-assured, strong-willed, decisive, and commanding.

## 2.4 The lower human faculties

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Triangle 7-8-9 and Sphere 10 constitute Man's lower human faculties.

Sphere 7 represents Man's visual mind – our imagination, which enables us to form mental images. When intensely entertained with aroused feelings of enjoyment, mental images gain the power to attract the necessary resources for their realization. It is through astrological Venus that we use our magnetism at Sphere 7 to attract what we want. The planet Venus (whose Latin name means 'love') represents affection, enjoyment, attractive power, and harmony. Astrological Venus is the energy associated with being imaginative, magnetic, pleasure-loving, and sociable.

Sphere 8 represents Man's verbal mind – our ability to think logically and to express ourselves through words. It is through astrological Mercury that we have the cleverness and verbal facility that are necessary at Sphere 8 to further our ideas. The swift-moving planet Mercury represents mobility of thought, word, and deed. Astrological Mercury is the energy associated with being quick-witted, communicative, detail-oriented, and versatile.

Sphere 9 represents Man's trance ability, which enables us to learn and to change. It is through astrological Moon that we have the impressionability and devotion that are necessary at Sphere 9 to attain a trance state of heightened receptivity in which beliefs, images, and words become empowered to create or undo habits. The faithfully reflecting and phase-changing Moon represents receptivity, adaptability, and devotion. Astrological Moon is the energy associated with being impressionable, compliant, devoted, and nurturing.

Sphere 10 represents Man's ability to patiently persevere (that is, to calmly remain constant to a purpose in spite of obstacles). It is through astrological Saturn that we develop the discipline that is necessary at Sphere 10 to think clearly and respond properly to the cycles that govern life in the physical world. The ringed and slow-moving planet Saturn represents restriction, structure, and slow change. Astrological Saturn is the energy associated with being disciplined, cautious, patient, and persevering.

Sphere 10 also represents Man's physical body, which is the vehicle that enables one to communicate with and act in the physical world. The physical body makes possible the illusion that each of us is a separate existence.

## 3. THE OSIRIAN LEGEND

### 3.1 Summary

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The legend of **Osiris** (Middle Egyptian *wsir*; Coptic, *ousire*) is the premier story of the people of Kemet. The story begins with Osiris as the king of Kemet who brings peace and prosperity to the kingdom. The king's brother **Seth** (Middle Egyptian *sth*; Coptic *sēt*) covets the throne of Osiris and plots to usurp the kingdom. Driven by the lust for power, Seth slays Osiris and dismembers his body. Seth then establishes himself as the king. As soon as **Isis** (Middle Egyptian *ꜣst*; Coptic *ēse*), the wife of Osiris, learns of her husband's fate, she is stricken with great sorrow. She weeps bitterly and cannot be consoled. In her grief, she vows to never rest until she finds the body of her beloved king and husband. Isis searches untiringly for Osiris. She travels about the land sorrowing and never rests until she eventually finds him.

Through the use of words of power, Isis not only reassembles Osiris and brings him back to life, but also conceives a son by him. After the conception, Osiris withdraws to rule the underworld. On hearing about the coming birth of an heir to Osiris who could challenge his reign, Seth sends his agents out to find and kill the child. After receiving warning from **Thoth** (Middle Egyptian *ḏḥwti*; Coptic *t'hoout*), the divine entity who is associated with wisdom, Isis flees to the remote Nile Delta marshes, where she gives birth to the infant **Horus** (Middle Egyptian *ḥr*; Coptic *hōr*). The great mother Isis protects her infant child, warding off or curing the bites of scorpions and serpents until, as an adolescent, Horus can stand against Seth to claim his rightful inheritance, the throne of Kemet.

The adolescent Horus contends with Seth for the kingship. The two combatants duel on land and water, and each one eventually inflicts principal damage on the other. Seth gouges out the eye of Horus, which would have cost Horus the war had not Thoth healed it. With his sight regained, Horus manages to castrate Seth. This act is the decisive point in the war, for now the contention is taken to the tribunal of divinities, who settle it like a legal decision over inheritance.

There are two stages in settling the contention. In the first settlement, Horus and Seth are each given one half of the earthly dominion of Osiris. This arrangement is then considered unworkable, and Horus is then given the undivided kingship as heir of Osiris. The tribunal of divinities sentences Seth to become the defender of the solar divinity *Re*, fighting off the forces of annihilation that threaten to engulf *Re* during his journey through the sky. Peace and prosperity return to Kemet under the reign of Horus.

### 3.2 The inferior person

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It is useful to view the characters of the Osirian legend as symbols of shaping forces that operate in Man's being. In the Osirian legend, Seth symbolizes the **inferior person** – one who

indiscriminately follows their emotions and sensual appetites. In terms of the Tree of Life, we may associate the inferior person with consciousness operating mostly at the lower human faculties (Triangle 7-8-9 and Sphere 10).

Sphere 9 represents Man's trance ability, which enables us to learn and to change. In its simplest mode, trance is indiscriminate imitation, which governs the earliest part of life when most learning takes place and is crucial. Trouble appears at Sphere 9 whenever we fail to transcend this simple mode of trance. In that case, we blindly imitate cultural customs (ways of eating, dressing, socializing, dealing with conflicts, etc.) to our detriment. Moreover, we indiscriminately follow our feelings.

Sphere 8 represents Man's verbal mind – our ability to think logically and to express ourselves through words. This faculty focuses on the external, concrete aspect of reality and breaks the world into separate symbols, to which it assigns names and definitions. Moreover, it is the engine of logic that shapes our beliefs, our conceptions of reality. Trouble appears at Sphere 8 whenever we ignore the suggestive power of beliefs. When entertained in a state of trance (daydreams, mental absorption, or strong emotional states), beliefs gain the power to define our behavior and to affect our physiological functions for good or for bad.

Sphere 7 represents Man's visual mind – our imagination, which enables us to form mental images. This faculty focuses on the external, concrete aspect of reality and coordinates different entities into harmonious expressions. It is responsible for art, music, scientific invention, and social harmony. Trouble appears at Sphere 7 whenever we ignore the power of visualization. When entertained in a state of trance (daydreams, mental absorption, or strong emotional states), images gain the power to define our behavior and to affect our physiological functions for good or for bad.

In summary, the inferior person is in a state of mind in which they are dominated by emotions and sensual appetites (Sphere 10), which they indiscriminately follow and erroneously identify as who they really are (Sphere 9). In this state of mind, they use their mental faculties of logic (Sphere 8) and visualization (Sphere 7) to indulge their emotions and sensual appetites. Because their mental perception here is limited to the external, concrete aspect of things and events, the inferior person acts in the darkness of ignorance, unaware of the harm that they do to themselves and to others.

In order to grow beyond the level of the inferior person, we must sorrow like Isis over Osiris being 'dead' in our lives. In the Osirian legend, Isis symbolizes motherly devotion to God. In terms of the Tree of Life, we may associate Isis with Sphere 9. Instead of indiscriminately following our emotions and sensual appetites, we must be devoted to resurrecting the dormant divinity within ourselves. Ra Un Nefer Amen informs us that devotion to God is the experiencing of remorse for indulging in thoughts, feelings, and actions that are determined by the lower part of being. In this state of mind, we can use the suggestive power of beliefs (Sphere 8) and the power of visualization (Sphere 7) to change our behavior to reflect the values of our divine nature.

### 3.3 The superior person

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The devotion of Isis to resurrecting Osiris eventually leads to the birth of Horus, who symbolizes the **superior person** – a person of conscience. Figuratively speaking, Horus is the ‘son of God’. Just as a son is generally expected to follow the way of life that is set for him by his father, then so is the ‘son of God’ expected to follow the way of life that is set for him by God. In terms of the Tree of Life, we may associate the superior person with consciousness operating mostly at the higher human faculties (Triangle 4-5-6).

Sphere 6 represents Man’s will – our ability to deliberately decide on a course of action, our freedom to choose between right and wrong. Our devotion to God gives birth to the true purpose of Man’s will, which is to maintain constant vigilance and censorship over our thoughts, feelings, and actions so that they may be in accord with what is right (that is, morally obligatory) and good (that is, beneficial).

Sphere 5 represents Man’s sense of justice. Through this faculty, we discover that there is a lower part of our being that is subject to conditionings and limitations and a higher part of our being that is able to transcend them. Moreover, we discover that the administration of justice requires us to sever our self-identity from the lower being of personality and to place it firmly in our higher being of indwelling divinity. This detachment from personality enables us to be just with all people in all situations, even at the cost of personal loss.

Sphere 4 represents Man’s moral sense – our intuitive ability to distinguish right from wrong. Through this faculty, we express loving-kindness out of a sense of the oneness that unites us all. Moreover, we discover that all things and events are integrated into a web of natural interrelationship and interdependence.

In summary, by loving God with all our affection, enthusiasm, and might (Sphere 9), we develop the will (Sphere 6) to rise above the influence of our emotions and sensual appetites. By endeavoring to love one’s neighbors as oneself, we develop the muscle to act toward one another with a balance of justice (Sphere 5) and loving-kindness (Sphere 4).

### 3.4 The spiritual master

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On hearing about the coming birth of Horus, the evil Seth sends his agents out to find and kill the boy-king. This part of the legend describes the antagonistic reaction of our inferior habits toward our efforts to alter our behavior in order to reflect the values of our divine nature. There is a dichotomy here between what we feel and what we understand.

The adolescent Horus engages Seth in battle but cannot achieve more than a stalemate. His inability to achieve victory is caused by the fact that Horus needs the help of Thoth in order to defeat Seth. That is, we must be guided by divine wisdom in order to prevail against our inferior habits. We must go from being a superior person to being a spiritual master.

A **spiritual master** is someone who is living in the world as Osiris. In terms of the Tree of Life, we may associate Osiris with Man's godself (Triangle 1-2-3). One of the titles of Osiris is *Wennefer* (Middle Egyptian *wnn-nfrw*; Coptic *ouenofre*: 'being of goodness; being of perfection'). The Kemite pictorial portrayal of Osiris as a mummy symbolizes his incorruptibility against forces of decay. The Osirian legend begins by describing the peaceful prosperity that is possible when our intrinsic divinity governs our daily lives.

As the king of the underworld, Osiris takes up residence in our subconscious – the part of our being that operates beneath our conscious awareness but affects our behavior nonetheless. As long as we have not suitably elevated our level of consciousness, Osiris remains in the background of our lives. Horus inheriting the earthly dominion of Osiris symbolizes the extension of our intrinsic divinity to the waking state so that we may properly manage our daily affairs. Our life purpose is to bring our intrinsic divinity to the foreground so that it may expertly guide our lives.

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