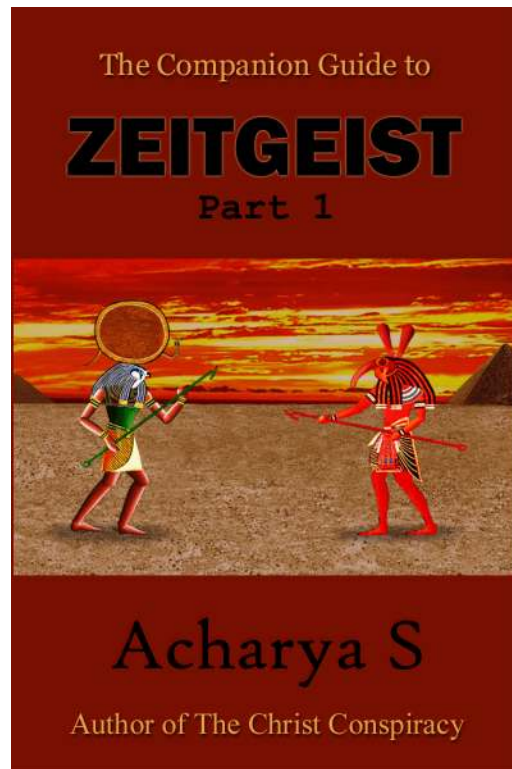


The Companion Guide to

ZEITGEIST

Part 1



Acharya S

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Introduction

"For what is now called the Christian religion existed of old and was never absent from the beginning of the human race until Christ came in the flesh. Then true religion which already existed began to be called Christian."

Saint Augustine, *Retractiones* (I, xiii)

"The Religion proclaimed by him to All Nations was neither New nor Strange."

Bishop Eusebius, *The History of the Church* (II, iv)

"There can be no doubt that the oldest Egyptian writings contain some vestiges of primeval faith. Egyptians in very remote areas believed in the immortality of man, with reward or punishment in the future state. They believed in the existence of good and evil powers in this life, and were not without a sense of personal responsibility..."

Rev. Dr. W.H. Rule, *The Horus Myth and Its Relation to Christianity* (66)

Chockfull of controversial, nerve-jarring themes, in 2007 the hit viral movie phenomenon "ZEITGEIST" was zinging around the internet at break-neck speed, receiving upwards of a million views per month. Needless to say, these various controversial themes, focusing on religious, political and financial conspiracies aimed at the common people, have become the subject of a great deal of debate. In fact, Part 1, which deals with religious conspiracy, indicting Christianity in particular of being a remake of ancient pre-Christian religions and myths, has caused a tremendous amount of furor in many forums. Naturally, as one of the sources of the material in Part 1, my work too has received interest by those intrigued by the suggestion that important motifs found in our "modern" religions have been around a very long time and have been incorporated into these religions, rather than the latter constituting unique, "divine revelation." Over the centuries, in fact, it has been the contention of numerous scholars and researchers of comparative religion and mythology that one of the major influences on the Christian religion was that of ancient Egypt, as highlighted in ZEITGEIST. Because of this fact of ZEITGEIST emphasizing the Egyptian religion, in this *Companion Guide* ebook, I will deal almost exclusively with some of the evident parallels between the Egyptian and Christian myths and rituals. A fuller treatment of the other aspects of ZEITGEIST, Part 1, may be found in a forthcoming longer work on the subject. In the meantime, interested parties should consult my books *The Christ Conspiracy: The Greatest Story Ever Sold* and *Suns of God: Krishna, Buddha and Christ Unveiled*.

Although we today may find the ancient Egyptian religion bizarre and amusing, with all its peculiarities, including gods and goddesses in the forms of all sorts of animals, the truth is that the Egyptians themselves took their faith very seriously, so much so that, as with religions of today, murder in its name was not unknown. One need only look to the story of notorious pharaoh Amenhotep, aka Akhenaten, for an example of how sincerely the Egyptians and their priesthoods upheld their religion. Indeed, the Egyptians—and especially their priests—were as devout in their own religion as are the most pious among us today. And this faith was not isolated or fleeting: The Egyptian religion was exceedingly widespread and possessed an antiquity unparalleled in the known world at the time. As the Greek

historian Herodotus wrote over 2,500 years ago, the Egyptians were "religious to excess, beyond any other nation in the world."¹

Over its vast life of several millennia, many millions of people engaged in the Egyptian religion, with its major themes and motifs well known and highly respected. Hence, any competing faith would be hard-pressed to overturn this deep and abiding reverence for the Egyptian religion and its gods, and would need to incorporate as much of the Egyptian mythos and ritual into itself as was possible. The fact is that such devoutly religious people do not easily and readily abandon their religion and god(s)—do fervent Christians, for instance, give up their god without a fight?

Also, much of the disparagement of the Egyptian gods and religion emanates from the Christian Church fathers of the second century and onwards, such as the particularly snide Clement of Alexandria, in a transparent play to usurp them with their own faith, which was, in reality, no less ridiculous.² This behavior is certainly unbecoming and unwarranted, in light of what we know about the Egyptian religion, which, because of these prejudicial efforts, was almost lost to us forever. Fortunately, a number of individuals over the centuries were able to overcome these prejudices to see for themselves what the Egyptian religion truly represented—and they did so often at great risk, as there was a concerted effort by the Church to censor this information from coming out. This type of abuse continues to this day, with those who dare to suggest that Christianity is not original but largely constitutes a reworking of old faiths subjected to all sorts of derision and ridicule, as well as irrational and impossible demands for evidence of an obvious fact, when, in upholding their own religious beliefs, these same detractors require little or no evidence at all.

Despite the disparagement and dismissal, the reality remains that the many Egyptian myths and rituals, including numerous gods and goddesses, prayers and hymns, were not obscure and ignored but were known to millions of people over a long period of time, with the result that these concepts were highly revered and on the forefront of worshippers' minds. *These hallowed Egyptian motifs included the sacredness of the cross, the virgin mother who gave birth to the divine son, a godman who taught on Earth and who was murdered, buried and resurrected, etc.* Again, these concepts were widely known and in the minds of millions by the time the Christian mythos and ritual appeared in the same areas of the Mediterranean. Therefore, noting the obvious parallels between the Egyptian religion and Christianity, it would seem not only disingenuous but also *dishonest* to suggest that Christianity represents a "unique, divine revelation" to a small group of people in the tiny area of Palestine/Judea. Instead of thus denying the clear connection between the two religions as brought up in ZEITGEIST, we will explore it here, using as many relevant and quality sources as is possible.

Egyptian Language Translations

The most important and obvious place we may turn in our quest for data regarding the Egyptian religion is to the ancient Egyptian texts, monuments and other artifacts, including, of course, the fabled hieroglyphics, the ancient script used to describe, among other things, the many sacred concepts. In discussing the translations of these hieroglyphics, it should be kept in mind that, while some antiquated "religious" language is frequently used, there is in general not as much room for interpretation as some might aver, and the common renderings by older scholars such as Sir E.A. Wallis Budge (1857-1934), a professed Christian and the Keeper of the Egyptian and Assyrian Antiquities at the British Museum, and Catholic scholar Sir Peter Le Page Renouf (1822-1897), the previous Keeper at the

¹ Herodotus, 2:37; de Selincourt, 99.

² For more on the problems with Christianity, see my book *Who Was Jesus? Fingerprints of The Christ*.

British Museum, tend to be surprisingly faithful and accurate.¹ We know this assertion concerning interpretation to be true in part because these scholars were using the keys provided by the Rosetta Stone, which included not only the Egyptian hieroglyphic and demotic scripts but also the Greek, the main language along with Coptic that allowed for the Egyptian to be translated at last. The Greek language is word-based, very specific and readily translated into English generally with little interpretation necessary. Hence, we can be relatively certain that the English renderings of the Greek translations of the Egyptian hieroglyphics are reasonably specific and likewise generally require little interpretation, although at times some is necessary. Moreover, the painstaking work of the French translator of the Rosetta Stone, Jean-François Champollion, and others to establish an accurate understanding of the Egyptian religion has been successful enough for us to reconstruct a reliable picture of what the Egyptians believed about this world and the next. Regarding the ability of modern scholars to read the Egyptian hieroglyphics, professor of Egyptology at Brown University Dr. James P. Allen concludes:

Since Champollion's time, Egyptologists have continually refined our knowledge of ancient Egyptian writing, words, and grammar. Except for the most obscure words, hieroglyphic texts can be read today almost as easily as those of any other known language.²

Thus, we can be reasonably assured when reading the various translations that we are faced with the essential intention of the writers of the original texts.

God, Man or Myth?

A major source of confusion within the field of religion has occurred because there has existed a tendency over the centuries to make gods into men and men into gods. It is therefore imperative that we develop our skills for discernment as to what is historical and what is mythical. In the case of the Egyptian gods, most if not all of the major deities have been mythical, not historical, despite the stories that place them into history and claim they were "real people" at some point. Let us take for example the Egyptian god Osiris, upon whose "life" so much of the gospel tale appears to have been based. Was Osiris ever a "real person?" Even in ancient times the story of Osiris included his advent on what seems to be Earth, and, as related by historians Herodotus and Diodorus Siculus centuries prior to the common era, *many* people have believed Osiris was a real person, as they have with numerous other gods and goddesses worldwide for thousands of years. Nevertheless, Osiris is in large part a sun god and, although there may have been real people by the same

¹ I am aware of the debate concerning Dr. Budge's work, a controversy that some have suggested represents a form of rivalry not uncommon in the academic world or in the world at large. I personally have found nothing egregious about his discussion of the Egyptian religion in English, although I cannot vouch for everything in his hieroglyphic dictionaries, for instance, which are considered "outdated" in their system of transliteration but which nevertheless appear to be sound overall. (Allen, J., *TAEPT*, 13) Nor can Budge be criticized for venturing what turned out to be certain flawed dates of pharaohs and texts; in consideration of the more limited knowledge of those particular subjects at the time, in general Budge did extremely well in his estimations. The fact remains that Budge was extremely talented linguistically, as well as extraordinarily well educated and experienced as to Egyptian antiquities, culture, religion and language. He also knew his own Christian faith very well, as evidenced by his remarks thereupon. In this present work, I have used the translations of not only Budge but also others, such as Renouf, Mercer, Faulkner, Parker and Allen. I also provide Budge's assessment of Egyptian religion, including some linguistic interpretation, but no subject that would become "obsolete" within the past decades since his passing. Moreover, in comparing the older and newer editions of Egyptian texts, I am not at all convinced that the latter are superior purely in terms of translation. *Perhaps Budge is unpalatable to some because he states that an investigation of the Egyptian religion's influences upon Christianity would fill "a comparatively large volume!"* (TGE, I, xvi)

² Allen, J., *ME*, 9.

name, the figure in the myths was never a human being who lived on Earth. The tales that assert Osiris to have traveled here and there saving and civilizing humanity in fact refer to the spread of his *cult* or religion.¹ The same phenomenon may be claimed as concerns the tales of other gods and goddesses having supposedly walked the Earth, extending to the story of Jesus Christ.

The tendency to make the gods into real people dates back into ancient times and was developed most notoriously by the Greek writer Euhemerus or Evemerus, who made the argument that the gods and goddesses of the day had been real people of old, such as kings, queens and other heroes and legendary figures. While such a development may have happened as concerns a relative handful of individuals, the fact will remain that the majority of popular deities have constituted *mythical* entities who never were real people but who often largely represented natural, astronomical phenomena.

In his long treatise in volume V of the *Moralia* entitled "Isis and Osiris," Greek writer Plutarch (46-120 AD/CE) positively fumed while discussing the theories of Euhemerus/Evemerus, called "euhemerism" or "evemerism." In his criticisms, Plutarch harshly remarked:

I hesitate, lest this be the moving of things immovable and not only "warring against the long years of time," as Simonides has it, but warring, too, against "many a nation and race of men" who are possessed by a feeling of piety towards these gods, and thus we should not stop short of transplanting such names from the heavens to the earth, and eliminating and dissipating the reverence and faith implanted in nearly all mankind at birth, opening wide the great doors to the godless throng, degrading things divine to the human level, and giving a splendid licence to *the deceitful utterances of Euhemerus of Messenê, who of himself drew up copies of an incredible and non-existent mythology, and spread atheism over the whole inhabited earth by obliterating the gods of our belief and converting them all alike into names of generals, admirals, and kings, who, forsooth, lived in very ancient times and are recorded in inscriptions written in golden letters at Panchon, which no foreigner and no Greek had ever happened to meet with, save only Euhemerus...*²

As we can see, Plutarch accused Euhemerus of spreading "atheism over the whole inhabited earth." Plutarch's sentiment is well founded that reducing to human exploits the glorious cosmic dramas of the Egyptian gods and others constitutes a degradation of "things divine to the human level." In this regard, no such tendencies will appear in this present work, as we are convinced that these deities represent mythical and fabulous entities, and that, if there were any human beings named Osiris, Isis and Horus, it is not *their* story being told within Egyptian religion. The same contention may be made of individuals who happened to have been named "Yeshua," "Joshua" or "Jesus" during the first century of the common era—they may indeed have been real people and historical individuals, but it is not *their* story being told in the gospels. In fact, the most scientific and valid evidence points to an origin for Jesus Christ as mythical and fabulous as that of the Egyptian, Greek and Roman gods of the same general era and area. In this short companion guide to Part 1 of the movie ZEITGEIST, we will not be exploring the various arguments against the historicity of Jesus Christ in depth. For those who are interested, much more on that particular subject can be found in my books *The Christ Conspiracy*, *Suns of God* and *Who Was Jesus?*

¹ The term "cult" is often used in a derogatory manner. Here it is meant in its first, anthropological meaning of "a particular system of religious worship, esp. with reference to its rites and ceremonies."

² Plutarch, ch. 23; Babbitt, 56-57. (Emph. added.)

Who Is Gerald Massey?

In exploring the various Egyptian influences upon the Christian religion, one name frequently encountered is that of self-taught lay Egyptologist Gerald Massey (1828-1907), whose works were utilized in ZEITGEIST as well. Massey was fortunate enough to live during an exciting time when Egyptology was in its heyday, with the discovery in 1799 of the Rosetta Stone and the subsequent decipherment of hieroglyphics in 1822 by Champollion. This monumental development allowed for the exposure to light of the fascinating Egyptian culture and religion, meaning that before that time no one could adequately read the Egyptian texts, which Massey ended up spending a considerable portion of his life studying and interpreting, and relatively little was known about the religion, for which Massey possessed a keen sense of comprehension.

In his detailed and careful analysis of the Egyptian religion, Gerald Massey utilized the work of the best minds of the time, including that of Champollion, as well as that of Dr. Budge; Sir Renouf; famed Egyptologist Sir William Flinders Petrie; noted Egyptologist Sir John Gardner Wilkinson, the "Father of British Egyptology"; Egyptologist and professor at the University of Berlin, Dr. Heinrich Brugsch; French Egyptologist and curator of the Egyptian section at the Louvre, le vicomte de Rougé; and expert on Egyptian mummies, Dr. Thomas Joseph Pettigrew, among many other scholars in a wide variety of fields. For example, Massey also utilized the work of Sir J. Norman Lockyer, the famous royal English astronomer who was friends with Budge and knew Egypt well, and of Dr. Charles Piazzi Smyth, royal Scottish astronomer and professor of Astronomy at the University of Edinburgh. Massey further studied the work of Reverend Archibald Sayce, professor of Comparative Philology at Oxford, as well as that of famous mythologist Sir James Frazer, although he did not agree with their conclusions. He likewise cited the work of Francois Lenormant, professor of Archaeology at the National Library of France, as well as that of noted philologist and comparative theologian Oxford professor Dr. Max Müller. Massey was very influenced by the work of Dr. Samuel Birch (1813-1885), famous archaeologist, Egyptologist and Keeper of the Department of Oriental Antiquities in the British Museum. Dr. Birch also was the founder of the very prestigious and influential Society of Biblical Archaeology, to which belonged many other notables in the fields of archaeology, Assyriology, Egyptology, etc. Much of this eye-opening work on comparative religion, in fact, emanated from this august body of erudite and credentialed individuals. Birch held many other titles and honors, including from Cambridge and Oxford Universities. His numerous works on Egypt are cited to this day in scholarly publications.

In the "Introduction" to his book *The Natural Genesis*, Massey writes:

The German Egyptologist, Herr Pietschmann...reviewed the "Book of the Beginnings"... The writer has taken the precaution all through of getting his fundamental facts in Egyptology verified by one of the foremost of living authorities, Dr. Samuel Birch, to whom he returns his heartiest acknowledgements.¹

Dr. Richard Pietschmann was a noted professor of Egyptology at the University of Goettingen, an impressive "peer reviewer" for one of Massey's early works on Egypt. By verifying his "fundamental facts" with Dr. Birch, Massey appears to be saying that his work was also reviewed by Birch.

In his scholarly works on Egypt, Gerald Massey demonstrates his knowledge of numerous works from the Greek and Latin world as well, including both the Classical writers and Christian fathers such as Church historian Eusebius. Having taught himself to read not only English but also several other languages including Egyptian hieroglyphics, Massey

¹ Massey, *TNG*, viii.

scrutinized and interpreted the texts and monuments for himself, such as the Egyptian Book of the Dead or "Ritual,"¹ as well as the famous zodiacs in the Temple of Denderah and the "Nativity Scene" at the Temple of Luxor, texts and images that predated the "Christian era" by centuries to millennia.² Massey was not only skilled at interpreting the Egyptian data in a highly intelligent and unusual manner, but, having been raised a Protestant Christian compelled to memorize whole sections of the Bible, he was also quite knowledgeable about the Bible and was able to see the numerous and profound correlations between the Christian and Egyptian religions, or the "mythos and ritual," as he styled them.

Gerald Massey appeared to possess an understanding of the spirituality and *astrotheology* being conveyed by the Egyptians more profound than most who have worked on the subject. As was the case with the Egyptian masses, no doubt, the astronomical or *astrotheological* meanings behind Christianity have been lost on the majority of its adherents. The case demonstrating that astrotheology—the reverence for the sun, moon, stars, planets and other natural phenomena—has been in reality the main motivating factor behind major religious myths and rituals the world over can be found in my book *Suns of God*. This fact of an astrotheological foundation for major religious and spiritual concepts—so brilliantly discerned by Gerald Massey, who was far ahead of his time—is being demonstrated on a regular basis by numerous archaeological discoveries around the world.

Although Dr. Budge also has been the subject of certain unwarranted criticism, perhaps because he too found many parallels between Christianity and the Egyptian religion, he also had a fine grasp of the spirituality within said faith, and expressed it in spiritual terms usually reserved—in a culturally biased move—for the Bible. Dr. James P. Allen also possesses an exceptional understanding of the Egyptian spirituality and *astrotheology*, remarking upon it throughout his important works on the Pyramid Texts and Egyptian language. Regarding Egyptian nature worship, Dr. Allen states:

Just as there are hundreds of recognizable elements and forces in nature, so too there were hundreds of Egyptian gods. The most important, of course, are the greatest phenomena.³

Thus, rather than constituting alien and incomprehensible concepts, the Egyptian gods are reflective of natural phenomena, the "greatest" of which would be the cycles and characteristics of the sun, moon, planets, stars and so on, a fact demonstrated repeatedly by Massey to reveal the true meaning behind not only the Egyptian but also the Christian religion.

Over the decades, much has been made about the numerous correlations determined by Gerald Massey between Horus and Jesus as well as other characters in the Egyptian and Christian religions. In *Origin and Evolution of Religion*, one of Massey's students, Dr. Albert Churchward, repeated many of these correspondences, and in *The Christ Conspiracy*, I too reiterated some of the more germane comparisons—*out of hundreds*—between Jesus and Horus. These parallels eventually found their way into ZEITGEIST and have been seen by millions. Naturally, these numerous parallels draw the wrath and intense scrutiny of Christian apologists and other detractors, as has been the case since they were first published.

¹ This title of "Ritual" was originally given to the Book of the Dead by Champollion. However, Renouf (xviii) objects that the Book does *not* constitute a "ritual" per se. Rather, it is, according to the British Museum's T.G.H. James, a "compilation of spells, prayers and incantations." In any event, this term "Ritual" will be used here interchangeably with "the Book of the Dead."

² The term "Christian era" is misleading, as such a time varied widely depending on the area. For example, the country of Lithuania did not become Christian until the 14th century; hence, the "Christian era" did not occur there until then.

³ Allen, J., *ME*, 44.

Independently of Massey, however, many others also noted these numerous and profound correlations between the Egyptian and Christian religions, with Budge, for example, definitively stating that a treatise on the Egyptian religion's influence on Christianity would fill a "comparatively large volume."¹ A professed Christian, Budge was so convinced of the important correspondences between the two faiths that *he believed the Egyptian religion had been fulfilled in Christianity*.

In 1877, William R. Cooper (1843-1878), a young lawyer and Egyptologist who was the Secretary of Dr. Birch's influential Society of Biblical Archaeology, as well as a Fellow and Member of the Royal Astronomical Society, published a work entitled *The Horus Myth in Its Relation to Christianity*, in which he highlighted many germane correspondences between the myth of the Egyptian god Horus and Christianity. So many were these correspondences, including in numerous physical artifacts, that Cooper termed them "the Horus Christian class."² From his constant apologies and declarations of devotion to the Christian faith, it is evident that Mr. Cooper was disturbed by his findings and hoped not to run afoul of the authorities who might censure him or worse. Indeed, at that time "blasphemy" laws in England were not only on the books—as they still are—but they were actually being used, ensnaring Rev. Dr. Robert Taylor, for example, who was imprisoned twice in Britain a half century previously for revealing Christianity to be a rehash based on previous religions and mythologies. Unfortunately, William Cooper died at the young age of 35, but his several valuable works on Egypt—and its relationship to the Bible and Christianity—were issued *years before* Gerald Massey published his famous writings on the same subject. Thus, the claim of correspondences between the Egyptian and Christian religions did *not* originate with Gerald Massey at all, and a significant number of the previous writers on the subject were well respected *Christians*.

Those who insist that Gerald Massey's work has been "debunked" or "refuted" have rarely read it. Although certain aspects of Massey's work may be considered speculative, as is the case with practically every scholar's work, it can be honestly stated that most of Massey's analysis is not only brilliantly insightful but appears to be sound, based on what was popular religiously and mythologically prior to the Christian era, sometimes centuries and many times millennia before the period in question. This information, of course, is not amenable to Christian claims of veracity and uniqueness; hence, fervent believers and especially their leaders do not enjoy knowing or hearing about it. Regardless of what details may have been lacking in total accuracy, the facts will remain that major aspects of the Christian myth and ritual can be found in the preceding pre-Christian religions and mythologies found in the "known world" of the time. Moreover, the preceding characters such as Horus, Osiris, Isis, Hercules, Krishna and many other gods and goddesses cannot be deemed any more mythical or any less historical than Jesus, as the evidences for their existence on Earth are as, if not more, abundant and convincing than those of Jesus Christ.

Although we do not find the severe criticisms regarding Gerald Massey—many of which are driven by a desire to make the gospel story historical no matter how much truth and facts are bent—to possess merit, this present analysis of the claims made in ZEITGEIST is not dependent on Massey's work for the most part. Only a small portion of his exegesis will be cited, in places where extrapolation of the texts has been necessary in order to find the correspondences hinted at by Budge and other experts on the Egyptian religion.

For example, when one studies the work of the famous royal astronomer Sir J. Norman Lockyer, who thoroughly and scientifically demonstrated numerous astronomical properties and alignments of Egyptian myths and architecture, one can readily understand how Massey would find astrotheological correspondences within Christianity, as, combining the opinions

¹ Budge, *TGE*, I, xvi

² Cooper, *THM*, 49.

of Lockyer, et al., with those of Budge, et al., who definitively stated that the Egyptian religion was a major influence on Christianity, we are left with the following inescapable and logical conclusion:

- If the myths of Osiris, Isis, Horus and Set, etc., are largely astronomical in nature; and
- If Christianity is highly influenced by—and is a fulfillment of—the Egyptian religion in significant part; then
- Christianity too must represent astronomical myth or astrotheology.

Once this conclusion is reached, someone with a passion may go on a quest such as Massey's to find these correspondences between the Egyptian and Christian religions, as well as the true astrotheological underpinnings of Christianity. Furthermore, many of Gerald Massey's most important contentions can be verified and demonstrated utilizing the primary sources of Egyptian texts and monuments—in other words, the parallels are real and significant.

In order to understand the many important correspondences between the Egyptian and Christian religions and how they have been framed in media like ZEITGEIST, as well as in my books such as *The Christ Conspiracy* and *Suns of God*, we need to remember that these common motifs in the Egyptian religion are not necessarily found in story form, as they are in the gospel tale, which itself, we contend, is a patchwork of motifs, myths, sayings and rituals found in pre-Christian religion. It also needs to be kept in mind that *the information concerning these previous myths, rituals and symbols was not written down in one neat, ancient encyclopedia but is found widespread around the Mediterranean and elsewhere.* Many of the elements of the tale, however, could have been found within the walls of the massive Library of Alexandria, where undoubtedly much of the most serious work in creating Christianity, the gospel story and the character of Jesus Christ was committed.

Indeed, it is my contention and that of others deemed "Jesus mythicists" that the creators of the gospel tale picked various themes and motifs from pre-Christian religions and myths, including and especially the Egyptian, and wove them together, using also the Jewish scriptures, to produce a unique version of the "mythos and ritual." In other words, the creators of the Christ myth did not simply take an already formed story, scratch out the name of Osiris or Horus and replace it with Jesus. They chose their motifs carefully, out of the most popular religious symbols, myths and rituals, making sure they fit to some degree with the Jewish "messianic scriptures," as they are termed, and created a new story that hundreds of millions since have been led to believe really and truly took place in history. Over the centuries, those who have clearly seen this development have asserted that this history is a fallacy imposed upon long pre-existing myths and rituals that have been reworked to result in the gospel story. In other words, we are convinced that "Jesus Christ" is a *fictional character* created out of older myths, rituals and symbols.

While reading this companion guide, it is important also to recall these various caveats and points, including that what we ourselves are attempting to convey is that to the ancients these diverse themes and motifs shared by the pre-Christian and Christian religions were all important and very much in the front of their minds, such that they could not be overlooked or ignored when priests went about to create a new, empire-unifying religion that came to be called Christianity.

With these facts at hand, as well as that there is no one concrete source for the complete story as found in the New Testament, but that there are many scattered sources used by the priesthood which created this tale, and that reconstructing their deeds can be very difficult, let us proceed through the claims made in the extraordinarily popular documentary ZEITGEIST, Part 1.

Horus, Sun of God

"Now when the ancient Egyptians, awestruck and wondering, turned their eyes to the heavens, they concluded that two gods, the sun and the moon, were primeval and eternal: they called the former Osiris, the latter Isis...."

Diodorus Siculus, *The Antiquities of Egypt* (14)

"There are some who without reservation assert that Osiris is the Sun and is called the Dog-star (Sirius) by the Greeks...and there are those who declare that Isis is none other than the Moon; for this reason it is said that the statues of Isis that bear horns are imitations of the crescent moon, and in her dark garments are shown the concealments and the obscurations in which she in her yearning pursues the Sun..."¹

Plutarch, "Isis and Osiris," *Moralia* (V, 52)

"Ruling over the universe by day, the Sun was identified with Horus, the god of kingship; at sunset he was seen as Atum, the oldest of all gods. The Sun's daily movement through the sky was viewed as a journey from birth to death, and his rebirth at dawn was made possible through Osiris, the force of new life...."

"...In the middle of the night the Sun merged with Osiris's body; through this union, the Sun received the power of new life while Osiris was reborn in the Sun."

Dr. James P. Allen, *The Ancient Egyptian Pyramid Texts* (8)

"In Osiris the Christian Egyptians found the prototype of Christ, and in the pictures and statues of Isis suckling her son Horus, they perceived the prototype of the Virgin Mary and her Child. Never did Christianity find elsewhere in the world a people whose minds were so thoroughly well prepared to receive its doctrines as the Egyptians."

Dr. E.A. Wallis Budge, *Egyptian Ideas of the Future Life* (48)

"There are few points on which the Egyptian and Christian religions so nearly analogize, and which are more striking in their resemblances, than that one doctrine which has always been regarded, and rightly so, as a special result of revelation: the doctrine of a Vicarious Deliverer of mankind in the person of a mysterious Being, who is at once both very God and very man."

W.R. Cooper, *The Horus Myth in Its Relation to Christianity* (3)

Many of the important and fascinating points made in ZEITGEIST, Part 1, revolve around the Egyptian religion, in particular the highly important god Horus, son of the famed god Osiris and goddess Isis. A number of these assertions regarding the myths of Horus and others shockingly resemble characteristics and events attributed to Jesus Christ, indicating that the gospel story is therefore neither original nor historical. As may have been expected, these parallels are not widely and neatly found in encyclopedia entries and textbooks, so they have often been dismissed without adequate study and with extreme prejudice. The claims made about Horus in ZEITGEIST appear mostly in the following paragraphs from the movie's "Interactive Transcript," which can be found at the website ZEITGEISTmovie.com, where they have been carefully footnoted. Here we will investigate more closely some of the most obvious parallels with the better-known aspects of the gospel story. Space in this

¹ Plutarch/Babbitt, 129.

ebook does not permit for a fuller treatment of all the parallels, the bulk of which may be found in a forthcoming longer study of "Christ in Egypt."

The pertinent part of ZEITGEIST regarding Horus to be addressed in the complete *Companion Guide* goes as follows:

This is Horus. He is the Sun God of Egypt of around 3000 BC. He is the sun anthropomorphized, and his life is a series of allegorical myths involving the sun's movement in the sky. From the ancient hieroglyphics in Egypt, we know much about this solar messiah. For instance, Horus, being the sun, or the light, had an enemy known as Set, and Set was the personification of the darkness or night. And, metaphorically speaking, every morning Horus would win the battle against Set—while in the evening, Set would conquer Horus and send him into the underworld. It is important to note that "dark vs. light" or "good vs. evil" is one of the most ubiquitous mythological dualities ever known and is still expressed on many levels to this day.

Broadly speaking, the story of Horus is as follows: Horus was born on December 25th of the virgin Isis-Meri. His birth was accompanied by a star in the east, which in turn, three kings followed to locate and adorn the new-born savior. At the age of 12, he was a prodigal child teacher, and at the age of 30 he was baptized by a figure known as Anup and thus began his ministry. Horus had 12 disciples he traveled about with, performing miracles such as healing the sick and walking on water. Horus was known by many gestural names such as The Truth, The Light, God's Anointed Son, The Good Shepherd, The Lamb of God, and many others. After being betrayed by Typhon [Set], Horus was "crucified," buried for 3 days, and thus, resurrected.

When reading this type of synopsis of the myth of Horus, one needs to keep in mind that it is the contention of those who claim Jesus to be a mythical construct that bits and pieces of the myths of these various other gods—the "essential parts of the myth," as Cooper puts it—were pulled out of context and woven together to create the gospel story. Again, one does not find this tale as above outlined in an ancient Egyptian encyclopedia, such that the creators of the Christ myth merely scratched out the Egyptian names and inserted the Christian ones. Those who have been attempting to explain the creation of the Christ myth have been compelled to back-engineer the story in order to analyze its components. In other words, in explaining the various mythical motifs used in the gospel story, some have retold the tale utilizing the original god or gods, in a gospel-like manner in order to express those components.

Hence, although the myth of Horus, for example, was not told in this condensed manner, such storytelling is useful to convey quickly and readily that the germane aspects of the Christian myth and ritual *were* found in Egypt, long predating the common era. Such is how mythmaking is accomplished, and those who created the *Christian myth* out of bits and pieces of pre-Christian writings and rituals engaged in the same process as well. This process of summarization did in fact occur to some extent with the Egyptian myths, as they were congealed and formalized over a period of centuries to millennia. Regarding the myths of Osiris and Horus, renowned professor of Classics and Egyptology Dr. J. Gwyn Griffiths states:

What emerges clearly from a study of the Horus-myth and the Osiris-myth is that although they appear in the Pyramid Texts as a composite story they were not originally so.¹

The Pyramid Texts date back at least 4,000 years;² hence, beginning even in the remotest era there was a tendency to make a composite story out of various characteristics and motifs.

Some 1500 or so years later we find the Greek historian Herodotus (c. 482-425 BCE) making reference to Osiris and Isis, who, during his time, were "worshipped by everyone throughout Egypt," demonstrating the continued massive popularity of these deities.³ Herodotus further relates that the Egyptians equated Osiris with the Greek god Dionysus, stating, "The only deities to whom the Egyptians consider it proper to sacrifice pigs are Dionysus and the Moon." Regarding these deities, Herodotus's editor Marincola notes: "Dionysus is Osiris, the Moon (Selene) is Isis."⁴ Herodotus also identifies Horus as the Greek *sun god* Apollo.⁵ Beyond these mentions in his long treatise on Egypt, however, Herodotus does not spell out any comprehensive myths of Osiris, Isis and Horus. Nevertheless, in book 2, chapter 61, Herodotus appears to imply that there are *mysteries* of Osiris that he cannot relate,⁶ which may refer to assorted myths, motifs and rituals not readily disclosed to the masses.

In the third century BCE, an Egyptian priest of the sun god Ra at Heliopolis named Manetho wrote in Greek about the Egyptian gods. Since his works have all been lost or destroyed, we must rely on the descriptions thereof by other ancient writers, including the Jewish historian of the first century AD/CE, Josephus, who informs us that Manetho claimed to have based his work on Egyptian oral traditions, "priestly writings" and other documents.⁷ In his histories, Manetho styled the gods by their Greek names, also equating Horus with Apollo, for example.⁸

During the first century BCE, the Greek writer Diodorus Siculus (c. 90-27 BCE) also related that Osiris was the sun and Isis the moon, remarking that Osiris was called "many-eyed" because of his rays. In book 1, chapter 11, Siculus further remarks, "Some of the early Greek mythologists call Osiris 'Dionysus' and also, changing the word slightly, 'Sirius'...."⁹ Diodorus also addresses the five intercalary days added to the end of the old 360-day calendar and identified as the birthdays of the gods "Osiris and Isis, Typhon [Set], Apollo [Horus], and Aphrodite [Nephthys]."¹⁰ Siculus further associates Isis with the Greek goddess Demeter or Ceres, the virgin earth mother who gave birth to Persephone or Kore.¹¹ Lending greater antiquity to Diodorus's assertions, the Catholic Church history Eusebius indicated that in chapters 11-13 Siculus was essentially summarizing the work of Manetho.¹² Giving credence to Herodotus's inference about Egyptian mysteries, Diodorus (1:20, 23) also refers several times to "sacred rites," "mysteries" and "mystical rites" in association with Egyptian

¹ Griffiths, 14. Dates for the Egyptian texts are difficult to ascertain. The Pyramid Texts, for example, are said to be the basis for what became the Book of the Dead. Yet, parts of the Book of the Dead have been dated to at least 6,000 years ago.

² Allen, J., *TAEPT*, 1.

³ Herodotus 2:42, Waterfield, 112.

⁴ Herodotus/de Selincourt, 104, 563.

⁵ Herodotus, 2:144, 156; de Selincourt, 139, 145.

⁶ Herodotus/de Selincourt, 108, 564.

⁷ Verbrugghe, 103.

⁸ Verbrugghe, 99.

⁹ Siculus/Murphy, 14.

¹⁰ Siculus/Murphy, 18.

¹¹ Schaff-Herzog, 212.

¹² Siculus/Murphy, 18.

gods, including and especially Osiris and Isis.¹ In fact, after describing inscriptions on two ancient stelae in "Nysa of Arabia" that supposedly marked the deities' graves, Diodorus remarks:

They say that only this much of the writing on the columns is legible and that the rest, the larger part, has been effaced by time. Be that as it may, most writers disagree over the burial place of the two gods. This is because the real facts in the case were handed down in secret tradition by the Egyptian priests, who cared neither to share the truth with the populace, nor to incur the retribution threatened for any who should reveal the mysteries of these gods to the vulgar.²

In many places, the penalty for divulging the mysteries was death, so it is obvious why the Egyptian priests and initiates would shy away from doing so. While the mysteries changed from place to place and era to era, it is likely that some of the characteristics, myths, motifs, symbols and rituals discussed here constituted Egyptian mysteries not to be revealed to the vulgar masses, which is one reason they are not neatly laid out in an ancient encyclopedia.

In creating his famous treatise on "Isis and Osiris," in which he told the composite myth of the most popular Egyptian gods of the time, the Greek historian Plutarch himself was evidently compelled to pull together characteristics from numerous sources, including papyri and inscriptions, from a wide era. Thus, prior to Plutarch's time too it appears there were few comprehensive sources for the various myths surrounding these deities. Because Christianity was unknown to Plutarch, he naturally would not have factored it into his analysis by couching his recap of the myth in Christian terms. We, however, are very aware of the gospel story, as well as the assertion that it too was based largely on the Egyptian mythos and ritual. Hence, in our comparisons we will summarize the Egyptian influence on Christianity in terms of how its successor and borrower—the Christian myth—itself reworked the Egyptian myths and rituals into a composite tale.

Who is Horus?

Since so many claims of Egyptian influence on Christianity revolve around Horus, investigating his identity becomes critical to our quest. Mainstream sources often only list Horus as a "sky god" with a falcon's head, the eyes of which are sometimes correctly related as symbolizing the sun and moon. However, as noted, the fact of Horus himself symbolizing the sun was understood beginning at least five centuries prior to the common era by several ancient Greek writers who equated him with the sun god Apollo. Indeed, in ancient Egyptian documents such as the Pyramid Texts, Horus's role as a sun god or aspect of the sun itself is repeatedly emphasized, although this singularly pertinent fact is seldom found in encyclopedias and textbooks, leaving us to wonder why he would be thus diminished.

Concerning Horus, Dr. James P. Allen remarks:

Horus was the power of kingship. To the Egyptians this was as much a force of nature as those embodied in the other gods. It was manifest in two natural phenomena: the sun, the most powerful force in nature; and the pharaoh, the most powerful force in human society. Horus's role as the king of nature is probably the origin of his name: *hrw* seems to mean "the one above" or "the one far off"... This is apparently a reference to the sun, which is "above" and "far off" in the sky, like the falcon with which Horus is regularly associated...³

¹ Siculus/Murphy, 25, 28.

² Siculus/Murphy, 34.

³ Allen, J., *ME*, 144.

Thus, Horus symbolizes the power aspect of the sun, and the falcon is likewise a solar symbol by virtue of how high it flies.

Regarding the Egyptian custom of naming, personifying and deifying different aspects of the sun, as well as rolling them together as one, Dr. Allen also states:

The sun...can be seen not only as the physical source of heat and light (Re) but also as the governing force of nature (Horus), whose appearance at dawn from the Akhet makes all life possible—a perception embodied in the combined god Re-Harakhti (Re, Horus of the Akhet). The tendency to syncretism is visible in all periods of Egyptian history.¹

Horus therefore represents the sun as the governor of nature, the "Lord of lords," as it were. The "Akhet" is the "region between the day and night skies," into which the sun sets and rises, before and after entering the Duat,² or the nightly "netherworld." As can be seen, Horus at the dawn is so important as to make "all life possible." Further revealing Horus's solar aspects, in the Pyramid Texts also appear many other epithets of the sun as Horus, such as: "He Whose Face is Seen," "He Whose Hair is Parted" and "He Whose Two Plumes are Long."³

Horus's solar role was also expressed in the adoption of the important "Horus names" by various pharaohs. As Cooper states:

The Egyptian kings, who by a magnificently conceived political fiction were themselves incarnations of the Deity, generally assumed also the name and offices of Horus the Sun in one of their two cartouches, which was called the Horus title, and which was, in fact, their proper name. This cartouche was always preceded by the hieroglyphics signifying Son of the Sun...⁴

The solar imagery throughout the Book of the Dead/Ritual is equally clear and pervasive, as the deceased in his efforts to attain resurrection and immortality is continuously likened to the sun in his daily battle with the darkness of night. In this regard, Sir Renouf remarks that "all the forms assumed in the Book of the Dead by the deceased are well known forms of the Sun-god."⁵

As an example of how much Egypt's spirituality was tied into the sun, chapter 15 of the Ritual constitutes a long prayer or hymn to the divine sun, said in the voice of the deceased to ensure his passage into the afterlife as an immortal soul. One of the main copies of the Book of the Dead is the Papyrus of Ani, designed to facilitate the passage of the deceased scribe Ani, and estimated to have been composed around 1250 BCE. The profound reverence for the sun is highly evident in chapter 15, in which the speaker repeatedly addresses the sun or "Re," also transliterated as "Ra," including in several rubrics or titles of different sections, such as: "*Worship of Re when he rises in the horizon until the occurrence of his setting in life.*"⁶ In another section of chapter 15 appears the following expression of veneration for the sun, Re/Ra:

Worship of Re when he rises in the eastern horizon of the sky, when those who are in his following are joyful.

¹ Allen, J., *ME*, 44.

² Allen, J., *ME*, 21.

³ Allen, J., *TAEPT*, 432.

⁴ Cooper, *THM*, 8.

⁵ Renouf, 141-142.

⁶ Faulkner, pl. 18.

O Sun-disk, Lord of the sunbeams, who shines forth from the horizon every day: may you shine in the face of Ani, for *he worships you* in the morning, he propitiates you in the evening. May the soul of Ani go up with you to the sky...

The Osiris Ani says when he honors his lord, the Lord of Eternity:

Hail to you, Horakhty, Khepri the self-created! How beautiful is your shining forth from the horizon when you illumine the Two Lands with your rays! All the gods are in joy when they see you as king of the sky...¹

The "Osiris Ani" is the deceased, who is identified with Osiris, the "Lord of Eternity," as well as the "Lord of Resurrections," two epithets very much the same as those of the much later Lord Jesus. Horakhty is "Horus of the Two Horizons," referring to the sunrise and sunset. He is also the "beetle" Khepri, who reproduces himself at dawn. As we can tell by the ebullience of the speaker, the sun was the epitome of divinity to the average Egyptian, who may have heard such words as found in the funereal/mortuary literature that comprised the Book of the Dead many instances during their lifetimes. Regarding the Egyptian religion, Sir Lockyer concludes: "In Egypt, then, as India, the pantheon was astronomical and, to a very large extent, solar in origin."²

Indeed, in the sacred literature of Egypt, the sun is all-important, repeatedly invoked, beseeched and prayed to as facilitating the beneficent passage of the soul into the afterlife. In fact, it is evident from these texts that there is no greater purifying power than the sun, and its role in Egyptian religion was supreme. As Allen further comments:

The Sun was the original and daily source of all life: his appearance at the creation and at every sunrise thereafter made life possible in the world.³

Concerning the sun's path, Allen also states:

The Sun's daily movement through the sky was viewed as a journey from birth to death, and his rebirth at dawn was made possible through Osiris, the force of new life.⁴

Importantly, this rebirth of the sun was associated with the desired state of *human* immortality, as Allen further says:

This vision of daily death and rebirth lay behind the ancient Egyptian concept of the afterlife. Like the Sun, each person's ba [soul] was seen as passing through the night of death before coming to life again with the sunrise.⁵

Again we see how singularly significant was the sun that its own cycles were closely tied in with *the salvation of the human soul*, thousands of years before the Christian era.

In his *Guide* to the Egyptian rooms at the British Museum, Dr. Budge summarizes the Egyptian solar mythology:

The Sun has countless names, Ptah, Tmu, Ra, Horus, Khnemu, Sebek, Amen, etc.; and some of them, such as Osiris and Seker, are names of the Sun after he has set, or, in mythological language, has died and been buried.... All gods, as such, were absolutely equal in their might and in their divinity; but, mythologically, Osiris might

¹ Faulkner, pl. 20.

² Lockyer, *TDA*, 39.

³ Allen, J., *TAEPT*, 8-9.

⁴ Allen, J., *ME*, 8.

⁵ Allen, J., *TAEPT*, 8.

be said to be slain by his brother Set, the personification of Night, who, in his turn, was overthrown by Horus (the rising sun), the heir of Osiris.¹

As the sun progresses through the day and night, "he" becomes a number of characters—or changes his epithets and characteristics, as it were—beginning with the rising sun, Horus, who at noon becomes Ra, who at sunset becomes Tmu or Atum, who at midnight becomes Osiris, who becomes Horus at sunrise, and so on. In the end, these gods are all one—as are their enemies, recounted here as "Set."

When studying Egyptian religion and mythology, it should be noted that its deities are not "simply" sun gods but symbolize a wide variety of elements, qualities or aspects of life as well. These various gods or epithets represent not only the physical sun but also its disk, light and heat, as well as the cosmic power behind it. In this regard, although Osiris, for example, is largely a sun god, the ancients also recognized that the sun's light is reflected in the moon, a symbol of Isis, who gives birth to Horus, the "reincarnation" of Osiris. Thus, Osiris was both solar and lunar, as well as the god of the star Sirius, of the river Nile, of water in general, of fertility, and of the resurrection and afterlife, these latter two precisely as was said of the later, Jewish version of the myth, Jesus Christ.

In addition, like Jesus, who is identified in the biblical book of Revelation (22:16) as the "morning star"—one of many astrotheological themes in Christianity—so too in the Pyramid Texts is "Horus of the Duat" called the "morning star."² In the Book of the Dead (ch. 109), the speaker says:

I know the Powers of the East: Horus of the Solar Mount, the Calf in presence of the God, and the Star of Dawn.³

Here Renouf translates the hieroglyph for "Horakhty" as "Horus of the Solar Mount," who is the "sun-calf," as well as the "Star of Dawn" or *morning star*. These "powers of the east" constitute the "Souls of the Easterners."⁴

Moreover, many of these gods fuse together in the Egyptian pantheon in the syncretism spoken of by Dr. James Allen, for the reason that the Egyptian mysteries long ago taught monotheism, with one overarching god whose numerous "members"—assorted gods and goddesses—expanded, contracted and merged with each other. Hence, in the Egyptian texts we find prayers to one god or goddess that include the names or epithets of many other gods or goddesses. For example, there is the sun god Amen—"the hidden god"—and the sun god Ra, but they are also combined as Amen-Ra, and so on. Regarding this fusion and confusion, Dr. Allen further remarks:

Although the Egyptians recognized most natural and social phenomena as separate divine forces, they also realized that many of these were interrelated and could also be understood as *different aspects of a single divine force*. That realization is expressed in the practice known as "syncretism," the combining of several gods into one.⁵

Thus, as is the case in other religions and mythologies, such as the Indian, the Egyptian represents a sort of "polytheistic monotheism" that ascribes divinity to a vast proportion of creation, while maintaining the cosmos to be one.

¹ Budge, *AGFSR*, 2-3.

² Allen, T., 37.

³ Renouf, 182.

⁴ Faulkner, 113.

⁵ Allen, J., *ME*, 44. (Emph. added.)

In addition, when analyzing myths, it is important to realize that, because they *are* myths, there will often be different versions of any particular story or motif. Such is the case with the myths surrounding Osiris, Isis and Horus. Moreover, there were various Horuses or *Horus epithets*, two of whom, for instance, were named as the son(s) of Osiris and Isis, and all of whom have been confounded in both ancient and modern times. This confounding is not necessarily a mistake but may be deliberate since, as stated, the myths and characteristics of gods and goddesses frequently blend into and overlap each other. The interchangeability of Osiris and Horus, for example, becomes evident on a daily basis, as the night sun Osiris at dawn *becomes* Horus. Regarding Osiris's transformation into Horus, Dr. Allen states:

Within Nut's womb, he embodied the force through which the Sun received the power of new life, to appear at dawn as *Osiris reborn in his own son*, the god Horus.¹

Therefore, for the purpose of easily and quickly describing important aspects of the Egyptian religion—especially as they concern correspondences with Christianity—certain sources have combined at times the various Horuses with each other and with Osiris, and related the data in a story-like manner. We further contend that this very same confounding was done by the creators of Christianity when they took over elements of the Egyptian religion and rolled them into one encompassing myth called the gospel story. In essence, when studying this situation, the scenario that reveals itself is that the creators of the gospel story in large part appear to have been scouring the vast Library of Alexandria in Egypt and elsewhere, such as Antioch and Rome, and picking out various attributes of the pre-Christian religion to be used in their creation of a cohesive Christian mythical tale that was later fallaciously set into history and presented to the gullible masses as a "true story."

As is abundantly clear, the sun in the Egyptian religion symbolized life, purification, salvation, resurrection and immortality, among many other important qualities. The sun was, in fact, a symbol of the divine and was beseeched as such in countless prayers and invocations, directed at not just the disk or orb itself but also at the unseen power behind the sun, as well as its heat, light and all its various aspects and movements through the heavens.

Many of the major and most beloved deities in the Egyptian pantheon symbolized aspects or epithets of the life-giving, sacred sun, including the very important god Horus, who represents the renewal of the nightly sun, Osiris, as he passes through the treacherous darkness of the Duat or underworld. If the parallels between Horus and Jesus outlined in ZEITGEIST and elsewhere are real and accurate to a sufficient extent, meaning the claims are true of Budge and many others that there is significant Egyptian influence on Christianity, it is reasonable and scientific to suggest that the story of Jesus Christ—which is *highly implausible* as "history"—ranks largely as a rehash of the myth of the ancient, exceedingly revered sun god.

¹ Allen, J., *TAEPT*, 9. (Emph. added.)

Horus versus Set

"The Christian Trinity ousted the old triads of gods, Osiris and Horus were represented by our Lord Jesus Christ, Isis by the Virgin Mary, Set the god of evil by Diabolus [Satan]...and the various Companies of the Gods by the Archangels, and so on."

Dr. E.A. Wallis Budge, *Egyptian Tales and Romances* (12)

"The god Seth, called Typhon by the Greek writers, was the Satan of later Egyptian mythology. He was the personification of the evil in the world, just as Osiris was the personification of the good."

Philip Van Ness Myers, *Ancient History* (38)

"Horus is presented in manifold aspects in Egyptian mythology. Mainly as the vindicator of the principle of Good; as the avenger of his father, Osiris, who succumbed temporarily in his struggle against Evil embodied in the god Set, who corresponds to our Satan. Set was represented as a beast with long pointed ears and erect tail, and may perhaps be the origin of the popular representations of Satan, the ears having come to be regarded as horns."

H. Villiers Stuart, *Egypt After the War* (191)

Despite the misconception that the ancients were primitive, many cultures of old were in reality highly sophisticated, as evidenced not only by their impressive architectural accomplishments such as the massive ruins around the world, but also by other artifacts such as political organization, language development and philosophical achievement. One of these advanced cultures was that of Egypt, which created along with its magnificent edifices such as the Great Pyramid and the Temple complex at Karnak both a sophisticated cosmology and an elegant writing system in which to express it. When we examine the religious and mythological beliefs of the Egyptians, in fact, we discover there is little theological they did not consider and incorporate into their faith that we possess in modern religions today. In other words, the Egyptians in particular not only were highly spiritual but also either originated or developed many of the cosmological and theological concepts found in current popular religions, such as the afterlife, immortality, heaven, deity and so on. One of the main religions in which we find the most apparent Egyptian influence is Christianity, in both its myths and rituals. Like many other faiths, the Egyptian and Christian religions share a strong overall theme of good versus evil and light versus dark. In the case of the Egyptian religion, good and evil were manifested in several gods, including and especially Horus and Set, while their Christian counterparts are Jesus and Satan.

As we explore the original Egyptian mythos and ritual upon which much of Christianity was evidently founded, it needs to be kept in mind that the gods Osiris and Horus in particular were frequently interchangeable and combined, as in "I and the Father are one." (Jn 10:30) In fact, as part of the mythos, Osiris was "re-born under the form of Horus," as we have seen. This particular development exists in significant part because these figures are largely sun gods, and when one sun god "dies," as is the case with Osiris daily, monthly and annually, another replaces him and *becomes* him, as happens with Horus taking the place of his father. Like Osiris's many followers, whose prayers included a request to *become* "the Osiris" in the afterlife, so too does Horus *become* his father upon Osiris's demise, which is caused by these sun gods' enemy, the serpent of the night and Prince of Darkness, Set.

To reiterate, as is the case with myths around the world, the story of Osiris was not neatly laid out in an entry in an ancient encyclopedia, but, rather, appears in bits and pieces in ancient sources such as the Pyramid Texts and the Book of the Dead, which were compiled and altered over a period of centuries to millennia, beginning more than 6,000 years ago and ending well before the so-called Christian era. Nevertheless, nearly 2,000 years ago Plutarch did tell the cyclical myth of Osiris/Horus in some detail and in a fairly cohesive manner as a story.

In the commonly known depiction of his death, the good god Osiris is killed by his evil brother Set, who first encloses the god in a container or "ark" and later dismembers him into 14 pieces, scattering the parts around Egypt.¹ In the version by Plutarch, Osiris's wife-sister, Isis, finds most of the pieces, except Osiris's phallus, and eventually Osiris is resurrected and returns from the "other world" to instruct his son Horus to battle and defeat "Typhon," the Greek name for the god Set.

Concerning the conflict between Osiris and Set, Budge remarks, "Details of the engagement are wanting, but the Pyramid Texts state that the body of Osiris was hurled to the ground by Set at a place called Netat, which seems to have been near Abydos."² The Pyramid Texts, in fact, contain another, older version of Osiris's death, in which he was said to have been *drowned* by Set, or *Seth*.³ According to a later magical papyrus, this drowning took place in the "water of the underworld." This aspect of the myth is interesting in light of the fact that in Greek mythology the sun god Helios was said to have been drowned in the river Eridanus or "*Jordan*," in which Jesus was likewise said to have been baptized or dunked.⁴

The earliest versions of Osiris's passion⁵ depict Set simply as slaying the god, without the ark and the dismemberment, while later sources attach 72 villainous helpers to assist in Set's murderous crime against Osiris.⁶ The story of Osiris being entombed in a tree and found by Isis at the city of Byblos in Phoenicia, also related by Plutarch, is later than the one in which his parts are simply tossed around Egypt.⁷ The Byblos tale may have been added by the Egyptians after 1500 BCE in order to explain the similar myth of the dying-and-rising god Adonis-Tammuz in that part of the Near East.⁸

The Astrotheology of the Passion

Although appearing bizarre and incomprehensible, like so many other myths, the story of Osiris's death possesses underlying *astrotheological* meaning that makes sense and teaches

¹ Diodorus relates that the pieces numbered 26. However, Murphy notes that, as the god became more popular, so too did his parts, eventually numbering 42 for each of the Egyptian nomes. This increase occurred as each priesthood wished to claim a relic for its own "tomb of Osiris," reflection of the enormous relics industry that continues to this day with countless bogus artifacts of the Christian faith. (For more, see *The Christ Conspiracy, Suns of God and Who Was Jesus?*)

² Budge, *LEG*, xlix.

³ Griffiths, 9.

⁴ In the Egyptian, the Jordan is called "Iurutana." (Cooper, *AAD*, 259.) This is the same term for the constellation of the river Eridanus.

⁵ The term "passion" refers to the sufferings of the god and does not belong exclusively to the Christian faith, despite the biases and oversights of dictionaries, and the spurious claims of Christian apologists. Osiris's sufferings have been referred to as a "passion" by numerous writers for a century or more, including by Professor Franz Cumont, who related: "Since the time of the twelfth dynasty, and probably much earlier, there had been held at Abydos and elsewhere a sacred performance similar to the mysteries of our Middle Ages, in which the events of Osiris's passion and resurrection were reproduced." (Cumont, 98.)

⁶ Gray, 114.

⁷ Gray, 114.

⁸ Gray, 120.

some of the important workings of the natural world. As Plutarch relates, Osiris was entombed in the ark on the 17th day of the month of Athyr, "when the sun passes through Scorpion [sic]," and in the 28th year of either his reign or his life.¹ Coincidentally, the 17th of Athyr is equivalent to the same day that the equally mythical biblical character Noah was said to have been shut up in *his* ark, the patriarch too having been identified as a sun god or solar hero. The notion that Osiris was 28 when he suffered his passion is also interesting, in light of the fact that Jesus was likewise said to have been around 28-30 when he began his ministry, depending on the source. Indeed, one early Christian tradition also places Christ's *passion* at when he was "only twenty eight, and one-quarter years of life,"² quite possibly in imitation of the Osiris myth.

In the solar myth, the enclosure in the ark during the zodiacal sign of Scorpio (October 24-November 22) symbolizes the weakening of the sun as it approaches the winter solstice. The number 28 is likewise astrotheological and represents the days of an average or mean monthly lunation, after which the soli-lunar god Osiris is torn into 14 pieces—the number 14 signifying the days of the moon's waning per month—and then resurrected, as the moon waxes again. As Plutarch remarks, "The Egyptians have a legend that the end of Osiris's life came on the seventeenth of the month, on which day it is quite evident to the eye that the period of the full moon is over."³

Plutarch further explains the astrotheological meaning of the Osiris myth:

Some say that the years of Osiris's life, others that the years of his reign, were twenty-eight; for that is the number of the moon's illuminations, and in that number of days does she complete her cycle. The wood which they cut on the occasions called the "burials of Osiris" they fashion into a crescent-shaped coffer because of the fact that the moon, when it comes near the sun, becomes crescent-shaped and disappears from our sight. The dismemberment of Osiris into fourteen parts they refer allegorically to the days of the waning of that satellite from the time of the full moon to the new moon....⁴

Regarding this tale, astronomer Dr. Edwin C. Krupp, Director of the Griffith Observatory in Los Angeles, remarks:

The numbers are significant. Although the moon completes its phases in 29½ days, the number 28 was used symbolically for this interval....

The 14 pieces of the body of Osiris sound like the 14 days of the waning, or "dying" moon, and on the main ceiling of the Dendera temple are inscriptions and pictorial reliefs that leave no doubt. In one panel, an eye, installed in a disk, is transported in a boat. The eye, we know, was a symbol of the sun or moon. Thoth, the ibis-headed scribe god of wisdom and knowledge, pilots the barge. Thoth was closely associated with the moon and counted the days and seasons. The text for this panel refers to the period after the full moon, and 14 gods accompany the eye in the disk.⁵

In addition, the 72 "co-conspirators" in the later version of the tale likewise possess astrotheological meaning, representing the 72 *dodecans*, or divisions of the circle of the zodiac into 5 degrees each. Interestingly, in the gospel story Jesus is depicted with either 70 or 72 "disciples," the number 70 often symbolizing the dodecans as well. Also, the drowning of Osiris in the "river" Eridanus evidently signifies the god's passage through the

¹ Plutarch, ch. 13; Babbitt, 37.

² *Catholic Encyclopedia*, "Christmas."

³ Plutarch, ch. 42; Babbitt, 103.

⁴ Plutarch, ch. 42; Babbitt, 103.

⁵ Krupp, 18.

well-known *constellation* of the same name. It is likely that the *Jordan* river, biblical site of so many purported miracles, was named after its apparent stellar counterpart, with said "miracles" also taking place not on Earth but in the heavens.

Furthermore, the subsequent avenging of Osiris's murder by his son(s) Horus also constitutes an astrotheological motif. In the myth, Horus the first son of Osiris and Isis is already alive before Typhon/Set tears Osiris's body into 14 pieces.¹ Osiris is depicted by Plutarch as later coming from "the other world" to train this Horus to battle Typhon, also called *Seth*.² At a certain point, the other, newborn Horus becomes the avenger of his father's death by killing Set. These different Horuses nevertheless symbolize the one sun in various phases of its "life."

The battle between Horus and Set is mentioned in many places in Egyptian texts, in which the dynamic duo is called, among other things, the "Two Combatants" and the "Divine Pair."³ The story of this conflict includes various details such as Horus's association with Ra in attempting to destroy Set, as well as numerous other characters such as the blacksmiths on Horus's side and the vast army of "bad guys" with Set. Some of these particulars signify astrotheological elements added as the science of astronomy became more sophisticated. For example, Horus's battle with Set depicted in the inscriptions at the relatively late site of Edfu includes him slaying Set's monsters, the crocodile and hippopotamus, which symbolize two of the "circumpolar stars" that are "washed out" or removed from sight when the sun's rays appear on the horizon.⁴ With or without the details, of course, the contention between Horus and Set ultimately represents the battle of good versus evil and light versus dark.

Who is Set?

One of the five children of Seb, the earth-god, and Nut, the sky-goddess, Set is described in chapter 17 of the Book of the Dead/Ritual as "that god who steals souls, who laps up corruption, who lives on what is putrid, who is in charge of darkness, who is immersed in gloom, of whom those who are among the languid ones are afraid."⁵ As the one "who is in charge of darkness," Set "comes to carry off the light."⁶ Regarding Set's role, Lewis Spence remarks, "As the days began to shorten and the nights to lengthen it was thought that he stole the light from the sun-god."⁷ Hence, Set is a *thief in the night* who robs Osiris/Horus of his strength and life. As the monster that prevents the sun from shining, Set also symbolizes storm clouds:

This battle may likewise be found in the sky by day when storm-clouds darken the face of the sun, so that the myth of the serpent and the solar deity Re merges into the old story of the conflict between Horus and Seth. Thus the serpent becomes more and more identical with Seth, as being an additional manifestation of the wicked god who later is said to have fought against Horus in the form of other water monsters as well, such as the hippopotamus and the crocodile. This confusion of 'Apop and Seth, however, does not take place until after the Eighteenth Dynasty.⁸

Prior to this identification of Set with the monster Apophis, enemy of the sun god Ra, Set was not always considered "evil" but was worshipped as a divine being, evidenced by the pharaonic choice of the name "Seti." At a certain point, however, Set is demonized:

¹ Plutarch, ch. 18; Babbitt, 45.

² Plutarch, ch. 41; Babbitt, 101, 121, 147.

³ Renouf, 140.

⁴ Lockyer, 151.

⁵ Faulkner, pl 10.

⁶ Bonwick, 133.

⁷ Spence, *AEML*, 100.

⁸ Gray, 107.

The last king bearing Seth's name belongs to the Twentieth Dynasty, about 1200 B.C. The interesting evolution of this god into a Satan is due to the influence of the Babylonian myth of Tiamat.¹

It has also been claimed that, like the monstrous Tiamat, Set himself was originally a *Semitic* god imported into Egypt,² an interesting assertion in light of the contention that Set is equivalent to *Satan*, the word "Satan" being related to the Hebrew or Semitic term *shaytan*, meaning "adversary," and later adopted into Christianity. Regarding Set/Seth, James Bonwick remarks:

[French Egyptologist] Pleyte has no doubt about Set being the *El* or *Elohim* of the East, and the same as Baal. Finding that curious passage in the book of Numbers about the destruction of the sons of Seth, he says, "It is probable that the Septuagint meant by the 'Sons of Seth,' the people who rendered homage to the god Seth (Set), the same divinity who was adored in Egypt by the Palestino-Asiatic tribes."³

Concerning the "children of Seth" at Numbers 24:17, Samuel Sharpe remarks, "Seth is an Egyptian name for Satan, and by the children of Seth, the Samaritans seem meant."⁴ Moreover, Louis Gray calls Seth "the general patron of Asiatics and of warriors,"⁵ and Prof. A.H. Sayce writes:

Set or Sut became for the later Egyptians the impersonation of evil. He was identified with Apophis, the serpent of wickedness, against whom the sun-god wages perpetual war; and his name was erased from the monuments on which it was engraved. But all this was because Set was the god and the representative of the Asiatic invaders who had conquered Egypt, and aroused in the Egyptian mind a feeling of bitter animosity towards themselves.⁶

Therefore, it would appear that the Egyptian god Set was originally one of the Semitic Elohim, the plural gods worshipped by the Israelites.⁷

As we have seen, the villain in the myth revolving around the sun god Ra is named Apophis, Apop, Apap, Apep or Apepi, all variants of the same word. Like the myth of Horus versus Set, Ra battles on a daily basis the great serpent of the night sky, Apap, defeating him at dawn. Apophis is the "devourer" and the "fiend of darkness."⁸ Regarding the serpent motif, Stuart states:

...It is remarkable that Satan—our evil principle—is spoken of also as the Great Serpent, and like Apop is represented as chained in the bottomless pit.⁹

Another transliterated *Egyptian* title for the destructive and fiendish serpent is "*Sata*," as found in Wilson's translation of the Papyrus of Nu, which reads:

I am the serpent Sata whose years are many. I die and I am born again each day. I am the serpent Sata which dwelleth in the uttermost parts of the earth. I die, and I am born again, and I renew myself, and I grow young each day.¹

¹ Gray, 392.

² Bonwick, 130.

³ Bonwick, 135.

⁴ Sharpe, 28.

⁵ Gray, 155.

⁶ Sayce, 162.

⁷ Cf. "The Myth of Hebrew Monotheism" in [The Christ Conspiracy](#).

⁸ Spence, 13.

⁹ Stuart, 345.

In his *Egyptian Hieroglyphic Dictionary*, using the same transliteration Budge calls Sata the "serpent-fiend in the Tuat."² The Tuat or Duat is defined as "a very ancient name for the land of the dead, and of the Other World."³ The "land of the dead" and "other world" also signify the "cave," "tomb" or "underworld" of the nightly terrain through which Osiris (or Ra) must pass daily, to be born again at sunrise as his son, Horus.⁴ This journey is described in the ancient Egyptian book "Am Tuat," as summarized by Budge:

When the Sun-god set in the west in the evening he was obliged to travel through the Tuat to the eastern sky, in order to rise again on this earth the following day.⁵

Thus, Apophis/Sata is the same as the monster Typhon/Set battled every day by Horus. In other words, all of these names—*Apap, Apep, Apepi, Apop, Apophis, Seth, Set, Sut, Sutu, Sata*—represent epithets for the same god or phenomenon: Both "the Arch-Enemy of Osiris, and the personification of Evil,"⁶ as well as "the Arch-fiend and great Enemy of Ra."⁷ Thus, it can be truthfully stated that Set is *Satan*, and the battle between Jesus and Satan—Light v. Darkness—represents a formulaic rehash of the far more ancient contention between Horus and Set. Indeed, if Set is Satan, then Osiris/Horus is Jesus, as has been maintained for centuries for this and many other reasons.

Like Satan, Set rebels from his divine birth. Also like Satan, who in the Old Testament is merely "the Adversary," rather than the personification of Absolute Evil that he became in the New Testament, Seth was not always considered absolutely evil. Like Yahweh, God of the Old Testament, who was the orchestrator of both good *and* evil, Set is represented as the "twin" of Horus and half of a dual god as a single being, Horus-Set.⁸ Yet, Set is also a separate entity who becomes locked in an eternal struggle with his alter ego and enemy, Horus, and, again, at a certain point the "old thunder-god" Set became "the representative of all evil" and "a real Satan."⁹

Like Satan, Set/Seth too had his devoted followers—the "sons of Seth," possibly as recorded in the Old Testament and generally thought to refer to the descendants of Adam's third son Seth. Like Adam's other son Cain, who kills his brother Abel, Seth/Set is depicted as murdering *his* brother Osiris. And like other characters in the Old Testament, such as Abraham and Moses, in the "patriarch" Seth we seem to have yet another instance of an ancient tribal god demoted to human status.

As does Satan with Jesus (Rev. 12:1-5), Set attempts to kill Horus. Set is the "god of the desert" who battles Horus, while Jesus is tempted in the desert by Satan.

Like Satan, who has a forked tail, Set too is depicted with a forked tail. In fact, Set's portrayal with bizarre ears and an anteater-like snout makes him appear creepy and demonic:

¹ Wilson, 73.

² Budge, *AEHD*, 640.

³ Budge, *AEHD*, 871-872.

⁴ Cf. Murray, *LAE*, 50-51: "Great and mighty is the river of the sky, flowing across the heavens and through the Duat, the world of night and of thick darkness, and on that river floats the Boat of Ra... Slowly goes the Boat of Ra, passing through the Duat, to regions of thick darkness, of horror and dismay, where the dead have their habitations, and Apep lies in wait for the coming of Ra."

⁵ Budge, *AIAEL*, 245.

⁶ Budge, *LOLM*, liii.

⁷ Budge, *LEG*, xlii.

⁸ Budge, *FFGAE*, 375. In the Pyramid Texts and elsewhere, as another one of the gods born on the five intercalary or epagomenal days completing the 365-day year, like Set, Horus the Elder is also said to be the son of Geb or *Seb*—the earth god and "father of the gods"—just as Jesus was the son of *Joseph*, the earthly father of God.

⁹ Gray, 109.

Seth was identified with an animal that had the body of an elongated jackal or greyhound; a long neck; a thin, curved snout; rectangular, upraised ears; and a stiff, forked tale. Seth was often portrayed with a human body and the head of this beast.¹

Set is the serpent of the night, the Prince of Darkness and other qualities in line with Satan, while Horus is the "sun of righteousness" and the Prince of Light, much like Christ. As we have seen and will continue to see, there are many such correspondences between the myth of Osiris/Horus and that of Jesus. In the end, the tale of Jesus versus Satan, we contend, is equally astrotheological and mythical as the prototypical epic drama of Osiris/Horus versus Set.

¹ *World Book Encyclopedia*, 321.

Born on December 25th

"As the annual rebirth of the sun's light, the winter solstice was important in most parts of the world. In fact, the Romans already had an ancient winter festival whose seven days bracketed the solstice.... Choosing the birth of Christ as December 25 successfully integrated long-standing popular traditions with the imagery of a new religion, and the theme of renewal is still part of Christmas."

Dr. Edwin C. Krupp, *Echoes of the Ancient Skies* (81)

"The well-known solar feast...of Natalis Invicti, celebrated on 25 December, has a strong claim on the responsibility for our December date [for Christ's Nativity]."

Catholic Encyclopedia, "Christmas"

"An early Christian work, the 'Paschal Chronicle' (Migne ed. xcii, col. 385), tells us that every year the temples of Horus presented to worshipers, in mid-winter (or about December 25th), a scenic model of the birth of Horus. He was represented as a babe born in a stable, his mother Isis standing by. Just in the same way is the birth of Christ dramatized today in every Roman Catholic church in the world on December 25th. The Roman writer Macrobius makes the same statement about the representation of the birth of Horus in the temples...and adds that the young god was a symbol of the rebirth of the sun at that date. The fact is, at all events, beyond question. We are brought to the very threshold of Christianity. The whole world by the year 1 A.D. was familiar with the Egyptian statues or pictures of Isis with the divine babe Horus in her arms."

Joseph McCabe, *The Story of Religious Controversy* (169)

Although many people remain unaware of the real meaning behind "Christmas," one of the better known correspondences between pre-Christian religion and Christianity has been the celebration of the god's birth on the 25th of December. Nevertheless, it has been argued that this comparison is erroneous because Jesus Christ was *not* born on December 25th, an assertion in itself that would come as a surprise to many, since up until just a few years ago only a miniscule percentage of people knew such a fact. In any event, this argument constitutes a logical fallacy, because over the centuries since the holiday was implemented by Christian authorities, *hundreds of millions of people* have celebrated Jesus's birthday on December 25th, or *Christmas*, so named after *Christ*. Moreover, hundreds of millions continue to celebrate the 25th of December as the birth of Jesus Christ, completely oblivious to the notion that this date does not represent the "real" birthday of the Jewish son of God.¹ In actuality, it would be highly refreshing for the facts regarding the *true* meaning of Christmas to be known around the world: To wit, "Christmas"—or the *winter solstice*—represents the birth of the *sun god* dating back millennia.

Concerning the origins of this *solar holiday* vis-à-vis Christianity, the authoritative *Catholic Encyclopedia* states:

The earliest rapprochement of the births of Christ and the sun is in [the writings of Church father] Cyprian [200-258]..."O, how wonderfully acted Providence that on that day on which that Sun was born...Christ should be born."

¹ In 2007, the U.S. House of Representatives passed HR 847, officially declaring December 25th to be the birthday of the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ: "Whereas on December 25 of each calendar year, American Christians observe Christmas, the holiday celebrating the birth of their savior, Jesus Christ..."

In the fourth century, Chrysostom...says:... "But Our Lord, too, is born in the month of December...the eight before the calends of January [25 December]..., But they call it the 'Birthday of the Unconquered'. Who indeed is so unconquered as Our Lord...? Or, if they say that it is the birthday of the Sun, He is the Sun of Justice."¹

As we can see from these revealing remarks, the birth of Christ at the winter solstice has been asserted since as early as the 3rd century. Moreover, the reason for this birthdate is clearly given: This date represents "*the birthday of the Sun!*"

Regarding Christ's birth and the establishment of Christmas, Christian apologist Thomas Thorburn relates:

The earliest church commemorated it at various times from September to March, until in 354 A.D. Pope Julius I assimilated the festival with that of the birth of Mithra (December 25), in order to facilitate the more complete Christianisation of the empire.²

Thus, Christ's birth at the winter solstice was not formalized until the fourth century—and this fact demonstrates a *deliberate contrivance* by Christian officials to usurp other religions, as we contend the entire Christian religion was specifically created to do.

Prior to its celebration as the birthday of Jesus Christ, the 25th of December/winter solstice was claimed as the birthday for a number of other gods and godmen, including the Perso-Roman god Mithra and the Greek god Dionysus.³ So too, apparently, do we find this annual celebration in Egypt concerning the sun god, which represents the "birth" of the "new sun" after the "old sun" "dies" around December 21st (in the northern hemisphere), lying in his "tomb" or "cave" for three days and on December 25th being "born again."

There appears to be frequent confusion regarding the dates of December 21st, 22nd and 25th. The fact is that *all* of them represent the time of the winter solstice, which *begins* at midnight on the 21st—equivalent to the morning of the 22nd—and *ends* at midnight on the 24th, which is the morning of December 25th. To summarize, in the solar myth the "death" of the "old sun" occurs as the days decrease in length towards the winter solstice, the word "solstice" meaning "sun stands still," as for three days the sun appears not to be moving south or north. Hence, it was considered "dead" and did not "return to life" until three days later, at midnight on December 24th, when it began its northerly journey again. Therefore, the ancients said the sun was born on December 25th.

In this regard, it has been the frequent contention of writers since antiquity that the Egyptians likewise celebrated the birth of the sun at the winter solstice, a logical conclusion, considering the reverence with which the sun was held in Egypt. Concerning this cycle in Egypt, in "Isis and Osiris" (ch. 65), Plutarch remarked that Horus—or "Harpocrates," his Greek name—was "born about the winter solstice, unfinished and infant-like..."⁴ A couple of centuries after Plutarch, in his *Saturnalia* (I, XVIII:10), ancient Latin writer of the fourth century Macrobius also reported on this annual Egyptian "Christmas" celebration:

...at the winter solstice the sun would seem to be a little child, like that which the Egyptians bring forth from a shrine on an appointed day, since the day is then at its shortest and the god is accordingly shown as a tiny infant.⁵

¹ CE, "Christmas."

² Thorburn, 33.

³ Thomson, 481.

⁴ King, 56; cf. Babbitt, 153.

⁵ Macrobius/Davies, 129. The original Latin of this paragraph in Macrobius is: "...ut parvulus videatur hiemali solstitio, qualem Aegyptii proferunt ex adyto die certa, quod tunc brevissimo die veluti parvus et infans videatur..."

As to the antiquity of the Egyptian winter-solstice, solar-birth drama depicted by Plutarch and Macrobius, Professor Orlando P. Schmidt makes some interesting claims regarding the Egyptian king Amenemhet or Amenemhat I (c. 1991/1985-c. 1962/1956 BCE), called in Greek "Amenemes" or "Ammenemes," founder of the 12th dynasty:

Now, as the sun of the Sothiac year reached the winter solstice in the seventeenth year of the reign of King Amenemes I, he assumed the title of Nem-mestu, meaning "Re-born," in commemoration of his birth as Harpocrates.¹

Thus, according to Schmidt the birth of Harpocrates at the winter solstice apparently dates back to almost 2,000 years prior to the Christian era, a tradition evidently verified by Plutarch.

This epithet "Nem-mestu" is the king's "Horus name" and means "repeater of births," "repetition of births" or "reborn." Regarding this title, Budge says:

..."nem mestu," i.e., "repeater of births," the allusion being to the idea that the king was like the Sun-god Re who was reborn daily; this title became a great favorite with the kings of the XIIth Dynasty.²

Budge thus verifies that this particular Horus name was indeed popular in the dynasty in question. Intriguingly, according to Budge the Egyptian word for winter solstice is *nen*, which would make a Horus name of "*Nen-mestu*" equivalent to "born of the winter solstice."

Also according to Budge, citing German Egyptologist Professor Heinrich Brugsch, the hieroglyphic for the winter solstice reveals two deities holding the sun with its rays extending down over an ankh,³ the symbol of life. If these two deities surrounding the sun being given life are indeed Osiris and Isis, as they appear to be, this hieroglyph would represent a clear indication that *their* child, Horus, was in fact born at the winter solstice.

In any case, this Horus name "repeaters of births" as a reflection of the sun god's birth, whether daily, annually or both, dates back thousands of years in Egypt, and the significance of the winter solstice in Egypt, as well as its perception as the birth of the sun god, seems evident.

In the Egyptian language, Harpocrates is "Her-pa-chruti" or "Heru-pa-Chrat," "the morning sun."⁴ On the subject of Plutarch and Harpocrates, Budge remarks:

The curious legend which Plutarch relates concerning Harpocrates and the cause of his lameness is probably based upon the passage in the history of Osiris and Isis given in a hymn to Osiris of the XVIIIth Dynasty.⁵

Budge never seems to return to this "curious legend," apparently coming from chapter 19 of Plutarch, which omits the pertinent part about Harpocrates representing the weak or "lame" sun of the winter solstice, as in chapter 65. Concerning the Osirian myth presented in Plutarch, in *Egyptian Ideas of the Future*, Budge remarks:

When we examine this story by the light of the results of hieroglyphic decipherment, we find that a large portion of it is substantiated by Egyptian texts...⁶

Budge proceeds to name many of the most significant details from Plutarch as having been verified by hieroglyphics, including texts, inscriptions, papyri, etc. The passage from

¹ Schmidt, 19.

² Budge, *EUGPB*, 190.

³ Budge, *AEHD*, 351.

⁴ Budge, *TM*, 271-272.

⁵ Budge, *EBD*, cvi.

⁶ Budge, *EITFL*, 35.

Plutarch quoted here by Budge is also from chapter 19 and, again, although mentioning the birth of Harpocrates, lacks the pertinent part about the winter solstice found in chapter 65. In neither book, in fact, does Budge describe the assertion in chapter 65. Perhaps as a professed Christian, Budge did not wish to reproduce these significant remarks concerning the "Christmas" birth of the Egyptian sun god. From comments by various writers of the time, it appears there was indeed a debate as to whether or not to accept the "opinions of the Greek" with regard to Harpocrates's nature as the sun born at the winter solstice. One must therefore ask whether or not this debate about the "correctness" of the ancient Greeks in their assertions regarding this figure—a debate continued by apologists today—has been based on scientific reasoning or religious prejudice, representing an intentional suppression and censorship of pertinent data. And, if the bulk of Plutarch's summary of the myth of Osiris, Isis and Horus is sustainable through Egyptian writings, as Budge himself states, can we not assume that this winter-solstice part would be reliable as well?

If Horus was not born at the winter solstice, why does Plutarch state that he was, in his form as Harpocrates or Horus the Child? Why does Macrobius record an Egyptian festival of apparent antiquity that celebrated the birth of the baby sun at the winter solstice? Would the Egyptians—who were so keenly aware of astronomy, solar mythology and astrotheology—truly be completely oblivious to, or deliberately unaffected by, the revered status of the sun at the winter solstice? Certainly the Egyptians were highly conscious of the all-important solstices—as demonstrated abundantly by the alignments of their monuments—could they possibly fail to integrate them into their solar religion?

Indeed, according to Budge *the solstices were personified as gods*. In fact, Budge claims that the personification of the winter solstice is the god "Ap-uat,"¹ while Renouf says Apuat is "identical with Osiris."² Thus, Osiris would represent the winter solstice, making this time of year highly significant to the Egyptians.

Furthermore, it is agreed that in Egypt "the summer solstice was paramount, for it heralded the rise of the Nile."³ As Herodotus states, the Nile began to overflow around the *summer solstice*—specifically named as such by Herodotus (1:19). The Greek historian further remarks that the river continues to rise for about 100 days, at which point it levels off and then starts to drop again, remaining low throughout winter.⁴ This life-giving time of year was so important to the Egyptians that at periods over the millennia they opened the new year with the summer inundation of the Nile.

During other periods, apparently, the year began at the *winter* solstice, which would be indicative that such a time was considered the "birth of the sun," as in so many other cultures. In *Horae Aegyptiacae: Or, the Chronology of Ancient Egypt, Discovered from Astronomical and Hieroglyphic Records Upon Its Monuments*, Egyptologist and professor of Archaeology Dr. Reginald Stuart Poole, another Keeper at the British Museum, states:

"The Season of the Waters," in the ancient nomenclature, plainly shows that the Tropical Year to which that nomenclature was originally applied commenced at the winter solstice, and not at, nor near, either of the equinoxes, or the summer solstice...

Thus we find that the true period of the commencement of "the Season of the Inundation" was one month before the autumnal equinox; and the end, at the winter

¹ Budge, *TGE*, 264.

² Renouf, 99.

³ Lockyer, *TDA*, 57.

⁴ Herodotus, 92-93.

solstice; and, consequently, that the Tropical Year anciently in use among the Egyptians commenced at the winter solstice, when all things in Egypt begin anew.¹

Obviously, the Egyptians were well aware of the winter solstice, which they evidently identified with Osiris and other gods at some point and which during certain eras or in various places opened with Egyptian year.

Concerning these important times of the year, astronomer Sir Lockyer remarks:

Did the ancients know anything about these solstices and these equinoxes? That is one of the questions which we have to discuss. Dealing with the monumental evidence in Egypt alone, the answer is absolutely overwhelming.²

Lockyer next describes a number of astronomical alignments of various monuments and buildings in Egypt, beginning with the temple enclosure at Karnak. Calling the temple of Amen-Ra at Karnak the "finest Egyptian solar temple" and "the most majestic ruin in the world,"³ Lockyer dated its foundation to 3700 BCE, using astronomical measurements.⁴ Encompassing twice the area covered by St. Peter's in Rome, the complex comprised "two temples in the same line back to back, the chief one facing the sunset at the summer solstice, the other probably the sunrise at the winter solstice."⁵ Concerning the smaller temple, Lockyer states:

The amplitude of the point to which the axis of the small temple points is 26° S. of E., exactly the position of sunrise at the winter solstice.

There is more evidence of this kind....⁶

Lockyer then discusses the colossal statues of Amenhetep III on the plain of Thebes, which were oriented to watch "for the rising of the sun at the winter solstice."⁷

Astronomer Dr. Edwin C. Krupp likewise comments on the winter-solstice alignment of Egyptian buildings:

Winter solstice sunrise alignment was also found at the solar sanctuary in Hatshepsut's mortuary temple at Deir el-Bahri, and these sanctuaries were linked with the Egyptian beliefs about the passage of Re through the netherworld and the transformation of the soul of the deceased pharaoh.⁸

The Temple of Amun-Ra at Abu Simbel, built by Ramses II, ranks as another edifice aligned with sunrise at the winter solstice.⁹

In the *Encyclopedia of the Archaeology of Ancient Egypt* ("EAAE") appears a discussion of the small temple at Aghurmi in the Siwa Oasis. This temple possesses a window in the west wall of the sanctuary that connects with an opposite window opposite, producing a light-shaft which illuminates the "god's barge naos in the center of the sanctuary." *EAAE* then states:

¹ Poole, 4-5.

² Lockyer, *Nature*, 10.

³ Lockyer, *TDA*, 99.

⁴ Lockyer, *TDA*, 119.

⁵ Lockyer, *TDA*, 102.

⁶ Lockyer, *Nature*, 57.

⁷ Lockyer, *Nature*, 57; *TDA*, 79.

⁸ Krupp, xii.

⁹ Clark, 147, 193.

The fact that Onuris and Tefnut are represented right next to this window and the mythology connected with these two gods suggest that occurrence of this event to have coincided with the winter solstice.¹

Hence, we find multiple astronomical alignments proving that the ancient Egyptians highly valued the winter solstice.

Moreover, a number of ancient Egyptian water clocks, such as at Karnak, were designed to measure the winter and summer solstices.² Indeed, that the Egyptians were keen measurers of time may be seen in an inscription from the tomb of the Karnak clock's creator, a "certain official" named Amenemhet who was buried "near the top of the hill of Sheikh Abd el-Gurna in Western Thebes." This very ancient inscription describes the measurements of the "longest night of wintertime" and the "shortest night of summertime," the former of which, of course, would be the winter solstice and the latter, the summer. This inscription also refers to Egyptian sacred literature as "the books of the divine word,"³ demonstrating the reverence with which these texts were held, no less than the holy books of today. The official in question dedicated his clock to Amenhotep I, who reigned in the 18th Dynasty, during the 16th century BCE.

In *Ancient Egyptian Science*, professor of Historical Studies Dr. Marshall Clagett (1916-2005) depicts another ancient Egyptian clock used to measure the equinoxes and solstices:

The first (and indeed only) Egyptian technical description of an ancient Egyptian shadow clock is found in an inscription in the cenotaph of Seti I (ca. 1306-1290 [BCE])...⁴

Dr. Clagett also describes an Egyptian sundial from Luxor that apparently dates to the "Greco-Roman period" and that possesses marks to measure, among other things, the winter solstice.⁵

As another example of Egyptian astronomical knowledge and the particular importance of the winter solstice, in 46 BCE famed Alexandria astronomer Sosigenes created a new solar calendar for Julius Caesar, called the Julian Calendar: "The new system, depending wholly on the sun, would naturally have commenced with the winter solstice,"⁶ called *bruma* in Latin, one source of the Roman celebration the Brumalia.⁷

In *The Sacred Tradition in Ancient Egypt*, Rosemary Clark describes another festival that purportedly took place on the winter solstice:

As the winter solstice denotes the literal decline of solar light, festivals celebrated at this time are connected with the renewal of the life force. One of these festivals was the annual raising of the Djed pillar of Asar [Osiris] at his great temple at Busiris in Lower Egypt. This was a symbolic restoration of the Neter's [God's] life, an event

¹ EAAE, 742.

² So closely have the Egyptian gods been associated with time that it has been repeatedly claimed that the name Horus has been brought forth into English in the word "hours." In his translation of Diodorus, Edwin Murphy—who is not prone to fantasy—remarks, "Horus was also said to have first divided the day into *hours*, which still reflect his name." (Siculus/Murphy, 32, footnote 51.)

³ Clagett, 69-70.

⁴ Clagett, 84, 86-87.

⁵ Clagett, 96-97.

⁶ Froude, 425.

⁷ The dates of the Brumalia, a Bacchic or Dionysian festival, have been reckoned as March 12th and September 18th. However, Bell relates that "there are others who say that the Brumalia was a religious festival, celebrated on the day of the winter solstice." This confusion evidently comes from two different terms as the basis for "Brumalia," one referring to the "shortest day" and the other to Bacchus/Dionysus. (Bell, 141)

which followed a ritual reenactment of an episode in the great Osirian mythos, The Contendings of Heru [Horus] and Set. It took place, according to ancient records, on the 30th of Choiach [Khoiak], a time coinciding with the end of the Nile's inundation over the land. In our calendar the festival begins on December 10 and culminates at the winter solstice (December 22).¹

The djed-pillar is a very ancient "cult icon of Osiris" that was "erected in a rite symbolizing Osiris's revivification after death."² The raising of the djed-pillar at Busiris is mentioned in chapter 18 of the Book of the Dead. The month of Choiach/Khoiak/Koiak corresponding to December comes from the Coptic calendar and is presumably an accurate rendering of an ancient Egyptian dating system. In *Calendrical Calculations*, Professors Dershowitz and Reingold state:

The Christian Copts, modern descendants of the Pharaonic Egyptians, use a calendar based on the ancient Egyptian solar calendar...but with leap years.³

Dershowitz and Reingold further say that "the Copts celebrate Christmas on Koiak 29 (which is always either December 25 or 26 on the Julian calendar)..."⁴

Modern Egyptians also still celebrate a festival around the vernal equinox called "Sham el-Nessim," or "Shamo," which traditionally occurs in April and closely resembles the Western celebration of Easter. Since this spring festival is estimated to date to at least 4,500 years ago, it would be reasonable to assert that comparable winter-solstice celebrations may approach that age in Egypt as well.

Knowing all these facts, it is logical and rational to assume that Plutarch and Macrobius were not in error in their reports about the Egyptian sun god celebrated at the winter solstice. If Macrobius is correct in his assertions that the Egyptians brought out an image of the baby sun at the winter solstice, we have no credible, scientific reason to dismiss Plutarch's statement regarding Harpocrates/Horus being this baby sun born at the winter solstice, especially since many of his contentions can be verified by the hieroglyphics, as stated by Budge.

In fact, the "restoration of Osiris" at the winter solstice—which would essentially constitute his rebirth in Horus—is also related by Plutarch:

Moreover, at the time of the winter solstice they lead the cow seven times around the temple of the Sun and this circumambulation is called the Seeking for Osiris, since the Goddess in the winter-time yearns for water; so many times do they go around, because in the seventh month the Sun completes the transition from the winter solstice to the summer solstice. It is said also that Horus, the son of Isis, offered sacrifice to the Sun first of all on the fourth day of the month, as is written in the records entitled the Birthdays of Horus.⁵

Although here Plutarch discusses Osiris's water aspect, logic would indicate that the god's *solar* nature was also being sought at the winter solstice, when the sun is viewed as "weakening," "dying" or otherwise diminishing, in line with the shortening days of the years.

Furthermore, the "Seeking of Osiris" at the solstice is confirmed by the conservative *Encyclopedia Britannica* as one of the Egyptians' "most characteristic celebrations":

¹ Clark, 131.

² Allen, J., *TAEPT*, 428.

³ Dershowitz, 73.

⁴ Dershowitz, 77.

⁵ Plutarch/Babbitt, 127.

Among those most characteristic celebrations of the Egyptians were those which took place at the ἀφανισμός or disappearance of Osiris in October or November, at the search for his remains, and their discovery about the winter solstice...¹

The discovery of Osiris's remains at the winter solstice means that he was "born again" at that time, since he was thereafter resuscitated. Because Horus and Osiris were one and interchangeable, the new sun replacing the old, it could be truthfully stated that the "rebirth" of Osiris at the winter solstice represents the "new birth" of Horus. Hence, again we find Horus being born on December 25th.

The winter-solstice motif is also represented in the story related by Plutarch of Osiris being shut up in his ark *during the sign of Scorpio*, the "backbiter," who robs the sun of its strength as it nears the death of winter. Horus being killed by a scorpion would likewise represent the same theme.

Obviously, it would be fascinating to inspect the ancient "records entitled the Birthdays of Horus" to which Plutarch refers. It is possible these texts could be found in the Library of Alexandria, which unfortunately was destroyed, taking with it a vast amount of human culture and knowledge, including many of these mysteries and secrets. Again, when we hear the clamor for "primary sources," we are reminded of this heinous destruction of ancient culture, often by religious fanatics trying to prevent the truth from becoming known.

In the same vein as Plutarch, and quite possibly discussing the same records or text, in his treatise on the *dual birthdays of Horus*—one at the vernal equinox and the other at the winter solstice—Massey refers to "the Egyptian Book of the Divine Birth":

The double birth of Horus at the two times, or the birth of the babe in the winter solstice and the rebirth as the adult in the Easter equinox is acknowledged in the Egyptian Book of the Divine Birth. The celebration of the Nativity at the solstice is referred to in the calendar of Edfu, and it is said that "everything is performed which is ordained" in the "Book of the Divine Birth."²

The text Massey is referring to was also mentioned by Austrian professor Dr. J. Krall, quoted by Lockyer:

On the 6th of Pachons...the solstice is then celebrated. The Uza-eye is then filled, a mythical act which we have in another place referred to the celebration of the solstice, and "everything is performed which is ordained" in the book "on the Divine birth."³

This solstice that is celebrated on the 6th of Pachons is that of the summer, once again demonstrating the significance of that time of year. The "Uza-eye" being filled apparently refers to the Eye of the Sun (Ra and/or Horus) approaching its culminating strength at the summer solstice.

According to Lockyer, Krall also discusses an inscription discovered at both Edfu and Esne "which seems to have astronomical significance." This inscription describes a feast day during the period of "1. Phamenoth" called the "Festival of the suspension of the sky by Ptah" or the "Feast of the suspension of the sky."⁴ In chapter 43 of "Isis and Osiris," Plutarch also remarks upon a festival that falls on the new moon in the month of Phamenoth called "Osiris's coming to the Moon," which the historian says "marks the beginning of

¹ *EB*, 221.

² Massey, *AE*, 572.

³ Lockyer, *TDA*, 284-285.

⁴ Lockyer, *TDA*, 284.

spring."¹ However, Krall clarifies these festivals as being "connected with the celebration of the Winter Solstice, and the filling of the Uza-eye..." He then continues:

Perhaps the old year, which the Egyptians introduced into the Nile valley at the time of their immigration, and which had only 360 days, commenced at the Winter Solstice. Thus we should have in the "festival of the suspension of the sky" by the ancient god Ptah—venerated as creator of the world—a remnant of the time when the Winter Solstice...marked the beginning of the year, and also the creation.²

As we have seen on the very good authority of Dr. Poole, the Egyptian year at one point apparently began with the winter solstice. Adding to this notion is the suggestion that this period preceded the adjustment of the Egyptian 360-calendar with the addition of the five intercalary or epagomenal days. The god Ptah is the very ancient Father-Creator figure who, in "suspending the sky," resembles other Egyptian deities such as Isis and Horus with arms outstretched in the vault of heaven, as well as the Greek god Atlas supporting the world on his shoulders, and various renderings of the Christian Father and Son depicted as holding up the heavens.

In *On Mankind: Their Origin and Destiny*, Arthur Thomson summarizes the story of the baby sun at the winter solstice, who was born of a *virgin mother*, specifically as applied to Horus and Isis:

The Egyptians did in fact celebrate at the winter solstice the birth of the son of Isis (Plut. De Iside), and the delivery of the goddess who had brought this young child into the world, feeble and weak, and in the midst of the darkest night. This child, according to Macrobius, was the god of light, Apollo, or the sun, painted with his head shorn of his beaming hair, his head shaved, and with only a single hair left. By this, says Macrobius, the dimness of the light at the winter solstice, and the shortness of the days as well as the darkness of the deep cave in which this god seemed to be born, and from which he issued forth to rise in the direction of the northern hemisphere and the summer solstice, in which he reassumed his dominion and his glory, was indicated...

It was this child of whom the virgin Isis called herself the mother in the inscription over her temple at Sais (Plut. De Iside) which contained the words, "The fruit which I have begotten is the sun." (Procl. in Tim. p. 30). This Isis of Sais has been correctly assumed by Plutarch to be the chaste Minerva, who, without fearing to lose her name of virgin, nevertheless says of herself that she is the mother of the sun. This Isis cannot be the moon, for she would never be called the mother of the star whose light she borrows. She is the Virgin of the constellations, who is called by Eratosthenes, a learned Alexandrian (Eratosthen. cap. vii.), Ceres or Isis; that Isis who opened the year, and presided over the birth of the new solar revolution, and of the god of day—in a word, of her in whose arms we shall soon see the symbolic child.³

As another version of the solar hero, the Greek god Dionysus too was asserted to have been born at the winter solstice, when his followers held a wild celebration in his and the sun god Apollo's honor.⁴ This winter-solstice birth may also have come with Dionysus's identification with Osiris, since, as Plutarch states (35), "Osiris is identical with Dionysus."⁵

¹ Plutarch/Babbitt, 105-106.

² Lockyer, *TDA*, 284.

³ Thomson, 468-469.

⁴ Sophocles, 136fn.

⁵ Plutarch/Babbitt, 85.

Concerning winter solstice "Feasts and Festivals," the Encyclopedia Britannica further reports:

The common people in China have a similar custom on the arrival of the winter solstice...

...The Phrygian festivals were also arranged on the theory that the deity was asleep during the winter and awake during the summer...¹

The EB also names several other cultures as having winter celebrations, including the Mexicans and Peruvians. Of course, the Romans were famed for their lengthy winter festival of Saturnalia, which encompassed the solstice. Even the lunar Jews had their winter holiday, or "Feast of the Dedication," as mentioned in John 10:22. As we can see, the celebration at the winter solstice represents an ancient tradition.²

Christian Sun Worship?

The fact that this highly important solar festival was not added to the Christ myth until centuries after the purported advent of Jesus does not make it any less significant or him any less of a solar hero himself. Indeed, so common was the claim that *Christians worshipped the sun* that Church fathers such as Tertullian (c. 155-230) and Augustine (354-430) were compelled to write refutations of it. In *Ad Nationes* (I, 13), Tertullian writes:

The Charge of Worshipping the Sun Met by a Retort.

...Others, with greater regard to good manners, it must be confessed, suppose that the sun is the god of the Christians, because it is a well-known fact that we pray towards the east, or because we make Sunday a day of festivity. What then? Do you do less than this? Do not many among you, with an affectation of sometimes worshipping the heavenly bodies likewise, move your lips in the direction of the sunrise?

Once more, in his *Apology* (16), Tertullian addresses what appears to be a widespread insight that he surprisingly asserts comes from those with "more information" and "greater verisimilitude" or *truth*:

...Others, again, certainly with more information and greater verisimilitude, believe that the sun is our god. We shall be counted Persians perhaps, though we do not worship the orb of day painted on a piece of linen cloth, having himself everywhere in his own disk. The idea no doubt has originated from our being known to turn to the east in prayer. But you, many of you, also under pretence sometimes of worshipping the heavenly bodies, move your lips in the direction of the sunrise.

These contentions of Christian sun worship evidently continued well into the fifth century, as St. Augustine also was forced to address them in his *Tractates on the Gospel of John* (34).³

Adding to the suggestion of sun worship, the orientation of Christian churches towards solar alignments is well known, as explained by Sir Lockyer:

All our churches are more or less oriented, which is a remnant of old sun-worship. Any church that is properly built today will have its axis pointing to the rising of the sun on the Saint's Day, i.e., a church dedicated to St. John ought not to be parallel to a church dedicated to St. Peter.... Certainly in the early centuries the churches

¹ EB, 220.

² A more in-depth study of the subject is provided in my book *Suns of God*.

³ For more on the subject of Christianity and sun worship, see my books *The Christ Conspiracy* and *Suns of God*.

were all oriented to the sun, so the light fell on the altar through the eastern doors at sunrise.¹

There are in reality numerous astrotheological characteristics within Christianity, many of which can be found in my books *The Christ Conspiracy* and *Suns of God*.

It is likely that anyone who wished to turn the popular and powerful sun god into a Jewish messiah, as we contend was done, would not immediately attach anything so obvious as the most popular solar festival—the birth of the sun god himself—to the myth they were attempting to propagate as "history." The fact that this celebration eventually was added to the expanding Christian mythology indicates: 1. The powers that be had some inkling as to what they were dealing with, i.e., a solar myth; and 2. No birthday of Jesus was previously celebrated to any significant degree. Indeed, the December 25th date is in reality one of *many* birthdays for Christ proposed by the various Church fathers and Christian authorities over the centuries.² If Jesus Christ were a historical figure, it is perplexing that no one knew his real birthday and that there were so many suggestions, a number of which also possessed astronomical or astrotheological meaning. In the end, the December 25th birthday represents the birth not of the Jewish messiah but of the *sun*.

¹ Lockyer, *TDA*, 95-96.

² Acharya/Murdock, *SOG*, 231, et seq.

The Virgin Isis-Mery

"...at the last, when [Osiris's] cult disappeared before the religion of the Man Christ, the Egyptians who embraced Christianity found that the moral system of the old cult and that of the new religion were so similar, and the promises of resurrection and immortality in each so much alike, that they transferred their allegiance from Osiris to Jesus of Nazareth without difficulty. Moreover, **Isis and the child Horus were straightway identified with Mary the Virgin and her Son**, and in the apocryphal literature of the first few centuries which followed the evangelization of Egypt, several of the legends about Isis and her sorrowful wanderings were made to centre round the Mother of Christ. *Certain of the attributes of the sister goddesses of Isis were also ascribed to her, and, like the goddess Neith of Sais, she was declared to possess perpetual virginity.* Certain of the Egyptian Christian Fathers gave to the Virgin the title 'Theotokos,' or 'Mother of God,' forgetting, apparently, that it was an exact translation of *neter mut*, a very old and common title of Isis."

Dr. E.A. Wallis Budge, *The Gods of Egypt* (xv-xvi)

"...Horus was not the only sun-god recognised by the Egyptians. His own father Osiris, the Savior (of whom Horus was a re-incarnation), was born—also at the winter solstice—of an immaculate virgin, the goddess Neith, who, like Isis, the mother of Horus, was known by the titles of Mother of God, Immaculate Virgin, Queen of Heaven, Star of the Sea, The Morning Star, The Intercessor."

William Williamson, *The Great Law: A Study of Religious Origins* (26)

Over the centuries, a number of individuals have brought to attention the obvious correspondences between the Christian Madonna and Child and the images of the great goddess Isis holding and suckling her babe, Horus. There are many pre-Christian images of Isis and Horus in this "Madonna and Child" pose, and it has been asserted by not a few people, quite logically, that the Christian iconography is directly based upon this extremely popular Egyptian image. Furthermore, it has been claimed repeatedly that, like her Christian counterpart, the Egyptian Mother of God was deemed an "immaculate virgin."¹ In addition, it has been evinced that the two Divine Mothers even shared the same name, with Jesus's mother named "Mary," of course, while Horus's mother possessed the epithet of "Meri" or "Mery," as the *Egyptian* word is transliterated by several authors including famed Egyptologist Dr. W.M. Flinders Petrie.² In addition to the fact that there have been pre-Christian goddesses named "Mari," such as on the Greek island of Cyprus,³ this epithet "Meri" or "Mery" in Egyptian simply means "beloved" or "delight," and we would thus expect it to have been applied many times to Isis at some point in the history of her long reverence by millions of people around the Mediterranean.

In reality, the epithet *meri/mery* was so commonly used in regard to numerous figures in ancient Egypt, such as gods, kings, priests, government officials and others, that we could not list here all of the instances in which it appears. For example, *many* Egyptian kings and authorities bore the appellation of "Meri," including Meri-ab-taui, Meri-Amen-setep, Meri-Aten, Meri-ka-Ra, Meri-mes, Meri-neter and so on.⁴ Some of these royal epithets represent

¹ Cf. Acharya/Murdock, *SOG*, 200-201.

² Petrie, 139.

³ Graves, 326.

⁴ Budge, *BKE*, 243.

"Horus names," while Horus himself is called "beloved"—i.e., *meri*—in the Book of the Dead.¹ Indeed, one of Horus's common titles is *Se-meri-f*: "the Beloved Son."²

The famous pharaoh Ramses II's wife, Nefertari, was also named *Mery Mut*,³ "Beloved Mother" or "Mother Mary," so to speak, long before the Christian era. Another queen was named "Merneith," a compound of *mery* with the goddess name Neith.⁴ Hence, in consideration of the fact that Neith was a *virgin mother*,⁵ in this name we possess the concept of a "virgin Mery" long prior to the Christian era. Obviously, the Egyptian name was not in English; nor was the "Virgin Mary" called as much in the ancient Greek texts in which her story was originally told. The point is that the Egyptians who would later become Christians were already familiar with a virgin mother of God named Mery.⁶

Several gods in addition to Horus, such as Ra and Amen, also had the epithet *meri/mery* attached to their names: Ra-Meri or Meri-Ra and Amen-Meri or Meri-Amen, meaning "beloved of Ra" or "beloved Ra" and "beloved of Amen" or "beloved Amen." The god Ptah was likewise deemed "beloved," as in "Ptah-Meri."⁷ Even Egypt itself is called Ta-Meri—"beloved land."⁸

In an inscription regarding one of the Greek rulers of Egypt called the Ptolemies, we find a reference to "Horus, son of Isis, beloved," the word for "beloved" being *meri/mery*. It is unclear exactly who is being called "beloved," Horus, Isis or the Ptolemy, but it certainly could be Isis described as *mery*.

As is also common with gods and goddesses, and especially in the Egyptian religion, gods and their epithets are frequently interchangeable with one another, representing the ultimate oneness expressed in ancient Egyptian spirituality. For example, in the chapter of the "Deification of the Members" from the Ritual (Papyrus of Ani), we find the following: "The head of this Meri-Ra is the head of Horus... The eyes of this Meri-Ra are the eyes of the Great Lady," i.e., Isis.⁹ Thus, it could be said that Meri-Ra is equivalent to both Horus and Isis.

Moreover, in the cartouches of several Egyptian kings we find references to "Auset Meri," or "Isis beloved,"¹⁰ including in that of the king Thekeleth or Takeleth II, who is called "Amen-meri Auset-Meri."¹¹ In fact, Caesar Augustus's cartouche likewise contained the epithet

¹ Renouf, 150.

² Renouf, 54.

³ Petrie, 82.

⁴ Rice, 126.

⁵ Tiele, *OHR*, 50.

⁶ In the original Greek of the New Testament, of course, the name for Jesus's mother is "Maria." However, one must ask why the name was shortened in English to "Mary"—was it because, centuries into the common era, Isis remained a *beloved* goddess surnamed "Mery?" When was Maria first called "Mary," and by what mechanism did this change occur? Early Christians noted the similarity between Maria and "mare" or "mari," meaning "sea" in Latin, as in "stella maris." Thus, it appears that Mary was called as such fairly early, certainly long before the time Isis worship had disappeared openly. In any event, it is beyond "coincidence" that *the Egyptian virgin mother of God was called Mery centuries before the Jewish virgin mother of God was likewise termed.*

⁷ Budge, *AHE*, 40.

⁸ Budge, *AHE*, 306.

⁹ Budge, *PA*, 95.

¹⁰ Budge, *TM*, 102, et seq.

¹¹ Budge, *AGTSER*, 206.

"Ptah Auset-Meri" or "Ptah and Isis Beloved."¹ Also, Isis was apparently called "his beloved one," or *Meri-f-u*, the "his" referring to Horus.²

In an article in *The Contemporary Review* under the entry for "Miriam"—the Jewish name for Mary—Dr. W. Robertson Smith ventures a derivation from "probably the Egyptian Meri-(t)," meaning, "beloved, a woman's name..."³ Since the name Miriam in Hebrew is said to mean "rebellion," this last point is debatable, as is frequently the case within the field of etymology. Nevertheless, the same logical association of *Meri* and *Mary* is posited by Rev. Henry Tompkins in *Journal of the Transactions of the Victoria Institute*: "May not Miriam be one of the many Egyptian names beginning with Meri?"⁴

In any event, the assertion that Horus's mother was called "Mery" is a sound and important one, as is the claim that, like Jesus's, his mother was a *virgin*. Indeed, verifying this Egyptian claim to a virgin birth, Bonwick relates:

In an ancient Christian work, called the "Chronicle of Alexandria," occurs the following: "Watch how Egypt has consecrated the childbirth of a virgin, and the birth of her son, who was exposed in a crib to all the adoration of the people..."⁵

The "Chronicle of Alexandria" or *Chronicum Alexandrinum* is also called the "Paschal Chronicle" or *Chronicon Paschale*, a Christian work begun in the 3rd century and finished in the 7th century.⁶

In *The Origin of All Religious Worship*, French Abbé Charles Dupuis relates the same information:

...the author of the Chronicle of Alexandria...expresses himself in the following words: "The Egyptians have consecrated up to this day the child-birth of a virgin and the nativity of her son, who is exposed in a 'crib' to the adoration of the people. King Ptolemy, having asked the reason of this custom, he was answered that it was a mystery, taught by a respectable prophet to their fathers."⁷

Also verifying these assertions, Arthur D. Thomson states:

The Chronicle of Alexandria has preserved the tradition of the practice of exhibiting the sun on the supposed day of his birth as a new-born infant as being held sacred in the mysteries of Egypt... "Up to the present time Egypt has held sacred the delivery of a virgin and the birth of her son, who is exposed in a cradle to the adoration of the people. King Ptolemy having asked the reason of this practice, the Egyptians told him that it was a mystery taught to their ancestors by a venerable prophet."⁸

The part about Ptolemy and the mysteries is important, for a couple of reasons: 1. It means that this custom of bringing forth the newborn sun of the virgin mother dated back at least to the time of Ptolemy Soter, three centuries prior to the Christian era; and 2. The custom being a *mystery* indicates it was not widely known by the masses or exposed by initiates under the penalty of death, such that we do not find it recorded in numerous sources from the pertinent era. We do, however, possess this curious passage from the Christian text the *Chronicon Paschale*. Citing the *Chronicum Alexandrinum* (366) as his source, Thompson

¹ Budge, *CH*, 211.

² Gordon, 460.

³ *TCR*, 362.

⁴ *JTVI*, 137.

⁵ Bonwick, 143.

⁶ On p. 256, McCabe relates that the pertinent passage of the *Chronicon Paschale* may be found in Migne's *Patrologia Graeca*, xcii, or "PG92," col. 385.

⁷ Dupuis, 237.

⁸ Thomson, 481.

provides the original Greek, which does indeed say what it is alleged to relate, the pertinent word here being *parthenos* or "virgin."¹

The assertion that Horus's mother was a virgin can also be found in the Book of the Dead, chapter 66, in which the deceased identifies himself as Horus and says: "I know that I have been conceived by Sechit and that I am born of Neith."² Budge's translation of the same passage from ch. 66 is as follows:

"I was conceived by the goddess Sekhet, and the goddess Neith gave birth to me. I am Horus..."³

Sechit or Sekhet is the wife of Ptah and mother of the god Atum, representing the "second personage of the Memphis triad,"⁴ one of the Egyptian "holy trinities." Identified with the goddess Hathor,⁵ who in turn is identified with Isis, Sekhet represents another form of the Dawn goddess.⁶ Not surprisingly, in the mythology of other cultures, such as the Indian and Greek, appears the same theme of the personified and deified Dawn giving birth to the sun—the *inviolable or virgin mother*.⁷

In addition, in this ancient text we possess an identification of the mother of Horus as the goddess Neith, who is by all accounts a virgin mother from thousands of years prior to the Christian era. In fact, some scholarship provides for estimates of the pre-historic Neith's worship dating back some 7,000 years.⁸

Regarding the important and ancient goddess Neith, from whom Horus is said to have been born, Budge states:

And the priests of the goddess Net (Neith) of Sais...held the view that she was self-begotten and self-produced, that she was the mother of the Sun-god, and at the same time a perpetual virgin-goddess.⁹

Moreover, in a startling series of admissions concerning Isis, sincere Christian Budge further remarks:

...it is clear that early Christians bestowed some of her attributes upon the Virgin Mary. There is little doubt that in her character of the loving and protecting mother she appealed strongly to the imagination of all the Eastern peoples among whom her cult came, and that the pictures and sculptures wherein she is represented in the act of suckling her child Horus formed the foundation for the Christian figures and paintings of the Madonna and Child. Several of the incidents of the wanderings of the Virgin with the Child in Egypt as recorded in the Apocryphal Gospels reflect scenes in the life of Isis as described in the texts found on the Metternich Stele, and *many of the attributes of Isis, the God-mother, the mother of Horus, and of Neith, the goddess of Sais, are identical with those of Mary the Mother of Christ*. The writers of the Apocryphal Gospels intended to pay additional honour to Mary the Virgin by

¹ "Εως νυν Αιγυπτιοι θεοποιουσιν Παρθενου λοχον και Βρεφος εν Φατνη τιθεντες προσκυνουσιν. Και Πτολεμαιω τω Βασιλει την αιτιαν πυνθανομενω ελεγον, οτι παραδοτον εστι μυστηριον υπο οσιου Προφητου τοις πατρασιν ημων παραδοθεν." This citation appears to refer to a version published in the 17th century.

² Renouf, 128.

³ Budge, *EBD* (Routledge), 228.

⁴ Wilkinson, 39.

⁵ Lockyer, *TDA*, 211.

⁶ Lockyer, *TDA*, 31.

⁷ Cf. Acharya/Murdock, *SOG*, 178, 180, 182, 199, 202, 205, 214, 222.

⁸ Bonwick, 114.

⁹ Budge, *ASH*, 168-169.

ascribing to her the attributes which up to the time of the advent of Christianity they had regarded as the peculiar property of Isis and Neith and other great indigenous goddesses, and if the parallels between the mythology history of Isis and Horus and the history of Mary and the Child be considered, *it is difficult to see how they could possibly avoid perceiving in the teachings of Christianity reflections of the best and most spiritual doctrines of the Egyptian religion. The doctrine of parthenogenesis was well known in Egypt in connexion with the goddess Neith of Sais centuries before the birth of Christ*; and the belief in the conception of Horus by Isis through the power given her by Thoth, the Intelligence or Mind of the God of the universe, and in the resurrection of the body and of everlasting life, is coeval with the beginnings of history in Egypt. We may note too in passing the probability that many of the heresies of the early Christian Church in Egypt were caused by the survival of ideas and beliefs connected with the old native gods which the converts to Christianity wished to adapt to their new creed.¹

Essentially Budge is indicating that much of the Christian religion and tradition is related to the Egyptian religion, including *direct lifts* of attributes from Egyptian goddesses later ascribed to the Virgin Mary. Budge states definitively that "partheno-genesis"—*virgin birth*—was known in Egypt *centuries prior to the Christian era*, specifically as concerns the goddess Neith.

Of Neith, Bonwick likewise states, "Neith or Nout is neither more nor less than the *Great Mother*, and yet the *Immaculate Virgin*, or female god, from whose bosom all things has proceeded."² Again, Budge states, "She was the Virgin-mother of the Sun-god, and the 'Mother-goddess' of the Western Delta."³

In his *History of the Egyptian Religion*, Dr. Cornelius P. Tiele (1830-1902), a professor of the History of Religions at the University of Leiden, likewise commented on the virginity of Neith:

...Neith is distinguished...by being a virgin goddess. This is expressed in the words inscribed on her temple, "My garment no one has lifted up," which is immediately followed by, "The fruit that I have borne is the sun." She is thus the virgin mother of the sun...⁴

In *Religious Systems of the World*, Dr. Tiele also refers to "Isis the virgin."⁵ As Neith gives birth to the sun god Ra (and Horus), so too does Isis give birth to the sun god Horus. In reality, Isis is a later form of Neith, the two combined as "Isis-Neith" or "Neith-Isis." Budge also states that Neith was "identified with Hathor and Isis."

The goddess Neith was celebrated at the Egyptian site of Sais, where she had a temple, also dedicated to her alter-ego Isis. Budge further discloses that "at Sais there were several chambers in which the 'Mysteries' of the ancient Virgin Mother-goddess Neith were celebrated."⁶ According to Plutarch (ch. 9), "In Saïs the statue of Athena, whom they believe to be Isis, bore the mysterious inscription: 'I am all that has been, and is, and shall be, and my robe no mortal has yet uncovered.'"⁷ As noted, this inscription at Sais finished with the sentence, "The fruit I have produced is the sun."

¹ Budge, *TGE*, II, 220. (Emph. added.)

² Bonwick, 115.

³ Budge, *FFGAE*, 59.

⁴ Tiele, *CHEMR*, 204.

⁵ *RSW*, 214.

⁶ Budge, *FFGAE*, 25.

⁷ Plutarch/Babbitt, 25.

Regarding this inscription at Sais, Thomson remarks:

Proclus, who, as well as Plutarch, has given the inscription over the temple of the Virgin of Sais, the mother of the sun, whom they both say is identical with Minerva [Athena], speaking of the seat of this goddess in the heavens, gives her two places—the one near Aries, or the equinoctial Lamb, whose form the god of light assumes in spring, and other in the celestial Virgin, or in the sign which presides at her birth (Procl. in Tim. p. 43); so that it appears that Isis, the mother of the sun, to whom the temple at Sais was dedicated, was the same that Eratosthenes places in the constellation Virgo, which opened that year. The symbolic representation of the year itself was a woman called Isis, according to Horapollo (vol. I. cap. iii.). It was in honour of this same virgin, the image of the pure and luminous substance, that the celebrated feast of lights (on which Candlemas, or the feast of Lights of the Purification, is founded) and was celebrated.¹

In his *Commentary on Plato's Timaeus*, Greek neoplatonist Proclus (c. 412-485 AD/CE) also discusses the city of Sais, the founding goddess of which is Neith, whom he likewise says the Egyptians equate with the Greek goddess Athena.² Proclus's rendition in Greek of the inscription at Sais is as follows:

τα οντα και τα εσομενα και τα γεγονοτα εγω ειμι. τον εμον χιτωνα ουδεις απεκαλυψεν. ον εγω καρπον ετεκον, ηλιος εγενετο.³

My very literal translation of this inscription is as follows:

The present and the future and the past, I am. My undergarment no one has uncovered. The fruit I begot, the sun came into being.

Regarding the meaning of the statement concerning no one uncovering Neith's garment, William Coleman remarks:

The point is this: Does the expression, "lifting the garment"...of Neith refer to her perpetual virginity or to her inscrutability? There is not a shadow of doubt that it refers to the former, and I am confident that every Egyptologist in the world will so decide.⁴

The general interpretation of this inscription is that Neith, one of the most important deities of the Egyptian pantheon, is not only the "Alpha and Omega," so to speak, but also the *involute* begetter of the sun, the Immaculate Virgin *and* Great Mother. The fact of her association with the Greek goddess Athena—herself a chaste and pristine virgin, as indicated by the name of her temple at Athens, the *Parthenon*—confirms Neith's esteemed virginal status. Also, that the perpetual virginity of the goddess was a *mystery* is indicated by both Plutarch and Budge, the former of whom further identifies the virginal goddess at Sais as *Isis*.

Among other attributes, scholars have found in Neith a representation of both the winter solstice and the summer solstice, as well as the sun itself.⁵ The suggestion that Neith—who gives birth to the sun—is also the winter solstice lends credence to the assertion that Horus was born on the winter solstice, especially since in the Book of the Dead Horus says he is born of Neith, further validating the inscription at Sais.

¹ Thomson, 468-469.

² Proclus (Tim. 21E), 97.

³ Proclus (Tim. 21E), 98.

⁴ Coleman, 66.

⁵ Bonwick, 117.

As stated, in the myths of other cultures, the "inviolable begetter of the sun" is the dawn, personified as a chaste goddess. Indeed, concerning Isis, Budge remarks, "As a nature goddess she is seen standing in the boat of the sun, and she was probably the deity of the dawn."¹ Royal astronomer Sir J. Norman Lockyer concurs. "*Isis* represents the Dawn and the Twilight; she prepares the way for the Sun-god."² Interestingly, Budge names Neith and Isis as among the goddesses who are "names of the Sky, especially at sun-rise and sun-set." (*AGFSER*, 2) That fact would make of Neith also a dawn goddess, and once again the identification of Neith with Isis is made.

Concerning the identification of Isis with Neith, whose virginal state long prior to the Christian era has been attested by a number of sources, Bonwick likewise says of Isis: "She is seen to assume the role of Neith."³

It is erroneously claimed that, because in one version of the myth Isis impregnates herself with Osiris's severed phallus, she cannot be considered a "virgin." In the first place, we are discussing *myths*, not set-in-stone biographies of real people with the relevant body parts. In addition, there is at least one other version of the myth in which Isis merely hovers above Osiris's body in order to become pregnant with Horus, as illustrated in an image from Denderah,⁴ and the fact will remain that Isis was considered by many of her ardent worshippers to be *chaste* and *virginal* regardless of the manner in which she was impregnated.

Furthermore, in his eye-opening comparison of Isis with the Virgin Mary, Budge states that in the Osirian myth it is by *incantations*, *spells* and *words* that Isis draws the seed into herself to conceive Horus.⁵ Says Budge:

By these spells she, assisted by her son Horus and by Anubis, the divine physician, reconstituted and revived the body of Osiris, and thus created her son Horus, and recreated Osiris.⁶

The identification of Isis with the Virgin is further made in an ancient Greek text called *The Katasterismoi*, or *Catasterismi*, allegedly written by the astronomer Eratosthenes (276-194 BCE), who was for some 50 years the head librarian of the massive Library of Alexandria.⁷ Although the original of this text has been lost, an "epitome" credited to Eratosthenes in ancient times has been attributed by modern scholars to an anonymous "Pseudo-Eratosthenes" of the 1st to 2nd centuries AD/CE.⁸ In this book, the title of which translates as "Placing Among the Stars," appear discussions of the signs of the zodiac. In his essay on the zodiacal sign of Virgo (ch. 9), under the heading of "Parthenos," the author includes the goddess Isis among others such as Demeter, Atagartis and Tyche, as *identified with and as the constellation of the Virgin*.⁹ In *Star Myths of the Greeks and Romans*, Dr. Theony Condos translates the pertinent passage from the chapter "Virgo" by Pseudo-Eratosthenes thus:

¹ Budge, *EBD*, cxiv.

² Lockyer, *TDA*, 29. 31

³ Bonwick, 113.

⁴ Budge, *ER*, 80.

⁵ Budge, *LOLM*, liii.

⁶ Budge, *LOLM*, liii.

⁷ Condos, 17.

⁸ Condos, 18-19.

⁹ Eratosthenes, 244-245.

Hesiod in the Theogony says this figure is Dike, the daughter of Zeus and Themis... Some say it is Demeter because of the sheaf of grain she holds, others say it is Isis, others Atagartis, others Tyche...and for that reason they represent her as headless.¹

The headlessness of the goddess/constellation is interesting in consideration of the story that Isis too was at some point decapitated.² Thus, Isis was associated with the constellation of Virgo, the *Virgin*. In fact, as we know well, much of the myth surrounding Osiris, Isis and Horus is indeed astrological or astrotheological. Hence, in the myth of Isis and Horus appears the theme of the constellation of the Virgin giving birth to the baby sun at the winter solstice, long before the Christian era and undoubtedly serving as the germ for the Nativity story of Jesus Christ.

Nor is Neith-Isis the only pre-Christian and non-Christian virgin mother. In *Heroes and Heroines of Fiction*, William Shepard Walsh states:

Virgin-mothers. Long before the time of Christ, parthenogenesis, or reproduction by a virgin, was as familiar to ancient Greek, Egyptian and Oriental legend as it is to modern biology. Guatama [sic] Buddha was only one of many Oriental heroes whose mother was a virgin. The Egyptian Horus was conceived by Isis without the direct intervention of a male. Isis has been identified with the Greek Demeter, and Demeter also was a virgin, even when she bore a child, Persephone or Proserpine.³

As we have seen, it has been contended that the Greek earth mother Demeter/Ceres, who gave birth to the season-goddess Persephone/Kore, was said to be a virgin, equated with Virgo by Pseudo-Eratosthenes, for one. Regarding the virginal status of Demeter, the authoritative Christian publication *The New Schaff-Herzog Encyclopedia of Religious Knowledge*, in its entry on the "Virgin Birth," reports:

Nowhere, perhaps, has comparative religion discovered a more impressive instance of virgin birth than in the Eleusinian Mysteries. The supreme moment of the solemn celebration of these rites was marked by the marriage of the sacred mother and the birth of the sacred child. The mother was Brimo, a maiden, a goddess of the underworld, the Thessalian Kore or Demeter, the goddess of the fruits of the cultivated earth.... Thus at the very heart and culmination of the ceremonies at this sacred shrine in ancient Greece, centuries before its appearance in the Septuagint, the dogma had been created, "A virgin shall conceive and shall bear a son."⁴

Not only does this passage validate the claim that there were other, pre-Christian virgin births, but it also supports the notion that this motif of parthenogenesis constituted a *mystery*. Thus, this motif represented part of the famous Eleusinian Mysteries, which, we contend, is one of the reasons the virgin birth is not widely known, including in the myth of Isis, who also had her mysteries, evidently including her own perpetual virginity.

Mary is Mery Redux?

The similarities between the Egyptian and Christian mothers of God do not end with their names or perpetual virginity. Like the Virgin Mary turned away from an inn while with child, the pregnant Isis too is refused a "night's lodging."⁵ Also like Mary, who flees with the baby

¹ Condos, 205.

² Griffiths, 104.

³ Walsh, 344.

⁴ Schaff-Herzog, 212.

⁵ Budge, *LOLM*, liii-liiii.

Jesus into Egypt to escape the tyrant Herod, Isis must flee with the baby Horus to another part of Egypt to escape the tyrant Set.¹

Like Jesus, Isis is imbued with the ability to raise the dead, first resurrecting Osiris, and then, after Set as a scorpion stings the baby Horus to death, resurrecting her son as well.² Isis is also depicted as the healing deity, likewise saving the life of the sun god Ra, when he too was poisoned.³ Of Isis's healing abilities, Budge remarks, "The great Codices of the Book of the Dead written under the XVIIIth dynasty prove that the blood of Isis was believed to possess great magical protective powers."⁴ Thus, Isis's magical blood is like that of Christ. In addition, as Christians do with the Virgin Mary, Isis's female worshippers petitioned her to make them fertile and able to conceive.⁵ Isis's titles were many, including: "Divine Lady," "Greatest of gods and goddesses," "Queen of the gods," "Lady of heaven," "Holy one of heaven," "Great goddess of the Other World," "Mother of Horus," "Mother of the God," "Lady of Life," "Lady of joy and gladness" and "Queen of heaven."⁶

By the time of the common era, it would not be an exaggeration to say that Isis was the most important deity of the Roman Empire, and, as such, her influence cannot be overstated. Her millions of worshippers would no more simply forget her than would the devotees of the Virgin Mary today, without a very powerful and concerted effort to usurp her worship by setting up a competing cult, which is precisely what happened with Christianity. As Budge points out, the powerful gods of the Isian cult became widespread around the Mediterranean, including and especially in Greece, four to five centuries before the Christian era, with Isis one of the most popular gods at Rome by the first century BCE.⁷ From Rome, the cult of Isis spread throughout other parts of the Roman Empire, including Europe and Libya. At this point, these many worshippers of Isis all around the vast territory of the Empire perceived reality in the following manner:

...The resurrection of Osiris taught them to believe in the resurrection of the dead, the conception and birth of Horus, preached the doctrine of life arising out of death, the triumph of Horus over Set symbolized the ultimate victory of good over evil, and the sorrows of Isis and her tender mother-love touched all hearts.⁸

Concerning this "preparation for Christianity," as apologists over the centuries have disingenuously deemed it, Budge states:

...the knowledge of the ancient Egyptian religion which we now possess fully justifies the assertions that the rapid growth and progress of Christianity in Egypt were due mainly to the fact that *the new religion*, which was preached there by Saint Mark and his immediate followers, *in all its essentials so closely resembled that which was the outcome of the worship of Osiris, Isis and Horus* that popular opposition was entirely disarmed. In certain places in the south of Egypt, e.g., Philae, the worship of Osiris and Isis maintained its own until the beginning of the fifth century of our era, though this was in reality due to the support which it received from the Nubians, but, speaking generally, at this period in all other parts of Egypt Mary the Virgin and Christ had taken the places of Isis and Horus, and the "God-mother" or "mother of

¹ Budge, *LOLM*, liii-liiii.

² Budge, *LOLM*, liiii.

³ Budge, *LOLM*, liiii.

⁴ Budge, *LOLM*, liv.

⁵ Budge, *LOLM*, lv.

⁶ Budge, *LOLM*, lv-lvi.

⁷ Budge, *LOLM*, lvii-lviii.

⁸ Budge, *LOLM*, lviii.

the god," was no longer Isis but Mary whom the Monophysites styled θεοτοκος ["Mother of God"].¹

Again, Budge remarks on the takeover of the Egyptian religion by Christianity:

And the bulk of the masses in Egypt and Nubia who professed Christianity transferred to Mary the Virgin the attributes of Isis the Everlasting Mother, and to the Babe Jesus those of Horus.²

Once more Budge says, "When the Egyptians embraced Christianity they saw nothing strange in identifying [Isis] with the Virgin Mary, and her son Horus with the Babe Christ."³

Of this apparent development and transparent usurpation of the Egyptian religion by Christians, Budge concludes:

It has often been said and written that the cult of Isis and Horus and the worship of Mary the Virgin and the Child are one and the same thing...⁴

With all these facts in mind, the insistence that Christianity sprang up in a vacuum as a unique and new "divine revelation" appears completely ludicrous and unsustainable.

Nevertheless, Budge, a pious Christian, attempts to delineate the two cults, based on the allegation that Mary was not a goddess but a "real person." However, we think the apologist does protest too much and that it is obvious the Christian *myth* was designed to take over the Egyptian one, with the *mythical* Virgin Mary composed in order to overthrow the highly popular Isis.

Oddly, even in face of his protests Budge continues to make these strong comparisons between Isis and Mary, even claiming that Mary too had "raised the dead and worked other miracles." Budge persists with the parallels:

Osiris, more than Horus, resembles Jesus in respect of His murder by the Jews. Isis bewailed Osiris in the shrines of Egypt, as Mary bewailed her Son at Golgotha. The seven scorpion-goddesses who attended Isis seem to have their counterpart in the seven maidens who were associated with Mary in weaving the Veil of the Temple....⁵

At this point, Budge tries again to differentiate the two stories, all the while assuming the Judeo-Christian tale to be "historical." In reality, the differences are slim and to be expected if Jewish priests were merely weaving Egyptian myths together with their own scriptures, which is precisely what we contend was done in the creation of the Christ and Virgin Mary characters, as well as Christianity as a whole. These peculiar attributes of Mary related by Budge that are not found in the canonical gospels, it should be noted, come from the *apocryphal* or "hidden" texts concerning her alleged life.

As yet another example of how the Egyptian religion was copied to become "Christian revelation," Budge discusses a "little work" of magical writings called the "Lefafa Sedek," or "Bandlet of Righteousness." In the Lefafa Sedek, the Christian author claims the booklet constituted a "divine revelation" dictated to Jesus and passed along firstly to the Virgin Mary and then to the archangel Michael, who revealed its contents to the apostles. Concerning this booklet, Budge remarks, "The Lefafa Sedek is constructed on the same plan as the

¹ Budge, *TGE*, 220-221. (Emph. added.)

² Budge, *OOER*, 306.

³ Budge, *ASH*, 181.

⁴ Budge, *LOLM*, lix. (Emph. added.)

⁵ Budge, *LOLM*, lix-lx.

Egyptian Book of the Dead, and is a veritable Ethiopian Book of the Dead. But the author, who was a Christian, substitutes God for Ra, Christ for Thoth, and the Virgin Mary for Isis."¹

Just like the Ritual, this *Christian* book was written on strips of linen and wrapped around dead bodies. Thus, we possess an apparently cut-and-dry case of Christians copying the Egyptian religion, texts and rituals, which, again, we assert was done with the gospel story itself and many other aspects of Christianity.

This changeover from the Egyptian to the Christian religion occurred within the Gnostic movement as well. As Budge further states:

The Egyptian Gnostics rejected many of the pagan cults of the early dynastic Egyptians, but they regarded Ra, Horus and Harpokrates [Horus the Child] as forms of their "One God of heaven," and they connected Isis with the Virgin Mary, Osiris and Serapis with Christ...²

In fact, if we were we to include the apocryphal and Gnostic texts in our investigation, we would develop a much longer list of parallels between the Egyptian and Christian religions.

This significant situation regarding the virgin mother of the god serves as a perfect example of how myths are made, as in the Ritual we possess not a *story* of Horus being born of the virgin mother Neith but the "deceased" (through his living representative) making statements that "I am Horus" and "I am born of Neith." Thus, when we say that Horus was born of a virgin, we are not claiming this fact is laid out in a concise story but, rather, that it was indeed a *characteristic* of Horus long prior to the Christian era. And again, the virgin-birth motif appears to have been one of the major mysteries, not to be divulged to the "vulgar masses." Hence, it was not readily written down and made publicly available.

In the end, rolling all of these qualities and myths into one, we can honestly say that the Egyptian son of God Horus was born on December 25th of the Virgin Mother Isis-Mery. From all the evidence so far presented, it may further be truthfully asserted that this same statement regarding Jesus and Mary represents a *mythical* construct based in large part on the Egyptian religion.

¹ Budge, AS, 195-196.

² Budge, AS, 203.

Conclusion

"...the study of Egyptian mythology will throw more light upon the restrictive customs of the Jews, the allusions of the prophets, and the early history of the Christian church than that of any other country."

W.R. Cooper, *The Serpent Myths of Ancient Egypt* (73)

When analyzing the Egyptian religion and its evident influence upon Christianity, it is necessary to recall a number of important facts. First of all, it should be kept in mind that the Egyptians took their religion very seriously and did not readily accept blasphemy against it, being every bit as pious about their faith as Christians are today. Hence, this matter is not to be taken lightly, with culturally biased dismissals disparaging the Egyptians as mere "heathens" and "pagans," while Christians hold up their own religion as "truth" and "divine revelation." Secondly, although thus portrayed as "unique divine revelation," Christianity was in fact neither "new nor strange" but had existed "from the beginning," as declared by Church fathers Eusebius and Augustine in a moment of inspired candor that likely revealed more than they intended. These comments by the Church fathers were apparently meant to demonstrate the eternal nature of the Christian faith but which, in reality, explained why, if Christianity was "unique revelation," so many of its tenets could already be found widespread around the known world for centuries to millennia. Indeed, as we can see from the numerous correspondences, if Christianity is to be considered "divine revelation," then so too must be the important Egyptian religion upon which much of it was palpably founded. As demonstrated in this present work, there exists good reason to assert that, rather than representing a new revelation, Christianity is in actuality a rehash of older religions, including and especially the Egyptian. In this regard, we have thus far explored only a small number of instances where the Egyptian and Christian religions converge, but there are *many* more parallels equally as profound and sustainable.

Indeed, the task of outlining all of the correlations between the Egyptian and Christian religions has proved itself so overwhelming that few people have been willing or able to undertake it. Even the great Dr. E.A. Wallis Budge demurred on this exceptional effort, declaring:

"Interesting, however, as such an investigation would be, no attempt has been made in this work to trace out the influence of ancient Egyptian religious beliefs and mythology on Christianity, for *such an undertaking would fill a comparatively large volume*."¹

Such statements should have spurred an entire field of study, but, as we know too well, vested interests clamped down and rendered this worthy endeavor nearly impossible. We are finally at a time, however, when implausible pabulum will be scrutinized scientifically and revealed as such, so that we may remove the delusion preventing further evolution.

As but one example of casuistry attempting to pass itself off as truth, although Christianity attempts to set itself apart by claiming its story to have truly taken place in history, the Egyptian religion too was supposedly rooted in history, which would make it true as well. Moreover, since it preceded Christianity by millennia, the Egyptian religion could lay claims to being the original "divine revelation," closer to the truth and less corrupted. As we know from ancient writers, the important Egyptian god Osiris was also believed to have been a real man who walked the earth and who was responsible for the civilizing and salvation of

¹ Budge, *TGE*, I, xvi. (Emph. added.)

mankind. In fact, Osiris is depicted as traveling far and wide in his quest to bring goodness and light to humanity, making him one of the best-known gods of all time. Not only were the deities Osiris, Isis and Horus highly popular, but their relics, including numerous tombs, could be found throughout Egypt and elsewhere, wherever there was a vested priesthood. Thus, again, to insist that *only* the Christian drama and its characters are "true" and represent "divine revelation" can be viewed as a manifestation of cultural bias, rather than reality.

The ancient Egyptian Christians themselves apparently possessed no such prejudices, as they readily identified Horus and Osiris with Jesus. This fact of the identification of Jesus with Horus in ancient times is evidenced by customs, rituals, myths, texts, images and other artifacts. Some of these Egypto-Christian artifacts are quite astonishing, as reported by the very devout Christian Egyptologist William R. Cooper, who provided examples of what he called the "Horus Christian class," such as:

...on the walls of an early Egyptian church at the Memonium [appears a] bas-relief [of] Christ sitting upon a throne with the horned disk of Horus, and a modification of the staff of Osiris, even to the characteristic features of the Egyptian deity, the identification is complete...¹

Following his list of artifacts demonstrating Egypto-Christian themes, the pious Cooper concludes:

These illustrations will now, I think, suffice for the purpose that I have in view—the purpose of proving that the works of art, the ideas, the expressions, and the heresies of the first four centuries of the Christian era cannot be well studied without a right comprehension of the nature and influence of the Horus myth; and that it becomes every student, or at all events every expositor of the Book of books, to examine this myth, and work out its operations for himself. Of its immense antiquity there can be no reasonable doubt; equally so can there be none of the extent to which the myth has been modified by the Classic, Jewish, and Christian theologies, although we are not yet in a position to separate the true from the false, and to assign to each interpolation or interpretation its proper place in the chronology of mythology. We cannot, I repeat, ignore these facts. We have, as Christians, no reason to be afraid of them. As philosophical scholars we are bound to make use of the materials brought ready to our hands in the records of the past, and as true believers in the co-eternal divinity and redeemership of our blessed Lord, we should be impelled by our responsibilities to be the first in the field...²

Cooper believed that by bringing forth these proofs of the merging of the Egyptian and Christian religions he was somehow presenting a defense of the Christian faith, and he was extremely disappointed by the weak reaction he received from the elite scholars and clergy to whom he circulated his ground-breaking work. Unfortunately, Cooper passed away "in exile," as he put it, shortly after presenting his startling findings to England's finest, with flaccid results. Thus, he did not live to see his work attain to fruition, and these significant correlations continued to be suppressed by the mainstream, although gaining momentum with such diligent and courageous individuals as Gerald Massey. Those who have ventured into the field of comparative religion and mythology, and have dared to include Christianity in their analysis, have frequently been subjected to ridicule or worse. The illogical implication is that the Jewish culture from which Christianity largely sprang, according to believers, possessed *no mythology whatsoever*, as virtually the only culture of significance to make such an unlikely claim. From the experiences of William Cooper and many others, it

¹ Cooper, *THM*, 43, citing Denon's *Egypte*, vol. II, plate 36.

² Cooper, *THM*, 49-50.

is obvious that society's elite—including *numerous* churchmen—have known about the research demonstrating the Egyptian parallels in Christianity, but that this information has been rigorously *censored*.

These many correlations are therefore not widely known because they have not been neatly laid out in sanctioned encyclopedias and textbooks. Yet, they are real, so we must ask why they are being censored out of the historical record. Moreover, when people say they cannot find a certain motif in the texts, that fact does not serve as evidence that the motif did not or does not exist. One could search high and low in the New Testament for evidence that Jesus Christ was born at the winter solstice, or December 25th, for instance, and one wouldn't find it. Does that fact mean that Christmas doesn't exist?

Rather than simply denying these many corresponding religious and spiritual motifs, honest assessors will recognize that they existed, that they were revered in the ancient world, particularly by the priesthoods that created such myths, and that anyone wishing to enter the profitable religion business would need to incorporate them into their myths, as we contend was done with the gospel story.

In light of these facts—carefully hidden from the masses—it is egregious to insist that the Egyptian and Christian religions are entirely unrelated, as do apologists today and in the past with such disingenuousness. In reality, it is obvious from comments by ancient and modern writers alike that various of the correspondences between the Egyptian and Christian religions constituted what are known as "the mysteries," such as the perpetual virginity of the goddess and the birth of her son at the winter solstice, hinted at in a number of places and brought to light here. If we were to explore the numerous other parallels between the Christian and Egyptian religions using the same "forensic" methodology, we would find much of the same veracity behind them as well. As *mysteries*, these characteristics were not necessarily spelled out overtly in texts or inscriptions—although, as we have seen, they are certainly strongly indicated in a number of places. Other correlations, however, have been right before our eyes, covered over in delusion and mendacity, to be exposed here and now through great struggle and the passage of thousands of years. We are, in fact, privileged to exist at a time when these mysteries are at last revealed, and humanity can progress to a greater level of enlightenment.

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