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Hymn to Ra

This hymn to Ra, from the Egyptian Book of the Dead, offers a glimpse at the Egyptian reverence for their gods.

(From the Papyrus of Nekht, Brit. Mus. No. 10471, Sheet 21)

NEKHT, THE CAPTAIN OF SOLDIERS, THE ROYAL SCRIBE, SINGETH A HYMN OF PRAISE TO RA, and saith:-

Homage to thee, O thou glorious Being, thou who art dowered [with all sovereignty]. O Tem-Heru-Khuti (Tem-Harmakhis), when thou risest in the horizon of heaven a cry of joy goeth forth to thee from all people. O thou beautiful Being, thou dost renew thyself in thy season in the form of the Disk, within thy mother Hathor. Therefore in every place every heart swelleth with joy at thy rising for ever. The regions of the South and the North come to thee with homage, and send forth acclamations at thy rising on the horizon of heaven, and thou illuminest the Two Lands with rays of turquoise-[coloured] light. O Ra, who art Heru-Khuti, the divine man-child, the heir of eternity, self-begotten and self-born, king of the earth, prince of the Tuat (the Other World), governor of Aukert, thou didst come from the Water-god, thou didst spring from the Sky-god Nu, who doth cherish thee and order thy members. O thou god of life, thou lord of love, all men live when thou shinest; thou art crowned king of the gods. The goddess Nut embraceth thee, and the goddess Mut enfoldeth thee at all seasons. Those who are in thy following sing unto thee with joy, and they bow down their foreheads to the earth when they meet thee, the lord of heaven, the lord of the earth, the King of Truth, the lord of eternity, the prince of everlastingness, thou sovereign of all the gods, thou god of life, thou creator of eternity, thou maker of heaven wherein thou art firmly established.

The Company of the Gods rejoice at thy rising, the earth is glad when it beholdeth thy rays; the people who have been long dead come forth with cries of joy to behold thy beauties every day. Thou goest forth each day over heaven and earth, and thou art made strong each day be thy mother Nut. Thou passest over the heights of heaven, thy heart swelleth with joy; and the Lake of Testes (the Great Oasis) is content thereat. The Serpent-fiend hath fallen, his arms are hewn off, the Knife hath severed his joints. Ra liveth by Maat (Law), the beautiful! The Sektet Boat advanceth and cometh into port. The South and the North, and the West and East, turn to praise thee. O thou First, Great God (PAUTA), who didst come into being of thine own accord, Isis and Nephthys salute thee, they sing unto thee songs of joy at thy rising in the boat, they stretch out their hands unto thee. The Souls of the East follow thee, and the Souls of the West praise thee. Thou art the Ruler of all the gods. Thou in thy shrine hast joy, for the Serpent-fiend Nak hath been judged by the fire, and thy heart shall rejoice for ever. Thy mother Nut is esteemed by thy father Nu.

HYMN TO OSIRIS UN-NEFER

A Hymn of Praise to Osiris Un-Nefer, the great god who dwelleth in Abtu, the king of eternity, the lord of everlastingness, who traverseth millions of years in his existence.

Thou art the eldest son of the womb of Nut. Thou was begotten by Keb, the Erpat. Thou art the lord of the Urrt Crown. Thou art he whose White Crown is lofty. Thou art the King (Ati) of gods [and] men. Thou hast gained possession of the sceptre of rule, and the whip, and the rank and dignity of thy divine fathers. Thy heart is expanded with joy, O thou who art in the kingdom of the dead. Thy son Horus is firmly placed on thy throne. Thou hast ascended thy throne as the Lord of Tetu, and as the Heq who dwelleth in Abydos. Thou makest the Two Lands to flourish through Truth-speaking, in the presence of him who is the Lord to the Uttermost Limit. Thou drawest on that which hath not yet come into being in thy name of "Ta-her-sta-nef." Thou governest the Two Lands by Maat in thy name of "Seker." Thy power is wide-spread, thou art he of whom the fear is great in thy name of "Usar" (or "Asar"). Thy existence endureth for an infinite number of double henti periods in thy name of "Un-Nefer."

Homage to thee, King of Kings, and Lord of Lords, and Prince of Princes. Thou hast ruled the Two Lands from the womb of the goddess Nut. Thou hast governed the Lands of Akert. Thy members are of silver-gold, thy head is of lapis-lazuli, and the crown of thy head is of turquoise. Thou art An of millions of years. Thy body is all pervading, O Beautiful Face in Ta-tchesert. Grant thou to me glory in heaven, and power upon earth, and truth-speaking in the Divine Underworld, and [the power to] sail down the river to Tetu in the form of a living Ba-soul, and [the power to] sail up the river to Abydos in the form of a Benu bird, and [the power to] pass in through and to pass out from, without obstruction, the doors of the lords of the Tuat. Let there be given unto me bread-cakes in the House of Refreshing, and sepulchral offerings of cakes and ale, and propitiatory offerings in Anu, and a permanent homestead in Sekhet-Aaru, with wheat and barley therein- to the Double of the Osiris, the scribe Ani.

Source:

E. A. Budge. *The Egyptian Book of the Dead*

https://www.africa.upenn.edu/Books/Papyrus_Ani.html

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