

HISTORY: BACKGROUND INFORMATION

World Book on the gods and goddesses of ancient Egypt¹

The ancient Egyptians believed that various *deities* (gods and goddesses) influenced every aspect of nature and every human activity. They therefore worshiped many deities. The main god was the sun god Re. The Egyptians relied on Re and the goddess Rennutet for good harvests. The most important goddess was Isis. She represented the devoted mother and wife. Her husband and brother, Osiris, ruled over vegetation and the dead. Horus, son of Isis and Osiris, was god of the sky. He was called the lord of heaven and was often pictured with the head of a falcon.

In each Egyptian city and town, the people worshiped their own special god in addition to the major deities. For example, the people of Thebes worshiped Amon, a sun god. Amon was later identified with Re and called Amon-Re. Amon-Re in time became the chief deity. Other local deities and their main centers of worship included Ptah, the creator god of Memphis; Thoth, the god of wisdom and writing in Hermopolis; and Khnum, the creator god of Elephantine. Many deities were pictured with human bodies and the heads of animals. Such a head suggested a real or imagined quality of the animal and made identification of the deity easy.

Most ancient Egyptians prayed at home because the temples did not offer regular services for people. Each temple was either regarded as the home of a certain deity or dedicated to a dead king. A temple built in honor of Amon-Re at Karnak was the country's largest temple. It had more than 130 columns that rose about 80 feet. Brilliantly colored paintings decorated the columns and walls in the temple's Great Hall, which still ranks as the largest columned hall ever built.

The priests' main job was to serve the deity or king, who was represented by a statue in the temple. The king reigning at the time was considered the chief priest of Egypt. Each day, he or other local priests washed and dressed the statue and brought it food. Priests also offered prayers requested by individuals.

World Book on mythology²

People have always tried to understand why certain things happen. For example, they have wanted to know why the sun rises and sets and what causes lightning. They have also wanted to know how the earth was created and how and where humanity first appeared.

Today, people have scientific answers and theories for many such questions about the world around them. But in earlier times—and in some parts of the world today—people lacked the knowledge to provide scientific answers. They therefore explained natural events in terms of stories about gods, goddesses, and heroes. For example, the Greeks had a story to explain the existence of evil and trouble. The Greeks believed that at one time the world's evils and troubles were trapped in a box. They escaped when the container was opened by Pandora, the first woman. Such stories are known as *myths*, and the study of myths is called *mythology*.

In early times, every society developed its own myths, which played an important part in the society's religious life. This religious significance has always separated myths from similar stories, such as folk tales and legends. The people of a society may tell folk tales and legends for amusement, without believing them. But they usually consider their myths sacred and completely true.

Most myths concern *divinities* (divine beings). These divinities have *supernatural* powers—powers far greater than any human being has. But in spite of their supernatural powers, many gods, goddesses, and heroes of mythology have human characteristics. They are guided by such emotions as love and jealousy, and they experience birth and death. A number of mythological figures even look like human beings. In many cases, the human qualities of the divinities reflect a society's ideals. Good gods and goddesses have the qualities a society admires, and evil ones have the qualities it dislikes.

By studying myths, we can learn how different societies have answered basic questions about the world and the individual's place in it. We study myths to learn how a people developed a particular social system with its many customs and ways of life. By examining myths, we can better understand the feelings and values that bind members of society into one group. We can compare the myths of various cultures to discover how these cultures differ and how they resemble one another. We can also study myths to try to understand why people behave as they do.

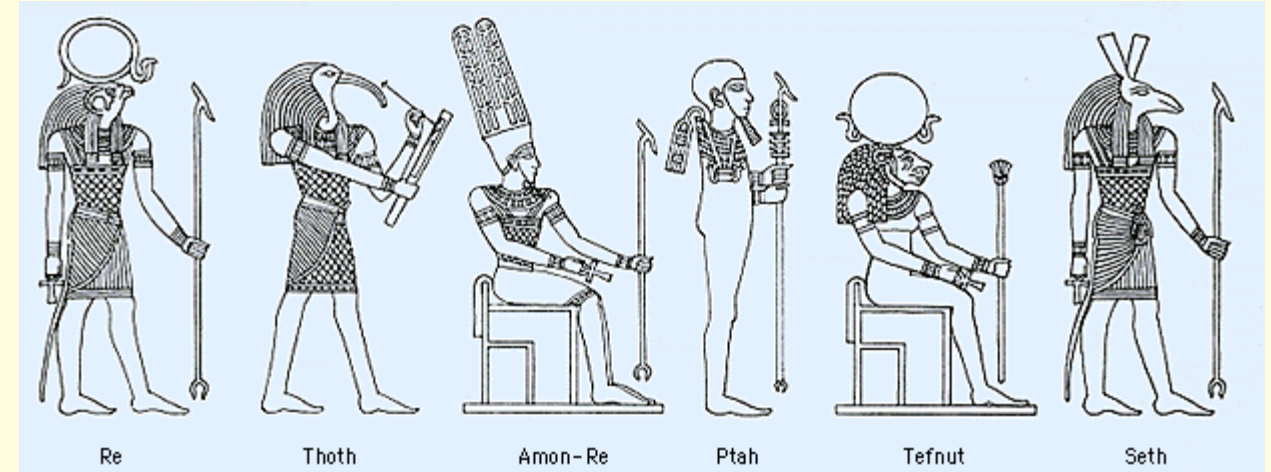
For thousands of years, mythology has provided material for much of the world's great art. Myths and mythological characters have inspired masterpieces of architecture, literature, music, painting, and sculpture.

¹ From an article in *World Book* entitled *Ancient Egypt*. Contributor: Leonard H. Lesko, Ph.D., Professor of Egyptology and Chairman, Department of Egyptology, Brown University.

² Excerpted from an article in *World Book* entitled *Mythology*. Contributor: C. Scott Littleton, Ph.D., Professor and Chair, Department of Anthropology, Occidental College; author, *The New Comparative Mythology and From Scythia to Camelot*.

Egyptian Mythology

Below are depictions of the major gods and goddesses found in ancient Egyptian mythology and literature.



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The ancient Egyptians portrayed many of their gods and goddesses with human bodies and the heads of birds or other animals. The divinities held or wore objects symbolizing their power. For example, the god Osiris held a scepter and a whip, which represented the authority of gods and divine pharaohs.



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The Nile River plays an important part in Egyptian mythology. As the Nile flows northward through Egypt, it creates a narrow ribbon of fertile land in the midst of a great desert. The sharp contrast between the fertility along the Nile and the wasteland of the desert became a basic theme of Egyptian mythology. The creatures that live in the Nile or along its banks became linked with many gods and goddesses.

The Great Ennead. The earliest information we have about Egyptian mythology comes from *hieroglyphics* (picture writings) on the walls of tombs, such as the burial chambers in pyramids. These "pyramid texts" and other documents tell us that from about 3200 to 2250 B.C., the Egyptians believed in a family of nine gods. This family became known as the *Great Ennead*, from the Greek word *ennea*, meaning *nine*. The nine gods of the Great Ennead were Atum, Shu and Tefnut, Geb and Nut, Osiris, Isis, Nephthys, and Horus.

The term *Ennead* later came to include other deities as well. One of these deities was Nun, who symbolized a great ocean that existed before the creation of the earth and the heavens. Another of these deities was the sun god, called Re or Ra. The Egyptians considered Re both the ruler of the world and the first divine pharaoh.

The first god of the Great Ennead was Atum. He was sometimes identified with the setting sun. Atum also represented the source of all gods and all living things. Re created a pair of twins, Shu and his sister, Tefnut. Shu was

god of the air, which existed between the sky and the earth. Tefnut was goddess of the dew. Shu and Tefnut married and also produced twins, Geb and his sister, Nut. Geb was the earth god and the pharaoh of Egypt. Nut represented the heavens. Geb and Nut married, but the sun god Re opposed the match and ordered their father, Shu, to raise Nut away from Geb into the sky. Shu's action separated the heavens from the earth. Nut had speckles on her body, and the speckles became the stars.

The Osiris myth. In spite of their separation, Geb and Nut had several children. These included three of the most important divinities in Egyptian mythology—Osiris, Isis, and Seth. Originally, Osiris may have been god of vegetation, especially of the plants that grew on the rich land along the Nile. The goddess Isis may have represented female fertility. Seth was god of the desert, where vegetation withers and dies from lack of water.

Geb retired to heaven. Osiris then became pharaoh and took Isis as his queen. Seth grew jealous of Osiris' position and killed him. In some versions of this myth, Seth cut Osiris' body into pieces, stuffed the pieces into a box, and set the box afloat on the Nile. Isis refused to accept her husband's death as final. She searched for Osiris' remains with the aid of her sister Nephthys and several other gods and goddesses. Isis finally found the remains of Osiris. With the help of other divinities, she put the body together, restoring Osiris to life. Osiris then became god of the afterlife.

Seth had become pharaoh of Egypt after killing Osiris. But Horus, son of Osiris and Isis, then overthrew Seth and became pharaoh. Thus, the forces of vegetation and creation—symbolized by Osiris, Isis, and Horus—triumphed over the evil forces of the desert, symbolized by Seth. But more important, Osiris had cheated death. The Egyptians believed that if Osiris could triumph over death, so could human beings.

Other Egyptian divinities included Hathor, Horus' wife; Anubis; Ptah; and Thoth. Hathor became the protector of everything feminine. Anubis escorted the dead to the entrance of the afterworld and helped restore Osiris to life. The Egyptians also believed that Anubis invented their elaborate funeral rituals and burial procedures. Ptah invented the arts. Thoth invented writing and magical rituals. He also helped bring Osiris back to life.

Many animals appear in Egyptian mythology. The **falcon** was sacred to Horus. The **scarab**, or dung beetle, symbolized Re. The Egyptians considered both the cat and the crocodile as divine. Between 1554 and 1070 B.C., various local divinities became well known throughout ancient Egypt. Some of them became as important as the gods and goddesses of the Ennead. The greatest of these gods was **Amon**. His *cult* (group of worshipers) originally centered in Thebes. In time, Amon became identified with Re, and was frequently known as Amon-Re. Amon-Re became perhaps the most important Egyptian divinity.

The influence of Egyptian mythology. The divinities of ancient Egypt and the myths about them had great influence on the mythologies of many later civilizations.

During the 1300's B.C., the pharaoh Amenhotep IV chose Aton as the only god of Egypt. Aton had been a little-known god worshipped in Thebes. Amenhotep was so devoted to the worship of Aton that he changed his own name to Akhenaton. The Egyptians stopped worshipping Aton after Akhenaton died. However, some scholars believe the worship of this one divinity lingered among the people of Israel, who had settled in Egypt, and became an important part of the religion that was developed by the Israelite leader Moses. These scholars have suggested that the Jewish and Christian belief in one God may come from the cult of Aton. [We know this to be untrue: no idol of the Egyptians parted the Red Sea for Moses and the Israelites. Perhaps Akhenaton got his ideas from the Israelites!? Dating systems vary from resource to resource. He could have been the grandson of the Pharaoh of Exodus.]

Teaching Mythology to Christian Students: All Levels

This week, we present a supplement that is written to your older students. It details reasons why Christian students should study ancient mythological pantheons. Supplements are placed in various positions within the week-plan, depending on their intended use. This week, we have placed it at the end of the week-plan *after* the Teacher's Notes so that you can decide whether or not to use it with your students.

If you do choose to use Supplement 2, we suggest that you read it aloud with your student(s) and talk through the concepts with them. We also present questions towards the end of the supplement for your optional use. In the box at the right you will find answers to these questions.

Note, too, that some stories contain a ring of familiarity or truths. Opponents of our faith claim that Bible truths were culled from earlier mythologies; the reverse is more likely. Remember, both conscience and creation speak to people's hearts about their loving Creator. It is not surprising that in the days of oral tradition, bits and pieces of revealed truth would become interwoven with human fabrications.

Many people confuse the terms pantheism and polytheism. The Egyptians were polytheists—not to be confused with pantheists. Below are a *World Book* definition of pantheism and a discussion of polytheism.

World Book on pantheism¹

Pantheism, pronounced PAN-thee-ihz-uhm, [which comes from the Greek *pan* = all + *theo* = god] is the belief that the essence of God is in all things. It is often associated with nature religions, including many American Indian, African, and ancient Middle Eastern religions. In these religions, gods are connected with such things as storms, stars, the sky, the sea, fertility, and skill in hunting. In the Japanese Shinto tradition, gods are identified with natural objects, including rocks and trees. In a more general sense, pantheism refers to any religious philosophy that identifies God with nature.

Thus, in pantheism, God equals nature. The divine spirit is in rocks, trees, mountains, sky—indeed, in all things. The Egyptian “gods” came from (and were believed to rule) nature, but because those gods were ultimately considered to be distinct from nature, the Egyptians, along with the Greeks and Romans, are better called polytheists.

Polytheism, from the Greek *poly* = many + *theo* = god, refers to belief in many separate gods instead of one sole, supreme God. The Egyptians, with their polytheistic belief system, worshiped co-equal (and often competing) deities. This type of religion easily gives rise to frightened, superstitious people, because there is no limit to the number of “gods,” known or unknown and making conflicting demands on their followers, which can (and must) be worshipped.

In addition to many supernatural divinities, the followers of some polytheistic religions also worship deities that are or were people or that are images of people. This was the case with the ancient Egyptian people, who considered their pharaohs to be living gods.

Before beginning your discussion, please read the following:

- History Background Information
- Student Activity Page questions: One suggestion is that you assign each student specific Egyptian deities on which to prepare a mini-report to the class (or for you). If you plan to do this, some students may have trouble finding sufficient details in their readings. You can recommend that they search the Internet for their answers, but caution them to do so with parental supervision, as searches for websites about pagan religions can yield unsavory results.
- Bible Survey and Church History lecture notes. For rhetoric and dialectic students, the history discussion is rather short this week, so you may wish to fill in the time with a discussion of the extensive Bible section for this week.
- Supplement 2 (begins on page 45)

HISTORY: DIALECTIC DISCUSSION OUTLINE

1. Begin by making sure that your students have mastered details about the Egyptian belief system to your satisfaction. Check their lists (if you required written answers to Accountability Questions) for neatness and thoroughness.
2. If students were assigned Egyptian deities to explain to the class in mini-reports, call on them to do so.
3. Ask students to define the difference between pantheism and polytheism. (See History background notes above for support.) Lead them through an analysis of which the Egyptians were (polytheists, not pantheists), making sure that they have supported their conclusions with details about Egyptian beliefs.
4. Though they were not pantheists, Egyptians definitely connected deities with their environment. Indeed, scholars often call such deities of ancient cultures “nature gods.” Lead students to recite the various aspects of the environment with which Egyptian deities were associated, such the sun, (Re or Ra), the setting sun (Atum), air (Shu), etc.
5. Go over the charts students made comparing the character traits of Egyptian idols with the more excellent character of our God. (See sample answers under rhetoric discussion outline.)

¹ From a *World Book* article entitled *Pantheism*. Contributor: Mark Juergensmeyer, Ph.D., Prof. of Sociology and Religious Studies, Univ. of California, Santa Barbara.

The first two pages of Supplement 2 are intended for older students. The third page is intended for younger students. However, all students can benefit from the ideas communicated on all three pages. I was amazed to discover that my 12-year-old daughter was much helped by logical arguments presented for older students.

- | | |
|------------|--------------|
| 1. a, b, c | 6. mythology |
| 2. c | 7. legend |
| 3. a | 8. folk tale |
| 4. b | 9. mythology |
| 5. legend | 10. legend |

We recommend that you spend the rest of this class going over the Bible Survey lecture notes. This leaves time on Friday to focus on Literature. In the History Background section are some pictures of Egyptian idols that may be useful in teaching or projects this week. Note how closely related to nature these idols are: most have animals or plants associated with them.

HISTORY: RHETORIC DISCUSSION OUTLINE

This week's discussion outline is somewhat abbreviated. We recommend that you spend any extra class time going over the Bible Survey lecture notes. This will leave time later in the week to focus on literature discussion. In the History Background section are some pictures of Egyptian idols that may be useful in teaching or projects this week. Notice how closely related to nature these idols are: most have animals or plants associated with them.

1. Ask students to tell you about the major idols of the Egyptian belief system.
 - Note with them that many of these were what scholars call "nature gods."
 - Note the interesting fact that Egyptians combined human and animal parts in their representation of their deities. Cite examples with students.
 - If students were asked to report on these, have them present their reports now.
2. Ask, "What kinds of personalities or character traits did Egyptian 'gods' manifest?"
 - Compare these with human personalities, and then compare them with the character of our God.
 - Ask students which deities seem more likely to have been invented by men, and which are more likely to be revealed by a God who transcends men and is "other" than them.
 - Students should note that a God who is filled with mercy and compassion for mankind, loves them unconditionally, and sacrifices His Son for their justification, as well as being perfect and eternal in ways that surpass human comprehension, is very "other" than mankind.*
 - Men tend to fight, conquer, and rule with despotism, not mercy. They are limited by and subject to human passions and frustrations. Obviously Egyptian "gods" mirror human characteristics; God is clearly different than we are.*
 - You might choose to use a white board and a chart to aid this discussion. Here are a few sample cells for a chart like that which students were asked to complete in their Thinking Questions:

EGYPTIAN IDOL	HUMAN CHARACTERISTICS DISPLAYED	GOD STANDS IN CONTRAST
Hathor: goddess of love, goodness, drunkenness. In anger, the avenger.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Legends associated with this deity are of her being confused in her mission because of drunkenness, and then being tricked into doing another god's will.</i> <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Humans get drunk, become unfocused, and are tricked. They also deceive others in order to accomplish selfish goals.</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Never forgets His plan.</i> <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Is never drunk.</i> <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Cannot be tricked.</i> <input type="checkbox"/> <i>All-powerful (omnipotent)</i> <input type="checkbox"/> <i>All-knowing (omniscient)</i> <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Does only His own will perfectly.</i> <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Not "in time"—outside time.</i>
Osiris: associated with fertility, and the supposed father of the living Pharaoh (who upon death becomes Osiris). God of the dead.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Is killed by a jealous rival, and his body is severed into pieces.</i> <input type="checkbox"/> <i>His wife finds all his pieces and restores him to life.</i> <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Humans can die, but it is uncertain if they can be restored to life after they die.</i> <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Humans wish for resurrection, but cannot attain it on Earth, and not necessarily in the life hereafter. This is a "wishful tale."</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> <i>No strife (no dualism—God is not an equal rival with Satan).</i> <input type="checkbox"/> <i>No need of help to be brought back to life.</i> <input type="checkbox"/> <i>God is life; He chose to lay His life down for our sakes, but it is never taken from Him.</i> <input type="checkbox"/> <i>The fond wish of all humans is granted by God Almighty Who came to us in the shape of a man, but sinless, and died for our sakes. No human ever conceived of such sacrificial love, or mercy, from God.</i>

3. Ask students to articulate what they perceive to be the relationship between Egyptians and their gods. Students should note that such things as fear, anxiety, and superstition based on what Egyptians did (not what they believed, for instance) characterized their relationship (or lack thereof) with their "gods." Help students to contrast that with the love relationship based on faith and God's initiative that God has sought with us, His creatures.

4. Students were asked in the Thinking Questions, "On what basis does a person achieve good and avoid evil in the Egyptian system?"

The answer is good works. We call any such religion a works-based religion: men must be good and must perform certain rituals, prayers, and actions in order to earn their way to a good afterlife. Christianity, by contrast, is based on faith. We do not earn salvation. It is a free gift from God through Christ to those who believe on Him and confess Him as Lord.
5. Teach students that a polytheistic doctrine leads to fear and superstition, because people never know when they have sufficiently pleased their capricious "gods." There is no assurance, and therefore no peace for the human heart, in any religion that relies on our performance!

GOVERNMENT: DISCUSSION OUTLINE

There is no Government assignment for this week.

LITERATURE: LOWER LEVEL QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Answers to Lower Grammar Worksheet for Ancient Egypt (Modern Rhymes About Ancient Times)

- | | |
|---------------------------|----------------------|
| 1. <i>Egypt and Syria</i> | 6. <i>Mut</i> |
| 2. <i>Isis</i> | 7. <i>Hatshepsut</i> |
| 3. <i>Neco</i> | 8. <i>King Tut</i> |
| 4. <i>Nile River</i> | 9. <i>Ramses II</i> |
| 5. <i>Egypt</i> | 10. <i>Cleopatra</i> |

Answers to Upper Grammar Worksheet for Pepi and the Secret Names

- | | |
|---------------------------|--------------------------------|
| 1. <i>Pepi</i> | 6. <i>Mertseger</i> |
| 2. <i>Prince Dhutmose</i> | 7. <i>wonderful</i> |
| 3. <i>Iion</i> | 8. <i>tabby cat</i> |
| 4. <i>Horus</i> | 9. <i>Lady Tmiao</i> |
| 5. <i>crocodile</i> | 10. <i>his/her secret name</i> |

Answers to Dialectic Questions on Tales of Ancient Egypt

Prologue

1. "[Egypt] was the most self-contained of all the countries of the ancient world." Explain this quote.

The complete quote reads, "[Egypt] was the most self-contained of all the countries of the ancient world; it lived its own life, practiced its own religion and made up its own stories with hardly any outside influence either from or upon other civilizations." Egypt was not dependent on any other countries for goods or income because the Nile was its means of prosperity. It was thus completely self-sufficient, and so it developed its own unique culture.
2. Explain the Egyptians' obsession with death.

Life depended on the crops that came with the flooding of the Nile. The inundation was not a definite thing. With life depending on such an uncertain thing as the weather, death was always a near and very real possibility. "If the Inundation was too small, starvation faced Egypt, and many died of hunger if several 'lean years' came together at a time when the Pharaoh had had no Joseph to store grain in the good years against such a time of want. With death always so near, the ancient Egyptians developed an obsession with death, yet not one that seems to have warped their lives."

Tales of the Gods

3. In the myths, Egyptian gods are modeled after humans—created in man's image, so to speak. Give three examples of a god having human characteristics. Use quotes from the book.

Answers will vary, but look for quotes which express either physical actions or anatomy of humans—like walking/ legs, etc.—or actions/attitudes which are decidedly ungodly (at odds with the character of the one true God)—sinful

thoughts or actions like deceit, jealousy, or revenge, or simply a lack of omniscience or omnipotence. Below are a few examples we found:

- ❑ “Then said Ra: ‘As I went on my way, I walked between the Two Lands of Egypt to look upon all I have created, I was bitten by a snake that I did not see—by a serpent that I did not make—with a poison that I do not know. It is not fire, neither is it water: yet one moment I am colder than water, and the next moment I am hotter than fire. Now my body is sweating, and now it is shivering. My eyes are clouded and I cannot see; my head burns as with the fierce beams of midsummer.’”
 - ❑ “The fight was long and terrible, but in the end Harmachis flung Set to the ground, smashing his face with his iron mace, bound him in chains, and brought him before the gods in council.”
 - ❑ “Zozer was in despair for, god though he knew himself to be, he could not cause the Nile to rise, and all his prayers and incantations and sacrifices to the Nine Gods of Memphis were of no avail.”
4. The Egyptians worshipped images which represented the spirit of a god. Why is this biblically wrong? What would be wrong with worshipping a statue of Jesus? Explain your answer using Scripture.
- ❑ Egyptians believed that the spirits of the gods would actually reside in the carved images. Therefore they worshipped the images. This is biblically wrong, first of all, because there is only one true God, who is omniscient, omnipotent, and omnipresent. He is not limited to an image. Exodus 3:14 says, “God said to Moses, ‘I am who I am.’” Exodus 20:1-3 says, “I am the LORD your God, who brought you out of Egypt, out of the land of slavery. You shall have no other gods before me.”
 - ❑ Worshipping an image is also unbiblical because God explicitly forbids it. Exodus 20:4-6 says, “You shall not make for yourself an idol in the form of anything in heaven above or on the earth beneath or in the waters below. You shall not bow down to them or worship them; for I, the LORD your God, am a jealous God, punishing the children for the sin of the fathers to the third and fourth generation of those who hate me, but showing love to a thousand generations of those who love me and keep my commandments.”
 - ❑ Worshipping a statue of Jesus is wrong because, if we believe Him to be our God, the scriptural injunctions above warn against us worshipping an image of Him. No image of Jesus will do Him justice; no artist’s brush can capture or represent what He would actually have been like. Faith is believing in that which is unseen. A statue of Jesus is dangerous because we could begin to worship the statue instead of Jesus Himself.
5. Explain the purpose of sacrifices.
- In Egypt, sacrifices were instituted in order to earn the favor of a god. By offering the best of one’s beasts, grain, wine, etc., one could earn a god’s favor, appease a god’s anger, or invoke a specific blessing. Note with students that this constitutes a “works-based” religion, where man seeks to earn divine favor. Christians know that man can never earn divine favor through works; righteousness is the gift of God through Jesus Christ (see Ephesians 2:8-10). Even Israel’s ritual sacrifices did not earn peace with God (see Hebrews 10:4).

LITERATURE: RHETORIC DISCUSSION OUTLINE

Literary Background

There is no literary background information for this week from the anthology itself, since we have now covered Foster’s preface. Please make sure, however, that your students have carefully studied Supplement 2 on Egyptian mythology. We have shortened the poem selections and discussion outline for this week’s literature in order to give you time to discuss the supplement and History Background information (found in the Teacher’s Notes for this week) with your student. We encourage you to take advantage of this opportunity to explore a Christian view of mythology!

Discussion Outline

This week, we will be discussing the following poems, which focus on Egyptian gods and the spiritual attitudes of ancient Egyptians. Many of their beliefs are startlingly parallel to those of Christians, testifying to the fact that human nature (both sin nature and the longing for God that is imprinted on the human soul) has not changed from ancient times to the present. Although contemporary writers claim that our society has progressed beyond the need for “dogmatic creeds” and the “crutch of religious belief,” we still see in their work the same sin, guilt, suffering, and longing that has existed in human literature since Adam and Eve fell. That is one reason why we study ancient literature: to demonstrate man’s unchanged sinful condition and his ongoing need for a savior.

With such weighty material for discussion, we will focus mostly on content this week, and devote comparatively little attention to form. Your student should still be conscious of formal patterns, vivid words, and so forth (and you

may still wish to ask him about his findings in these areas). The discussion outline, however, will concern itself almost exclusively with Egyptian religious practice as expressed in literature. It is especially important this week that the student look up any unfamiliar names (most obviously of gods or goddesses) and know the mythological stories associated with the major Egyptian idols.¹ (As usual, “lecture” information is printed in regular font; sample answers to questions we prompt you to ask of students during the discussion are in italics.)

The subject for recitation or reading aloud this week is *The Debate between a Man Tired of Life and His Soul* (pages 61-62, section vi, subsection b).²

Hymn to the Sun—begin on page 1

NOTE: Each section in this poem is composed of a single stanza (except the last, which is three stanzas long). Therefore, in our discussion, we will refer to stanzas by their section numbers (i, ii, iii, etc.). In the last section, stanza 1 (beginning at the bottom of page 6) continues through the first nine lines of page 7.

1. Pharaoh Akhenaten rejected his people’s polytheistic beliefs and became a monotheist, worshipping only the sun god, whom he called “Aton” or “Aten” (Foster, 233-234). How do the beliefs and emotions expressed in this hymn compare to those of a person who believes in God Almighty (Yahweh)? Consider especially Akhenaten’s conception of himself as the son of the god. (Student Question #1)
 - ❑ Many of the beliefs expressed in this poem are startlingly similar to those of a person who believes in God. First and most unusually (for his culture), Akhenaten insists on the existence of only one god. Like most ancient peoples who did not believe in God, the Egyptians believed in a supreme god, a king of the gods who reigned over a group of gods. The idol Aton is unique (and much like God) in that he is portrayed as having no co-divinities or divine subjects.
 - ❑ Secondly, and again like God, Aton is viewed as the creator who first fashioned and still sustains all life (sections v-ix particularly demonstrate this attitude). Unlike the Bible’s portrait of God, however, Aton is incarnated³ as the sun. It is in the form of the sun that he sustains all life (see for example section x, lines 9-17). God the Father, by contrast, created and continually sustains all life without being incarnated as the sun, or as any physical being.
 - ❑ Thirdly, Aton is seen as one who cares for mankind, whose dawning beauty is a source of joy, and whose setting signals the return of evil: darkness, thieves, and death (sections i-iv). In these attributes, he is both like and unlike God, for, though God is not incarnated as the sun, and though God never leaves His world (especially not to night and darkness), yet He is our spiritual light (1 John 1:5), and He is the ultimate beauty and joy of the universe, whom we as Christians worship with delight.
 - ❑ Section xi nicely encapsulates all the ideas discussed so far: Aton as the only god, incarnated as the sun who is creator and sustainer, and whom mankind delights to see (“each eye looks back and beholds you/to learn from the day’s light perfection” [section xi, lines 9-10]).
 - ❑ The concept of the pharaoh Akhenaten as Aton’s divine and only son (section i, lines 10-12; section xii, especially lines 1-3 of stanza 1 and lines 5-6 of stanza 3) is understandable if we remember that all Egypt viewed the pharaoh as a god. However, it is very far from the truth revealed in Scripture. Men redeemed through Christ are God’s adopted sons, but no man (except Christ, who was God first and became flesh later) can claim to be God’s divine Son.

¹ The glossary of Foster’s anthology and the Tapestry Week 3 supplement are excellent resources for quick synopses of myths. You may also wish to let your student read the History Background information (especially browsing the illustrations of major gods and goddesses) in the Teacher’s Notes for this week.

² Although this week focuses on Egyptian gods and prayers made to them, we did not want to choose a recitation which would require any student to say a prayer addressed to an idol. In our view, Christian students may recite poems which come from worldviews other than their own (indeed, it would be hard to find enough selections for recitation if they could not). However, there is a difference between reciting a poem that references an idol or expresses belief in a false worldview, and reciting a poem that is entirely addressed to an idol. The first is, in our view, acceptable for the sake of understanding other people and appreciating the beauty of their poetry. The second is still distinguishable (by a narrow margin) from worship of idols, but, nevertheless, we prefer to avoid it.

³ The word “incarnate” is derived from the Latin verb *incarnare*, which means “to make into flesh” (*carnis* is the Latin word for “flesh”). Thus, when we speak of incarnating something, we mean literally clothing it in flesh. When the word “incarnate” or “incarnation” appears in Egyptian literature, what is meant is that a god (a spiritual and invisible being) has clothed himself in a physical and visible form, such as the sun. As Christians, we speak of God the Son being incarnated as Jesus Christ, who is both fully man and fully God. “Incarnation” in this case is the technical term for what is meant by the Scripture that speaks of how God became flesh and dwelt among us (John 1:14).

Hymn to the Nile—begin on page 110

2. Although Egypt was called “the gift of the Nile,” Egyptians did not worship the river in the same way that they worshipped their other gods. There were no temples dedicated to the Nile, and the god of the river had no “special city or cult center for worship” (Foster, 110). As Foster tells us, “the focus of the hymn is not so much the River itself as it is Hapy, the deified spirit or energy exhibited in the annual inundation, which brought fertility and abundance, and without which the civilization of Egypt could not have existed” (110). If you’ve seen *Star Wars*, you may notice a resemblance between Hapy and “the Force” (the *Star Wars* worldview is one that replaces God with a life-force). Why might this seem like an attractive faith? What’s wrong with the idea of worshipping an “energy”? (Student Question #2)

- ❑ *The idea of worshipping a “force” is attractive to many people because it makes no demands on the believer and requires no relationship between the believer and his god. One can simply have “good feelings” about the force, or perhaps seek to control it by incantations and supplications. It’s like electricity: powerful, but controllable. As humans, one of our deepest (and most sinful) desires is to be in control. The idea of a life-force that is vast and woven into everything yet able to be molded for our own purposes is certainly appealing.*
- ❑ *Such beliefs are proven to be wrong by the very elements that make them attractive: humans were created to exist in relationship with God, under God’s perfect and loving rule. Our souls cannot be satisfied by good feelings about an impersonal force, nor can we control God (nor would we be glad if we could!).*

The Debate between a Man Tired of Life and His Soul—begin on page 55¹

NOTE: Stanza 1 of section v continues through the first eleven lines of page 59. Stanza 4 of section v continues through the first six lines of page 60. Subsection a of section vi continues through the first two lines of page 61. Subsection b of section vi continues through the first eighteen lines of page 62. Subsection c of section vi continues through the first three lines of page 63.

This is a fascinating poem, but it is also a difficult one, both poetically (it can be hard to grasp the author’s meaning at times) and because it deals with suicide, a subject that may be disturbing to your young student. Because of this, we have provided an outline for your reference as you consider the discussion questions with your student. We hope you will get the chance to pre-read the poem and make sure that your student is ready for its contents and this discussion.

- ❑ *Section i: The soul finishes his speech (this section is fragmented, and most of it is lost).*
 - ❑ *Section ii: The man answers his soul bitterly, complaining that it will not stay with him, but runs away from him because he plans to kill himself (the Egyptians believed that the soul or ba was separate from the body, able to leave and return to it [234]).*
 - ❑ *Section iii: The soul replies and reproaches the man for his complaints. The soul threatens to get even, and ends by extolling life (possibly life after death, from what the soul says about life in the “district of the West” [stanza 2, line 2]).*
 - ❑ *Section iv: The man answers his soul and tells it that it is foolish to want to keep him alive, since he will be able to care for it better, and attract a companion soul for it, after death.*
 - ❑ *Section v: The soul replies first by representing the weariness of death (stanza 1), and then urges the man to “forget your troubles!” (stanza 2, line 3). It then tells two stories to illustrate how men mourn for those who never lived (stanza 3) and how some men refuse to enjoy the life that they have because they long for something else (stanza 4).*
 - ❑ *Section vi*
 - ❑ *Subsection a: The man answers his soul and blames it for the harm which has come to his name. Names were very important to the Egyptians, a thing to be guarded and greatly treasured (see Foster’s note on “name” in the glossary [244]).*
 - ❑ *Subsection b: The man laments the state of the world, its evil and wrongdoing.*
 - ❑ *Subsection c: The man extols death in light of the suffering which he has just depicted in subsection b.*
 - ❑ *Subsection d: The man longs for the afterlife, where he can be with his god.*
 - ❑ *Section vii: The soul exhorts the man to put aside his complaints and to continue living. He promises that if the man goes on living, he will come at last to the West, where the soul will remain with him forever.*
3. In this poem we have a man who wants his soul (his *ba*, the Egyptian equivalent of one’s personality and psyche) to stay with him and let him commit suicide. The soul, by contrast, wants the man to stop complaining about life and enjoy what he has on earth until a natural death comes, after which it looks forward to a happy afterlife in

¹ Before you begin your discussion of this poem, please make sure that your student has looked up the words *ba*, “West,” and “name” in Foster’s glossary. You will need these specific definitions in order to discuss the poem.

the West. Why do you think that the man would want his soul to *stay* with him if he’s planning to die? Doesn’t the soul leave the body at death? And if the soul is so excited about the afterlife, why do you think it isn’t eager to get there faster by letting the man kill himself? Remember to back up your answers by quoting either the text or relevant facts from your knowledge of ancient Egypt. (Student Question #3)

NOTE: Your student may not have all the relevant data to answer these questions himself. If he cannot, please give him whatever information he lacks from what is provided here:

- ❑ *The Egyptians did not believe that the soul would permanently leave the body behind at death (though the two might become separated for a little while). Rather, Egyptians thought of the soul as a separate and immortal spirit, often portrayed as a bird, which made its home in the body (though it is clear that the body is also more than a home, since the soul and the man call each other “brother” [for example section iv, stanza 1, line 1]). The soul was thought to lodge with the body (in the form of a bird-like spirit) throughout both the earthly life and the afterlife (section iv shows this relationship). This explains why the man wants his soul to stay with him—he does not want to lose it, and he knows that because it is a separate entity it may leave him at any time, whether in earthly life, or at death, or in the afterlife.*
 - ❑ *It is not absolutely clear why the soul, which clearly desires a happy afterlife in the West (section iii, stanza 2), is so set against the man’s intended self-destruction. One reason might be that the man seems to intend to kill himself by fire (section ii, stanza 2, lines 5-6), and if that is the case, then the body will be destroyed and the soul will have lost its home. This seems a plausible explanation. Another explanation may be that the soul simply thinks it right for the man to live out and enjoy his natural life, rather than throwing it away in disgust.*
4. Do you see connections between this poem’s themes and some others that we have studied over the past three weeks? For example, how does this poem compare to the Harpers’ Songs on pages 178-182? (Student Question #4)
- ❑ *Like the carpe diem themes of the Harpers’ Songs, the soul in this poem insists that life should be enjoyed and lived, not discarded (though of course, in this poem, the man is seeking to end his life, not simply to misuse it as we saw the young scribe doing in the Rebuke [48]). Unlike the Harpers’ Songs, however, both man and soul in this poem look forward to a happy afterlife; clearly, for them, death is not a final annihilation.*
 - ❑ *There are other themes in this poem which we have seen before: for example, subsection d of section vi describes the kind of love for and longing to be near one’s god that we saw in Akhenaten’s Hymn to the Sun (1-7), and in the third stanza of Prayer of the King as a Star Fading in the Dawn (75). Or again, the lamentation of injustice and evil in subsection b of section vi are consistent with much of what was said in The Peasant’s Eighth Complaint (184). Your student may be able to find more connections, but these are a few of the larger ones.*

The Leiden Hymns—begin on page 149

NOTE: Below we have provided a brief description of the theme of each hymn, for your reference as you discuss them with your student.

- ❑ *Hymn IX (page 150)—The god as the dawn which brightens and gives life to all creation.*
- ❑ *Hymn X (page 152)—The perfections and glory of Thebes.*
- ❑ *Hymn XX (page 153)—Horus of Twin Horizons, and tracing the path of the sun across the sky.*
- ❑ *Hymn XXX (page 155)—Amun-Rê’s defeat of evil (which in this case exists in the form of the god Apophis).*
- ❑ *Hymn XL (page 156)—The god as a skilled craftsman, especially with reference to his self-fashioning.*
- ❑ *Hymn LXX (page 157)—Amun and his mercy towards those who cry out to him for help.*
- ❑ *Hymn LXXX (page 159)—The god in various incarnations.*
- ❑ *Hymn XC (page 160)—The god in more incarnations, beginning with light, and his creations.*
- ❑ *Hymn C (page 162)—Amun and his self-creation.*
- ❑ *Hymn CC (page 163)—The awe, mystery, and glory of the god, who has many incarnations but is yet alone in his immense power and holiness.*
- ❑ *Hymn CCC (page 166)—The trinity of Amun, Rê, and Ptah. Our first two questions considered Aton as compared to God, and Hapy as compared to the Holy Spirit. It appears that the Egyptians also had a trinity of sorts.*
- ❑ *Hymn D (page 167)—The god’s power in war and preeminence over any foe.*
- ❑ *Hymn DC (page 168)—A sort of pantheistic hymn of the god as all parts of creation or as the source of all parts of creation.*

5. As Foster tells us in his introduction to the Leiden Hymns, “In them we see a culmination of ancient Egyptian theology as it developed the concept of one preeminent god, the creator, all-powerful, all-encompassing, god of all

lands and peoples, and one who can appear in a multitude of forms or incarnations, including those of the other Egyptian gods” (149). Many people claim that God, as He has revealed Himself in the Bible, is only another variation on the polytheistic beliefs of ancient cultures. People who make this sort of statement often express surprise that the “outdated faith” of Bible times “managed to hang on” into the twenty-first century. “After all,” some might say, “Moses was raised at the court of Pharaoh. He must have taken Egyptian religious beliefs and recombined them into the Hebrew religion, in order to make the Israelites into a unified nation.” Use the chart below to compare and contrast this “all-powerful” deity of the Egyptians with Jehovah. Based on your findings, how would you answer somebody who believes that there is no real difference between belief in the God of the Bible and belief in the supreme idol of the Egyptians? (Student Question #5)

- ❑ First, please have your student look up Romans 1:18-23. He was instructed to use it in his preparation for class, and you will need it for reference throughout your discussion of this difficult issue.
- ❑ Since men know God’s invisible attributes (Romans 1:19-20), they often incorporate some of these into the idols which they make for themselves. Thus the deity described in the Leiden Hymns is, like God, a skillful and life-giving creator who is transcendently holy and mysterious and who loves mankind, his creation.
- ❑ However, men refused to worship God. Claiming to be wise, they became fools who made up images resembling themselves and various aspects of creation (Romans 1:21-23). In an attempt to invent gods that could be controlled by human beings (and believing that it is much easier to control a visible god than an invisible one), they gave the gods so many different incarnations and forms that their myths and doctrines became hopelessly confusing. Is Amun a different god than Amun-Rê? Is there one god who has many incarnations (as nine gods, or eight gods, or light, or as a goddess)? If that is the case, why does he need so many? These are questions that expose the foolishness (indeed, sometimes the downright silliness) of polytheistic beliefs.
- ❑ The key difference between any man-made religion and faith in God is that man-made religions are made in man’s image, whereas faith in God comes directly from God and is given to man via God’s own words (the Bible). Man-made religions will always mirror man, whereas beliefs derived from the Bible will be consistently striking in that they are so different from what human beings make up on their own. The biblical explanation of reality is astoundingly simple, coherent, and above all concerned with God’s glory. Indeed, the best test-question for any religion is, “Whose glory is the ultimate focus of this belief system?” If the answer is “the glory of man,” then the “god” is no god at all, but only a reflection of man. Glory belongs to the creator, not the creature. See a chart of sample answers to the compare/contrast chart on attributes of Egyptian deities and Yahweh, below.

HYMN CONTENT	HYMN	GOD’S NATURE AND ATTRIBUTES	SCRIPTURE
The god as a life-giving creator and skilled craftsman	IX	God is indeed the Creator, who gives life to all things that have it. He is also a wonderfully skillful fashioner.	Acts 17:28; Gen. 1-2
The god incarnated as light	IX, XX, XC	“God is light,” but nowhere in Scripture do we read that God incarnated Himself as the sun.	1 John 1:5
The god incarnated as various other gods	LXX, XC, CC	None: God has only been incarnated once, as Christ, and He was still fully Himself in that incarnation.	John 1:14; 20:31
The god as a warrior and defeater of evil	XXX, D	There is no equal contest between evil and God, because God is infinitely greater than evil, and is always triumphing over it.	1 Sam. 17:47; Psalm 24:8
The god’s self-creation or fashioning of himself	XL, C	None: God did not create or fashion Himself—He has always been.	Nowhere in Scripture is there any idea of God creating Himself.

Chart continues on the next page...

HYMN CONTENT	HYMN	GOD’S NATURE AND ATTRIBUTES	SCRIPTURE
The god’s favorite or most sacred city: Thebes	X	Jerusalem or the New Jerusalem.	Neh. 11:1; Rev. 21:2
The god’s mercy towards mankind	LXX	God is supremely merciful towards mankind, His creation. Scripture abounds with examples of God’s lovingkindness, which culminate in the ultimate example of His sacrifice of Himself for us.	John 3:16; Eph. 2:7; Luke 1:78-79
The god as a trinity, or the god as the world (pantheism)	CCC, DC	God does indeed exist as the Trinity, but not as the Egyptian trinity, and He is certainly not pantheistically present in creation.	The doctrine of the Trinity is overwhelmingly supported in Scripture, but it is nowhere implicitly stated.
The god’s transcendent holiness and mystery	CC	God is indeed transcendently holy, and He is wrapped in infinite mystery.	Exodus 15:11; 1 Chron. 16:29; Prov. 25:2

GEOGRAPHY: BACKGROUND INFORMATION

World Book on the lotus ¹

Lotus is the common name for many different kinds of plants. The lotus that is known in most places is the Egyptian water lily. The American lotus is also a well-known plant.

The Egyptian water lily is a familiar sight along the Nile River and neighboring streams. This plant has white or rose-purple flowers that may be 1 foot across. They grow on a weak stalk, 4 to 8 feet long, and rise only a little above the water. The leaves spread out on the water’s surface.

The lotus was a sacred flower to the people of Egypt, India, and China. It is also the national flower of India. The lotus appears in ancient Egyptian art.

The American lotus is a close relative of the East Indian lotus. It also is known as the water chinquapin and yellow water lily. Its yellow flowers and leaves are on stout stalks that stand 2 to 3 feet above the water. There is a large lotus bed in Grass Lake, about 50 miles northwest of Chicago. These plants cover about 600 acres, and make a wonderful sight in August. Other lotus beds are found near New York City, in Monroe, Mich., in southern California, and in the valleys of the Missouri and Mississippi rivers.

The scientific name Lotus has nothing to do with the common name lotus. It is a genus of the pea family and consists of about 100 species. The flowers are white, yellow, red, or purple, and have a shape and size resembling pea flowers.

FINE ARTS AND ACTIVITIES: BACKGROUND INFORMATION

This week, we will begin a study of the elements and principles of design (eleven total). We suggest that you keep a small collection of note cards this year for art terms, printing the terms on one side of the card and use the other side for taking notes, drawing examples, etc. These cards can be used with all ages and will help you and your students to observe art more closely. You may want to clip them together and keep them near your Art History books so that you get in the habit of pulling them out together. This week, make cards for “line” and “shape”:

1. Line (Element of Design)

- ❑ For a definition of line, use the Paul Klee quote, “A line is a dot who went for a walk.”
- ❑ Though most students will be familiar with what a line is, it will be helpful to point out the vast variety of lines possible. Brainstorm a list of possible kinds of lines. (Have your students illustrate and write them on the back of the card.) Examples include straight, curved, diagonal, wide, bold, even, quiet, or impulsive.

¹ Excerpted from a World Book article entitled Lotus. Contributor: Thomas B. Croat, Ph.D., P. A. Schulze Curator of Botany, Missouri Botanical Garden.

- ❑ One kind of line that might be new to you is the implied line. This includes dotted lines and lines that might “trail off” while the viewer understands that it is implied that the line continues. In other words, every part of the line does not need to be visible to be understood (an important concept when learning to draw).

2. Shape (Element of Design)

- ❑ Again, this term is very basic, and could be defined as a line enclosing a space. When discussing this definition, ask the student to tell you the difference between a shape (like a square) and a form (like a box or a cube).
- ❑ Also point out the difference between geometric and organic shapes. Geometric shapes here are defined as any man-made shapes with straight edges. Examples would include triangles, squares, and other polygons. Organic shapes here are defined as natural (not man-made) shapes with any variety of curved or non-straight edges: flowers, trees, or birds, for example.

Egyptian art was almost solely devoted to adorning temples, palaces, and tombs. Tombs received the greatest attention because of the belief that the deceased would only enjoy what was pictured, and then only if the painting was exactly according to set forms.

In the Egyptian wall paintings, observe the varieties of lines and shapes that they used. Pull out your note cards and add to the list any new varieties that you find. Spend some time having your student point out and describe the varieties of lines and shapes. Though it may seem simplistic, this can benefit even rhetoric level students. Here are some questions that may keep the older students looking: What kinds of shapes seem to be repeated? What patterns seem common? Are all of the objects outlined? What colors are the outlines? Describe the scale (size) of the shapes in relation to each other.

World Book on Egyptian art, music, and literature¹

Painting and sculpture. Many of ancient Egypt’s finest paintings and other works of art were produced for tombs and temples. Artists covered the walls of tombs with bright, imaginative scenes of daily life and pictorial guides to the afterlife. The tomb paintings were not simply decorations. They reflected the Egyptians’ belief that the scenes could come to life in the next world. The tomb owners therefore had themselves pictured not only as young and attractive but also in highly pleasant settings that they wished to enjoy in the afterlife.

Ancient Egyptian sculptors decorated temples with carvings showing festivals, military victories, and other important events. Sculptors also carved large stone sphinxes. These statues were supposed to represent Egyptian kings or gods and were used to guard temples and tombs. The Great Sphinx, for example, is believed to represent either King Khafre or the god Re-Harakhte. This magnificent statue has a human head and the body of a lion. It is 240 feet long and about 66 feet high. The Great Sphinx, which is near the Great Pyramid at Giza, was carved about 4,500 years ago. Sculptors also created small figures from wood, ivory, alabaster, bronze, gold, and turquoise. Favorite subjects for small sculptures included cats, which the Egyptians considered sacred and valued for protecting their grain supplies from mice.

Music and literature. The ancient Egyptians enjoyed music and singing. They used harps, lutes, and other string instruments to accompany their singing. Egyptian love songs were poetic and passionate.

Writers created many stories that featured imaginary characters, settings, or events and were clearly meant to entertain. Other writings included essays on good living called “Instructions.”

BIBLE SURVEY AND CHURCH HISTORY: DISCUSSION OUTLINE

This is our last week to study Egyptian culture, and the focus for this week is on the mythology of ancient Egypt in relationship to the history of redemption. If you’ve already been reading the Egyptian myths and legends, you know that they are polytheistic and pagan. You and your child should discuss some or all of the following questions.

Questions for Discussion, Thought, or Journaling for All Levels

1. Did the ancient Egyptians believe such obviously outrageous tales? If so, why?
Yes. Because they did not worship the true God as God nor give Him thanks, therefore their foolish hearts were darkened, and God gave them over to superstitious fears.
2. What are the differences between the supernatural stories they believed in and the miracles recorded in the Bible?
Miracles in the Bible are all done with one purpose: to glorify God and reveal His will. See sidebar, right, for examples of signs that were given to build faith and confirm Moses’ message.

¹ Excerpted from a *World Book* article entitled *Ancient Egypt*. Contributor: Leonard H. Lesko, Ph.D., Professor of Egyptology and Chairman, Department of Egyptology, Brown University.

3. What was the Egyptians’ basis of hope for life after death?
A superstitious belief in capricious, impersonal, unloving “gods” who might grant them eternal happiness if they passed certain tests. Their goal was to cheat death, not to pass from death to life because of a loving, compassionate act of an all-knowing God.

Lecture Questions for Rhetoric Level

1. Define “miracle.”
Students’ responses will vary. Have them start by writing down their definitions for one minute, then sharing them. Then ask them to think about this question: “When you have a headache, and you take medicine and feel better, how were you healed: by the medicine or by a miracle?” The answer is, “both!” One definition of a miracle is the setting aside of God’s natural laws; another is the direct intervention of God in the world. It’s a miracle that we are healed, whether God works through medicine or sudden, supernatural intervention.
2. What was the symbolic significance of the first nine plagues?
Twofold. First, each plague “judges” and topples an idol of Egypt. Second, note that Moses announces each one. God is exalting His chosen messenger, firstly before Pharaoh and then before the Israelite community.
3. Go over the chart from the Student Activity Pages that the students filled out. Sample answers are given to you below and on page 40. Help students associate major idols of Egypt with judgments in the plague.

Exodus 4:1

Moses answered, “What if they do not believe me or listen to me and say, ‘The Lord did not appear to you?’”

God gave him three miraculous signs (staff turning to a snake, hand becoming first leprous then cleansed, and Nile turning to blood) to perform for them in answer to this question, so that their faith would be built.

Exodus 10:1-2

Then the Lord said to Moses, “Go to Pharaoh, for I have hardened his heart and the hearts of his officials so that I may perform these miraculous signs of mine among them, that you may tell your children and grandchildren how I dealt harshly with the Egyptians and how I performed my signs among them, and that you may know that I am the Lord.”

PLAGUE	WHAT THE PLAGUE REPRESENTED
1. Nile turns to blood; by-waters and small streams are also turned to blood. Egyptians dig near the Nile for drinking water. Magicians can turn water to blood, too.	<i>The Nile god is named and represented in various ways, depending on your resource: he’s called Hopi, Khnum, and other things (e.g. Sothis, god of floodwaters). Obviously, turning the Nile to blood showed Yahweh’s power over Egypt’s very life-source.</i>
2. Frogs further foul the land of Egypt and the Nile. Again, magicians can match Moses’ plague.	<i>The frog symbolized the goddess Heqt, or Heket. She was a primordial (foundational) deity and specially associated with childbirth. Burning piles of frogs would have been a painful sight (and smell!) to Egyptians.</i>
3. Gnats fill the land. Magicians cannot create gnats, and they tell Pharaoh, “This is the finger of God!”	<i>There doesn’t seem to be one deity to whom this plague applies. But it is the first plague that the magicians can’t match, and they admit that this display of power is God operating. Isis and Thoth were the deities of Magicians</i>
4. Insects infest the land—but God begins to set His people apart. Insects do not infest Goshen, where the Israelites live.	<i>The Bible says that “the land was laid waste.” We don’t know what insects these were, but they were harmful to vegetation and humans. Probably little normal work could go on; perhaps they brought diseases. The idols of health (Isis and Thermuthis) and crops (Osiris) would be affected.</i>
5. Severe pestilence on all livestock: horses, donkeys, cattle, herds, and flocks. Again, no Israelite animals die.	<i>This is a severe blow to the wealth and prestige of the Egyptian culture. Animals were very valuable. Furthermore, Apis, represented by a bull, and patron god of Memphis, was overpowered, as was Hathor, who was associated with cows.</i>
6. Fine dust that causes boils and sores to break out on man and beast, from head to foot. Again, not in Goshen.	<i>All Egyptian deities of healing were powerless before the Lord, especially Isis.</i>
7. Hail, thunder, and fire rain down on Egypt, destroying all crops that are in flower or bud (flax and barley) and all trees in the fields (valuable for both shade and wood). In Goshen there is no hail.	<i>Again, this is a blow to the wealth of Egypt: valuable crops are destroyed. The god Osiris again takes a beating. Some servants of Pharaoh heed Moses and take servants and animals out of the fields. These are saved from this judgment, in a picture of common grace.</i>

Chart continues on the next page...

PLAGUE	WHAT THE PLAGUE REPRESENTED
8. Locusts eat the remaining vegetation, especially the important crops of wheat and spelt. They come into the houses and fields throughout Egypt, but not in Goshen.	Once again, Egypt is further impoverished, and Pharaoh is proven impotent before the plague. His subjects begin to murmur against him. No Egyptian idols can help.
9. Darkness, even a darkness that may be felt, covers the land for three days; but not in Goshen.	Darkness would, of course, topple the chief idol: the sun god Re, or Ra, or Amon-Re. Also affected would be Mut (eye of the sun) and Nut (sky goddess) and Khepri (god of the rising sun). Furthermore, Pharaoh is powerless (even though he believes himself to be the brother of the sun).
10. The firstborn of Egypt die, both of men and of cattle, from the Pharaoh to the prisoner in his dungeon, but Israelites who observe Passover are safe.	The firstborn son represents the strength of a man's life and his hope for a continuation of his line on Earth. It is a huge blow to human pride and also to family emotions and relationships (see comments below). Not one house in Egypt was unaffected; all had someone dead.

- Ask, "How did God use Pharaoh to further His purposes through the plagues and the crossing of the Red Sea?"
 - Moses explains Pharaoh's vacillations by stating repeatedly that God hardened Pharaoh's heart in order to glorify Himself. See Exodus 10:1-2 (in the sidebar on page 39) as an example of this.
 - The children of Israel were at first terrified at the Red Sea, then amazed at its parting, then relieved and rejoicing as those waters swept away all of their enemies. God allowed the Israelites to come to a situation where only God could save, and then He did save, utterly and completely.
- Ask, "What was the special significance of the tenth plague?"

In the ancient world, the firstborn male child represented the primal strength of the father. Oldest sons inherited all of their father's estate. The oldest male among brothers was the leader of his clan. To kill a man's firstborn was to kill his best hope for the future. God judged every household in Egypt by cutting off the pride of life in each home. The Bible tells us that there was no home left untouched by this terrible judgment. Furthermore, it was a powerful testimony to the miraculous work of God. How else can you explain a disease that only kills all the firstborn of all cattle and humans whose parents didn't put lamb's blood on their door posts? This could have been only explained by the judgment of God.
- What is the symbolic significance of the events of the Passover meal? Can you see any "types" that relate to the experience of Christian believers?

In the Passover Ritual, we have a clear picture of Christ who is slaughtered and whose blood is shed so that the sins of those who slay Him are forgiven. By voluntary participation in the original Passover, (by faith in God's Word and direction) the disaster of death (a pending judgment by a righteously angry God that menaced those who did not choose to associate themselves with the Passover lamb) "passes over," leaving unharmed those who remain within the houses marked by the blood. Many types are listed on pages 41-42 in the sample chart.
- Go over the charts students have made about trials and deliverances. Ask, "How did God use Moses in the wilderness journey to Sinai?"

God continues to send deliverance through Moses, exalting him in the sight of Israel so that God's laws and statutes given by Moses may be respected by future generations. Moses throws a branch in the water, and God turns it sweet; Moses prays for food, and God sends quail and manna; Moses hits the rock, and it produces water; Moses' arms are supported, and Israel wins a military battle.
- What was Moses' purpose for Israel when he wrote the book of Exodus?

A central message of Exodus 1-18 is that Moses was God's chosen leader. Though he was the meekest of men (Numbers 12:3), God had him write seemingly self-promoting things for the sake of His laws and preparation. Later generations who had not known Moses would need assurance of God's choice.

Look for two wonderful sermons by Charles H. Spurgeon available free online and linked to the Year 1 Church History page of the Tapestry website. One is called "Christ Our Passover," based on 1 Corinthians 5:7 and delivered on December 2, 1855; and a second titled "The Exodus," based on Exodus 12:41, was originally delivered on December 9, 1855. Both would make great content for devotions this week. Consider reading them aloud and discussing them. "The Exodus" is available in audio version as well.

- Define "mediator."

A mediator is someone who comes between two people/ groups to help them communicate with each other.

Go over, and expand where necessary, the charts of types the student has found in the story of Egypt and the children of Israel this week. Help them see how God was preparing the world for a Savior in His dealings with Israel and with Egypt. He was giving them "categories" for future events. Later, people would feel that the work and words of the Savior had a familiar quality to them; they would see in Jesus the character of God as revealed in the events we've read about this week. They would also see elements of themselves and their lost, sinful situations mirrored in the characters of Pharaoh and his servants and slaves in Egypt.

On this page and page 42 is a sample chart with some insights I've had in reading this story with my students, along with others that I have culled from recommended resources. Given the richness of this story, you even more than these. (Note that your student may not have cited verses to support his types; we have done in our chart for your convenience.)

THIS STORY...	IS A PICTURE OF...
Egypt herself	<input type="checkbox"/> Worldly accomplishment, wealth, arrogance. <input type="checkbox"/> She bases at least part of her wealth on slave labor. In pursuit of wealth and power, she grows more oppressive. <input type="checkbox"/> Her people choose to worship gods of their own fashioning, and so Pharaoh "does not know the LORD" (Ex. 5:2). In this, the Egyptians are "without excuse" (Rom. 1:19).
Israelites in bondage	<input type="checkbox"/> Every sinner trapped in sin and experiences demonic oppression. <input type="checkbox"/> The sinner is powerless to free himself, the sinner is cruelly used by a fearful taskmaster (Satan) who makes unfair and inhumane demands of him or her.
"Make bricks without straw!" (Exodus 5:6-23)	<input type="checkbox"/> Pharaoh's response to Israel's early faith in Moses and in God's message of hope and deliverance is to deliver a swift "kick in the teeth," which he hopes will be a knock-out blow. <input type="checkbox"/> Many times, when a believer is first saved or first steps out in obedience to a new request from God, he experiences opposition. <input type="checkbox"/> He can learn how not to react from the story of the Israelites, who immediately blamed Moses! <input type="checkbox"/> Leaders can identify with Moses' cry (Ex. 5:23) at moments like these! <input type="checkbox"/> It is when we are at the end of OUR strength that God starts to work. "NOW you shall see what I will do to Pharaoh..." (Ex. 6:2)
Israelites did not easily trust Moses after experiencing Pharaoh's wrath. (Ex. 6:6-12)	<input type="checkbox"/> It is easy for young believers to see their oppressor (the Enemy) or their sins as bigger than God. They become despondent and unbelieving. <input type="checkbox"/> This response is also hard for leaders!
Magicians match Moses' first signs with equal demonstrations of power (Ex. 7-8) but cannot keep pace as God shows more and more of His power.	<input type="checkbox"/> Paul echoes this event in 2 Corinthians 11:14-15, "And no wonder, for Satan himself masquerades as an angel of light. It is not surprising, then, if his servants masquerade as servants of righteousness. Their end will be what their actions deserve." <input type="checkbox"/> The believer should be warned of this reality! <input type="checkbox"/> Such masquerades do not prove God false, and will eventually cease as the believer puts his trust in God, and God reveals Himself to the believer more and more.

Chart continues on the next page...

THIS STORY...	IS A PICTURE OF...
The struggle between Pharaoh and Moses throughout.	<input type="checkbox"/> <i>This story foreshadows the struggle of God's people with many seemingly powerful enemies (Goliath, Pilate, Satan) or apparently insurmountable odds (storms, pestilences, wars).</i> <input type="checkbox"/> <i>The believer must remember the power of the God who has chosen him or her to overcome all enemies and obstacles!</i>
In Exodus 8:22 and following, God makes a distinction between the Egyptians and the Israelites.	<input type="checkbox"/> <i>This event foreshadows many instances of God's specific and protective care.</i> <input type="checkbox"/> <i>It gives hope to the Christian in difficult times: God is able to save Christians alone when disaster strikes all around (Ps. 91:7). It harkens back to Lot in Genesis, too.</i>
In Exodus 11, the Israelites ask for gold, silver, and clothing from Egyptians, and God gives them favor.	<input type="checkbox"/> <i>The children of Israel left Egypt in their best clothes, adorned for a festival. "That is just how a child of God comes out of Egypt. He does not come out of his bondage with his old garments of self-righteousness on: oh, no! As long as he wears those he will always keep in Egypt; but he marches out with the blood and righteousness of Jesus Christ upon him, and adorned with the goodly graces of the Holy Spirit" (from Spurgeon's "The Exodus").</i> <input type="checkbox"/> <i>"God's people never lose anything by going to the house of bondage. They win their choicest jewels from the Egyptians." Spurgeon makes this point fully in "The Exodus": all our sins and oppressions and trials turn to jewels as we leave Egypt.</i>
In Exodus 12, the Passover lamb is sacrificed and consumed.	<i>Jesus! (Many of these are taken from Spurgeon's sermon "Christ Our Passover"):</i> <input type="checkbox"/> <i>A perfect, innocent lamb, who gives us His righteousness as a covering</i> <input type="checkbox"/> <i>One who goes quietly to slaughter</i> <input type="checkbox"/> <i>One who is young when crucified, in the prime of life</i> <input type="checkbox"/> <i>One who is spotless and unblemished, pure and free from all sin that He might bear ours</i> <input type="checkbox"/> <i>The lamb was to be slaughtered and its blood smeared on the houses' doorways so that the wrath of God might pass over. Its blood was precious!</i> <input type="checkbox"/> <i>It was to be roasted, and no bone of it broken. When Jesus was crucified, He hung in the hot Judean sun, being tortured a long time, and none of His bones were broken.</i>

Optional: An advanced topic for discussion is a "theology of suffering."

When the Israelites suffer, God is at work. We are not, as Christians, promised that we will not suffer—quite the opposite is true. We are promised that we will enjoy blessings with persecutions when we obey God on earth. But we further understand that God is with believers in their suffering and that earthly suffering is never the end of the story. God is able to restore and renew us—whether here or in eternity no matter how much we suffer. The purpose for suffering is always the same: to glorify God. In unbelievers' lives, this usually means that suffering is a completely just penalty for sin. In believers' lives, God is most glorified when we continue to trust Him through our difficult situations and call upon Him in prayer. We do not always understand the entire purpose for our sufferings in this life, but we can know this: God's mercy, care, and tenderness are on full display when a Christian suffers in trust.¹

PHILOSOPHY: BACKGROUND INFORMATION

World Book on ancient Egyptian beliefs about the afterlife (reprinted from Week 2) ²

The afterlife. The ancient Egyptians believed that they could enjoy life after death. This belief in an afterlife sometimes led to much preparation for death and burial. It resulted, for example, in the construction of the pyramids and other great tombs for kings and queens. Other Egyptians had smaller tombs.

¹ For more on this, note these passages: Job 42, Psalm 9:17-18, Psalm 51:17, 2 Corinthians 12:1-10, Mark 10: 28-31. Also, see *Trusting God: Even When Life Hurts*, by Jerry Bridges.

² Excerpted from a *World Book* article entitled *Ancient Egypt*. Contributor: Leonard H. Lesko, Ph.D., Professor of Egyptology and Chairman, Department of Egyptology, Brown University.

The Egyptians believed that the bodies of the dead had to be preserved for the next life, and so they *mummified* (embalmed and dried) corpses to prevent them from decaying. After a body was mummified, it was wrapped in layers of linen strips and placed in a coffin. The mummy was then put in a tomb. Some Egyptians mummified pets, including cats and monkeys. A number of Egyptian mummies have survived to the present day.

The Egyptians filled their tombs with items for use in the afterlife. These items included clothing, wigs, food, cosmetics, and jewelry. The tombs of rich Egyptians also had statues representing servants who would care for them in the next world. Scenes of daily life were painted on walls inside the tombs. The Egyptians believed that certain prayers said by priests would make Osiris bring the scenes as well as the dead to life.

Many Egyptians bought texts containing prayers, hymns, spells, and other information to guide souls through the afterlife, protect them from evil, and provide for their needs. Egyptians had passages from such texts carved or written on walls inside their tombs or had a copy of a text placed in their tombs. Collections of these texts are known as the **Book of the Dead**.

PHILOSOPHY: RHETORIC DISCUSSION OUTLINE

As always, ask whether your student has read the script on his own. Take a look at what, if anything, he has noted from his reading. Then read through the script again with your student and discuss it, using the following outline.

I am the Great God who created himself.

- There are some questions everybody has to ask. One is, "Where did things come from?" No matter how you answer that question, it leads to another ("And where did *that* come from?") and another, and another, until you get to the First Thing, whatever that first thing may be. And then you still have the question, "And where did the First Thing come from?"
- Ask your student how the Egyptians would answer that question.
The Egyptians believed the First Thing was Ra, and said that Ra created himself.
- Is that the only possible answer to where the First Thing came from?
No, the First Thing might have always existed.

The things which have been made, and the things which shall be made [refer to] the dead body of Osiris.

- How did the Egyptians think the material world relates to the spiritual world?
They believed the universe was made from the dead body of Osiris.
- What other ways could the material and spiritual worlds relate?
 - The material world is God (pantheism).*
 - The material world is a part of a greater God (pantheism).*
 - The material world is animated by various spirits (animism).*
 - The material world was created by God (theism).*
 - We don't know and can't find out (agnosticism).*
 - There is no God (atheism).*

Those who do away utterly sins and offences...

- The Egyptians believed in life after death and said that the way one lived (and was buried) would affect one's future existence. How did this belief shape Egyptian society?
The immense amount of time/resources devoted to mummies, pyramids, etc.
- Which question matters more to the average human being, "Where did everything come from?" or "Where am I going to?"
Answers will vary. Most people care more about where they are going than how things got here.
- Did the Egyptians say you had to be sinless to live on after death?
No, they believed in minor gods who did away with the sins of mortals.
- Can you think of any Old Testament passages that clearly teach that the soul is immortal?
No. The Pharisees, who believed in the resurrection, debated this issue with the Sadducees, who did not. See Acts 23:8.

- Read Psalm 90, which is attributed to Moses. Is there anything in this psalm that teaches that there is a life after death?
No.
- Is there anything in the first five books of the Old Testament that would suggest that Moses taught any Egyptian beliefs about the afterlife?
No. Moses was most responsible for the first five books of the Old Testament, but there is nothing in them that clearly teaches that the soul lives on after death.
- Does a belief in God necessarily mean there will be an afterlife?
No, there is no particular reason God should raise the dead, and there is no particular reason the soul should be immortal.
- Why do Christians believe in an afterlife?
Jesus promised that His followers would be raised from the dead.

GLANCE INTO NEXT WEEK...

WEEK 4: CREATION THROUGH NOAH	
Lower Grammar	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> History readings are geared toward developing a Christian worldview of Creation. <input type="checkbox"/> If you choose to do additional activities in <i>A is for Adam</i> (found in the second half of the book), expand the book's assignments into Week 5. <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Yellow and Pink</i>, now unfortunately out of print but listed in the right-hand Reading Assignment Chart, is a great discussion-starter!
Upper Grammar	Read several versions of the Noah's Ark story to begin teaching basic discernment skills.
Dialectic	Our History: In-Depth choice for this week could also be counted toward science. The purpose of this selection is to further instill an awe of God's magnificent creation.
Rhetoric	<i>Adam and His Kin</i> is considered to be "extra-biblical." You'll find lots of interesting propositions that will aid your high school student in giving careful consideration to the actual biblical account.
Teacher	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> All students can compare various episodes in biblical history with their storybook assignments. Be ready to discuss and emphasize your beliefs concerning creation and the flood. <input type="checkbox"/> If possible, make time to read <i>Adam and His Kin</i> ahead of time, or with your student, so that you can answer any questions he may have.

BUDGET TIPS		
Dialectic	Rhetoric	Do you want dialectic and rhetoric students to use the same literature book? Choose <i>Tales of Ancient Egypt</i> .
All Levels	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> If you have to choose one book for all of your kids, choose <i>How Majestic is Thy Name</i>. Illustrations are outstanding, and text can be read aloud to younger students. <input type="checkbox"/> Everyone in the family will enjoy <i>Yellow and Pink</i>! It's a fun read-aloud and great for emphasizing the differences in individuals. 	