

The Egyptian Creation Epic

Harmonized from various versions of the Mythos
by Aaron Leitch

In the beginning there was only the *Nun*: the great celestial waters of the Unmanifest; the depths of the nighttime sky. Swimming within this primordial Deep were the mighty *Ogdoad*: eight Gods who consisted of four Serpents, and four Frogs. Their names were Nun and Nunet, deities of the watery abyss; Heh and Hehet, deities of infinite space; Kek and Keket, deities of darkness; and Amon and Amonet, deities of the invisible. These primordial Gods swam within the Waters, guarding the Great Egg that incubated the Creator.

In time, the Egg began to hatch. It split into two halves, dividing the waters of the *Nun* into the upper and lower, and making between them a space wherein the Creator could fashion the world.

From the Egg arose a single blue Lotus. It rose high above the darkness of the abyss, and opened its great petals. Within its golden heart rested a beautiful young God, the Creator Amen-Re, with one single finger pressed against His lips in Silence.

Light streamed from the body of this Divine Child, banishing darkness to the far reaches of the universe. Like a phoenix with flaming plumage He arose, uttering a cry that shattered the eternal silence. This was the first sound- the first Word- and that Word manifested as a living God. That was His name: the Self-Created, the Logos, Wisdom.

Amon-Re then constructed an island for Himself to rest upon, and He surveyed the expanse of water around Him. He knew that He was alone, and soon found He could not bear the solitude. He longed for others to share the Light with Him.

Thus, He began his creation. In this He is known as Khephera, the God of Creation, the God of the Rising Sun. He brought order to the chaotic *Ogdoad*- setting Them in Their proper places- and it was thus the world came into existence. He accomplished this through the mighty power of the Divine Word, *Thoth*, and that power was yet another God: Ptah, the architect of the world and all of its creatures.

The first to be created was the Great Goddess Maat; Justice, Truth, the Judge and Balance of Dualities; for, duality *is* the law of the universe. *Thoth* took Her as His wife, and the two sustain the universe even unto this day; the Divine Word and Truth.

And more were created, in Their turn, by the thoughts of Amen-Re. He empowered Them with His word- by naming Them. First among Them were Shu, the God of Air, and Tefnut, the Goddess of Moisture.

Yet, Shu and Tefnut were quickly lost to Re in the waters of the abyss, and He was once again alone. He therefore took an Eye from His face and filled it with His own power. He called the Eye his daughter, Hathor, Goddess of the Sky, and sent Her out into the darkness to find His children.

The light of Hathor pierced the forces of darkness and Shu and Tefnut were quickly found and returned to Their Father. As a reward, Re set the Eye upon His brow in the

form of the Great Cobra, the *Uraeus* Serpent. He swore an oath to Her that She would ever have power over His enemies, and in ages to come both Gods and men would fear Her.

Now Shu and Tefnut loved each other, and in time Tefnut gave birth to twins. The eldest was Geb, God of the Earth. The younger was Nut, Goddess of the Heavens. Re took the Star Goddess Nut for His wife, yet it was Geb for whom She yearned. It was Geb that She moved toward. The Earth and Sky, entangled in love, were intermixed and chaotic. The universe was formless; as if rebelling against order.

Re, unaware, stumbled upon this union of Geb and Nut. Angered at his unfaithful wife, He forced the lovers apart. He pulled the Sky far above the Earth, and held Them distant by force. He then set Shu between the lovers, upholding Nut in Her place to keep Them forever apart. It was thus that the Air came to reside between Sky and Earth.

Though Re's wrath against His wife was not yet complete. He further decreed that Nut, impregnated by Her union with Geb, should never give birth to Her young in any month of any year. Instead, They were to be locked within Her, never to see the light of day.

Nut mourned for Her loss; the loss of both Her lover and Her unborn children. Her lamentations reached even unto the ears of Thoth, the Self Created. He rushed to Her side, and dried Her tears. He soothed Her and spoke with Her, discovering the pain which inflicted Her. Thoth, who was the Lord of all magick and spells, knew that Re's decree could not be undone. Yet, he knew also that there was a way in which to relieve great Nut of Her suffering.

To this end, Thoth created the game of draughts, and challenged the Moon Goddess Silene; whose light then rivaled that of the sun. Thoth convinced Her to gamble a seventieth part of Her light for each day of the year. Being the Lord of Wisdom, He easily won from Her this light, and to this day the moon dwindles and darkens at certain periods. Thoth pieced together the light he had won- enough to fashion five whole days- and added them to the end of the 360-day lunar year.

These days did not rest within any month, nor any year, and thus Nut was able to bear Her children, one on each day. On the first was born Osiris. As he came into the World a Great Voice was heard throughout the heavens proclaiming that the Lord of Creation was born.

On the second day was born the great Elder Horus, whose right eye is the sun, and left eye the Moon. The Sky Goddess' name, Hathor, literally means "The Abode of Horus."

On the third day was born dark Set, the Lord of warfare and the burning deserts.

On the fourth day was born Isis, Goddess of Love, Magick, and Wisdom. The Great Lady of the heavens. Osiris took Her as His wife, and there was great love between Them.

Finally, on the fifth day, was born Isis' beloved sister Nephthys. The dark aspect of Her sister, She was taken by Set as His wife, but there was never love between Them at all. She, instead, remained always loyal to Her sister.

And thus is the birth of the Great Shining Ones, the Company of the Gods of *Annu*. They are the *Ennead*, the Great Company of Gods: Re; His children Shu and Tefnut, His grandchildren Geb and Nut, and His great-grandchildren Osiris, Isis, Set, and Nephthys. Many other Gods were also created by Re; and He filled the sky above the earth, and the abyss below it with spirits, demons, and lesser Deities.

Last of all was created Man and the other creatures of the earth. The mighty Khnem'u fashioned them upon His potter's wheel, and Re breathed into them the breath of life. Further, He made a land for them to dwell within, and named the kingdom Khemet (Egypt).

He protected the land with great barriers of desert, and created the river Nile so that it's waters would flood the land and rich crops would be plentiful. He also made other countries, and for them he created a Nile in the sky that would rain down its waters and sustain their life. He populated the world with all forms of animal, bird, fish, and plant; and gave them also the breath of life.

Each day Re walks through His kingdom, or sails across the sky in His Barque of Millions of Years (that is- the Ship of Eternity). To restrain the forces of darkness and chaos, He created the kingship; He then established Himself as the first and greatest King of Egypt and reigned for countless centuries in joy and peace.

But, alas, every evening the great primordial Lotus closes it's petals and sinks once more into the waters of the abyss. Darkness reigns throughout the Night until the young God within the Lotus is reborn. The forces of darkness were not conquered forever at the beginning of time; instead they surrounded the earth as serpents poised to attack the Sun God. The war between darkness and light sustains the world; and when it comes to a final end, so too will the world.

The Osirian Cycle

Now, Great Re had at last grown old. He saw that man had become fearful and angry. They had made the first weapons, and attacked anyone who might be an enemy of the Sun God.

Sadly, Re chose to leave the Divine Throne and moved far away from the land; He moved where He could still see mankind, but be far out of their reach. He made the stars and scattered them along the belly of Nuit. He made the Field of Peace and the Field of Reeds as homes for the blessed dead. Finally, He summoned Wise Thoth. He spake unto Him and said, "See, I will shine here in the heavens. I will light the sky above and the sky below. You must represent Me on earth, and record the deeds of men." He then created the Ibis form of Thoth, and made Him the Scribe of the Gods.

When Re was in the underworld, the world was engulfed in Darkness, and men were afraid; They wept for the loss of the Sun God. Their cries reached Re Himself, and the Divine One also transformed Thoth into the Great White Baboon. Thoth shone with a silvery Light, and man no longer feared the sinking of the Sun. This was the mercy of Re to the children of His tears.

Finally, Re commanded Geb and Nun to guard the world against the Serpents of Chaos; and He set His Great Grandson, Osiris, Lord of Eternity, as the new Pharaoh of Egypt, and made Isis His Queen.

Osiris proved to be a wise and kindly ruler. He taught man how to irrigate the land from the flood-waters of the Nile, and to grow crops therefrom. He taught them how to know and worship the Gods. He gave them the law of the land. He guided them away from cannibalism and incest, and brought civilization to the people.

Soon, the Great Pharaoh had brought a Golden Age to Egypt, and He set off to share His wisdom with distant countries as well. Isis was left in His place, and She ruled as well as Osiris Himself had done. Her brother, Seth, Dark Lord of Storm, She watched as a mongoose eyes the cobra. For Seth coveted the Throne of Osiris for His own.

When Osiris returned to Egypt, Seth had designed a plot for His overthrow with the aid of seventy-two conspirators. A banquet had been planned in honour of Osiris; one that Cunning Isis would not be attending. During the festivities, Seth began to speak of a splendid chest that had been made for Him. He sent for the chest, and all present admired the fine wood and gilding. Seth declared that He would gift the chest to any man who could fit it exactly.

Each man, in his turn, laid within the chest. Some were too short, and others too tall. Seth knew that only Osiris would fit the chest exactly, for he had constructed it to Osiris' exact measurements. Osiris' turn came, and He lay trustingly back into the chest, fitting snugly within it. There was laughter among the guests who thought that Seth had lost His prize to the Pharaoh. Seth signaled his conspirators, and the chest was immediately slammed shut and locked.

The chest was carried in the dark of night to a branch of the Nile, and was tossed into the cold waters. Seth then declared the death of the King, and crowned Himself King of Egypt.

When Isis came to know of Her husband's death, she became half mad with grief. She cut off a lock of Her hair and dressed in widow's clothing. She then went out in search of Her husband's body.

During Her travels, Isis came to learn that Osiris had known Her sister Nephthys. From that union had been born a child- Anubis- but Nephthys had turned Him away at birth. And so Kindly Isis tracked Him with the help of dogs, and raised Him to be Her guardian and attendant.

From village to village She traveled, until finally She found that the chest had come to rest in the land of Byblos. It had been entangled in the roots of a young sapling. Strengthened by the murdered God, it had grown in a single night into a tall and graceful

tree. When the King of Byblos heard of this marvel, he had sent for the tree to be made into a pillar for his palace. No one suspected that the tree contained a coffin within its trunk.

Isis heard of this and made Her way into the palace, residing there for many months. At last she convinced the Queen of Byblos to give Her the pillar, and she cut it open to reveal the coffin inside. She was given the best boat in Byblos, and She journeyed home to Egypt; finally hiding Osiris' body in the marshes by the Nile.

One night, whilst Mighty Isis slept, Seth happened upon the Dead King. In a fury, He tore the body of Osiris into fourteen pieces and scattered them throughout Egypt to ensure they would not all be found.

When Isis found the empty coffin, Her cries reached unto the heavens; even unto the ears of Her beloved Nephthys. She came to Isis' side, and the two sisters searched the land for the scattered body of Osiris. For many sad years the Daughters of Nuit wandered through Egypt. Everywhere They found a fragment They built a shrine. At last, all the pieces were gathered; with the exception of the God's phallus. Isis reassembled Osiris' body, and fashioned a phallus of pure gold to replace the lost member. She wrapped the body in cloth and perfumed it with many scents. Thus was Osiris whole again, and mummification was created.

Isis then transformed Herself into the form of a swallow, and with Her wings She fanned the Breath of Life into Her husband. The Lord of Eternity arose, restored to life at last. But it was only to last for the length of one night, so that He and Isis could conceive their Divine Son Horus. Because of the loss of His phallus, He could not return to the land of the living. Instead, Re-Atum made Him the King of the Dead in the realm of the Beautiful West. From that time onwards, every Egyptian knew that death was nothing to fear, for his spirit would live on in the Kingdom of Osiris.

Even Horus could not have been come into being had not His Half-Brother Anubis sacrificed a day of His own life so that Horus could be born. The Young God lived a perilous childhood, yet survived to grow strong and proud. Soon He came of age and set out to fulfill His destiny- to pull the Crown from His uncle, Seth, and thus avenge His Father's death and claim His place as rightful Heir to the Throne.

The 80 Years of Contention Between Horus and Seth

Horus, the Avenger of Osiris, came before the Great Ennead. With His Mother beside Him, He spoke of the cruel murder of His Father at the hands of Seth. He spoke of the usurption of the Throne of Egypt. The Gods were impressed by the eloquence of the Falcon-Headed One, and They pitied Him.

Shu, Son of the Creator, was the first to speak: "Right should rule might. Mighty Seth hath force on His side, but Young Horus hath Justice. We shalt do Justice unto Horus by proclaiming, 'Yes! Ye shalt have the throne of Thy Father!'"

Thoth, Lord of Wisdom, spake unto the Ennead, "This is right a million times!"

Isis gave a great cry of Joy. She begged the North Wind to change direction Westward to whisper the news unto Osiris.

Lord Shu declared, "Giving the Throne unto Horus seems right to the whole of the Ennead! Thoth shalt give the Royal signet ring to Horus. We shall crown Him with the White Crown!"

And, to this, Seth proclaimed, "It is I who slay the Enemy of Re daily. It is I Who stand in the prow of the Bark of Millions of Years, and no other God can do it. It is I who should receive the office of Osiris!"

The Gods knew the Terrors of the Serpents of Chaos. They muttered that Seth was right. Horus, Lord of Light, spake and said, "Shall one give office to the uncle when the bodily Son is there?"

Isis became furious at the Ennead for not speaking in favour of Her Son. She complained to Them until, for the sake of peace, They promised that Justice should be given unto Horus.

Mighty Seth was angered. "How dare Ye cowards break Thine Oath! I shalt fetch My Great Septre and strike one of You down with it each day! I swear that I will not argue My case in any Court where Isis is present!"

Re proclaimed, "We shall cross the river to the Island in the Midst, and try the case thereon. I shalt further order the ferryman not to ferry Isis across."

Cunning Isis, the Mistress of Magick, changed Herself into a bent old woman. She carried a jar of flour and honey cakes. She offered a golden ring to the ferryman to give Her passage, and They were soon across. She slipped through the trees, and towards the camp of the Ennead.

The Gods were holding a feast, but Seth stood apart from the Divine Company. Isis had changed Her shape once more. She now appearing as a beautiful young woman, dressed as a widow. The Great Lady approached the Lord of Storm. "Who art Thou, my pretty?" asked Seth, "And why hast Thou come here?"

Isis hid her face and wept, "O Great Lord, I am looking for a champion. I was the wife of a herdsman, and I bore for him a son. Then, my dear husband died, and the boy began to tend his father's cattle. But, lo! a stranger came and ceased our byre, and told my son that he would take our cattle and turn us out. My son wished to protest, but the stranger threatened to beat him. Great Lord, help me! Be my son's champion!"

Seth heard Her words and dried Her tears. "Do not cry, my pretty. I shalt be your champion and destroy this villain! How dare a stranger take the father's property whilst the son is still alive!"

Great Isis shrieked with laughter. She became a kite. She flew into an acacia tree. "Cry thyself, Mighty Seth! Ye hath condemned thyself! Thou hast judged Thine own case!"

Seth was angered unto tears of rage. The Gods demanded to know what had transpired. He told Them of how He had been tricked by the cunning Lady Isis.

Re said unto the Dark God, "It is true, Seth. Thou hast judged Thyself."

Now the Ennead crossed over the river and camped in the Western Mountains. Plans were made for the coronation of Horus. Seth, still, would not admit His defeat. He exclaimed, "I challenge You, Horus! Let us turn Ourselves into hippopotami and fight deep within the river! Who-so-ever surfaces first shall admit defeat!"

Horus accepted gladly, but Isis fell to the ground and wept, afraid that Seth would slay Her Son. The two Gods plunged into the depths of the river. The battle raged for many days. Vicotry inclined first to one side, and then to the other; and the heart of Isis suffered bitterly. She took yarn and copper; making them into a magickal harpoon. She threw the weapon into the white water. The copper point stabbed Horus in the flank; He surfaced and roared, "Mother! Thy spear hath pierced Me! Let me go!"

Isis called to Her magick weapon to release Horus. It returned to Her hand. She threw it again, and this time it caught hold of Seth. With a bellow of pain Seth arose. "O My Sister, why must Thou always be My enemy? What have I done to Thee? I am Your Brother; Let Me go!" Great Isis' heart grew soft, and She released Her pleading Brother.

Horus was furious with His Mother for the release of His enemy. He leaped out of the river, His face like a leopard, and cut off the head of Isis with one stroke of His copper knife. He then strode away towards the Mountains of the West. Isis, Mistress of Magick, calmly turned Her body into a statue; She walked towards the tent of Re. The Gods were horrified, even Thoth Himself. The Great God of Words of Power transformed Isis' head and set it again upon Her shoulders in the form of that of a cow. The Ennead went into the Mountains of the West in search of Horus.

The Young God had found an oasis. He was asleep in the shadow of a palm tree. Seth found Horus, seized hold of Him, threw Him down, removed His two Eyes from their sockets, and buried them on the mountain so as to illumine the earth. The two balls of His eyes became two bulbs which grew into lotuses. When He returned to the encampment, He told the Gods that He had found no trace of His nephew.

Hathor, Lady of the Southern Sycamore, finally came upon the blinded God. She pitied His agony. She caught a gazelle and milked it, and then knelt beside the Young God, saying gently, "Uncover Your face." She dripped the milk onto His wounds. At once the pain vanished. "Open Your eyes," commanded Hathor. He obeyed and found that the healing Magick of the Goddess had restored His eyes and He could see again.

Hathor returned to the Ennead and said, "Seth has been lying to you. He hath torn out the Eyes of Horus. I hath healed the Young God. He approacheth now!"

Re called the Two Contendors before Him. He passed Divine Judgment upon Them for Their wrong-doings. He demanded that They cease their quarreling. Seth appeared to agree. He invited Horus to stay with Him in His palace.

One evening, as the two lay together resting, Seth inserted his penis between the thighs of Horus. Horus, however, unknown to the Dark Lord of Storm, had caught Seth's semen in His hand. With the help of His mother, Isis, He placed His own semen upon lettuce growing in a garden; lettuce that Seth was to eat.

Seth spake unto Horus, "Come, let us go, that I may contend with you in the Court." Within the Court, Seth declared, "Let the office of Ruler be given to Me, for as regards Horus who stands here, I have done a man's deed to Him."

Horus laughed and said, "What Seth has said is false. Let the semen of Seth be called, and let us see from where it will answer."

And so Thoth, the Self Created, called upon the semen of Seth. The answer came from a far-away marsh, where Isis had long since deposited it.

Horus said, "Let mind be called, and let us see from where it will answer."

Then Thoth laid His hand on the arm of Seth and said, "Come out, semen of Horus!" And it spake unto Him, "Where shall I come out?" Thoth said to it, "Come out of His ear." It replied to Him, "Should I come out of His ear, I who am Divine Seed?" Then it came out as a Golden Sun Disk upon the head of Seth. Seth became very angry, and He stretched forth His hand to seize the Golden Disk.

In desperation, Seth demanded one more contest with Horus. Before the whole Ennead he declared, "Let both of us build a ship of stone. We shall race them down the Nile. Who-so-ever wins the race shall wear the Crown of Osiris." Horus agreed to the contest at once.

Mighty Seth took up His club. He struck the top of a mountain. Then he built a huge ship of solid stone and dragged it to the river. Horus' ship was already afloat, for the Young God had secretly made a boat of pine and plastered it so as to appear as stone. Seth tried to launch His boat; it sank to the bottom of the Nile and the Ennead laughed. Seth leaped into the water. He turned Himself into a hippopotamus once more. He attacked the bark of Horus. The wooden boat splintered and sank. Horus grabbed His spear and thrust at Seth, but the Ennead shouted at Him to stop; He had to obey the command of the Great Gods of Annu.

Horus made His complaint against Seth: "It is now eighty years We are in the Court, but They do not know how to judge among Us. I have contended with Him in the Hall of the Way of Truth. I was found right against Him. I have contended with Him in the Hall of the Horned Horus. I was found right against Him. I have contended with Him in the Hall of the Field of Rushes. I was found right against Him. I have contended with Him in the Hall of the Field Pool. I was found right against Him."

In the Trial, Re-Atum asked this important question: "What shall We do about these two Gods, Who for eighty years now have been before the tribunal?"

Geb, Lord of the Gods, commanded the Nine Gods gather to Him. He judged between Horus and Seth; He ended Their great quarrel. He made Seth as king of Southern Egypt, up to the place in which He was born, which is Su. And Geb made Horus king of Egypt in the land of Northern Egypt, up to the place in which His Father was drowned, which is the Division of the Two Lands.

Thus Horus stood over one region, and Seth stood over one region. They made peace over the Two lands. That was the division of the Two Lands.

Geb's words to Seth, "Go to the place in which You were born." Seth: Southern Egypt. Geb's words to Horus, "Go to the place where Your Father was drowned." Horus: Northern Egypt. Geb's words to Horus and Seth, "I have separated You."- Lower and Upper Egypt.

Then Horus spake and said, "It is not good to defraud Me before the Ennead and to take the office of my Father Osiris from Me!"

Shu and Thoth persuaded the Court to send a letter to Osiris. After a time, the messenger returned. He bore an angry letter from the King of the Dead. Osiris demanded to know why His son had been robbed of the throne. He demanded to know if the Gods had forgotten that it was He, Osiris, Who had given the world the precious gifts of barley and wheat.

Re was offended at Osiris' words. He returned a letter of arrogance. After many days, another weary messenger returned. He bore a second letter from the King of the Dead. Thoth read it aloud: "How good are the deeds of the Ennead? Justice has sunk into the underworld. Now, listen to Me; The land of the Dead is full of demons who fear no God or Goddess. If I send them out into the world of the living they will bring back the hearts of evil-doers to the place of punishment. Who among You is more powerful than I? Even the Gods must come, at last, to the Beautiful West." At these words even the Creator was afraid.

Then it seemed wrong to Geb that the portion of Horus was like the portion of Seth. So Geb gave to Horus His inheritance, for He is the Son of His Firstborn Son.

Geb's words to the Nine Gods: "I have appointed Horus, the Firstborn, Him alone, Horus, the inheritance. To the Son of My Son, Horus, the Jackal of Southern Egypt...the First-Born Horus, the Opener of the Ways."

Then Horus stood over the land. He is the uniter of this land, proclaimed in the Great Name Ta-tenen, South of His Wall, Lord of Eternity.

Then sprouted the two Great Magickians upon His head. He is Horus who arose as King of Upper and Lower Egypt, who united the Two Lands in the Nome of the Wall, the place in which the Two Lands were united.

Reed and papyrus were placed on the double door of the House of Ptah. That means Horus and Seth, pacified and united. They fraternized so as to cease quarreling in whatever place They might be, being united in the House of Ptah, the Balance of the Two Lands in which Upper and Lower Egypt had been weighed.

Isis Recieves the True and Hidden Name of Re

Now Isis was a woman who possessed Words of Power; Her heart was wearied with the millions of men, therefore she chose the millions of the Gods, but She esteemed more highly the millions of the Spirits. And she meditated in her heart, saying, "Cannot

I, by means of the Sacred Name of Divinity, make Myself Mistress of the Earth and become a Goddess like unto Re in heaven and upon earth?"

Now, behold, each day Re entered at the head of His holy mariners and established Himself upon the Throne of the Two Horizons. Now the Divine One had grown old, He dribbled at the mouth, His spittle fell upon the earth, and His slobbering dropped upon the ground.

And Isis kneaded it with earth in Her hand, and formed thereof a Sacred Serpent in the form of a dart; She did not set it upright before Her face, but let it lie upon the ground in the path whereby the Great God went forth, according to His heart's desire, into His double Kingdom.

Now the Holy God arose, and the Gods who followed Him as though He were Pharaoh went with Him; and He came forth according to His daily wont; and the Sacred Serpent bit Him. The flame of life departed from Him, and He who dwelt among the cedars was overcome. The Holy God opened His mouth, and the cry of His Majesty reached unto heaven; His company of Gods said, "What hath happened?" and His Gods exclaimed, "What is it?". But Re could not answer, for his jaws trembled and all his members quaked; the poison spread swiftly through His flesh just as the Nile rusheth through all His land.

When the Great God had established His heart, He cried unto Those who were in His train, saying, "Come unto me, O Ye who have come into being from My body, Ye Gods who have come forth from Me, make Ye known unto Khephera that a dire calamity hath fallen upon Me. My heart perceiveth it, but My eyes see it not; My hand hath not caused it, nor do I know who hath done this unto Me. Never hath I felt such pain, neither can sickness cause more woe than this. I am a prince, the son of a prince, the Sacred Essence which hath proceeded from Divinity. I am the Great One, the Son of the Great One, and my Father planned My Name; I have multitudes of Names and multitudes of Forms, and my Being is in every God. I have proclaimed by the heralds Temu and Horus, and My Father and my Mother uttered My Name; but it hath been hidden within Me by Him that begat Me, who would not that the Words of Power of any seer should have dominion over Me. I came forth to look upon that which I had made, I was passing through the World which I had created, when lo! something stung Me, but what I know not. Is it fire? Is it water? My heart is on fire, My flesh quaketh, and trembling hath seized all My limbs. Let there be brought unto Me My Children, the Gods, who possess the Words of Power and Magickal Speech, and mouths which know how to utter them, and also powers which reach even unto the Heavens."

Then the Children of every God came unto Him uttering cries of grief. And Isis also came, bringing with Her Her Words of Magickal Power, and Her mouth was full of the Breath of Life; for Her Talismans vanquish the pains of sickness, and Her Words make to live again the throats of those who are dead. And she spake, saying, "What hath come to pass, O' Holy Father? What hath happened? Is it that a serpent hath bitten Thee, and that a thing which thou hast created hath lifted up its head against Thee? Verily it shall be cast down by My effective Words of Power, and I will drive it away from before the sight of Thy sunbeams."

The Holy God opened His mouth and said, "I was passing along my path, and I was going through the two regions of My lands according to My heart's desire, to see that which I had created, when lo! I was bitten by a serpent which I saw not. Is it fire? Is it water? I am colder than water, I am hotter than fire. All My flesh sweateth, I quake, My Eye hath no strength, I cannot see the sky, and the sweat rusheth to My Face even as in the time of summer."

Then said Isis unto Re, "Oh tell Me Thy Name, Holy Father, for whosoever shall be delivered by Thy Name shall live."

And Re said, "I have made the Heavens and the Earth, I have knit together the mountains, I have created all that is above them, I have made the water, I have made to come into being the Goddess Meht-urt, and I have made the 'Bull of His Mother', from whom spring the delights of love. I have made the heavens, I have stretched out the two horizons like a curtain, and I have placed the soul of the Gods within them. I am He who, if He openeth His eyes, doth make the Light, and, if He closeth them, Darkness cometh into being. At His command the Nile riseth, and the Gods know not His Name. I have made the hours, I have created the days, I bring forward the festivals of the year, I create the Nile-flood. I make the Fire of Life, and I provide food in the houses. I am Khephera in the morning, I am Re at noon, and I am Temu at even."

Meanwhile, the poison was not taken away from His body, but it pierced deeper, and the Great God could no longer walk. Then said Isis unto Re, "What Thou hast said is not Thy Name. O tell it unto Me, and the poison shall depart; for He shall live whose Name shall be revealed."

Now the poison burned like fire, and it was fiercer than the flame and the furnace, and the majesty of the Great God said, "I consent that Isis shall search into Me, and that My Name shall pass from me into Her." Then the God hid himself from the Gods, and His place in the Boat of Millions of Years was empty. And when the time had arrived for the heart of Re to come forth, Isis spake unto Her son Horus, saying, "The God hath bound Himself by Oath to deliver up His Two Eyes."

Thus was the Name of the Great God taken from Him, and Isis, the Lady of Words of Magickal Power, said, "Depart, poison, go forth from Re. O, Eye of Horus, go forth from the God, and shine outside His mouth. It is I who work, it is I who make to fall down upon the earth the vanquished poison, for the Name of the Great God hath been taken away from Him. Let Re live, and let the poison die! Let the poison die, and let Re live!" These are the words of Isis, the Mighty Lady, the mistress of the Gods, who knew Re by His own Name.

Hathor's Rage and the Destruction of Mankind

Now Re had grown old and frail; His bones were like silver, His skin like burnished gold, and His hair like lapis lazuli. When the people of Egypt saw His feeble condition, they

murmured against Him. Soon, there were plots among mankind to seize the Throne of Re. The plotters met in secret on the edge of the desert, and thought themselves safe. However, the Sun God knew of the traitors and listened to their plotting.

Re's anger blazed forth as never before. He commanded the attendants of His throne, "Summon My daughter, the Eye of Re; send for mighty Shu and Tefnut; bring Their children Geb and Nuit; fetch the Dark Ogdoad, the eight who were with Me in the watery Abyss; raise Nun Himself! But let Them all come secretly. If the traitors learn that I hath summoned a council of Gods they will know they have been discovered and attempt to escape their punishment."

The King of the Gods spoke to Nun, "O oldest of living things and all ye primeval Gods, I wept and men sprang from My tears. I gave them life, but now they are tired of My rule and plot against Me. Tell me, what should I do to them? I will not destroy the children of My tears until I have heard your wise advise."

Watery Nun spoke first, "My son, Thou art older than Thy father, greater than the God who created You. May you rule forever! Both Gods and men fear the terrible power of the Eye of the Sun; send it against the rebels."

Re looked out over Egypt and spake, "The plotters have already fled deep into the desert. They are afraid that I might learn of their plans and punish them. How shalt I pursue them?"

The Gods cried out with one voice, "Send the Eye of Re to seize them! Send the Eye of the Sun to slaughter them! All of mankind is guilty, let the Eye go down as Hathor and destroy the children of Your tears. Let not one man remain alive."

Hathor, the Eye of the Sun, most beautiful and terrible of Goddesses, bowed before the throne and Re and nodded His head. Hathor went down into the desert, raging like a lioness. The plotters attempted to escape Her wrath, but to no avail. She siezed them and slaughtered them and drank their blood. Then merciless Hathor left the desert and raged through villages and towns, killing every man, woman, and child She could find. Re heard the prayers and screams of the dying and felt compassion for the children of His tears, but He remained silent.

When darkness fell, Hathor returned triumphantly to Her father. "Welcome in peace," declared Re. He tried to calm the fury of His daughter, but Hathor had tasted the blood of men and found it sweet. She was eager for the morning when She could return to Egypt and complete the slaughter of mankind to avenge their treachery. Soon, the power of Re would be unquestioned, but He would have no subjects to rule.

The Sun God wondered how He could save mankind, as He could not go back on His Divine Word. Soon, he created a plan to halt His terrible daughter. He ordered His followers to run, swifter than the shadows, to the city of Abu and bring back all the ochre they could find there. When they had returned with baskets full of red soil, He sent them out again to fetch the High Priest of Re, from Memphis, and all the slave girls who worked in his temple. Re ordered the High Priest to pound the ochre to make a red dye and set the slave girls to brewing beer. Just before dawn, the red dye was mixed with

the beer until it looked like fresh blood. The King of the Gods smiled. "With this sleeping potion mankind will be rescued from My daughter," He said. "The people have suffered enough."

Re had the jars carried to the place where Hathor would begin Her killing and ordered the beer to be poured out to flood the fields with crimson.

As soon as it was light, Hathor came down into Egypt to sniff out and slaughter the few who were left alive. The first thing She saw was a great pool of blood. The Goddess waded into it and was enchanted by Her own reflection in the crimson surface. She stooped to lap up the blood and drank the pool dry.

The beer was strong, and the Goddess soon became very happy. Her head whirled and She could not remember why She had been sent into Egypt. Hathor made Her way back to the palace of Re and sank down at Her father's feet to sleep for many days.

"Welcome, gentle Hathor," spake Re. "Mankind shall remember their escape from Your fury by drinking strong beer at all Your festivals." Hathor was known from then on as The Lady of Drunkennes.

But Re was still angry and saddened over the rebellion of mankind. Nothing would be as it once was in the Golden Age before their treachery. When Hathor finally awoke, She felt as She had never felt before. Re asked Her, "Dost Thy head ache? Dost Thy cheeks burn? Dost Thou feel ill?" As He spoke, illness first came into being in Egypt.

Then Re summoned a second council of the Gods and spake, "My heart is too weary for Me to remain as King of Egypt. I am weak and old, let Me sink back into the Watery Abyss until it is time for Me to be born again."

Nun said quickly, "Shu, protect Your father! Nuit, carry Him upon Thy back."

"How can I carry the mighty King of the Gods?" asked gentle Nuit, and Nun told Her to turn Herself into a cow. And so Nuit was turned into a vast cow with golden flanks and long curved horns. Re mounted the Divine Cow, and rode away from Egypt.