

THE LAMENTATIONS
OF
ISIS AND NEPHTHYS.

TRANSLATED BY

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THIS papyrus was found by the late Mr. Passalacqua, in the ruins of Thebes, in the interior of a statue representing Osiris. It is divided into two very distinct parts. The first contains chapters of the funereal ritual in the hieroglyphic writing; the second, of which a translation here follows, consists of five pages of a fine hieratic writing of the lower epoch (probably about the time of the Ptolemies).

This manuscript now belongs to the Royal Museum of Berlin, where it is registered under the No. 1425.

A partial translation of it was published in 1852 by M. H. Brugsch, *Die Adonisklage und das Linoslied*.

He translated the second page and the beginning of the third, but without giving the hieratic text. I have since published and completely translated this interesting document, *Les Lamentations d'Isis et de Nephthys*, Paris, 1866, and now give an English translation revised.

The composition has a great analogy with the *Book of Respirations*, a translation of which follows in the fourth Volume of "RECORDS OF THE PAST." Both refer to the resurrection and renewed birth of Osiris (the type of man after his death) who, in this quality, is identified with the Sun, the diurnal renewal of which constantly recalled the idea of a birth eternally renewed. The object of the prayers recited by Isis and Nephthys is to effect the resurrection of their brother Osiris, and also that of the defunct to whom the papyrus is consecrated.



LAMENTATIONS
OF
ISIS AND NEPHTHYS.

RECITAL of the beneficial formulæ
made by the two divine Sisters¹
in the house of OSIRIS KHENT-AMENT,²
Great god, Lord of Abydos,
in the month of Choiak, the twenty-fifth day.
They are made the same in all the abodes of OSIRIS,
and in all his festivals ;
and they are beneficial to his soul,
giving firmness to his body,
diffusing joy through his being,
giving breath to the nostrils, to the dryness of the throat ;
they satisfy the heart of ISIS as well as (that) of NEPHTHYS ;
they place HORUS on the throne of his father,
(and) give life, stability, tranquillity to OSIRIS-TENTRUT³
born of TAKHA-AA, who is surnamed PERSAIS, the justified.
It is profitable to recite them,
in conformity with the divine words.

EVOCATION BY ISIS.⁴ She says :

Come to thine abode, come to thine abode !
God AN,⁵ come to thine abode !

¹ Isis and Nephthys.

² Lit., "who resides in the West."

³ The name of Osiris is invariably prefixed to that of the deceased, the latter being always assimilated to this god.

⁴ The first two sections are *evocations* addressed to Osiris defunct, expressing the grief of his two sisters at the loss of their brother, and referring to the search made by them after him.

⁵ One of the names of Osiris.

Thine enemies (exist) no more.
 Oh excellent Sovereign, come to thine abode !
 Look at me ; I am thy sister who loveth thee.
 Do not stay far from me, oh beautiful youth.
 Come to thine abode (with haste, with haste).
 I see thee no more.
 My heart is full of bitterness on account of thee.
 Mine eyes seek thee ;
 I seek thee to behold thee.
 Will it be long ere I see thee ?
 Will it be long ere I see thee ?
 (Oh) excellent Sovereign,
 will it be long ere I see thee ?
 Beholding thee is happiness ;
 beholding thee is happiness.
 (Oh) god AN, beholding thee is happiness.
 Come to her who loveth thee.
 Come to her who loveth thee.
 (Oh) UN-NEFER,¹ the justified.
 Come to thy sister, come to thy wife.
 Come to thy sister, come to thy wife.
 (Oh) URT-HET,¹ come to thy spouse.
 I am thy sister by thy mother ;
 do not separate thyself from me.
 Gods and men (turn) their faces towards thee,
 weeping together for thee, whenever (they) behold me.
 I call thee in (my) lamentations
 (even) to the heights of Heaven,
 and thou hearest not my voice.
 I am thy sister who loveth thee on earth ;
 no one else hath loved thee more than I,
 (thy) sister, (thy) sister.

¹ Surname of Osiris.

EVOCATION BY NEPHTHYS. She says :

Oh excellent Sovereign, come to thine abode.
 Rejoice, all thine enemies are annihilated !
 Thy two sisters are near to thee,
 protecting thy funeral bed ;
 calling thee in weeping,
 thou who art prostrate on thy funeral bed.
 Thou seest (our) tender solicitude.
 Speak to us, Supreme Ruler, our Lord.
 Chase all the anguish which is in our hearts.
 Thy companions, who are gods and men,
 when they see thee, (exclaim) :
 Ours be thy visage, Supreme Ruler, our Lord ;
 life for us is to behold thy countenance ;
 let not thy face be turned from us ;
 the joy of our hearts is to contemplate thee ;
 (Oh) Sovereign, our hearts are happy in seeing thee.
 I am NEPHTHYS, thy sister who loveth thee.
 Thine enemy is vanquished,
 he no longer existeth !
 I am with thee,
 protecting thy members for ever and eternally.

INVOCATION BY ISIS.¹ She says :

Hail (oh) god AN !
 Thou, in the firmament, shinest upon us each day.
 We no longer cease to behold thy rays.
 THOTH is a protection for thee.
 He placeth thy soul in the barque Ma-at,
 in that name which is thine, of god MOON.

¹ The following sections are *invocations* addressed to Osiris under the forms of the Moon and the Sun, expressing the joy of his two sisters at having thus perceived him.

I have come to contemplate thee.
 Thy beauties are in the midst of the Sacred Eye,¹
 in that name which is thine, of Lord of the sixth day's
 festival.

Thy companions are near to thee ;
 they separate themselves no more from thee.
 Thou hast taken possession of the Heavens,
 by the grandeur of the terrors which thou inspirest,
 in that name which is thine, of Lord of the fifteenth day's
 festival.

Thou dost illuminate us like RA² each day.
 Thou shinest upon us like ARUM.³
 Gods and men live because they behold thee.
 Thou sheddest thy rays upon us.
 Thou givest light to the Two Worlds.
 The horizon is filled by thy passage.
 Gods and men (turn) their faces towards thee ;
 nothing is injurious to them when thou shinest.
 Thou dost navigate in the heights (of Heaven)
 and thine enemy no longer exists !
 I am thy protection each day.
 Thou who comest to us as a child each month,
 we do not cease to contemplate thee.
 Thine emanation heightens the brilliancy
 of the stars of Orion in the firmament,
 by rising and setting each day.
 I am the divine SOTHIS⁴ behind him.
 I do not separate myself from him.
 The glorious emanation which proceedeth from thee
 giveth life to gods and men,

¹ The Sacred-Eye here indicates the disc of the moon.

² The sun in all his power.

³ The setting sun.

⁴ The star of Sirius where the soul of Isis dwelt.

reptiles and quadrupeds.

They live by it.

Thou comest to us from thy retreat at thy time,
to spread the water of thy soul,
to distribute the bread of thy being,
that the gods may live and men also.

Hail to the divine Lord !

There is no god like unto thee !

Heaven hath thy soul ;

earth hath thy remains ;

the lower heaven is in possession of thy mysteries.

Thy spouse is a protection for thee.

Thy son HORUS is the king of the worlds.

INVOCATION BY NEPHTHYS. She says :

Excellent Sovereign ! come to thine abode !

UN-NEFER the justified, come to Tattu.

Oh fructifying Bull, come to Anap.

Beloved of the Adytum, come to Kha.

Come to Tattu, the place which thy soul preferreth.

The spirits of thy fathers second thee.

Thy son, the youth HORUS, the child of (thy) two sisters,¹
is before thee.

At the dawn of light, I am thy protection each day.

I never separate myself from thee.

Oh god AN, come to Sais.

SAIS is thy name.

Come to Aper ; thou wilt see thy mother NEITH.²

Beautiful Child, do not stay far from her.

¹ Isis having with the aid of her sister Nephthys reunited the parts of Osiris' body dispersed by Set, formed of them the infant Horus.

² Neith personified the Lower Hemisphere, whence Osiris, the rising sun, appeared under the form of Horus.

Come to her nipples; abundance is in them.¹
 Excellent Brother, do not stay far from her.
 Oh son, come to Sais!
 OSIRIS-TARUT, surnamed NAINAI,² born of PERSAIS, the
 justified,
 come to Aper, thy city.
 Thine abode is Tab.
 Thou reposest (there) by thy divine mother, for ever.
 She protecteth thy members,
 she disperseth thine enemies,
 she is the protection of thy members for ever.
 On excellent Sovereign! come to thine abode.
 Lord of Sais, come to Sais.

INVOCATION BY ISIS.³ She says:

Come to thine abode! come to thine abode.
 Excellent Sovereign, come to thine abode.
 Come (and) behold thy son HORUS
 as supreme Ruler of gods and men.
 He hath taken possession of the cities and the districts,
 by the grandeur of the respect he inspireth.
 Heaven and earth are in awe of him,
 the barbarians are in fear of him.
 Thy companions, who are gods and men,
 have become his, in the (two hemispheres)
 to accomplish thy ceremonies.
 Thy two sisters are near to thee,
 offering libations to thy person;
 thy son HORUS accomplisheth for thee the funeral offering:

¹ The sun nightly sinks into the bosom of his mother Neith, who personifies the Lower Hemisphere of heaven.

² This is the name of the individual for whom the papyrus was written.

³ Osiris again coming forth under the form of Horus-conqueror, (or the Rising Sun) becomes the Lord of the universe.

of bread, of beverages, of oxen and of geese.
 THOTH chanteth thy festival-songs,
 invoking thee by his beneficial formulæ.
 The children of HORUS are the protection of thy members,
 benefiting thy soul each day.
 Thy son HORUS saluteth thy name
 (in) thy mysterious abode,
 in presenting thee the things consecrated to thy person.
 The gods hold vases in their hands
 to make libations to thy being.
 Come to thy companions,
 Supreme Ruler, our Lord !
 Do not separate thyself from them.

CONCLUDING RUBRIC.

When this is recited,
 the place (where one is)
 is holy in the extreme.
 Let it be seen or heard by no one,
 excepting by the principal *Kher-heb*¹ and the *Sam*.²
 Two women, beautiful in their members,
 having been introduced,
 are made to sit down on the ground
 at the principal door of the Great Hall.³
 (Then) the names of ISIS and NEPHTHYS

¹ The high-priest, reader in the panegyrics.

² The high-priest presiding over funeral ceremonies and rituals.

³ The Great Hall wherein the Judgment-scene was painted.

are inscribed on their shoulders.

Crystal vases (full) of water
are placed in their right hands ;
loaves of bread made in Memphis
in their left hands.

Let them pay attention to the things done
at the third hour of the day,

and also at the eighth hour of the day.

Cease not to recite this book
at the hour of the ceremony !

It is finished.



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