

The Pillars in the Hall of Truth

According to the traditional teachings of the Order

In the explanation of the Symbols of the Grade of Neophyte, your attention has been directed to the general mystical meaning of the Two pillars called in the Ritual the "Pillars of Hermes" of "Seth" and of "Solomon." In the 9th chapter of the Ritual of the Dead they are referred to as the "Pillars of Shu," the "Pillars of the Gods of Dawning Light," and also as "the North and Southern Columns of the Gate of the Hall of Truth." In the 125th Chapter, they are represented by the sacred gateway, the door to which the aspirant is brought when he has completed the negative confession. The archaic pictures on the one Pillar are painted in black upon a white ground, and those on the other in white upon a black ground, in order to express the interchange and reconciliation of opposing forces and the eternal balance of light and darkness which gives force to visible nature.

The black cubical bases represent darkness and matter wherein the spirit, the Ruach Elohim, began to formulate the Ineffable NAME, that Name which the ancient Rabbis have said "rushes through the universe," that Name before which the Darkness rolls back the birth of time.

The flaming red triangular capitals which crown the summit of the Pillars represent the Triune manifestation of the Spirit of Life, the Three Mothers of the Sepher Yetsirah, the Three Alchemical Principles of Nature, the Sulphur, the Mercury and the Salt.

Each Pillar is surmounted by its own light-bearer veiled from the material world.

At the base of both Pillars rise the Lotus flowers, symbols of regeneration and metempsychosis. The archaic illustrations are taken from the vignettes of the 17th and 125th chapter of the Ritual of the Dead the Egyptian Book of the Per-em-Hru or the Book of Coming Forth into the Day, the oldest book in the world as yet discovered. The Recension of the Priests of ON is to be found in the walls of the Pyramids of the Kings of the 5th and 6th Dynasties at Sakarah, the recensions of the 11th and 12th Dynasties on the sarcophagi of that period, and the Theban recension of the 18th Dynasty and onward is found on papyri, both plain and illuminated. No satisfactory translation of these books is available, none having been yet attempted by a scholar having the qualifications of mystic as well as Egyptologist.

The Ritual of the Dead, generally speaking, is a collection of hymns and prayers in the form of a series of ceremonial Rituals to enable the man to unite himself with Osiris the Redeemer. After this union he is no longer called the man, but Osiris with whom he is now symbolically identified. "That they also may be One of us," said the Christ of the New Testament. "I am Osiris" said the purified and justified man, his soul luminous, united to Osiris, and thereby justified, purified by suffering, strengthened by opposition, regenerate through self-sacrifice. Such is the subject of the great Egyptian Ritual.

The 17th Chapter of the Theban recension consists of a very ancient text with several commentaries, also extremely old, and some prayers, none of which come into the scheme of the original text. It has, together with the 12th chapter, been very carefully translated for the purpose of this lecture by the V.H. Frater M.W.T, and the V.H. Soror S.S.D.D. has made many valuable suggestions with regard to the interpretation. The Title and Preface of the 17th Chapter reads:

"Concerning the exaltation of the Glorified Ones, of Coming and Going forth in the Divine Domain, of the Genies of the Beautiful land of Amentet. Of coming forth in the light of Day in any form desired, of Hearing the Forces of Nature by being enshrined as a living Bai."

And the rubric is:

"The united with Osiris shall recite it when he has entered the Harbour. May glorious things be done thereby upon earth. May all the words of the Adept be fulfilled."

Owing to the complex use of symbols, the ritual translation of the Chapter can only be understood by perpetual reference to the ancient Egyptian commentaries, and therefore the following paraphrase has been put together to convey to modern minds as nearly as possible the ideas conceived by the old Egyptians in this glorious triumphal song of the Soul of Man made one with Osiris, the Redeemer.

"I am TUM made One with all things.

"I have become NU. I am RA in his rising ruling by right of his power I am the Great God self-begotten, even NU, who pronounced His Names, and thus the Circle of Gods was created.

"I am Yesterday and know Tomorrow. I can never more be overcome. I know the secret of Osiris, whose being is perpetually revered of RA. I have finished the work which was planned at the Beginning. I am the spirit made manifest, and armed with two vast eagle's plumes. Isis and Nephthys are their names, made One with Osiris.

"I claim my inheritance. My sins have been uprooted and my passions overcome. I am Pure White. I dwell in Time. I live through Eternity, when Initiates make offering to the Everlasting Gods. I have passed along the Pathway. I know the Northern and the Southern Pillars, the two Columns at the Gateway of the Hall of Truth.

"Stretch unto me your hands, O ye Dwellers in the centre. For I am transformed into a God in your midst. Made One with Osiris, I have filled the eye socket in the day of the morning when Good and Evil fought together.

"I have lifted up the cloud-veil in the Sky of the Storm. Till I saw RA born again from out of the Great waters. His strength is my strength and my strength is his strength. Homage to you, Lords of Truth, chiefs of Osiris rules.

Granting release from Sin, Followers of Ma where rest is Glorious. Whose throne Anubis built in the day when Osiris said:

"Lo! A man wins his way to Amentet. I come before you, to drive away my faults. As ye did to the Seven Glorious Ones who follow their Lord Osiris. I am that Spirit of Earth and Sun."

"Between the Two Pillars of Flame. I am RA when he fought beneath the Ashad Tree, destroying the enemies of the Ancient of Days. I am the Dweller in the Egg. I am he who turns in the disc. I shine forth from the horizon as the gold from the mine. I float through the Pillars of SHU in the ether. Without a

peer among the Gods. The Breath of my mouth is as a flame. I light upon the Earth with my glory. Eye cannot gaze on my daring beams as they reach through the Heavens and lick up the Nile with tongues of flame. I am strong upon Earth with the strength of RA. I have come into Harbour as Osiris made perfect. Let priestly offerings be made to me as one in the train of the ancient of Days. I brood as the Divine Spirit. I move in the firmness of my Strength. I undulate as the Waves that vibrate through Eternity. Osiris has been claimed with acclamation, and ordained to rule among the Gods. Enthroned in the Domain of Horus where the Spirit and Body are united in the presence of the Ancient of Days. Blotted out are the sins of his body in passion. He has passed the Eternal Gate, and has received the New Year Feast with Incense, at the marriage of Earth with Heaven.

"TUM has built his Bridal Chamber. RURURET has founded his shrine. The procession is completed. HORUS has purified, SET has consecrated, SHU made one with OSIRIS, has entered his heritage.

"As TUM he has entered the Kingdom to completed union with the Invisible. Thy Bride, O Osiris, is Isis, who mourned thee when she found thee slain. In Isis, thou art born again. From Nephthys is thy nourishment. They cleansed thee in thy Heavenly Birth. Youth waits upon thee, ardour is ready at thy hand. And their arms shall uphold thee for millions of years. Initiates surround Thee and Thine enemies are cast down. The Powers of Darkness are destroyed. The Companions of Thy Joys are with Thee. Thy Victories in the Battle await their reward in the Pillar. The Forces of Nature obey Thee. Thy Power is exceeding great. The Gods curse him that curseth Thee. Thine Aspirations are fulfilled. Thou art Mistress of Splendour. They are destroyed who barred the way.

The 125th Chapter is concerned with the entry of an Initiate into the Hall of the Two Columns of Justice, and commenced with a most beautiful and symbolic description of Death, as a journey from the barren wilderness of Earth, to the Glorious Land which lies beyond. The literal translation of the opening lines is as follows:

"I have come from afar to look upon thy beauties. My hands salute Thy Name of Justice. I have come from afar, where the Acacia Tree grew not. Where the tree thick with leaves is not born. Where there com not beams from herb or grass. I have entered the Place of Mystery. I have communed with Set. Sleep came upon me, I was rapped therein, bowing down before the hidden things. I was ushered into the House of Osiris. I saw the marvels that were there. The Princes of the Gates in their Glory.

The illustrations in this chapter represent the Hall of Truth as seen through the open leaves of its door. The Hall is presided over by a God who holds his right hand over the cage of a hawk, and his left over the food of eternity. On each side of the God is a cornice crowned by a row of alternate feathers and Uraei symbolizing justice and fire power. The door leaf which completes the right hand of a stall is called "Possessor of Truth controlling the Feet," while that on the left is "Possessor of strength, binding the male and female animals." The 42 Judges of the Dead are represented as seated in a long row, and each of them has to be named, and the Sin over which he presided has been denied.

This chapter describes the introduction of the initiate into the Hall of Truth by Anubis, who, having questioned the aspirant, receives from him an account of his initiation, and is satisfied by his right to enter. He States that he has been taken into the ante-chamber of the Temple and there stripped and blind-folded, he had to grope for the entrance of the Hall, and having found it he was reclotted and anointed in the presence of the Initiated. He is then asked for the Pass-words and demands that his Soul should be

weighed in the Great Balance of the Hall of Truth, whereupon ANUBIS again interrogates him concerning the symbolism of the door of the Hall, and his answers being found correct, ANUBIS says: "Pass on, thou knowest it."

Among other things the initiate states that he has been purified four times, the same number of times that the Neophyte is purified and consecrated in the ceremony of the Neophyte. He then makes the long Negative Confession, stating to each Judge in turn that he is innocent of that form of Sin over which he judges. Then he invokes the Judges to do him justice, and afterwards describes how he had washed in the washing place of the South, and rested in the North, in the place called "Son of the Deliverers" and he becomes the Dweller under the Olive Tree of Peace, and how he was given a tall flame of fire and a sceptre of cloud, and made a lake of it. The initiate is then brought to the actual Pillars, and has to name them and their parts under the symbol of the Scales of Balance. He also has to name the Guardian of the Gateway who prevents his passage, and when all these are propitiated, the plea of the Hall itself cries out against his steps, saying "Because I am silent, because I am pure," and it must know that his aspirations are pure enough and high enough for him to be allowed to tread upon it. He is then allowed to announce to Thoth that he is clean from all evil, and has overcome the influence of the planets, and THOTH says to him: "Who is He whose Pylons are of Flame, whose walls of Living Uraei, and the flames of whose House are streams of Water?" and the Initiate replies "Osiris!"

And it is immediately proclaimed: "The meat shall be from the Infinite, and thy drink from the Infinite. Thou art able to go forth to the sepulchral feasts on earth, for thou has overcome."

Thus, these two chapters, which are represented by their illustrations upon the Pillars, represent the advance and purification of the Soul and its union with Osiris, the Redeemer, in the Golden Dawn of the Infinite Light, in which the Soul is transfigured, knows all, and can do all, for it is made One with the Eternal Divine.