

Gods of Ancient Egypt

The Ancient Egyptians were devout people. In fact, there were over 2,000 named gods and goddesses in the Ancient Egyptian pantheon. Lots were depicted as having the head of an animal and the body of a human. Each was represented on Earth by an animal which embodied its spirit. This is just a small selection of some of the most important ones.



Ra

Ra was the god of the sun and the creator of the universe and life. He was the most important god of all. Egyptians believed that he would die at the end of each day and sail into the Underworld, and the moon would take his place. His symbol was the **scarab beetle**.



Bastet

Bastet was the goddess of cats, protection, joy and love. She was also said to watch over pregnant women. She was said to love music and dancing and was believed to look after all females. She was the daughter of Ra. Her symbol was the **cat**.



Isis

Ancient Egyptians believed that Isis was a protective goddess and the mother of Horus. They believed that the pharaoh was a living embodiment of Horus, and so she was especially important. She was considered the protector of the kingdom. Her symbol was the **tyet**.



Osiris

Osiris was the god of the afterlife, the dead and resurrection. He was the husband of Isis. He was the first mummy and was embalmed by Anubis himself. He ruled over the Underworld. As the god of fertility and life, the Egyptians believed he blessed them with barley, an important crop. His symbol was the **djed**.



Anubis

Anubis was the god of mummification and it was believed that he would guide the souls of the dead to Osiris in the Underworld. The Egyptians believed that Anubis would weigh the heart of the deceased against a feather in the Hall of the Dead. His symbol was the **jackal**.



VOCABULARY FOCUS

1. Which word has a meaning closest to “a collection of gods”?
2. What does the word “embodied” mean?
3. What does the word “blessed” mean in the sentence “blessed them with barley”?
4. Which word tells you that Ancient Egyptians were deeply religious?
5. What does resurrection mean?

VIPERS QUESTIONS

R

Who was the father of Bastet?

P

Why do you think the Egyptians had so many gods?

R

Whose symbol was the **tyet**?

S

Which of these gods were involved in the running of the Underworld?

P

Why do you think gods and goddesses were given animal symbols on Earth?

Answers:

1. Pantheon
2. Its body contained the spirit of the god or goddess
3. He created and gave them barley as a gift
4. Devout
5. To bring something back from the dead

R: Ra

P: Look for understanding of the idea that they were there to explain many of the mysteries of the world

R: Isis

S: Osiris and Anubis

P: It helped people to believe that they existed and to ensure people were always aware of their existence