

# Journey into the afterlife

## & the ancient Egyptian code of ethics

by Amber St Clare



The Ankh, ancient symbol of eternal life.



The Hall of Judgement.

When Ani opened his eyes, he immediately registered two things: first, the pain had gone, and second, it was very dark. He thought perhaps his exhausted wife Tutu had fallen asleep at his side and let the oil lamps burn out. It was such a relief to be free of the pain. He felt as if he was floating, lighter than air – it was wonderful. Then, as if from a great distance, he heard the sound of crying and his name being called over and over. When he tried to answer, no sound came from his lips. In shock, he altered his position and looked down. Far below, he could see his lifeless form lying on his bed, the figure of his wife hunched over him crying and calling his name, the servants running in to comfort her; Ani realised he had died.

A million things started to rush through his mind all at once: grief at leaving the wife he so loved, sorrow at not being able to do all the things he had still wanted to do, disbelief at what had happened, but also a wonderful feeling of lightness, freedom, bliss and joy, the likes of which he had never experienced before. He stared into the darkness again and realised that he had better start to remember all the things he had been taught in the temple about how not to get lost in the underworld. He recalled the stories of the great perils and the awful monsters that could lay in wait, trapping the unwary, keeping them lost in the darkness forever.

Against his will, he found himself being pulled into the dark void, away from his beloved Tutu, his mind running at a thousand miles an hour, trying to remember all the spells and secret names he would need to know to avoid the perils of this journey. Suddenly he saw a faint light, far away at the end of a dark tunnel, but growing brighter every second, and with all his will he propelled himself toward it. He could just make out the shape of a figure coming towards him and the bright golden light seemed to emanate from the skin of that being, surrounding them like a halo of

sunlight. As the being got closer, the light became more brilliant, almost too dazzling to look into. But Ani kept watching as his saviour came into view; Anubis had come to guide him through the terrors of the underworld and immediately all of Ani's fears melted and he was overwhelmed by gratitude and devotion.

Anubis gazed gently into Ani's eyes, then took hold of his hand. "Come with me," he said. "You have nothing to fear whilst you are with me."

It seemed to Ani as if they travelled effortlessly through inky blackness for a great deal of time. It was silent in this place, and yet it was not silent. The darkness seemed full of faint voices whispering, millions of them, and yet, to his amazement, Ani could hear the voice of Tutu speaking to him, as clearly as if she was at his side.

"I love you my husband," she cried through her tears. "When it is my time, be waiting for me." Then she started to recite the prayers and spells that would alert the Gods to his journey and give him power over the demons that may lie in wait for him.

Gradually the darkness was left behind and they came to the doors of a vast temple, larger and more beautiful than anything Ani had ever seen before – and he had seen all the temples of his homeland. As Anubis led him in, Ani realised they had arrived at The Hall of Judgment. He was well prepared; he knew exactly what to do; he had been trained for this moment since the first day at the temple school, but he was still



afraid. What if his heart spoke against him? What if he forgot a line?

Anubis smiled and gently pushed him forward and Ani looked up at the 42 Gods and Goddesses of the Judgment and began to speak The Negative Confession: "I have not caused suffering to any being," he began, as he walked towards Maat, the Goddess of Justice.

What the ancient Egyptians called The Negative Confession, no-one knows; it seems to have been so much a part of the psyche of the people, that it did not need a name. It was the Egyptologists of the last centuries who named it. As every line begins with "I have not", The Negative Confession is a declaration of innocence of wrong doing, said to the Gods in the Hall of Judgment after death.

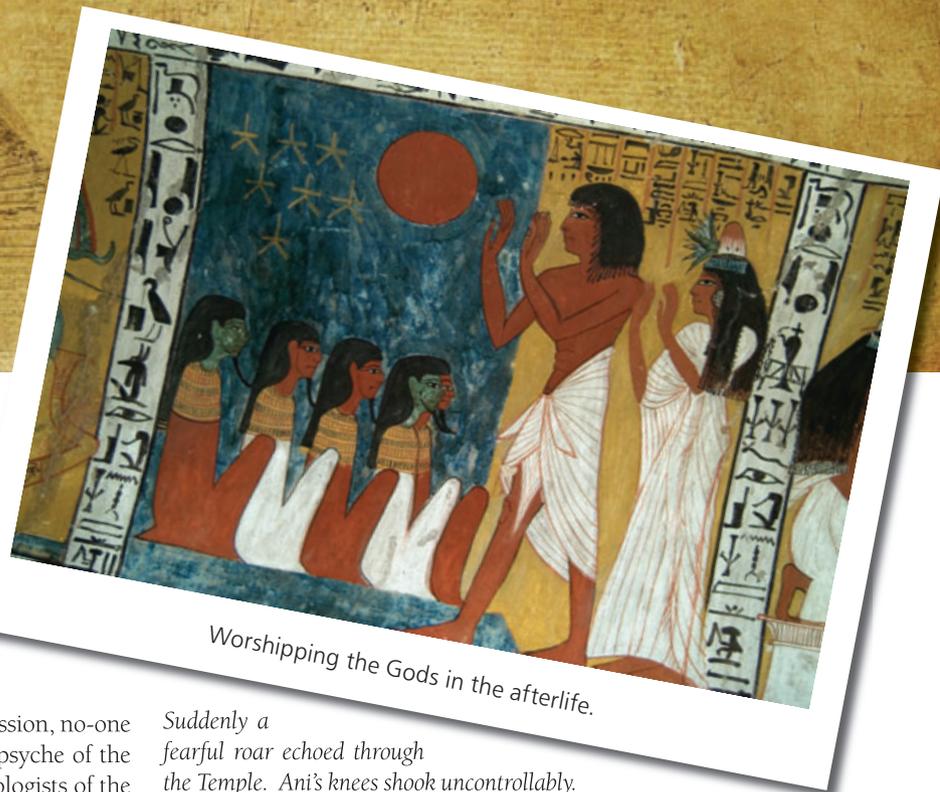
The 42 Negative Confessions were the code of ethics and moral behaviour that every ancient Egyptian had to live by, even, and most especially, the Pharaoh himself. It was the gift of the Goddess Maat, the Goddess of Justice, Order, Balance and Harmony. It was what kept the nation, the lives of individuals and the very cosmos in order and kept chaos at bay. If Pharaoh himself did not adhere to its laws, Egypt would fall into ruin and the balance of the Cosmos would be lost. To the Ancient Egyptian mind, chaos was the thing most to be feared, and if we really think about it, they were right – any life that is full of chaos is awful, a nation full of chaos is fearful, but a universe full of chaos is terrifying beyond belief.

Ani moved with dignity between the waiting Gods and Goddesses, pleased that he seemed to be wearing a new white robe and clean sandals. "I have not acted with insufferable arrogance," he intoned, head bowed before them.

The Ancient Egyptians believed that after death, our souls went into The Hall of Judgment to be judged by the 42 Gods and Goddesses who presided there. The soul of the deceased would recite the Negative Confession, one confession for each of the Gods/Goddesses, and when he had finished, his heart would be weighed on the scales of Maat, weighed against the feather of Maat, and if the person had spoken the truth, the heart would be lighter than the feather. Indeed, it had to be for the soul to be admitted to Amenti, literally 'the west', where the Sun God Ra disappeared every evening. In this spot was the entrance to the abode of the Gods. In fact, the term for death was the phrase 'he/she has gone into the west'.

"I have not stolen from anyone," said Ani in a firm voice as he stood humbly in front of a God with a stern face. He was confident, as he knew this to be true; he had always been scrupulous in all his dealings.

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Worshipping the Gods in the afterlife.

Suddenly a fearful roar echoed through the Temple. Ani's knees shook uncontrollably. Then She appeared as if out of nowhere, the mighty lioness, Goddess Sekhmet. Her blazing mane gave her an air of triumphant power. She came closer, her golden eyes blazing with solar fire, her teeth flashing, a low growl rumbled like distant thunder through the Hall of Judgment. For a few seconds they stood looking at each other. Ani gulped down his terror, "I have not done what the Gods abhor My Lady," he whispered in a trembling voice.

Finally all 42 lines were delivered and, as Ani watched, his heart was put on the scales of Justice. Though the wisdom God waited to record the verdict. If Ani had lied, his heart would be heavy and he would be sent back to Earth to live the fate he had created for himself by the words and the deeds of the life he had just left.

The ancient Egyptians possessed something of great value that has been overlooked for millennia. Invaders ransacked the temples for gold and jewels, believing that these were the great treasures of Egypt, but the thing that was priceless was invisible to greedy eyes..... It was The Rule Book of Fate, the gift of the Gods themselves.

Contained within the 42 Negative Confessions are all the rules that we need to know in order not to create an unpleasant fate for ourselves, our descendants (who often have to live with the results of our mistakes) and our planet.

Anubis stepped forward again, placing his hand lovingly on Ani's shoulder. "Your heart is light and you are pure of voice," he said. "Welcome to Eternity. We have been waiting so long for you to join us."

Amber St Clare has studied Esoteric Egyptology for over 30 years and takes metaphysical tour groups to Egypt on a regular basis. This article contains excerpts from her upcoming book *Quest for Eternity – A journey into the afterlife*. For more information – Website: [www.spiritwanderer.com/egyptquest](http://www.spiritwanderer.com/egyptquest)