

📖 Topic Page: [Thoth \(Egyptian deity\)](#)

Definition: **Thoth** from *Brewer's Dictionary of Phrase and Fable*

The Egyptian lunar god, usually with the head of an IBIS but sometimes that of a baboon. His chief centre was Hermopolis Magna (modern El-Ashmunein), and he was identified with HERMES by the Greeks. He was the master over writing, languages, laws, annals, calculations and the like and was patron of scribes and magicians. He made the CALENDAR and his control over HIEROGLYPHICS and divine words enhanced his magical powers. He acted as secretary of the gods. At the judgement after death he weighed the heart.



Image from: [Replica of antiquity wall engraving from... in Encyclopedia of African Religion](#)

Summary Article: **Thoth**

From *Encyclopedia of African Religion*

The ancient Egyptian god of wisdom, Djehwty, Tehuti, Djehuty, was called by the Greeks Thoth. He was depicted in either one of two forms, an ibis or a baboon. The most popular representation was a human form with the head of one of those animals. His main cult center was Hermopolis Magna, the 15th nome of Upper Egypt (Al Ashmunein nowadays), where the ibis was the sacred animal of the site. It is almost halfway between Heliopolis and Luxor. Remains of his cult temple still exist; other temples were built for Thoth in different parts of Egypt, such as in the Delta, El Kab, and Upper Egypt. Some

remains of his sanctuary were discovered at modern Luxor on the western bank of the River Nile to the south of the mortuary temple of Ramses III at Madinet Habu at a place called *Qasr El Aguz*, that is, “The palace of the elder.”

Thoth was associated with the moon and so was the ibis, with its white and black feathers resembling the light and dark stages of the moon. As for the baboon form, it was also related to the moon. In earlier times, there was a clear identification between the attitudes of the apse in relation to the different phases of the moon. Thoth was known as the scribal god, and he witnessed several important events that needed recording, such as the final judgment, the weighing of the heart, and the name of the king inscribed on the sacred tree. He was believed by the people to be the master of time and the god of mathematics, astronomy, and reading. The most significant ancient Egyptian source for this god is his book known as *The Book of Thoth*. This book had two chants in it, each with a certain transformative power if you read it in a loud voice. The first chant will help one understand all kinds of beasts and birds. As for the second chant, it is one of the ways to bring the Dead to life.

Many texts referred to him as the son of Re, as well as one of the earliest created gods in the myth of creation of Hermopolis, where the first eight gods in the universe started. Thoth was the god responsible for the announcement of the death of the king and the recognition of the newly enthroned royal character. With the help of goddess *Seshat*, goddess of art and writing, he recorded the years of the king and allowed him to celebrate the *heb Sed* (the 30-year festival of ascending the throne). His role with the Dead is not limited to the final judgment, but he helps the deceased in various ways. He unites his head after his body has fallen apart, he gives him a heart, he gives him the Horus eye, he opens his mouth using his magical power so he will be able to speak and defend himself in the afterlife, and he protects the deceased and gives him the green stone, which is most probably the stone of life.

There were a couple of festivals related to god Thoth. It seems that these were early festivals

because they were mentioned in the pyramid texts from the 5th dynasty. There is a festival carrying his name celebrated on the 26th day of the first month of the year, the month named after Thoth. The actual dates of these festivals were mentioned on the most important calendar from ancient times at the temple of Esna. The calendar identified the dates as the 4th, 19th, and 21st of this month. The calendar also described two themes for two of these days: one for the 19th as the festival of Thoth, the great, in the whole country, and the second for the 21st to celebrate the triumph of Thoth in the presence of Re.

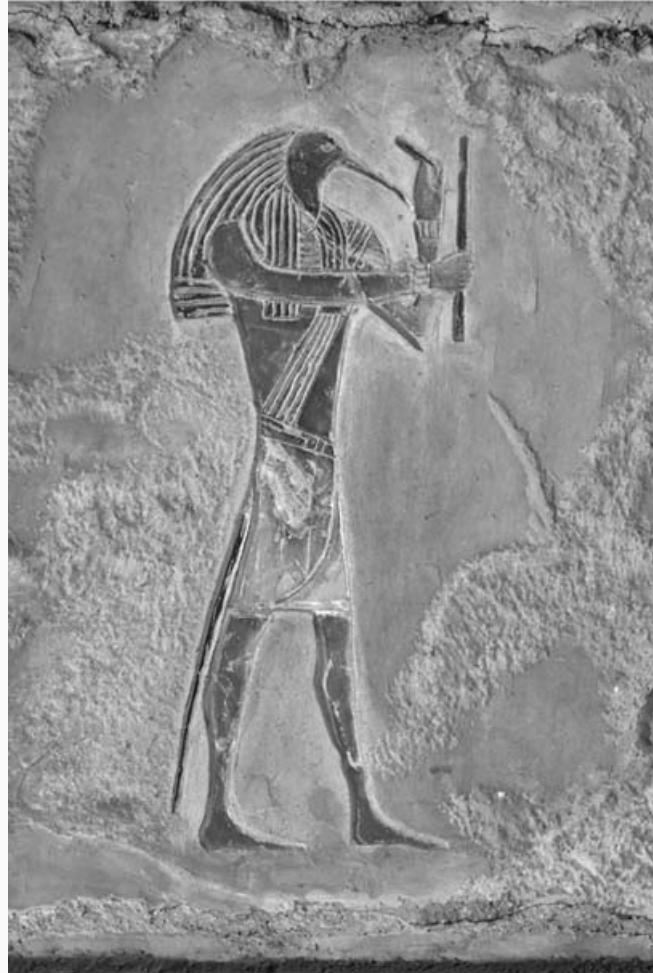


Figure 1 Replica of antiquity wall engraving from ancient Egypt—The god Thoth (Tehuti).

Source: iStockphoto.

See also

Ausar, Auset, Min

Further Readings

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Ismail, Sbaza Gamal, and Ismail. "Thoth." *Encyclopedia of African Religion*, edited by Molefi Kete Asante, and Ama Mazama, Sage Publications, 1st edition, 2008. *Credo Reference*, https://search.credoreference.com/content/topic/thoth_egyptian_deity. Accessed 17 Oct. 2019.