

Annihilation of the Wicked

Nile

The Dominion of Seker.
Barren Desert of Eternal Night.
Shunned by Ra.
Behind the Gate Aha-Neteru.
The Wastelands of Seker.
Eldest Lord of Impenetrable Blackness.
Death God of Memphis.
He of the Darkness and Decay of the Tomb.
He of Rosetau.
The Mouth of the Passage to the Underworld.
Closely Guarded by Terrible Serpents.
Who Careth Not for His Own Cult of Worshippers.

Seker.
Ancient and Dead.
Primeval Master of the World Below.
Remaineth Unwitnessed, Unseen, Hidden in His Secret Chamber.
His Primitive Graven Image like as a Hawk-headed Man.
Shrouded and Swathed in Tomb Wrappings.
Standing Between a Pair of Wings which Issue Forth from the Back of a Monstrous Serpent.
Having Two Heads.
Having Two Necks and Whose Tail Terminates in a Human Skull.

In Thick Darkness.
Amid Violent Tempests of Unendurable Cacophony.
His Serpents Make Offerings unto His Image and Live upon Their Own Fire.
His Servants.
Hideous Reptiles of Terrifying Aspect.
Whose Work is Nothing Less than the Annihilation of the Wicked.
Consume the Bodies of the Damned by Flames of Liquid Fire They Emit from Their Mouths.
And the Goddess Quetet Tent which Liveth on the Blood of the Dead.

On Their Blocks.
They Cut into Pieces the Flesh of the Dead.
Singing Hymns of Torture and Mutilation to Their Master.
Accompanied by the Wailings and Anguish of the Damned.
They Wreak Destruction upon the Wicked.
Those Who Hath Not Recited the Formulae.
Nor Made the Sacrifices or Who Know Not the Words of Power.

["Annihilation of the Wicked" combines Chapters 7 and 8 of the book "Am-Tuat", which describe the Fourth and Fifth Hours of Night. The Fourth and Fifth Hours of Night harbor Seker's kingdom. Seker is probably the oldest of all the gods of the dead in Egypt.

The dominions of Seker were supposedly situated in the ever-shifting sands around Memphis, and covered a vast expanse of territory. Their theology and doctrines were older than any other Egyptian underworld depiction - these parts of the Duat were completely different from those rules over by Khenti-Amun near Abydos, or those from Osiris' kingdom. The domain of Seker was shrouded in thick darkness. Unlike the places of the underworld wherein dwelled the blessed (where fertile plains and fields were fed by flowing streams of water), the place of Seker was formed of barren, endless desert wherein lived monster serpents of terrifying aspect. Some of these monster serpents were depicted with two, and sometimes three, heads, and others had wings. This re

gion offered so many difficulties to the passage of Afu-Ra's boat that Ra did not attempt to journey through Seker's realm. Instead, he navigated completely around it.

Some of the horrible reptiles in the kingdom of Seker were manifestly the servants of Seker, and their duties were to guard his kingdom and his image. Seker did not actually even live in his own kingdom, but was entombed, hidden deep within his chambers. There was little inducement for any of his cult to aspire to reside in the blackness that enveloped his realm. The dead referred to in these particular passages are those who have succeeded in entering the realm of Seker, but who are doomed for lack of influence of the gods there.

There is also a company of eight gods, and the goddess Quetet-Tent. The work of these servant-gods in Seker's realm was nothing less than the "Annihilation of the Wicked" (quotations are Budge's) - verily, the consummate and final eternal destruction of the dead in the Duat. The eight gods consumed the bodies of the damned by means of liquid fire they emitted from their mouths, while Quetetent lived partly on the blood of the dead, and whatever the other gods gave her. The eight gods would cut the dead in pieces on ensanguined blocks, and when they were not thus employed, they sang hymns to their master - the dread Seker.

To Sir Budge, there is little doubt that this was the earliest of the many pits of fiery torment in the Egyptian underworld, and that the torture, mutilation and destruction by fire were believed to be reserved for the wicked. It seems as if the scheme of the Seker's realm made no provision of the rewards of the beautified dead.

Sir Budge relates that the cult of Seker is one of the oldest in Egypt - and in its earliest form - representative of the belief as to the future life of some of the most primitive inhabitants of Egypt. In fact, it originated when the pre-dynastic priests taught that death was the end of all things.

The oldest surviving presentment of the land of Seker is not older than the 17th Dynasty. It should be noted that it is the work of the priests of Thebes (whose doctrines were at odds with much of the earlier cult of Seker's theology), thus introducing many confusing aspects to the plethora of belief systems already existing in the region. The priests of Thebes removed the texts, figures or details that they found incongruous with their ways.

Budge believed that it was tolerably certain that their version is much shorter than that which originally existed a millennium or so before, and that the attributes may have been altered somewhat to suit the needs of the later cults of Osiris and Ra. The priests of Amen-Ra likely found it impossible to completely ignore the ancient beliefs in Seker and his realm of impenetrable blackness. (Underworld depictions from this time show Ra's path "over" and not through Seker's kingdom.)

On the other hand, great importance was attached to the knowledge of the pictures of the Fourth and Fifth Divisions of Night, which they believed would enable a man's body to rejoin his soul, which in turn prevented the goddess Khenti-Amenti from hacking it to pieces. Lastly, for the believer, this would secure share of the offerings made to Seker.]