

Book of the Dead – Connections to Genesis

Note: This is a working paper. I am far from drawing any definitive conclusions regarding much of what is discussed in this paper. I invite interested parties to share their connections that they may see that I, in my limited understanding, am missing. I will add thoughts to this paper as time permits. (Tuesday - 2.22.22)

Misleading

The title "Book of the Dead" is somewhat unsatisfactory and **misleading**,¹ for the texts neither form a connected work nor belong to one period; they are miscellaneous in character, and tell us nothing about the lives and works of the dead with whom they were buried.² Moreover, the **Egyptians possessed many funerary works that might rightly be called "Books of the Dead," but none of them bore a name that could be translated by the title "Book of the Dead."** This title was given to the great collection of funerary texts in the first quarter of the nineteenth century by the pioneer Egyptologists, who possessed no exact knowledge of their contents.³

Great care of the dead

The dynastic Egyptians, either as the result of a difference in religious belief, or under the influence of invaders who had settled in their country, attached supreme importance to the preservation and integrity of the dead body, and they adopted every means known to them to prevent its dismemberment and decay. They cleansed it and embalmed it with drugs, spices and balsams; they anointed it with aromatic oils and preservative fluids; they swathed it in hundreds of yards of linen bandages; and then they sealed it up in a coffin or sarcophagus, which they laid in a chamber hewn in the bowels of the mountain. All these things were done to protect the physical body against damp, dry rot and decay, and against the attacks of moth, beetles, worms and wild animals.⁴

The Opening of the Mouth

Hugh Nibley explains this rite:

This is one place to discuss the famous "Opening of the Mouth" ceremony, a very ancient sequence of rites which in the longer texts contains in reduced form the entire Egyptian

¹ Ancient Egyptians called the composition the "Book of Going Forth by Day" (*t3 md3.t n.t pri. t m hrw*) or the "Spells for Going Forth by Day" (*r3.wn.w pri. t m hrw*). "Going forth by day" refers to **the soul, called the *ba* (*b3*)** in the Egyptian language, with its ability to leave the tomb, fly out into the daylight, and join the sun god in his journey across the heavens. See: ¹ Foy Scalf (editor), *Book of the Dead: Becoming God in Ancient Egypt*, University of Chicago, 2017, p. 23.

² The Book of the Dead is the modern term for **about two hundred compositions assigned numbers in modern times for reference purposes**. In 1842 **Richard Lepsius** assigned numbers 1-165 in his edition of the papyrus of Iufankh (Egyptian Museum Turin), the longest manuscript known to him from the period at which the sequence of compositions was most regular, the Late to Ptolemaic Period. **Edouard Naville** and then **Wallis Budge** (probably from the research by Le Page Renouf) added further numbers from New Kingdom and Third Intermediate Period manuscripts. Other numbers were assigned by Pleyte from Third Intermediate Period charms with single formulae and from a Roman Period manuscript, strictly speaking outside the Book of the Dead. See:

<https://www.ucl.ac.uk/museums-static/digitalegypt/literature/religious/bdbynumber.html>

³ <https://www.gutenberg.org/files/7145/7145-h/7145-h.htm> Accessed 1.24.21

⁴ Ibid.

initiation or endowment. The O.M. rite can represent at one and the same time both baptism and coronation, libation and ritual meal. In the Joseph Smith and de Horrack versions it comes as the final step to preparing the initiate for a journey:

"Thou seest with thine eye, thou hearest with thy two ears, thou speakest with thy mouth, thou walkest with thy two legs."⁵

This is a typically reduced version of the formula. Here it begins not with the mouth but with the eyes, the symbol of complete restoration and possession of one's faculties, and gets no farther than the walking with the two legs, indicating that the purpose of introducing it here is to get the initiate started on his way. The purification accompanying the Opening of the Mouth is "before all else an act of re-animation," its purpose being, according to Otto, "to insure the physical integrity of the deceased"; it is a "baptism" having the physical effect of counteracting the decay of the body. The Opening of the Mouth itself was nothing less than "a miracle which restored to each organ its proper functions." The main purpose, wrote Maspero, is to restore all the parts and organs of the body so that they will never be lost again. By it the organs and parts of the body after having been properly assembled are put again "in working order." The Opening of the Mouth is "the final ritual of incorporation," and "only when the ritual of the Opening of the Mouth had been performed has his (the deceased's) position ultimately been fixed in the beyond." **The ordinance insures that each part of the body by virtue of remaining (1) pure and (2) intact will never again lose its proper function.** It is specifically **an anointing to seal** the body up against the day of the resurrection, its total restoration being anticipated by a ritual reversing the effect of the "blows of death" on each member of the body. It thus fulfils the same function as mummification, namely that of restoring or recreating the members of the body on a permanent basis.

The Opening of the Mouth ordinance is of prehistoric antiquity. By the Pyramid Age it had undergone so **much alteration and reprocessing** that "**no historical reconstruction of the ritual ... can be given,**" and it is quite impossible at this date to reconstruct the complex original rite from the sources. But though among the **eighty-odd versions** studied by Otto no two are exactly alike, it is apparent that all have a common nature and background.⁶

Enoch literature shows parallels to these things as well. Bradshaw⁷ notes that:

In the book of Moses, Enoch described how, as he "cried unto the Lord," (Moses 7.2) he was told to go to Mount Simeon. There, as Enoch stood upon the mount, the heavens opened and he was "clothed upon with glory." (Moses 7.3) The texts of 2 and 3 Enoch purport to describe the process by which Enoch was "clothed upon with glory" in more detail. As a prelude to Enoch's introduction to the secrets of creation, these ancient accounts describe a "**two-step initiatory procedure**" whereby "the patriarch was first initiated by angel(s) and after this by the Lord"⁸ Himself. In 2 Enoch, God commanded his angels to "**extract Enoch from (his) earthly clothing.**

⁵ P. Louvre N. 3284 lines 36-37.

⁶ See: Hugh Nibley, *The Message of the Joseph Smith Papyri: An Egyptian Endowment*, FARMS, 2005, p. 164-166.

⁷ Jeffrey Bradshaw, [Could Joseph Smith Have Drawn On Ancient Manuscripts When He Translated the Story of Enoch?, *Interpreter*, Jan. 26, 2018.](#)

⁸ A. A. Orlov, *Enoch-Metatron*, p. 102.

And **anoint him with my delightful oil**, and put him into the clothes of my glory.”⁹ Joseph Smith’s Enoch was given a right to the divine throne, (Moses 7.59) and likewise, in 3 Enoch, God makes a throne for the seer and sits him down upon it.¹⁰

Another scholar¹¹ makes this observation:

Although the ceremony itself differed in specifics between Mesopotamia and Egypt, the components and structure of the ritual are similar. Three specific components are congruent between the *wpt-r* ritual in Egypt and the *mispī* ritual in Mesopotamia, namely **purification, vivification, and enthronement**.

Walker points out that these three steps were vital in the creation of an image, and without the precise execution of each step, “the statue was only a dead product of human artisans.” **To the Egyptians, this ceremony was viewed as essential for the cultic image to obtain the ability to come alive:**

“They were not satisfied with just fashioning an image ... on the contrary, (these steps) were performed on statues ... and as a result of which the work of human hands was thought to come alive. This ceremony of the “opening of the mouth” had the purpose of making all the organs serviceable and so vitalizing the image.”¹²

The steps of purification, vivification, and enthronement can be seen in the account of Joseph of Egypt, the final story in the text of Genesis (Genesis 37-50).

Purification – The Opening of the Mouth

The purification part, what Matson refers to as the “washing of the mouth,”¹³ refer to cleansing and purification. In Genesis 41, after his descent into the abyss (the prison in Egypt), Joseph is brought out: “Pharaoh sent and called Joseph, and they brought him hastily out of the dungeon: and he shaved himself, changed his raiment, and came in unto Pharaoh.” (Gen. 41.14.)

Vivification – The Opening of the Mouth

Matson describes the vivification portion of the rite:

“The second phase of the opening of the mouth ritual has been described as vivification, or the bringing to life ... actions such as the partial opening of the mouth, feeding the image, clothing the image, and anointing the image took place.”¹⁴

We see possible connection to these ideas throughout the text of Genesis, where instruction regarding clothing, eating, and anointing are taking place, usually in a distinct temple context. We also see this in the exchange between Joseph and the Pharaoh in the narrative after he reveals the dreams of the Pharaoh:

⁹ F. I. Andersen, 2 Enoch, 22:8 [J], p. 138. Cf. 2 Corinthians 5:1–4. See J. J. Collins, *Angelic Life*, p. 293.

¹⁰ P. S. Alexander, *From Son of Adam*, 10:1, 3, p. 263-264.

¹¹ Joshua M. Matson, [Idol Remains: Remnants of the Opening of the Mouth Ritual in the Hebrew Bible](#), *Studia Antiqua*, Volume 12, No. 1, June 2013, p. 37.

¹² Siegfried Morenz, *Egyptian Religion* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1973), 155.

¹³ Matson, p. 38.

¹⁴ Matson, p. 38. See also: T.J.C. Baly, “Ritual of Opening of the Mouth,” *The Journal of Egyptian Archaeology*, Nov., 1930, Vol. 16, No. 3/4 (Nov., 1930) p. 176.

Pharaoh said unto Joseph, Forasmuch as God hath shewed thee all this, there is none so discreet and wise as thou art: Thou shalt be over my house, and according unto thy word shall all my people be ruled: only in the throne will I be greater than thou... And Pharaoh took off his ring from his hand, and put it upon Joseph's hand, and arrayed him in vestures of fine linen, and put a gold chain about his neck." (Gen. 41.40, 42.)

Enthronement

Matson describes the final phase:

"The final phase, and the ultimate end of the ritual, was the enthronement of the cultic image... the ultimate goal of the *mis pi* ritual was the enthronement of the image of a given deity within the temple cella. The achievement of this goal depended upon the purification and vivification rites performed in the ritual."¹⁵

We read something similar to this in Genesis 41.43-46, where Joseph is given political authority over Egypt, subjects are to "bow the knee," he is married to the daughter of the priest of On, and he is put "over all the land of Egypt."

Parodies of the Opening of the Mouth

Matson describes how the Opening of the Mouth ceremony was also parodied in several instances in the Hebrew Bible. Authors of the later texts of the Hebrew Bible, living in the 7th and 6th centuries, worked to disparage the Egyptian funerary practice. He writes:

The disapproval by the authors of the Biblical texts concerning the opening of the mouth ritual is consistent throughout the seventh and sixth centuries BCE as these references show. The references by these authors were not aimed at disproving the ritual by each phase, or extensively discussing its practice, but instead they focused on disproving the ultimate end of the ritual, the bringing to life of the cultic image. In comparison, other authors at this time in Israel used narratives to juxtapose the opening of the mouth ritual with images by using the same tripartite pattern in their narratives of the granting of the spirit and breath of God upon his chosen people and servants.¹⁶

Though Matson details in his paper that the statue was purified and vivified, and that "the opening of the mouth ritual was essential to the validity and reality of the created image,"¹⁷ Nibley emphasizes that "the substitution of a statue for the dead in the Opening of the Mouth ceremony readily gave rise to the false idea that the rite was, first and last, concerned with animating the statue instead of the individual for which it was substituted."¹⁸

Spells

Each morning the rising sun was menaced by the fearful monster *Āapep*, which lay hidden under the place of sunrise waiting to swallow up the solar disk. It was impossible, even for the Sun-god, to destroy

¹⁵ Matson, p. 39.

¹⁶ Matson, p. 44.

¹⁷ Matson, p. 50.

¹⁸ Nibley, Message, p. 167.

this "Great Devil," but by reciting each morning the **powerful spell with which Thoth had provided him** he was able to paralyse all Āapep's limbs and to rise upon this world. Since then the "great gods," even though benevolently disposed towards them, were not able to deliver the dead from the devils that lived upon the "bodies, souls, spirits, shadows and hearts of the dead," **the Egyptians decided to invoke the aid of Thoth on behalf of their dead and to place them under the protection of his almighty spells.** Inspired by Thoth the theologians of ancient Egypt composed a large number of funerary texts which were certainly in general use under the IVth dynasty (about 3700 B.C.), and were probably well known under the 1st dynasty, and throughout the whole period of dynastic history Thoth was regarded as the author of the "Book of the Dead."¹⁹

Each individual spell was essentially a self-contained unit with its own theme and structure. Some spells are very long, such as Book of the Dead spell 17, otherwise abbreviated BD 17... Other spells are very short, such as BD 6, the *ushabti* spell. **Individual spells were often, although not always, combined with specific illustrations,** referred to as vignettes, which provided a visual component to the spells' content. The most famous of these vignettes is the judgment scene accompanying BD 125, in which the heart of the deceased is weighed against the feather of Maat in the hall of Osiris (see below).²⁰



What these spells did

These texts were called "Chapters of the coming forth by (or into) day," and was highly regarded. **This composition was greatly revered, for it "would make a man victorious upon earth and in the Other World; it would ensure him a safe and free passage through the Tuat (Under World); it would allow him to go in and to go out, and to take at any time any form he pleased;** it would make his soul to flourish, and would prevent him from dying the [second] death." For the deceased to receive the full benefit of this text it had to be recited by a man "who was ceremonially pure," with all that entailed.²¹

A Formal Judgment – BD 125

The formal judgment of the dead contained in BD spell 125 is an entirely new addition to the mortuary corpus and involves the deceased supplicant making a "negative confession" asserting his or her faultless behavior on earth in the presence of forty-two gods assembled in the Hall of the Two Truths, while the heart is weighed against the feather of Maat.²²

A Glorified Eternal Existence

¹⁹ Ibid.

²⁰ Scaf, p. 24.

²¹ Ibid.

²² Peter F. Dorman, as found in Scaf, p. 39.

Spells composed for a glorified eternal existence attest to **universal beliefs about the afterlife** shared by most or all Egyptians, not just those able to commission pyramids or coffins on the basis of rank or wealth.²³

Embedded Redundancies

Since the Book of the Dead was a collection of individual compositions, by extension the Book of the Dead therefore appears on many other media beside papyrus as each spell could be inscribed alone or in groups of spell sequences. Spells were inscribed on every form of media available, including papyri, leather, linen bandages, cartonnage mummy cases, coffins, sarcophagi, funerary figures, stelae, magic bricks, and even on the walls of the tomb. In fact, **Book of the Dead spells were often inscribed in all these places for an individual with the means to afford it. This created an embedded redundancy by surrounding the dead within a magical cocoon** and ensured that if the spells from one copy were damaged, a second or third copy was available to effect its magical intent.²⁴

Becoming Free, Conquering Enemies

The ritual of “opening the mouth” took place in front of the mummy, the transfigured form of a blessed dead, into which the mummification rites had transformed the earthly body. **It was performed by a priest who touched the deceased’s organs of perception, such as the mouth, ears, nostrils and eyes, with certain implements** in order to animate them so that the mummy could regain all necessary faculties. The animation of sensory functions was essential for the many stations the deceased had to pass through in the netherworld. Without a functioning mouth no essential needs such as eating food, drinking water, or breathing could be performed. The interrogation by the door-keepers could not be answered. **Knowing and being able to pronounce his own name was mandatory when the deceased was conducted to the judgment hall. Pronouncing a name was, in the perception of the ancient Egyptians, a sort of creative act, which could promote entities into being.**²⁵

Many of these “chapters” from this collection of texts have to do with overcoming enemies and becoming free. For example, chapter 23 is a formula for opening the mouth of the deceased in the underworld:

Formula for opening the mouth

My mouth is released by Ptah,

the bonds of my mouth are caused to be unfettered by the god of my city.

Thoth comes fully equipped with his words of power,

and has released for me the items belonging to Seth, **the bonds of my mouth,**

My hands are moved by Atum, he puts them forward as the guard of my mouth.

My mouth is opened, my mouth is parted by Ptah with that tool of iron,

with which he has opened the mouth of the gods.

I am Sekhmet Wadjyt,

I sit beside the great starboard in the sky,

I am Sahyt amidst the powers of Iunu.

²³ Dorman, as found in Scalf, p. 33.

²⁴ Scalf, p. 24.

²⁵ Foy Scalf (editor), *Book of the Dead: Becoming God in Ancient Egypt*, University of Chicago, 2017, p. 55.

**As for any words of power, any speech uttered against me,
May the gods stand against them,** the assembled Ennead and its Enneads.²⁶

Chapter 44 is a formula for preventing the second death in the underworld:

Formula for not dying again

This cavern, this cavern

The Blessed dead are fallen in the darkness

the Eye of Horus is separated for me

Wepwawet nurses me, and has hidden me among you, Indestructible Stars

My throat is that of Ra, my face is opened

My heart is on its place, my pronouncements are informed

I am Ra who protects himself

I am not ignorant of my seizure

Life to you, my father son of Nut

I am your eldest son who sees your mysteries

I am arisen as king of the gods, and I will not die again.²⁷

Correspondences between the Book of the Dead and Genesis

Embedded with Redundancies

Both Genesis and the nature of the Book of the Dead are imbedded with redundancies. The hero's journey is repeated with Adam/Eve, Abraham/Sarah, Isaac/Rebekah, Jacob/Rachel, Joseph/Asenath. These five couples repeat the themes of the Abrahamic covenant attached to the promises of land, seed, and in the additional revelations of the Restoration, promises of exaltation and priesthood power, the power of Godliness. These successive wrappings are not unlike the "embedded redundancy" of a "magical cocoon" that ensured that if one copy of these promises was damaged, the intent of the message would continue.²⁸

The nature of both: fluidity in transmission

Genesis had many sources and varied considerably, depending on the source and time period of construction, transmission, and redaction.²⁹ The Book of the Dead is similar in some ways. Scalf writes, "For the Book of the Dead, variation was the rule. Manuscripts were individually hand-crafted objects. Spells could appear alone, as part of short sequences, or in massive collections of more than 160. Any surface capable of being inscribed acted as a medium for their transmission. Each spell itself had many different variations and versions, some nearly unrecognizable when compared next to each other... When all of the above is taken into consideration, it is clear that answering the question "what is the Book of the Dead" is very different from answering the question "what was the Book of the Dead." In

²⁶ Book of the Dead, Chapter 23. See: <https://www.ucl.ac.uk/museums-static/digitalegypt/literature/religious/bd23.html>

²⁷ Book of the Dead: Chapter 44. See: <https://www.ucl.ac.uk/museums-static/digitalegypt/literature/religious/hpres44.html>

²⁸ Scalf, 24.

²⁹ See: [Stories told twice in the Bible](#).

many ways, the Book of the Dead is a modern construction of our imagination. Our conceptions are dictated by the way we categorize text...³⁰ Similarly, the stories told in Genesis had degrees of variation, and evidence from the Book of Mormon suggest that even more variation may have existed.³¹

Images that are important to both collections

The Embrace

Both Egyptian funerary literature and the Book of Genesis stress the embrace as a culminating symbol and idea. It is important to note one of the final images of the text of Genesis: that of Joseph in an embrace. From the text we read:

And he fell upon his brother Benjamin's neck, and wept; and Benjamin wept upon his neck. Moreover he kissed all his brethren, and wept upon them: and after that his brethren talked with him. (Gen. 45.14-15)

Hugh Nibley³² said this regarding the embrace:

The basic word for atonement is *kafar*, which has the same basic meaning in Hebrew, Aramaic, and Arabic—that being “to bend, arch over, cover; 2) [to pass over with one’s palm &c., to wipe out, rub] ... to deny, ... to forgive, ... to be expiated, ... renounce.”³³

The Arabic *kafara* puts the emphasis on a tight squeeze, such as tucking in the skirts, drawing a thing close to oneself. Closely related are Aramaic³⁴ and Arabic *kafata*,³⁵ meaning a close embrace, which are certainly related to the Egyptian *hpt*,³⁶ the common ritual embrace written with the ideogram of embracing arms. *Hpt* may be cognate with the Latin *capto*³⁷ and the Persian *kaftan*,³⁸ a monk’s robe and hood completely embracing the body.

³⁰ Scaf, p. 27.

³¹ See: 1 Nephi 19.10. The understanding of the Fall of Adam and Eve is also portrayed differently than the way it is read in the account of Genesis 1-3. See: 2 Nephi 2. See also Joseph’s prophecies in 2 Ne. 3.6-21, found nowhere in the Tanakh. Millet writes, “these prophecies of Joseph have no counterpart whatsoever in the Bible known to people outside of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.” Millet, Robert L. “The Influence of the Brass Plates on the Teachings of Nephi.” In *The Book of Mormon: Second Nephi, The Doctrinal Structure*, edited by Monte S. Nyman and Charles D. Tate, Jr., Religious Studies Center, Brigham Young University, 1989, p. 220.

³² Hugh Nibley, [The Atonement, Ensign, July 1990](#).

³³ Marcus Jastrow, *A Dictionary of the Targumim, the Talmud Babli and Yerushalmi, and the Midrashic Literature*, 2 vols. (New York: Pardes, 1950), 1:661–62.

³⁴ Regarding the Aramaic *kafat*, see William Gesenius, *Hebrew and English Lexicon of the Old Testament*, trans. Edward Robinson (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1974), p. 1097.

³⁵ Regarding the Arabic *kafata*, see Edward Stanley Lane-Poole, *Arabic-English Lexicon*, 2 vols. (London: Williams and Norgate, 1885), 1(7):2618–23.

³⁶ Regarding *hpt*, see Adolf Erman and Hermann Grapow, *Worterbuch der Aegyptischen Sprache*, 7 vols. (Leipzig: Hinrichs, 1929), 3:71.

³⁷ Regarding *capto*, see, P. G. W. Glare, ed., *Oxford Latin Dictionary* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1982), p. 273.

³⁸ Regarding the Persian *kaftan* (*caftan*), see Philip B. Gove, ed., *Webster’s Third New International Dictionary* (Springfield, Mass.: Merriam, 1971), p. 313: “caftan: An ankle-length coatlike garment, usu. of cotton or silk, often striped, with very long sleeves and a sash [note that the garment is drawn up around the body by the sash] fastening, common throughout the Levant.” Cf. David B. Guralnik, *Webster’s New World Dictionary* (New York: Collins and World, 1953), p. 198: “caftan [Turk. qaftan] a long-sleeved robe with a girdle, worn in eastern

Most interesting is the Arabic *kafata*,³⁹ as it is the key to a dramatic situation. It was the custom for one fleeing for his life in the desert to seek protection in the tent of a great sheik, crying out, “Ana dakhiluka,” meaning “I am thy suppliant,” whereupon the host would place the hem of his robe over the guest’s shoulder and declare him under his protection. In one instance in the Book of Mormon we see Nephi fleeing from an evil enemy that is pursuing him. In great danger, he prays the Lord to give him an open road in the low way, to block his pursuers, and to make them stumble. He comes to the Lord as a suppliant: “O Lord, wilt thou encircle me around in the robe of thy righteousness! O Lord, wilt thou make a way for mine escape before mine enemies!” (2 Ne. 4:33.) In reply, according to the ancient custom, the Master would then place the hem of his robe protectively over the kneeling man’s shoulder (*kafata*). **This puts him under the Lord’s protection from all enemies. They embrace in a close hug**, as Arab chiefs still do; the Lord makes a place for him (see Alma 5:24) and invites him to sit down beside him—they are at-one.

This is the imagery of the Atonement—the embrace: “The Lord hath redeemed my soul from hell; I have beheld his glory, and I am encircled about eternally in the arms of his love.” (2 Ne. 1:15.)

“Behold, he sendeth an invitation unto all men, for the arms of mercy are extended towards them, and he saith: Repent, and I will receive you.” (Alma 5:33.)

This is the *hpt*—the ritual embrace that consummates the final escape from death in the Egyptian funerary texts and reliefs, where the son Horus is received into the arms of his father Osiris.⁴⁰

The Name

Hugh Nibley explains:

One of the most puzzling episodes in the Bible has always been the story of Jacob's wrestling with the Lord. When one considers that the word conventionally translated by "wrestled" (*yeaveq*) can just as well mean "embrace," and that it was in this ritual embrace that Jacob received a new name and the bestowal of priestly and kingly power at sunrise (Gen. 32:24ff), the parallel to the Egyptian coronation embrace becomes at once apparent.⁴¹

Mediterranean countries”; Jess Stein, ed., Random House Dictionary, unabridged (New York: Random House, 1983), p. 208, “caftan. n. a long garment having long sleeves and tied at the waist by a girdle, worn under a coat in the Near East. Also, *kaftan* [<Russ kaftan <Turk <Pers qaftan].”

³⁹ Regarding the Arabic *kafata*, see Edward Stanley Lane-Poole, *Arabic-English Lexicon*, 1(7):2618–19.

⁴⁰ Hugh Nibley, [The Atonement, Ensign, July 1990](#).

⁴¹ Hugh Nibley, *Message*, p. 434. Nibley explains further: “The embracing (*skhn*) of the king by the god is the definitive consecration” of the new king, who at that moment alone becomes fully consecrated, crowned and sanctified, according to Moret. Before becoming a king, however, he must first become a priest, and for that also he must be “**purified with divine water, receive a garment, be crowned** and led into the sanctuary to receive the embrace of the god, the head of the Temple.” **In the final scene of the Opening of the Mouth** “the statue rests in the chapel as Horus in the arms of his Father,” where the statue is Horus, the chapel is Osiris, and its door the door of life. The cosmic implications of the scene are recalled in the Coffin Texts: “He placed me upon his neck; he would not let me depart from him. My name lives: Son of the Primordial God. I live in the members of my father Atum; I am the living one upon his neck.... he sent me down to this earth even to the Isle of Flame when my name became Osiris, son of Geb.... My father Atum embraced me (*sn.wy*) when he came from the horizon of the East; his heart was pleased at seeing me....” *Ibid.*, p. 433-434. Barbash explains the significance of the Opening of the Mouth ceremony:

The Exchange of tokens

Ritual Clothing

Ritner writes that “The recitations of the Book of the Dead **envelop the deceased in ritualized phrases of deification**. When they are inscribed on mummy bandages and coffins, the envelopment is quite literal. They are the textual counterpart to the physical rituals of mummification intended for the same purpose, **converting a deceased man into a god** by extracting corrupting fluids with surrounding bundles of cleansing natron salts, **washing and thus “baptizing”** the corpse in enclosing streams of blessed water, **applying protective amulets** whose textual sources and images actually appear in the Book of the Dead (BD spells 155–160), and fumigating the completed mummy with incense, whose very name, *sntr*, means “to make divine,” encoding in a word the essence of Egyptian funerary practice.⁴²

We see some connections between some of the Egyptian material regarding clothing individuals, offering divine protection via amulets and enshrouding the dead with actual texts of protection and some of the material in Genesis. For example, in Genesis 41, Joseph is brought out of the pit and into the king’s presence. From the account we read:

... Pharaoh sent and called Joseph, and they brought him hastily out of the dungeon: and he shaved himself, and changed his raiment, and came in unto Pharaoh... Thou shalt be over my house, and according unto thy word shall all my people be ruled: only in the throne will I be greater than thou. And Pharaoh said unto Joseph, See, I have set thee over all the land of Egypt. And Pharaoh took off his ring from his hand, and put it upon Joseph's hand, and arrayed him in vestures of fine linen, and put a gold chain about his neck; And he made him to ride in the second chariot which he had; and they cried before him, Bow the knee: and he made him ruler over all the land of Egypt. And Pharaoh said unto Joseph, I am Pharaoh, and without thee shall no man lift up his hand or foot in all the land of Egypt. And **Pharaoh called Joseph's name Zaphnathpaaneah**; and he **gave him to wife** Asenath the daughter of Potipherah priest of On.⁴³

From this we can gather a couple of things. The act of clothing was connected to Joseph’s being invested with authority in this setting. Nibley writes that “the related rites of washing, anointing, and clothing are the same for the daily temple cult as for the dead, which is not surprising since they are the normal business of every matutinal rising.”⁴⁴

Another significant funerary rite was the opening of the mouth ceremony. With the mummy set upright and facing south in the forecourt of the tomb, priests symbolically opened its mouth, allowing the deceased to consume offerings and communicate — in other words, to become an *akh*. The full, elaborate ritual involved purification and the sacrifice of a calf as well as offerings of food, linen, oils, and invocations to various deities. Although the words of this ceremony are not part of the Book of the Dead corpus (Otto 1960), the ritual is clearly implied. Spells 21–23 concern the mouth of the deceased, with the title of spell 23 “formula for opening the mouth of PN” establishing their ritual context. Spell 30, commonly inscribed on heart scarabs as well as other media, instructs the priest: “... spoken over a scarab... place in the area of a man’s heart after the opening of the mouth (ritual) is performed for him ...” See: Yekaterina Barbash, Foy Scalf (editor), *Book of the Dead: Becoming God in Ancient Egypt*, University of Chicago, 2017, p. 77.

⁴² Robert Ritner, Foy Scalf (editor), *Book of the Dead: Becoming God in Ancient Egypt*, University of Chicago, 2017, p. 115.

⁴³ Genesis 41.14, 40-45.

⁴⁴ Nibley, *Message*, p. 143.

We see this connection between being raised to a higher status juxtaposed with ritual clothing throughout the texts of the visionaries in extrabiblical texts. Whether we are reading the Enoch material, the Testament of the Twelve Patriarchs, or the Ascension of Isaiah, we continue to see these tropes.⁴⁵

⁴⁵ On the Day of Atonement when the high priest entered the Holy of Holies he was, as we have seen, to be clothed entirely in white linen garments. The necessity of proper dress is a constant theme in the accounts of prophets being taken into the presence of the Lord. In 2 Esdras, one of the intertestamental books, we are told of a heavenly feast to be attended by those who have been "sealed." Here they are to "receive glorious garments from the Lord."

Similarly, in the Secrets of Enoch we have an account of Enoch being taken unto the presence of the Lord. In this instance the Lord instructs Michael, "Go and take Enoch from out his earthly garments, and anoint him with my sweet ointment, and put him into the garments of My glory." This having been done, Enoch records, "I looked at myself, and was like one of his glorious ones." (2 Enoch 22:8-9.) In another Enoch manuscript, an account is given of Enoch being taken again into the heavenly court, clothed with the garments of glory, and invited to sit upon the heavenly throne. He had a crown placed upon his head, and was called the "Lesser YHWH" (Jehovah) in the presence of the heavenly household. (3 Enoch 12:2-5.)

Describing the manner of his dress when he was taken to the heavenly court, Levi said he "put on the robe of the priesthood, and the crown of righteousness, and the breastplate of understanding, and the garment of truth, and the plate of faith, and the turban of the head, and the ephod of prophecy." In so doing he was assisted by seven angels.

In the [Testament of Levi](#) (a portion of the [Testament of the Twelve Patriarchs](#), an apocryphal text) we read:

And there again I saw a vision even as the former, after we had spent there seventy days. And I saw seven men in white raiment raiment saying unto me: Arise, put on the robe of the priesthood, and the crown of righteousness, and the breastplate of understanding, and the garment of truth, and the plate of faith, and the turban of the head, and the ephod of prophecy. And they severally carried (these things) and put (them) on me, and said unto me: From henceforth become a priest of the Lord, thou and thy seed forever. And **the first anointed me with holy oil**, and gave to me the staff of judgement. The **second washed me with pure water**, and fed me with bread and wine (even) the most holy things, and clad me with a holy and glorious robe. **The third clothed me with a linen vestment** like an ephod. **The fourth put round me a girdle** like unto purple. The fifth gave me a branch of rich olive. **The sixth placed a crown** on my head. **The seventh placed on my head a diadem of priesthood**, and filled my hands with incense, that I might serve as priest to the Lord God. ([Testament of Levi 8:2-11.](#))

In 2 Enoch, Enoch is brought to the 10th heaven, and in so doing approaches the Lord. In 2 Enoch 22 we read:

And the LORD said to Michael, "Go, and **extract Enoch from (his) earthly clothing.** And anoint him with my delightful oil, and put him into the **clothes of my glory.**" And so Michael did, just as the LORD had said to him. He anointed me and clothed me. And the appearance of that oil is greater than the greatest light, and **its ointment is like sweet dew, and its fragrance myrrh**; and it is like the rays of the glittering sun. And **I looked at myself, and I had become like one of his glorious ones, and there was no observable difference.**" ([2 Enoch 22.7-10](#))

We also have an account of Isaiah ascending to heaven, where he sees the manner in which the angels are clothed. He is told that when he is so clothed he will be equal to them. He also records, " And there I saw Enoch and all who were with him, stript of the garments of the flesh, and I saw them in their garments of the upper world, and they were like angels, standing there in great glory." ([Ascension of Isaiah 9:9.](#))

Calling upon God

From an ancient [Syrian source](#) we find the plan of salvation depicted in an allegory. It is a story of a king's son who is required to leave his father's kingdom, where he enjoyed great wealth, to obtain a pearl. The pearl, it becomes quite apparent, is his own soul. His parents see that he is properly provisioned for his journey, though before leaving their presence he must surrender his splendid robe. This robe, or garment of light, we are told, had been woven to the measure of his stature. Before he leaves his parents' presence he enters into a covenant with them to obtain the pearl and return, that he might once again enjoy their presence and wear his splendid robe. The covenant is written upon his heart.

Though the way is dangerous and difficult, an intimate friend, referred to as "an (anointed one)," warns him of the dangers that beset him. Notwithstanding all this he soon forgets that he is a king's son and forgets his mission to obtain the pearl. At this point a council is held, attended by his father, mother, brother (the crown prince), and many other great and mighty ones. They determine to send him a letter imploring him to awake and remember who he is and what king he serves. He is encouraged to remember his splendid robe and to so conduct himself that his name might be written in the book of the heroes and that he with his brother might be an heir in his father's kingdom.

Thus reminded, he commences again his efforts to obtain the pearl, which he must wrestle from a terrible serpent. This he is able to do only by naming his father's name, that of his brother, and that of his mother. Having obtained the pearl he flees Egypt, sheds his dirty and unclean garments, and is further guided by the letter. At this point he is greeted by messengers from his parents who clothe him once more in his royal robe, and he returns as an heir to his father's kingdom. Joseph Fielding McConkie, [Gospel Symbolism](#), Bookcraft, 1985. See also: [The Hymn of the Pearl](#), translated by G.R.S. Mead)