

Nil Lara

"The Blessed Dead"

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Looked Down Upon With Scorn
We Work the Fields of the Masters
And Share Not the Bounty of the Black Earth

Destitute Servile Cast Out
Affording No Tomb
We Shall Be Buried
Unprepared in the Sand

We Shall Never Be The Blessed Dead

Scorned By Asar
Condemned at the Weighing of the Heart
We are Exiled from the Netherworld
Serpents fall Upon us Dragging us Away
Ammitt Who Teareth the Wicked to Pieces

Pale Shades of the UnBlessed Dead
None Shall Enter Without the Knowledge
Of the Magickal Formulas
Which is Given to Few to Possess

Not for Us to Sekhet Aaru
Our Souls Will be Cut to Pieces with Sharp Knives
Tortured Devoured
Consumed in Everlasting Flames

We Shall Never Be The Blessed Dead

[The phrase, "the Blessed Dead," is a reference to those who obtain the "blessed" condition in the afterlife: the beautified condition of eternal life in the presence of Osiris in the Sekbet-Aaru, or "Field of Reeds." Those who had lived a moral life, observed the proper burial rites and procedures, and possessed all the correct magickal spells to navigate the treacherous and horrific Egyptian underworld, who could recite the 42 negative confessions, and whose hearts were found to be pure at the "Weighing of the Heart," were then allowed to be "Osirified" - to become a person like as unto Osiris - and enjoy a pleasant afterlife as ne of the

blessed dead.]

[Proper burial, though, was an expensive undertaking. It was usually afforded only by pharaohs, priests, and the wealthy class. What of those who could not afford the extravagant tombs, mummification, magical amulets, and costly papyrus texts on which were written the necessary spells for successfully navigating the underworld? Even linen, which was used to wrap the mummies, was so expensive in ancient Egypt that people had to save what little scraps of it they could for years to have enough to have themselves wrapped. Also of mention would be the cost of professional mourners, embalmers, and priests for the "Opening of the Mouth" ceremony. This was all extremely expensive. Even a wealthy person in ancient Egypt would spend a lifetime saving and preparing for his or her burial and afterlife. I suppose it is no small coincidence that the religious priests were directly involved in the embalming industry.]

[But what of the middle and lower classes of people - the common working man? What then of the slaves and servant classes? If all these costly preparations and arcane knowledge were essential to achieving a state of blessedness in the afterlife, would a person of limited financial means be condemned beforehand to burn in torment in the afterlife, so only the wealthy became the Blessed Dead? While most of the population certainly accepted this fatalistic concept - and by all that we know of ancient Egypt, embraced life and the hope of an eternal afterlife - most ancient Egyptians probably were resigned to do whatever funereal preparations were within their means. It stands to reason, however, that certainly some small number of lower income / slave / working class people (predestined, of course, to certain financial / spiritual doom, as upward caste mobility was very limited in ancient times) would be less than inclined to accept at face value the idea that, no matter what, by the end of their lives they would not be able to afford to be buried as one of the blessed dead. Would they be resigned to their eternal fate, or live their lives with subversive viewpoints - perhaps rebelling against the established religious order, or perhaps choosing to worship amongst the plethora of "other gods" of the Egyptian pantheon? (Budge refers to them as, "Wretched little gods.")]

[Certainly the existence of the ancient cult worship of the god, Set, is not without some sort of seditious

causality. Perhaps these, then, are the countless legions of souls damned to fiery pits of torment in the underworld: the "Hated of Ra" or "Enemies of Osiris." This probably would also liken these wretched and lost souls to be followers of Set and his Seban fiends, who were the original enemies of Osiris and precursor role models on which later religious based their ideas of "Hell" and "Satan" and his "infernal legions." I am reminded of John Milton, who, in Paradise Lost, wrote of Lucifer, after he had been cast down and came to realization of his unrepentant autonomy, "It is better to rule in Hell than serve in Heaven." And thus, that brings us full circle to the chorus refrain of "The Blessed Dead." complete with infernal choirs of the underworld defiantly proclaiming, "We Shall Never Be The Blessed Dead."]

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