

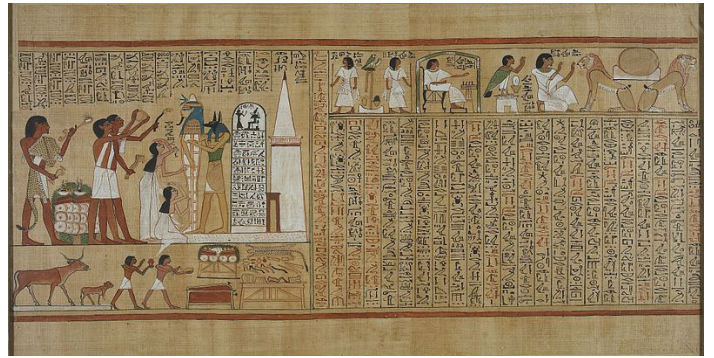
# Journey to the Afterlife

In ancient Egyptian religion, the journey after death was very important.

## The Book of the Dead

Egyptians created a personalised book for certain people when they died, now known as the Book of the Dead. This book would be filled with prayers, spells and messages to help the person's spirit on their way to the afterlife.

The spells and prayers would be written in hieroglyphic or hieratic writing. The book would be placed inside the coffin or in the burial chamber of the person.



This image, from the Book of the Dead of Hunefer, shows the different ceremonies being carried out at the entrance of the tomb.

## Papyrus of Ani

Ani was a scribe who lived in Waset, Egypt over 3,000 years ago. Scribes were important people who could afford to be well prepared for the afterlife.

In AD 1888, some Egyptian traders found a scroll belonging to the ancient scribe, which turned out to be his copy of the Book of the Dead. It had survived for thousands of years after Ani's death.

The scroll containing Ani's Book of the Dead is divided into 11 sections and contains hymns, prayers and speeches to help him pass through the underworld on his way to the Field of Reeds.



From the Papyrus of Ani, this image shows the weighing of Ani's heart by the god Anubis.

# Ani's Journey to the Afterlife

**1** First, Ani's body is mummified. All his organs are removed except for his heart, then his body is embalmed and wrapped in linen strips and charms. A scarab amulet is added over his heart. The process takes two months.

**2** In Ani's tomb are placed many things that he will need for the afterlife, including shabti dolls: models of servants and assistants who will help him on his journey and in the afterlife. The more objects the tomb contains, the easier the journey and the better the afterlife will be.

**3** Ani's spirit must pass through the duat (underworld): a realm with lakes of fire and magical gates guarded by fierce creatures. Apep the serpent god of destruction lurks here, waiting to swallow Ani's soul.

**4** Ani uses his Book of the Dead, filled with prayers and spells, to pass through the underworld until he reaches the Hall of Ma'at, goddess of truth and justice.

**5** Ani is judged by forty-two assessor gods. He steps up to each one and tells them a sin that he has not committed, for example making anyone cry or eavesdropping. Ani's heart scarab amulet stops his heart from giving away his secrets.

**6** Ani's heart is weighed against a feather. If he has lived an honest life, his heart will be lighter than the feather. If his heart is too heavy, it will be devoured by Ammit: part crocodile, part leopard, part hippopotamus, and Ani will disappear forever.

**7** If Ani's heart is pure, Ra, the sun god, will take him to Osiris, the god of the underworld, who will allow him to enter the afterlife.

**8** In the Field of Reeds, Ani is reunited with his ancestors and is given a plot of land to look after. Here, there is no sadness, pain or anger. His shabti dolls will help him with his work.

