

## W.E. Brown's Translation

### Introduction

The papyrus contains a copy of the first Book of Breathings, a recension and amplification of some chapters of the more famous Book of the Dead, which was especially popular during the Roman period in Egypt. The papyrus can be dated by the palaeography to the second century A.D. It contains, besides the text, two vignettes, one at either end of the roll; that at the right or beginning of the book represents the god Osiris wearing the 'atef crown and holding the crook and flail, seated upon a throne. Before him with hands upraised in supplication stands the soul of the deceased. In hieroglyphics to the right of Osiris the words: "Say: Osiris Lord of Those in the West [Khent-Amenti], Great God, Lord of the East." Above and behind the figure of the soul are the words, also in hieroglyphics: "The second priest in Heliopolis ['Iawen], Hor-Nuty, son of the chief of workers Hery." Then follows a long list of titles ending: "Second priest of Sati, priest of Atem, priest, musician of Tenenet and Yunyot [goddesses of the city of Hermunthis], Hor-Nuty, son of the chief of workers Hery." At the other end of the roll is pictured the usual scene of the last judgement. The god Osiris is seated on a throne as in the first vignette, with the same inscription before him; behind him stands the goddess Isis, holding a tall staff and wearing the symbol of the horned moon; before her the words: "Isis, great Mother goddess." Before Osiris rises a great lotus flower with two buds, and upon the open flower the four "Children of Horus," who represent the cardinal directions; above each is his name: Amesthu above the first, human-headed; Hapy above the second, ape-headed; Tua-mut-ef above the third, jackal-headed; Qebh-sennu-f above the fourth, falcon-headed. Above to the right stands the soul in an attitude of supplication, name and title to the left: "The second priest in Heliopolis, Hor-Nuty, son of the chief of workers Hery." Beneath on a throne sits, tongue hanging out, the fearful "Devourer of the Dead," a creature compounded of hippopotamus and lion, whose duty it is to eat the heart of the unjustified soul. Farthest to the right stands the scribe-god Thoth, titled: "Say Thoth, great Lord of Khemenu." Before him is a balance, one pan presided over by a falcon-headed, one by an ibis-headed god; in one pan rests the Feather of Maat, sign of Right and Truth, in the other a small goose, sign signifying Ba, the Soul of man.

The text is written in hieratic script from right to left, and containing occasional rubrics as chapter heads. In the translation the words thus pointed are written in red.

### Translation

**"Beginning of the Book** of Breathings composed by Isis for her brother Osiris to make his soul to live, to make his body to live, to make young all his members anew, that he might reach the horizon together with his father the Sun; that his soul might rise in heaven like the disk of the Moon, that his body might shine in Orion, in the body of Nut [Sky-goddess]; that moreover these things might happen to Osiris Her-Nuty, son of the chief of workers Hery, etc.; would that thou wouldst hide this thing, so as not to have it read to anyone. It is helpful to the one in the place of the dead; he shall live anew in truth, millions of times.

**Say:** Hail, Osiris Her-Nuty, etc., thy body is pure, thy heart is pure, thy front parts are pure, thy hind parts have been cleansed, thine interior (is clean) with incense and natron. There is no member in thee that is in sin. Pure is Osiris Her-Nuty, etc., by means of the waters of the

Fields of Peace, this being toward the north of the Field of Grasshoppers. (The goddesses) Wadjet and Nekhebet, have purified thee, at the eighth hour of the night, at the eighth hour of the day. Come thou, Osiris Her-Nuty, etc., thou shalt enter the Hall of double Truth. Thou art purified from every crime, from every sin. Stone of Truth (is) thy name.

**Hail**, Osiris Her-Nuty, etc., thou enterest the Underworld by means of a great purification. They have purified thee, the Two Truths, in the great hall. There has been made upon thee a purification in the hall of Seb, thy members have been purified in the hall of Shu, thou art in sight of Ra at his setting, of Atum (in the) evening. Amon is beside thee, to give thee breath, Ptah to fashion thy members. Thou enterest the horizon together with Ra; thy soul is received in the boat Neshemet together with Osiris. Thy soul is made divine in the house of Seb, it is made justified forever, eternally.

**Hail**, Osiris Her-Nuty, etc., thy name endures, thy body is lasting, thy spiritual body [sahu] germinates. Thou art not driven back from heaven or earth. Bright is thy face before Ra, lives thy soul before Amon, young is thy body before Osiris, thou breathest forever, eternally. Thy soul makes for thee offerings of bread, beer, cattle, fowl, cool water in the course of each day. Thy flesh (is) upon thy bones, thy form (is) like as it was upon earth. Thou drinkest into thy body, thou eatest with thy mouth, thou receivest offerings together with the souls of the gods. One protects thee, even Anubis he makes thy protection. Thou art not turned back from the gates of the Underworld. Thoth comes to thee, the twice mighty, the Lord of Khemenu, he writes for thee the Book of Breathings with his own fingers; thy soul breathes forever; thou repeatest thy form according as upon earth among the living. Thou art made divine together with the souls of the gods; thy heart is the heart of Ra, thy flesh is the flesh of the great god.

**Hail**, Osiris Her-Nuty, etc., Amon (is) beside thee every day, to repeat thy life; Wepwawet [Opener-of Ways] opens to thee a good way; thou seest with thine eyes, thou hearest with thine ears, thou speakest with thy mouth, thou walkest with thy legs, thy soul is made divine in the Underworld, to make transformations according as each is its pleasure. Thou makest the delights of the sacred persea tree of Heliopolis. Thou awakest every day; thou seest the rays of the Sun; Amon comes to thee bringing the breath of life; he grants to thee that thou breathe in thy coffin. Thou comest forth upon earth every day; the Book of Breaths of Thoth is a protection to thee, thou breathest by its means every day. Thine eyes see the rays of the Sun-disk, Speaks Truth for thee before Osiris; the writings of justification (are) upon thy tongue. Horus, avenger of his father, he protects thy body (tongue), he makes thy soul to be divine like all the gods, that the soul of Ra may make thy soul to live; that the soul of Shu may breathe in the passages of thy nostrils.

Hail, Osiris Her-Nuty, etc., thy soul breathes, it is the place thou lovest; thou art as Osiris. As Osiris Khent-Amenti (is) thy name. Hapi the prince [Nile-god] comes to thee from Abu [Elephantine], he fills thy offering-tables with food.

Hail, Osiris Her-Nuty, etc., there come unto thee the gods of Upper and Lower Egypt, and thou art led to the ends of the countries of millions of years. Thy soul lives, thou followest Osiris, thou breathest (in) Restau; that by which thou art protected is hidden in the lord of Setet, and in the hand of the great god. Thy body lives in Djedu, in Nef-wertet, thy soul lives in heaven every day.

Osiris Her-Nuty, etc., Sekhet masters the evil that is in thee; Heru-aa-ab makes thy protection, Heru-seshet-her makes thy heart, Heru-mer keeps thy tongue. Thou endurest with life, strength, health. Thou art established upon thy throne in Ta-djesertet. Come, Osiris Her-Nuty, etc., thou art made to rise in thy form, thou art adorned in thine adornments, thou holdest

very strongly upon life, thou livest in health, thou walkest, thou breathest in (lit., it is ) every place. Rises Ra over thy house, (as does) Osiris; thou breathest, thou livest in his rays. Amen-Ra causes to live thy double [ka]. One makes thee flourish, even the Book of Breathings. Thou followest Osiris-Horus, Lord of the (boat) Henu; thou art as the great god, head of the gods. Lives thy face, beautiful are thy births, thy name flourishes every day. Thou enterest into the divine great hall in Djedu, thou seest Khent-Amentet (Head of those in the west) at the festival Wega. Sweet is thy smell like the revered ones, magnified is thy name as the spiritual bodies [sahu].

**Hail**, Osiris Her-Nuty, etc., lives thy soul through the Book of Breathings, thou art joined by the Book of Breathings, thou enterest into the Underworld, there is no enemy of thee. Thou art as a divine soul in the Underworld; thy heart is with thee, it is not departed from thee; thine eyes are with thee, they open every day.

Say the gods who are in the following of Osiris to Osiris Her-Nuty, etc.: Thou followest Ra, thou followest Osiris, thy soul lives forever, eternally. Say the gods who are in the Underworld of Osiris Khent-Amentet: As for Osiris Her Nuty, etc., may be opened for him the gates of the Underworld, may one receive thee in the necropolis. Truly lives his soul forever, it builds halls in the necropolis; his god will favour his double. He shall receive the Book of Breathings, truly he makes breathings. A royal offering may he give, Osiris Khent-Amentet, the great god, the lord of Abdu [Abydos]; may he give offerings, bread, beer, cattle, fowls, wine, yaget-drink, bread [hetep], food, and every beautiful thing to the ka of Osiris Her-Nuty, etc., His soul lives, his body sprouts at the command of Ra himself; thou shalt not perish, thou shalt not be lessened, like Ra, forever, eternally.

Hail, Wesekh-Nemtet, coming forth from Nemtet (?) , Osiris Her-Nuty, etc., has not done wrong.

Hail, Wer-At, coming forth from Kher-Aha, Osiris Her-Nuty, etc., has not done deeds of violence.

Hail, Fenti, coming forth from Sesennu, Osiris Her-Nuty, etc., has not committed slaughter.

Hail, Amam-Maat-f, coming forth from the two Kerty, Osiris Her-Nuty etc., has not robbed the dead.

Hail, Ha-her (?), coming forth from Restau, Osiris Her-Nuty, etc., has not done injury.

Hail, Rereti, coming forth from heaven, Osiris Her-Nuty, etc., has done no crimes of hardness of heart (?).

Hail, Maatyf-em-Khet, coming forth from Sekhem, Osiris Her-Nuty has not made revolt.

Hail, ye gods who are in the Underworld, hear ye the voice of Her-Nuty, may he come before you; there is not any evil with him, there is not any sin in him, there stands no accuser against him. He lives by Truth, he feeds on Truth, satisfied is the heart of the gods with all that he has done. He has given bread to the hungry, water to the thirsty, clothes to the naked; he has given offerings to the gods, oblations to the spirit-souls [khu]; one has not made any report against him in the presence of any of the gods. Come, let him enter the Underworld, let him not be repulsed. Come, let him follow Osiris together with the gods (of) the Kherty. Let him be favored among the favored, let him be a god among the perfect. Come, let him make breathings together with that soul of his in the Underworld. Moreover let him make all his transformations, (as) it is his determination, together with those of the West. Come, let his soul go into every place it desires. Come, let it be living upon earth, forever, eternally.

