

Signs of Adoration before Masonry

It was Josephus, writing in his *Antiquities of the Jews*, who brought to my attention the gesture of raising the hands over the head as a possible source of certain Signs in Masonry originating in Scripture:

Ex 17:8 Then came Amalek, and fought with Israel in Rephidim.

Ex 17:9 And Moses said unto Joshua, Choose us out men, and go out, fight with Amalek: tomorrow I will stand on the top of the hill with the rod of God in mine hand.

Ex 17:10 So Joshua did as Moses had said to him, and fought with Amalek: and Moses, Aaron, and Hur went up to the top of the hill.

Ex 17:11 And it came to pass, when Moses held up his hand, that Israel prevailed: and when he let down his hand, Amalek prevailed.

Ex 17:12 But Moses hands were heavy; and they took a stone, and put it under him, and he sat thereon; and Aaron and Hur stayed up his hands, the one on the one side, and the other on the other side; and his hands were steady until the going down of the sun.

Ex 17:13 And Joshua discomfited Amalek and his people with the edge of the sword.

Imagine, if you will, the raising of Moses's hands to Heaven, then his faltering and lowering them, according to his distress at the battle raging before him. If you are involved in the Scottish Rite degrees, compare the need for two officers to uphold the candidate's hands, like Aaron and Hur did for Moses.

At this point in the Bible the Israelites had just escaped Egypt. The idea of raising the hands in supplication to God was a common Egyptian expression. The Israelites had labored in Egypt for many years. It is likely they picked-up this notions there. Look at these Egyptian hieroglyphics:

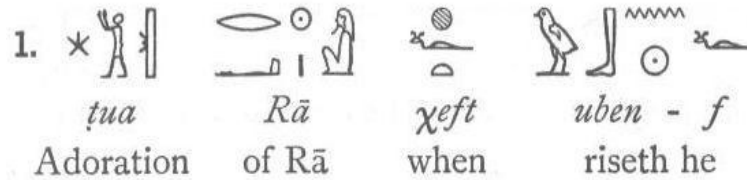


The point my source for the picture was making is that the hieroglyph at the end of either word --the figure with upraised hands-- determines the meaning of the entire hieroglyph, which in this instance may refer to an old man leaning on a staff, or a gesture of praise. The Egyptian word in both instances is pronounced "yao," spelled *iao*.

The word "yao," or *Iao*, is a Gnostic name for deity. The *Catholic Encyclopedia*, which has traditionally been hostile to Gnosticism, has this to say about *Iao*:

“Jao (Iao, perhaps from Jahu, Jahveh, but possibly also from the magic cry iao in the mysteries) is Jupiter.”

The Sacred Name, YHVH, when pronounced "Yahweh," is probably of Egyptian origin. More importantly, for the purpose of this report, the raised hands gesture probably originated with the Egyptian "Book of the Dead," which begins with a figure with hands raised above the head in praise:



Observe the same hieroglyphics in this authentic papyrus from the "Book of the Dead":



Notice in both examples the figure with hands raised in adoration. Also note the "star." Could it be Jupiter, mentioned in the Catholic Encyclopedia entry for Gnosticism?

(Brian Higgins 4/2/2011)