



Hermes Trismegistus



MORYA FEDERATION
ESOTERIC SCHOOLS OF MEDITATION, STUDY AND SERVICE

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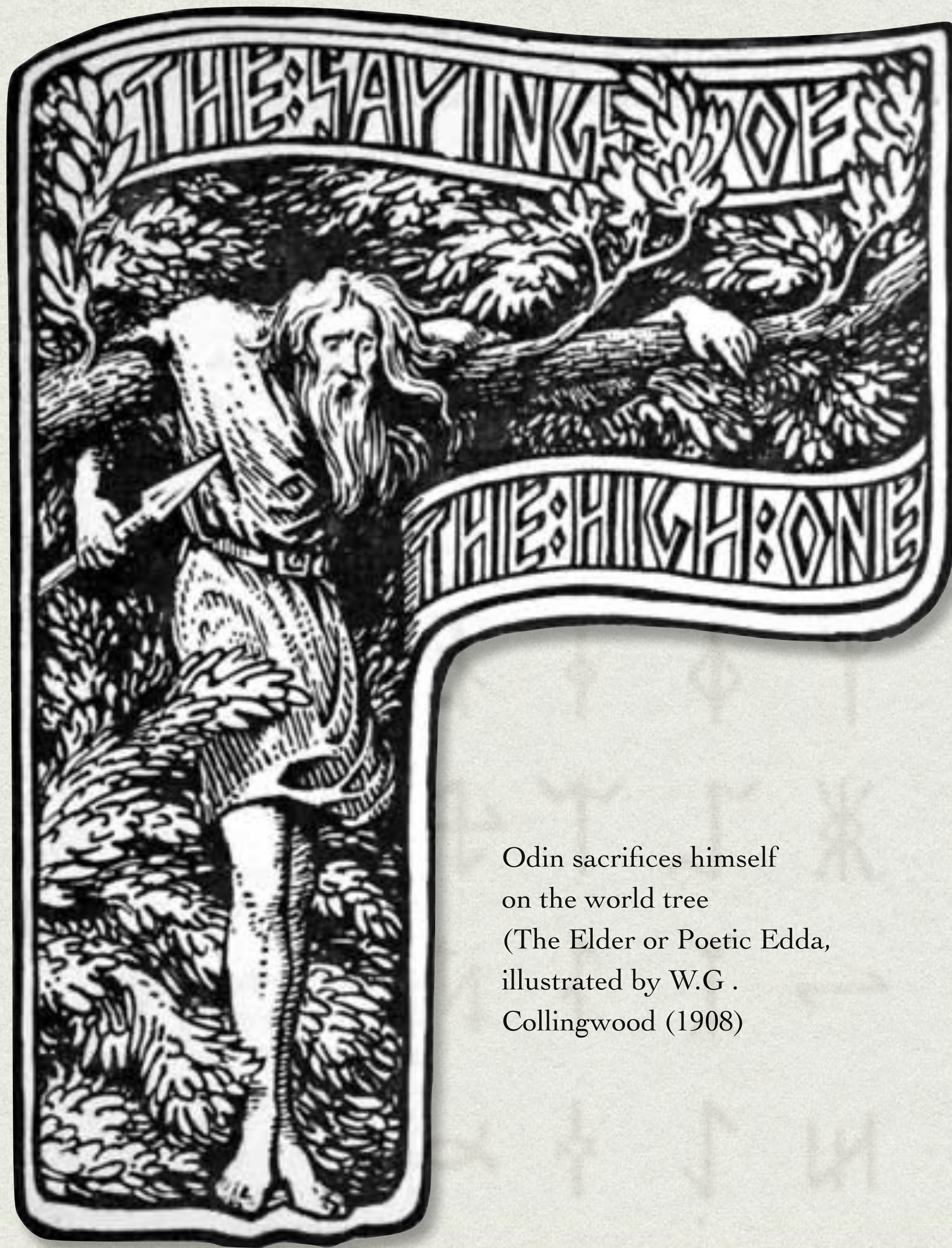


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“Sanctuary of the Great Gods” in Samothrace



Odin sacrifices himself
on the world tree
(The Elder or Poetic Edda,
illustrated by W.G .
Collingwood (1908)

Odin's Rune-song

140. I know that I hung,
on a wind-rocked tree,
nine whole nights,
with a spear wounded,
and to Odin offered,
myself to Myself;
on that tree,
of which no one knows
from what root it springs.

141. Bread no one gave me,
nor a horn of drink,
downward I peered,
to runes applied myself,
wailing learnt them,
then fell down thence.

142. Nine mighty lays I learned
from the famous son of Bolthorn,
Bestla's father,
And a draught I had of the holy mead
Poured out of Odrerir.

143. Then I began to bear fruit,
and to know many things,
to grow and well thrive:
word by word

I sought out words,
fact by fact
I sought out facts.



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In Phrygia there existed a remarkable school of religious philosophy which centered around the life and untimely fate of another Savior-God known as Atys, or Attis, by many considered synonymous with Adonis. This deity was born at midnight on the 24th day of December. Of his death there are two accounts. In one he was gored to death like Adonis; in the other he emasculated himself under a pine tree and there died. His body was taken to a cave by the Great Mother (Cybele), where it remained through the ages without decaying. To the rites of Atys the modern world is indebted for the symbolism of the Christmas tree. Atys imparted his immortality to the tree beneath which he died, and Cybele took the tree with her when she removed the body. Atys remained three days in the tomb, rose upon a date corresponding with Easter morn, and by this resurrection overcame death for all who were initiated into his Mysteries.

"In the Mysteries of the Phrygians," says Julius Firmicus, "which are called those of the MOTHER OF THE GODS, every year a PINE TREE is cut down and in the inside of the tree the image of a YOUTH is tied in! In the Mysteries of Isis the trunk of a PINE TREE is cut: the middle of the trunk is nicely hollowed out; the idol of Osiris made from those hollowed pieces is BURIED. In the Mysteries of Proserpine a tree cut is put together into the effigy and form of the VIRGIN, and when it has been carried within the city it is MOURNED 40 nights, but the fortieth night it is BURNED!" (See *Sod, the Mysteries of Adoni*.)

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"If you wish to inspect the orgies of the Corybantes," writes Clement, "then know that, having killed their third brother, they covered the head of the dead body with a purple cloth, crowned it, and carrying it on the point of a spear, buried it under the roots of Olympus. These mysteries are, in short, murders and funerals. [This ante-Nicene Father in his efforts to defame the pagan rites apparently ignores the fact that, like the Cabirian martyr, Jesus Christ was foully betrayed, tortured, and finally murdered!] And the priests of these rites, who are called kings of the sacred rites by those whose business it is to name them, give additional strangeness to the tragic occurrence, by forbidding parsley with the roots from being placed on the table, for they think that parsley grew from the Corybantic blood that flowed forth; just as the women, in celebrating the Thesmophoria, abstain from eating the seeds of the pomegranate, which have fallen on the ground, from the idea that pomegranates sprang from the drops of the blood of Dionysus. Those Corybantes also they call Cabiric; and the ceremony itself they announce as the Cabiric mystery."

The Mysteries of the Cabiri were divided into three degrees, the first of which celebrated the death of Cashmala at the hands of his three brothers; the second, the discovery of his mutilated body, the parts of which had been found and gathered after much labor; and the third—accompanied by great rejoicing and happiness—his resurrection and the consequent salvation of the world. The temple of the Cabiri at Samothrace contained a number of curious divinities, many of them misshapen creatures representing the elemental powers of Nature, possibly the Bacchic Titans. Children were initiated into the Cabirian cult with the same dignity as adults, and criminals who reached the sanctuary were safe from pursuit. The Samothracian rites were particularly concerned with navigation, the Dioscuri—Castor and Pollux, or the gods of navigation—being among those propitiated by members of that cult. The Argonautic expedition, listening to the advice of Orpheus, stopped at the island of Samothrace for the purpose of having its members initiated into the Cabiric rites.

Herodotus relates that when Cambyzes entered the temple of the Cabiri he was unable to restrain his mirth at seeing before him the figure of a man standing upright and, facing the man, the figure of a woman standing on her head. Had Cambyzes been acquainted with the principles of divine astronomy, he would have realized that he was then in the presence of the key to universal equilibrium. "I ask," says Voltaire, "who were these Hierophants, these sacred Freemasons, who celebrated their Ancient Mysteries of Samothracia, and whence came they and their gods Cabiri?" (See Mackey's *Encyclopædia of Freemasonry*.) Clement speaks of the Mysteries of the Cabiri as "the sacred mystery of a brother slain by his brethren," and the "Cabiric death" was one of the secret symbols of antiquity. Thus the allegory of the Self murdered by the not-self is perpetuated through the religious mysticism of all peoples. The *philosophic death* and the *philosophic resurrection* are the Lesser and the Greater Mysteries respectively.

A curious aspect of the *dying-god* myth is that of the Hanged Man. The most important example of this peculiar conception is found in the Odinic rituals where Odin hangs himself for nine nights from the branches of the World Tree and upon the same occasion also pierces his own side with the sacred spear. As the result of this great sacrifice, Odin, while suspended over the depths of Niflheim, discovered by meditation the runes or alphabets by which later the records of his people were preserved. Because of this remarkable experience, Odin is sometimes shown seated on a gallows tree and he became the patron deity of all who died by the noose. Esoterically, the Hanged Man is the human spirit which is suspended from heaven by a single thread. Wisdom, not death, is the reward for this voluntary sacrifice during which the human soul, suspended above the world of illusion, and meditating upon its unreality, is rewarded by the achievement of self-realization.

From a consideration of all these ancient and secret rituals it becomes evident that the mystery of the *dying god* was universal among the illumined and venerated colleges of the sacred teaching. This mystery has been perpetuated in Christianity in the crucifixion and death of the God-man—Jesus the Christ. The secret import of this world tragedy and the Universal Martyr must be rediscovered if Christianity is to reach the heights attained by the pagans in the days of their philosophic supremacy. The myth of the *dying god* is the key to both universal and individual redemption and regeneration, and those who do not comprehend the true nature of this supreme allegory are not privileged to consider themselves either wise or truly religious.

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worship of *Atys* and Cybele was also involved in the Samothracian Mysteries. In the rituals of the Cabiri is to be traced a form of pine-tree worship, for this tree, sacred to *Atys*, was first trimmed into the form of a cross and then cut down in honor of the murdered god whose body was discovered at its foot.

"If you wish to inspect the orgies of the Corybantes," writes Clement, "then know that, having killed their third brother, they covered the head of the dead body with a purple cloth, crowned it, and carrying it on the point of a spear, buried it under the roots of Olympus. These mysteries are, in short, murders and funerals. [This ante-Nicene Father in his efforts to defame the pagan rites apparently ignores the fact that, like the Cabirian martyr, Jesus Christ was foully betrayed, tortured, and finally murdered!] And the priests of these rites, who are called kings of the sacred rites by those whose business it is to name them, give additional strangeness to the tragic occurrence, by forbidding parsley with the roots from being placed on the table, for they think that parsley grew from the Corybantic blood that flowed forth; just as the women, in celebrating the Thesmophoria, abstain from eating the seeds of the pomegranate, which have fallen on the ground, from the idea that pomegranates sprang from the drops of the blood of Dionysus. Those Corybantes also they call Cabiric; and the ceremony itself they announce as the Cabiric mystery."

The Mysteries of the Cabiri were divided into three degrees, the first of which celebrated the death of Cashmala at the hands of his three brothers; the second, the discovery of his mutilated body, the parts of which had been found and gathered after much labor; and the third—accompanied by great rejoicing and happiness—his resurrection and the consequent salvation of the world. The temple of the Cabiri at Samothrace contained a number of curious divinities, many of them misshapen creatures representing the elemental powers of Nature, possibly the Bacchic Titans. Children were initiated into the Cabirian cult with the same dignity as adults, and criminals who reached the sanctuary were safe from pursuit. The Samothracian rites were particularly concerned with navigation, the Dioscuri—Castor and Pollux, or the gods of navigation—being among those propitiated by members of that cult. The Argonautic expedition, listening to the advice of Orpheus, stopped at the island of Samothrace for the purpose of having its members initiated into the Cabiric rites.

Herodotus relates that when Cambyes entered the temple of the Cabiri he was unable to restrain his mirth at seeing before him the figure of a man standing upright and, facing the man, the figure of a woman standing on her head. Had Cambyes been acquainted with the principles of divine astronomy, he would have realized that he was then in the presence of the key to universal equilibrium. "I ask," says Voltaire, "who were these Hierophants, these sacred Freemasons, who celebrated their Ancient Mysteries of Samothracia, and whence came they and their gods Cabiri?" (See Mackey's *Encyclopædia of Freemasonry*.) Clement speaks of the Mysteries of the Cabiri as "the sacred mystery of a brother slain by his brethren," and the "Cabiric death" was one of the secret symbols of antiquity. Thus the allegory of the Self murdered by the not-self is perpetuated through the religious mysticism of all peoples. The *philosophic death* and the *philosophic resurrection* are the Lesser and the Greater Mysteries respectively.

A curious aspect of the *dying-god* myth is that of the Hanged Man. The most important example of this peculiar conception is found in the Odinic rituals where Odin hangs himself for nine nights from the branches of the World Tree and upon the same occasion also pierces his own side with the sacred spear. As the result of this great sacrifice, Odin, while suspended over the depths of Niflheim, discovered by meditation the runes or alphabets by which later the records of his people were preserved. Because of this remarkable experience, Odin is sometimes shown seated on a gallows tree and he became the patron deity of all who died by the noose. Esoterically, the Hanged Man is the human spirit which is suspended from heaven by a single thread. Wisdom, not death, is the reward for this voluntary sacrifice during which the human soul, suspended above the world of illusion, and meditating upon its unreality, is rewarded by the achievement of self-realization.

From a consideration of all these ancient and secret rituals it becomes evident that the mystery of the *dying god* was universal among the illumined and venerated colleges of the sacred teaching. This mystery has been perpetuated in Christianity in the crucifixion and death of the God-man—Jesus the Christ. The secret import of this world tragedy and the Universal Martyr must be rediscovered if Christianity is to reach the heights attained by the pagans in the days of their philosophic supremacy. The myth of the *dying god* is the key to both universal and individual redemption and regeneration, and those who do not comprehend the true nature of this supreme allegory are not privileged to consider themselves either wise or truly religious.

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The Life and Writings of Thoth Hermes Trismegistus



HUNDERrolled, lightning flashed, the veil of the Temple was rent from top to bottom. The venerable initiator, in his robes of blue and gold, slowly raised his jeweled wand and pointed with it into the darkness revealed by the tearing of the silken curtain: "Behold the Light of Egypt!" The candidate, in his plain white robe, gazed into the utter blackness framed by the two great lotus-headed columns between which the veil had hung. As he watched, a luminous haze distributed itself throughout the atmosphere until the air was a mass of shining particles. The face of the neophyte was illumined by the soft glow as he scanned the shimmering cloud for some tangible object. The initiator spoke again: "This Light which ye behold is the secret luminance of the Mysteries. Whence it comes none knoweth, save the 'Master of the Light.' Behold Him!" Suddenly, through the gleaming mist a figure appeared, surrounded by a flickering greenish sheen. The initiator lowered his wand and, bowing his head, placed one hand edgewise against his breast in humble salutation. The neophyte stepped back in awe, partly blinded by the glory of the revealed figure. Gaining courage, the youth gazed again at the Divine One. The Form before him was considerably larger than that of a mortal man. The body seemed partly transparent so that the heart and brain could be seen pulsating and radiant. As the candidate watched, the heart changed into an ibis, and the brain into a flashing emerald. In its hand this mysterious Being bore a winged rod, entwined with serpents. The aged initiator, raising his wand, cried out in a loud voice: "All hail Thee, Thoth Hermes, Thrice Greatest; all hail Thee, Prince of Men; all hail Thee who standest upon the head of Typhon!" At the same instant a lurid writhing dragon appeared—a hideous monster, part serpent, part crocodile, and part hog. From its mouth and nostrils poured sheets of flame and horrible sounds echoed through the vaulted chambers. Suddenly Hermes struck the advancing reptile with the serpent-wound staff and with snarling cry the dragon fell over upon its side, while the flames about it slowly died away. Hermes placed His foot upon the skull of the vanquished Typhon. The next instant, with a blaze of unbearable glory that sent the neophyte staggering backward against a pillar, the immortal Hermes, followed by streamers of greenish mist, passed through the chamber and faded into nothingness.

SUPPOSITIONS CONCERNING THE IDENTITY OF HERMES

Iamblichus averred that Hermes was the author of twenty thousand books; Manetho increased the number to more than thirty-six thousand (see James Gardner)—figures which make it evident that a solitary individual, even though he be overshadowed by divine prerogative, could scarcely have accomplished such a monumental labor. Among the arts and sciences which it is affirmed Hermes revealed to mankind were medicine, chemistry, law, art, astrology, music, rhetoric, magic, philosophy, geography, mathematics (especially geometry), anatomy, and oratory. Orpheus was similarly acclaimed by the Greeks.

In his *Biographia Antiqua*, Francis Barrett says of Hermes: "*** if God ever appeared in man, he appeared in him, as is evident both from his books and his Pymander; in which works he has communicated the sum of the Abyss, and the divine knowledge to all posterity; by which he has demonstrated himself to have been not only an inspired divine, but also a deep philosopher, obtaining his wisdom from God and heavenly things, and not from man."

His transcendent learning caused Hermes to be identified with many of the early sages and prophets. In his *Ancient Mythology*, Bryant writes: "I have mentioned that Cadmus was the same as the Egyptian Thoth; and it is manifest from his being Hermes, and

from the invention of letters being attributed to him." (In the chapter on the theory of *Pythagorean Mathematics* will be found the table of the original Cadmean letters.) Investigators believe that it was Hermes who was known to the Jews as "Enoch," called by Kenealy the "Second Messenger of God." Hermes was accepted into the mythology of the Greeks, later becoming the Mercury of the Latins. He was revered through the form of the planet Mercury because this body is nearest to the sun: Hermes of all creatures was nearest to God, and became known as the Messenger of the Gods.

In the Egyptian drawings of him, Thoth carries a waxen writing tablet and serves as the recorder during the weighing of the souls of the dead in the Judgment Hall of Osiris—a ritual of great significance. Hermes is of first importance to Masonic scholars, because he was the author of the Masonic initiatory rituals, which were borrowed from the Mysteries established by Hermes. Nearly all of the Masonic symbols are Hermetic in character. Pythagoras studied mathematics with the Egyptians and from them gained his knowledge of the symbolic geometric solids. Hermes is also revered for his reformation of the calendar system. He increased the year from 360 to 365 days, thus establishing a precedent which still prevails. The appellation "Thrice Greatest" was given to Hermes because he was considered the greatest of all philosophers, the greatest of all priests, and the greatest of all kings. It is worthy of note that the last poem of America's beloved poet, Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, was a lyric ode to Hermes. (See *Chambers' Encyclopedia*.)

THE MUTILATED HERMETIC FRAGMENTS

On the subject of the Hermetic books, James Campbell Brown, in his *History of Chemistry*, has written: "Leaving the Chaldean and earliest Egyptian periods, of which we have remains but no record, and from which no names of either chemists or philosophers have come down to us, we now approach the Historic Period, when books were written, not at first upon parchment or paper, but upon papyrus. A series of early Egyptian books is attributed to Hermes Trismegistus, who may have been a real savant, or may be a personification of a long succession of writers. * * * He is identified by some with the Greek god Hermes, and the Egyptian Thoth or Tuti, who was the moon-god, and is represented in ancient paintings as ibis-headed with the disc and crescent of the moon. The Egyptians regarded him as the god of wisdom, letters, and the recording of time. It is in consequence of the great respect entertained for Hermes by the old alchemists that chemical writings were called 'hermetic,' and that the phrase 'hermetically sealed' is still in use to designate the closing of a glass vessel by fusion, after the manner of chemical manipulators. We find the same root in the hermetic medicines of Paracelsus, and the hermetic freemasonry of the Middle Ages."

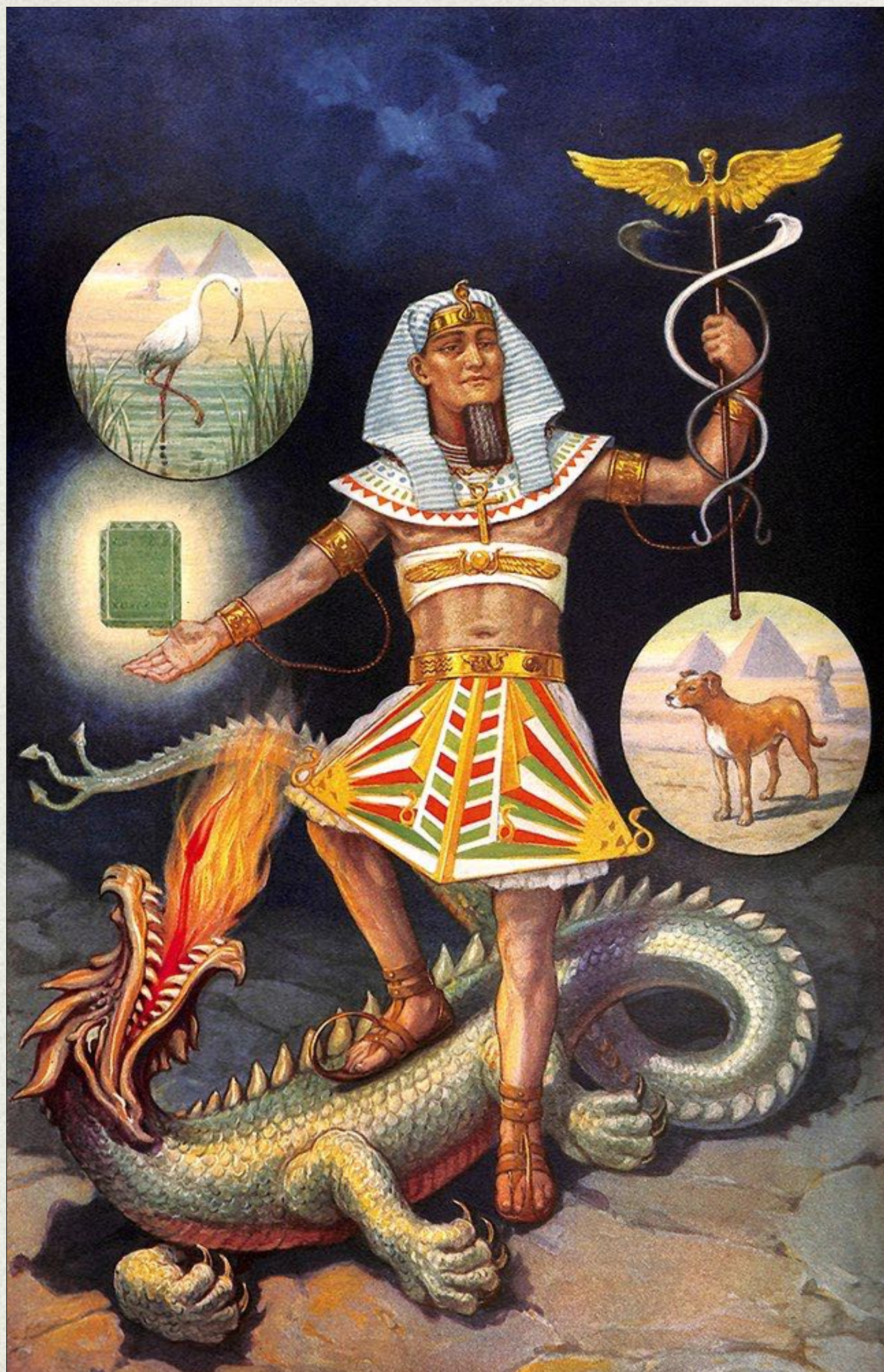
Among the fragmentary writings believed to have come from the stylus of Hermes are two famous works. The first is the *Emerald Table*, and the second is the *Divine Pymander*, or, as it is more commonly called, *The Shepherd of Men*, a discussion of which follows. One outstanding point in connection with Hermes is that he was one of the few philosopher-priests of pagandom upon whom the early Christians did not vent their spleen. Some Church Fathers went so far as to declare that Hermes exhibited many symptoms of intelligence, and that if he had only been born in a more enlightened age so that he might have benefited by their instructions he would have been a really great man!

In his *Stromata*, Clement of Alexandria, one of the few chroniclers of pagan lore whose writings have been preserved to this age, gives practically all the information that is known concerning the original forty-two books of Hermes and the importance with which these books were regarded by both the temporal and spiritual powers of Egypt. Clement describes one of their ceremonial processions as follows:

"For the Egyptians pursue a philosophy of their own. This is

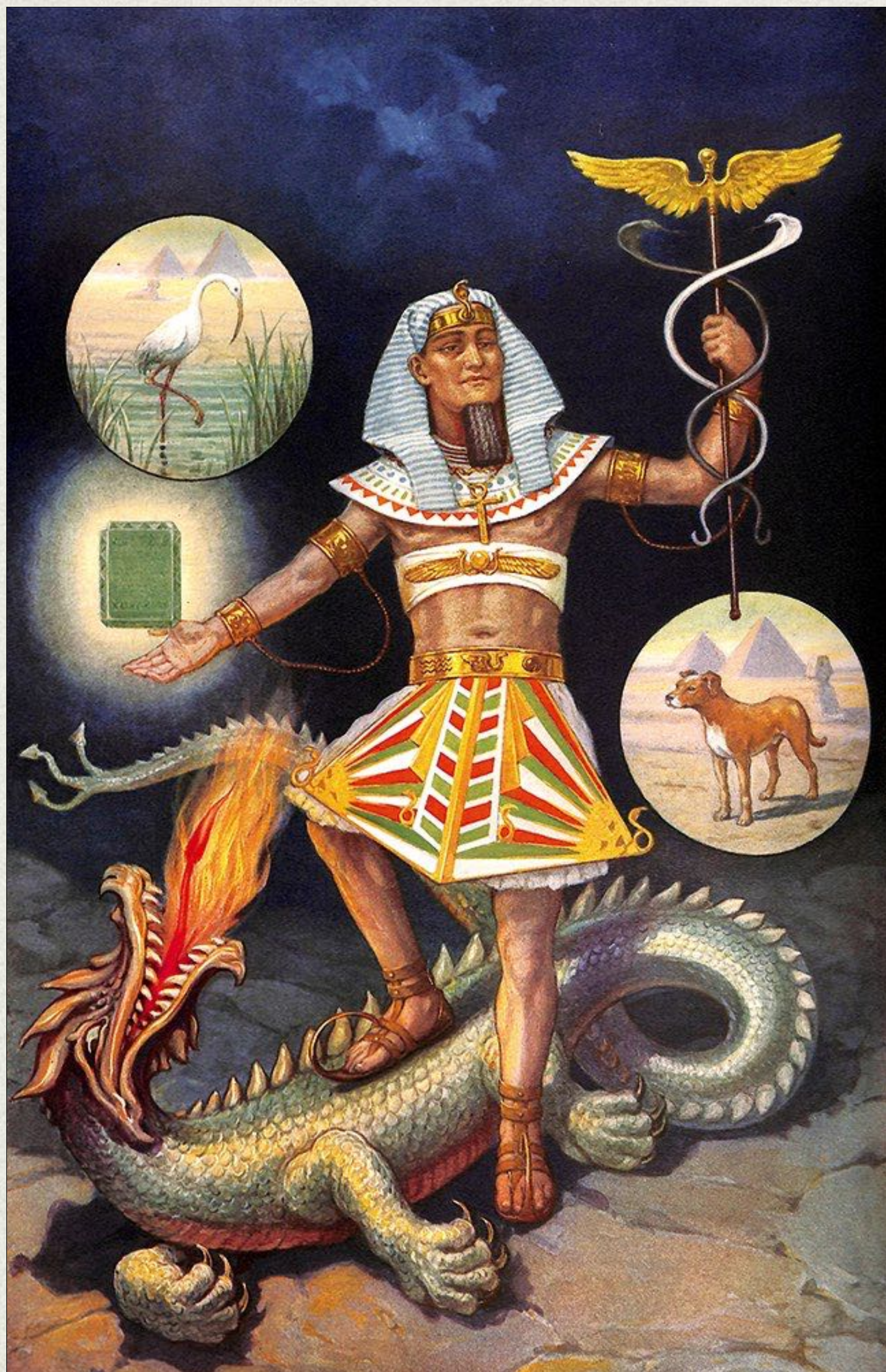


From *Historia Doctrinae Ptolemaicae*.
HERMES MERCURIUS TRISMEGISTUS.
Master of all arts and sciences, perfect in all crafts, Ruler of the Three Worlds, Scribe of the Gods, and Keeper of the Books of Life, Thoth Hermes Trismegistus—the Thrice Times Greatest, the 'First Intelligence'—was regarded by the ancient Egyptians as the embodiment of the Universal Mind. While in all probability there actually existed a great sage and educator by the name of Hermes, it is impossible to extricate the historical man from the mass of legendary accounts which attempt to identify him with the Cosmic Principle of Thought.

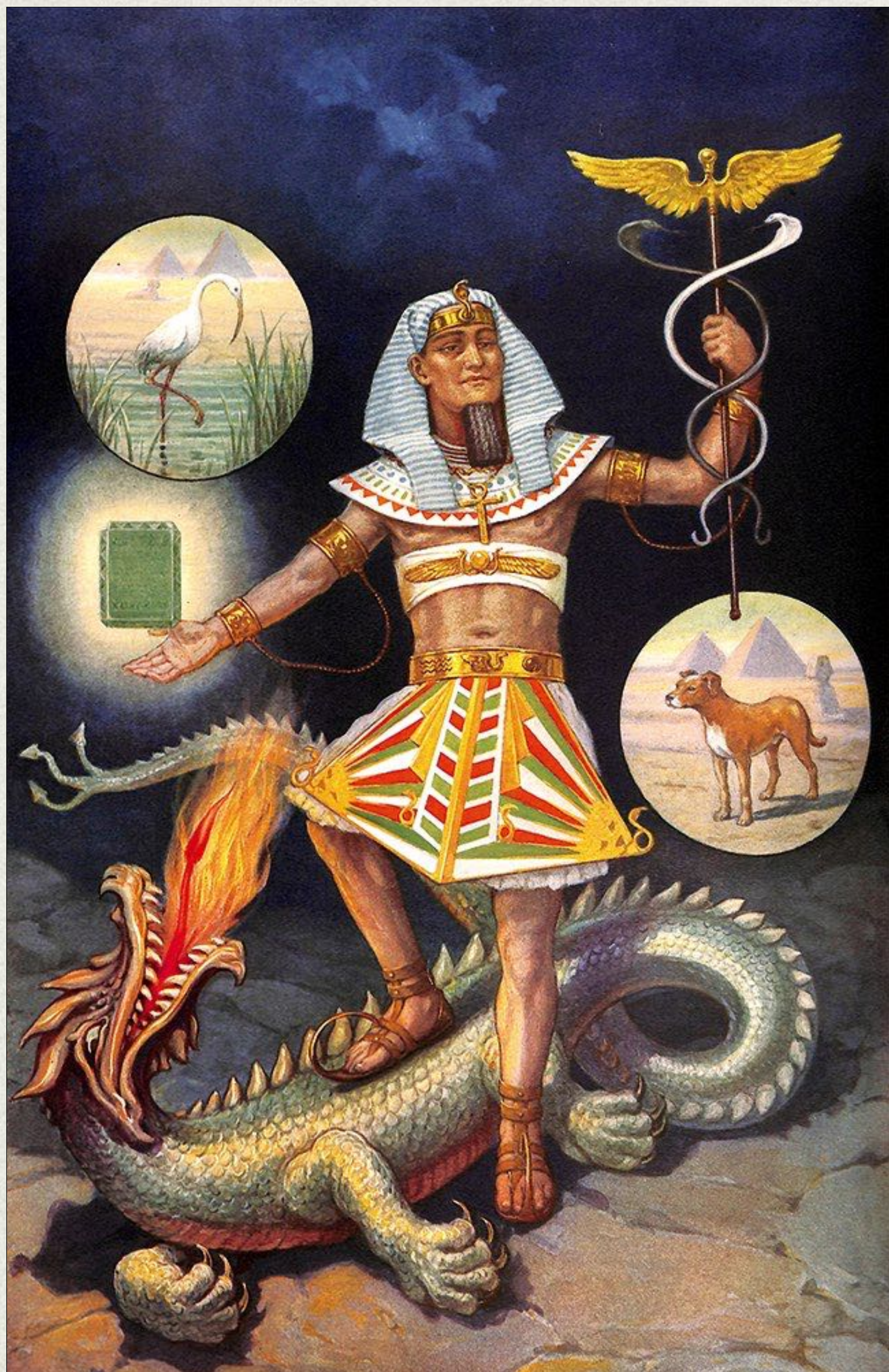


Hermes, as the personification of Universal Wisdom, is here depicted with his foot upon the back of Typhon, the vanquished dragon of ignorance and perversion. To the Egyptian initiates Typhon, the devourer of souls, signified the lower world which swallows up the spiritual nature of individual who, being imperfect, is forced to descend from the higher spheres and be reborn into the physical universe. To be swallowed by Typhon therefore signifies the process of rebirth, from which man can only release himself by vanquishing his mortal Adversary. In one hand Hermes carries the

Emerald, upon whose surface was inscribed in raised letters the sum of philosophy. The figure wears the ancient Egyptian Masonic apron according to the pattern discovered by Belzoni, the eminent Egyptologist. The two small circles contain the forms and symbols most closely associated with Hermes. In the upper circle is the ibis, whose curious characteristics have caused it to be particularly associated with the medical art. In the initiation ceremonies the Egyptian priests wore masks in the form of the ibis head to signify that they represented the attributes of Thoth, or Hermes. The lower circle contains the dog, an animal always associated with Hermes because of its intelligence and devotion.



Upon the forehead of Hermes appears the uræus, the secret symbol of the constellation of Scorpio, which represents the regeneration of the same power that in the form of a dragon lies helpless under his foot. The scarab over the heart of Hermes represents the presence of the spiritual and regenerative light within his own soul; the collar typifies by its circles the orbits of the heavenly bodies. The three points of the tail of Typhon which end in arrows indicate the three destructive expressions of universal energy—mental, moral, and physical perversion. The entire diagram signifies mastery through the regeneration of the body, the illumination of the mind, and the transmutation of the emotions.



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Hermes was a generic nom-de-plume used by a series of generations of mystics of every shade. -SD1:286

Hermes Trismegistus, floor mosaic in the Cathedral of Siena



From the bosom of Egypt sprang a man of consummate wisdom, initiated in the secret knowledge of India, of Persia, and of Ethiopia, named *Thoth* or *Phtha* by his compatriots, *Taut* by the Phoenicians, *Hermes Trismegistus* by the Greeks, and *Adris* by the Rabbins. Nature seemed to have chosen him for her favorite, and to have lavished on him all the qualities necessary to enable him to study her and to know her thoroughly. The Deity had, so to say, infused into him the sciences and the arts, in order that he might instruct the whole world. He invented many things

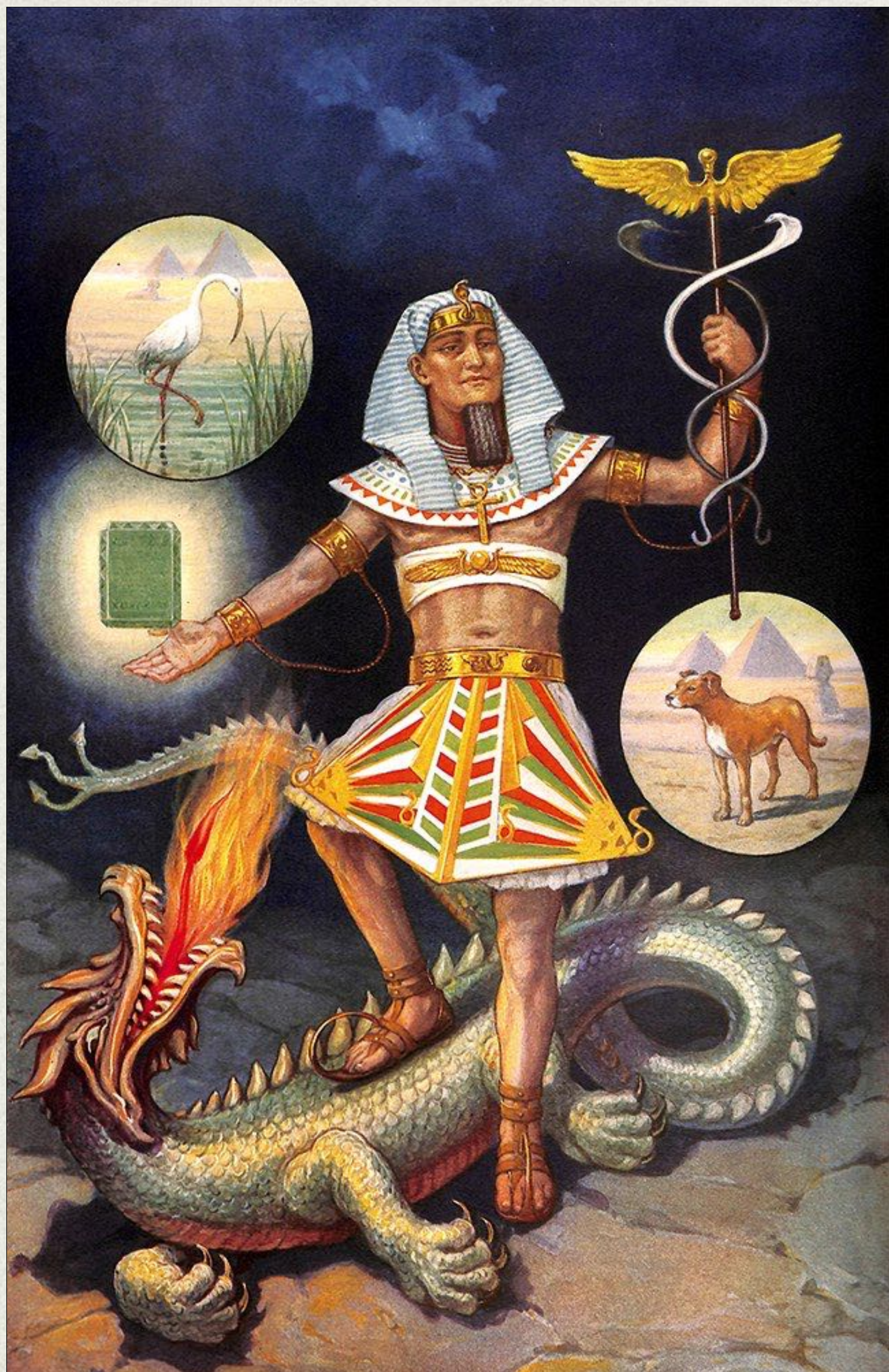
necessary for the uses of life, and gave them suitable names; he taught men how to write down their thoughts and arrange their speech; he instituted the ceremonies to be observed in the worship of each of the Gods; he observed the course of the stars; he invented music, the different bodily exercises, arithmetic, medicine, the art of working in metals, the lyre with three strings; he regulated the three tones of the voice. It was he who taught the Greeks the mode of interpreting terms and things, whence they gave him the name of *Ἑρμης* [*Hermes*], which signifies “Interpreter”.



In Egypt he instituted hieroglyphics: he selected a certain number of persons whom he judged fitted to be the depositaries of his secrets, of such only as were capable of attaining the throne and the first offices in the Mysteries; he united them in a body, created them Priests of the Living God, instructed them in the sciences and arts, and explained to them the symbols by which they were veiled. Egypt, 1500 years before the time of Moses, revered in the Mysteries ONE SUPREME GOD, called the ONLY UNCREATED. Under Him it paid homage to seven

principal deities. It is to Hermes, who lived at that period, that we must attribute the concealment or veiling of the Indian worship, which Moses unveiled or revealed, changing nothing of the laws of Hermes, except the plurality of his mystic Gods.

The Egyptian Priests related that Hermes, dying, said: *"Hitherto I have lived in exile from my true country: now I return thither. Do not weep for me: I return to that celestial country whither each goes in his turn. There, is God. This life is but a death."* –Morals and Dogma:385-6



Hermes, as the personification of Universal Wisdom, **is here depicted with his foot upon the back of Typhon, the vanquished dragon of ignorance and perversion.** To the Egyptian initiates Typhon, the devourer of souls, signified the lower world which swallows up the spiritual nature of individual who, being imperfect, is forced to descend from the higher spheres and be reborn into the physical universe. To be swallowed by Typhon therefore signifies the process of rebirth, from which man can only release himself by vanquishing his mortal Adversary.

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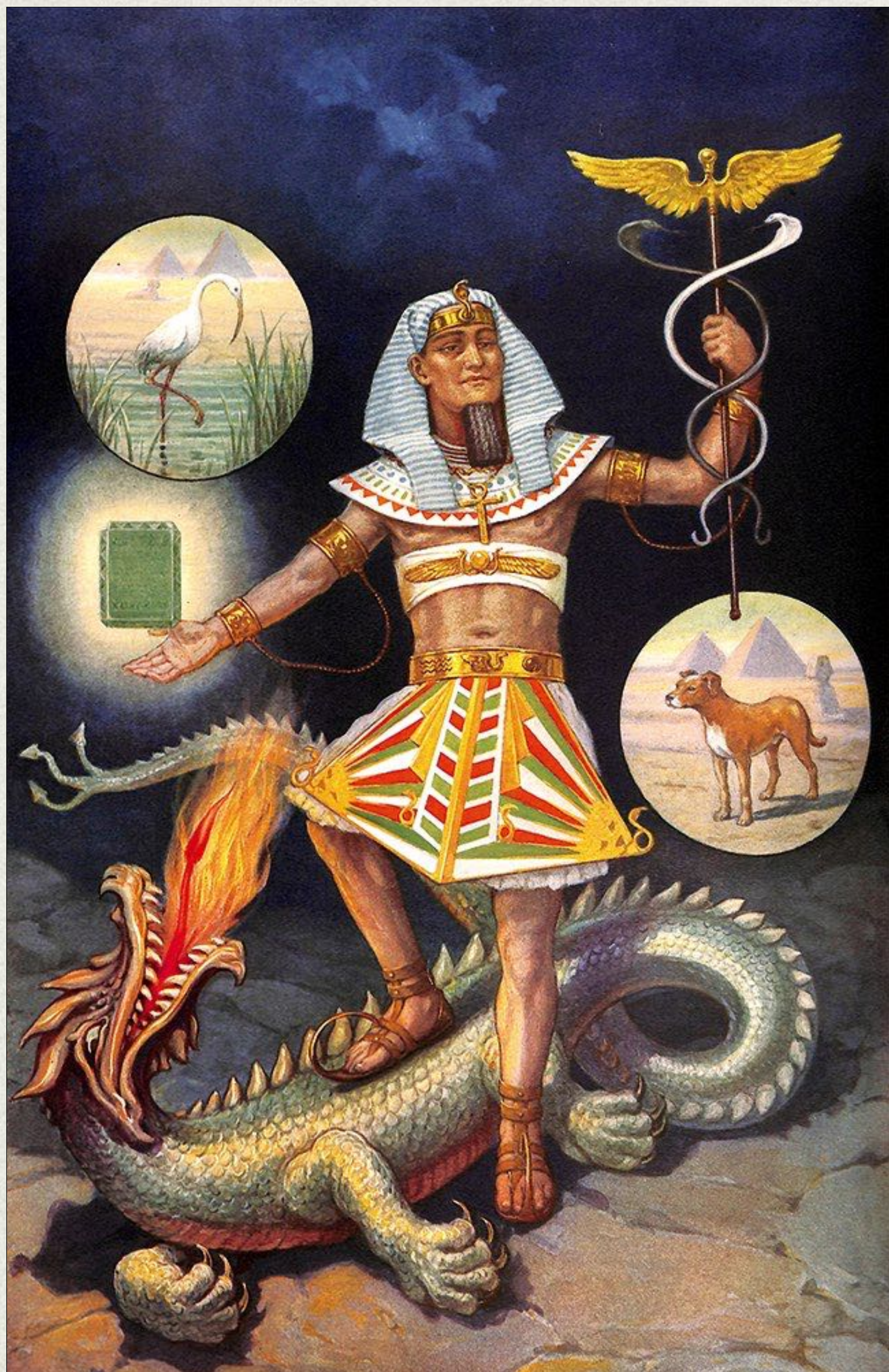


Zeus aiming his thunderbolt at a winged and snake-footed Typhon. Chalcidian black-figured hydra (c. 540–530 BC),

Typhoeus, Typhon: (Greek) Typhoeus in Hesiodic theogony is a son of Tartarus and Gaia, a fire-breathing titan with a hundred heads and begetter of destructive hurricanes. He rebels against the gods and is killed by Zeus with a thunderbolt and buried under Mount Etna. Typhon was originally his son — post-type of himself — but the two were later identified [as one]. He represents the necessary counterpart of Zeus, as darkness is

of light, Set of Osiris, or Satan of God. He is the Dragon Apophis, the Accuser in The Egyptian Book of the Dead, murderer of Osiris, destroyed by Horus; the dark side of Zeus, as Set is the dark side of Osiris, and night the dark side of day; Python, Loki, Rahu, and falling demons in general. In one form he is the dragon slain by St. Michael or St. George. The original meaning is sublime, for Typhon in its prototypal significance is chaos, the

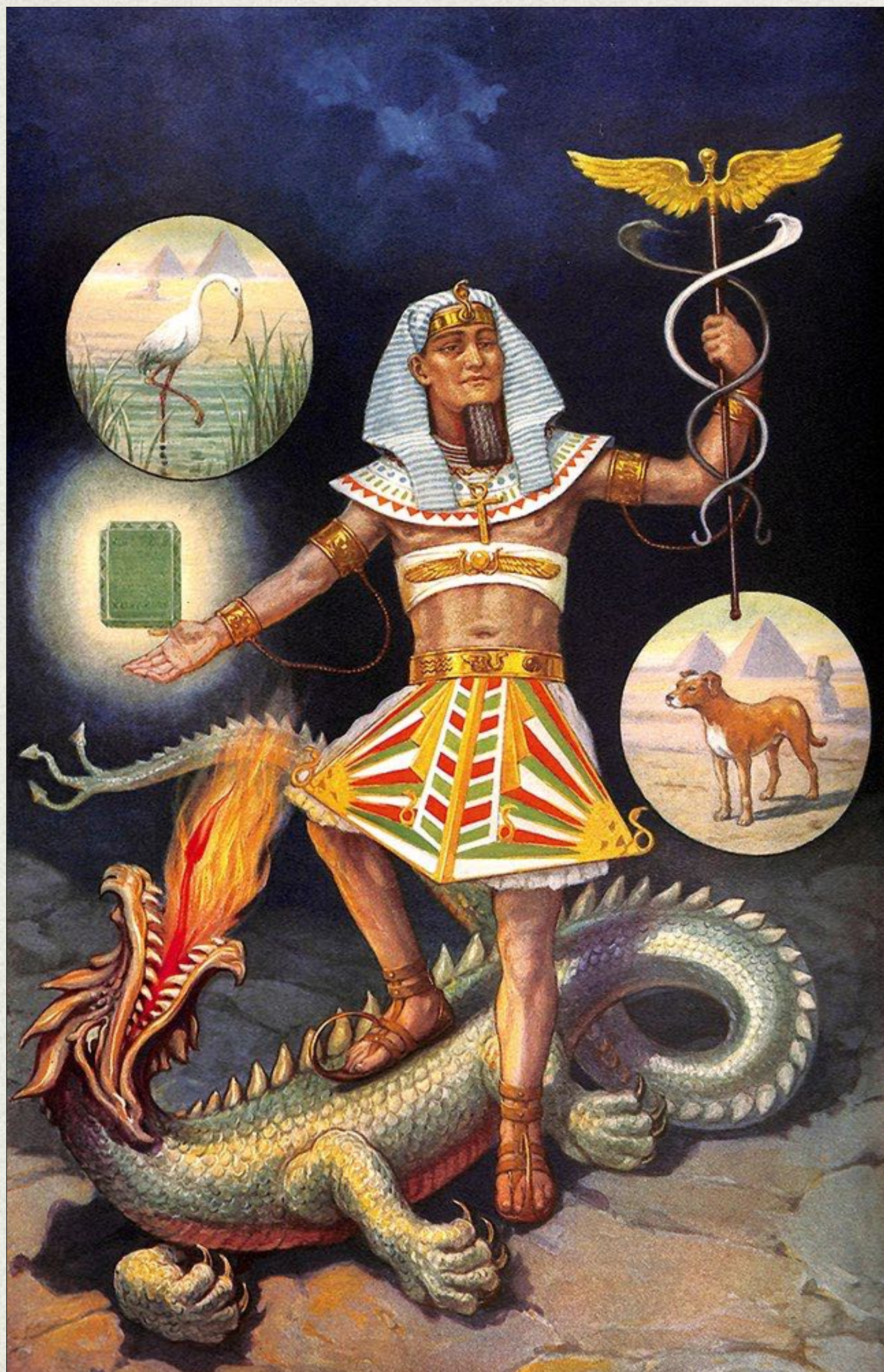
unorganized womb or fountain of production, which calls forth the creative energy by resisting it, and is equally necessary with the former. When humanity falls into matter, then these dark-side potencies of nature acquire for mankind a distinctly evil connotation, and their names can be given to vast destructive forces which the misuse of the human will has engendered. -OTG



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THE
GODS OF THE EGYPTIANS
OR
STUDIES IN
EGYPTIAN MYTHOLOGY

BY
E. A. WALLIS BUDGE, M.A., LITT.D., D.LITT., D.LIT.
KEEPER OF THE EGYPTIAN AND ASSYRIAN ANTIQUITIES
IN THE BRITISH MUSEUM

WITH 98 COLOURED PLATES
AND 131 ILLUSTRATIONS IN THE TEXT

VOLUME I.

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In the papyri of the XVIIIth Dynasty we have representations of the weighing of the heart of the deceased in the Great Balance, which takes place in the presence of the Great Company of the gods, who act as judges, and who pass the sentence of doom, that must be ratified by Osiris, according to the report of the god Thoth, who acts as scribe and secretary to the gods. The Egyptian hoped that his heart would exactly counterbalance the feather, symbolic of Maat or the Law. The act of weighing was

carefully watched by Anubis the god of the dead, whose duty was to cast to the “Eater of the Dead” the hearts which failed to balance the feather exactly; and by the guardian angel of the deceased, on behalf of the deceased; and by a dog-headed ape, who was seated on the top of the pillar, and who supported himself upon the bracket on which was balanced the beam of the Great Scales. This ape was the associate and companion of the god Thoth, and he was supposed to be skilled

in the art of computation, and in the science of numbers, and in the measurement of time; his duty at the weighing of the heart was to scrutinize the pointer of the scales, and, having made sure that the beam of the scales was exactly level, i.e., that the heart and the feather exactly counterbalanced each other, to report the fact to Thoth, so that he in turn might make his report to the gods on the case under consideration. -The Gods of the Egyptians Budge:20-1



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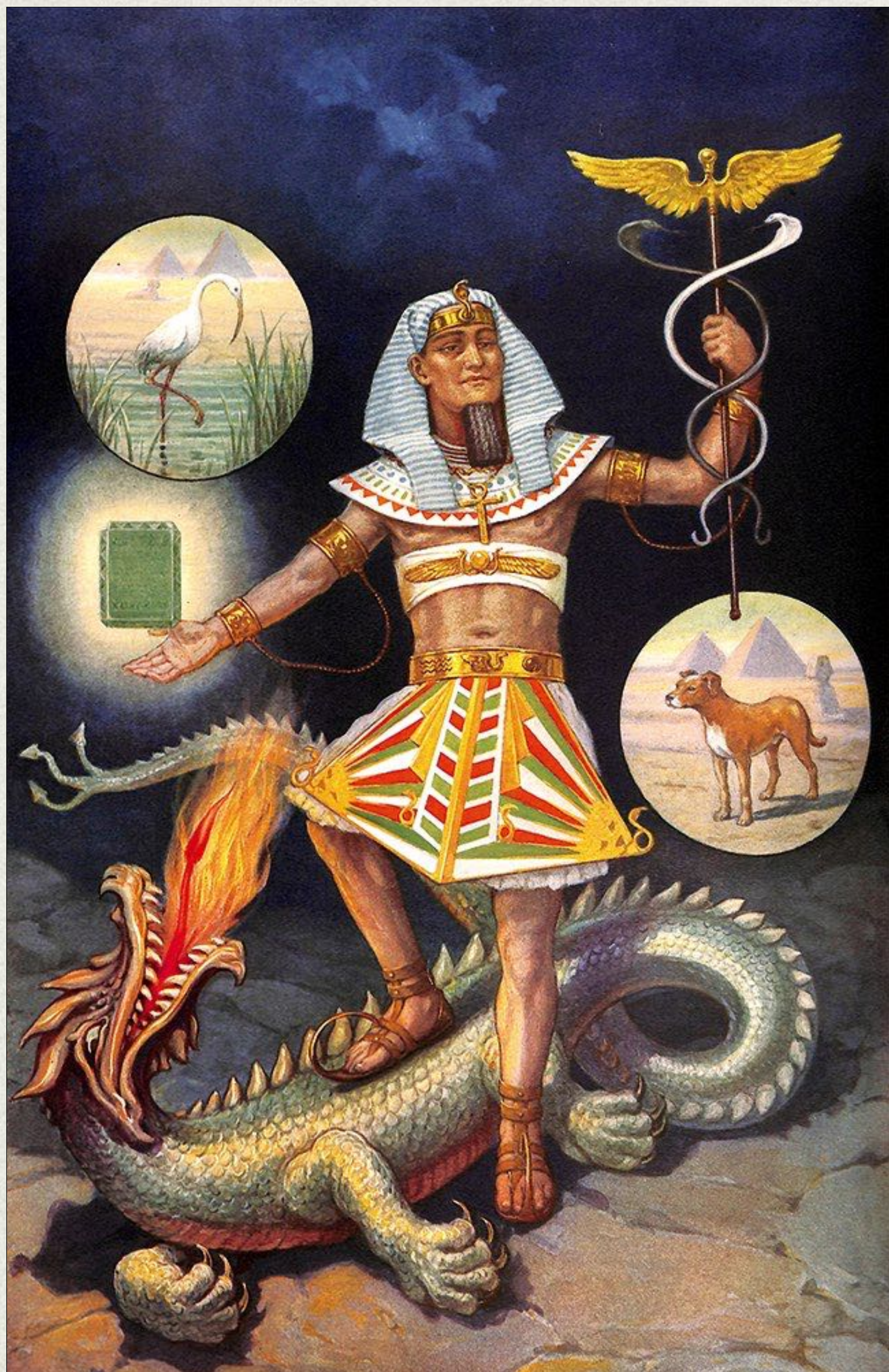
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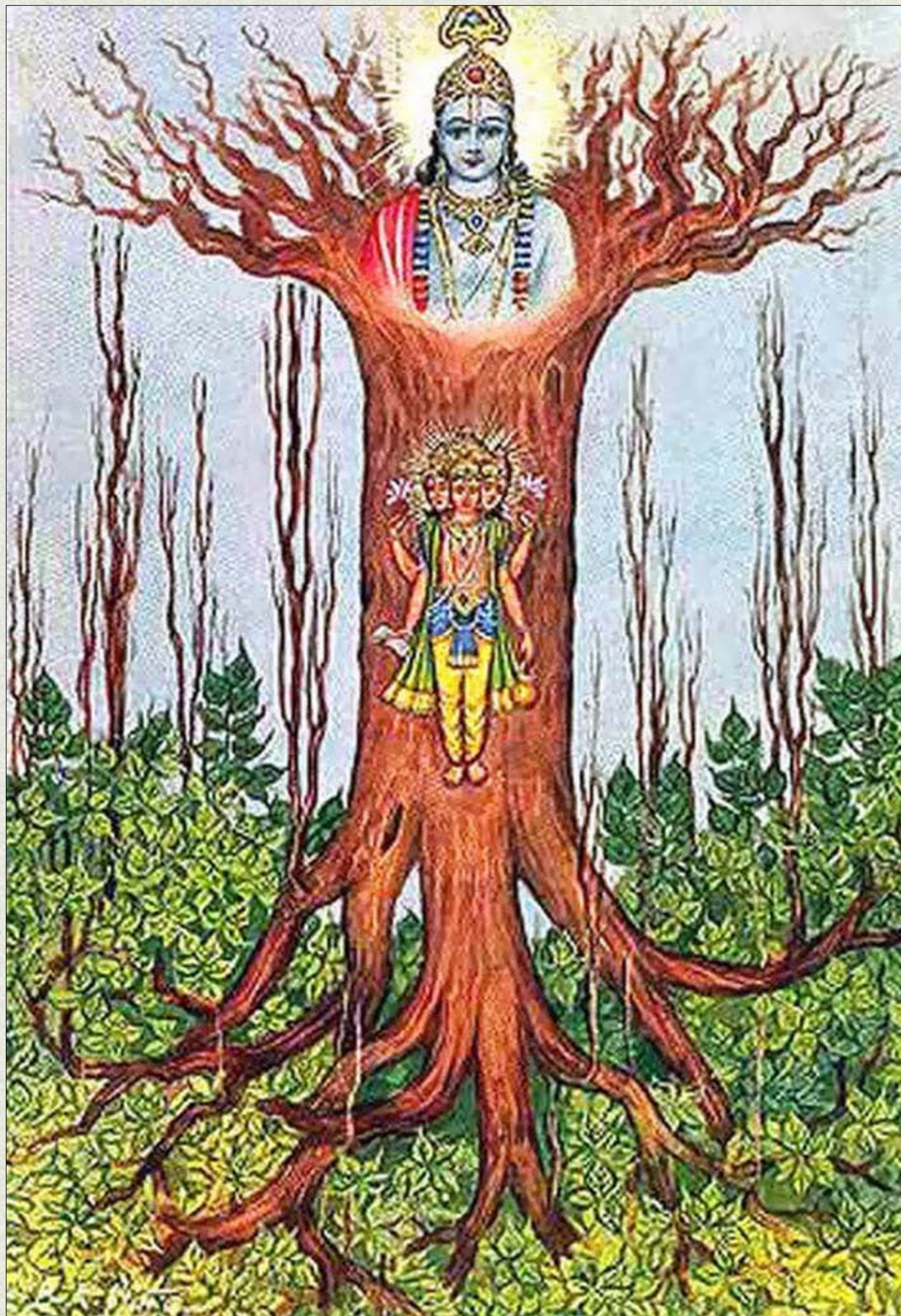
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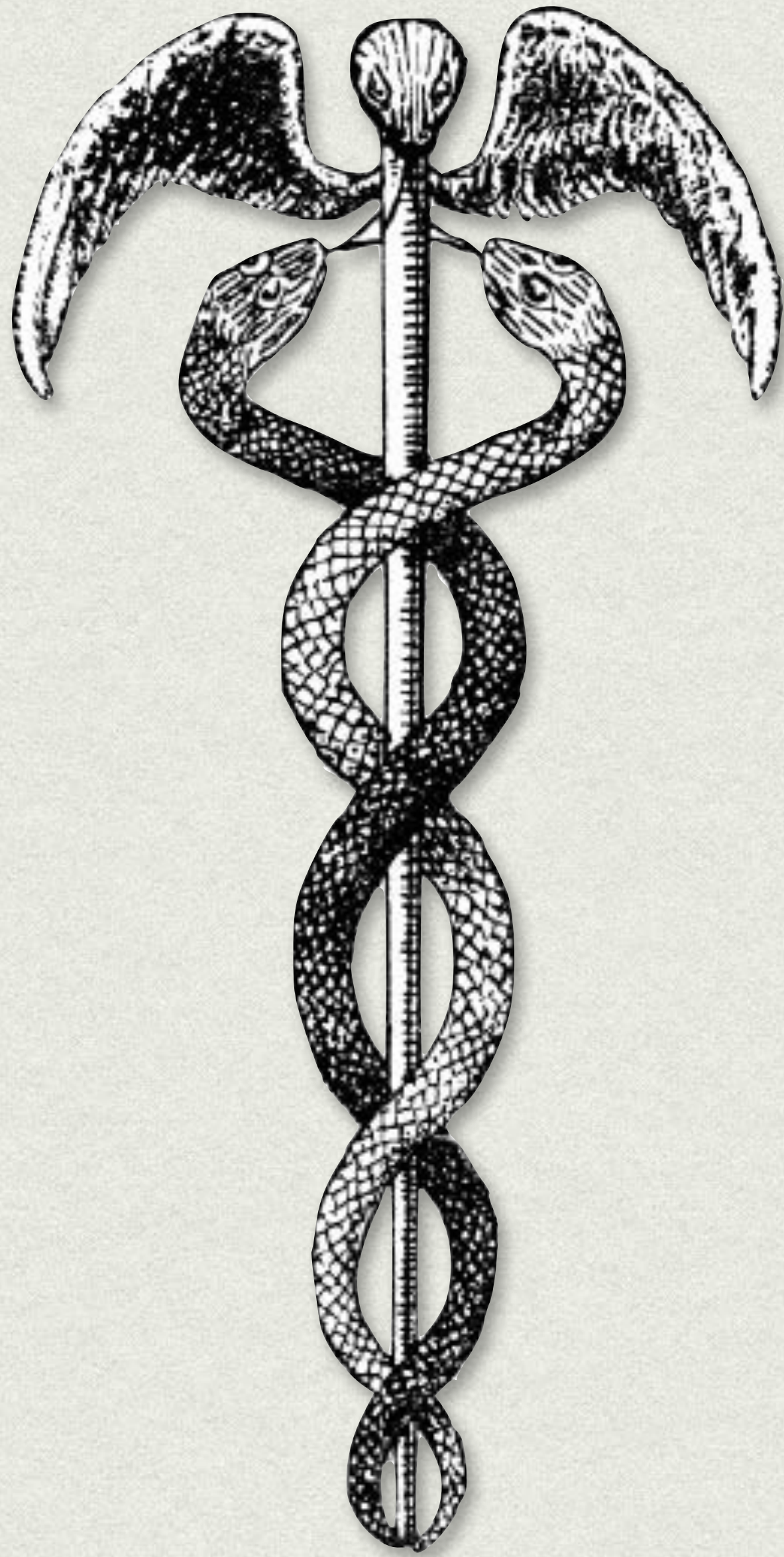
Chemical Science is now compelled, by the very force of things, to accept even our illustration of the evolution of the gods and atoms, so suggestively and undeniably figured in the caduceus of Mercury, the God of Wisdom, and in the allegorical language of the Archaic Sages. Says a commentary in the esoteric doctrine:

“... The trunk of the Asvattha (the tree of Life and Being, the rod of the caduceus) grows from and descends at every Beginning (every new manvantara) from the two dark wings of the Swan (Hansa) of Life. The two Serpents, the ever-living and its illusion (Spirit and matter) whose two heads grow from the one head between the wings, descend along the trunk,

interlaced in close embrace. The two tails join on earth (the manifested Universe) into one, and this is the great illusion, O Lanoo !”

Every one knows what the caduceus is, already modified by the Greeks. The original symbol — with the triple head of the serpent — became altered into a rod with a knob, and the two lower heads were separated, thus disfiguring somewhat the original meaning. Yet it is as good an illustration as can be for our purpose, this laya rod entwined by two serpents. Verily, the wonderful powers of the magic caduceus were sung by all the ancient poets, with a very good reason for those who understood the secret meaning. SD1:449-50

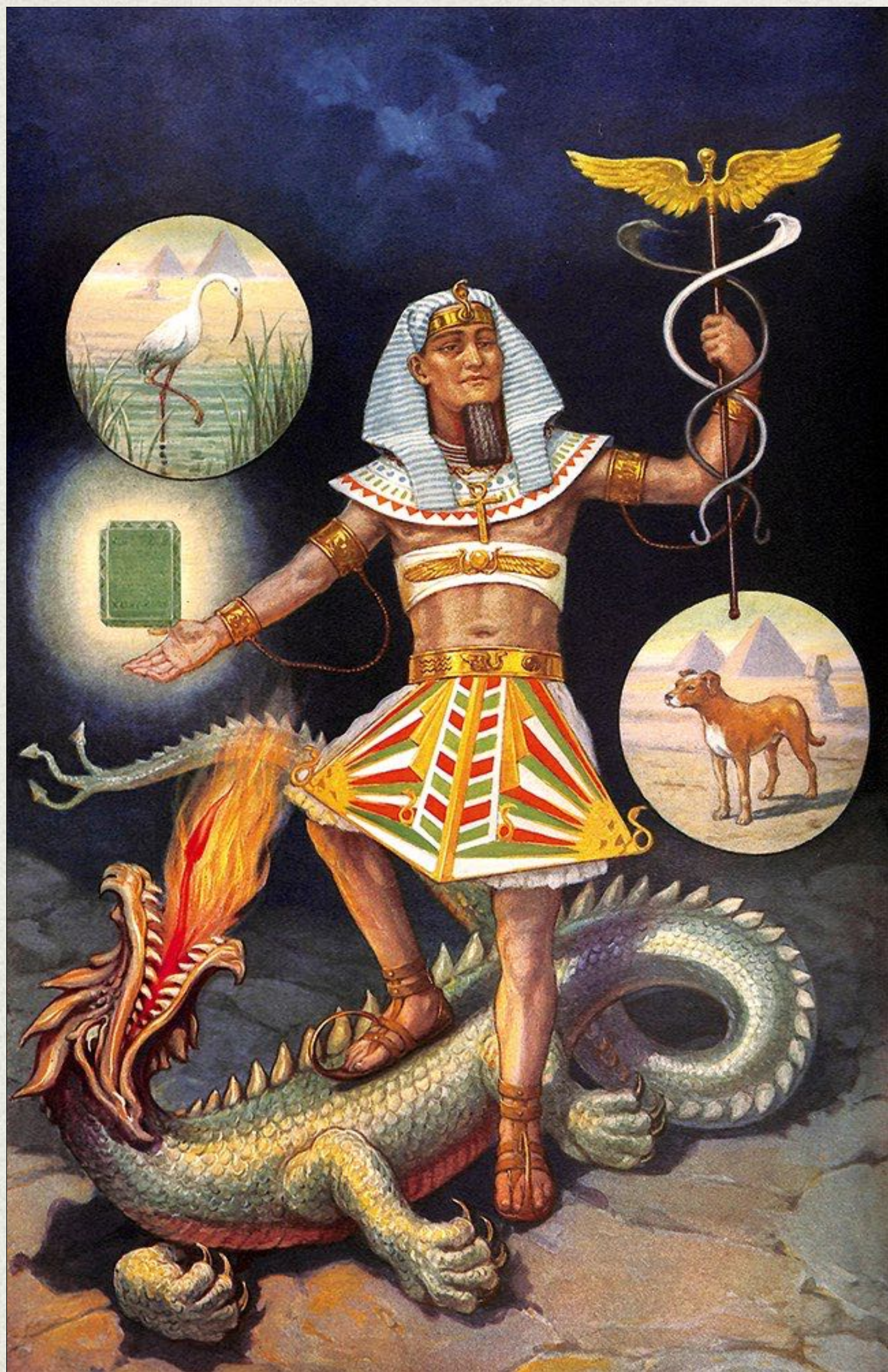
The Asvattha, or Tree of Samsara



Caduceus illustration from SD1:550

That the Serpents were ever the emblems of wisdom and prudence is again shown by the caduceus of Mercury, one with Thot, the god of wisdom, with Hermes, and so on. The two serpents, entwined around the rod, are phallic symbols of Jupiter and other gods who transformed themselves into snakes for purposes of seducing goddesses — but only in the unclean fancies of profane symbologists. The serpent has ever been the symbol of the adept, and of his powers of immortality and divine knowledge. Mercury in his psychopompic character, conducting and guiding with the caduceus the souls of the dead to Hades and even raising the dead to life with it, is simply a very transparent allegory. It shows the dual power of the Secret Wisdom: the black and the white magic. It shows this personified Wisdom guiding the Soul after death, and its power to call to life that which is dead — a very deep metaphor if one thinks over its meaning. Every people of antiquity revered this symbol, with the exception of Christians. -SD2:364

Caduceus: The analogy is found in every known cosmogony, all of which begin with a circle, head, or egg surrounded by darkness. From this circle of infinity — the unknown All — comes forth the manifestations of spirit and matter. The emblem of the evolution of gods and atoms is shown by the two forces, positive and negative, ascending and descending and meeting. Its symbology is directly connected with the globes of the planetary chain and the circulations of the beings or life-waves on these globes, as well as with the human constitution and the after-death states. Significantly, in ancient Greek mythology, Hermes is the psychopomp, psychagog, or conductor of souls after death to the various inner spheres of the universe, such as the Elysian Plains or the Meads of Asphodel. The Caduceus also signifies the dual aspect of wisdom by its twin serpents, *Agathodaimon* and *Kakodaimon*, good and evil in a relative sense. -OTG



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THE
DIVINE
PYMANDER
OF

Hermes Mercurius Trismegistus,
In XVII. BOOKS.

Translated formerly out
of the *Arabick* into *Greek*, and
thence into *Latine*, and *Dutch*,
and now out of the Original
into *English*;

By that Learned Divine
Doctor *Everard*.

London, Printed by Robert White,
for Tho. Brewster, and Greg. Moule,
at the Three Bibles in the Poul-
trey, under Mildreds
Church. 1650.

If we consult alchemical manuscripts, no matter the date or author or language, we find constant mention of Hermes Trismegistus, who was indeed considered, and sometimes designated, the father of alchemy. In a treatise attributed to Albertus Magnus, we are told that the tomb of Hermes was discovered by Alexander the Great in a cave near Hebron. In this was found a slab of emerald, which had been taken from the hands of the dead Hermes, by "Sarah, the wife of Abraham," and which had inscribed upon it, in Phoenician characters, the precepts of the great master concerning the art of making gold. The inscription consisted of thirteen sentences, and is to be found in numerous alchemical works. It is for the most part very difficult to understand, and in this respect

closely resembles most of the great mass of the middle age alchemical literature. The following is cited as the inscription of the *Smaragdine Table*, [Emerald Tablet] and is to be found in very early MSS. in various languages:

"Firstly.— I speak not fictitious things, but that which is certain and most true.

Secondly.— What is below, is like that which is above; and what is above, is like that which is below: to accomplish the miracle of one thing.

Thirdly.— And as all things were produced by the one word of one Being, so all things were produced from this one thing by adaptation.

Fourthly.— Its father is the sun, its mother the moon, the wind carries it in its belly, its nurse is the earth.

The Divine Pymander of Hermes



Translated by Dr. Everard

Fifthly.— It is the father of all perfection throughout the world.

Sixthly.—The power is vigorous if it be changed into earth.

Seventhly.— Separate the earth from the fire, the subtle from the gross, acting prudently and with judgment.

Eighthly.— Ascend with the greatest sagacity from the earth to heaven, and then again descend to the earth, and unite together the powers of things superior and things inferior. Thus, you will obtain the glory of the whole world, and obscurity will fly away from you.

Ninthly.— This has more fortitude than fortitude itself, because it conquers every subtle thing, and can penetrate every solid.

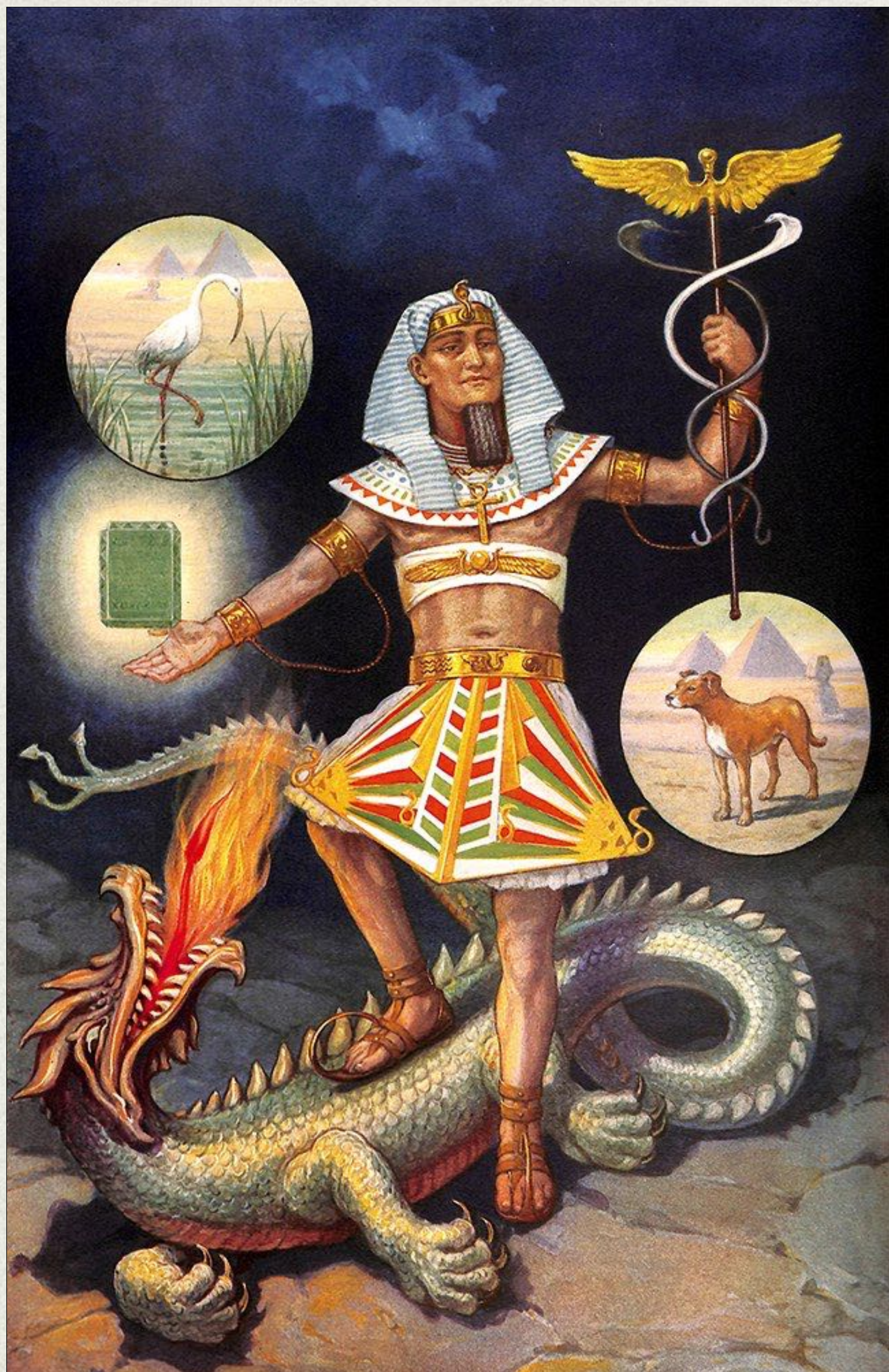
Tenthly.— Thus was the world formed.

Eleventhly.— Hence proceed wonders which are here established.

Twelfthly.— Therefore I am called HERMES TRISMEGISTUS, having three parts of the philosophy of the whole world.

Thirteenthly.— That which I had to say concerning the operation of the sun is completed."

The story and the inscription, together with all books attributed to Hermes (who is asserted to have lived about 2,000 B.C.) are still matter of dispute (occasionally vehemently) among the learned. In spite of the obvious difficulty of interpretation of the inscription of the "emerald table," men (and men of extraordinary capacity) have not been wanting who have laboured long and lovingly to prove its authenticity, to interpret it, and to show that it is, in good sooth, a marvelous revelation, full of sublime secrets of considerable import to mankind. —The Divine Pymander, by Dr. Everard, p.ix-x



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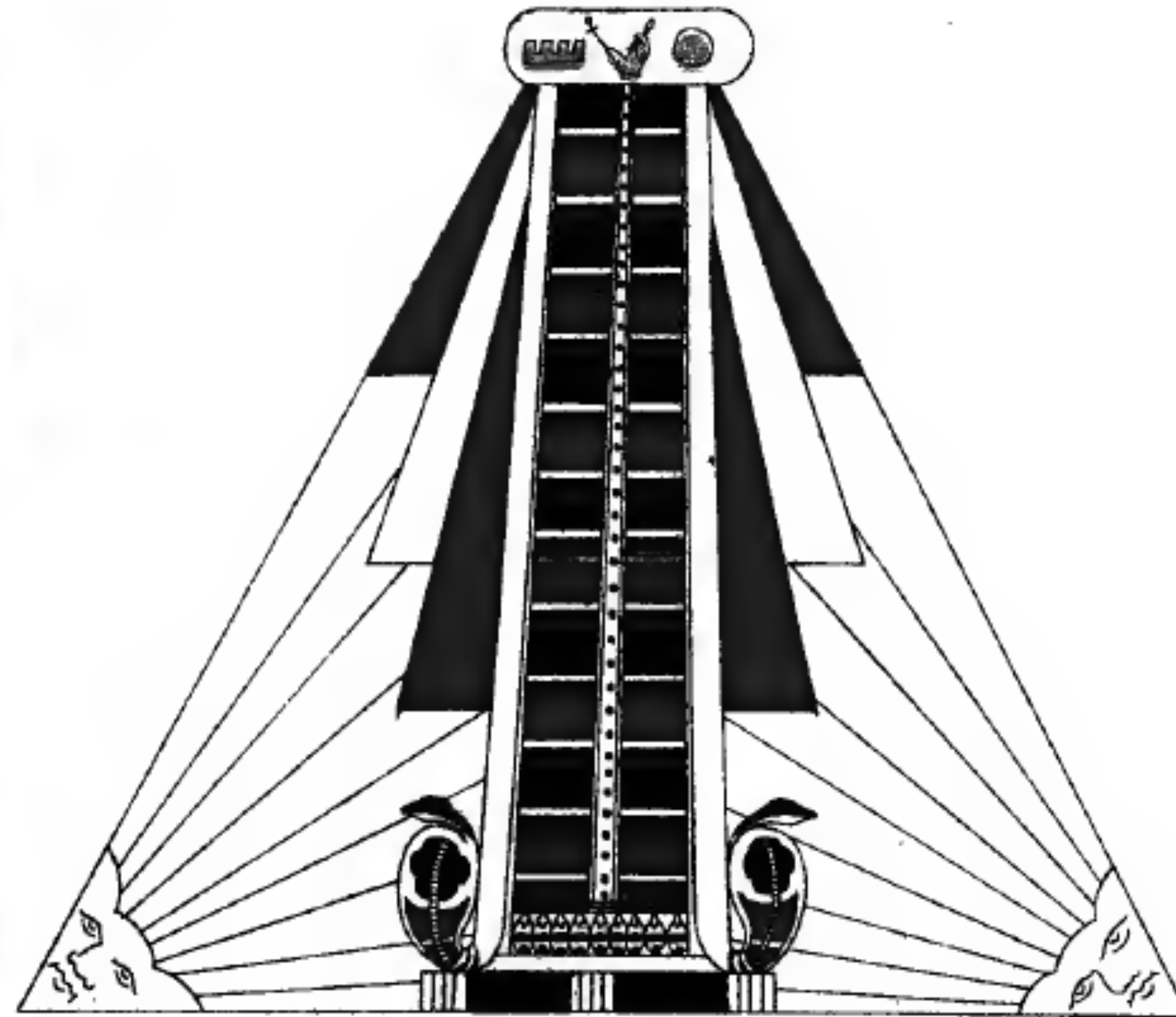


Giovanni Battista Belzoni
1778-1823

THE BELZONI MANUSCRIPTS AND ILLUSTRATIONS OF FREE-
MASONRY.



INITIATION

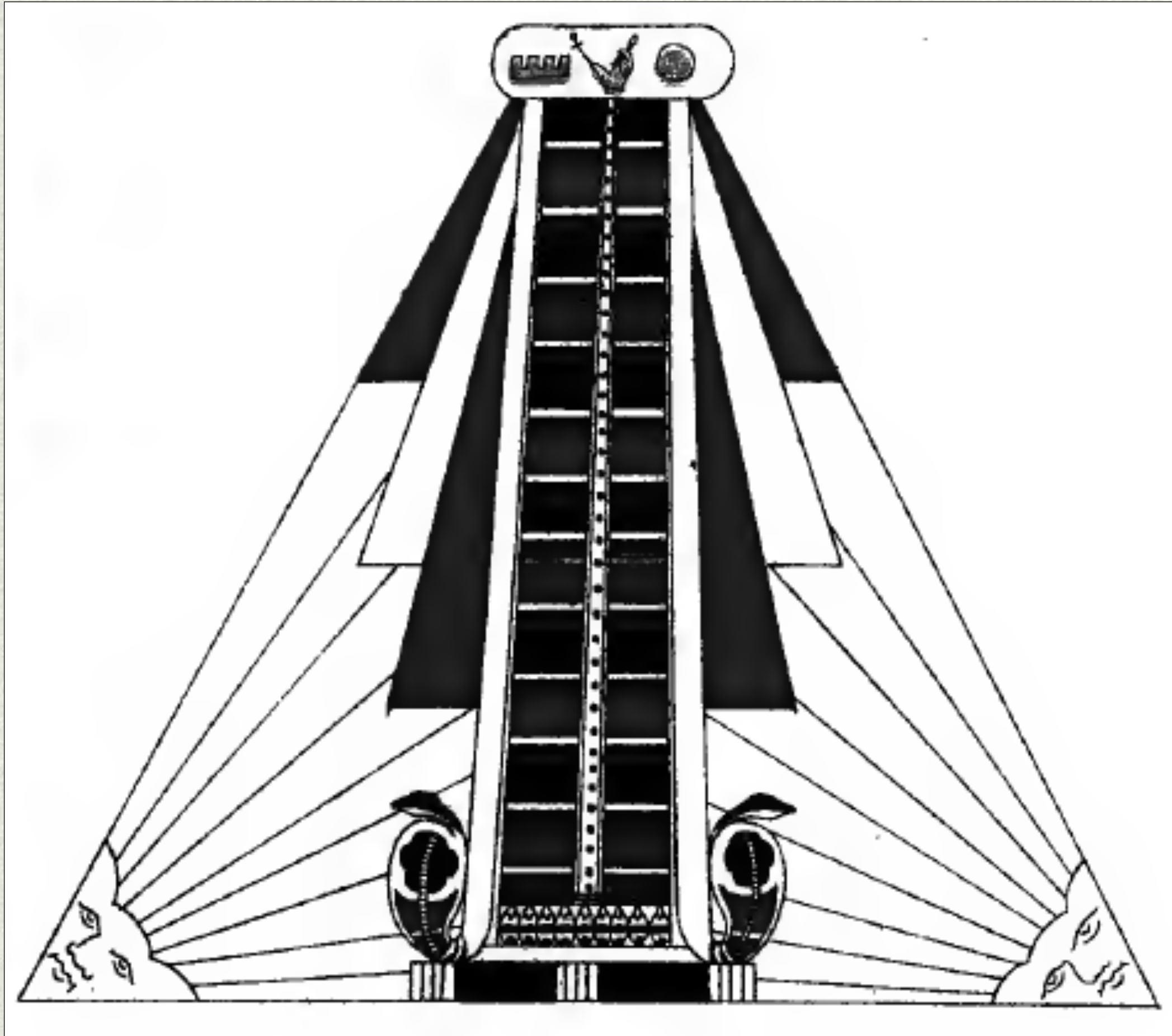


MASTER'S APRON

The plate represents Pharaoh Ousirei, King of Egypt, in Masonic communication with one of that order, whose head is covered with a mask, representing the

head of the Ibis. The King is invested with the triangular Masonic Apron, holding in his right hand the grand Masonic emblem and last grade obtained. The second

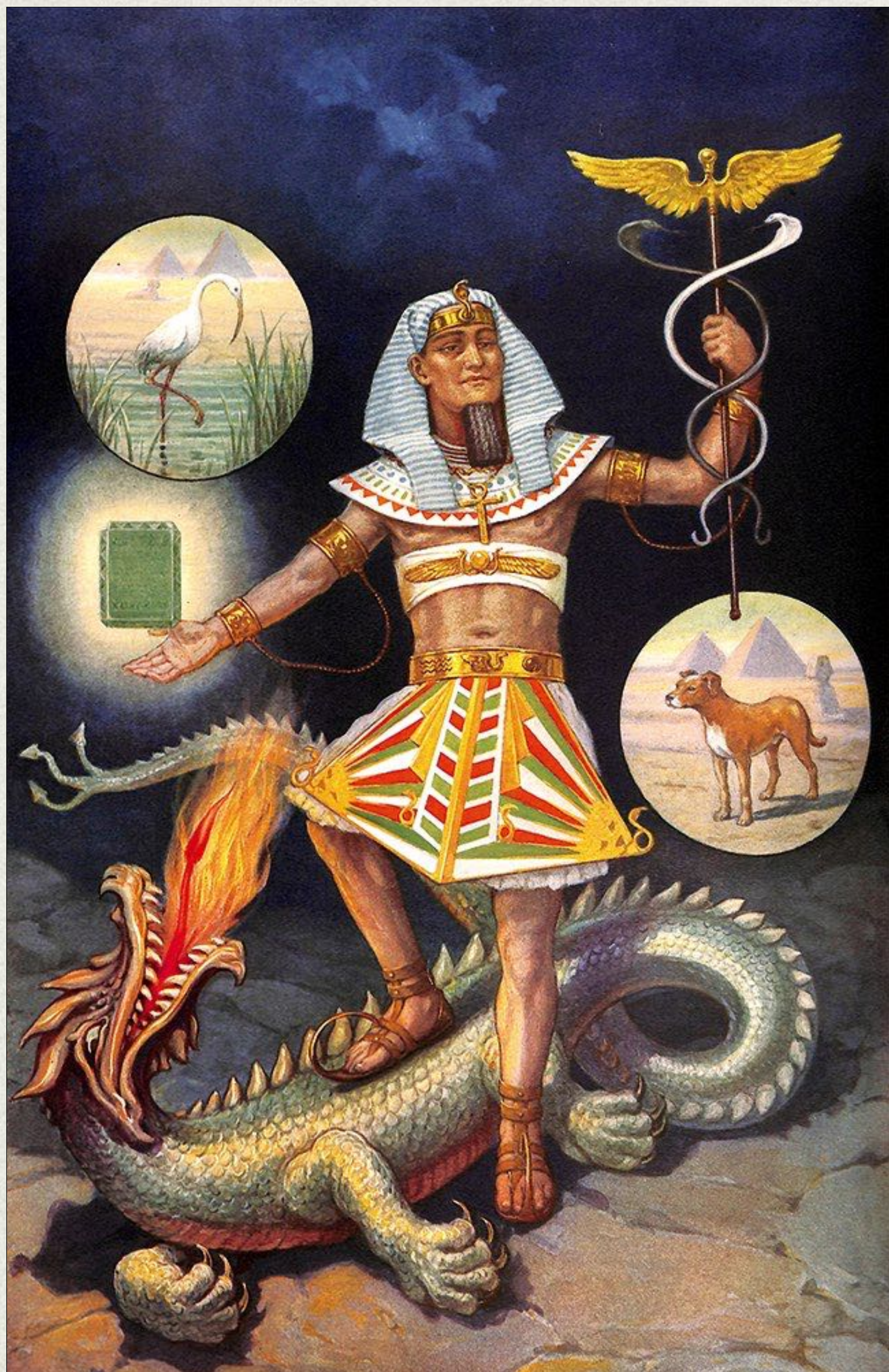
drawing represents the triangular Masonic Apron, united with the Apron of Serpents. -The Obelisk and Freemasonry, by John Weisse, p.37



Master' Apron illustrated in *Obelisk and Freemasonry*



New Kingdom Egypt. A detail of the king's apron covering his loin cloth and skirt



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The ibis, sacred to Isis, who is often represented with the head of that bird– sacred also to Mercury or Thoth, because that god assumed its form while escaping from Typhon– was held in the greatest veneration in Egypt. There were two kinds of ibises, Herodotus tells us, in that country: one quite black, the other black and white. The former is credited with fighting and exterminating the winged serpents which came every spring from Arabia and infested the country. The other was sacred to the moon, because the latter planet is white and brilliant on her external side, dark and black on that side which she never turns to the earth. Moreover, the ibis kills land serpents, and makes the most

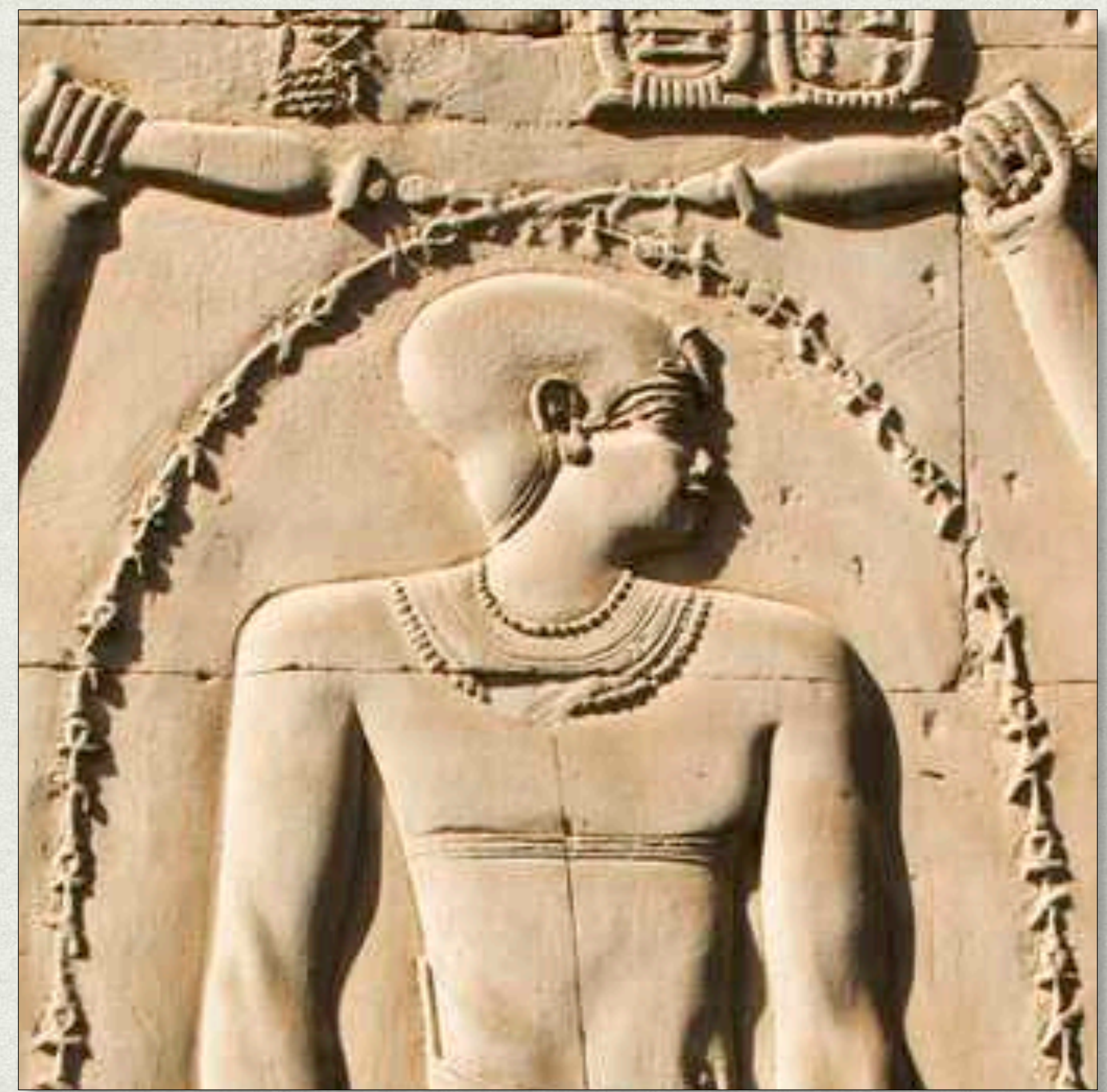
Thoth as an Ibis

terrible havoc amongst the eggs of the crocodile, and thus saves Egypt from having the Nile infested by those horrible Saurians. The bird is credited with doing so in the moonlight, and thus being helped by Isis, as the moon, her sidereal symbol. But the nearer esoteric truth underlying these popular myths is, that Hermes, as shown by *Abenephios* (*De cultu Egypt.*), watched under the form of that bird over the Egyptians, and taught them the occult arts and sciences. This means simply that the *ibis religiosa* had and has “magical” properties in common with many other birds, the albatross pre-eminently, and the mythical white swan, the swan of Eternity or Time, the Kalahansa. –SD1:362

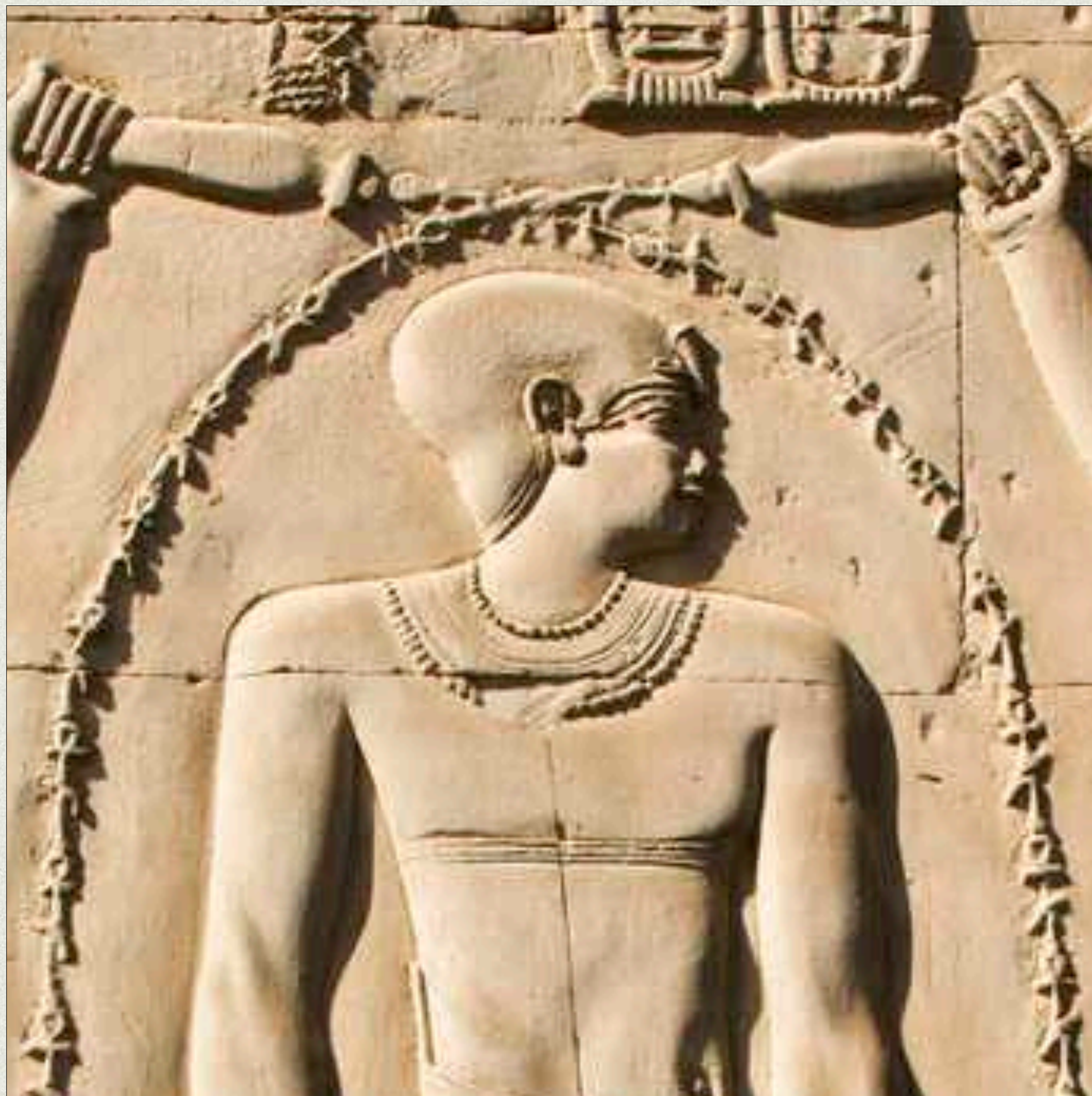


...Let him turn to some most suggestive Egyptian bas reliefs. One especially from the temple of Philae, represents a scene of initiation. Two Gods-Hierophants, one with the head of a hawk (the Sun), the other ibis-headed (Mercury, Thoth, the god of Wisdom and secret learning, the assessor of Osiris-Sun), are standing over the body of a

candidate just initiated. They are in the act of pouring on his head a double stream of water (the water of life and new birth), which stream is interlaced in the shape of a cross and full of small ankh symbols. This is allegorical of the awakening of the candidate (now an Initiate), when the beams of the morning sun (Osiris) strike the



crown of his head (his entranced body being placed on its wooden tau so as to receive the rays). Then appeared the Hierophants-Initiators, and the sacramental words were pronounced, ostensibly, to the Sun-Osiris, addressed in reality to the Spirit Sun within, enlightening the newly-born man. -SD2:558-9



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