

Ancient Egypt – Mummification

The Ancient Egyptians had a deep belief in the Afterlife — a world that existed after death, where the soul could live on forever. For the soul to survive, they believed it needed to return to the body, so it was essential that the body was carefully preserved. This process is called mummification.

Trained priests carried out the mummification process. The body was first washed with water from the River Nile and palm wine. The internal organs — including the lungs, liver, stomach, and intestines — were removed and stored in canopic jars, each protected by one of four gods called the Sons of Horus. The heart, however, was left inside the body because the Egyptians believed it was the centre of intelligence and emotion.

The brain was considered unimportant and was removed through the nostril using a hooked tool. The body was then packed and covered with natron salt for up to seventy days to dry it out completely.

Once dried, the body was wrapped in fine linen bandages, with protective amulets placed between the layers. The mummy was then placed in a series of coffins, sometimes decorated with gold and hieroglyphics. Wealthy Egyptians were buried in grand tombs filled with possessions for the Afterlife.

Questions

1. What did the Egyptians believe the soul needed to do in order to survive in the Afterlife?
2. Who carried out the mummification process?
3. What two liquids were used to wash the body?
4. Name three organs that were removed and stored in canopic jars.
5. Which four gods protected the canopic jars?
6. Why was the heart left inside the body?
7. How was the brain removed?
8. How long was the body packed in natron salt?
9. What was placed between the layers of bandages?
10. Why do you think wealthier Egyptians were buried with more possessions than poorer people?



Text C Quiz



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