

## TRUTH ABOUT AMEN-RA

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### Who is Amen-Ra?

The Afrikania “Mission”, a group that promotes traditional African spiritism, has proclaimed that Amen-Ra is the deity they worship and has held Amen-Ra up as an example of the kind of god modern Africans should address in their worship. Who is this Amen-Ra?

Amen was an ancient Egyptian deity, first a local deity worshipped in the area of Thebes. When the two kingdoms of Egypt united, early in Egyptian history, he grew in importance until he emerged as the chief deity. This did not take place until the 18<sup>th</sup> Dynasty (1570-1293 B.C.). Amen means “that which cannot be seen,” for as a local deity Amen had been the god of the wind. Later, as the chief deity, he was considered king of the gods. As was often the case in Egyptian religion, he was often combined with other gods, thus pleasing the worshippers of those deities. Especially effective was his combination with Ra, the sun god. Ra was believed to be the father of all living things and the physical father of all the Pharaohs.

In modern times some extremists like the Afrikania Mission and others have rejected the Christian God in favor of this ancient Egyptian deity, calling themselves “children of Amen-Ra.”

### Is Amen-Ra the Creator?

At times in Egyptian history, devotees of Amen-Ra claimed his was the creator, thus some dictionaries of Egyptian mythology claim Amen was self-created in the beginning. Yet other dictionaries follow older records claiming that Amen was one of eight gods made by Thoth. Thus the earlier Egyptians saw Amen as a created being, not the creator. Yet neither was Thoth the creator, for they believed he was created by Ra-Atum, the sun god, represented by a bull. One might claim they thought of Ra-Atum as the creator, for they said he created himself out of the primeval waters of Nun. (Other legends say it was from one of the four original frog gods and snake goddesses that he was created.) Yet if he created himself out of any snake or frog god or goddess or any waters, then those gods or waters existed before him and he did not create them. Then someone else created them and Ra-Atum is not the ultimate creator, either.

In fact, it is probably obvious by now that the Egyptians recognized that there must be a creator, but they were pretty confused about who he was, and there were many contradictory stories. It was common for priests of each god to claim that their god was the greatest and possessed special powers. For instance, devotees of Hapi, God of the Nile, also claimed that Hapi was creator of the Universe and all in it. Creative powers were claimed for a number of gods—Nun, Tem, Ra, Ptah, Atum, and others--but these claims, followed back far enough in history, fall far short of a claim to absolute deity.

Clearly, if one wants to look for the Creator, the Big Creator, the Ultimate Creator, the One beyond whom we can go back no further because He existed before all things, one must look elsewhere.

### **Is Amen-Ra good?**

The ancient Egyptians themselves seemed to be more concerned with their god's power, glory, and ability to intervene on their behalf than they were with ethical questions of goodness. Modern Afrocentrists have claimed that all the gods are good, usually as a simple affirmation with no supporting evidence offered.

One of the most telling stories about the real nature of this deity is the historical story concerning the coffin of a princess-priestess of Amen-Ra. The priestess who served Amen-Ra was buried in a deep vault at Luxor. Her mummy case was later exhumed, perhaps by grave robbers, and sold in 1890 to a wealthy Englishman, who drew lots with four friends for the honor of purchasing it. After he sent the coffin to his hotel, he was seen walking out toward the desert and never returned. The second man was accidentally shot and his arm had to be amputated. The third man arrived home to find that his entire life savings had disappeared in a bank crisis. The fourth man became severely ill. He lost his job and ended up selling matches on the street in order to survive.

When the coffin reached England, a London businessman purchased it. Soon three members of his family were injured in a road accident and his house was badly damaged by a fire.

He donated it to the British Museum. As the coffin was being unloaded at the museum, the truck suddenly went into reverse and trapped a bystander. As it was being taken up the stairs, one workman fell and broke his leg. The other two workmen died two days later for no particular reason. Both had been in excellent health.

When the mummy was placed in the Egyptian Room, the night watchmen frequently complained that they heard sobbing and hammering coming from the coffin. Other exhibits were thrown around during the night. One watchman died while on duty. A visitor flicked a dust cloth at the coffin, and his child died soon afterwards.

The mummy caused so much trouble at the museum that they had it removed to the basement. Shortly, one of the movers became seriously ill and the supervisor who had ordered the move was found dead on his desk.

The newspapers heard about the mummy and came to take pictures of it. When the pictures were developed, one was so horrible that the photographer shot himself.

The museum sold the mummy to a private collector. It brought many deaths and continual misfortune to his family. Finally he put it up in the attic to get rid of it.

A well-known occultist, Madame Helena Blavatsky, visited the home. As soon as she came in, she began shivering uncontrollably and said there was an evil someplace in the house of incredible intensity.

Finding the coffin, the owner asked her to exorcise the spirit, but she could not. She said “Evil remains evil forever,” and urged him to get rid of the thing.

However, so many people had died and met such calamity from exposure to the thing that no British museum anywhere would take the thing. Finally an American archaeologist bought it and arranged to send it to New York. In 1912 he escorted his new possession aboard an ocean liner bound for New York. On April 14, in the midst of unparalleled scenes of horror, the priestess of Amen-Ra took 1,500 passengers to their deaths in the icy waters of the Atlantic along with the Titanic.

Does Amen-Ra sound like a benevolent deity to you?

### **Is Amen-Ra all-powerful?**

Ra was ascribed creative powers by some, yet other legends show him as a feeble old man. In one story the goddess Isis contrived and succeeded in forcing him to whisper to her his secret name. Even the way she contrived shows Ra in a weaker position. He had grown old and drooled, the story goes. So Isis mixed his saliva with earth to make a snake. The snake bit Ra and he was in terrible agony. Only Isis could cure him. She refused to do so until he gave in and told her his secret name. Does Amen-Ra sound like an all-powerful god on whom you would like to call for help?

If the ancient Egyptians were confused about who the real God was, He did not leave Himself without witness. According to the Holy Scriptures, God sent His own chosen\* people to live amongst them for four hundred years as His witnesses. Then He chose Moses to witness before a hard-hearted Pharaoh the truth that He was far more powerful than any of the gods they worshipped. The first miracle Moses did was to have Aaron throw his rod down before Pharaoh (Genesis 7) When it became a snake, this must have brought to Pharaoh’s mind the legendary snakes of the primeval waters from whom the other gods of Egypt were believed to have come. It should have showed Pharaoh that He was dealing with a power older and more powerful than that of any of his gods. The magicians of Egypt, it is true, followed by also bringing forth snakes. Yet Aaron’s snake ate up all of theirs. This was a preview of events to follow. God spoke gently at first, but when Pharaoh refused to acknowledge Him, other, more devastating events followed. The plagues that followed showed God’s power over the main gods they worshipped—even over the Nile God, the primeval frog gods, and even over Ra, the sun god (Exodus 7-10). When Pharaoh finally agreed to let the Hebrews go, he soon changed his mind and chased after them. They were cornered at the Red Sea with no escape, but when Moses lifted up his rod over the waters in obedience to God’s command, God made a strong wind to blow so that a path appeared in the sea and they escaped. When they were safe across the water, God stopped the wind so that the sea returned and drowned the Egyptians who were seeking to kill them (Exodus 12). But why could the Egyptians not

call on Amen, the ancient god of the wind? Perhaps they did, but they were facing the God who created the earth's atmosphere and who designed and controls the wind He made. When God the Creator blew, Amen could not stand. God the Creator had clearly and forcefully shown that even if Amen ruled some lesser gods, He the Creator ruled over all, King of Kings and Lord of Lords.

### **Is Amen-Ra worthy of our worship and devotion?**

The modern Afrikania movement calls on all sons and daughters of Africa to “return” to the worship of Amen-Ra. In fact, of course, only a tiny tiny percentage of Africans ever worshipped Amen-Ra, so such a call to return must be based on something other than historical reality. To many, Amen-Ra is seen as a unifying force that can bring all Africans together. But is this god worthy of the position that so many want to give him in our modern world?

It has been established that Amen-Ra is not the God who created us. He is not all-powerful, and he is not a benevolent deity. But there is another reason why, brothers and sisters of Africa, we must not succumb to worship Amen-Ra.

Any deity, any spirit, any person other than our Creator who seeks or accepts worship is not beneficent. That deity is not seeking the good of humanity. The Bible makes this very clear.

### **Is there an alternative to Amen-Ra?**

Is there another god who is good, who seeks good for us? Is there another god who has not just some magical powers, but whose power is limitless? Is there a god who really created us and all that is? Yes, brothers and sisters of Africa, yes. There is a God who really is the one and only unique Creator. We have forgotten Him and offended Him by replacing Him with many idols, the works of our own imaginations. Listen to what the Holy Scriptures say:

*“For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who suppress the truth in unrighteousness, because what may be known of God is manifest in them, for God has shown it to them. For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even His eternal power and Godhead, so that they are without excuse, because, although they knew God, they did not glorify Him as God, nor were thankful, but became futile in their thoughts, and their foolish hearts were darkened. Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools, and changed the glory of the incorruptible God into an image made like corruptible man—and birds and for-footed animals and creeping things. ...who exchanged the truth of God for the lie, and worshiped and served the creature rather than the Creator, who is blessed forever...” (Romans 1:18-25, in the Holy Bible)*

These words, of course, are addressed not only to the people of Africa, but to all men everywhere who know, as all we the children of Africa do, that there is one eternal, all-powerful God who created all things. The God, the Creator who really made us and who really created all things is offended that we have chosen to give glory not to Him, but to idols made in the shapes of animals and people. The problem of Africa (as well as other continents, of course) is that we have worshiped and served the creature more than the Creator. Because of that God holds us guilty, for we have failed to honor Him who alone is worthy of our worship.

If Amen-Ra exists in an objective sense, then he is a created being. We should not worship Amen-Ra, the creature. Rather we should worship and give glory to the One who created all things.

Who is this Creator? The Holy Scriptures again give us light:

*“In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things were made by Him, and without Him nothing was made that was made....And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth...grace and truth came through Jesus Christ.” (John 1:1-3,14,17 in the Holy Bible)*

Jesus Christ is the Creator who is worthy of our worship, our devotion, our obedience, our love, our lives.

It is a mistake for the sons and daughters of Africa to turn to idols in order to find their identity, their dignity, their purpose. The God who created us all created us with dignity and purpose, being made in His image. The God who created us is the One who also can tell us who we are and who we can become. The God who created us is Jesus Christ. He is not the white man’s God. He is our God. He was known in Africa before He was known in Europe, and we will not turn away from Him just because some white men have also accepted Him. Dear brothers and sisters, God is not an image made of clay. God does not live in a shrine. God is not Amen-Ra or any other image. We can find our true identity as Africans only as we worship our Creator, the One who likes Africans because He made Africans—the One who loves Blacks because He made Blacks. I call on the Afrikania movement to turn back to this God and find in Him real identity, real dignity, real help, and a real focus for the African family.

\* The Hebrew people were chosen for three specific purposes—to model faith in the One True God before a world sinking ever deeper into idolizing the creatures God made, to give God’s Word the Holy Scriptures to the world, and to give birth to the Savior God had promised would come as the Savior of all men. Their special status had to do with their God-assigned roles in the world, and never denoted God’s disinterest in others. In fact, when God called Abraham, He said, “in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed” (Genesis 12:3).

### **Does the Christian give homage to Amen-Ra when he uses the phrase “Amen” to finish his prayers?**

The phrase Amen used by Christians in prayer or in agreement to something spoken by a leader does not come from the Egyptian word Amen and has quite a different meaning.

Before explaining the differences, let's take another example of a word that looks the same but has quite a different meaning. Those who have studied both English and French are probably familiar with words that are called “false friends.” They look so much alike that it is easy to assume that one knows the meaning in the other language, yet they are very different and can easily lead to problems in communication if this is not understood. An excellent example is the English word “demand” compared with the French word “demander.” French speakers might use the English word demand in inappropriate settings, because in French demander just means to ask or request. The English word demand has a forceful insistence about it that is quite contrary to the spirit of the French.

Amen might be called a false friend. Because it looks like the word Amen-Ra, Afrikanists have claimed that even Christians give homage to the god Amen-Ra in their prayers. This is not so. The words look alike in English, but they are not the same word or the same meaning.

As we have seen, Amen was a local god known as god of the wind. The name means “that which is unseen.” In contrast, the English word Amen used in Christian prayers is transliterated from the Hebrew and emphasizes the faithfulness and dependability of God the Creator. It is used sometimes as a title of Jesus Christ denoting His faithfulness, as in Revelation 3:14: “These things says the Amen, the faithful and true witness...” It is used by Jesus to emphasize the absolute dependability of His words. In this case the Hebrew word “Amen” is translated “verily.” The best known example is John 3:3: “Verily, verily I say unto you, you must be born again.” But the most common usage of the word is as a response or conclusion to something stated. Since the word has come from the faithful, dependable God who never fails or changes, Christians often say “Amen” to show agreement with a prayer or utterance. In this sense Amen means “So let it be.” The Hebrew word and the use of the term Amen amongst Jews and Christians is far removed from the meaning of the Egyptian god Amen and implies no allegiance to him. To the contrary, “Amen” implies that the hearer is acknowledging the faithfulness of the One Supreme Creator God who speaks and has the authority and the character to bring His Word to pass.