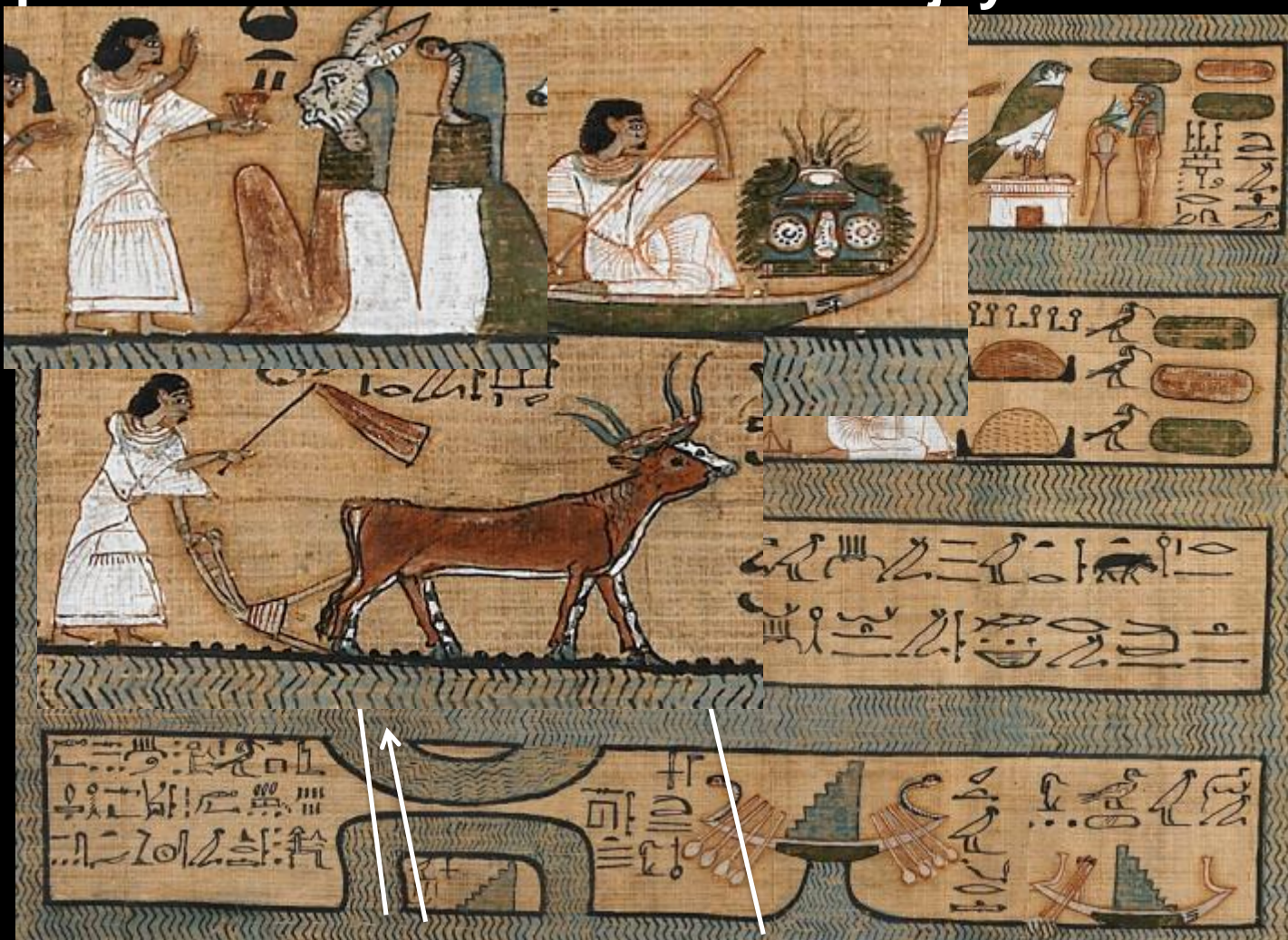


# Egyptian Mummies



**Ancient Egyptians believed that their body needed to be preserved in order for them to enjoy the afterlife.**



**An pilgrim gets the food for the afterlife across the beautiful 'Lake of Offerings'**



c3400 BC



The first burials in the **hot desert sands** led to **natural mummification** of the whole body.

c3000 BC



Later, placing the body in a **coffin** meant that only the skeleton survived.



c2600 BC



So the Egyptians developed a way to **artificially mummify** the body before putting it in the coffin.



The desert **sand** was **hot** and **dry**.

Bodies placed in the hot sand **dehydrated** because the hot sand absorbed the water from the body.



Dehydration (drying out) **preserved** the whole body.

**The result is a natural sand-dried mummy.**



preserved skin

burial in sand

grave goods

**But bodies buried in the desert sands were at risk  
from wild animals.**



**If animals attacked the bodies they would not be preserved and would  
not reach the afterlife.**

They decided to place the body in a coffin.

*Will this work?*

No.

This is a **skeleton** (not a mummy).

The soft parts of the body have **rotted** away.

*Why did the body rot?*

The hot dry sand could not reach the body to dry it out...

...so the soft parts rotted away.



The ancient Egyptians realised they needed to mummify the dead body artificially before they placed it in the coffin.



They **dehydrated** the body and the internal organs by covering them in salt.



Then they wrapped the body in **linen bandages**.



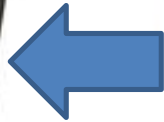
**A mummy mask was placed over the face of the wrapped body and then the body was put inside one or more wooden coffins.**



This is the bandaged mummy of a priest called Hornedjitef.

The mummy was then placed in an inner coffin.

The mummy mask was placed over the wrapped face.



The lid of the inner coffin of Hornedjitef was closed.

Then the inner coffin was placed in the outer coffin.

This process was very expensive so over 99% of the population were buried in the sand to become natural sand dried mummies

# The coffin was put into a tomb.

Other objects were placed alongside that would be useful to the person in the afterlife.



Food



Servants



Household  
goods



A Book of the Dead

# What was the process?

The body was taken to a place called the Beautiful House. It wasn't as beautiful as the name suggests!

The body was cleansed with palm wine and rinsed with water from the River Nile.

Sometimes they would use a slatted bed on a slant. This would let fluids drain off and out of the body, and allow them to wrap the strips of linen around the body.



# Organs

A cut was made on the left side of the body and the organs removed to stop the body decomposing.

The liver, lungs, intestines and stomach were washed, dried in **natron** and either wrapped in cloth to place in the body later or stored in **canopic jars**.

The heart, responsible for intelligence and emotion, was left in the body as it was needed in the afterlife.

**Natron** is a natural salt.

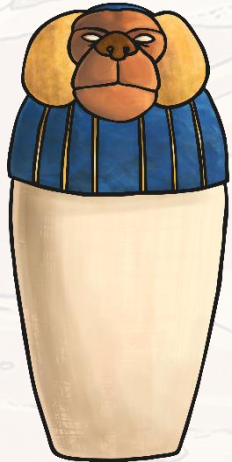


# Canopic Jars

The **canopic jars** had four different heads representing the four sons of Horus.

## Hapi

Baboon headed  
God. Looked after  
the lungs.



## Imsety

Huma headed  
God. Looked  
after the liver.



## Duamutee

Jackal headed  
God. Looked  
after the stomach.



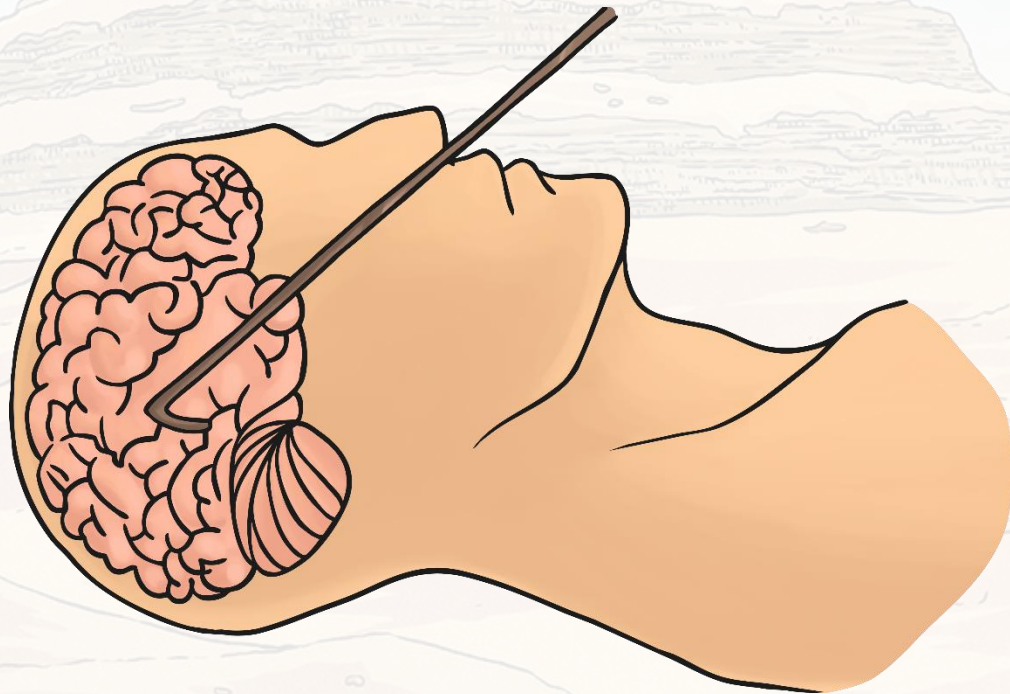
## Qebehsenuef

Falcon headed God.  
Looked after  
the intestines.



# The Brain

The brain wasn't thought to be important! A long hook was pushed up through the nose to smash the brain to pieces, then either pull it out or lift the body so the liquefied brain would drain out through the nose. This prevented them having to damage the head or the skull.

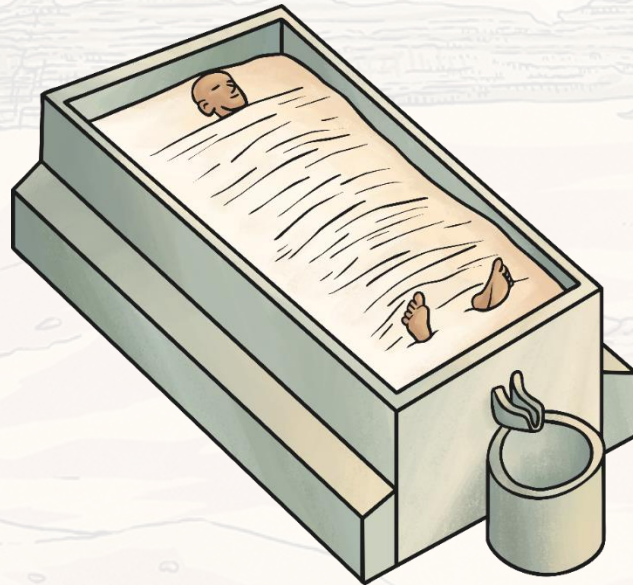


# Natron

75% of the body is water.

Wet things rot very quickly so the body was dried inside and out with natron.

Natron absorbed the moisture but it could take 40-50 days.





# Further Preservation

Unless they were put in canopic jars, the dried organs would be replaced, or the body filled with sawdust, rags or leaves so it kept its shape.

In order to preserve the skin it was coated in a resin made from plants.

The body was now wrapped in strips of linen, hundreds of metres of it, up to twenty layers thick. This was an elaborate process.



# Wrapping

The head and neck would be wrapped first, then the fingers and toes wrapped individually.

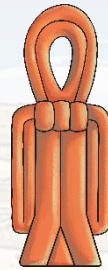
The arms and legs were wrapped separately.

Between the layers of linen they would place amulets, which would protect the dead person in the afterlife.

As well as amulets, inscribed pieces of papyrus were placed between the layers. Words from the book of the dead were placed between the hands.



# Amulets



The **isis knot** or **tyet** would be placed at the neck to protect the body.



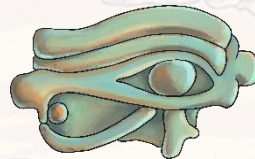
The **heart** amulet was placed over the heart to protect it.



The **scarab** was placed over the upper abdomen. It was a dung beetle which represented rebirth and the rising and setting of the sun.



The **Udjat** or **Eye of Horus** was placed on the abdomen, over the cut to remove the organs. It was a symbol of good health that was shaped like the eye of the falcon God Horus.



# The Mask of Anubis

While the wrapping took place, a priest wearing a mask of Anubis would read out spells to ward off evil spirits and help the journey to the afterlife. Anubis was the jackal headed God of the dead.



# Mummia

Mummia, a tar like paste, was used to 'glue' the wraps of linen together. This is where the term 'mummy' came from.

A final piece of linen, the shroud, was placed over the body.

