

Religion. — Noah's descendants had brought with them to the banks of the Nile, their belief in one God; but soon in Egypt and elsewhere this belief became perverted. Egyptian priests, nevertheless, always maintained the dogma of the unity of God combined, however, with many errors.

The belief of the people was very crude. The Egyptians thought that the gods became incarnate in the bodies of sacred animals, the most famous being the ox, Apis, which was magnificently served in its own temple by its own priests. These people adored even vegetables, the onion and the garden-wart. Everything was God except God Himself.

The Egyptians believed in a future life, a land of peace, in which bodies were to be reunited to souls, and there with them receive the same reward. From this belief sprang the general endeavor to retain their form. Such care was taken that even to-day, some of these corpses or mummies are found perfectly preserved under the linen bands in which they were wrapped five or six thousand years ago.

Civilization. — No other country can boast of a civilization of such ancient standing as that of Egypt. This civilization is especially manifest in the architecture of its temples, pyramids and obelisks.

QUESTIONS. — 1. What historical facts form the subject matter of Ancient History? — 2. What races does Ancient History especially mention? — 3. Where is Egypt situated? How is this country naturally divided? — 4. Which was the most famous dynasty of the Old Empire and what monuments did it leave? — 5. About what period was the Middle Empire formed? What was the seat of the Middle Empire? Which is the best known dynasty? — 6. About what century did the invasion of the Shepherd Kings take place? What do you know of their rule? — 7. What Empire in Egypt was remarkable for its great conquests? Relate the downfall of Egypt. — 8. What nations first conquered Egypt? — 9. Did Egypt ever recover its independence? — 10. Relate the story of the reign of Necho II. — 11. Give a sketch of the life of king Amasis — 12. What became of Egypt after the death of Amasis?
