

LIFESTYLES OF THE RICH AND EGYPTIAN

THE CAST

SETTING THE SCENE – THE EARLIEST OF EGYPTIAN TIMES

Richie Talksalot: Host – Introduces audience to different locations.

Chorus 1 – Sets up each scene and gives information about geography and time frame. Provides sound effects.

Chorus 2 – Sets up each scene and gives information about geography and time frame. Provides sound effects.

PART 1 – THE GODS

Hapi - the Egyptian flood god, father of the Gods, nurturing

Ra – the Egyptian sun god

Horus - Egyptian sky god, arrogant

Osiris - Egyptian god of the afterlife, defensive

Follower 1

Follower 2

PART 2 – THE LEADERS

King Narmer – first Egyptian pharaoh, cranky old man

Pharaoh Thutmose III – Hatshepsut's stepson

Ramses the Great – a major Pharaoh, humble

Amenhotep IV – Pharaoh who believed in just one god and changed religion of entire nation

Nefertiti – Amenhotep IV's wife

PART 3 – THE VALLEY OF THE QUEENS

Pharaoh Hatshepsut – first and longest ruling woman pharaoh, kind and generous

Ramses the Great – a major Pharaoh, humble

Nefertari -Meritmut – Ramses the Great's first wife

Follower 1

SETTING THE SCENE – THE EARLIEST OF TIMES ALONG THE NILE

Host: Hello and thank you for joining us on *Lifestyles of the Rich and Ancient*. We've got a special treat for our viewers today. We're touring the depths of Egyptian tombs and temples to uncover the lifestyles of some of the oldest and wealthiest members of Egyptian society. From big-time rulers and their extravagant wives to the very gods that created this impressive part of the Fertile Crescent, you'll get the scoop on what made them tick, how they accumulated, or lost, all their wealth and



prestige, and where they are now! So stay tuned to the *Lifestyles of the Rich and Ancient!*

Chorus 1:

*The arid land begs for a drink.
Those crossing sand can hardly speak.
Is that a mirage winking across the heat?*

*Darkened soil, water swells
Up the bank vegetation wells
A tale of life and death, it tells*

Chorus 2:

*What is this river none could defile?
It's the arrival of a God, the mighty Nile.
Where civilization will soon pile.*

*Surely, Gods and Pharaohs keep
A holy place to live and sleep
Among fields, and boats, and duties deep.*

Chorus 1:

*With strength of men they command
And trade robust or sometimes banned
They lead their people and their land.
And are remembered by history and fans.*

Chorus 2:

*Myths and stories speak some truth,
About those who create and rule all above men.
Glorious gods with meaning and fear
They influenced history, far and near.*

PART 1 – THE GODS

Host: Thank you for joining us today! We're starting this tour in the temples of the Gods. These deities controlled the world around their followers, the Egyptians. The first of these was Horus, the Sky God. Hieroglyphs depict him as the oldest God to be worshipped nationwide. We're in Ednu at his primary temple along the western shores of the Nile.

Horus: I loved the adoration! The festivals! The rulers whom I allowed to claim me as their divine representative! It makes sense that I would be the first deity of this place. The sky is expansive since Egypt is a land of sand and water. Not many trees here!

Host: Not only was he the first God of the Egyptians, but also the longest held God, with a lasting



legacy that flowed into the times when Romans ruled it.

Horus: The temple in Ednu is my favorite place, and still stands today. It wasn't built until later, but I did watch as the Hyksos kings usher in numerous innovations such as crop rotations, horses, chariots, composite bows, ceramics, and bronze works early in Egyptian history. Unfortunately, their stagnant civilization made room for more prominent leaders to take over.

Host: We'll be visiting those leaders' tombs later today. Horus definitely held an important place in Egyptian history and religion. Next, we'll take a look at Ra and his influences within this region. Ra, the god of the sun, day, and noontime. Over the 25th and 24th centuries BC, his roles and the mythology surrounding his place in the hierarchy of deities shifted.

Follower 1: All hail Ra, King of the Gods!

Host: This particular follower looks to be later in Ra's influential period, here in Ra-Amon's Temple at Karnak. Before this, Ra had dominated Heliopolis Egypt.

Ra: I took great pride in my amazing good looks, with the head of a falcon or a ram depending on the time of night or day. I also enjoyed my travel in the *Mandjet* and *Mesektet*, the solar boats of Millions of Years that took me through the sky and then the underworld before the day started again.

Host: These journeys mapped the day and the sun for the Egyptians, and lead to the creation of seasons and calendars, one of which had 12 months just like the one we use today.

Ra: Even more importantly, I gained even more wealth when a new temple was built in Thebes and was dubbed Amun-Ra, finally giving me the credit for creating everything.

Host: Another of the major Gods of Egypt who rolled in the adoration and rich offerings of the ancient Egyptians was Osiris the God of the afterlife.

Osiris: Yeah, what of it?

Host: He can't hear us. Anyways, his green skin and the crossing of the crook and flail across his chest symbolized kingship and a full harvest. He also wore a distinctive crown with two large ostrich feathers in many depictions.

Osiris: You don't like my crown? It mirrors the crown of Pharaohs, but is bigger and more elaborate.

Host: Wait, what?

Osiris: I'm not just about death, you know. I became wealthy with the Egyptians giving me gifts in exchange for help with transitions, resurrection of dead ones, and regeneration of life, primarily of their crops.

Host: (*ignoring Osiris*) His main temple was in Abydos in upper Egypt, where solemn and mournful ceremonies were held in his honor.

Osiris: Oh sure, just keep on talking as though I'm not here. (Whisks away.)

Host: We've saved the best for last! Hapi the god of flooding, was perhaps the most revered in the



Nile region.

Chorus 2: Splash! Swoosh! Roar!

Follower 2: Look, look! The Nile is flooding! Hapi has arrived!

Host: His arrival each season signified the Nile flooding, depositing silt along its coasts and creating the rich soil for the Egyptians to grow their grains. This wealth of food created a strong, highly populated civilization, and they were able to trade for metals and wood in other parts of the Fertile Crescent. They also used the waters of the Nile to sail up and down to trade and conquer other areas in order to expand their nation.

Hapi: My blue skin reflects the waters, and my bulging belly and chest symbolize swollen, abundant harvest. Just call me Father of the Gods. Everyone did.

Host: He had no need for a temple since the waters of the Nile themselves became his altar. Some say there was more treasure *in* the Nile than growing from its waters. While the Gods reigned supreme, many leaders lead luxurious lives basking in their connection to them. We'll dip into their lifestyles when we return from this break.

PART 2 – LEADERS

Chorus 2:

Mighty men, god reps on earth.

Swaying the rise and fall of wealth and belief.

Though their leadership time was brief.

Host: Aaaannndddd we're back, this time stepping into the simple home of the first King of Egypt. King Narmer was instrumental in uniting the upper and lower parts of Egypt in 31 BC.

King Narmer: Those fools! Just couldn't figure out how to get along. I finally just had to sweep down the Nile and knock some heads together.

Host: Some scholars think that had he not done this, Egypt would have been at war for centuries like many other countries in Africa are today.

King Narmer: I was not going to let that happen.

Host: *(to himself)* How are they hearing me?

King Narmer: I don't know, but I have to tell you one thing more. It took centuries for Egypt to get their stuff together after I moved on to the afterlife. And then a woman did it!

Host: Aw, he's speaking of Hatshepsut. We'll get to her when our tour takes us to the Valley of the Queens. In the meantime, know that her stepson Pharaoh Thutmose III tried to erase her from history, but seemed eager to use the riches she created to the benefit of the Egyptian people.



Hatshepsut: My stepson was a fiery thing, always eager to please and to take over as Pharaoh.

Pharaoh Thutmose III: Ruling the people is no place for a woman, or so we all thought back then. I didn't mind women of our society owning land or bartering for their household, but ruling a nation? Bah!

Host: Boy, he'd be pretty shocked at the way things are run here in the United States now. Despite his ungraciousness thanks to his stepmom, he did expand Egypt and funded major advances in Egyptian sports, beer brewing, and medicine.

Pharaoh Thutmose III: My biggest achievement was the bath houses! We built many to encourage health and hygiene. This also became important in relation to surgery and dentistry. We came up with the first tooth brushes and pastes, and even made breath mints out of herbs and honey.

Host: Unfortunately, all that learning and creating also used a lot of resources, and under Thutmose's rule, the Egyptian nation became the poorest in its ancient history. Thankfully, the next ruler of Egypt did things a bit differently. His legendary name was Ramses the Great.

Ramses the Great: You're too kind.

Host: Historical evidence reveals that many nations in the Fertile Crescent feared the 100,000 man army created by Ramses. This was with good reason because he used his army to both protect his people and attack other nations. He acquired great wealth and slave labor on a massive scale!

Ramses the Great: Nations trembled at the sight of us since most of our neighbors had little more than one thousand fighting men. Despite what we accomplished, I'm not an aggressive guy. I did love to create plans for extravagant temples and other building projects.

Host: Dozens of temples, monuments, and tombs in fact. In addition to land enemies, Ramses used cedar traded from the middle eastern areas to build a fleet of ships to not only defend their sea trade from pirates, but actively destroy them.

Ramses the Great: We needed to protect our assets.

Host: He also needed to feed his eight wives and nearly 100 children. He reigned from 1279-1213 B.C.E. and lived to be over 95 years old. Over a century after Ramses the Great died of old age or heart failure, another major Pharaoh came to power in 1353 B.C.E.

Amenhotep IV: ah, yes, me!

Host: Pharaoh Amenhotep the...

Amenhotep: (clears throat) My name is Akhenaten!

Host: As I was saying, Pharaoh Amenhotep the Fourth believed in just one god, Aten. He changed his name to Akhenaten, meaning "living spirit of Aten."

Amenhotep: There are no other Gods but Aten. He created and rules all of man. I am his most loyal follower, and all of Egypt shall bow to him.



Host: By focusing on his god alone, Amenhotep and his wife Nefertiti created a strong priesthood and greatly expanded the strength of the government.

Amenhotep: My name is Akhenaten now. Please don't call me anything but that.

Nefertiti: My husband was always such a pious man! His faith and the power Aten gave him offered the people hope for a better future than they'd had when we became their leaders.

Host: Pharaoh *Akhenaten* lived a long life and nearly tripled the wealth of his people through the faith he led them to.

Chorus 1: Now for some Egyptian Trivia! Which ancient Egyptian God didn't have a physically built temple? Was it A: Hapi, B. Ra, C. Horus, or D. Osiris. The answer when we come back!

PART 3 – VALLEY OF THE QUEENS

Chorus 2: So which ancient Egyptian God didn't have a physically built temple? It was A: Hapi the God of flooding. Hapi's temple was the waters of the Nile River, where the annual flooding helped created fertile land for agriculture.

Host: Just like in other ancient civilizations, men were considered the rulers of a nation. However, in Egypt some women did play major roles that shaped Egypt in unique ways. These women have all been buried in the Valley of the Queens, so we're heading there today.

Chorus 1:

The Valley of the Queens, truly

A unique burial ground referred to as "The Place of Beauty."

Scholars don't know whether "beauty"

Refers to the tribute altars or the regal cuties.

Host: Perhaps the most famous of all the women leaders in Egypt was Pharaoh Hatshepsut. She was the first ever female Pharaoh, and also ruled the longest of any woman for a total of 20 years.

Pharaoh Thutmose III: Despite the fact that I thought no woman should rule, I have to admit that she was a fair-minded leader and she had an eye for design. She just shouldn't have been a Pharaoh.

Hatshepsut: My stepson watched all that I did. I like to think he learned much from my time ruling.

Host: Many modern educators consider Hatshepsut to be the most successful of all Egypt's Pharaohs. She gave her people the stability that it needed after a stagnant century of unrest.

Hatshepsut: We needed Egypt to grow! We needed to become a dominate world power! Trade was an instrument of power. We'd been closed off from the rest of the world for too long.

Host: Pharaoh Hatshepsut expanded Egypt's borders, and sent ambassadors to other countries to make alliances and trade deals. This prospered Egypt in a way it never had before.



Follower 1: Every Egyptian felt the heavying of their purses! Pharaoh Hatshepsut cared about us all and it showed in how she ran the nation.

Host: Only one other Egyptian Queen rivaled Hatshepsut. Nefertari Meritmut, the first and most prominent royal wife of Ramses the Great, and a great scholar of the day.

Ramses the Great: My wondrous first wife! She is so smart, always doing something for our people.

Nefertari Meritmut: Hello my Pharaoh! Yes, I very much enjoyed reading and writing in hieroglyphs. Thank the gods Egyptians invented a thick paper made from the papyrus plant. I didn't always use black ink typical of other places, but also the brilliant color ink we Egyptians were know for.

Host: These were rare skills of that time period, and Meritmut wrote other royals of the era to accomplish relationships that she used to increase her husband's diplomatic acclaim.

Ramses the Great: I couldn't do it without her. In addition to her tomb in the Valley of the Queens, I also built my beloved a temple in Abu Simbel next to my own.

Host: Her name suited her well. Nefertari roughly means "beautiful companion" and Meritmut means "beloved of Mut." Just FYI, Mut was not a dog, but a prominent Goddess of ancient Egypt known as the mother of all. Well, that's all we have for you today on *The Lifestyles of the Rich and Ancient!*

