

DJED

**Stability and
Transformation**

DJED: STABILITY AND TRANSFORMATION

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The Djed is the symbolic backbone of Ausir (Kemetic Netjer of the afterlife, dead and the underworld). It represents stability. Other representations are as follows:

1. Ausir's Backbone
2. Tamarisk Tree (enclosed Ausir's body)
3. Four Pillars Rising
4. Fertility Pole

The djed hieroglyph was a pillar-like symbol that represented stability. It was also sometimes used to represent Osiris himself, often combined "with a pair of eyes between the crossbars and holding the crook and flail." The djed hieroglyph is often found together with the tyet (also known as Isis knot) hieroglyph, which is translated as life or welfare. The djed and the tiet used together may depict the duality of life. The tyet hieroglyph may have become associated with Isis because of its frequent pairing with the djed. - Wikipedia

Ptah, the national god known best as the patron deity of Memphis is sometimes described as "the noble Djed". However, the djed pillar was quickly associated with the god Sokar, and Sokar's association with Osiris, god of the dead, eventually led to the Djed being symbolic of that great god. - Jimmy Dunn

Ptah was the Netjer of Men-nefer in Lower Kemet. He was known as "Lord of Truth", "Noble Djed", "First of the gods" and "He who set all the gods in their places and gave all things the breath of life". With Sekhmet and Nefertem, he made up the triad of Men-nefer.

However, the djed pillar popularly associated with Ausar (Osiris) had its roots in the Memphis god of creation for Ptah was termed the 'Noble djed'. Not only was he a symbol of stability, Ptah was also the symbol of fertility as the sacred Apis bull of Memphis. - Cassandra Birrell

Ptah was a creator deity who made the world with his heart and his tongue. As Ptah "South of His Wall" he was the chief god of the Egyptian capital, Memphis. He was usually shown as a bearded man wearing an artisan's skull-cap and an enveloping cloak or shroud. As "he who is beautiful of face," Ptah had skin of celestial blue. His scepter combined the djed symbol of stability with the was symbol of dominion and the ankh symbol of life. He bestowed these three qualities on Egyptian kings, who were often crowned in his temple at Memphis. - Geraldine Pinch

Djedu was the pharaonic name of Per-Asar (House of Ausir, named Busiris by the Greeks), a chief town in the Central Delta region of Lower Kemet. It's where the reconstruction of the body of Ausir occurred (Per-Asar-Neb-Djedu means "The House of Ausir - the Lord of Djedu).

Among the centers of worship for Ausar were the temples at Abju, 8th Nome, Upper Egypt; Saqqara, 1st Nome, Lower Egypt; HutHeryib/Athribis, 1st Nome, Lower Egypt; Djedu, 9th Nome, Lower Egypt; Taposiris Magna, west of Alexandria, Lower Egypt; Djan'net Tanis, 19th Nome, Lower Egypt; Bigeh, 1st Nome, Upper Egypt; Waset, 4th Nome, Upper Egypt; and at Karnak there were five chapels built for Ausar. - Asar Sa Ra Imhotep

The Djed was largely associated with Memphis creator god Ptah in the Old Kingdom. In fact, he was given the epithet, "The Noble Djed", because of this. However, the association was passed on to Osiris especially in his aspect as Benebdjed. In the story of Osiris and Isis, the pillar is Osiris' backbone (that was thrown by Set in his fit rage of jealousy) that Isis found buried in the city of Djedu. This prompted the renaming of the city into Pr-Asir or "the House of Osiris" later translated to Busiris by the Greeks. - Egyptian Gods

Banebdjedet was a Kemetic Netjer of Mendes. Depicted as a ram, his name means "the ba of the lord of the djed". Ba means spirit. He was sometimes depicted with four rams' heads, each corresponding to one of the ba's of the sun (Ausir, Geb, Shu, Ra-Atum).

This symbol was Osirian in nature and was primarily associated with themes of rebirth and regeneration. According to legend, Osiris, the king of the ancient Egyptian pantheon, was murdered by his brother, Seth, the god of chaos. After his passing, his consort, Isis, and son, Horus, revived the god so that he could serve as the chief deity of the netherworld. The djed-pillar was designed as a symbol of Osiris and later came to be understood as a representation of his backbone. In fact, in several Book of the Dead spells, representations of the symbol are used to help reinstate the vertebrae of the deceased and consequently revive them for his or her rebirth into the afterlife. When worn as an amulet, the symbol helped to invoke the regenerative powers of Osiris. The djed-pillar also served as a common hieroglyphic symbol, representing the ancient Egyptian word for "stability." - Kierra Foley

The Djed or Tet symbol is used in association with Ausar. Djed is usually to mean "stability" or "steadfastness." The Djed pillar is the earliest known symbol associated with Ausar and may actually be predynastic. In the Book of the Coming Forth by Day, often called the Egyptian Book of the Dead, it is said that the Djed pillar is the vertebrae of Ausar. Some believe that the pillar is actually a pole in which grain was tied. It is often seen used in decorative friezes, together with the Ankh and Was sceptre hieroglyphs, but just as frequently with the "Tyet" knot, symbol of Auset. This may be the reason that Ausar is often spelled Wasiri because his early depictions included the Was sceptre. - Asar Sa Ra Imhotep

In amulets used for the protection, the djed is often seen in conjunction with other symbols like the ankh, was and tjet. It may also be seen painted on the back of the coffins where the backbones lie. In line with this, the djed symbolized transformation - the human form transcends to its spiritual form for afterlife and eternity. - Egyptian Gods

The djed pillar not only symbolized stability in life and after death but also the enduring presence of the gods in one's life. The symbol assured the ancient Egyptians that the gods were with them every step of their journey through their earthly travels and would continue with them after death. The djed symbol promised human beings that, like Osiris, they would rise from death to life and continue on to live eternally in the Field of Reeds. The Egyptian afterlife was a mirror-image of one's life on earth but eternally blissful without loss, disappointment, or death. The immutability of the soul and the promise of this eternal life was represented by the djed. The symbol appears so regularly throughout Egypt's history because it reminded the people of the true nature of life, that death was not the end, and that the gods were always near. -

Joshua J. Mark

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