

# Text of the Rosetta Stone

In the reign of the young one who has succeeded his father in the kingship, lord of diadems, most glorious, who has established Egypt and is pious towards the gods, triumphant over his enemies, who has restored the civilized life of men, lord of the Thirty Years Festivals, even as Ptah the Great, a king like Ra, great king of the Upper and Lower countries, offspring of the Gods Philopatores, one whom Ptah has approved, to whom Ra has given victory, the living image of Amun, son of Ra, **PTOLEMY, LIVING FOR EVER, BELOVED OF PTAH**, in the ninth year, when Aetos son of Aetos was priest of Alexander, and the Gods Soteres, and the Gods Adelphoi, and the Gods Euergetai, and the Gods Philopatores and the God Epiphanes Eucharistos; Pyrrha daughter of Philinos being Athlophoros of Berenike Euergetis, Areia daughter of Diogenes being Kanephoros of Arsinoe Philadelphos; Irene daughter of Ptolemy being Priestess of Arsinoe Philopator; the fourth of the month of Xandikos, according to the Egyptians the 18th Mekhir.

**DECREE.** There being assembled the Chief Priests and Prophets and those who enter the inner shrine for the robing of the gods, and the Fan-bearers and the Sacred Scribes and all the other priests from the temples throughout the land who have come to meet the king at Memphis, for the feast of the assumption by **PTOLEMY, THE EVER-LIVING, THE BELOVED OF PTAH, THE GOD EPIPHANES EUCHARISTOS**, of the kingship in which he succeeded his father, they being assembled in the temple in Memphis on this day declared:

**Whereas King PTOLEMY, THE EVER-LIVING, THE BELOVED OF PTAH, THE GOD EPIPHANES EUCHARISTOS**, the son of King Ptolemy and Queen Arsinoe, the Gods Philopatores, has been a benefactor both to the temple and to those who dwell in them, as well as all those who are his subjects, being a god sprung from a god and goddess like Horus the son of Isis and Osiris, who avenged his father Osiris, being benevolently disposed towards the gods, has dedicated to the temples revenues of money and corn and has undertaken much outlay to bring Egypt into prosperity, and to establish the temples, and has been generous with all his own means; and of the revenues and taxes levied in Egypt some he has wholly remitted and others has lightened, in order that the people and all the others might be in prosperity during his reign; and

**whereas** he has remitted the debts to the crown being many in number which they in Egypt and the rest of the kingdom owed; and

**whereas** those who were in prison and those who were under accusation for a long time, he has freed of the charges against them; and

**whereas** he has directed that the gods shall continue to enjoy the revenues of the temples and the yearly allowances given to them, both of corn and money, likewise also the revenue assigned to the gods from the vine land and from gardens and the other properties which belonged to the gods in his father's time; and

**whereas** he directed also, with regard to the priests, that they should pay no more as the tax for admission to the priesthood than what was appointed them throughout his father's reign and until the first year of his own reign; and has relieved the members of the priestly orders from the yearly journey to Alexandria; and

**whereas** he has directed that impressment for the navy shall no longer be employed; and of the tax on fine linen cloth paid by the temples to the crown he has remitted two-thirds; and whatever things were neglected in former times he has restored to their proper condition, having a care how the traditional duties shall be fittingly paid to the gods; and likewise has apportioned justice to all, like Thoth the great and great; and has ordained that those who return of the warrior class, and of others who were

unfavourably disposed in the days of the disturbances, should, on their return be allowed to occupy their old possessions; and

**whereas** he provided that cavalry and infantry forces and ships should be sent out against those who invaded Egypt by sea and by land, laying out great sums in money and corn in order that the temples and all those who are in the land might be in safety; and having gone to Lycopolis in the Busirite nome, which had been occupied and fortified against a siege with an abundant store of weapons and all other supplies seeing that disaffection was now of long standing among the impious men gathered into it, who had perpetrated much damage to the temples and to all the inhabitants of Egypt, and having encamped against it, he surrounded it with mounds and trenches and elaborate fortifications; when the Nile made a great rise in the eighth year of his reign, which usually floods the plains, he prevented it, by damming at many points the outlets of the channels spending upon this no small amount of money, and setting cavalry and infantry to guard them, in a short time he took the town by storm and destroyed all the impious men in it, even as Thoth and Horus, the son of Isis and Osiris, formerly subdued the rebels in the same district; and as to those who had led the rebels in the time of his father and who had disturbed the land and done wrong to the temples, he came to Memphis to avenge his father and his own kingship, and punished them all as they deserved, at the time that he came there to perform the proper ceremonies for the assumption of the crown; and

**whereas** he remitted what was due to the crown in the temples up to his eighth year, being no small amount of corn and money; so also the fines for the fine linen cloth not delivered to the crown, and of those delivered, the several fees for their verification, for the same period; and he also freed the temples of the tax of the measure of grain for every measure of sacred land and likewise the jar of wine for each measure of vine land; and

**whereas** he bestowed many gifts upon Apis and Mnevis and upon the other sacred animals in Egypt, because he was much more considerate than the kings before him of all that belonged to them; and for their burials he gave what was suitable lavishly and splendidly, and what was regularly paid to their special shrines, with sacrifices and festivals and other customary observances, and he maintained the honours of the temples and of Egypt according to the laws; and he adorned the temple of Apis with rich work, spending upon it gold and silver and precious stones, no small amount; and

**whereas** he has funded temples and shrines and altars, and has repaired those requiring it, having the spirit of a benficent god in matters pertaining to religion; and

**whereas** after enquiry he has been renewing the most honourable of the temples during his reign, as is becoming; in requital of which things the gods have given him health, victory and power, and all other good things, and he and his children shall retain the kingship for all time.

**WITH PROPITIOUS FORTUNE: It was resolved** by the priests of all the temples in the land to increase greatly the existing honours of **King PTOLEMY, THE EVER-LIVING, THE BELOVED OF PTAH, THE GOD EPIPHANES EUCHARISTOS**, likewise those of his parents the Gods Philopatores, and of his ancestors, the Great Euergatai and the Gods Adelphoi and the Gods Soteres and to set up in the most prominent place of every temple an image of the **EVER-LIVING KING PTOLEMY, THE BELOVED OF PTAH, THE GOD EPIPHANES EUCHARISTOS**, which shall be called that of '**PTOLEMY, the defender of Egypt,**' beside which shall stand the principal god of the temple, handing him the scimitar of victory, all of which shall be manufactured in the Egyptian fashion; and that the priests shall pay homage to the images three times a day, and put upon them the sacred garments, and perform the other usual honours such as are given to the other gods in the Egyptian festivals; and to establish for **King PTOLEMY, THE GOD EPIPHANES EUCHARISTOS**, sprung of King Ptolemy and Queen Arsinoe, the Gods Philopatores, a statue and golden shrine in each of the temples, and to set it up in the inner chamber with the other shrines; and in the great festivals in which the shrines are carried in procession the shrine of the **GOD EPIPHANES EUCHARISTOS** shall be carried

in procession with them. And in order that it may be easily distinguishable now and for all time, there shall be set upon the shrine ten gold crowns of the king, to which shall be added a cobra exactly as on all the crowns adorned with cobras which are upon the other shrines, in the centre of them shall be the double crown which he put on when he went into the temple at Memphis to perform therein the ceremonies for assuming the kingship; and there shall be placed on the square surface round about the crowns, beside the aforementioned crown, golden symbols eight in number signifying that it is the shrine of the king who makes manifest the Upper and the Lower countries. And since it is the 30th of Mesore on which the birthday of the king is celebrated, and likewise the 17th of Paophi on which he succeeded his father in the kingship, they have held these days in honour as name-days in the temples, since they are sources of great blessings for all;

**it was further decreed** that a festival shall be kept in the temples throughout Egypt on these days in every month, on which there shall be sacrifices and libations and all the ceremonies customary at the other festivals and the offerings shall be given to the priests who serve in the temples. And a festival shall be kept for **King PTOLEMY, THE EVER-LIVING, THE BELOVED OF PTAH, THE GOD EPIPHANES EUCHARISTOS**, yearly in the temples throughout the land from the 1st of Thoth for five days, in which they shall wear garlands and perform sacrifices and libations and the other usual honours, and the priests in each temple shall be called priests of the **GOD EPIPHANES EUCHARISTOS** in addition to the names of the other gods whom they serve; and his priesthood shall be entered upon all formal documents and engraved upon the rings which they wear; and private individuals shall also be allowed to keep the festival and set up the aforementioned shrine and have it in their homes; performing the aforementioned celebrations yearly, in order that it may be known to all that the men of Egypt magnify and honour the **GOD EPIPHANES EUCHARISTOS the king**, according to the law.

**This decree** shall be inscribed on a stela of hard stone in sacred and native and Greek characters and set up in each of the first, second and third rank temples beside the image of the ever-living king.