

# Modern Sethianism

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Several contemporary Sethian movements emphasize channeled revelation from the spiritual realm, with varying degrees of connection to the traditional gnostic Sethian tradition.

From:

<http://www.newworldencyclopedia.org/entry/Gnosticism>

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As a contemporary Sethian, I believe that Typhon Seth is the true God of Abraham and Moses, and that the biblical version of Yahweh, as observed in the Old Testament, is a political caricature thereof. What I mean to convey is that I believe the Israelite prophets were actually henotheistic pagans, and that the writers of the Old Testament, being priests and politicians, largely corrupted the wisdom of these prophets (at least insofar as it related to social behavior and constructs) for their own ecclesiastical and political benefit.

A common reaction I get when sharing this perspective is that a Deity is most accurately represented by its own scriptures or propaganda, and that such propaganda would not be allowed to suggest anything abusive to the Deity in question by virtue of its divine providence. I think that's a great big pile of steaming puppy poo, myself. For much of their history, the majority of Israelites were either henotheistic or monolatrous at best, meaning that they might

**have worshiped only one God, but that they did indeed believe in others and that they chose to worship only one either because He was their favorite (henotheism) or because they thought Him to be the only one worthy of praise (monolatry). At "worst," they were polytheists along with the rest of the ancients, worshiping Yahweh beside Ashtoreth, Asherah and others. Most of the Old Testament consists of criticisms made by a monolatrous minority against a heno-/polytheist majority within Israel, indicating that biblical monotheism was really more reactionary than commonplace.**

**Furthermore, I do not take the myths and scriptures of any religion at face value, not even the Egyptian. As a Sethian I am obliged to dissect the popular versions of Egyptian myth as handed down to us by cheap "Egypt for Kids" books, and to sift the gold from the mud so to speak. For instance:**

- I believe the universe was created by a Deity, but I do not believe it was created by Atum-Ra, or by Ptah, Amen, or even Thoth for that matter.**
- I believe that Seth is related to Ra and to Horus, but I do not believe that He is the great-grandson of Ra, or that Horus is His nephew.**
- I believe that Seth slew Osiris, but I do not believe that He did so out of jealousy, rage, or any other egotistical temperament.**

**So on, so forth. While these objections are contrary to the**

most common versions of Egyptian myth, I have historically valid reasons for making them, due to the multitude of theologies and cosmogonies to be found in different Egyptian texts. Every Netjer or Netjert was worshiped as supreme in His or Her own cult, and even Seth was called "Creator of the Gods" by those who spoke His words of power. It's to be expected that a Sethian will not agree with the Osirian version of events, or the Horian version, or the Bastian, etc.

So if I must be careful not to take everything in my own source mythos at face value, I certainly won't take everything in other cycles at face value either. Not to mention that my ancient predecessors used names for the God of Israel as names for Typhon in their rituals, and that the Hyksos "Shepherd Kings" were henotheistic worshipers of Seth (by the name of Sutekh - though some experts would argue that they were monolatrous). And writers like Manetho and Plutarch reported the Israelites to have been directly descended from Seth; and although this was intended as a slur (in much the same way that some evangelicals claim Islam to be "of the devil"), it comes across as a pretty hefty endorsement from a Sethian angle. My predecessors certainly thought as much.

That being said, I'd like to offer my own opinions as to what the Ten Commandments might mean, as a Sethian who believes that the man to whom they were given (Moses) was a worshiper of the Holy Jackass who really gave the Egyptians a run for their money.

## **1. Thou shalt have no other gods before Me.**

**As previously mentioned, the Israelites were not full-blown monotheists at the time this was first spoken. Again, the closest things they had to monotheism were henotheism and monolatry. And in my opinion, it is no coincidence that many of Seth's ancient worshipers, including the Hyksos, were either henotheists or monolators. In my own experience, Typhon has made it clear to me that although I may believe in and even communicate with other divinities, He is the only one I can worship. This is not to say that He "forbids" me to worship others, or that He threatens to "punish" me if I do. It simply means that in being one of His Elect, I "shall not" worship other Gods because it is not in my nature to do so. It would be like trying to marry someone when my heart truly belongs to someone else. It's not that I believe other Gods are worthless; it's just that I can't settle for anyone else. My brothers in Seth feel much the same way and we would sooner describe ourselves as henotheists than as monolators.**

## **2. Thou shalt not make any graven image.**

**I don't believe it's wrong to make statues of Seth, or to draw images of Him. I do it all the time, actually. But I do believe it would be wrong to confuse images of Seth with Seth Himself. While such images can provide a point of focus during ritual, and they can help me to remain thoughtful of Seth, I know in my heart of hearts that He has no form. He does not literally**

look like a donkey-headed man strolling about in the desert, whipping up dust devils. He is not limited to any known form or substance. He transcends all of it. Poetically speaking, He is truly "dark," being utterly outside the "light" of what we know and what we can imagine. Yet by the same token, appearances can be deceiving. Not everything that looks "Sethian" is filled with His spirit, and not everything that looks "un-Sethian" is devoid of His grace. He can just as easily speak to a person through a Betty Boop cartoon as He can through a statue of a donkey-headed man, if He so pleases. Hence why it is important to distinguish Him from that which is considered to "resemble" Him.

**3. Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain.**

Vanity is defined as excessive pride in oneself. To "take" something "in vain," in my opinion, means to appropriate something for oneself in strict terms of what it can give you or what it can do for you. To take Seth's name(s) in vain would be to use His sacred words of power for purely egotistical purposes. One of the most famous (or infamous) aspects of Egyptian magic is that it sometimes involves "acting as the God/dess." The magician speaks words of power and/or performs a symbolic action in a Netjer's name (e.g., chopping up a clay worm and shouting, "It is TYPHON SETH HIMSELF who banishes thee, Apophis! Seth triumphs over Apophis! Taste thy death, Apophis!"). Some people mistake this for being a prideful act in which the individual dares to boss the world around in a deity's name, with free license to do whatever they like. But it's really more like

**entering into a sacred pact in which the deity agrees to lend you Their strength so long as you attempt to use that power for a noble purpose that is true to Ma'at. Attempting to use that power for Isfet - like saying "May Seth destroy you mercilessly!" just because someone laughed at you - is an open invitation for Big Red to kick your butt straight down the cosmic sewer drain. So yeah, taking words of power in vain is a real big no-no in my book.**

#### **4. Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy.**

**The Israelite Sabbath is believed to have come from the Babylonian "shappatu," which was a holy day that was observed on the seventh day of each lunar phase. The Israelites adapted this to become the idea of a weekly holy day that begins on Friday at sunset and that ends on Saturday at sunset. Later, the word "sabbath" became associated with witchcraft and devil worship as the result of Christian anti-Semitism. In fact, this was very similar to how Jews were linked with Seth in a negative light by the Egyptians and the Greeks. Hence why my brothers in Seth and I observe the Sabbath each week in Typhon's name. We feel it is important to have a time each week when we can get together and throw off the shackles of the secular world, like Moses and the Israelites are said to have done when they left Egypt. (Nevermind the fact that the Exodus didn't happen exactly the way the Bible says it did.) We light red candles and invoke Big Red; we talk to Him extensively about whatever's bothering us and we talk to each other, letting Him guide us as we speak. It is a truly moving experience**

and it helps us to distinguish our true selves from our jobs, our social obligations, and everything else by which the world would like to "define" us. Keeping the Sabbath helps us to remember who we really are and what we're really doing here on this earth, and it's like a holiday that we get to enjoy every week. In fact, it's almost like the week can't properly end or begin without it. It's also a special time when we can catch up on all the prayer we couldn't get around to doing during the work week. It's a "time-out" for our egos and a "play time" for our spirits.

#### **5. Honor thy father and thy mother.**

This one seems simple enough, and in many cases, it's a good rule of thumb, especially if your parents are (or were) good to you. Much of the time, we are capable of achieving what we can achieve thanks to what those who came before us have already accomplished. Sure, Madame Currie was brilliant, but if it hadn't been for Imhotep and Hippocrates, the medical field would never have gotten started. So it's important to acknowledge one's sources and to be respectful in how one follows them - and in how one deviates from them. Hence why I think studying how Seth was actually viewed and worshiped in history, as opposed to just accepting whatever might be \*concluded about Him in modern systems (like Typhonian Thelema or the Temple of Set), is so important. This isn't to say that the opinions of Kenneth Grant, for instance, should be entirely ignored. Grant was largely responsible for kicking off the modern Sethian revival and his views deserve some consideration.

**But they aren't the only views worthy of consideration, for even Grant had to get his information from somewhere, just as his own sources and inspirations did. Same thing goes for Michael Aquino, Don Webb, and everyone else who's contributed to the modern Sethian revival. Honor your father and mother; even if they were wrong about some things, you wouldn't be here if they hadn't come along in the first place.**

#### **6. Thou shalt not murder.**

**For me, there is a difference between killing something and committing a murder. To kill is to take a life. All living things must kill and take life at one time or another to survive. Even cows must kill grass, which is also alive, if they are to be healthy. Life feeds on life, so killing is a necessary part of Ma'at, macabre as it may seem. But to murder is entirely different. To murder is to take intelligent life without actually needing to do so to survive. To murder is to destroy someone just because they're in your way or they make you mad or you just want to see them suffer. There is no cosmic justice in murder; it is an act of Isfet and a crime against nature. This is why I prefer to say that Seth \*slew\* Osiris and not that He "murdered" Him, for in the end, the death of Osiris was a sacrifice for all living beings, that we may all live and grow again after we die. It was not just a vile act that served no cosmic purpose; to say that it was is to rob Osiris' death of its meaning.**

#### **7. Thou shalt not commit adultery.**



To "adulterate" means to debase or make impure with inferior materials or elements, not just to cheat on one's life partner or spouse. But how does one judge whether a material or an element is "inferior"? I guess it depends on who you are and what you need. My first thought on this is of an experience I had many years ago, back before I met my brothers and we started our fellowship in Seth together, when I was still a novice. In those days I associated with some people whom I thought to be wise and spiritual and worthy of my time. I looked up to them very much, but in time I discovered that these people were not what I thought they were. Associating with them turned out to be a horrible idea; as a result of doing so, I became a very frightened and hateful person. I thought hanging out with them would help lead me to a better understanding of Typhon, but if anything, they dragged me away from Him and led me to doubt Him, and to lose faith. Perhaps it is true that in the long run, they *\*did\** bring me closer to Seth, for in learning to see through them and tearing myself away from them, I regained my faith and it was made even stronger. I learned to be very careful of all the freaks and weirdos who are out there, who pretend to have great spiritual knowledge just so they can manipulate others and drag them down. Perhaps it was all Seth's way of teaching me not to adulterate myself by associating with and obligating myself to people who just don't deserve my attention or my respect.

8. Thou shalt not steal.

I believe that a person's property includes "I," the self-as-

knower, "me," the self-as-known, and "mine," an extension of the self-as-known. That which is truly "mine" is not just something I have or own, but a part of myself, an extension of my very being. My house is where I live and sleep, and it is a part of me. My job may not define me, but it is a part of me because in doing it I am sending out a part of myself into the world. As materialistic as it may sound, my collection of books and CDs and DVDs is also a part of me, for it reflects my interests and my concerns with this world. But if something is not an extension of my innermost self then it is not truly "mine" and I have no right to it, especially if it is really an extension of someone \*else's\* very being and not also of my own. A single thing or object can be an extension of more than one person's essence, but to exert authority over something that is not of oneself - like someone else's body, soul, or spirit - is not only theft but the beginning of all tyranny. I am even more sensitive to this when it comes to Typhon's property. His cult images, His words of power and His wisdom are all extensions of \*His\* being. And though He is willing to share these things with us, we must be careful not to abuse that privilege. Sometimes I'm complimented on the rituals that I conduct, for instance, to which I reply that Typhon Himself deserves all the credit for such, not me. While I may be the one leading the rituals, He's the one who decides if they'll actually work or not, lol.

**9. Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbor. \***

**This seems fairly clear; do not accuse innocent people of wrongdoing unless there is proof. It is wrong to destroy the**

**lives of others with falsehood. Or to put it another way, we are supposed to be "innocent until proven guilty." But even more, I think this speaks to the concept of otherness, and of accepting the other. This ties in with what the Egyptians called the Secret of the Two Partners; beneath all the exoteric fighting and sibling rivalry, Horus and Seth are esoterically joined in a common bond. They are two sides of the same coin, just as men and women, believers and non-believers, blacks and whites, and kings and paupers are all human beings. To intentionally hurt someone other than oneself without due cause is ultimately to dehumanize oneself, to bring oneself down to the level of whatever one imagines or claims the other person to be. Take the European witch hysterias for instance; so many innocent people were hanged and burned for being so-called "witches" and traitors to the human race. And yet the people who orchestrated such events never succeeded in fighting evil; they merely made themselves evil. They themselves became traitors to humanity, raping the goodness of this world with Isfet. If there is one thing Seth has made clear to me, it is that His following requires a deep sensitivity to otherness and the concept that goodness and truth can wear many different masks. No one is evil just because they are an other; and if we disregard this truth, if we refuse to recognize the humanity of others, and if we attempt to degrade that humanity, we become inhuman ourselves.**

**10. Thou shalt not covet.**

**To "covet" someone or something is to have an unnatural or**

inappropriate desire for that someone or something. But what exactly is an unnatural desire? We covet each other's possessions, each other's abilities, and even each other's spouses all the time. Is a man who truly loves another man's wife a sinner, if he never attempts to steal her from her husband? If Yahweh is really Typhon, what the hell is He, the God who lusted after Isis, His Brother's wife, really trying to say here? I don't think it's saying that it's morally wrong to love someone who is betrothed to someone else, or to desire the same comforts and pleasures that other people have. After all, you can't help who you fall in love with, and wanting the same things other people have is part and parcel of any functioning social environment. I think this commandment is actually referring to the concept of having the wrong goals. Let's say it is your true destiny, your higher Will, to be a lawyer and work as a district attorney. But let's say you decide to try and please your friends by becoming an actor in Hollywood instead; after all, everyone else is doing it. You may enjoy yourself for a time, but eventually your discomfort and your resentment will break through and you may realize you are not walking the path that is truly meant for you. You are coveting - you are following an unnatural desire, a desire that is "unnatural" because it is contrary to *your* personal nature. You are trying to be or to do something that is inconsistent with your true Will. So I believe this commandment is truly saying that we must be true to ourselves in all things, and not try to be or do things unnatural for us as individuals just to please our parents, our peers, or our own fleeting egos. It is most interesting to me that this is the one commandment that refers to a type of

feeling and not specifically to a type of behavior or action (though behaviors and actions can certainly be influenced by such feelings.)

From:

<http://www.earthsongforums.com/forums/showpost.php?p=216299&postcount=4> (Darth Brooks)

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I did the first in a monthly series of radio shows on Gnosticism, and that went very well. And this Winter I may do a weekly show titled "A Scriptural Introduction to Contemporary Gnostic Sethianism." That is a mouthfull, so it will probably change to something like "Gnostic Sethianism 101" or something like that. But I am getting ready for the series. I am hopping to turn it into a series of comentaries on the Sethian Scriptures as well as a Contemporary Sethian Theological Handbook.

From: <http://spiralinward.com/forum/thread-565-page-2.html> (Mani)

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**Review of: THE BULL OF OMBOS**  
**By Mogg Morgan**

**iISBN 978-1869928-872r: Mandrake**  
**356pp / 152x229mm / 78 illustrations**  
**Price: £13.99 / \$28**  
**Format: Paperback Original**  
**Category: Egyptian Magick**

The publication of a book devoted to the Egyptian deity Seth (aka Set) is a rare enough event even in the rarified halls of academia. The publication of a modern magickal text focusing on Seth is even rarer. Despite the important role Seth played in the history of magick—his frequent appearances in the magical papyri of the Hermetic period—few modern texts have taken a serious look at the enigmatic god. This is not all too surprising, given the short-shrift and a good dose of bad PR both in antiquity and also in the Victorian mis-interpretations of the early Egyptologists. Two other modern texts come immediately to mind: Don Webb's short treatise *Seven Faces of Darkness* and Mr. Morgan's earlier work *Tankhem*. Mr. Morgan is an amateur Egyptologist who has long maintained an interest in the maligned figure of Seth. *The Bull of Ombos* begins with the 19th century discovery of an ancient city near Naqada, Egypt. The city proved to be the capital of the earliest Egyptian state. The lost city was known to the Greeks as Ombos, the Citadel of Seth. Once ruled by the Hidden God the site had been left to be swallowed by the sands of the desert—the image of the god transformed through later layers of Egyptian power and politics. As Mr. Morgan notes that most of the knowledge discovered at Ombos was quickly reburied in academic libraries. *Bull of Ombos* delves into these forbidden areas. Mr. Morgan painstakingly puts together the intricacies of early Sethian worship and the roll the god played in the Egyptians' daily lives. He does not shy away from analyzing the more disturbing suggestions of previous archeological conclusions—even hints of cannibalism. From the scant clues available, the author has produced a detailed

and intricate portrait of Seth that is at the same time very applicable to the modern Sethian. Mr. Morgan also provides retellings of the key Seth-related stories as appendix material—a welcome supplement to the text.

From: <http://www.mandrake.uk.net/moggmorgan.htm>

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## History

The Temple of [Set](#) was established in 1975 by Lt. Colonel of the US Army [Michael A. Aquino](#) and certain members of the priesthood of the [Church of Satan](#),<sup>[1]</sup> who left because of administrative and philosophical disagreements with its founder, and, as Aquino said, because he was disgusted at the corruption within the Church of Satan.<sup>[1]</sup> The Temple of Set was incorporated in [California](#) that same year as a nonprofit church.<sup>[2]</sup>

## Organization

The Temple of Set is an [occult](#) initiatory school in which varying degrees of expertise, experience, and apprehension of [metaphysics](#) are recognized among members.

The Temple of Set holds an annual conclave where members of the Temple can come together to meet and exchange ideas. Workshops are held in which members discuss a wide variety of topics and activities. The conclave usually lasts about a week and is held in various global locations, though it usually takes place within the [USA](#).<sup>[citation needed]</sup> There are also occasional regional gatherings, organized and attended by interested Setians, at their own initiative.

In addition to the international organization, the Temple sponsors initiatory Orders and local groups called *Pylons*. Pylons generally explore a wide range of metaphysical topics and exercises, since their members are determined largely by the accident of residence. Order members share specific interests, and Order activities therefore focus more deeply on these selected interests.

The Temple also makes available to members a variety of informational resources for individual reference as desired. The central of these resources is the *Jewelled Tablets of Set* which contain information relevant to the Degrees of the Organization.<sup>[3]</sup> The very core of their teaching can be found within the material provided to the I\* of the Temple, *The Crystal Tablet of Set*. All further volume in the series are built upon this document's foundation.

The Temple adheres to selective membership policies; fewer than half of all applicants are accepted for membership with the two year recognition period.<sup>[4]</sup> The Temple's membership does have a fairly large turnover rate; most members leave eventually for a wide variety of reasons.<sup>[5]</sup> Only a minority of members remain with the Temple more than a decade. Members pay a membership fee. The Temple admits members on all continents except Antarctica, though it is largely a U.S.-based organisation.

All officers and workers within the Temple of Set are volunteers. Some receive reimbursement for expenses incurred for the Temple; none receive a salary. All officers are selected from within the Priesthood.<sup>[citation needed]</sup>

## Philosophy

The [philosophy](#) of the Temple of Set may be summed up as "enlightened individualism": enhancement and improvement



of oneself by personal education, experiment, and initiation. This process, necessarily different and distinctive for each individual, is referred to within the Temple by the [Egyptian hieroglyphic](#) term Kheper, or "Xeper" (a phonetic of \_Xpr\_), as the Temple of Set prefers to write it. *Xeper* is symbolized by the [scarab beetle](#), significant of personal rebirth and immortality within the Temple of Set.<sup>[6]</sup> The term is deemed central to Setian philosophy and practice, having been introduced at the founding of the Temple of Set in 1975, when Aquino made the claim that the [Egyptian god Set](#) communicated the word *Xeper* in the sense of "become" to him during the "North Solstice X Working" aka "The Santa Barbara Working."<sup>[7]</sup> The Word was re-uttered in 1996 by [Don Webb](#) in the more focused translation "I have come into being."<sup>[6]</sup>

Setians recognize several levels or degrees of initiation, and identify their members by their degree. These degrees are:

- Setian ( First Degree )
- Adept ( Second Degree )
- Priest / Priestess ( Third Degree )
- Magister / Magistra Templi ( Fourth Degree )
- Magus / Maga ( Fifth Degree )
- Ipsissimus / Ipsissima ( Sixth Degree )

The Priesthood of the Temple of Set is restricted to members holding the Third Degree or higher. Full membership comes about on recognition to the second degree, which has a time frame of around two years. Recognition is performed by members of the priesthood, though it is up to the individual to find a priest to work with towards this end. However, there is no set criteria for recognition and no obligation for the priesthood to work with new initiates towards recognition.<sup>[citation needed]</sup>

## Notes

1. ^ [a b](#) Aquino, Michael (2009) (PDF). [Church of Satan](#) (6th ed.). San Francisco: Temple of Set.
2. ^ ["California Secretary of State - California Business Search - Corporation Search Results"](#). Retrieved 2008-09-25.
3. ^ url = [http://www.xeper.org/pub/gil/xp\\_FS\\_gil.htm](http://www.xeper.org/pub/gil/xp_FS_gil.htm)
4. ^ [KHPR 001: So you're thinking about joining the Temple of Set?](#)
5. ^ [AKHPR 001: So you're thinking about joining the Temple of Set?](#)
6. ^ [a b](#) Webb, Don. [Xeper: The Eternal Word of Set](#)
7. ^ Aquino, Michael A. [The Temple of Set](#)

## References

- [Flowers, Stephen Edred](#) (1997). *Lords of the Left Hand Path: A History of Spiritual Dissent*. Runa Raven Press. [ISBN 1-885972-08-3](#)
- [Webb, Don](#) (1996) *The Seven Faces of Darkness: Practical Typhonian Magic*. Runa Raven Press. [ISBN 1-885972-07-5](#)
- Webb, Don (1999). *Uncle Setnakt's Essential Guide to the Left Hand Path*. Runa Raven Press. [ISBN 1-885972-10-5](#)
- Webb, Don (2004). *Mysteries of the Temple of Set: Inner Teachings of the Left Hand Path*. Runa Raven Press. [ISBN 1-885972-27-X](#)
- U.S. Department of the Army (ed.) (2002). "Temple of Set" in *Religious Requirements and Practices of Certain Selected Groups: A Handbook for Chaplains*. University Press of the Pacific. [ISBN 0-89875-607-3](#)

## External links

- [Official Web Site](#)
- [Religious Movements Homepage: Temple of Set](#)

**From:** [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Temple\\_of\\_Set](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Temple_of_Set)