



Sons of Ra Ministries



Karast Maát Kwanzaa



2nd Edition

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Foreword

On November 16, 2006 – The year 6,246 or 6,247 in the Ancient Egyptian calendar depending on one's perspective – after I had committed to hosting a Kwanzaa party for the first time in six years, it came to me that something more was required. In the past I had hosted several Kwanzaa parties where we participated in the ceremony, recited the principles and spoke eloquently on what was required or desired for the coming year.

Over the years Kwanzaa ceremonies had become somewhat mechanical without true purpose and intent. More importantly, the conditions in our communities have either stayed the same or progressively worsened in many respects. I felt something was missing from our Kwanzaa observances. Because even as it has become more and more popular within our communities and the world, the very objectives that Kwanzaa was meant to address have gone unanswered.

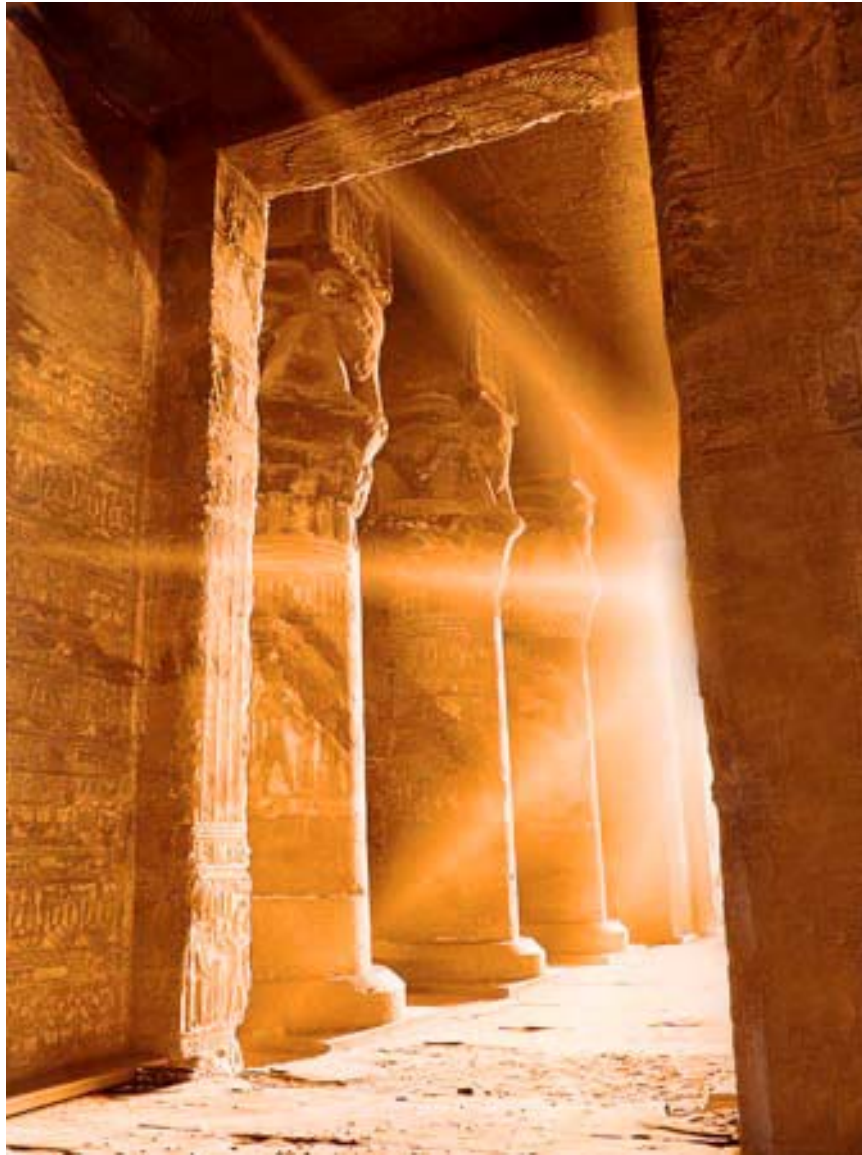
As I did not want to simply continue with going through the motions I opened myself to new possibilities. While walking a little Yorkshire Terrier by the name of Ramsey on a clear starlit night, I felt myself open to the Universe. It was then that I received that Kwanzaa can be enhanced by adding five days to the beginning of it to make it a twelve day ritual observance. These five days would imbue it with the Spiritual Traditions of our Afrikan Ancestors. No longer would it be necessary for this “holiday” to be non-religious or secular as this is a concept that belongs to the Western World and is not of the Afrikan Mind.

Moreover, the Karast Maát Kwanzaa makes use of Spiritual Science. Thus, those that participate with intention have the probability of bringing into manifestation the dreams, ideas, projects, solutions and gifts that the world so eagerly calls for at this time. Whereas, seven (7) is the number of perfecting the Divine Nature in the physical. Twelve (12) is the number of spiritual manifestation in the physical universe; it is the spiritualization of matter!

May this document and the principles described herein serve as a light to all in the unfolding of your own gifts and contributions.

Maát Hotep,

Calvin Kennedy, Heru Jehuti Bey Sa-Ra
Presiding Priest of the Sons of Ra



Sun shining into the Holy of Holies within Ancient Egyptian Temple



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"Behold Khepera, the rising sun! For as he brings the mighty globe of day out of the darkness of night, between his claws, so for thee the Sun of Spirit has risen from the darkness of night and in the name of the living God, we hail thee Priest of Ra."

The above quotation is from THE LOST KEYS OF FREEMASONRY or The Secret of Hiram Abiff by **Manly P. Hall**



Introduction

The *Karast Maát Kwanzaa* is an offering from the *Sons of Ra Ministries* through the person of Calvin Kennedy. It is envisioned that this “new” holiday observance serve to deepen our relationships, a deepening of our inner relationships of the True Self, the Ancestors and God Most High as well as our relationships with our families, communities, nations and the earth as a whole.

To say this is a new observance would not necessarily be correct. The *Karast Maát Kwanzaa* builds upon the ancient traditions and wisdom that has been continually brought forth from antiquity. Many people who are on the path of rediscovery of themselves have been following this ritual or a similar type ritual as articulated herein without naming it or defining it as such. The creation of rigid structure or protocol is not the objective this ritual. It is, however, an invitation to experience a greater understanding, wisdom and growth for the Participant. Correspondingly, it offers the opportunity for true unity and expression within the family, community and even for humanity as a whole.

This new holiday, or “Holy Days” observance, is a twelve day ritual observance that is actually seven plus five days. It is the seven days of traditional Kwanzaa with five newly defined days that are added to the beginning. In the sections that follow within this document we will see how these five days correspond to festivals of Ancient Egypt. Further, the great significance of the number twelve will be explored as well.

The number twelve speaks directly to the twelve-fold manifestation in man/woman. This number is the basis for most, if not all, of our spiritual stories and teachings. This is the number of manifestation. In the subsequent sections this idea is further expounded upon. Suffice to say that by designating the *Karast Maát Kwanzaa* as a twelve day ritual we have aligned ourselves with the spiritual truth of the universe and of our nature.

The twelve days are defined as follows:

<i>December 21st</i>	<i>Maát</i>	- <i>Balance</i>
<i>December 22nd</i>	<i>Set</i>	- <i>Desire</i>
<i>December 23rd</i>	<i>Ausar</i>	- <i>True Self</i>
<i>December 24th</i>	<i>Auset</i>	- <i>Love</i>
<i>December 25th</i>	<i>Heru</i>	- <i>Born</i>
<i>December 26th</i>	<i>Umoja</i>	- <i>Unity</i>
<i>December 27th</i>	<i>Kujichagulia</i>	- <i>Self Determination</i>
<i>December 28th</i>	<i>Ujima</i>	- <i>Cooperation</i>
<i>December 29th</i>	<i>Ujamaa</i>	- <i>Family</i>
<i>December 30th</i>	<i>Nia</i>	- <i>Purpose</i>
<i>December 31st</i>	<i>Kuumba</i>	- <i>Creativity</i>
<i>January 1st</i>	<i>Imani</i>	- <i>Faith</i>



It should be apparent to the reader that phrase *Karast Maat* has been added to Kwanzaa to distinguish this ritual observance as a unique offering. We will see how the term *Karast Maát* so appropriately describes the process that this ritual encourages.

The word *Karast* is derived from the ancient Egyptian term KRST. In the MDW NTR, which is an ancient Egyptian language that literally means the language of God, KRST means to anoint. The MDW NTR did not include vowels and a proper transliteration should only include consonants, thus KRST is the correct method of representing the term *Karast*. However, the spelling of the word *Karast* phonetically expresses KRST in the English language and is therefore a more appropriate rendition for our ritual observance.

As mentioned previously, KRST means to anoint or anointed. It is from this word that the Greek word “Kristos”, which also means to anoint, is derived. Further, as is generally known, Christ is derived directly from “Kristos”. The practice of anointing in oils and resins the mummified deceased was known as to Karast the mummy. In fact, the hieroglyphic symbol of Karast is represented by a mummy that is raised up from a laying position.



This practice was done so that the soul of the deceased would be known as an Ausar in the spirit world or in the Amenta. We also find within the Bible an interesting correspondence:

John 19:40 Then took they the body of Jesus and wound it in linen clothes with the spices, as the manner of the Jews is to bury.

The second part of our phrase is *Maát*. *Maát* is a very important symbol and understanding in regards to the ancient world as well as to our modern world. *Maát* is represented as the goddess that corresponds to the principles that govern creation, the universe and our society. The principles that comprise *Maát* include the following:



1. Order
2. Balance
3. Harmony
4. Compassion
5. Reciprocity
6. Justice
7. Truth



The above is a common rendition of the Goddess *Ma'at* with Her outstretched wings and the feather of *Ma'at* upon her head. This symbol is the archetype for the pictorial representations of Angels that we are so accustomed to seeing.

Ma'at is most significant as it governs our relationship with Spirit, each other and the environment. In fact, in the ancient traditions that speak to the creation of the universe by *Ra*, *Ma'at* must first exist in order for creation to proceed. Thus, *Ma'at* represents the foundation that we must build upon in order to build for eternity.

Karast represents that which we are bringing forth. It is the divine spark that leads to our authentic Self and expression in the world. This is true whether we relate it to our individual person or to our society as a whole. We are bringing forth that which will transform for good, create true unity and harmony in the world. In order for our family, community, nation and world to be transformed we must first be transformed within.

Thus, the purpose of the *Karast Ma'at Kwanzaa* is to bring to remembrance traditions, teachings and practices that will enable and facilitate a personal and community – even worldwide – rebirth and transformation. This ritual observance is established upon a true foundation by uniting it with the spiritual traditions of Ancient Egypt (Kemet). Although Kemet is the progeny of African people and the basis for African culture and spiritual traditions, it also represents the foundation of the world's current civilization. Moreover, the Nile Valley traditions give the essence and meaning to the world's spiritual traditions.

Whereas what we know as traditional Kwanzaa speaks to the uplifting and empowerment of the African-American community, the *Karast Ma'at Kwanzaa* speaks to the uplifting and empowerment of the entire human family. This in no way diminishes the call and the need to address the peculiar circumstances that people of African descent find themselves in at this time in human history. In fact, it is envisioned and ordained that African people will come forward and sit at



the table of humanity speaking with true voice as their authentic Self unencumbered by traditions, structures or principalities that do not serve the best interests of African people. Through this demonstration and experience of divine purpose and destiny *Maát* is restored upon the earth. The healing and restoration of African people serves to uplift and empower the whole of the human family. For, the human family is indeed one and we are only as strong as our weakest link.

Further, as this ritual observance is based on spiritual truth and cosmic law, this practice will transform and heal all that participate. In the sections that follow, the idea of the conscious human and humanity is presented. It is shown and discussed how the *Karast Maát Kwanzaa* is an offering and possibility for the unity, healing and transformation for all of humanity.

Following this introduction section, the *Twelve Days of the Karast Maát Kwanzaa* is presented with a summary description of each of the days. This is followed by the *Historical Background* where the History of Kwanzaa, African Harvest Festivals, Ancient Egyptian Festivals and Other Festivals are explored.

The *Extended Description of Karast Maát Kwanzaa* defines the steps for preparation and beginning the ritual observance. Also defined are key aspects of the “Holy Days” that relate to the cosmology of the time of the year of the ritual days. *The Days of the Karast Maát Kwanzaa* section lists each of the individual days along with an extended description of the respective days. It is in this section where a Conscious Humanity interpretation is defined for the traditional days of Kwanzaa.

The *Significance of a Twelve Day Ritual* section presents the spiritual basis for a twelve day ritual observance. *Cosmology Revealed* goes into further detail regarding the cosmic occurrences and alignments that correspond to the time of year of the observance as well as to the spiritual traditions. Finally, *Symbols for Karast Maát Kwanzaa* presents traditional symbols of Kwanzaa along with new symbols that can be incorporated into the ritual observance.



The Twelve Days of Karast Maát Kwanzaa

December 21 st	Maát	<i>Balance</i> – All activities, internal and external are brought into balance, order and harmony.
December 22 nd	Set	<i>Desire</i> – The willingness to submit the personal self (Ego) to the Higher Faculties.
December 23 rd	Ausar	<i>True Self</i> – Recognition of the Higher Self that exists within which is the perfect will of the Creator.
December 24 th	Auset	<i>Love</i> – That which seeks for union with the True Self in order to bring forth the will of the Creator into manifestation. Unfailing Love.
December 25 th	Heru	<i>Born</i> – Celebrate that <i>Karast</i> has brought forth true Will and Vision within and transformation is at hand. To be born.
December 26 th	Umoja	<i>Unity</i> – To strive for and to maintain unity in the family, community and nation.
December 27 th	Kujichagulia	<i>Self Determination</i> – To define, name, create and speak for ourselves.
December 28 th	Ujima	<i>Cooperation</i> – The importance of working together. Collective work and Responsibility.
December 29 th	Ujamaa	<i>Family</i> – Honor and empower foundational relationships. Cooperative Economics.
December 30 th	Nia	<i>Purpose</i> – The discovery, activation and then actualization of our divine purpose.
December 31 st	Kuumba	<i>Creativity</i> – The active use of our imagination in the service of our divine purpose.
January 1 st	Imani	<i>Faith</i> – Belief in Oneself, Community and Creator. The knowing anticipation that our vision is fulfilled.



Historical Background

This section presents the Historical Background for the *Karast Maát Kwanzaa*. The history of Kwanzaa is presented along with some of the more prolific African Harvest Festivals. Several Ancient Egyptian Festivals are also described. The reader will be able to see many parallels between the ancient Egyptian traditions and what is being reinvigorated through the current offering. Other festivals, holidays and observances that are common throughout the world and from diverse traditions and communities are also discussed; thereby demonstrating the oneness of humanity.

History of Kwanzaa

It is generally accepted that Kwanzaa was created and brought forth in 1966 by Dr. Maulana Karenga. At the writing of this document, Dr. Karenga is a Professor in the Department of Black Studies at California State University at Long Beach.

The 1960s were a tumultuous period in America and specifically the African-American community. People of African descent were coming together in powerful ways to address the historical inequities, injustices and outright criminal activity perpetrated by the dominant culture. There was a new sense of inherent power and dignity that was being expressed within the African-American communities across the nation. This new sense was manifesting as a call for human rights, civil rights, prisoner rights and, most significantly, as “black” power.

Within the context of this dynamic energy, Kwanzaa as traditionally understood and articulated was born. Swahili was selected as the language of Kwanzaa because Swahili was seen as a universal African language. Several nations in East Africa spoke/speak Swahili and yet it is not a colonial language such as English or French. It presented itself as the best choice for a modern Pan-African language that could speak to a Pan-African vision.

The principles of Kwanzaa were developed in order to facilitate and manifest community vision, responsibility and empowerment. These principles are explored in detail in subsequent sections of this document as the *Karast Maát Kwanzaa* does acknowledge and make use of the original principles of Kwanzaa as brought forth by Dr. Karenga.



African Harvest Festivals

Kwanzaa, as traditionally created, is modeled on the African Harvest Festivals. Harvest festivals are common across Africa. These festivals are normally held in autumn to coincide with the yearly harvest or first fruits. However, not all African harvest festivals are held in the autumn. Common to all African Harvest Festivals, however, are that they are times of giving thanks, engaging in ritual and celebrations.

A popular festival that is observed in both Ghana and Nigeria is the Yam Festival. This festival is normally held in August at the end of the rainy season. The yam is the first crop to be harvested; this gives us the reason for the naming of this festival. The participants offer yams to the gods and ancestors first prior to distributing them to the people.

The Homowo Festival is another festival of West Africa. This is a celebration of the Ga people of Ghana. It is considered to be the largest cultural festival of its kind. The word Homowo means “hooting at hunger” in the Ga language.

The origin of the Homowo Festival is traced back to the migration of the Ga people to present day Ghana. Ga people are among those people that made the mass migrations from the Nile Valley to West Africa over two millenniums beginning in 50 B.C.E. It took many years to reach West Africa and along the way famine was experienced. However, because they helped each other, they survived. In latter times when harvests were bountiful, this feast was held during which they [Ga] jeered at the hunger and the difficult times. This became the first Homowo.

The modern Homowo Festival follows the protocol of a traditional Ghanaian ritual procession. Local Africans and Africans from the Diaspora will assume the roles of kings, queens and followers of the royal family of each of Ghana’s ethnic groups.

In Southern Africa there is another festival that is called Ncwala and it is known as the “Festival of the First Fruits”. This festival is in Swaziland – this country is contained within the borders of South Africa – and it is the largest festival in the region. The ancestors are remembered, the first harvest is celebrated and the King is honored. There are two main celebrations, the Little Ncwala and the Big Ncwala. The exact date of the festival is determined by the king’s astrologers; however it always starts in December.

The Ncwala festival can be viewed as the most appropriate modern day comparison to the *Karast Maat Kwanzaa* as it captures much of the same essence. It integrates some of the current West African traditions with the older



Ancient Egyptian traditions by honoring the first fruits and honoring the king. Further, like the *Karast Maát Kwanzaa* it is held in December/January timeframe. We will see in the next section, *Ancient Egyptian Festivals*, how the honoring of the King relates to honoring the life and resurrection of Jesus the Christ.

The following is from the Swaziland government website: <http://www.gov.sz/>

TRADITIONAL CEREMONIES AND DANCING

Traditional ceremonies are an integral part of Swazi life, despite the advent of modernisation. The most important of these is the sacred Incwala or 'Festival of the First Fruits'. This is essentially a Kingship ceremony held to renew the strength of the King and the Swazi Nation for the coming year.

Incwala dress cord



Incwala is held in late December/early January of each year and, at a time of the new moon preceding the event, traditionalists visit the main rivers of Swaziland and return to the Nations ancestral home, on the shores of the Indian Ocean near Maputo, to gather sea water. At this time the King goes into seclusion.

When the water gatherers return, and at the time of the full moon, the young men of the Nation congregate at the King's residence. He orders them to march to Egundvwini that first afternoon of Ncwala, a distance of 40 kilometres, to gather branches of the lusekwane tree. They arrive, by mid-night, with the branches.

As the youths rest, the elders use the branches to construct a sacred bower for the King alongside the Royal cattle Byre. The warriors of the nation assemble, dressed in special Ncwala costumes made of of ox hide and leopard skin. Ritual songs, which may not be recorded and which are taboo at other times of the year, are sung. A black bull is driven



into the King's bower and this animal is used for the mystic and sacred purposes of the ceremony.

The King joins the warriors in dance on the fourth day and the Queen Mother and official guests attend. Only after the King has eaten part of a pumpkin may the Swazi consume newly-grown crops. No work is done on the fifth day which is set aside for rest and meditation.

On the sixth day, firewood is collected for a massive bonfire on which articles are burned representing the year just past. To signify the start of a new year, the ancestral spirits are entreated to quench the bonfire with rain. The Ncwala ends with singing, dancing and feasting.

A Regiment



Photography and sound recording of sacred parts of the ceremony is strictly prohibited. Visitors wishing to photograph at the Incwala must apply in writing to the Government Information Service, Broadcasting House, P.O.BOX 338, Mbabane.



Ancient Egyptian Festivals

It is very likely that the Ancient Egyptians had more festival and ritual days than any other people in the ancient world. This would most certainly hold true in comparison to the modern cultures of today. There are several days of acknowledgment and ritual dedicated to one or more NTR (gods) in each and every month in the Ancient Egyptian Calendar.

The Ancient Egyptian Calendar acknowledged twelve (12) months of thirty (30) days each for a total of 360 days. To account for the five extra days in order to correspond to the 365 day solar year, five ritual days were added at the end of the calendar. This period was known as the Epagomenal Days, or the days that are “out of time”. These days were seen as transition days from the old year to the new and were enthusiastically celebrated by the Ancient Egyptians.

The similarity between these five days and the five days added to create the *Karast Maát Kwanzaa* is striking. In fact the days are identical in respect to the NTR (deity) that are acknowledged with the exception of one day. The difference being that in the ancient ritual Nebet-Het is acknowledged wherein we are acknowledging Maát in the new ritual.

It should also be pointed out that the Egyptian calendar year end corresponds to our mid July timeframe. The following lists the Epagonmenal Days and the newly added five days of the *Karast Maat Kwanzaa* to provide a comparison:

Epagonmenal Days	Corresponds To	Karast Maát	Date
1 Ausar	July 14	Maát	December 21
2 Heru-Dunawhy	July 15	Set	December 22
3 Set	July 16	Ausar	December 23
4 Auset	July 17	Auset	December 24
5 Nebet-Het	July 18	Heru	December 25

The Epagonmenal Days were celebrated as birthdays for the NTR by the Ancient Egyptians. Although, Heru-Dunawhy is an aspect of Heru and his birthday is celebrated on July 15th, the Ancient Egyptians nonetheless celebrated December 25th as the birthday of Heru, the divinely conceived Son of Auset.

Just as there is a relationship with the newly added five days of the *Karast Maát* to the Epagonmenal Days in the ancient calendar, we can also perceive an overall connection in regards to the twelve day ritual as a whole. There is a discernable emphasis placed on major Feast Days starting with the Winter Solstice in the Nile Valley spiritual traditions.

In the ancient calendar the Winter Solstice (December 21st) begins on the 6th day in the month of Mechir. It begins with the Feast of Auset. Throughout the twelve



day period there are several notable Feast Days that have embedded within astronomical and spiritual truths that are being communicated. The following lists several of the more significant days. This list is derived from the Ancient Egyptian Lives website: www.aelives.com

Day of Mechir	Corresponds To	Festival/Celbration
6	December 21 st	Winter Solstice, Feast of Auset
8	December 23 rd	Festival of the Great Heat; Feast Day of Het-Heru (Hathor)
10	December 25 th	Birth of Heru the child of Auset ; Going forth of Wadjet singing in Heliopolis; Day of Elevating the Great Netjert (Goddess) in all Her names & manifestations
17	January 1 st	Day of keeping the things of Ausar in the hands of Anpu (Anubis)

Although there are other Feast Days that are recognized within this twelve day period, only those that show a more direct link to *Karast Maat Kwanzaa* Twelve Day ritual are listed above.

One of the most important rituals to the Ancient Egyptians is The Festival of Koiak. It is in the Festival of Koiak that we see the Ausarian drama enacted. This ritual celebrates the death of Ausar by Set and his resurrection through the birth of Heru, the Divine Son. It is here that we see the obvious similarities to the Christian resurrection story.

There are several excellent sources that can provide a complete rendition and interpretation of the Ausarian Resurrection Drama. The authors Ra Un Nefer Amen and Dr. Muata Ashby have both done excellent works in this area of study. For a more complete reference list of books that can provide more detailed information review the reference section of the document entitled *A Theological Treatise on the Afrikan Origins of Christianity and Other Western Religions*, which was also prepared and offered by this Author through the *Sons of Ra Ministries*.

As with any historical study there can be varying interpretations developed as the modern theologian/historian endeavors to decipher past events. In the case of the Festival of Koiak we will explore two interpretations of this ancient celebration.



In the first interpretation the Raising of The Djed Pillar begins the festival days on the 21st day of the month of Koiak, which corresponds to November 6th. The Djed Pillar is symbolic of the strength and stability of the king and thus the kingdom. Following this day are four days that are observed in succession that ritualize the search, lamentations, and rejoining of Auset to Ausar to conceive Heru. The following provides a summary:

Day of Koiak	Corresponds To	Festival/Celbration
21	November 6 th	Raising of The Djed Pillar
27	November 12 th	Auset seeks the body of Ausar.
28	November 13 th	Auset grieves the loss of Ausar.
29	November 14 th	Aset rejoices as She finds Ausar.
30	November 15 th	Ennead feast in the House of Ra, Heru and Ausar; Invocation and offering to the Spirits (khu).

The second interpretation of the Festival of Koiak is a based on the Papyrus of Jumilhac. This ancient papyrus denotes a twelve day festival beginning on 19th day of the month of Koiak.

In this interpretation Auset reconstitutes the body of Ausar piece by piece over the twelve day period. On the first day she [Auset] finds the head of Ausar and on each subsequent day she finds a different part of the body of Ausar. This continues until the 29th day of the month of Koaik (the eleventh day) when she finds the heart of Ausar. Then on the 30th day of Koaik, which is the twelfth and final day of the celebration, the ceremony of Raising the Djed Pillar is performed by the King.

As previously mentioned the Raising of the Djed Pillar is symbolic of the strength and stability of the King. The strength and stability of the King is seen as corresponding to the strength and stability of the people and the kingdom. The Djed Pillar is formed from the tree that grew around Ausar. It is this pillar that Auset obtained from the King of Byblos after healing his son from a fatal illness.

The following page provides two depictions of the Djed Pillar. The first depiction shows the King Seti I raising the Djed. The second portrays Ausar within the Djed Pillar.



The Pharaoh Seti I Raising the Djed, from Abydos



Ausar within the Djed Pillar

A discussion on the festivals of Ancient Egypt would be incomplete without the mention of the Sed Festival. This festival is one of the most important in antiquity and it is often referred to as the Royal Jubilee. The Sed Festival ritualizes the king's right to rule and the renewal of his royal powers. This celebration has as its focus the vitality of the king. As the king is a representative of the people and his vitality speaks directly to the vitality of the people, it was important for the king to represent strength and vitality.

This ritual dates far back into Predynastic Nile Valley culture and traditions. In fact, variations of this ritual are found throughout Africa in antiquity and in modern times. The Sed Festival in Ancient Egypt was typically held after the king had ruled for thirty years. However, there is evidence that this timeframe may have been shorted by certain kings for various reasons.

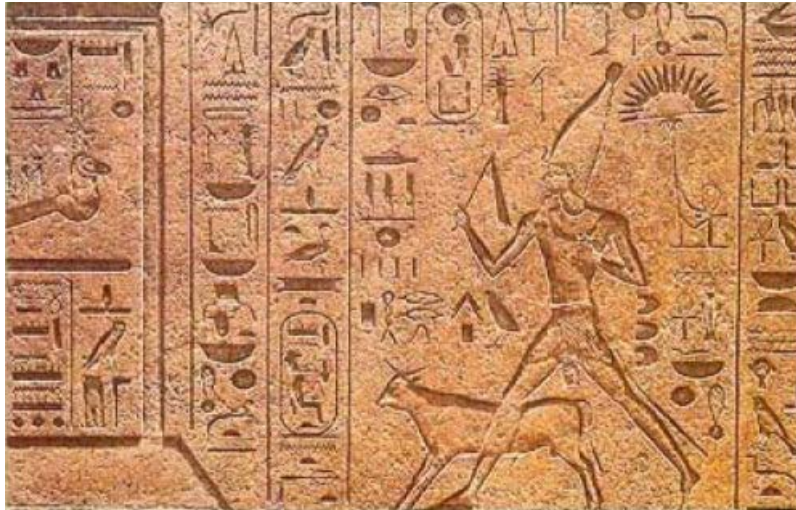
The central symbolism of the Sed Festival is the king running along side the Apis Bull to show his fitness. It is noteworthy to point out here the similarities to the Incwala Festival of the Swazi Nation that is discussed in the previous section, *African Harvest Festivals*. The Incwala Festival, in addition to being the Festival of the First Fruits, is a ceremony to renew the strength of the king. In the modern day Swazi Nation festival we see the following ritual:

A black bull is driven into the King's bower and this animal is used for the mystic and sacred purposes of the ceremony.



This exemplifies how this ancient tradition has survived to this day. In fact, the idea of the bull being sacred to the king is prevalent throughout Africa.

The following temple carving depicts the King running along side the Apis Bull.



Dinka people of modern day Southern Sudan have a ritual whereby their young men must jump onto the back of a bull and then run across several more as part of initiation into manhood. Once again, the similarities are striking. The picture below depicts the ritual:



Taking a running jump to launch himself onto the back of the first bull, the initiate attempts to run across the backs of twenty to forty cattle. The boy must take as few steps as possible without falling off, for to do so would bring shame on him for the rest of his life. This initiate repeats his run four times. If he completes this test without faltering, he earns the right to be called a man. Source: www.salon.com



Other Festivals

Harvest Festivals, Winter Solstice observances and Renewal/Rebirth rituals are common to all parts of the world. Within the Native American culture, the Iroquois and the Hopi have ceremonies that show a great similarity to the ancient and modern African festivals.

The Iroquois Confederation, which consists of the six nations, of the Mohawk, Oneida, Onondaga, Cayuga, Seneca and Tuscarora, observes a Midwinter Ceremony that is in either January or February depending on the moon cycle. When the new moon appears the spiritual year begins. Five days later – an interesting similarity to the Ancient Egyptian Epagonmenal Days – the ceremony starts. The celebration lasts for nine days culminating with the choosing of new council members. It is noteworthy that the Founders of the American Republic were greatly influenced by the governing system that the Iroquois Confederation had in place. It is said that Benjamin Franklin studied the Iroquois form of government as articulated in their Gayanerkowa (Great Law) to develop the U.S. Constitution.

The Hopi Nation observes the Winter Solstice through a festival called the Soyaluna. It is one of the Hopi's most sacred ceremonies. It is also known as the "Prayer-Offering Ceremony" because it is a time for saying prayers for the New Year and for wishing each other prosperity and health. The Hopi see this day as the day that the Sun God has traveled furthest from the earth. In order to bring the Sun God back the warriors have this festival. Thus, the purpose of the Soyaluna ceremony is to prevent the disappearance of the sun and to celebrate its return.

As previously mentioned Harvest Festivals are common throughout the modern world to include such diverse places as Korea, China, Israel and India. The Harvest Festival in Korea is called Chusok. At this time families take the time to thank their ancestors for the fruits of their labor.

In China and Vietnam, the families feast on mooncakes and round fruits, which are symbols for togetherness. In Israel, the harvest festival is called Succoth. This celebration last for seven days. During this time Jewish families build outdoor booths to symbolize thanksgiving and preservation.

The harvest celebration in India is called Pongal, or the Rice Harvest Festival. During this time families take time out to thank all of those who have contributed to a successful harvest. All are thanked, the gods, the sun and the cattle.





Extended Description of Karast Maát Kwanzaa

This section provides a detailed description for the *Karast Maát Kwanzaa*. The process for preparation and how to enter into this ritual observance is described in this section. Then an overview of key aspects for understanding the ritual and to fully maximize its potential is discussed. Finally, the days of *Karast Maát Kwanzaa* are once again listed with a detailed description of the significance for each of the days.

As previously mentioned, this Holy Days observance is an offering for all of humanity. The five days that comprise the *Karast Maát* speak to the spiritual development and manifestation in man/woman. Therefore, all that practice it have the opportunity to experience its benefits. Moreover, the remaining seven days that is held to be the traditional Kwanzaa celebration can also be interpreted in such a manner that all can participate.

This is accomplished by providing two definitions or interpretations for the seven days of traditional Kwanzaa. The first interpretation is the *Traditional Kwanzaa* definition. This applies to the original intent and purposes of Kwanzaa. It is understood that Kwanzaa was brought forth to help a specific people that are in a specific condition, which is that people of African descent find themselves at the bottom of the socioeconomic structure throughout the world. Thus, it is important that this condition be transformed and it is the responsibility of Africans throughout the world to transform it. It should also be noted that this is a noble pursuit and that it can only be good for humanity as a whole. A strong and self determining African population actually strengthens the position of all other groups and nations of the world. This is provided, of course, that those other groups and nations prescribe to an outlook that can best be described as that of a conscious human.

This brings me to the second interpretation for the seven days of traditional Kwanzaa, which is that of *Conscious Humanity*. Those humans that fit the definition of the conscious human are those that are not threatened by Africans owning their own resources (land, labor and mineral wealth) and speaking with their authentic voice. In fact, they would welcome it because they see it as bringing balance to the earth; it protects them from despots within their own communities and power structures who seek to control everything and everybody. They know that to encourage freedom and sovereignty for one is to encourage it for all.

It is also important to point out here that the *Conscious Humanity* interpretation is an interpretation that can be embraced by those of African descent also. In fact, it is in this interpretation that the human family is unified. The *Traditional*



Kwanzaa definition speaks to a particular situation and condition that is not permanent. We do not enshrine the idea that people of African descent will always be striving to bring our families, communities and nations back to vibrancy. In fact, we recognize and accept that at some point – in the near future - we will succeed. At this juncture the *Karast Maát Kwanzaa* Holy Days observance still proceeds; it now proceeds in a manner that recognizes that the initial goals of *Kwanzaa* are fulfilled and that we are now moving forward as a restored and whole human family. Nevertheless, we still have challenges and we must stay vigilante and constantly in a state of renewal. Thus, the *Conscious Humanity* interpretation of the seven days of *Kwanzaa* now becomes the mantra for all Participants and humanity as a whole.

Preparation and Beginning the Ritual Observance

To successfully prepare and enter into this ritual observance the Participant must enter with intention. Here we recognize our oneness with God Most High – The Creator of All – and we acknowledge that it seeks expression even through us. As mentioned previously, this Holy Days ritual observance is steadfast and unapologetic in reinstating the Ancient African Love Wisdom teachings first articulated to the world from the Nile Valley. Thus, the wisdom of the Ancient Elders is applied wholeheartedly.

It is not necessary that the observance of this ritual forces one to abandon any other belief systems or structures. We are simply applying the spiritual science of the African Priest and Elders for our transformation and the transformation of our communities and nations. Nevertheless, in order to gain the full benefits of participation there are certain percepts that must be adhered to.

Normally, during the time of year that this ritual observance is instituted much chaos and revelry does ensue. There is increased traffic with its accompanied increase of tension. Many people fall under the feeling, belief and experience of being obligated to certain duties that may be stress inducing. These obligations can vary from attending events to buying material items that may create a burden. Interesting to note that it is commonly reported that during this time of year there are more problems with certain crimes than at other times of the year. Oftentimes, those that are committing crimes would not do so under “normal” circumstances.

In addition to the crime, many people are running to and fro. This time of year can be a blur for many. There can be so much “merry making” that by the time one comes to their senses the New Year is well under way. Thus, the power and potentiality of the season is lost.



This is a time of stillness. And to take advantage of and benefit from the twelve day ritual observance one must endeavor to stillness. Therefore, it is important that by the time of the commencement of this Holy Days observance that the individual have brought to completion all obligations. Further, all distractions that would interfere with the intentional participation in the Holy Days observance must be minimized to the best of one's ability.

This means that by the first day, December 21st, of the *Karast Maát Kwanzaa* that all errands, shopping and busy work is completed. This will allow the Participant to enter into the Holy Days observance with fullness and intention.

Key Aspects of the Holy Days

As indicated, this ritual begins on December 21st which is the first day of winter. This is also known as the Winter Solstice. On this day the sun is in its furthest position from the earth from the perspective of being in the Northern Hemisphere. It is of note that 88% - 90% of the world's population lives in the Northern Hemisphere. The Africans who originated and migrated from the beginning of the Nile – near the equator – established their spiritual traditions and cosmology from the vantage point of Kemet in antiquity. Kemet is in the Northern Hemisphere and it is from Kemet that the entire world gets its spiritual traditions and cosmology. This is one explanation as to why a Northern Hemisphere perspective dominates the world.

In regards to the proper observance of these Holy Days, it may be deemed appropriate for those that live in the Southern Hemisphere to enact this ritual observance in alignment with their Winter Solstice, which would be June 21st. Notable countries that are in the Southern Hemisphere include Australia, Brazil and South Africa.

Returning to the main point of the Key Aspects of the Holy Days, there is a phenomenon that occurs immediately following the first day of winter (Dec. 21st). For three days, December 22nd, 23rd and 24th, the sun appears to stay in the same position. It does not move any further away nor does it come any closer. This is likened unto the three days in the grave. This is symbolic of initiation and dying to the old self in order to resurrect. What is important to point out here is that three days of stillness is being demonstrated by the universe.

As our Ancient Elders teach us: as above so below. Thus what is occurring in the macrocosm, the universe and specifically our solar system, is also occurring in the microcosm, which is us. So when the universe is still it behooves us to be still also; thereby placing ourselves in alignment with the universe and even God Most High – The Creator of All.



In acknowledgement of this occurrence and opportunity these three days are given a special meaning and specific practice. The term *Sadhana Shetaut Neter* is used to describe this three day phenomena and to provide a special attention to the practice for these three days. This term is gleaned from the work of Dr. Muata Abhaya Ashby and he translates it to mean a spiritual study (Sadhana) of the hidden ways (Shetaut) of the Gods (Neter).

Those familiar with Hinduism or Buddhism will be familiar with the term Sadhana, which is commonly understood to mean one's spiritual practice. And Shetaut and Neter are terms that relate to the language of the Ancient Egyptians or the Mdw Neter (language of God).

Typically, Sadhana refers to one's ongoing spiritual practice that is life-long. In this particular instance, however, it is being applied to the three specific days of December 22nd (Set), December 23rd (Ausar) and December 24th (Auset). Meaning, within the entire twelve day ritual we are recognizing three specific days that our primary focus is on stillness. Thus, if one is compelled or called to fast for three days then these three days offer a most appropriate period for the fast or intentional focused meditation. This does not imply that one cannot fast and will not be meditating and in prayer and reflection for the entire twelve days. This just emphasizes the added potency and power of observing these three specific days in this manner.

The significance of the *Sadhana Shetaut Neter* (December 22nd – 24th) in relationship to the overall success of the Holy Days observance should not be lost on the Participant. On the first day of the *Karast Maát Kwanzaa*, December 21st (Maát), we ensure that we are externally and internally in order so that we may proceed with intention. Then the next three days are observed in alignment with the stillness that is being exemplified by the universe itself. This allows us to build a solid foundation to bring forth the birth of the *Karast* within on December 25th (Heru). As each day builds upon the previous days it is important to find ourselves in alignment to reap the full benefits that this time of year offers.



The days of the Karast Maát Kwanzaa

This section provides a detailed description of the twelve days of the *Karast Maát Kwanzaa*. As mentioned previously there are two interpretations applied to the seven days of traditional Kwanzaa: *Traditional Kwanzaa* and *Conscious Humanity*. The newly added five days that are the *Karast Maát* only have one interpretation as the application is universal. Additionally, it can be envisioned that the first five days of the ritual observance apply more to personal development and transformation, whereas the remaining seven days apply to the community, nation and/or world evolution and transformation.

Maát **December 21st** *Balance* – All activities, internal and external are brought into balance, order and harmony.

Maát is symbolized by a female deity that corresponds to seven principles that are Order, Balance, Harmony, Compassion, Reciprocity, Justice and Truth. Maát relates to this ritual as being the foundation that we adhere to upon entering into the observance of the Holy Days. On this day, we ensure that all of our activities have been brought to a completion. We are in a place where we can quiet the mind and proceed unburdened into this period of stillness, meditation, reflection, self evaluation, inspiration, creativity and transformation. Our scales are balanced.

Set **December 22nd** *Desire* – The willingness to submit the personal self (Ego) to the Higher Faculties.

Set is commonly symbolized as egoist mind. Meaning, the personal mind that we create based on our sense of separation from our Source. Set is seen as a bringer of chaos and destruction. Set is personified as the wrong use of the will and being ruled by our desires. It represents the unauthorized or illegal governing of the Individual. We see this in the *Ausarian Drama* as Set, the brother of Ausar, illegally taking the throne from Ausar. This drama is also articulated in the Bible through the Cain and Abel story, the story of Esau and Jacob; and Jesus in the desert for 40 days being tempted by Satan. It is even retold in the contemporary tale of the Lion King.

On this day we acknowledge our willingness for our personality and lower faculties to come into submission to the Higher Mind. This can be envisioned as the dying on the cross of the old nature for the new to come forward. It must be noted that desire in and of itself is not evil or negative; it simply must be used to serve the True Self (Ausar).



Ausar **December 23rd** *True Self* – Recognition of the Higher Self that exists within which is the perfect will of the Creator.

On this day we acknowledge that submerged within our Being is our True Self (Ausar). This can be likened unto the Christ Self that is in perfect alignment with all that is. This sphere of our Being is wholly aware of our divine purpose and it seeks expression in the manifested universe. It is always present and it is ever regenerating and coming forward. It is through our spiritual practice and evolution that we are able to express more and more fully from this Reality.

Once we display the willingness to submit our personal self to our greater Self then all of our choices in our life and our life path reflect the perfect will of the Creator. As we become fully identified through this aspect of our Being then we truly experience and demonstrate ourselves as Manifestors of the Universe.

Auset **December 24th** *Love* – That which seeks for union with the True Self in order to bring forth the will of the Creator into manifestation. Unfailing Love.

Auset is the sister/wife of Ausar. In the Ausarian Drama, she searches the land for Ausar, her husband and rightful King of the Land. Even after Set cuts up the body of Ausar into fourteen pieces, Auset finds the missing pieces and reconstitutes her husband in order to divinely conceive a Son that will restore order and his Father's will on the earth.

Thus, Auset represents the aspect of searching for the True Self. She is steadfast in her allegiance and fully committed to finding Ausar. Once she brings forth the divine Son, she protects, nourishes and provides for him until he is able to challenge Set for the throne. On this day we acknowledge our searching for the True Self and we seek the birth of the *Karast* within. Here we see and experience the power of love. We understand God as Love and ourselves as offspring of Love.



Heru **December 25th** *Born* – Celebrate that *Karast* has brought forth true Will and Vision within and transformation is at hand. To be born.

This is a day of Celebration for a Son is born, the Spiritual Sun within. And not inconsequential on this day, the Sun begins its march back towards to earth. The Ancients celebrated this day because the Sun literally and symbolically represents life giving essence. Of note, the Sun is not fully resurrected until after the Vernal Equinox (Easter). However, it is acknowledged that all is well for it [the Sun] has returned.

This day is a day of celebration and thanksgiving. We may receive gifts or give gifts to others in recognition and honor of the *Karast* within. However, “gift giving” should only be done so provided an undue burden is not created. Going into debt, which is slavery, to give gifts would not be consistent with the spirit and intention of this Holy Days observance ritual. The gift of your divine presence is received and acknowledge by all.

Umoja **December 26th** *Unity* – To strive for and to maintain unity in the family, community and nation.

Traditional Kwanzaa

It is imperative for people of African descent to strive for and to maintain unity in the family, community and nation. African people must unite based on our commonality. The African-American must unite and seek and speak with their authentic voice. The Africans on the continent must unite and seek and speak with their authentic voice. We must work to build bridges of cooperation between the African-American and the Continental African. We must see and understand that Africans all over the world unnaturally comprise the bottom rungs of the socio-economic ladder. We must see and understand that by our unification that all Africans will be empowered.

Conscious Humanity

Unity speaks to the oneness of humanity. For in Truth all are one and all of the world’s Great Teachers have steadfastly brought forward this teaching. As it is written the entire law can be summed up as “Love thy neighbor as you love thy self”. To evaluate where we stand in the relationship of the Law of Oneness then we must inquire of ourselves “Do I want for my neighbor as I want for myself”? Meaning, we are to want the best for our neighbor as we seek the best for our self. We recognize that the universe is abundance and that there is more than enough for all through Maát.



Kujichagulia December 27th *Self Determination* – To define, name, create and speak for ourselves.

Traditional Kwanzaa

It is of utmost importance that we practice the principle of Self Determination in regards to the renaissance of the African People worldwide. In truth, no people can possibly move towards any form of freedom without first being Self Defining. It is a key prerequisite. As we take ownership of the process of defining, naming, creating and speaking for ourselves, the concept and the necessity of our Authentic Voice becomes all the more relevant and necessary. As we move through this process we must reevaluate what we have brought forth from within versus that which was fostered upon us. Even that which makes us uncomfortable must be reexamined. All true growth requires going through periods of discomfort. In light of that truth there are specific areas that present themselves as candidates for our reevaluation: the religious and spiritual traditions we acknowledge; the models of education that we participate in; the standards of beauty we adhere to; how we define the value of an Individual and their contribution; the names that we call ourselves by; the policies and principles that we defend.

Conscious Humanity

Self Determination for the Conscious Human speaks to the idea and practice of Freedom. Physical freedom is important and it was hard won and it must be diligently maintained. However, even more important than physical freedom, is the idea of Freedom of Conscience. We must be free to explore our truth and to then exercise our truth in the world. Throughout the ages despots have relentlessly worked to limit and control knowledge and the access to information for the masses of People. Once the mind is colonized then it is most difficult to gain and preserve freedom in the world. Therefore, on this day we recognize that Freedom of Conscience, Self Determination, is enforced and reinforced.

Ujima December 28th *Cooperation* – The importance of working together. Collective work and Responsibility.

Traditional Kwanzaa

Cooperation in the spirit of Collective Work and Responsibility is crucial as we build and rebuild our communities worldwide. Cooperation also speaks to harmony, which is something that must be restored to our living environments. We must recognize that only we can do it and that only we should do it. No one can nor should care for a people greater than they care for themselves. Thus, in the spirit of cooperation we keep our communities clean. This applies to physical deterioration along with the spiritual deterioration that we witness. So this would apply to the broad areas of picking up trash to ensuring that no one is allowed to



disrespect the community by pushing poison within it. It is clear that these tasks cannot be tackled alone and will require the participation of the entire community in the spirit of Ujima.

Conscious Humanity

The motivations for instituting the spirit of Cooperation are not unique to any one community. Whereas certain communities may appear to be facing greater difficulties, all of humanity is facing the same or similar challenges to one degree or another. The earth ecology as a whole is experiencing challenges that are calling for a greater solution. Further, we are either moving in a direction of Oneness, wholeness and reconciliation, or towards chaos, confusion and separation. Therefore, it is important that the spirit of Cooperation and Responsibility is practiced by all. We can no longer look to others to solve our problems. We cannot look to authority figures. We must take responsibility ourselves. In many instances the artificial authority group or figure cannot or will not respond. This gives us the opportunity to call forth upon something much greater within, and working in the Spirit of Cooperation among those of good will, we are able to accomplish the seemingly impossible.

Ujamaa **December 29th** *Family* – Honor and empower foundational relationships. Cooperative Economics.

Traditional Kwanzaa

Central to the rebuilding of our communities and nations worldwide is the establishment of sound and prosperous economies. It is interesting to note, that the organic meaning of the word Ujamaa is family. This exemplifies how it is family extended and networked together that ensures prosperity. We only have to take a cursory look at other communities to witness this principle in practice and the benefits that it has bestowed on those that have successfully practiced it throughout the ages. In fact, we can clearly see that certain “families” control certain industries. Families, of course, extend and now include nations and groups. In order for the African-American, Africans in the Diaspora and the Africans on the continent to achieve any semblance stability, the principle of Ujamaa must be practiced. We must also ensure that as we practice this principle it is performed in full accordance with the best of the wisdom of our African Elders who built civilization and brought it forth to humanity. Thus, in the practice of Ujamaa the *Principles of Maát* are adhered to with devotion. The nation states on the African continent must implement their programs and policies upon the *Principles of Maát*. This will allow Africa to once again be that shining light for the entire world.

Conscious Humanity

Responsible Economics is the application for the idea of Ujamaa for Conscious Humanity. Here, the Conscious Human is aware of that which she is supporting



through her patronage. We recognize that only what we feed will grow and what we do not feed will wither and die. In light of this truth, value decisions are made in terms of the types of enterprises and institutions we want to see thriving in the local community and the world community as a whole. This entails knowing the values of the organizations and businesses that we support. Questions that we may ask include the following: are they a responsible citizen; are they good for the environment; are the products that they sell helpful to Individuals and the environment; what type of policies are promoted through these businesses or institutions; is a proliferation of this particular enterprise a positive for humanity. In response to these questions we may determine that it is a sound idea to pay more for a product at a particular business in order to keep the community viable. Economies are barter systems. When we keep our neighbors employed and prospering, we also prosper ourselves. We must evaluate the wisdom of allowing more and more consolidation of power in the hands of a few. So here the local business, credit union, organic farmer and others so deemed are sought out and empowered.

Nia **December 30th** *Purpose* – The discovery, activation and then actualization of our divine purpose.

Traditional Kwanzaa

In Nia we recognize that we have a specific individual purpose to perform. It is our duty to discover this purpose and then to bring this purpose forth through our activation and actualization of it. Just as we have an individual purpose, our family or soul group which can be defined as being of those of African descent has a collective purpose to perform. In the exercising of this Holy Days observance we have affirmed that we do not belong within the “box” that has been prepared for us and for humanity as a whole. The African-American has historically been the voice of conscious for America and this reverberates throughout the world. This purpose still holds true even with a greater need and calling than was necessitated by slavery, deconstruction, Jim Crow and the civil rights era. We have a duty to fulfill. We are not in alignment with disorder, our spirit hates disorder and so we bring order. We restore Maát to the entire earth. We have as an example our glorious and exalted Ancestors. We answer the call.

Conscious Humanity

Through the development of stillness by the practice of meditation we open ourselves to a greater communication. This communication speaks to a great destiny for humanity. This communication speaks to humanity as a keeper of the flame of knowledge and wisdom. It speaks to a great society that recognizes the Sovereignty of all humans as Spiritual Beings. In order for us to experience this outcome it is necessary that we answer the call within. We learn how to tune out the outside programming and listen to the Inner Guidance System. This brings forth our individual and collective greatness and salvation.



Kuumba **December 31st** *Creativity* – The active use of our imagination in the service of our divine purpose.

Traditional Kwanzaa

The day of Kuumba calls for the right use of our imaginative faculty. We use this day to think and vision clearly the realization of our personal goals and our community/national goals. In order to use our creative capacity we create a clear mental picture of that we seek to experience. We experience the restoration of African people worldwide. We see vibrant and healthy communities. We open ourselves to an alternative way of thinking and by not being bound to former structures creative solutions come through us, even as us.

Conscious Humanity

The imagination is the one faculty where we can exercise a power that is likened unto divine power and presence. When we place ourselves in alignment and identify with our True Self (Ausar) then we truly co-create with God Most High – The Creator of All. We have access to assistance both seen and unseen. The world is calling for more and more people to bring this ability forth as this represents the salvation that the world seeks.

Imani **January 1st** *Faith* – Belief in Oneself, Community and Creator. The knowing anticipation that our vision is fulfilled.

Traditional Kwanzaa

The final principle is most appropriately Imani, which is Faith. This is one Principle in regards to the traditional seven day Kwanzaa observance that remains consistent regardless of the interpretation or orientation. We must have faith in ourselves, faith in our fellow man/woman, faith in the righteousness of our struggle and faith in the God of our Understanding.

“Faith is the substance of things hope for”

Conscious Humanity

In the *Principles of Faith for the Spiritual Society of Amen-Ra the Virtues of the Initiate* are articulated. This is most appropriate as the Participant in this ritual observance can be likened as to one undergoing initiation. Although we are always going through initiation whether consciously or not, this ritual observance is an acknowledgement and participation with the initiation process with the goal being the activation of the divine wisdom within. Thus, there are ten virtues that an Initiate is required to demonstrate prior to being accepted as a candidate for initiation into the Sacred Science of the African Elders of the Nile Valley.



Of these ten virtues, three deal directly with the idea and practice of Faith, as follows:

1. "Faith in the master's ability to teach the truth"
2. "Faith in one's ability to assimilate the truth"
3. "Faith in oneself to act with wisdom"

On this last day of our twelve day ritual observance it is most appropriate that we end with essential requirement of Faith. This is akin to the meaning of the Sabbath in terms of working for six days and then resting on the seventh. We have worked on the previous eleven days and now we rest on the twelfth day. Thus, the Sabbath is to be in stillness and knowingness that the work of the prior days now comes into fruition. And so it is that we use this day as a day of stillness and acknowledgement knowing that our seed is germinating; that we have received the necessary direction to proceed and our work will bring forth fruit in due season.

In the midst of outer dangers I have felt an inner calm and known resources of strength that only God could give. In many instances I have felt the power of God transforming the fatigue of despair into the buoyancy of hope. I am convinced that the universe is under the control of a loving purpose and that in the struggle for righteousness, man has cosmic companionship.

Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

Faith in God is the greatest power... but great, too, is faith in oneself.

Mary McLeod Bethune



Significance of a Twelve Day Ritual

The number twelve (12) represents the manifested universe or fruition. Whereas the number three (3) represents the Divine ▲ as in the Divine Trinity of the Father, Holy Spirit (Mother) and Son (union); and the number four (4) represents physical manifestation ■. Twelve is fruition or a fourfold manifestation of three i.e. $3 \times 4 = 12$. Symbolically this is represented by the triangle ▲ sitting on a four square foundation ■, which is the pyramid. Thus, the number twelve can be described as the number representing the spiritualization of matter.

This explains the reason for the division of the zodiac into twelve parts or signs. As this is a representation of the totality of the physical universe. All of our savior/resurrection stories such as the life of Jesus center around this fundamental truth. For it is the Initiate that becomes the Savior standing in the center of the manifested universe as the Sun. The section on Jesus and Hercules will go into further detail on the significance of the sun initiation.

The *Karast Maát Kwanzaa* has been created to serve as a yearly ritual to reinforce and remind us of our own redemption and resurrection. This understanding may provide a new interpretation to *The Twelve Days of Christmas*. Also of note is that the most Eastern Orthodox Churches celebrate Christmas on January 7th, which is exactly twelve days after December 25th.

Sacred Numerology for the Karast Maát

In the creating of the twelve days of the *Karast Maát Kwanzaa* it became apparent that there is an inherent sacred numerology that corresponds to the days of the *Karast Maát*. This section presents and discusses this occurrence so that the Reader may come to know how these Holy Days are naturally infused with a potency that can be empowering to the Participant.

As previously discussed the Holy Days observance begins on December 21st, which is the Winter Solstice or the first day of winter. The day that we start is when the Sun has moved it's farthest from the earth. The next three days then become very important. These three days have a very spiritual meaning in that they correspond to the Divine Trinity. The Divine Trinity speaks to the three-fold or triad manifestation in all reality; Father, Son and Holy Spirit; Mind, Body and Soul; Past, Present and Future. Here the two or duality unify in the three and become one. This illustrates the importance and potency of using the three days of stillness in the cosmos (December 22nd, 23rd & 24th) as a motivation for stillness within.



Thus, the period within the *Karast Maát Kwanzaa* that we know as the *Sadhana Shetaut Neter* is a very sacred time. And depending on how we use these three days will determine the success of the entire Twelve Holy Days observance. It is the spiritual foundation upon which we build. Here it is important to point out that upon the completion of the three days of stillness, we have completed the fourth (4th) day of the ritual; thereby laying our foundation.

Many have heard the term four-square or to stand upon one's square. This corresponds to the foundation that one stands on. When the Trinity descends and manifest on the physical plane it creates the four. Therefore, four (4) is the number of physical manifestation whereas three (3) is the number of spiritual manifestation. Thus, we have the four cardinal points, the four seasons and the four Gospels to name a few correspondences to the meaning and power of the number four.

Within the *Karast Maát Kwanzaa* the first four days represent the foundation stone that we build the entire ritual upon. Therefore, the effectiveness of the remaining eight (8) days is directly impacted based upon the foundation that we build in the first four days. Moving forward, the number eight (8) corresponds to transformation. Thus, the foundation we build will determine the transformation that we seek.

We can also look at our twelve day ritual as corresponding to two areas of development:

- Personal development
- Community development

The first five days of the ritual (December 21st, 22nd, 23rd, 24th & 25th) correspond to the personal development. This can be likened to the internal or individual as well as personal qualities, goals and aspirations that must be brought forth. It is interesting to note that the number five (5) corresponds to the number of man or personal power. It is here that man recognizes his personal dominion and sovereignty.

The remaining seven (7) days of the ritual (December 26th, 27th, 28th, 29th, 30th, 31st and January 1st) correspond more to community development and empowerment. The number seven (7) is the number of perfection. Thus, through the practice of the first five days we develop the Self and this allows us to move into the remaining seven days, which will bring about perfection through societal development.

We, as the Initiate, are represented by the number thirteen (13) and we stand outside of the ritual. However, we participate or pass through the ritual as the sun moves through the zodiac.



The following table provides a representation of the Holy Days observance and their correspondence to Sacred Numerology. The first column lists the name of the day, then the numerical value is listed and this is followed by a description of the numerical esoteric meaning.

Maát	1	<i>First</i> – We recognize that we live in a Spiritual Universe governed by Spiritual Law. Maát is the embodiment of these spiritual laws that govern the universe that represent was the Creator, Ra, built upon.
Set	2	<i>Duality</i> – Here the One becomes Two and we have the appearance of separation. Set and Ausar are, in fact, brothers. Here we have the appearance of positive and negative, order and disorder.
Ausar	3	<i>Trinity</i> – Corresponds to Spiritual Manifestation as we identify our Spiritual Reality of who we truly are. Ausar is the representation of that truth.
Auset	4	<i>Foundation</i> – The throne sits on the head of Auset. Meaning, the Divine Son can only come through her. It is the feminine principle of divinity and the unfailing love that it represents that allows for the birthing of Heru and his eventual restoration to the throne.
Heru	5	<i>Power</i> – As the number five corresponds to personal power and dominion, we can see how this relates to the recognition of the birth of Heru. Although he is a baby and must be protected and nourished, he represents power and dominion birthed.
Umoja	6	<i>Unrest</i> – The number six represents the Christ-Force or the Urge to Perfection. We must harness this force to move forward in our development. Striving for, building and maintaining Unity is a representation of harnessing the Creative Force in order to heal and build in a purposeful manner.
Kujichagulia	7	<i>Perfection</i> – In number seven we have Perfection. Once we have become fully self-determining through Unity then we have reached perfection for the way is now clear for us to move forward without looking back. The work is done; we just need to walk it out.



Ujima	8	<i>Transformation</i> – The number eight is the number of transformation and evolution. Through Cooperation we will transform our communities, nations and the world. To cooperate then is the fuel that will start and run the engine of true change.
Ujamaa	9	<i>Initiation</i> – Nine is the number of initiation. And nothing provides for a more sure initiation than Family. It is our Family – those that we are drawn to – that provides the true mirror back to ourselves. It is here we must face and deal with all that holds us back. It is our Family that we must trust, build and rely upon so that we manifest. Yet, it is also our Family that we oftentimes have the greatest difficulty in working with. Therefore, successfully practicing this truth will finally set us free in truth.
Nia	10	<i>Completion</i> – The number ten represents completion. Within the ritual it is the day of Purpose. Once we have discovered, accepted and then become our purpose then we are truly complete. This is true for the individual or the community as a whole. There is nothing more that can be added. To know and to live ones purpose is to be whole.
Kuumba	11	<i>New Beginnings</i> – Now that we are complete, in number eleven we can create New Beginnings. New Beginnings corresponds to Creativity. It is through our individual and community creativity that we can now bring forth the new beginnings that we have received as vision and purpose through the prior days and principles.
Imani	12	<i>Manifested Universe</i> – The Twelfth and final day of the <i>Karast Maát Kwanzaa</i> , which represents the Manifested Universe, most aptly corresponds to Faith. This day is the Sabbath and we rest with the assurance that our seed shall bring forth fruit. We are quiet within while reflecting on the active vision that has been birthed and brought forth during the previous eleven days. We now look within and to the outer world and say that it is good.
Ra	13	<i>Manifestor of the Universe</i> – On this thirteenth day that is outside of the Ritual yet it is part of the Ritual as it represents the Participants or the Co-creators. We recognize ourselves as Manifestors of our Universe. We pass through the ritual as the sun passes through the twelve divisions of heaven or the zodiac.

Two primary texts were used in the process of defining the meaning and attributes of the numbers. For more information and further study, the following books by Harriett Augusta Curtiss and F. Homer Curtiss should be referenced:



1. Key to the Universe or a Spiritual Interpretation of Numbers
2. Key of Destiny

Jesus and Hercules

The significance of the number twelve was briefly discussed in the introduction to this section. The stories of Jesus and Hercules are depictions of the universal Sun Myth, which is the spiritual unfoldment of the Spiritual Sun in the life of man/woman. Jesus and Hercules are personified by the sun and the number twelve is significant to both stories. In fact, we see that the same symbolisms and fundamental story are common to many ancient portrayals of the Sun Myth, to include:

- Jesus and the 12 disciples
- The 12 apostles of Osiris (Ausar)
- The 12 Sons of Jacob who founded the 12 tribes of Israel
- The 12 great labors of Hercules
- The 12 dimensions to King Solomon's (the sun) temple
- King Arthur and the 12 Knights of the Round Table (zodiac)

The above is a small representation of this spiritual story that has been passed down through the ages in many forms. The essence of this process is *the Great Law (Lord God) of Divine Love and Wisdom may bring forth and perfect Man/Woman made in the image of God.*

Thus, we have a deeper understanding of the life of Jesus and other Sun Initiates. Jesus represents the Initiate that has mastered the twelve disciplines and now he shines forth as a light and redeemer. Each of us is also an Initiate, consciously or unconsciously, and the Jesus story serves as a mystical allegory that represents the unfoldment and manifestation of the Cosmic Christ within.

The following quote from the *Key to Destiny* illumines this understanding:

The 12 was a symbol necessarily used by every Light Bearer, not to copy some older expression of cosmic truth but to illustrate the 12 aspects of the cycle through which both the physical Sun manifests in nature and the Spiritual Sun manifests in humanity; also to indicate 12 mighty zodiacal Hierarchies or Rays of Understanding, the 12 mighty expressions of cosmic Truth; 12 avenues through which the Sun of Righteousness – the incarnate Word – can shine forth to illuminate the hearts and minds of all classes and conditions of humanity.

Understanding Jesus as the Initiate that masters the manifested universe to become manifestor of the universe provides a basis for further exploration and



study. This can also be understood as the mastery of the twelve faculties in man.

Charles Fillmore's book, *The Twelve Powers of Man*, goes into detail of these 12 faculties and the process for their manifestation, which leads to the regeneration in man as represented by Jesus the Christ.

The following is from Fillmore's book, *The Twelve Powers of Man*:

#	Disciple Name	Meaning / Physical Correspondence
1	Peter	Faith / center of brain
2	Andrew	Strength / loins
3	James, son of Zebedee	Discrimination or Judgment / pit of stomach
4	John	Love / back of heart
5	Philip	Power / root of tongue
6	Bartholomew	Imagination / between the eyes
7	Thomas	Understanding / front brain
8	Matthew	Will / center front brain
9	James, son of Alphaeus	Order / navel
10	Simon	Zeal / back head, medulla
11	Thaddaeus	Renunciation or Elimination / abdominal region
12	Judas	Life Conserver / generative function

The above listing provides the faculties that must be cultivated by the Initiate. It represents a quality of being that is to be achieved, experienced and demonstrated.

The Twelve Labors of Hercules provide insight as to what the Initiate must accomplish or overcome as he passes through the various stages of initiation as represented by the zodiac or the cycle of evolution. The following table provides a summary of each of the 12 labors of Hercules as adapted from the book, *Key of Destiny*:



Twelve Labors of Hercules, from the book *Key of Destiny*:

#	Labor Name	Zodiac	Description
1	Killing the Nemean Lion	Leo	This entails the overcoming of self-indulgence, cowardice and weak uncontrolled passions. Victory here is represented by strength, courage and love.
2	Killing the Hydra	Scorpio	The subduing of sexual lust. The manifestation of Divine Love as the driving force in one's life.
3	The Capture of the Keryneian Doe	Cancer	Balance the feminine power of intuition. Learning to listen to the voice of the soul by stilling the intellectual activity.
4	The Capture of the Erymanthian Boar	Libra	To not indulge in gluttony. Eat to live, not live to eat. Man does not live by bread alone...
5	Cleansing the Augean Stables	Aquarius	Cleanse the lower appetites or nature in man. The subjugation of the physical body to the higher aspects. To also cleanse the thoughts held in mind.
6	Killing the Man-eating Birds of Stymphalos	Sagittarius	Discern those thoughts that have risen to a seeming higher truth, yet are not. To not be deceived by a seeming angel of light.
7	The Capture of the Cretan Bull	Taurus	To properly apply one's work and activity in the world to the service of the Christ. To not allow our toil and labor to be sacrificed to the king of this world.
8	Capturing the Man-eating Mares of Diomedes	Aries	To ensure that the Intellect does not rule or run amuck. The intellect is subdued and controlled by the Higher Will.
9	Seizing the Girdle of Hippolyte	Virgo	To unite with the feminine side (love, compassion, intuition, etc...). Allow this to be our inspiration and comforter. To accept our true Divine Love.
10	Capturing the Oxon of Geryoneus	Pisces	The manifestation of Wisdom and Understanding in all undertakings.
11	Obtaining the Golden Apples of Hesperides	Gemini	The manifestation of Divine Love with Immortal Life.
12	Carrying Cereberus from Hades	Capricorn	Descent into Hell and minister to the Spirits trapped there. Bring evil or the devil to light and show that it can be conquered and made friends of the Sun Initiate.



Cosmology Revealed

In the section titled *Key Aspects of the Holy Days*, the cosmological alignments that occur during the time of the year that this ritual is to be practiced were discussed. Specifically, that section discussed the phenomenon that occurs starting on the Winter Solstice, December 21st. This section delves further into this subject.

As previously mentioned, for three days after the Winter Solstice, which is the shortest day of the year and signifies the beginning of winter, the Sun appears to stay still. Then on December 25th the Sun begins its movement back towards the earth. The days start to get longer and the earth can rejoice for the Sun has been born. The Ancient Priests and Teachers understood the correlation between the Sun and the Son of God. Most, if not all, resurrected Saviors are said to be born on December 25th. Each of them individually are a representation and example for humanity as a whole, and it is the Spiritual Sun rising in the hearts of man/woman that is the ultimate truth that is being communicated through symbolic myth-form.

Further, as the Sun matures to the position where the day and night are of an equal twelve hour period, this is the point of the Vernal Equinox. This day is known as the first day of spring. Here we see the Sun as being fully matured or resurrected because the days are now getting longer than the nights; the day has conquered the night. This brings us to Easter or Resurrection Day.

Every year people will notice that Easter Sunday moves around. However, it is not always commonly understood as to why this occurs. This occurs because Easter Sunday is tied directly to the Vernal Equinox or the beginning of spring, which is March 21st, and the lunar cycle. Thus, Easter Sunday is always the first Sunday after the first full moon occurring after the Vernal Equinox. If the first full moon occurs on the first Sunday after the Vernal Equinox, then the following Sunday is designated as Easter Sunday.

Much more symbolism and detail could be explored here. Suffice to say that the cosmological understandings of the Ancients still permeate our religions and traditions to this day. To summarize, the Sun is born on December 25th and it is fully resurrected by the Vernal Equinox or Easter Sunday as the case may be.

As our focus regarding the cosmological relevance is in regards to the *Karast Maát Kwanzaa* Holy Days ritual observance, we will now return to the occurrences and symbolisms that are specific to that time of year, i.e. December 21st – January 1st.



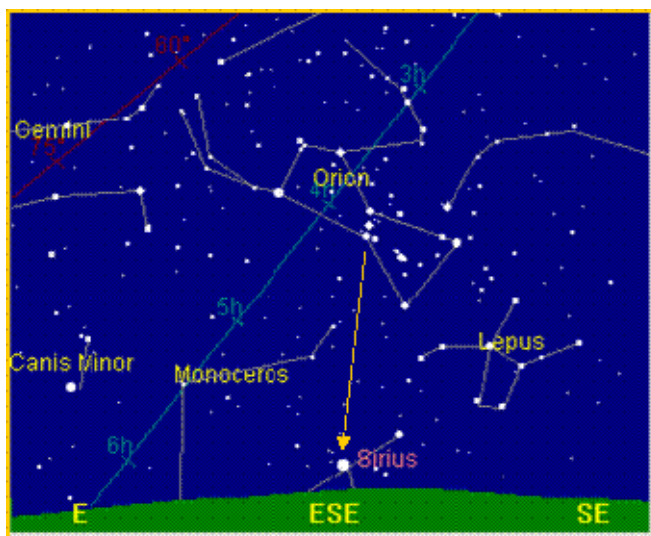
In the *Cycles of Times* section of the document titled *A Theological Treatise on the Afrikan Origins of Christianity & Other Western Religions*, the reader is introduced to several aspects that relate to the cosmology of the Nile Valley to include: The Great Year; Pole Star in relationship to the deluge/flood; the Sothic Period; Sirius and Orion.

Sirius and Orion figure prominently within the time period associated with the *Karast Maát Kwanzaa*. Sirius is regarded as a very sacred star system to the Ancient Egyptians. It is considered the companion star to our star (the Sun) as these two systems revolve around each other. This 1,461 year cycle is described as the Sothic Period. This was the first method for the keeping of the calendar. Moreover, we find that the prominence and importance of Sirius continues in the culture and traditions of the Dogon.

The Dogon are indigenous to Mali in West Africa. However, according to their traditions they are descendents from a sect of Ancient Egyptian Priests that left the Nile Valley in one of the many migrations. According to their traditions, Sirius is the abode of the gods and from where we originate. It is notable that the Dogon possessed knowledge of the Sirius Star System long before it could be validated by modern Western technology. Specifically they spoke of another star, Sirius B, which could not be seen by modern telescopes until much later.

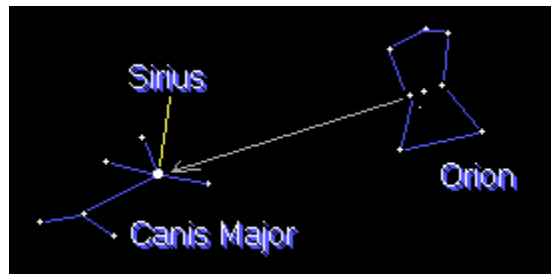
Sirius relates to Isis (Auset). It represents the Divine Feminine, the Mother of God, The Virgin Mary. It is the Star of Bethlehem. In late December this star shines brightly in the night on the eastern horizon. In fact, Sirius is considered the brightest star in the sky next to our own Sun.

Orion relates to Osiris (Ausar). This star system is representative of the King. There are three stars in Orion's belt and these are the Three Kings that follow the Star of Bethlehem to the manger with the Christ Child. The three pyramids on the Giza Plateau are laid out in alignment with the three stars of Orion.





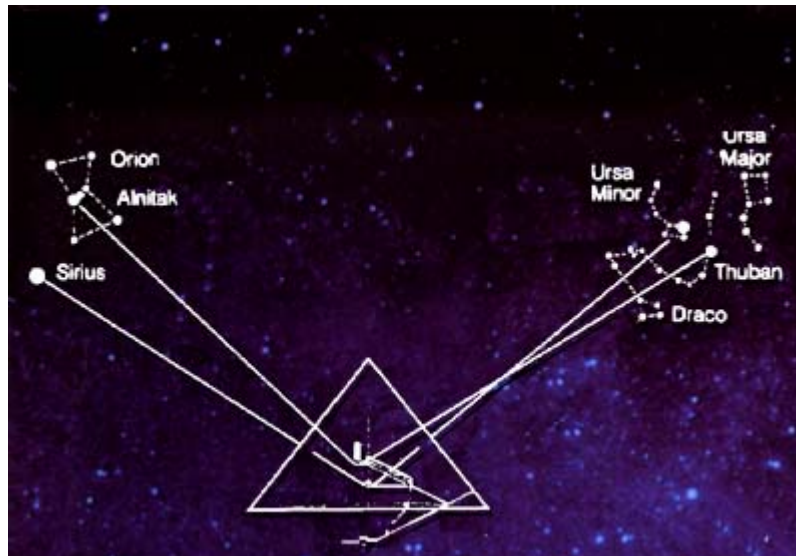
This page lists further pictorial representations of the cosmology that relates to resurrection, obtained from www.crystalinks.com



Sirius in Canis Major



Belt of Orion and the Pyramids of the Giza Plateau



Sirius - Queens Chamber [Feminine] - The Pleiades [Sister Stars]

Orion - Kings Chamber - Thuban

Thuban - Gold - Snake - Alpha Draconis

It was the pole star when the pyramids were built.

Seamen called it 'The Dragon's Tail'.

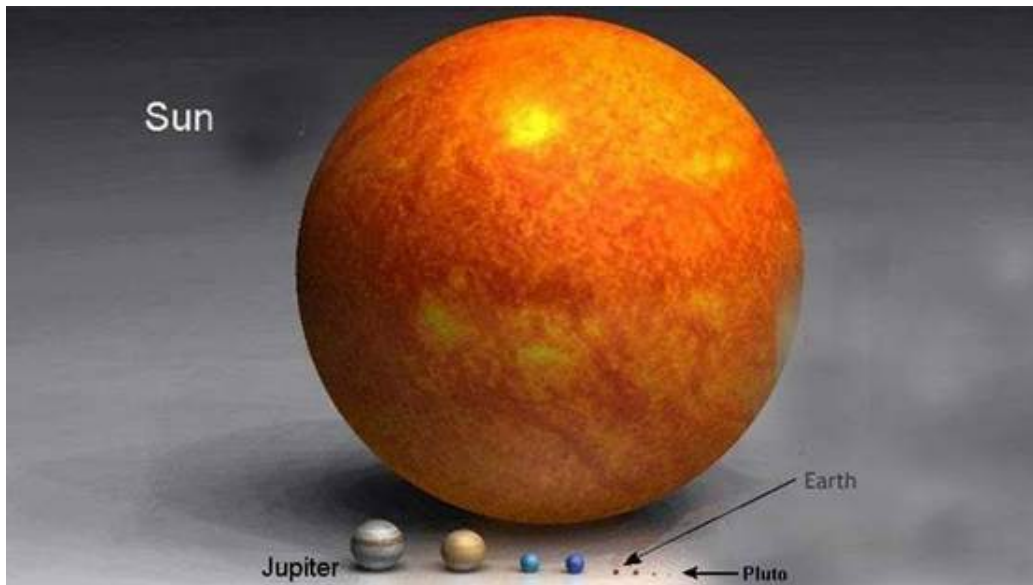


During late December it is quite easy to see Sirius shining brightly in the night sky with the three stars of Orion pointing directly towards her. Here we see the universe communicating the eternal truth of our origin, nature and destiny.

To summarize the attributes and qualities of both Sirius and Orion:

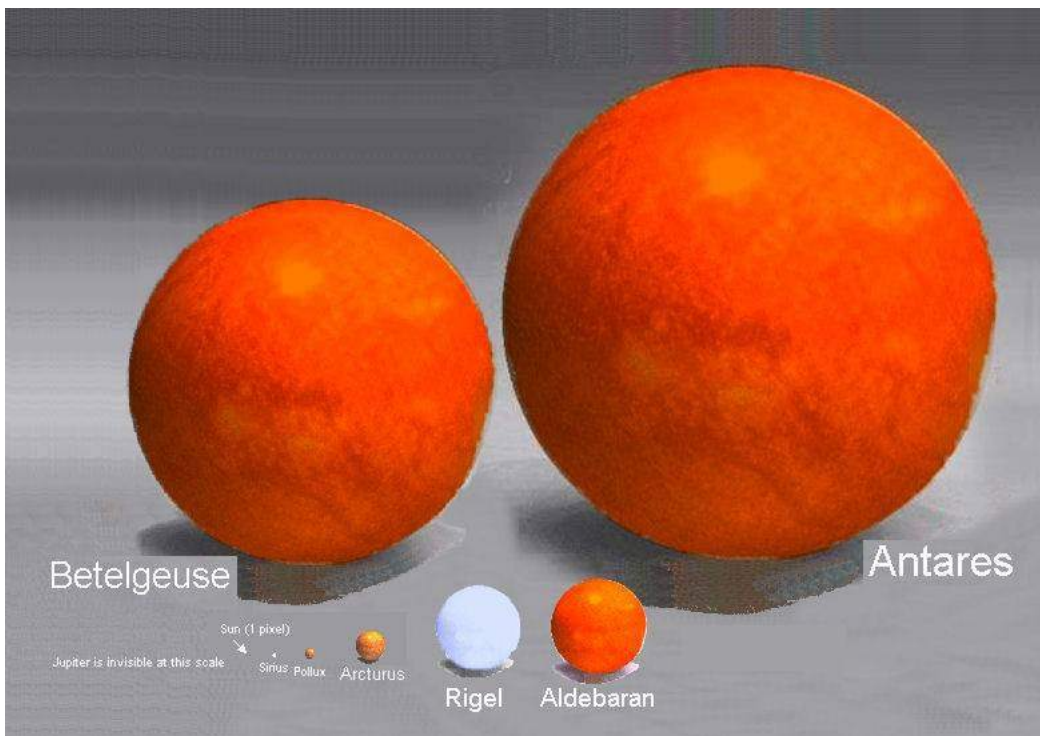
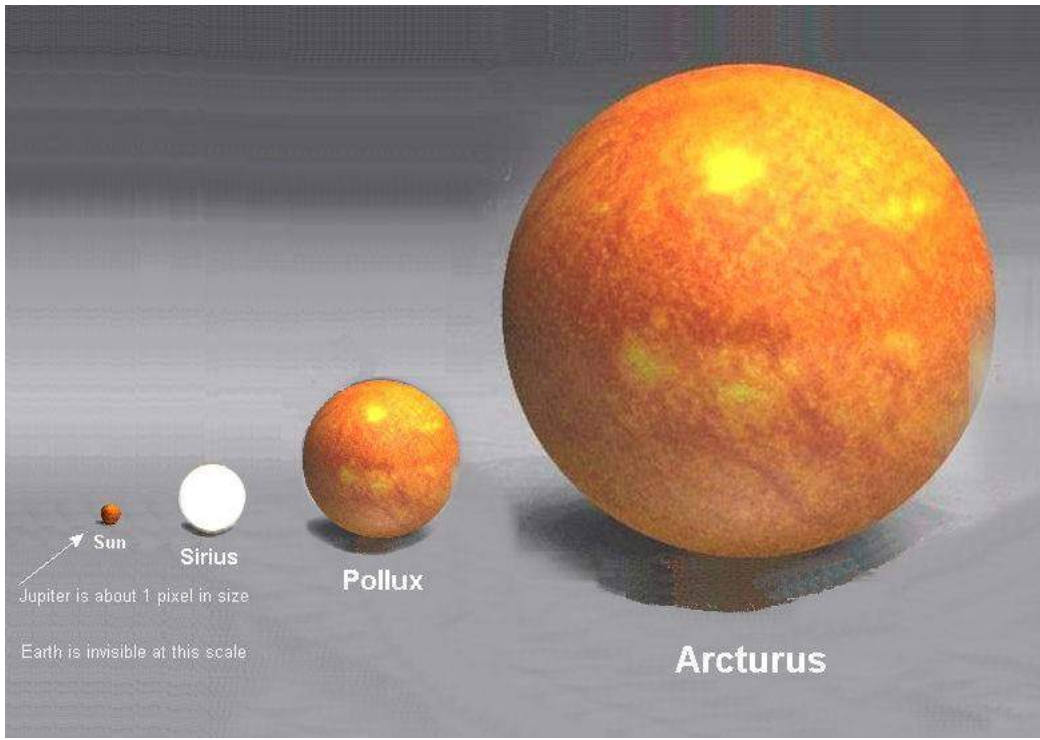
	Corresponds To	Meaning & Symbolisms
Sirius	Isis (Greek), Auset (African)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Mother of God ➤ Virgin Mary ➤ Star of Bethlehem ➤ The Queen
Orion	Osiris (Greek), Ausar (African)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Father Principle ➤ Three Wise Men (Kings) ➤ Gifts of gold, frankincense & myrrh ➤ The King
Sun	Jesus, Heru, Heracles, etc...	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Born on December 25th (Return/Rebirth/Birth of the Sun/Son) ➤ In the grave for three days (grave can be cave or manger), it is three days of gestation (e.g. Jonah in the Belly of the Whale);

To conclude the section *Cosmology Revealed*, a few pictures have been included to provide a visual impression of our part of the universe.





Consider that our Sun is one among a billion stars in our galaxy, the Milky Way. And that the Milky Way galaxy is one of a billion galaxies!








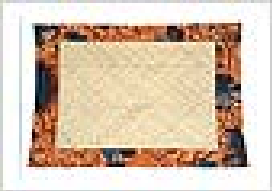
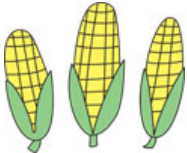





Symbols for Karast Maát Kwanzaa

This section provides a pictorial glossary of symbols that can be used for the *Karast Maát Kwanzaa*. Several symbols have already been created in reference to what we understand as Traditional Kwanzaa. The traditional symbols are listed first and then followed by the new symbols for the *Karast Maát Kwanzaa*.

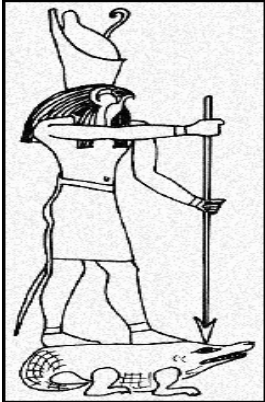


The Reader/Participant is invited to review the new symbols being put forth herein. The symbols provide a basis for augmenting and synthesizing the Ritual Observance. All are encourage to bring forth one's own creativity (Kuumba) in regards to the use of these symbols and/or in the creation of your own.

Symbol	Corresponds To	Meaning
<p>Kinara & Mishumaa Saba</p> 	<p>All Seven Traditional Principles: Umoja, Kujichagulia, Ujima, Ujamaa, Nia, Kuumba, Imani</p>	<p>The Kinara is the candle holder. It symbolizes the Ancestors. Mishumaa saba are the seven candles: three red, three green, and one black. The back candle symbolizes Umoja (unity) and is lit on December 26. The three green candles, representing Nia, Ujima, and Imani, are placed to the right of the Umoja candle, while the three red candles, representing Kujichagulia, Ujamaa, and Kuumba, are placed to the left of it.</p>
<p>Kikombe Cha Umoja</p> 	<p>Unity & Family: Umoja, Ujamaa</p>	<p>The Kikombe Cha Umoja is the Unity Cup. It is used for pouring libations to the Ancestors. The pouring of libations is how a ceremony is opened.</p>
<p>Mazao</p> 	<p>Fruits, Thanksgiving</p>	<p>Symbolizes the fruit or the harvest. It is the basis for coming together to give thanks for all that has worked for and received.</p>








Symbol	Corresponds To	Meaning
<p>Mkeka</p> 	<p>Foundation</p>	<p>The mkeka is made from straw or cloth. It symbolizes the foundation that we stand and build upon. It represents the four cardinal points, the foursquare foundation.</p>
<p>Vibunzi</p> 	<p>Children, Ujamaa</p>	<p>The Vibunzi is an ear of corn and it symbolizes the children. This represents the future hopes for the family and the community.</p>
<p>Zawadi</p> 	<p>Gifts, Heru</p>	<p>Zawadi means gifts. We give meaningful gifts that encourage growth and success. We give gifts to the Christ child that is within as we celebrate the birth/rebirth of the Karast.</p>
<p>Goddess Maát</p> 	<p>Maát</p>	<p>Symbolizes the principles on which we build, Truth, Justice, Balance, Order, Harmony, Reciprocity & Compassion.</p>
<p>Scales of Maát</p> 	<p>Maát</p>	<p>Here we stand before the Scales of Maát as we seek balance within. This is conceptualized by the weighing of the heart on one side  and it being as light as a feather, which is on the other side. </p>







Symbol	Corresponds To	Meaning
<p>Heru & Set</p> 	<p>Heru & Set</p>	<p>Heru spearing Set in the form of a crocodile. It is from Set that the term Satan is derived. This symbolizes the subjugation of the lower aspects of our Being to the will of the Higher. Here we overcome egoism, selfishness and desires that are not in alignment with the Maát.</p> <p>This is relevant on a personal level as well as a community and societal level. <i>The world rejoices when the Righteous are in power.</i></p>
<p>St. Giorgis & Satan</p> 	<p>Heru & Set</p>	<p>This is St. Giorgis slaying Satan in the form of a dragon. This symbol is from the Ethiopian Coptic Church. We see this same symbol across Europe in the form of St. George slaying the dragon. Both symbols are derived from the earlier symbols of Heru & Set from the Nile Valley culture and traditions.</p>
<p>Flail & Crook</p> 	<p>Ausar</p>	<p>The Flail and Crook represent the power and the strength of Ausar, the King. This can be used to symbolize the inner strength and truth of the Participant. The Flail represents discipline and self-restraint while the Crook represents authority and power to do.</p> <p><i>Yeah thou I walk through the valley of the shadow of death I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me.</i></p>



Symbol	Corresponds To	Meaning
<p>Djed</p> 	<p>Ausar</p>	<p>This symbolizes the backbone of Ausar. It represents firmness, stability and strength.</p>
<p>Evergreen Tree</p> 	<p>Ausar</p>	<p>The evergreen tree is a symbol of immortality. It remains green in the dead of winter even when all other trees have lost all of their leaves.</p> <p>Ausar is referred to as the green man</p>  <p>for he represents the regeneration power of nature. He is forever coming forth. He was placed in a coffin by Set, which grew into a Byblos tree that gave off a wonderful fragrance.</p>
<p>Auset nursing Heru</p> 	<p>Auset & Heru</p>	<p>Auset nursing Heru represent the nurturing, love, support and protection that is necessary to bring forth the Christ child, the Karast within.</p> <p>Auset after findin Ausar reunites with him to miraculous conceive a Son. The rightful heir to the throne.</p>
<p>Madonna and Child</p> 	<p>Auset & Heru</p>	<p>This Madonna and Child statue is located at Abbey of Einsiedeln (Hermits) in Switzerland. This is one of many "black" Madonna and Child statues across Europe to include the Vatican. The dark skinned Madonna's are considered powerful and miraculous by the devotees.</p>



Symbol	Corresponds To	Meaning
<p>Star</p> 	<p>Auset</p>	<p>The Star Sirius was previously discussed in detail in the <i>Cosmology Revealed</i> section. This is the Star of Bethlehem and it is traditional placed on top of the Christmas Tree.</p>
<p>Khepera</p> 	<p>Kuumba</p>	<p>Khepera is a symbol of the creative power of Ra. The dung beetle rolling a ball of dung and birthing its offspring within the dung was observed by the Afrikan Priests and Elders.</p> <p>This symbolizes creating from the void. The bringing forth into manifestation of our gifts, talents, ideas and contributions from within. As offspring of God Most High, we share in the creative aspect of God.</p>
<p>Conquering Lion of Judah</p> 	<p>Ra</p>	<p>The Conquering Lion of Judah can be likened unto Ra. The King wears a headdress that symbolizes a Lion's mane. The Lion as King of the Animal Kingdom is associated with the King of Kemet, who is also known as a Son of Ra. The Lion's roar brings forth the vibration of Rah!</p>  <p>This symbolizes the Participant and/or the Initiate. Having completed the twelve day ritual we now go forward like Ra, as a Co-creator with God Most High.</p>