

The Greek Section of the Rosetta Stone

1. In the reign of the young one who has succeeded his father in the kingship, lord of diadems, most glorious, who has established Egypt and is pious
2. Towards the gods, triumphant over his enemies, who has restored the civilised life of men, lord of the Thirty Years Festivals¹, even as Hephaistos² the Great, a king like the Sun³,
3. Great king of the Upper and Lower countries⁴, offspring of the Gods Philopatores, one of whom Hephaistos has approved, to whom the Sun has given victory, the living image of Zeus⁵, son of the Sun, Ptolemy
4. Living for ever, beloved of Ptah, in the ninth year, when Aetos son of Aetos was priest of Alexander, and the Gods Soteres, and the Gods Adelphoi, and the Gods Euergetai, and the Gods Philopatores⁶ and
5. The God Epiphanes Eucharistos; Pyrrha daughter of Philinos being Athlophoros of Berenike Euergetis; Areia daughter of Diogenes being Kanephoros of Arsinoe Philadelphos; Irene
6. Daughter of Ptolemy being Priestess of Arsinoe Philopator⁷; the fourth of the month of Xandikos, according to the Egyptians the 18th Mekhir. DECREE. There being assembled the Chief Priests and Prophets and those who enter the inner shrine for the robing of the
7. Gods, and the Fan-bearers and the Sacred Scribes and all the other priests from the temples throughout the land who have come to meet the king at Memphis, for the feast of the assumption
8. By Ptolemy, the ever-living, the beloved of Ptah, the God Epiphanes Eucharistos, the kingship in which he succeeded his father, they being assembled in the temple in Memphis this day declared:
9. Whereas king Ptolemy, the ever-living, the beloved of Ptah, the god Epiphanes Eucharistos, the son of King Ptolemy and Queen Arsinoe, the Gods Philopatores, has been a benefactor both to the temples and
10. To those who dwell in them, as well as all those who are his subjects, being a god sprung from a god and goddess (like Horus the son of Isis and Osiris, who avenged his father Osiris)⁸ (and) being benevolently disposed towards
11. The gods, has dedicated to the temples revenues in money and corn and has undertaken much outlay to bring Egypt into prosperity, and to establish the temples,

¹ The Sed Festival, originally held at thirty-year intervals after a king's coronation, in order to renew a king's physical powers.

² In the Egyptian version Ptah.

³ In the Egyptian version Ra.

⁴ The South and North of Egypt, the two great predynastic kingdoms, we always remembered in the royal title.

⁵ In the Egyptian version Amun.

⁶ Alexander the Great, Ptolemy I and Berenike I, Ptolemy II and Arsinoe II, Ptolemy III and Berenike II, and Ptolemy IV and Arsinoe III respectively.

⁷ Eponymous priests; priests and priestesses, always with Greek names, attached to the royal cult, who served in their office for a year and were arranged in two colleges in a completely Greek institution.

⁸ Ie Horus-avenger-of-his-father, in Greek Harendotes.

12. And has been generous with all his own means; and of the revenues and taxes levied in Egypt some he has wholly remitted and others he has lightened, in order that the people and all the others might be
13. In prosperity during his reign; and whereas he has remitted the debts to the crown being many in number which they in Egypt and in the rest of the kingdom owed; and whereas those who were
14. In prison and those who were under accusation for a long time, he has freed of the charges against them; and whereas he has directed that the gods shall continue to enjoy the revenues of the temples and the yearly allowances given to them, both of
15. Corn and money, likewise also the revenue assigned to the gods from vine land and from gardens and the other properties which belonged to the gods in his father's time;
16. And whereas he directed also, with regard to the priests, that they should pay no more as the tax for admission to the priesthood than what was appointed them throughout his father's reign and until the first year of his own reign; and has relieved the members of the
17. Priestly orders from the yearly journey to Alexandria; and whereas he has directed that impressment for the navy shall no longer be employed; and of the tax in byssus⁹ cloth paid by the temples to the crown he
18. Has remitted two-thirds; and whatever things were neglected in former times he has restored to their proper condition, having a care how the traditional duties shall be fittingly paid to the gods;
19. And likewise has apportioned justice to all, like Hermes¹⁰ the great and great; and has ordained that those who return of the warrior class, and of others who were unfavourably
20. Disposed in the days of the disturbances¹¹, should, on their return be allowed to occupy their old possessions; and whereas he provided that cavalry and infantry forces and ships should be sent out against those who invaded
21. Egypt by sea and by land, laying out great sums in money and corn in order that the temples and all those who are in the land might be in safety; and having
22. Gone to Lycopolis¹² in the Busirite nome, which had been occupied and fortified against a siege with an abundant store of weapons, and all other supplies (seeing that disaffection was now of long
23. Standing among the impious men gathered into it, who had perpetrated much damage to the temples and to all the inhabitants of Egypt), and having
24. Encamped against it, he surrounded it with mounds and trenches and elaborate fortifications; when the Nile made a great rise in the eighth year (of his reign), which usually floods the

⁹ Fine linen.

¹⁰ In the Egyptian version Thoth.

¹¹ A reference to the years since 205 BC, during which Upper Egypt had been ruled by two rebel native pharaohs, first Hor-Wennefer (previously misread as Hor-em-akhet) and since 199 BC, Ankh-Wennefer (misread as Ankh-em-akhet).

¹² A town in the ninth nome (administrative area) of the Delta, probably near Busiris but not identified with certainty.

25. Plains, he prevented it, by damming at many points the outlets of the channels (spending upon this no small amount of money), and setting cavalry and infantry to guard
26. Them, in a short time he took the town by storm and destroyed all the impious men in it, even as Hermes and Horus, the son of Isis and Osiris, formerly subdued the rebels in the same
27. District¹³; and as to those who had led the rebels in the time of his father and who had disturbed the land and done wrong to the temples, he came to Memphis to avenge
28. His father and his own kingship, and punished them all as they deserved, at the time that he came there to perform the proper ceremonies for the assumption of the crown; and whereas he remitted what
29. Was due to the crown in the temples up to his eighth year, being no small amount of corn and money; so also the fines for the byssus
30. Cloth not delivered to the crown, and of those delivered, the several fees for their verification, for the same period; and he also freed the temples of (the tax of) the *artabe*¹⁴ for every *aroura*¹⁵ of sacred land and likewise
31. The jar of wine for each *aroura* of vine land; and whereas he bestowed many gifts upon Apis and Mnevis and upon the other sacred animals in Egypt, because he was much more considerate than the kings before him of all that belonged to
32. The gods; and for their burials he gave what was suitable lavishly and splendidly, and what was regularly paid to their special shrines, with sacrifices and festivals and other customary observances;
33. And he maintained the honours of the temples and of Egypt according to the laws; and he adorned the temple of Apis with rich work, spending upon it gold and silver
34. And precious stones, no small amount; and whereas he has founded temples and shrines and altars, and has repaired those requiring it, having the spirit of a beneficent god in matters pertaining to
35. Religion; and whereas after enquiry he has been renewing the most honourable of the temples during his reign, as is becoming,; in requital of which things the gods have given him health, victory and power, and all other good things,
36. And he and his children shall retain the kingship for all time. WITH PROPITIOUS FORTUNE: It was resolved by the priests of all the temples in the land to increase greatly the existing honours of
37. King PTOLEMY, THE EVER-LIVING, THE BELOVED OF PTAH, THE GOD EPIPHANES EUCHARISTOS, likewise those of his parents the Gods Philopatores, and of his ancestors, the Gods Euergetai and
38. The Gods Adelphoi and the Gods Soteres and to set up in the most prominent place of every temple an image of the EVER-LIVING King PTOLEMY, THE BELOVED OF PTAH, THE GOD EPIPHANES EUCHARISTOS,
39. An image which shall be called that of 'PTOLEMY, the defender of Egypt', beside which shall stand the principal god of the temple, handing him the weapon of victory¹⁶, all of which shall be manufactured (in the Egyptian)

¹³ According to one version of the Osiris legend, his followers under Horus and Thoth defeated the supporters of Seth nearby at Hermopolis Parva.

¹⁴ A measure of grain.

¹⁵ A measurement of land equal to about 2/3 of an acre (about 2,735 sq. m.).

40. fashion; and that the priests shall pay homage to the images three times a day, and put upon them the sacred garments, and perform the other usual honours such as given to the other gods in the Egyptian
41. festivals; and to establish for King PTOLEMY, THE GOD EPIPHANES EUCHARISTOS, sprung of King Ptolemy and Queen Arsinoe, the Gods Philopatores, a statue and golden shrine in each of the
42. Temples, and to set it up in the inner chamber with the other shrines; and in the great festivals in which the shrines are carried in procession the shrine of the GOD EPIPHANES EUCHARISTOS shall be carried in procession with them.
43. And in order that it may be easily distinguishable now and for all time, there shall be set upon the shrine the ten gold diadems of the king, to which shall be added a uraeus¹⁷ but instead of
44. The uraeus-shaped diadems which are upon the other shrines, in the centre of them shall be the crown called *Pschent*¹⁸ which he put on when he went into the temple at Memphis
45. To perform therein the ceremonies for assuming the kingship; and there shall be placed on the square surface round about the diadems, beside the aforementioned crown, golden symbols (eight in number signifying)
46. That it is (the shrine) of the king who makes manifest the Upper and Lower countries. And since it is the 30th of Mesore on which the birthday of the king is celebrated, and likewise (the 17th of Paophi)
47. On which he succeeded his father in the kingship, they have held these days in honour as name-days in the temples, since they are sources of great blessings for all; it was further decreed that a festival shall be kept in the temples throughout Egypt
48. On these days in every month, on which there shall be sacrifices and libations and all the ceremonies customary at the other festivals (and the offerings shall be given to the priests who)
49. Serve in the temples. And a festival shall be kept for King PTOLEMY, THE EVER-LIVING, THE BELOVED OF PTAH, THE GOD EPIPHANES EUCHARISTOS, yearly in the temples throughout the
50. Land from the 1st of Thoth for five days, in which they shall wear garlands and perform sacrifices and libations and the other usual honours, and the priests (in each temple) shall be called
51. Priests of the GOD EPIPHANES EUCHARISTOS in addition to the names of the other gods whom they serve; and his priesthood shall be entered upon all formal documents (and engraved upon the rings which they wear);
52. And private individuals shall also be allowed to keep the festival and set up the aforementioned shrine and have it in their homes, performing the aforementioned celebrations
53. Yearly, in order that it may be known to all that the men of Egypt magnify and honour the GOD EPIPHANES EUCHARISTOS the king, according to the law. This decree shall be inscribed on a stela of

¹⁶ The *khepesh*, or scimitar, the royal weapon often depicted being given by a god to the king.

¹⁷ The cobra, symbol of kingship.

¹⁸ From the Egyptian *Pa-sekhemty*, the two powers, that is the Double Crown which incorporated the Red Crown of Lower Egypt and the White Crown of Upper Egypt.

54. Hard stone in sacred [that is hieroglyphic] and native [that is demotic] and Greek characters and set up in each of the first, second, and third [rank] temples beside the image of the ever living king.