

“Man Proposes, God Disposes,” Part 2

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A bust of
Virgil from
his tomb at
Naples,
Italy.

PHOTO: A.
Hunter
Wright

Both Virgil's act of creation and the ambivalent act of destruction and recycling performed by the Egyptian populace were acts of remembrance; both were self-serving, and both were accidentally and unconsciously irreverent. Both had borrowed materials from a predecessor in order to apply them to a new purpose, and both had performed a service to people of the future and a disservice to God: They had profaned an image devoted to God and thus unknowingly salvaged it from oblivion. In time, this secret has been revealed.

In the mid-nineteenth century, on the east bank of the Nile, halfway between Memphis and Thebes, the ruins of an ancient and unidentified city, literally covered by the sands of time, were found by the army of Napoleon excellently preserved. Its outlines were mapped by the army's engineers, and the reliefs on its tombs and temples and boundary steles were recorded by

archaeologists. Later in that century, a poor woman of the house of Ishmael, who was digging on the ancient site for nitrogen-rich fuel for her hearth, accidentally uncovered a cache of three hundred letters written in cuneiform on clay tablets that identified the unknown city as Akhetaten and its builder as the then-unknown pharaoh Akhenaten. Today the sacred city of Akhetaten remains the only ancient Egyptian city whose internal plan is preserved in detail. During the twentieth century, three millennia after the mysterious and damaging enmity that arose between Egyptians and Israelites, more than one student of Egyptology has proposed that Akhenaten might be another child of the Hebrew scriptures, one whose name was also banned in Egypt and whose memory was buried in Israel by biblical redactors. Among the ancient adherents of this school are Lysimachus, Tacitus, Strabo, and Manetho; among the modern adherents are Sir Matthew Flinders Petrie, James Henry Breasted, Arthur Weigall, Alan Gardiner, E. Wallis Budge, Sigmund Freud, and Ahmed Osman. Breasted was the first modern scholar to recognize that the name *Moses* means "child" in the ancient Egyptian language (*The Dawn of Conscience*, 1934, page 350). Freud popularized this meaning to identify the Jewish figure Moses with the Egyptian Akhenaten or one of the heretic king's followers (*Moses and Monotheism*, 1937). Osman went further and put this meaning into a theory with dramatic context (*The Hebrew Pharaohs of Egypt*, 1987; *Moses and Akhenaten*, 1990) by historical identification of biblical characters: All the kings who ruled from the sacred city of Akhetaten, the so-called Amarna kings—Akhenaten (Amenhotep IV), Semenkhkare, Tutankhaten (Tutankhamun), and Aye—are identified as descendants of the house of Jacob; that is to say, Israel, through Yuya, the vizier to Amenhotep III, who was, historically, the biblical patriarch Joseph. The usurper Horemheb is identified as the biblical oppressor king "who knew not Joseph" (Exodus 1:8); Akhenaten he identified as the biblical Moses. Osman proposes that after Akhenaten fell from power and fled into exile—when it became a crime to utter the name *Akhenaten*, the name that had been part of his royal

and religious power while he sat on the throne—he was referred to unofficially as “the fallen one” or “the rebel of Akhetaten”; and his followers, faced with the accusation that their leader was not the real heir to the throne and being forbidden to speak his name, invented for him a nickname—*Mos*, meaning “the child” or “the son” or “the son and rightful heir”—to indicate that Akhenaten was the legitimate son of Amenhotep III and the rightful heir to his father’s throne. That nickname, claims Osman, has come down to us in its Greek transliteration, as *Moses*.

In 1907, after centuries of speculation, three British scholars published extensive findings and thorough research to prove that the prophetic Hebrew image of the Golden Age of the future had been grafted into Virgil’s Fourth Eclogue (*Virgil’s Messianic Eclogue: Its Meaning, Occasion & Sources*). A century of historical and literary clarifications followed. Our time offers a further point of clarification: The Divine Child who would fulfill the original intention of the oracle was born not around 40 BCE, as Virgil had hoped, nor nearly forty years later in Bethlehem, as medieval Christians believed, but in the year 1959 of our own age. The Child’s name was Jamil (See *Jamil: Child of Light*).*

* My note [“The Divine Child of Virgil”](#) provides an account of how the image of the Divine Child came to enter Virgil’s Fourth Eclogue and a summary of these findings.

Robert Petrovich
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FURTHER READING:

Jamil: Child of Light, Gene Savoy (1973)

< [For ebook, click HERE](#) >

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“Man Proposes, God Disposes,”

Part 1



A bust of Virgil
from his tomb at
Naples, Italy.
PHOTO: A. Hunter
Wright

Late in the year 40 BCE, the young Roman poet Virgil composed a poem to celebrate his patron Pollios on the latter's ascension to consulship. The poem has come down to us as Virgil's Fourth Eclogue. In it the poet praises Pollios in his praise of the blossoming promise of a divine child to come, a child expected to be born within the year, the first year of his patron's consulship. The poem sings of the Roman consul, speaks of a crime committed by the Roman people and a mysterious act of primeval treachery, and announces the impending birth of a divine boy-child, "the Light of Ages,"

whose coming is to be the sign of the beginning of a new Golden Age. Virgil, a poet and not a prophet, attributed the inspiration of his poem to the Cumaean Sibyl in order to call to mind in his Roman readers the renowned *Libri Fatales*, or *Books of Fate*, which we know, in the form we have them, as *The Sibylline Oracles*. Romans had often imagined a Golden Age that belonged to the infancy of the world. In his poem, however, Virgil gave to Rome images of a Golden Age of the future, announced by the birth of a wondrous child of divine nature, the firstborn of a new race to which nature itself would respond by bringing forth fruit in abundance, by making rough places smooth, and by bringing to the world a universal peace in which even the animals would share. When Virgil incorporated these prophetic images of the Golden Age to come into his poem, he knew their oracular power would resonate with the rulers and populace of Rome. What Virgil did not know is that his copy of the Sibyl's book had been grafted, three centuries before, with Hebrew prophecy translated into Greek and that the passages from *The Book of Fates* that he had borrowed for his poem were part of this prophecy.

The original purpose of the Hebrew words had been to reveal how God's purpose in the world would be fulfilled. When Virgil embedded these words into his poem, he used them for a Roman purpose: to announce and illuminate the birth of a hoped-for boy-child who would restore the Roman world to a place of glory in the cosmos. As fate would have it, the wondrous boy-child whom Virgil expected did not appear.

The void in Virgil's prophecy remained to be fulfilled in a future century. In 339 CE Emperor Constantine's bishop of Caesarea, Eusebius—under the mistaken impression that he was living in the fourth century of the prophesied millennial Golden Age—proposed to fill that void when he identified the Divine Child of Virgil's poem with Christ Jesus (*Oration in Praise of Constantine*, chapters 19–20), thus making Virgil into the gentile prophet of Christ for Christians of the

Middle Ages and beyond.

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Another such act of fabrication was committed in Egypt centuries before Virgil: In the early fourteenth century BCE, in the semicircle of the Amarna Plain, generations of villagers picked out adobe bricks from the walls of uninhabited houses and palaces in a broken, antique city, whose name they probably did not know, to build for themselves new homes along the rim of the plain. The mud bricks that the villagers did not bother to remove, in time, were reduced to ruin and ultimately into deposits of nitrogen-rich soil—that is, all but the foundational ones, which were preserved by the clean, dry sands blown in by desert winds over the ages that followed.

Unknowingly, these villagers had violated an image devoted to God. The convenient-sized mud bricks they took for themselves had once been used to construct the ephemeral holy city Akhetaten, the political capital dedicated to The One and Universal God. The city had been constructed on a sacred tract of land centuries before them by a king who had been raised from childhood to inherit the throne of Egypt: Amenhotep IV, who, once he was consecrated as chief priest and prophet to The One God, Aten, called himself Akhenaten.



Detail from a

statue of
Horemheb with
the god Horus.
PHOTO:
Captmondo on
wikipedia.com

The dismemberment of the walls by the villagers was the last act in the erasure of the city and its founder from memory, an act of forgetfulness first undertaken and encouraged by the general Horemheb, who usurped Akhenaten's throne for himself and made himself king. In the first years of his illegitimate reign, Horemheb proposed to destroy the memory of the One God and his heretical prophet and to restore the country of Egypt to the stability of religious convention: He forbade the worship of The One God and ordered all standing monuments in the city of Akhetaten to be pulled down and thoroughly smashed. The kings who succeeded Horemheb systematically demolished the stonework of the city's palaces and temples. Ramses II alone shipped thousands of limestone blocks from the temples of Akhetaten across the Nile to rebuild the temple at Hermopolis. The usurper king also attempted to erase from history the kings of the holy city Akhetaten. He ordered their names expunged from the walls of temples and palaces and monuments throughout Egypt, just as king Akhenaten decades before him had ordered the names of all deities other than The One God to be expunged from the kingdom. After Horemheb, the names of the kings of the holy city were ignored in all Egyptian records and omitted from the ancestral king-lists: the name *Horemheb* followed the name of Akhenaten's father in the records and not the name *Akhenaten*. And just as Akhenaten had proscribed in his reign the utterance of the plural word for the gods, *netaru*, so did Horemheb in his reign decree it a crime punishable by death to utter the name *Akhenaten*. The two opponents, Horemheb and Akhenaten, both followed the same Egyptian creed: so long as an inscription exists in the wrong form, the wrong beliefs live. Only one of them followed that

cultural creed to good purpose.

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