

## Christianity: An Ancient Egyptian Religion

In his highly provocative 1998 book, *Christianity: An Ancient Egyptian Religion*, Ahmed Osman makes many remarkable assertions. To open the volume, Osman writes that “...the stories in the Koran come from the same source as the books in the Bible,” and that the teachings of Hermes Trismegistus have survived into the present era “in the teachings of the Islamic Sufis, Jewish Qabbalah (sic) and Christian Rosicrucians and Freemasons.” He explains how Gnostic Christians of the 1st and 2nd centuries C.E. grew from the cult of Serapis, who he states “made no distinction between Christ and Serapis.”

Osman writes of the importance of the archaeological discoveries of the Amarna Letters in 1887, the Ugaritic Texts beginning in 1929, the Dead Sea Scrolls in 1946, and the Nag Hammadi library in 1945, and quotes the Harvard professor who translated the Nag Hammadi Gospel of Thomas as stating that, as a result of these discoveries, it is the “conventional picture [of Christianity] itself that is called into question.”

Osman’s scholarship revolves around several controversial but well-researched points. He makes the case that the historical Jesus lived many centuries earlier than the prevailing timeline permits, identifying Him as Joshua of the 15th century who succeeded Moses as the leader of the Israelites. He states that this was once the teaching of the early Christian Church, but that “an attempt has been made to explain away this identification” and presents evidence for his view in several canonical Old Testament texts. Osman explains that Abram allowed his wife Sarai to marry the Pharaoh who impregnated her with Isaac, but then expelled the entire family when he discovered the treachery. This research indicates that Moses, Aaron and Ishmael were descendants of Jacob, but not of Abraham. Osman provides compelling evidence for further

claims that may upend traditional Biblical perspectives. He states that the Israelite David was actually the Egyptian Pharaoh Thutmose III, and Thutmose IV (Tutankhamen) was actually Jesus, known in the Old Testament as Joshua. He identifies Solomon as Amenhotep III and Moses as Amenhotep IV, aka the monotheistic heretic Akhenaten.

While students of religion may be tempted to dismiss Osman's research because of its unorthodox conclusions, I hope they will delve into the evidence Osman supplies through his diligent scholarship before they make up their minds on the complex perspectives and theories he presents.

1. Osman, Ahmed. *Christianity: An Ancient Egyptian Religion*. Simon and Schuster, 19 Apr. 2005.

<https://www.amazon.com/Christianity-Egyptian-Religion-Ahmed-Osman/dp/1591430461>