

# *Emblems of divine power*



Procession of the Bull Apis (detail 1) by Frederick Arthur Bridgman, 1879

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An important Biblical error is alleged to have been discovered by Mr. Charles T. Beke,<sup>1</sup> the learned author of a well-known work called *Origines Biblicae*, and exposed in a new pamphlet of his bearing the title of *The Idol in Horeb*. He proves therein that the “golden calf” made by Aaron and worshipped by the Israelites was, in fact, no calf at all but a globe. This would be a curious yet trifling error in a book which is now proved to be more full of errors and contradictions than any other work in the whole world; but in this instance, we are afraid, the mistake is rather that of the author himself. We have not yet seen the pamphlet, and therefore, judge but by the reviews of it. The mistaken use of the word “calf” for “globe” is due, he says, to the incorrect translation of the Hebrew word “agel” or “egel.” The Israelites despairing of the return of Moses from Mount Sinai, made and worshipped not a “molten calf”<sup>2</sup> but a globe or disc of molten gold which was in those days a universal symbol of power. Later on, the word “egel” was translated “calf,” because both terms “calf” and “globe” are synonymous and pronounced alike in the Hebrew language. We do not question the correctness of the author’s philological demonstration as to the word itself, but rather whether he is right in calling it a mistake in its symbological rendering. For if both “calf” and “globe” are synonymous words, so also the symbology of the *globe* and the ox was identical.

The winged globe of the Egyptians, the Scarabaeus, or “stellar disc”;

The circle or globe of the Phoenician Astarte; the Crescent of Minerva;

The disc or *globe* between the two cow’s horns, on the brow of Isis;

The winged disc, with pendant-crowned Uraei, carrying the cross of life;

The solar globe or disc, resting upon the outspread horns of the goddess Hathor; and the horns of the Egyptian Amon;

The deifying of the ox,

— all have the same meaning. The globe and the horns of the ox speak the same story: they are the emblem of the eternal divine power. Was not Amon or “the hidden one,” the greatest and highest of the Egyptian gods, the “husband of his mother, his own father, and his own son,” the One in Three (*i.e.*, identical with the Christian trinity), according to the interpretation of the best Egyptologists, including the piously Christian George Ebers and Brugsch-Bey — represented with a ram’s head as Amon-Chnemu?<sup>3</sup> Before, therefore, the Biblical scholars lay such stress upon the dead letter meaning of the Biblical words, they should in all fairness turn their atten-

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<sup>1</sup> [Charles Tilstone Beke, 1800–74, English traveller, geographer and Biblical critic.]

<sup>2</sup> [*Exodus* xxxii, 4, 8; *Nehemiah* ix, 18. — *Boris de Zirkoff*.]

<sup>3</sup> [Also Khnemu, Khnum, and Chnum. — *Boris de Zirkoff*.]



tion to more serious questions. They ought, for instance, to prove to the satisfaction of all — Christians and infidels alike — the reason why in ancient Hebrew coins and elsewhere, Moses is likewise represented with horns; and why such “horns” should be also found on the monotheistical Levitical altar. . . .



Procession of the Bull Apis (detail 2) by Frederick Arthur Bridgman, 1879