

【 插图 · 中文导读英文版 】

*The Story of the Bible*

# 圣经的故事

[美] 房龙 著  
王勋 纪飞 等 编译



清华大学出版社





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## 内 容 简 介

《圣经的故事》是一部以通俗的手法描写和演绎《圣经》故事的文学巨著。《圣经》是西方文明的基石，而《圣经》原典的庄严肃穆常使人望而生畏。本书作者房龙以简洁优美的叙述，解读了《圣经》这部伟大作品，同时还勾勒出了一幅犹太人的历史画卷。《圣经》是怎样一部书，包含哪些内容，作者是谁，成书于何时，犹太教与基督教的关系，希腊罗马文明与基督教的关系，耶稣是怎样一个人……这些在房龙的娓娓叙述之下变得清晰而迷人。

该书自出版以来，一直畅销至今，无论作为了解《圣经》的读本，还是作为语言学习的课外读物，本书对当代中国的读者都将产生积极的影响。为了使读者能够了解每段故事概况，进而提高阅读速度和阅读水平，在每段故事的开始部分增加了中文导读。书中所配插图为著名插画家多雷所作。

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# 前言

亨德里克·威廉·房龙（Hendrik Willem Van Loon，1882—1944），荷兰裔美国人，20世纪美国著名的通俗历史学家、科普作家和文学家，在历史、文化、文明、科学等方面都有著作，被誉为“伟大的文化普及者，传播人类文明的文化骑士”。

1882年1月14日，房龙出生于荷兰鹿特丹。幼年时对历史、地理、船舶、绘画和音乐感兴趣，这种兴趣伴随着他的一生。从8岁起，房龙先后进入一些著名的寄宿制学校，学习了拉丁文、希腊文和英文，10岁时，房龙便立志要成为历史学家。1902年，房龙入美国康奈尔大学学习，获学士学位；之后，房龙进入德国慕尼黑大学学习，1911年获博士学位。房龙求学前后，当过编辑、记者、播音员，也先后在美国几所大学任教，游历过世界上很多地方。1913年，房龙编著并出版了第一本历史书《荷兰共和国的衰亡》，虽然销路一般，但受到书评界的赞扬。1920年圣诞节期间，房龙出版了他的第二本书《古代的人》，这是一部带插图的通俗历史读本，市场反应良好。经过知识、阅历、研究成果等方面的积累，房龙于1921年出版了他的第三部历史著作《人类的故事》，并一举成名，从此房龙迎来了他创作的丰收期。之后，房龙陆续出版了《发明的故事》、《圣经的故事》、《美国简史》、《地理的故事》（《人类的家园》）、《人类的艺术》、《宽容》、《与世界伟人谈心》、《伦勃朗传》、《太平洋的故事》等二十多部著作。房龙作品的内容涉及历史、地理、宗教、文学、政治、艺术、科学和技术等诸多方面。房龙多才多艺，能用十种语言写作和与人交流，拉得一手优美的小提琴，还能画画，他的著作中的所有插图全部出自他自己手笔。1944年3月11日，房龙在美国康涅狄格州去世，美国《星期日快报》刊登讣告时用了这样的标题“历史成就了他的名声——房龙逝世”。

房龙的作品文笔优美、知识广博，在世界各地广受读者喜爱。其作品内容丰富、资料翔实、知识广博而不乏真知灼见，文字深入浅出、通俗优

# 前言



美、轻松风趣而又发人深省，贯穿着理性、宽容和进步的思想，具有经久不衰的魅力。他的绝大部分著作均是风靡世界的畅销书，历经近一个世纪仍不失魅力，影响了一代又一代的读者。房龙的作品饮誉世界，荷兰、德国、法国、瑞典、丹麦、芬兰、挪威、日本、印度、前苏联、西班牙、意大利、波兰、匈牙利、希腊等国都翻译出版了他的作品。

自 20 世纪 20 年代开始，房龙的主要作品几乎被同步介绍给中国的读者。翻译者把这个荷兰裔美国人的名字译为“房龙”。此后，这个名字为我国读者所熟悉。房龙深入浅出的通俗文风和百科全书般的渊博知识，对中国读者产生了巨大的影响。这是因为，一方面房龙的文风正好适合于当时新文化运动所提倡的生活化的白话文，房龙的书也为中国求知者提供了关于人类和自然的启蒙知识；另一方面，房龙的写作技巧也给中国当时的作家以很多启发。历史学家和著名报人曹聚仁回忆说：20 世纪 20 年代，他在候车时偶然买到《人类的故事》中译本，“那天下午，我发痴似的，车来了，在车上读，到了家中，把晚饭吞下去，就靠在床上读，一直读到天明，走马观花地总算看完了。这 50 年中，我总是看了又看，除了《儒林外史》、《红楼梦》，没有其他的书这么吸引我了”。郁达夫曾说：“房龙的笔，有一种魔力……是将文学家的手法，拿来用以讲述科学……无论大人小孩，读他书的人，都觉得娓娓忘倦了。”郁达夫曾说，房龙的笔有一种魅力，干燥无味的科学常识经他那么一写，无论大人小孩，读他书的人都觉得娓娓忘倦了。20 世纪 80 年代是中国改革开放的年代，房龙的作品重新被发现，且被逐步引进。而自 20 世纪 90 年代后期开始，国内兴起“房龙热”，房龙的作品再次受到读者的青睐，这是因为他的著作特别符合现代中国人的心理气象：务实进取的时代，读书趋向于知识性、趣味性。

目前，国内已出版的房龙著作形式主要有两种：一种是中文翻译版，另一种是中英文对照版。其中的中英文对照读本比较受读者的欢迎，这主要是得益于中国人热衷于学习英语的大环境。从英文学习的角度来看，直接使用纯英文的学习资料更有利于英语学习。考虑到对英文内容背景的了解有助于英文阅读，使用中文导读应该是一种比较好的方式，也可以说是该类型书的第三种版本形式。采用中文导读而非中英文对照的方式进行编排，这样有利于国内读者摆脱对英文阅读依赖中文注释的习惯。基于以上原因，我们决定编译房龙系列著作中的经典，其中包括《人类的故事》、《圣经的故事》、《地理的故事》、《宽容》和《美国简史》，并采用中文导读英文版的形式出版。同时，为了读者更好地理解书中内容，加入大量插图，



在中文导读中，我们尽力使其贴近原作的精髓，也尽可能保留原作的风格。我们希望能够编出为当代中国读者所喜爱的经典读本。读者在阅读英文故事之前，可以先阅读中文导读内容，这样有利于了解故事背景，从而加快阅读速度。我们相信，这些经典著作的引进对加强当代中国读者，特别是青少年读者的科学素养和人文修养是非常有帮助的。

房龙始终站在全人类的高度在写作，他摒弃了深奥理论，却拥有自己独立的思想和体系，他的论述主要是围绕人类生存与发展等本质的问题，贯穿其中的精神是科学、宽容和进步，他的目标是向人类的无知与偏执挑战，他采取的方式是普及知识和真理，使它们成为人所皆知的常识。房龙毕生持人文主义立场，在有的问题上不免有与唯物主义者不同的观点；同时，由于他是生活在 20 世纪早期的美国作家，其思想的观点不可避免地会受到时代和历史的局限，比如在他的《地理的故事》一书中错误地将西藏放到“中亚高地”这一章，而不是“中国”这一章来讲述，又比如他以地理环境决定论来解释日本近代侵略行为，希望读者朋友阅读这些著作时能够甄别。

本书主要内容由王勋、纪飞编译。参加本书故事素材搜集整理及编译工作的还有郑佳、刘乃亚、赵雪、左新杲、黄福成、冯洁、徐鑫、马启龙、王业伟、王旭敏、陈楠、王多多、邵舒丽、周丽萍、王晓旭、李永振、孟宪行、熊红华、胡国平、熊建国、徐平国、王小红等。限于我们的科学、人文素养和英语水平，书中难免有不当之处，衷心希望读者朋友批评指正。



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# 1. 一份文学遗产

## A Literary Inheritance



这本书写的不是历史上确实发生过什么，而是一个叫犹太的部落认为发生了什么。

犹太人为我们提供了《圣经》和基督，但对于这个奇特部族的起源，我们竟然一无所知。

4000年前，巴比伦王国和亚述王国通过叙利亚这条狭长的地带与埃及通商。从阿拉伯沙漠迁来的闪族部落就分布在这一地区。部族之间充满争吵、混战、掠夺。

闪族部落的一队犹太人曾经流浪了千百年，竭力想拥有一小块属于自己的土地。他们曾经在埃及住过。后来，他们离开埃及，联合成一个强大部落，征服了巴勒斯坦，建立了独立的国家。这个国家存在了几个世纪，然后并入了亚历山大帝国，之后又成了罗马帝国的一部分。

犹太人撰写了自己的历史，用他们的看法，讲述了他们在埃及人、迦南人、巴比伦人当中的经历。《圣经》就是一部犹太人版本的古代亚洲史和非洲史。

《旧约》基本用希伯来语写成，只有几章预言是用阿拉米文写的。在1000年的时间里，犹太人的故事和预言被记录下来，汇编成书。后来，这些文字被译成希腊文，传到了欧洲。

基督死后的前两三百年期间，由于受到罗马当局的迫害，基督和他的使徒的故事只能秘密地通过手抄的册子传播。后来，教会整理了这些不同



的版本，经过几百年的讨论和争辩，最终确定了我们现在所见的《新约》。

## HOW THE OLD AND THE NEW TESTAMENT CAME TO BE WRITTEN AND WHAT HAPPENED TO THE HOLY BOOK IN THE COURSE OF MANY CENTURIES

THE pyramids were a thousand years old.

Babylon and Nineveh had become the centres of vast empires.

The valley of the Nile and that of the broad Euphrates and Tigris were filled with swarming masses of busy people, when a small tribe of desert wanderers, for reasons of their own, decided to leave their home along the sandy wastes of the Arabian desert, and began to travel northward in search of more fertile fields.

In time to come, these wanderers were to be known as the Jews.

Centuries later, they were to give us the most important of all our books, the Bible.

Still later, one of their women was to give birth to the kindest and greatest of all teachers.

And yet, curious to say, we know nothing of the origin of those strange folk, who came from nowhere, who played the greatest role ever allotted to the race of man, and then departed from the historical stage to become exiles among the nations of the world.

What I shall therefore tell you in this chapter is somewhat vague in its general character and none too reliable as to detail.

But the archaeologists are busily digging in the soil of Palestine. They are learning more and more as time goes by.

A few facts are at our disposal, and of these I shall try to give you a trustworthy account.

Through the western part of Asia run two broad rivers.

They take their origin among the high mountains of the north. They lose themselves in the waters of the Persian Gulf.

Along the banks of those two muddy streams, life was very agreeable and quite lazy. Therefore the people who inhabited either the cold mountains of the north or the scorching desert of the south all tried to get a foothold in the valleys of the Tigris and the Euphrates. Whenever they had a chance, they left their old homes and wandered into the fertile plain.

They fought each other and conquered each other, and founded one civilization right on top of the ruins of another that had gone before. They built large cities like Babylon and Nineveh, and more than forty centuries ago they turned this part of the world into a veritable paradise, the inhabitants of which were envied by all other men.

But when you look at the map you will see many millions of busy little peasants tilling the fields of another powerful country. They live on the banks of the Nile and their country is called Egypt. They are separated from Babylonia and Assyria by a narrow strip of land. There are many things which they need and which they can obtain only in the distant countries of the fertile plain. There are many things which the Babylonians and the Assyrians need, and which are manufactured only in Egypt. The two nations therefore trade with one another, and the highroad of commerce runs through the narrow strip of land which we have just mentioned.

Nowadays we call that part of the world Syria. In olden days it was known by many names. It is composed of low mountains and broad valleys. It has few trees, and the soil is baked by the sun. But a number of small lakes and many little brooks add a touch of loveliness to the sombre monotony of the rocky hills.

From the earliest times on, this region of the ancient highroads has been inhabited by different tribes, who have moved hither from the Arabian desert. They all belong to the Semitic race. They all speak an identical language. They worship the same gods. Often they fight each other. Then they make treaties of peace with each other, and fight each other again. They steal each other's cities and each other's wives and each other's flocks, and generally behave as such wandering tribes will behave when there is no higher authority in the land than

the violence of their own will and the strength of their own good sword.

In a vague way they recognise the authority of the Kings of Egypt or the Kings of Babylonia or Assyria. When the tax-collectors of those mighty potentates come down the road with their armed retinue of men, the quarrelling herdsmen become very humble. With many profound bows, they acknowledge themselves the obedient servants of the Pharaoh of Memphis or the King of Akkad. But when His Excellency, the Governor, together with his soldiers, has gone, then the old life of tribal warfare continues as merrily as before.

Please do not take these struggles too seriously. They were the only outdoor sport these ancient people could enjoy, and the damage done was usually very slight. Besides, it kept the young men in good trim.

The Jews, who were to play such a great role in the history of the human race, began their career as one of the quarrelling, fighting, wandering, stealing little tribes who were trying to maintain themselves in the land of the High Roads. Unfortunately, we really know next to nothing of the beginning of their history. Many learned men have made many learned guesses. But a plausible guess does not fill an historic gap. And when we read that the Jews originally came from the land of Ur on the Persian Gulf, this may be true, but also it may be false. Rather than tell you many things which were not so, I tell you nothing at all and only mention a very few facts, upon which all historians agree.

The earliest ancestors of the Jews probably lived in the desert of Arabia. We do not know in what century they left their old homesteads, that they might enter the fertile plain of western Asia. We know that they wandered for many centuries, trying to get hold of a bit of land which they could call their own, but the road which they followed has been lost. We also know that at one time or another, the Jews crossed the desert of Mount Sinai and that they lived for a while in Egypt.

From that moment on, however, Egyptian and Assyrian texts begin to throw some light upon the events which are enumerated in the Old Testament.

The rest of the story became a familiar tale—how the Jews left Egypt and after an endless trek in the desert, were united into a strong tribe—how that



tribe conquered a small part of the land of the High Roads, called Palestine, and there established a nation, and how that nation fought for its independence and survived several centuries until it was absorbed by the empire of the Macedonian King, Alexander, and was then turned into part of one of the minor provinces of the great Roman state.

But when I mention these historical occurrences, bear one thing in mind. This time, I am not writing a book of history. I am not going to tell you what (according to the best historical information) actually happened. I am going to try to show you how a certain people, called the Jews, thought that certain things had happened.

As you all know, there is a great deal of difference between the things that "are facts" and the things which we "believe to be facts". Every text-book of history of every land tells the story of the past as the people of that particular country believe it to be true, but when you cross the frontier and read the text-book of the nearest neighbour, you will therein find a very different account. Yet the little children who read those chapters will believe them to be true until the end of their days.

Here and there, of course, an historian or a philosopher or another queer person will read all the books of all the countries, and perhaps he will come to an appreciation of something that approaches the absolute truth. But if he wishes to lead a peaceful and happy life, he will keep this information to himself.

What is true of the rest of the world is also true of the Jews. The Jews of thirty centuries ago and those of twenty centuries ago and those of to-day are ordinary human beings, just as you and I. They are no better (as they sometimes claim) and no worse (as their enemies often state) than any one else. They possess certain virtues which are very uncommon, and they also have certain faults which are exceedingly common. But so much has been written about them, good, bad and indifferent, that it is very difficult to come to a correct estimate of their just place in history.

We experience the same difficulty when we try to learn the historical

value of the chronicles which the Jews themselves kept and which tell us their adventures among the men of Egypt and among the men of the land of Canaan and among the men of the land of Babylonia.

Newcomers are rarely popular. In most of the countries which the Jews visited during their endless years of peregrination, they were newcomers. The old and settled inhabitants of the valleys of the Nile and of the dales of Palestine and those who lived along the banks of the Euphrates did not receive them with open arms. On the contrary, they said, "We have hardly room for our own sons and daughters. Let those foreigners go elsewhere." Then there was trouble.

When the Jewish historians looked back upon those ancient days, they tried to place their own ancestors in the best possible light. Nowadays we do the same thing. We praise the virtues of the Puritan settlers of Massachusetts and we describe the horrors of those first years when the poor white man was forever exposed to the cruel arrow of the savage. But we rarely mention the fate of the red man, who was exposed to the equally cruel bullet of the white man's blunderbuss.

An honest history, written from the point of view of the Indians, would make mighty interesting reading. But the Indian is dead and gone, and we shall never know how the coming of the foreigners in the year 1620 impressed him. Which is a pity.

For many centuries, the Old Testament was the only history of old Asia which our grandfathers could decipher and understand. But a century ago, we began to learn how to read the hieroglyphics of Egypt, and fifty years ago we discovered the key to the mysterious nail-writing of Babylon. We now know that there was a very different side to the stories which were related by the old Jewish chronicle writers.

We see them commit the mistakes of all patriotic historians and we understand how they perverted the truth to increase the glory and the splendour of their own race.

All this, however (I repeat it), does not properly belong in my book. I am

not writing a history of the Jewish people. I am not defending them, or attacking their motives. I am merely repeating their own version of ancient Asiatic and African history. I shall not study the critical texts of learned historians. A little Bible, bought for a dime, will provide me with all the material I can possibly need.

If you had used the word "Bible" to a Jew of the first century of our era, he would not have known what you were talking about. The word is comparatively new. It was invented in the fourth century by John Chrysostom, the patriarch of Constantinople, who referred to the general collection of Holy Books of the Jews as the "Biblia" or the "Books".

This collection had been growing steadily for almost a thousand years. With a few exceptions, the chapters had all been written in Hebrew. But Hebrew was no longer a spoken language when Jesus was born. Aramaic (much simpler and widely known among the common people) had taken its place and several of the prophetic utterances of the Old Testament were written in that language. But please don't ask me "when the Bible was written", because I could not answer you.

Every little Jewish village and every little Jewish temple possessed certain accounts of its own which had been copied on the skins of animals or on bits of Egyptian papyrus by pious old men, who took an interest in such things. Sometimes small collections were made of different laws and of prophecies for handy use among those who visited the temple.

During the eighth century B. C. , when the Jews had settled down to their life in Palestine, those compilations grew larger and larger. At some time or other between the third and the first century before our era, they were translated into the Greek language, and were brought to Europe. Since then they have been translated into every language of the world.

As for the New Testament, its history is quite simple. During the first two or three centuries after the death of Christ, the followers of the humble carpenter of Nazareth were forever in danger of trouble with the Roman authorities. The doctrines of love and charity were thought to be very

dangerous to the safety of the Roman state, which had been founded upon the brute strength of the sword. The early Christians, therefore, could not go to a book store and say: "Please give me a 'Life of Christ' and an account of the acts of his Apostles." They got their information from secret little pamphlets which were passed from hand to hand. Thousands of such pamphlets were copied and recopied, until people lost all track of the truth of their contents.

Meanwhile, the Church had been triumphant. The persecuted Christians became the rulers of the old Roman state. First of all they brought some order into the literary chaos caused by three centuries of persecution. The (head of the) Church called together a number of learned men. They read all the accounts which were popular, and discarded most of them. They decided to keep a few of the gospels and a few of the letters which had been written by the Apostles to the members of distant congregations. All the other stories were discarded.

Then followed several centuries of discussion and dispute. Many famous Synods were held in Rome and in Carthage (a new city built upon the ruins of the famous old seaport) and in Trullo, and seven hundred years after the death of Christ the New Testament (as we know it) was definitely adopted by the Churches of the East and by those of the West. Since then there have been countless translations made from the original Greek, but no very important changes have occurred in the text.

## 2. 创 世 记

Creation



我们从哪里来？对于这个人类最古老的问题，犹太人给出了世界是在七天内创造出来的故事：

一开始，耶和华（意思是“上天之主”）的灵运行在水上，他创造了白天和黑夜。

第二天，他让天笼罩在水上。

第三天，海面上耸起了陆地，地上长满了植物。

第四天，他创造了日月星辰，照亮白天和黑夜。

第五天，他造出了水里的鱼和天空飞的鸟。

第六天，他创造了各种爬行的动物和走兽。他仿造自己的形状，用泥土造了第一个人——亚当。

第七天是休息日。

耶和华用亚当的肋骨创造了夏娃。让他们住在伊甸园里。在一条蛇的诱惑下，夏娃和亚当吃了善恶之树的果子，他们因此被逐出了伊甸园。

他们的大儿子该隐失手杀了弟弟亚伯，耶和华迫使他离家逃亡。

早期的人类有很多恶习，耶和华决定用洪水淹没世界。他让善人挪亚造了方舟，装上所有的动物。暴雨下了 40 个昼夜，只有方舟中的挪亚一家和船上的动物幸免于难。

当洪水退去，挪亚一家再次开始了安宁的生活。

他们的后人打算在幼发拉底河谷造一座通天塔，并围绕塔建立一个国家。耶和华突然让他们说起了不同的方言，于是人们分散到世界各地。

这就是犹太版本的世界起源的故事。





上帝说“要有光”！