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中英双语 · 人文典藏

圣经的故事

THE STORY OF BIBLE

[美] 亨德里克·威廉·房龙 / 著 袁雷 / 译

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FOREWORD FOR ROBERT AND ARTHUR

Dear Boys:

This is the story of the Bible. I have written it because I think that you ought to know more about the Bible than you do, and I really could not tell you where to go for just the sort of information I want you to have. Of course, I might ask you to read the original, but I am not certain that you would. For many years, little boys of your age have been frightened away from it by the solemn faces and forbidding attitude of those who believe that the Holy Volume has been entrusted to their particular care. And yet you never can be thoroughly educated without knowing these stories. Besides, at one time or another in your lives, you may badly need the wisdom that lies hidden in these ancient chronicles.

This book has been a most faithful companion of man for several hundred generations. A few of the chapters were written as long as twenty-eight hundred years ago. Others are of much more recent date. For many centuries, it was almost the only book your ancestors possessed or cared to read. They knew it by heart. They made the Law of Moses the highest law of the land. Then, when the age of modern science came, there arose conflict, which gave rise to a bitter warfare between those who held the book to be of Divine origin, and those who regarded it merely as an account of certain historical events. And for a time, the Bible was hated as cordially by many men and many women as it had been loved and revered before by their father and grandfathers.

前言：写给罗伯特和亚瑟

亲爱的孩子们：

这本书是关于圣经的故事。我之所以写它是因为我觉得，关于圣经，你们应该知道得比现在的更多，但我又无法告诉你们确切的获得这类知识的途径。当然，我可以让你们去读原文，但我不敢肯定你们会去读。多少年来，和你们一般大的孩子们都总想逃离它严肃的面孔；另有一些人，则把它视作神的赐予而不容有任何的亵渎与冒犯。如果你们不懂得这些故事，到今天仍然不能算是接受了完整的教育。并且，在你们生命中总会有某些时候，会很需要隐藏在这些古老的典籍中的智慧。

数千年以来，这本书一直是人类最可信赖的伙伴，其中的许多章节写于 2800 年以前，其他的部分稍微晚些。多少个世纪里，你们的祖先可能只拥有这么一本书，或者说用心灵去阅读的唯一一本，他们把摩西的箴言当做最高的准则。后来，当近代科学来临的时候，围绕着这本书出现了一场激烈的纷争。一方把圣经看做是神的原典，而另一方则认为它不过是一些历史事件的记录。甚至有一度，人们憎恶它，就如他们的父辈和祖辈对它虔诚地敬仰与崇敬一样。

Of all this,I shall tell you nothing.

I am not preaching to you. I am not defending or attacking a cause. I shall merely tell you what you ought to know(in my own opinion and Heaven forbid that I should ask others to agree!)that your lives may be more full of understanding,of tolerance and of love for that which is good and beautiful,and therefore holy.

It will be comparatively easy to write about the Old Testament. It is the story of a certain tribe of desert people who,after many years of wandering,finally conquered a little corner of Western Asia,where they settled down,and founded a nation of their own. Then we come to the New Testament. That is going to be very difficult. The New Testament centers around one single figure. It tells the story of a simple carpenter of the village of Nazareth, who asked nothing of life and gave all. There may be other stories more interesting than that of Jesus,but I have never read any. And so I shall give you a very simple account of his life as I see it,not a word more and not a word less For that,I am sure,is the way he would like me to tell it.

HENDRIK WILLEM VAN LOON.

2 圣经的故事

关于其中的一些内幕,我想最好不要让你们知道。

我不是在向你们说教,也不是在捍卫或者攻击某种目标。我只是想告诉你们该知道些什么(当然这仅仅只是我个人的想法,因为上帝也不会允许我强行灌输别人某种观念),明白了这些道理,对于那些善的、美的东西,你们就会充满理解、宽容和爱意,进而神圣。

《旧约》写起来要相对容易些,那是沙漠上一个部族的故事,他们在多年的漂泊之后,征服了西亚的一个小小的角落,并在那里安居下来,建立了自己的国家。接下来我们说到《新约》,《新约》写起来就难多了。它围绕着一个中心人物,讲了一个拿撒勒乡村木匠的故事,他对于生命一无所取,但却奉献出了全部。这世界上或许还有比耶稣更有趣的故事,但目前为止我还没读到过。所以关于他的生平,我将就我所知道的,给你们作一个简略的介绍,不多写一字,也不少写一字,耶稣在世,我相信他也会乐意我的叙述方法。

亨德里克·威廉·房龙

1 A LITERARY INHERITANCE

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 had become the center of a vast empire. The valley of the Nile and that of the broad Euphrates 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 archeologists are busily digging in the soil of Palestine. They are learning

1 一部文学遗产

《旧约》和《新约》是如何写成的？数世纪以来这部圣书在历史上的遭遇如何？

金字塔已矗立千年；巴比伦已经成为庞大帝国的中心；尼罗河谷和广阔的幼发拉底河流域，到处都是忙碌的人群。而此刻，沙漠中流浪漂泊的一支小部落，为了更好地生存，正决定离开阿拉伯沙漠贫瘠的家乡，北上寻找更为肥沃的田园。

这群流浪者就是日后的犹太人。

许多世纪以后，他们向我们提供了所有书籍中最重要的一部——《圣经》。

再晚些时候，他们中的一位女子生育了一位最善良、最伟大的导师。

然而，不可理解的是，我们对于这个陌生民族的来历却是一无所知，不知他们从何而来。在人类历史上的所有种族中，他们是起过最伟大作用的一个民族，后来却悄无声息地离开了历史舞台，流亡离散于世界各地。

所以，我在这一章中所叙述的，总体而言不免有些含糊，具体的细节也可能会不太确切。

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 high road of commerce runs through the narrow strip of land, which we have just mentioned.

4 圣经的故事

但一直以来,考古学家们都在巴勒斯坦的土地上辛勤发掘。随着时间的推移,他们获得了越来越多的资料,我手头就有一些,根据这些资料,我将努力尝试着作更为可靠的叙述。

亚洲西部奔腾着两条宽阔的河流。

它们发源于北部的高山深处,流入波斯湾的汪洋大海。

在这两条浑浊的河流两岸,人们的生活非常惬意,同时也十分懒散。所以不管是生活在北方寒冷山区,还是居住在南部炎热沙漠地带的人,都希望有朝一日,能进入底格里斯河和幼发拉底河流域。他们一旦获得机会,就会离开家园,进入这片肥沃的平原大地。

他们互相争斗,彼此攻伐,在一个文明毁灭后的废墟上建立起新的文明,建立起巨大的城市,比如巴比伦和尼尼微。早在四千年前,他们就把世界上的这个角落变成了真正的天堂,其他地区的人对这里的居民羡慕不已。

但当你看到地图时就会发现,在另外一个强盛的国家,成千上万身材短小的农民正在土地上辛勤地耕作,他们居住在尼罗河两岸,他们国家的名字叫做埃及。埃及与巴比伦和亚述隔着一片狭长的陆地,他们需要的很多东西,只能从富庶平原上很远的其他国家获得。有许多巴比伦和亚述人需要的东西只有埃及出产,因此,这两个国家互相做生意,商路就穿过我们刚才提及的那片狭长地带。

Nowadays we call that part of the world Syria. In older 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 somber monotony of the rocky hills.

From the earliest times on, this region of the ancient high-roads 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 recognize 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 herds-men 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 sports 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

今天我们把那个地方叫做叙利亚,在过去它曾经有过很多个名字。这个国家里到处都是低矮的丘陵和宽阔的山谷,基本上没有树,泥土都快被太阳烤干了。幸好还有一些小的湖泊和溪流,给阴沉黯淡的多石山丘平添了几分生气。

从很早的时候开始,高地上的这片土地就居住着不同的部落,他们从阿拉伯沙漠搬到这里,并且都是属于闪族的不同分支,使用着相同的语言,崇拜着同样的神灵。他们常常互相争斗,之后又互相签订和平合约,以后又会纷争再起。他们劫掠对方的城市、女人和壮丁,就如游牧民族的飞扬跋扈,因为在这里,除了他们自己的暴力意志和锋利的刀剑之外,再也没有其他的权威可言了。

据不确定的考证,他们对埃及、巴比伦和亚述的国王的权威还是臣服的,当那些强大的君主派出的收税总督带着武装侍从来到他们这里的时候,吵闹不休的牧人们就立刻变得温顺起来,朝着总督的队伍深深鞠躬,并把自己当作孟菲斯的法老和阿卡德君王的忠实仆人。但只要总督和他的武装随员一旦离开,部族间的战火又会重新点燃,而且和往常一样的热闹。

我们没有必要把这些争斗看得过于严重,这不过是那些古人能够享受的唯一户外运动而已,造成的损失也是非常轻微的。另外,这也使得年轻人英勇善战。

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, which 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

6 圣经的故事

在后来的人类历史上扮演重要角色的犹太人，一开始就是这样的一支小部落，他们不停地争吵、战斗、游荡，以及劫掠其他试图在这片土地上生存的小部落。但不幸的是，我们对于他们早期的历史知之甚少，很多饱学之士作出种种颇有根据的猜测，但即便是最为近乎合理的猜测也不能真正代表历史的真实。

当我们读到犹太人最初来自波斯湾的乌珥这个地方时，我们会认为这样的记载既可能是真实的，也可能是错误的。与其告诉你们一些不确切的东西，还不如什么都不说，而只提及一些所有的历史学家都公认的事实。

犹太人最早的祖先可能生活在阿拉伯大沙漠里，我们不知道在哪个世纪他们离开了自己的家园，后来他们可能进入了西亚富饶的平原。我们只知道，为了获得一片属于自己的土地，他们漂泊流浪了好多个世纪，但他们漫游的路线现在已无从知晓。曾经有一度，他们穿越西奈山脉一带的沙漠，在埃及住了一段时间。

从那个时候开始，埃及和亚述的文献里开始零星提及的一些事件就在《旧约》中有所记载。

接下来的故事大家就耳熟能详了——犹太人如何离开埃及，经过沙漠里艰苦的跋涉之后，统一成一个强大的部落——又如何征服了高地上的另一片叫做巴勒斯坦的土地，在那里建立起他们的国家，以及如何为了自身的独立和生存而战斗了数个世纪，一直到

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 textbook 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 textbook of the nearest neighbor; you will therein find a very different account. Yet the children who read those chapters will believe them to be true until the end of their days.

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 today 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 anyone 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

它被马其顿国王亚历山大领导的帝国所吞并,接着成为罗马帝国的一个二流行省。

但是当我在说到这些历史事件的时候,请记住:这一次,我不是在写一本历史书,我无意告诉你们实际发生的事实(哪怕是最权威的历史信息),我只想努力告诉你们一个叫做犹太人的种族,是如何看待某些历史事件的。

你们都知道,“实际发生的历史”和“观念中的历史”有着天壤之别。每一个特定国家的历史教科书总是讲述他们自以为正确的历史,但当你越过国境,读到最相邻的国家的历史教科书时,你就会发现一个完全不同的记载,而孩子们却会永远认为他们读到的内容是真实的。

世界上其他地方真实的东西对于犹太人同样真实。三千年前的犹太人和两千年前的犹太人和今天的犹太人都是普普通通的人,就像你我一样。与其他任何人相比,他们算不上差(就像他们自己有时说的),也算不上好(他们的敌人常常这么认为)。他们有着一些非同寻常的优秀品质,却又有着一些极为平常的缺点。尽管对于他们有着种种好的、坏的甚至是不屑一顾的记载,但要想对他们在历史上的地位作一个正确的评价却实在不是一件容易的事情。

犹太人自己记载的编年史,讲述了他们在埃及、迦南、巴比伦的坎坷经历,当我们估量这些史书价值的时候,就会碰到与上述相同的难题。

Babylonia.

New-comers are rarely popular. In most of the countries which the Jews visited during their endless years of peregrination, they were new-comers. 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 else-where." 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.

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 splendid our of their own race.

All this, however (I repeat it), does not properly belong to 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 sixpence, will provide me with all the material I can possibly need.

8 圣经的故事

新来者几乎永远都是不受欢迎的。对于犹太人来说,在他们无止境的漂泊生涯中流浪过的大多数国家,他们都是新来者。那些原先定居下来的,无论是尼罗河流域,或是巴勒斯坦谷地,还是幼发拉底河两岸的居民,对新来的这些犹太人并不友好。他们并且都会说:"我们自己的儿女都还没有足够的地方生活,让这些外人滚出去。"于是纷端就不可避免。

当犹太史学家回顾他们祖先的历史的时候,几乎都会致以最崇高的赞誉。一直到今天,我们也同样在这么做。

数千年以来,《旧约》一直是我们的祖先们能够破译和理解的唯一一部关于古代亚洲历史的书。一百年前,我们开始学会辨识埃及的象形文字,过了约五十年左右,我们发现了破译神秘的巴比伦纸草文的方法。今天,与犹太人的编年史学家讲述的故事有所不同,我们获得了一种完全不同的记载。

我们现在明白,他们犯了所有爱国的史学家都会犯的错误,并且也能够理解,他们如何曲解历史事实的真相,来给他们的种族添上光环与荣耀。

现在,我再次强调,所有这些历史事实并不是我这本书所要讲述的内容,我在写的不是一部关于犹太人的历史,我无意为他们辩护,更不会攻击和谴责他们的动机,而只是在

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

复述他们对古代亚洲和非洲历史的看法。因此,我不需要去读博学的历史学家的尖锐评论,相反,六便士就能买得到的一部小小《圣经》,就能给我提供我所需要的全部材料。

如果你在公元初年就跟犹太人提到“圣经”这个词,他们肯定会茫然不知所云。这个词相对而言还比较新,它是在公元4世纪,由君士坦丁堡的教长约翰·克里索斯托发明的,他把犹太人的所有圣书称之为“圣经”。

一千年来,这一经书总集的篇幅一直在稳定增加。除了一些例外,大部分章节都是用希伯来文写成的,但是当耶稣出现的时候,希伯来语已经不是一种口耳相传的语言了,阿拉姆语(更为简单和为大众所接受)取代了它的地位,《旧约》中有几位先知的话就是用阿拉姆语记录下来的。但是请不要问我“圣经是什么时候写的”,因为我自己也不知道答案。

每一个犹太人的小村庄和小神庙都拥有一些经书故事,虔诚的先辈把这些故事抄写在兽皮或者埃及的纸草上,有的时候,不同的律令和先知的预言被制作成小册子,以供入庙朝拜的人手头之需。

公元前8世纪,当犹太人在巴勒斯坦定居后,这些民间的经文集变得越来越庞大。公元1世纪至3世纪的某个时候,它们被翻译成希腊文,接着又被带到欧洲。正是从那个时候开始,它们被翻译成世界上的每一种文字。

至于《新约》,它的历史就简单多了。在耶稣死后的最初两到三个世纪里,这些拿撒勒

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 bookstore 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 re-copied, 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 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 change.

10 圣经的故事

谦逊木匠的追随者们遭到罗马当局的迫害,陷入了无穷无尽的危险之中,博爱和仁慈的教义被视作对罗马安全的最大威胁,因为罗马帝国是建立在强力和刀剑基础上的。因此,早期的基督徒们绝不能大摇大摆地到书店说:“给我一本《基督传》和《使徒行记》。”他们只能从秘密流传的小册子里,获取自己所需要的信息。这样的小册子辗转传抄了数千份,枝蔓丛生,其最初的面貌也就因此而变得模糊不清了。

同时,教会也取得了胜利,过去屡遭迫害的基督徒如今成了罗马的新主人。三百年的宗教迫害使得这些经文繁芜琐碎、杂乱不堪,因此他们做的第一件事情就是对圣经正本清源,规范整理。教会领袖召集了许多博学之士,校读了各种流行的版本,舍弃了其中的大部分,决定保留一些福音书和使徒写给远方信徒们的书信,所有其他的故事就从此被删除了。

接下来,围绕这一部圣经,好多世纪以来人们一直在争论不休,在罗马和迦太基(一个在著名的旧海港废墟上建立起来的新城市),召开了很多次闻名于世的教会会议。耶稣逝世七百年后,我们今天看到的《新约》才被东西方的教会确定下来。从那时候起,尽管对于希腊原文版本有着林林总总的转译,但文字上却再也没有重大的改变。

2 CREATION

HOW THE JEWS BELIEVED THAT THE WORLD HAD BEEN CREATED

The oldest of all questions is this: "Where do we come from?"

Some people ask it until the very day of their death. They do not really expect to get an answer, but they are happy in the courage that makes them face the realities of life, and like brave soldiers, facing a hopeless task, they refuse to surrender and they pass into eternity with the proud word "why" upon their lips.

This world, however, is full of all sorts of men and women. Most of them insist upon a plausible explanation of the things which they do not understand. When no explanation is forth-coming, they invent one of their own.

Five thousand years ago a story which told of the creation of this world in seven days was common among all the people of western Asia. And this was the Jewish version of it.

They vaguely attributed the making of the land and of the sea and of the trees and the flowers and the birds and of man and woman to their different gods.

But it happened that the Jews were the first among all people to recognize the existence of One Single God. Afterwards, when we come to talk of the days of Moses, we shall tell you how this came about.

In the beginning, however, the particular Semitic tribe which later was to develop into

2 创世纪

犹太人是如何看待世界起源的。

有史以来,最古老的问题就是:“我们从何而来?”

一些人甚至在他们的生命快要结束的时候,仍然在苦苦追问。他们不期望得到答案,但他们陶醉于促使他们能够勇敢面对生活的勇气,就像是无畏的士兵,即便接受了一个不可能完成的战斗使命,也终不言弃,他们要带着这个疑问走向光荣与永恒。

尽管这个世界上的人千差万别,但是对于所不理解的事,他们总是坚持着自己貌似合理的解释。当没有现成的解释时,他们就自己给出一个。

五千年前,一个关于上帝七日创世的故事在西亚广为流传,这就是出自犹太人的说法。

他们模糊地把土地、海洋、树木、花草、禽鸟、男人、女人的创造归之于它们各自所属的神灵。

但犹太人却是所有先人中最先开始信奉一神论的民族。当我们稍后谈到摩西时代的

the Jewish nation, worshipped several divinities, just as all their neighbors had done before them for countless ages.

The stories of the creation, however, which we find in the Old Testament, were written more than a thousand years after the death of Moses, when the idea of One God had been accepted by the Jews as an absolutely established fact, and when doubt of His Existence meant exile or death.

You will now understand how the poet who gave unto the Hebrew people their final version of the beginning of all things, came to describe the gigantic labour of creation as the sudden expression of one single and all-mighty will, and as the work of their own tribal God, whom they called Jehovah, or the Ruler of the High Heavens.

And this is how the story was told to the worshippers in the temple.

In the beginning, this earth floated through space in somber silence and darkness. There was no land, but the endless waters of the deep ocean covered our vast empires. Then the Spirit of Jehovah came brooding over the sea, contemplating mighty things. And Jehovah said, "Let there be light," and the first rays of dawn appeared amidst the darkness. "This," Jehovah said, "I shall call the Day."

But soon the flickering light came to an end and all was as it had been before. "And this," Jehovah said, "shall be called the Night." Then he rested from his labors, and so ended the first of all days.

Then Jehovah said: "Let there be a Heaven, which shall spread its vast dome across the waters below, that there may be a place for the clouds and for the winds which blow across

12 圣经的故事

时候,就会告诉你们所有的这一切是如何发生的。

在最初的时候,这支后来发展成为犹太人的闪族人中的特殊一支,也崇拜着多种神灵,就像他们之前的邻族持续多年崇拜多种神灵那样。

我们在《旧约》中发现的关于上帝创世的故事,写于一千多年前摩西死了之后,那时候一神论已经作为一种绝对真理而被犹太人接受,对它的任何怀疑就意味着流放或者杀戮。

你们现在就会明白,关于万物的起源,诗人们如何给希伯来人一个终极性的结论,如何把开天辟地的伟大功业说成是唯一全能的神意志突然显灵的结果。他们把这一功业归之于本族的神,称作耶和华,或者是天国的主宰。

下面就是在神庙里给朝拜者们讲述的故事。

最初的时候,地球漂浮在宇宙之中,一片寂静与黑暗。没有陆地,只有浩瀚深广的大洋覆盖着整个世界。耶和华的精魂来到这海洋,筹划沉思。他说:"要有光,"于是第一缕黎明的光亮从黑暗中闪现,他说:"这就是白昼。"

但是很快,闪烁的光亮消失不见,一切又回归到本来的样子。耶和华说:"这应该叫做黑夜。"然后他就停下工作休息了,由此结束了创世以来的第一天。