

[美] 亨德里克·威廉·房龙 著
梁志坚 黄婷婷 译

圣经故事

《圣经》是西方文化的基石，对西方文化影响深远，本书以简洁、晓畅的语言向读者讲述了《圣经》中的故事。

The Story of the Bible

Bible



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The Story of the Bible

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序

给汉斯杰和威廉

亲爱的孩子们：

这是一本关于《圣经》的故事。我之所以写下这本书，是因为我觉得你们应该对《圣经》有更多的了解。事实上，我无法告诉你该去哪里找我想让你们掌握的知识。当然，我也许该让你们去读原作，可我不能确定你们是否会做得到。多年来，你们这个年龄的小孩子们总是被那些自恃负有专责保管圣卷者严肃的面孔和令人生畏的态度所吓跑。但是，如果你们不知道这些故事，你们就永远无法得到全面的教育。另外，你们在生活中的某个时候，也许会迫切地需要一点隐藏在那些古文卷里的智慧。

一直以来，《圣经》这本书就是人类最忠实的伴侣。其中一些章节是在两千八百年前写下的，其余的则较晚。许多世纪以来，它几乎是你们的祖先们可以拥有、保管的唯一读物。他们把这本书熟记于心。他们把《摩西十诫》作为世上最高的法律。后来，随着现代科技的发展，在那些把《圣经》作为神圣之源的人和那些认为《圣经》只是对历史的记录的人之间就发生了冲突，从而导致了战争。而《圣经》这本书也曾经一度遭到许多人的敌视，就如同它曾受到这些人的祖辈和父辈们的热爱和推崇一样。

对于这些，我没有什么可以告诉你的。

我并不打算对你们进行说教，我也不打算为某种东西辩护，也不打算抨击某种东西。我只是要告诉你们一些你们应该知道的东西（上帝不允许我强求别人的苟同！），你们的生命中应当充满理解、包容和爱，因为它们是善与美的，因而也是神圣的。

写《旧约》相对比较容易些。它是有关于一个沙漠部落的故事。这个部落历经数年的流浪，最终征服了西亚的

一个小角落，在那里定居下来，建立起了他们自己的国家。然后，我们谈谈《新约》。这将非常困难。《新约》围绕着一个人物，以他为中心，讲述了拿撒勒村一个纯朴的木匠的故事，他对生活一无所求，但却为别人奉献了一切。也许还会有其他比耶稣的生平更精彩的故事，但是我从未读过。所以，我会就自己的所知，为你们简述一下他的生平，一字不多，一字不少。我相信，这正是他希望人们叙述的方式。

亨德里克·威廉·房龙

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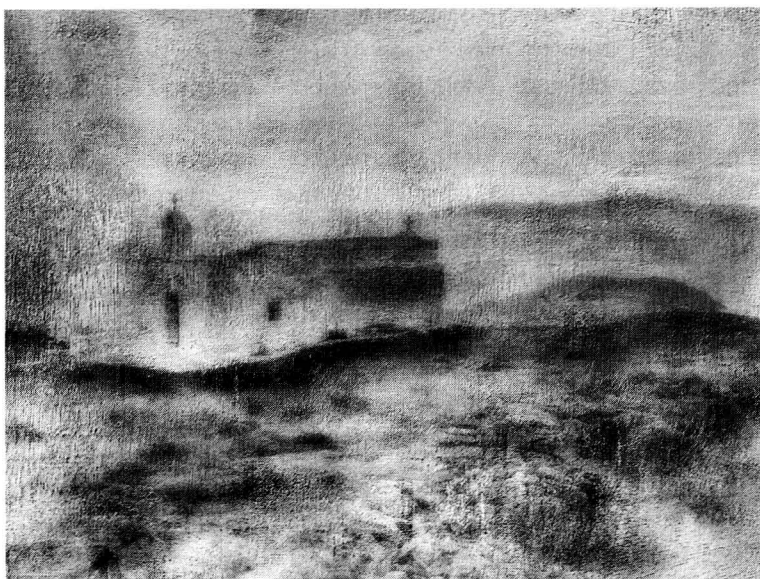
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Chapter I A Literary Inheritance

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 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 civilisation right on top of the ruins of another that had gone before. They built large cities like

第一章 一部文学遗产

《旧约》和《新约》是如何写就的？这部圣书在数百年中经历了些什么呢？

pyramid
['pirəmid] *n.*
金字塔

金字塔已矗立了千年之久。

fertile
['fɜ:təil] *adj.*
富饶的，肥沃的，多产的

巴比伦和尼尼微已成为庞大帝国的中心。

尼罗河河谷、广袤的幼发拉底河河谷、底格里斯河河谷熙熙攘攘，挤满了忙碌的人群，这时，一个流浪于沙漠上的小部落，由于自身的原因，决定背井离乡，沿着流沙肆虐的阿拉伯沙漠北徙，寻找更肥沃的土地。这一流浪的民族就是后来我们所知的犹太人。

exile
['eksail] *n.*
流亡国外者，流放

几百年之后，他们奉献给我们一部最重要的书籍——《圣经》。

再后来，他们中的一个女子生下了一位最仁慈、最伟大导师。

vague
[veig] *adj.*
模糊的，不明确的

然而，令人费解的是，我们对这群陌生人的来历一无所知，不知道他们从何而来，他们曾经在人类历史上发挥过最重要的作用，随后离开了历史舞台，流浪于世界各国。

reliable
[ri'laɪəbl] *adj.*
可靠的，确实的

因此，我在这一章节中只能说个大概，具体细节尚待查证。

scorching
['skɔ:tʃɪŋ] *adj.*
(天气等)热的，炎热的

不过，考古学家们一直忙于在巴勒斯坦地区辛勤地挖掘。随着时间的流逝，他们掌握了越来越多的史实。

conquer
['kɒŋkə] *v.*
征服，战胜

我们掌握着为数不多的事实，根据这些少量的事实，我将尽可能地为你进行忠实的叙述。

亚洲西部流淌着两条宽广的大河。

它们源于北面的高山，注入波斯湾。

居住在这两条浑浊的河流两岸的人们生活得惬意而懒散，所以那些居住在北边寒冷山区和南边酷热沙漠里的人都千方百计地试图在底格里斯河河谷和幼发拉底河河谷占有一席之地。只要一有机会，他们就会离开家乡，迁徙到这片沃土上。

他们相互争斗，相互征服，在一个文明的废墟之上建立起另一个文明。他们建起了像巴比伦和尼尼微这样的大城



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 herdsman 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.

envy
['envi] vt.
妒忌, 羡慕

peasant
['pezənt] n.
农民, 农夫

obtain
[əb'tein] v.
(通过努力等)获得, 得到, 买到

manufacture
[ˌmænju'fæktʃə] vt.
(大规模)制造, 生产

monotony
[mə'nɒtəni] n.
单调, 缺乏变化

worship
['wɜ:ʃɪp] v.
崇拜, 崇敬

acknowledge
[ək'nɒlɪdʒ] vt.
承认, 自认

warfare
['wɜ:fɛə] n.
战争, 交战

maintain
[meɪn'tein] vt.
赡养, 维持

市。在四千多年前, 他们把这个地区变成了名副其实的天堂, 该地区的居民成为其他人羡慕的对象。

但是, 如果看地图的话, 你就会发现, 还有数百万卑微的农夫在另一个强大的国家里忙碌地耕耘着。他们生活在尼罗河畔, 他们的国家叫埃及。一条狭长的陆地把他们与巴比伦王国、亚述国分隔开来。他们需要许多东西, 而这些东西只能从那些遥远的富庶的平原国家那里获得。巴比伦人和亚述人也许多东西, 而这些东西只产在埃及。于是, 两个国家就彼此通商, 在我们方才所提到的狭长的土地上开辟了一条商旅通道。

如今我们称那个地方叙利亚, 古时它有好几个名称。它由低矮的丘陵和广阔的山谷组成, 树木稀少, 烈日曝晒着大地。不过, 有许多小湖泊、小溪流为这阴郁、单调的山丘略添了几分勃勃生机。

自古以来, 这古老的商旅通途所经过的地方就居住着许多部落, 他们从阿拉伯沙漠迁徙而来, 都属于闪族, 操着同样的语言, 信奉同样的神灵。他们常常相互争斗, 然后讲和, 再争斗。他们相互劫掠对方的城市、女人和羊群, 就像游牧民族一样, 除了随心所欲的暴力和利剑的力量, 他们谁也不放在眼里。

他们或多或少地承认埃及国王或者巴比伦、亚述国王的权威。当这些强大君主的税务官们带着全副武装的随从们来到这里的时候, 争吵不休的牧人们就会变得非常恭顺, 深深鞠躬以示自己是孟斐斯法老或者阿卡德国王的顺仆。等到总督阁下和他的士兵们一离开这里, 他们便又重新乐此不疲地继续他们古老的部落之战。

请不要把这些争战太当一回事儿。这是古人能享受的唯一户外运动, 其损失通常并不大。另外, 它还有助于年轻人保持活力。

在人类历史上即将发挥重大作用的犹太人, 就是从这种争吵不休、四处漂泊、劫掠成性, 并企图在商旅通道上占有一席之地的小部落开始兴起他们的事业。遗憾的是, 我们对他们的起源近乎一无所知。许多学者对此作过学术上的猜测, 然而貌似有道理的猜测并不等同于历史。我们从书上看到, 犹太人最初来自波斯湾的乌尔, 这一说法也许是正确的, 也许不正确。与其告诉你们不确切的东西, 不如什么都不说, 只说史学家们都认可的一些事实。



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.

ancestor
[ˈænsəstə] *n.*
祖先, 祖宗, 始祖

enumerate
[ɪˈnju:məreɪt] *vt.*
列举

absorb
[əbˈsɔ:b] *vt.*
把…并入, 吸收

frontier
[ˈfrʌntjə] *n.*
国境, 国界, 边界

queer
[kwɪə] *adj.*
古怪的, 奇怪的

appreciation
[əˌpri:ʃiˈeɪʃən] *n.*
领会, 了解, 觉察

virtue
[ˈvɜ:tʃu:] *n.*
优点, 美德

chronicle
[ˈkrɒnikl] *n.*
编年史

犹太人的始祖可能生活在阿拉伯沙漠。至于他们什么时候离开家园, 来到西亚丰饶的平原, 我们不得而知。我们知道的是他们漂泊了几百年, 想拥有一块属于他们自己的土地, 但是他们迁徙的路线已无从考证。我们还知道, 犹太人曾穿越西奈山沙漠, 并在埃及居住了一段时间。

从那时起, 埃及人和亚述人的文献开始对《旧约》里列举的事件有所记载。

其余的故事已是家喻户晓的了: 犹太人如何离开埃及, 在沙漠里历尽艰辛之后, 成为一个强大的部落; 这个部落如何征服商道上一块叫做巴勒斯坦的地方, 建立起一个国家; 这个国家又怎样为独立而战, 历经数世纪之久, 直至被马其顿国王亚历山大所吞并, 而后又成为罗马帝国的一个小行省的一部分。

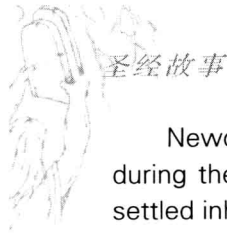
不过, 在我提到这些历史事件的时候, 请记住一点: 这一次, 我不是在写一本历史书, 我不是想要(根据最确切的史学资料)告诉你究竟发生了什么, 我只想让你们知道那个称做犹太的民族对所发生的某些事实的看法。

我们知道, “真正的事实”和“我们相信的事实”有很大差别。每一个国家的史书所说的都是该国人民深信不疑的历史, 但是当你越过国境去阅读邻国的史书时, 你会发现与之截然不同的记载。然而, 读着这些史书长大的孩子们却将一辈子都不会对其真实性有所怀疑。

当然, 难免会有某个史学家、饱学之士或古怪之人把所有国家的史籍通读一遍, 或许他会察觉到一些事实而接近绝对真理。然而, 倘若他希望自己的日子过得安逸平静的话, 他最好免开尊口。

犹太人和世界上的其他人都是一样的。三千年前的犹太人、两千年前的犹太人、今天的犹太人和你我一样都是普通人。他们不比别人优越(如同他们有时宣称的那样), 也不比别人低劣(如同他们的敌人常常说的那样)。他们具有某些非凡的优点, 也有某些极平常的缺点。但是, 由于对他们的议论褒贬不一、模棱两可, 我们很难对其在历史上的地位作出准确的判断。

犹太人有自己的编年史, 其中讲述了他们在埃及、迦南、巴比伦国的历险。当我们尝试着去探析这部编年史的历史价值时, 也碰到了同样的难题。



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.

peregrination
[ˌperɪgrɪˈneɪʃən] *n.*
(徒步)旅行, 步行, 漫游

Puritan
[ˈpjuərɪtən] *adj.*
清教徒的

decipher
[diˈsaɪfə] *vt.*
破译, 译解, 辨认

commit
[kəˈmɪt] *v.*
干(坏事), 犯(错、罪)

perverted
[pəˈvɜ:t] *vt.*
歪曲, 曲解

motive
[ˈməʊtɪv] *n.*
动机, 缘由

patriarch
[ˈpeɪtriɑ:k] *n.*
[常作 P-](基督教)早期的主教

prophetic
[prəˈfetɪk] *adj.*
先知的, 预言的

后来者总是不受欢迎的。对犹太人而言, 在漫漫的漂泊岁月里, 在他们去过的大多数国家里, 他们都是后来者。尼罗河河谷、巴勒斯坦山谷, 以及幼发拉底河两岸的原住居民是不会张开双臂来欢迎他们的。相反, 他们说: “我们自己的子女都快没地方住了, 让这些外乡人到别处去吧。”于是, 就发生了纠纷。

当犹太史学家们回顾历史时, 他们总会对自己的祖先极尽赞美之能事。现在, 我们也在做同样的事。我们极力颂扬早期定居马萨诸塞州的清教徒的美德, 绘声绘色地描绘可怜的白人被迫面对野蛮人残酷的弓箭时的恐惧感。可是我们只字不提那些红种人的命运——他们也同样面对着白人残酷的子弹。

一部从印第安人的角度出发而写成的真实历史, 势必引起人们极大的阅读兴趣。但是, 印第安人死的死, 散的散, 我们永远无法知道 1620 年白人的到来给他们留下了怎样的印象。这真是遗憾!

许多世纪以来, 《旧约》是我们的祖先可以破解并读懂的记载古代亚洲的唯一史书。但是一个世纪前, 我们开始识读埃及的象形文字, 五十年前, 我们破译了神秘的巴比伦楔形文字。我们现在知道了与早年犹太编年史作者所叙述的历史截然不同的史实。

我们知道他们犯了与所有的爱国史学家一样的错误, 我们了解他们是如何歪曲史实以为其民族增光添彩。

然而, (我再重复一遍)本书绝无类似错误, 我不是在撰写犹太人的历史, 不是在为他们辩护, 也不是在抨击他们的动机, 而仅仅是在重复他们关于古亚洲和古非洲历史的说法。我也不想研究那些博学的史学家们的长篇大论。一角钱一本的袖珍版《圣经》就能为我提供我所需要的一切资料。

如果你对公元 1 世纪的犹太人说“圣经”这个词, 他可能不知道你在说什么。这个词当时还较为陌生。公元 4 世纪时, 君士坦丁堡的主教约翰·克里索斯托创造了这个词, 他把犹太人的圣书统称为“Biblia (圣经)”或者“Books (书籍)”。

在大约一千年间, 这部圣书的篇幅在不断地增加。除了少数章节外, 大部分章节都是用希伯来语写的。但是到耶稣诞生时, 希伯来语已不再用做口语, 取而代之的是更简单、在老百姓中广为使用的阿拉姆语, 而且, 《旧约》里一些先知的启示就是以这种语言来写的。但是, 千万不要问我“《圣经》是什么时候写成的”, 因为这个问题我无法回答你。