

| 房龙经典作品 | 双语典藏版

圣经故事

THE STORY OF
THE BIBLE

[美] 亨德里克·威廉·房龙 著

雷菊霞 译



中国国际广播出版社

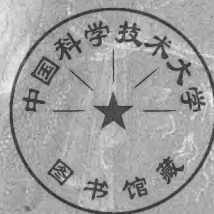
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序

写给汉斯杰和威廉

亲爱的孩子们：

这是一本有关《圣经》的故事。我之所以写它，是因为我觉得你们应该对《圣经》有更多的了解。我的确不能告诉你们到何处去得到我要求你们知道的那些知识，不过，我可能要求你们去读原著，但是我不能肯定你们会这么做。许多年来，像你们这个年龄段的孩子，常常因为《圣经》那庄严的形象和那些相信圣书只被特定人而信仰的禁止态度，而对它敬而远之。然而，不了解这些故事，你们的教育就会有缺憾；更何况，在你们的一生中，会时常感到迫切需要蕴涵在这些古代记事里的智慧。

千百年来，《圣经》一直是人们最忠实的伴侣。其中某些章节远在两千八百年前就已写就，其余的部分则稍晚些。数百年来，它几乎是你们的祖先所拥有或所愿意读的唯一一本书。他们对它熟知于心，他们将摩西律法看作世间最高的法律。随着现代科学的发展，在那些以《圣经》为神圣之本的人和那些仅仅将此书当作是一本古代记事的人之间，产生了新的冲突，导致了激烈的战争。曾有一度，许多男女对《圣经》恨之入骨，如同当年他们的父辈祖辈对它深爱敬畏一样。

关于这些，我不想谈论。

我不是给你们讲道，我不会辩护或攻击某个理由。我只想告诉你们，让你们明白（以我的观点，绝无强求他人赞同之意），你们的生活会充满更多的理解、宽容和爱，因为那是善良、美好的，自然也是神圣的。

《旧约》的故事相对容易些，它是有关一个沙漠居民部落的故事。他们在多年漂泊之后，终于征服了西亚的一小块地方，并在那里定居下来，建立了自己的国家。可是，《新约》就较为困难，它围绕一个中心人物讲故事。讲述了拿撒勒村一个纯朴的木匠，付出了全部的爱而从不索取。所以，我就我所知的有关他的生平事迹给你们作一简单描述，一字不多，一字不少。我相信这么做，也正是他欣赏的方式。

亨德里克·威廉·房龙

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CHAPTER I A LITERARY INHERITANCE



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.

第一章

一笔文学遗产

《旧约》和《新约》是如何写成的？数世纪以来
这部圣书有哪些经历？

pyramid

['pirəmid] *n.*

金字塔

origin

['ɔ:ridʒin] *n.*

1. 开端，来源

2. (复数) 背景，出身

allot

[ə'lot] *v.*

分配，拨给

exile

['eksail]

1. *n.* 流放

2. *n.* (自愿或被迫) 流亡者

3. *v.* 放逐

vague

[veig] *adj.*

1. 含糊不清的

2. 不具体的，不确切的

3. 犹豫不决的

archaeologist

[,ɑ:ki'ələdʒist] *n.*

考古学家

disposal

[di'spəʊzəl] *n.*

1. 清除，处理

2. (at one's disposal) 供任意使用

scorch

[skɔ:tʃ] *v.*

1. 将(物体表面)烫焦

2. 使(植物)枯萎

金字塔群矗立已达千年之久。

巴比伦和尼尼微已成为庞大帝国的中心。

尼罗河谷、宽广的幼发拉底河和底格里斯河流域，处处是忙碌的人群；此时，一支在沙漠中漂泊的小部落，由于自身的原因，决定离开家园，沿着荒芜的阿拉伯大沙漠北上，去寻找更加肥沃的田园。

这些漂泊者，就是日后的犹太人。

数世纪后，正是他们，将向我们提供那本最重要的书——《圣经》。

再晚些时候，其中的一个女子还将生育一位最善良、最伟大的先知。

然而，奇怪的是，我们对这个陌生民族的始祖一无所知。他们是谁？从何而来？他们是在人类史上起过最伟大作用的一个种族，后来却离开历史舞台，成为世界各国的流亡者。

因此，我在本章中所讲的，总体而言有点含糊，具体细节是不太可靠的。

但是，考古学家们一直在巴勒斯坦的土地上辛勤地发掘，随着时光的流逝，他们得到了越来越多的事实。

一些事实已在我们的掌握中，我将根据这些事实，试图给你们提供真实可信的材料。

两条宽阔的河流缓缓流经西亚。

它们源于北方的高山上，汇入波斯湾的海水中。

两河沿岸的人们过着惬意而闲适的日子。所以，无论是生活在北方寒冷山区还是南方酷暑沙漠中的人们，都想方设法在底格里斯河和幼发拉底河流域拥有立足之地。只要一有机会，他们便离开故乡，不辞艰辛来到这肥沃的平原。

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 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.

civilisation

[ˌsɪvɪlaɪ'zeɪʃən] *n.*

1. 开化, 教化
2. 文明, 文明阶段
3. (一民族、国家或时期) 文化和生活方式

veritable

['verɪtəbl] *adj.*

真正的

obtain

[əb'tein] *v.*

1. 获得, 得到
2. (规则、风俗等) 流行

manufacture

[ˌmænjʊ'fæktʃə] *v.*

制造

sombre

['sɒmbə] *adj.*

1. 暗淡的, 阴沉的
2. 忧郁的

monotony

[mə'nɒtəni] *n.*

单调, 无聊

identical

[aɪ'dentɪkəl] *adj.*

同样的, 相同的

treaty

['tri:ti] *n.*

条约、协定

potentate

['pəʊtənteɪt] *n.*

君主, 统治者

retinue

['retɪnju:] *n.*

随员

acknowledge

[ək'nɒlɪdʒ] *v.*

1. 承认(某事物)属实
2. 为……表示感谢
3. 接受或承认(某事物)

maintain

[meɪn'tein] *v.*

1. 保持, 维持
2. 赡养
3. 坚持认为

plausible

['plɔ:zəbl] *adj.*

似乎有理的

他们相互争斗, 相互征服, 在上一代文明的废墟上建立了又一个文明, 即像巴比伦和尼尼微那样的大城市。四千多年前, 他们将这一地区变成一个名副其实的乐园, 令其他各地居民羡慕不已。

如果看看地图, 你会发现还有数以百万计身材矮小的农民, 在另一强国的土地上忙碌着。他们居住在尼罗河两岸, 同巴比伦和亚述只有一狭地之隔, 这个国家叫作埃及。他们所需要的很多物品只能来自遥远的、肥沃平原上的各国; 而巴比伦人和亚述人也有很多生活必需品只在埃及生产。这样, 两边国家就在狭地上开辟了通商大道, 相互进行贸易往来。

如今, 这一狭地叫叙利亚, 而古时候则有多种名称。它由低矮的丘陵和广阔的平原组成, 树木稀少, 烈日炙烤着大地。仅有几个小湖和众多溪流为这阴沉单调的多石山丘略添几分生机。

自古以来, 这一通衢大道周围, 居住着从阿拉伯沙漠迁移来的不同部落。他们都属闪族人, 说同样的语言, 信奉同样的神; 他们经常争斗, 讲和, 再斗; 他们窃取对方的城市、妻子和牲口。就像一般游牧部落的行为一样, 他们将自己的强权和利剑作为至高无上的权威。

他们含含糊糊地承认埃及国王或者巴比伦、亚述国王的权威。当那些大国的税务官们带着武装沿着通商大道而来时, 争吵中的牧民们即刻变得异常恭顺。他们频频鞠躬以示自己是埃及法老或巴比伦国王的顺仆。一旦那些官员们离开, 部落争战的生活便故态复萌。

请别把这些争斗看得太认真, 这是古代人唯一能享受到的户外活动的机会, 况且这些争斗常常损伤轻微, 反倒使年轻人保持身心平衡。

作为那些争吵打斗着、游荡着, 并依靠掠夺来维持自己在通商大道上地位的众多小部族中的一支, 在人类历史上将起巨大作用的犹太人就此起步。不幸的是, 我们的确对他们的历史起源所知甚少。不少学者做过许多颇有见地的猜想, 但一个看似合理的猜测却无法填补历史的空白。当我们读到犹太人最初来自波斯湾名叫乌尔的地方, 这或许是正确的, 也可能是错误的。在此, 我宁可只提供一些经历史学家认可的少量事实, 而不提那些不够确切的猜测。

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

enumerate

[i'nju:mə'reit] *v.*

列出

account

[ə'kaunt] *n.*

1. 账单
2. 报告, 叙述
3. 账户

appreciation

[ə'pri:ʃi'eɪʃən] *n.*

1. 欣赏
2. 感激, 感谢
3. 评价

approach

[ə'prəʊtʃ] *v.*

接近, 靠近

estimate

[i'estimeɪt] *n.*

1. 估计, 估价
2. (对人/事物性格或质量的) 判断

chronicle

['krɒnikl] *n.*

编年史

peregrination

[,perɪɡri'neiʃən] *n.*

旅行, 游历

犹太人最早的祖先可能居住在阿拉伯沙漠上, 至于他们哪一世纪离开故乡进入西亚的沃土, 我们不得而知。只知道他们曾漂泊达数世纪之久, 极想拥有一片确属自己的土地, 但是他们漂泊的路线已难追寻。我们还知道, 在某个时期, 犹太人跨越了西奈山的沙漠地带, 在埃及住过一段时间。

然而, 从那时起, 埃及人和亚述人的文献开始使《旧约》中涉及的一些事件初露端倪。

其余的故事已家喻户晓——犹太人怎样离开埃及、怎样在沙漠中历尽艰辛、怎样合并成一支强大的部落——这部落如何征服了通商大道上一块叫巴勒斯坦的土地, 建立了一个国家——这国家又怎样为独立而战长达数世纪, 直到被马其顿国王亚历山大所吞并, 然后又变成了大罗马帝国一个小省的一部分。

但是切记, 当我提及这些历史事件时, 我不是在写一本历史书, 我不是依据最可信的历史资料告诉你们真正发生了什么事情, 而是要指出一个叫作犹太人的民族对发生过的事情的想法和看法。

众所周知, 在“真正的事实”和“人们相信的事实”之间有极大的差异。每个国家的史料所载, 只有本国人民确信无疑。而当跨过边境去读邻国的史书时, 就会发现截然不同的结论。可是, 读本国史书长大的孩子们终生都不会发生怀疑。

当然, 这儿, 那儿, 总会有某个史学家、哲学家或某个怪异之人, 把各国的所有史书通读一番, 他可能会从中觉察到一些事实而接近“绝对真理”。但是, 若要生活得安宁舒心的话, 他最好还是免开尊口。

犹太人和世界上的其他人相同。三千年前的犹太人、两千年前的犹太人直至今日的犹太人, 都是普通人, 如同你我一样。比起其他人, 他们不怎么好 (就像自称的那样), 也不那么坏 (如同他们的敌人所言)。他们具有某些不寻常的优点, 也有某些极平常的缺点。但是, 已经有那么多书讲述犹太人, 褒的、贬的、模棱两可的都有。因此, 难以对他们在历史上的地位做出准确的判断。

关于犹太人先后在埃及人、迦南人和巴比伦人中的冒险经历, 犹太人有自己的编年史。当我们试图弄清楚犹太人自己的这部编年史的历史价值时, 我们也遇到了与上述同样的难题。

新居民总是不受欢迎的。对犹太人来说, 在漫长的流浪过程中每到一地, 他们都是外乡人。尼罗河谷、巴勒斯坦山区及幼发拉底河两岸的原住居民, 并未张开双臂迎接犹太人。恰恰相反, 他们



A LITERARY INHERITANCE / CHAPTER I

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

blunderbuss

['blʌndə,bʌs] *n.*

(旧式) 大口径前膛枪

decipher

[di'saifə] *v.*破译(密码), 辨认
(字迹)

hieroglyphic

[haiə'rəu'glɪfɪk] *n.*

象形文字

pervert

[pə'vɜ:t] *v.*1. 滥用, 歪曲
2. 使……入歧途

patriarch

['peɪtriɑ:k] *n.*

(男性) 家长

prophetic

[prə'fetɪk] *adj.*

先知的, 预言的

papyrus

[pə'paɪərəs] *n.*

纸莎草, 纸莎草纸

compilation

[ˌkɒmpɪ'leɪʃən] *n.*

编辑, 编撰

说: “地方还不够我们自己的子女住呢, 让那些外乡人到别处去吧!” 于是便发生了纠纷。

当犹太史学家在回顾历史时, 总想极力美化自己的祖先。今天, 我们不是仍然如此吗? 我们称赞那些在马萨诸塞州的早期定居者具有怎样的美德, 极力描述这些可怜的白人被迫面对那些野蛮人的残酷之箭时是如何地恐惧; 而只字不提那些红种人的命运, 他们同样面临着白人残忍的枪弹。

一部诚实的历史, 站在印第安人的立场上来写, 会引起人们极大的阅读兴趣。但印第安已成为过去, 我们将永远无法了解 1620 年那些外国人的到来给他们带来了怎样强烈的影响, 真是遗憾!

几百年来, 《旧约》是我们的祖先能读懂的记载古代亚洲历史的唯一史书。但是一百年前(本书出版于 1923 年——译者注), 人们开始能识读埃及的象形文字; 五十年前, 又发现了辨识巴比伦楔形文字的窍门, 至此才恍然大悟, 原来还有与古犹太编年史家所讲的截然不同的故事。

我们明白, 他们与所有爱国历史学家犯了同样的错误: 歪曲事实为本民族增光添彩。

但是我必须重复一遍, 本书绝无类似的错误。我不是在写犹太人民的历史, 既不为他们辩护, 也不会有攻击他们的动机, 仅仅是重复他们关于古代亚洲和非洲历史的说法。我不去研究博学的史学家的论著。一本价值一角的袖珍版《圣经》, 足以为我提供一切所需的材料。

假如你用“圣经”这个字眼与公元 1 世纪的某个犹太人交谈, 他会不知所云。相对而言, 这个词比较新。它是在 4 世纪, 由君士坦丁堡的大主教约翰·克里索斯通首创, 他将犹太人的圣书总集称为“诸卷书籍”或“圣经”。

大约在一千年前, 这些书籍汇编的篇幅不断增加。除少数章节外, 其余各卷均用希伯来语写就。但到耶稣出生时, 希伯来语已不再流行。取而代之的是更为简单的, 为普通百姓所习用的阿拉米语。《旧约》中的部分先知启示就是用阿拉米语写成的。但是, 请千万别问我《圣经》是何时写成的, 我无法回答。

每个犹太小村庄, 每座犹太小神庙, 都有关于其历史的一些记载, 由专心此道的虔诚老人们记在兽皮或埃及草纸上。有时, 某些朝拜神庙的人顺手记下了各种法典和预言警句以便随时使用。

在公元前 8 世纪, 犹太人定居巴勒斯坦时, 这种辑录越来越

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 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 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.