

MY WORLD STORY BOOK

The Middle East / Holy Land

A Compilation of Historical
Biographies for the Young Reader

Compiled by Marlene Peterson

Libraries of Hope

My World Story Book
Book Six: The Middle East / Holy Land

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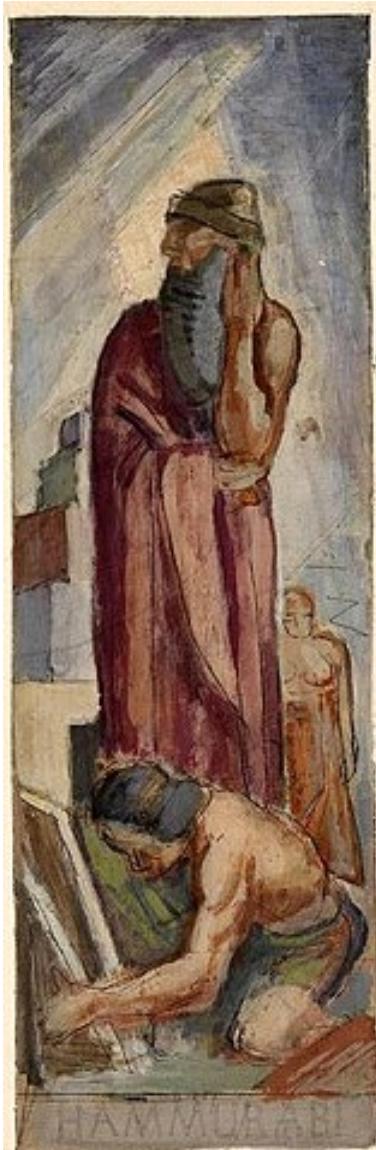
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Chapter 1



Hammurabi

2123-2080 B.C., Babylon



Hammurabi (mural study),
Boardman Robinson

Mighty warrior, great administrator, the king who consolidated the power of Babylon, all his deeds pale before his wonderful Code of Laws, one of the most important documents in the history of the human race.

Abraham knew him and had tarried in one of his cities, Ur of the Chaldees; and to Abraham he was Amraphel, King of Shinar, and an enemy whose power had made itself felt among kings and princes who were Abraham's allies.

Many besides these had felt the weight of Hammurabi's hand. He had come to the throne of Babylon about the year 2123 B.C. a young and vigorous warrior, who spent the first thirty years of his long reign in subduing his enemies and in making a great kingdom between the Tigris and Euphrates from the north of Babylon the shores of the Persian Gulf. His deeds were written on tablets of clay that time has preserved for us these 4000 years so that we may read today:

For all time he his mighty strength hath shown,
The mighty warrior, Hammurabi, king,
Who smote the foe, a very storm in battle.
Sweeping the lands of foemen, bringing war to nought,
Giving rebellion surcease, and destroying,
Like dolls of clay, malignants, hath laid open
The steeps of the impenetrable hills.

Then, having made all secure, he so governed his country that his reign is known as the Golden Age of Hammurabi. He built and restored the great temples, he dug canals, he made the country prosperous and wealthy, filling its plains with sheep and cattle, giving to it fertility so that it might be said of it, as was afterwards written of Canaan, that it was a land flowing with milk and honey.

He made the land as safe as it was peaceful, so that, as one of those age-old clay tablets tells us, it was safe for a boy to travel with

treasure through the length and breadth of the land. The poorer people used the reeds as they still do for houses and boats, but brick building sprang up for the houses of the richer folk, as well as for the temples and the royal palaces.

Rafts that were not very different from those in use today floated on the rivers; sailing barges brought for the king statues of the goddesses he placed in the temples of Babylon.

Babylon itself, with its mighty walls and hanging gardens, rose higher and higher from the plain. A list has survived of more than 60 different kinds of vegetables grown in the royal Babylonian gardens. There were lions in the wilder places as well as panthers, jackals, and foxes. Yet the testimony of the letters and contracts on the burned bricks tell us so little of them that we can surmise how well the shepherds knew how to look after their flocks.

In this dominion of the great king Babylon was more than the proud imperial city renowned through all the world then known, the place of great temples to the gods Ishtar and Hammurabi's favourite Marduk; it was the seat of justice with courts for civil and criminal cases and a supreme court of appeal. We may note that civil judges were replacing priests, and the king was the final arbiter. In accordance with this kingly authority it fell to Hammurabi to draw up a code of laws embracing and regularising all those which, in scattered form, had been traditional throughout the provinces now joined in one empire.

This code of laws had come down to us because it was inscribed on a block of black diorite nearly eight feet high, found in pieces but readily rejoined. It was discovered by the French archaeologist De Morgan among the ruins of the acropoli of Susa, where it had been carried off by some Elamite conqueror when Hammurabi's empire had shattered. On the upper part of the stone of the law is a sculpture in relief of Hammurabi receiving the laws from the Sun God, the supreme judge of Heaven and Earth. Then follow 16 columns of writing with 1114 lines. There were five more columns on this side, but they have been erased and the stone repolished by the Elamite conqueror who meant to inscribe his name and titles there. On the other side are 28 columns with more than 2500 lines of inscription.



Code of Hammurabi, Wikimedia Commons

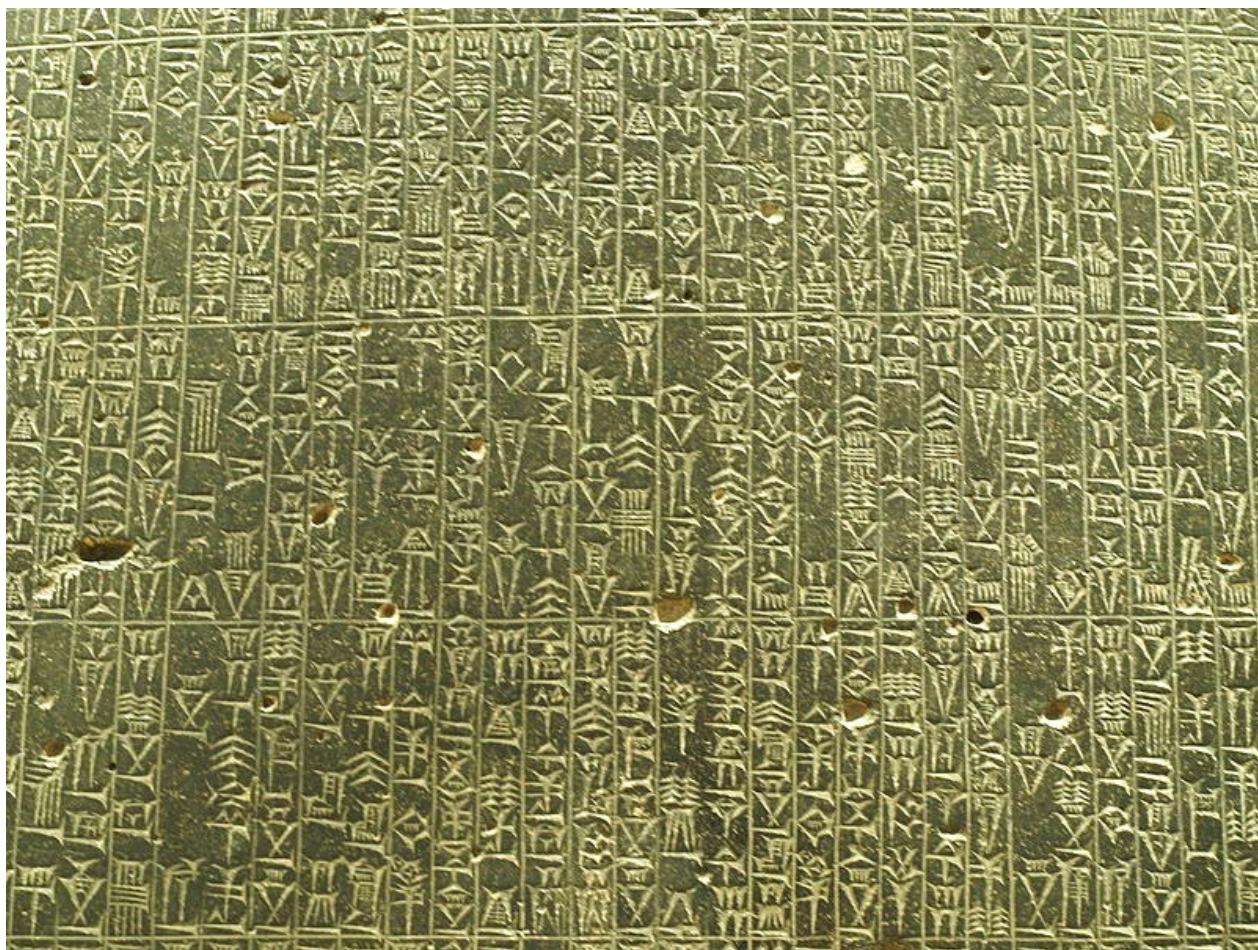
HAMMURABI

A great space is devoted by the king to setting out his titles, his glory, his care for his subjects, his veneration of his gods, and incidentally revealing cities and districts under his rule. He also invoked blessing on those who should preserve and respect his monument, and cursed those who should injure or remove it. His code, consisting of 282 laws, defines in 128 of them the civil law in all its branches. The relation of master to slave and labourer, of merchant to agent, of landed proprietor to tenant farmer, are strictly regulated. There is a law that the agent who pays over money to his principal for goods sold must be given a receipt.

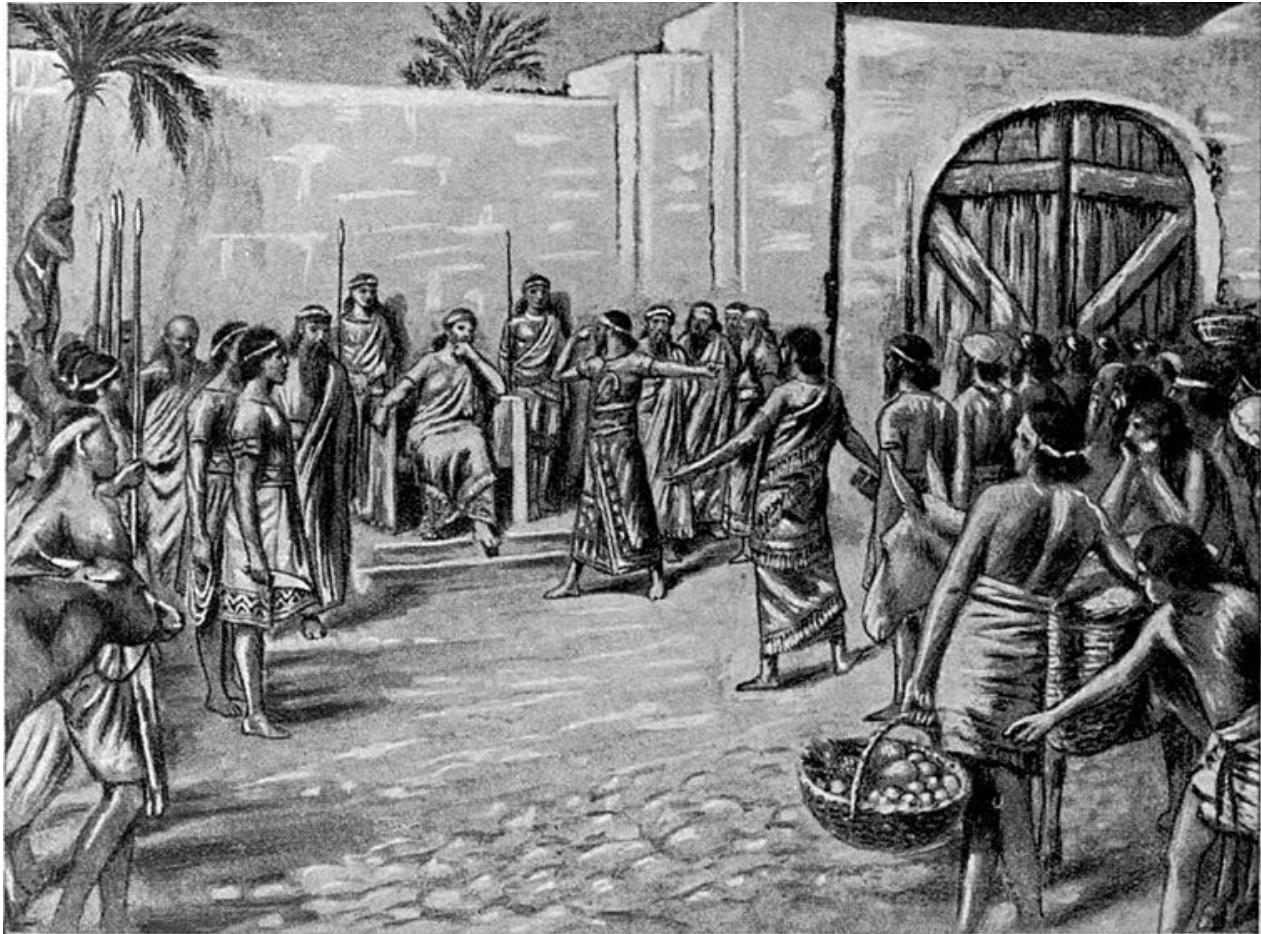
Abatement for rent is provided for in the event of damages by storm or flood. Fishing rights for each village situated on a canal are precisely defined. Every able man is bound to serve as a soldier, although precaution is taken against excessive conscription by numerous decrees recognising the rights of priestly families, or exempting shepherds from military service in the interests of cattle-breeding.

One curious provision may be noted; if a builder erects a house for another and it is not well made, and falls down and kills the owner, the builder shall be killed. From this it may be judged that this ancient code did not err on the side of leniency.

Throughout when it comes to deal with criminal affairs it lays down the law of an eye for an eye



Code of Hammurabi, Wikimedia Commons



Trial Before Hammurabi, illustration from *Hutchinson's story of the nations*, Anonymous Author, 1914

and a tooth for a tooth, and the merest scrutiny of it reveals it as the law which almost without alteration the Jews adopted. There are special penalties for the unjust judge and penalties also for the unrighteous accuser. The crimes for which death was the penalty are numbered, as well as those for which the penalty was less drastic.

If there was one law for the rich and one for the poor it is noticeable that the punishments were more severe on the patrician than on the workman. Nothing was too unimportant for notice in the code. It even laid down the fees for surgeons, veterinary surgeons, the wages of builders, brick-makers, tailors, stonemasons, carpenters, boatmen, ox-drivers, herdsmen, shepherds, and the hire of oxen and asses. The unfortunate surgeon who made a mistake in his treatment of a patient was liable to severe penalties.

At the end of the code Hammurabi repeatedly calls himself the King of Righteousness, as did Melchisedec King of Salem (probably Jerusalem), and calls on his successors to observe his code of laws forever. The empire he ruled has vanished, the king himself would have been no more than a name had not the archaeologists of our own time discovered his records among the dusty ruins of his cities. But his laws, made the basis of others by other peoples, the Jews first among them, may truly be said to have achieved indestructible fame.

Chapter 2

Moses

Possibly 1391-1271 B.C., Goshen

Lawgiver and Prophet, he stands, an ever memorable figure, on the threshold of their religion to Christian and to Jew alike.

To the Jews he is the human instrument in the creation of the Israelitish nation, taught by God to be the leader of His chosen people, and communicating to it from God the laws by which it was to be governed.

To Christians Moses is the prototype of Christ, the Redeemer and Deliverer of His people from the slavery of sin. His is the guide and leader, viewing in spirit the Promised Land to which he pointed the way but did not enter in.

In the Old Testament story he first assumes the character of the Deliverer. The Hebrew family of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, introduced into Egypt by Joseph, had multiplied and increased till the Patriarchal descendants had become a horde. The seed of Abraham was a pastoral alien race settled in a rich country, an unorganized tribe among the more highly civilised Egyptians, who had come to regard their numbers as a source of potential danger.

Ripe for slavery, the Children of Israel were employed to build temples and tombs by hard and



The Mother of Moses, Simeon Solomon



The Finding of Moses, Lawrence Alma-Tadema

exacting taskmasters. Furthermore, the Pharaoh commanded that the male Hebrew children should be put to death at birth, an edict designed to limit the threat of numbers. Hence the episode of the woman of the tribe of Levi who hid her first-born son Moses in an ark of bulrushes among the reeds by the waters of the Nile, and the sequel of his discovery there by the daughter of Pharaoh. The Princess adopted the foundling and had him taught all the wisdom of the Egyptians. Despite his education and his surroundings, he remained Hebrew at heart, and his feelings for his own people led him to slay the Egyptian overseer who was maltreating one of them.

He received small thanks from those with whom he had so rashly betrayed his sympathy, and who feared that they would be made the sufferers for his act, which might be pardoned to a young Egyptian noble but never to an Israelite. Thus it was that Moses found it prudent to fly into the land of Midian. There he married one of the daughters of Jethro, a Midianitish priest, and kept his father-in-law's flocks for forty years.

Then the summons came, by the side of the burning bush on Mount Horeb, when God called him, told him of the Promised Land to which he would bring Israel, and gave him the mission to deliver his people from the Egyptians.

To the appointed leader God revealed the great mystic name by which He was to be known to the Children of Israel, I AM, "I Am hath sent me to you."

Doubtful of his own capacity, God's envoy was met on his return to Egypt by his brother Aaron,

MOSES

a man eloquent and persuasive of speech, who was to be his right-hand man until his death. In the story of the Exodus power and authority seems to clothe Moses, after his return, with a miraculous suddenness. It was he who confronted Pharaoh with the threat and consequence of the Ten Plagues descending on Egypt. He, the fugitive into Midian, was now the spokesman of the downtrodden, with no hint in his demeanour of any faltering or weakness. Before the Israelites left Egypt the Pass-over, the first symbol of their ordained religion and their new unity, was by Moses ordained among them.

Every stage of the loosening of the bondage and the exodus from Egypt was marked by some new token of authority divinely conferred on Moses the Deliverer. At the passage of the Red Sea at the southern part of the Isthmus of Suez the waters rose up, as if he had commanded them, to overwhelm the pursuing host of Pharaoh. In the wilderness, when the tried and dispirited people who had lived so long in well-fed slavery complained of their fare, he fed them with quail and manna.

Moses led them across the Sinai peninsula to Horeb, or Mount Sinai; and there the nomads were met by Jethro, who brought with him Zipporah, the wife of Moses, and his two sons. There are

many very human traits in the stern unbending Messenger of God. We may fancy that this reunion disclosed some of them, though the Bible narrative pauses only to speak of the burnt-offerings to the God of Israel before going on to speak of the Beginning of the Law.

Moses as the Law Giver, and the circumstances with which he was invested with that supreme authority, are of immense significance in the history of the Jews. He disappeared in the clouds of Mount Sinai, there to talk with God and receive from Him the Ten Commandments and the canons of the Law. The Commandments are of extreme simplicity; the directions laid down in the Law are the foundation of the complicated Jewish ritual, which has remained in unaltered sanctity for 4000 years. When Moses reappeared from his seclusion in the sacred mountain he bore the Ten Commandments with him engraved on tablets of stone.

Even so the Laws of Hammurabi, who lived in the time of Abraham,



Moses and the Burning Bush, Bernardo Strozzi

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were engraved. But the resemblance is superficial, for the Babylonian king's laws were very largely civil. The laws of Moses were divine, and the sole and single Divinity of the God of the Jews, the One God, is insisted on. Moses the Law Giver was careful to emphasise their importance by the prophetic utterance, for which the God he served and proclaimed had given him authority, that He would be the God of Israel only if they were faithful and kept His commandments.

Moses knew enough of the wayward tribes he led to recognise the need of threat as well as persuasion. Even as he returned to them with the Tables of Stone he found that in his absence they had made for themselves a Golden Calf and were worshiping this image. He cast the Tables of Stone whereon were written the words of God on the ground so that they were shattered. It was no act of furious anger. It was a terrible sign, which the disobedient Israelites could understand, that the Covenant with God had been broken. It was easy for him then to break their golden image in pieces.

His authority over them was thereafter reestablished and complete. They remained at Sinai, and during that time the Jewish religion was firmly established, its code begun. Moses as Prophet communing with God gave to the Jews their Tabernacle, and consecrated it. Priestly law was ordained, and the first indications of Jewry as a nation appeared, when a plan of encampment was schemed for the Levites and the other tribes. Moses appointed Joshua his general of the Israelite armies, and his chief Minister, and in the choice revealed yet another of his tremendous qualities, that of being



Moses with the Tables of the Law, José Camarón y Meliá

MOSES



Moses Viewing the Promised Land, Frederic Edwin Church

a judge of men, and one who knew when and where to delegate authority.

With a new organisation of the people he led them from Sinai to Kadesh, whence he sent out spies to Canaan. They brought back tidings of a land flowing with milk and honey, but also of cities walled and very great, so that the Israelites, more faint-hearted than their leader, refused to go forward and were condemned to stay in the wilderness till that generation should have passed away. It was a new and less timid generation that Moses led onward.

They came to the territory of Edom, or Esau, but were refused passage; so they passed on to Mount Hor, where Aaron died, and then through the land of Moab. But Sihon, King of the Amorites, whose capital city was at Heshbon, refusing leave to pass through, was conquered by Moses, who gave his land to the tribes of Reuben and Gad and Manasseh.

The long sojourn in the wilderness had welded the Israelites into a weapon fit for Joshua to wield, and these nomads, no longer meek and pastoral but martial in temper, and already infused with the belief implanted by Moses that they were the Chosen People, were Ironsides in his hands. They overthrew Og, the King of Bashan, and Moses gave his lands to the tribes just named.

Following these conquests is the story of Balak, King of the Moabites, and Balaam, the seer, told

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so dramatically in words that might have been dictated by Moses himself. When Balaam, refusing to curse, turns to blessing, saying, "How goodly are thy tents, O Jacob, and thy tabernacles, O Israel," the words are those of him who has loved and led the people. When all these things were accomplished the Deliverer, the Law Giver, the Leader learned that he would not be permitted to go with them across the Jordan, but would die on its eastern side.

He assembled the people and delivered to them the message of farewell, which is the Book of Deuteronomy. In this, the Fifth Book of Moses, he recapitulated the Law, and emphasised its most important points.

In that great code of laws and regulations governing the most minute circumstances of the daily life of the people we may perceive another aspect of Moses the Lawgiver. He was one of the world's chief Ministers of Health. The ordinances, which were given the sanctity and authority of Divine command, comprise the food, the domestic hygiene, the daily habits of a people.

They take in the humanitarian aspect of the attitude toward animals and the treatment of them; and the best token of their value and importance is that all these thousands of years afterwards they are rigorously observed by devout Jewish people in all parts of the world.

In his farewell message Moses blessed the people in these moving words: "Happy art thou, O Israel; who is like unto thee, O people saved by the Lord, the shield of thy help, the sword of thy excellency."

Then, being 120 years old, he withdrew and went up into Mount Nebo, to the top of Pisgah, and God showed him all the land. And the Lord said: "This is the land. I have caused thee to see it with thine eyes, but thou shalt not go over thither." So Moses died and was buried where no man knows unto this day.

Chapter 3



Joshua

Died 1245 B.C., Canaan

He was ever a fighter, a mighty man before the Lord. It was Joshua whom Moses sent out to fight with the Amalekites in that battle where Amalek went down to defeat while Moses, Aaron, and Hur watched the fight from the top of the hill.

It came to pass, when Moses held up his hand, that Israel prevailed; and when he let down his hand Amalek prevailed. And Aaron and Hur stayed up his hands, the one on the one side and the other on the other side, and his hands were steady until the going down of the Sun.

So this servant of Moses enters into the Bible story. A man to whom honour and responsibility were early given, a guardian of the Tabernacle, a defendant of his master when in the wilderness



Joshua Passing the River Jordan with the Ark of the Covenant, Benjamin West

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the people murmured against him, he was one of those whom Moses chose to go forward and spy out the Promised Land.

Of those whom Moses sent into Canaan there were some who brought back word that the land flowed with milk and honey; but the timorous among them spoke with bated breath of the Amalekites and Hittites and Amorites, and the Canaanites that dwelled by the sea, and the giants, the sons of Anak, by the side of whom the Israelites were as grasshoppers. Joshua and Caleb alone spoke as men who feared not, saying that the Lord would bring His chosen people into this land and give it to them, and, as for those mighty people, they were as bread for God's chosen. Already their defence was departed from them, for the Lord was with His people.

Therefore, said Joshua, Fear them not. He risked his life by the boldness of his words, for the stiff-necked generation would have stoned him; but because of the unbelief of the congregation of the Israelites it was ordained that Joshua and Caleb alone of all of them should enter, after 40 years wandering in the wilderness, into that land of Canaan offered to them for their portion.

Thus for 38 years no mention is again made of the young envoy chosen by Moses, who had spoken words of belief and hope in the face of suspicion and doubt. He sinks back into the multitudes of the tribes of Israel who wandered as nomads in the deserts about the Holy Land, sometimes, we may suppose, gaining a footing there, and sometimes cast out again. It is reasonable to suppose that, when at last they left the wilderness behind them and found a triumphant way into their inheritance, it was not by a single victory on a comprehensive scale, but in waves of conquest and immigration.

By whatever route they arrived at their goal, it was Joshua who led them.

It was Moses who, learning of his own approaching death, appointed his servant Joshua his successor. He was the chosen of God, the man filled with the spirit of wisdom. He had been lieutenant and minister of Moses in the desert wanderings; he was to be captain of the Hosts of Israel, their leader in many battles, planter of their tribal homes, organiser and shaper of the new national life that founded itself in the settled places they could call their own. His was to be the twofold mission of the conquest of the Promised Land and its division among the tribes. The hand of God was with him, parting the waters of the flooded Jordan while the priests crossed with the Ark of the Covenant, and throwing down the walls of Jericho at the sound of the trumpet.



The Battle of Jericho, Johann Heinrich Schönfeld

JOSHUA

Is there anywhere a more striking story more dramatically told than that of the Fall of Jericho? There was the compassing of the city daily for seven days and its compassing on the seventh day seven times.

And it came to pass at the seventh time, when the priests blew with the trumpets, Joshua said unto the people, Shout, for the Lord hath given you the city.

So the people shouted when the priests blew with the trumpets with a great shout, and the wall fell down flat so that the people went up into the city, every man straight before him, and they took the city. And they burnt the city with fire, and all that was therein, only the silver and the gold and the vessels of brass and of iron they put into the treasury of the House of the Lord.

The people of Jericho perished utterly, save only the woman Rahab, who had sheltered the spies of Joshua and about whom many a legend afterwards was told, though none could be so vivid as the story in the Book of Joshua of the way she hid the spies under the bundles of flax on the flat roof of her house by the walls.

It is not a little singular that in our own times excavations made about Jericho have confirmed the story of the collapse of the walls.

The story of this great leader's penetration into Palestine is like a picture gallery of magnificent episodes of war and strategy. It is, in fact, the tale of the invasion of a nomadic people, strengthened and hardened by their long sojourn in desert places, directed against the tribes of pastoral and settled men, not unwarlike but of far softer fibre. To those who took part in this invasion, and those who read of it, their progress and victories seemed as miracles. Among the victories were the rout and the alliance of the southern rulers of Canaan at Makkedah.

On that day, as the defeated enemy fled from Israel, great stones from heaven were cast upon them, so that there were more who died from hailstones than from the sword. Then there was the



The Fall of Jericho, The Providence Lithograph Company



Joshua Commanding the Sun to Stand Still, John Martin

day when the Amorites were delivered up and Joshua said in the sight of Israel: "Sun, stand thou still upon Gibeon, and thou Moon in the Valley of Ajalon." Thirty-and-one kings in all Joshua smote on the other side of the Jordan, among them Zion King of the Amorites, and Og King of Bashan, the last of the giants. Five kings hid in the Cave of Makkedah and were put to death.

To the south Joshua penetrated to Kadesh-Barnea, and to the west to Gaza; and later, defeating the allied kings of the north, he took the city of Hazor and was master of the whole country except the Philistine and Phoenician coasts. There followed the allotment of the land to the tribes of Israel and the setting-up of the Ark of the Covenant in Shiloh. There were cities of refuge to be established, the settling of Reuben, Gad, and half the tribe of Manasseh on the east side of the Jordan, and the task was almost done.

Old and stricken in years, Joshua assembled the chiefs and elders, exhorting them to have no fellowship with the peoples they had supplanted. Herein we may see one of the great canons of Judaism. The assembly of the clans was in the fairest spot in the Holy Land, the Vale of Shechem. North and south are the high ranges of Ebal and Gerizim, between them the narrow valley, sometimes only a few hundred feet in width, green with olives and intersected everywhere with running

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streams. Today a white town nestles in the verdure and is called Nablous. It stands where once stood Shechem.

Here Abraham halted when, with his flocks and herds, he came from Ur of the Chaldees. Under one of the oaks he built the first altar to God the land had known. It was a place of holiness long after Joshua had passed away. Here by the edge of a well Christ sat and talked with the woman of Samaria and gazed out on the plain of the waving corn beyond.

This is the hallowed spot where Joshua gathered the people to hear the last utterance of one whose days on Earth were running out. He spoke from the commanding eminence which looks on the clearness of the earthly past and the dimness of the heavenly future with the wisdom of experience and the awe of coming death. He looked back on about 80 years of active public life, half spent in the desert and half in ruling Israel.

He stood among the people, a monumental relic of times pushed back by a stirring century of change into remote history, one who had toiled in Egyptian quarries, had crossed the sand of the Red Sea, had shrunk from the thunders of Sinai. Only one white-haired elder could recollect the time when he was not a leader and a prince, and in every point of his historic life, the fight with the Amalekites, the adventures of the spies, the besieging of Jericho, the Battle of Ajalon, he had stood before them as the Lord's captain. He asserted in all his deeds the supremacy of Israel's unseen God, guiding all the love and loyalty of the people for himself into the channel of piety and devotion to the Most High.

He met with his reward, the highest that life can yield. He turned many to righteousness. Throughout his reign we hear of no idolatry, no alliance with the heathen, no counterfeit priesthoods, none of those transgressions which so often challenged God's vengeance in the long history of the race. His personal example and authority had held the tribes of Sinai unbroken, had encouraged worship and religion. Now that his days were over and he felt life ebbing from him, his last thoughts were for the continuance of that God-fearing life he had maintained among them so long.

So Joshua made a covenant with the people that day and set them a statute and an ordinance in the fruitful valley. He took a great stone and set it up under an oak, saying unto the people:

Behold this stone shall be a witness unto us, for it hath heard all the words of the Lord which He spake unto us: it shall be therefore a witness unto you, lest ye deny your God.

A witness the stone long remained. So long as the elders who had sworn to that covenant remained, Israel served the Lord. Long afterwards the oak and the pillar at Shechem formed a marked national monument, still speaking to a far-off generation of what the stone had seen and heard. It had seen this great leader smite all the country of the hills until the land rested from war; and now it had seen, a long time after the Lord had given rest unto Israel from all their enemies about, that Joshua waxed old and stricken, and it had heard him say unto the people:

I am old and stricken in age. Ye have seen all that the Lord your God hath done unto all these nations because of you. The Lord hath driven out from before you great nations and strong; no man hath been able to stand before you unto this day, for the Lord your God, he it is that fighteth for you. Take good heed, therefore, that ye love

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the Lord your God.

Behold this day I am going the way of all the Earth, and ye know in all your hearts and in all your souls that not one thing hath failed of all the good things which the Lord your God spake concerning you; all are come to pass unto you, and not one thing hath failed.

Now, therefore, fear the Lord and serve Him in sincerity and in truth. Choose you this day whom ye will serve; but as for me and my house we will serve the Lord.

So he passed, and they buried him in Timnath-serah, which is in Mount Ephraim, on the north side of the hill of Gaash.

Chapter 4

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Elijah

About 900 B.C., Gilead

He lived out of the tenth century into the ninth before Christ, when Ahab and Ahaziah were successively Kings of the Northern Israelite State and Jehoshaphat was the King of the State of Judah. He is the most dramatic figure in the long line of Hebrew prophets.

A prophet was a religious seer who acted as an interpreter of the will of the gods and delivered their messages to men. The tribes who occupied Palestine when the Hebrew race reached it had their prophets acting as the spokesmen of their many gods. Similarly the Hebrew tribes had their organised groups of "men of God" at their high places sacred to worship. The essential difference



The Prophet Elijah, Daniele da Volterra

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was that from the time of Moses the Hebrew race was pledged to worship One God, whom they regarded as the special guardian of their race.

He was their omnipotent Defender as a nation, their spiritual King. His deputy, their human king, sought to ascertain the Divine will through the agency of a group of prophets, or through one of the prophets most sensitive to Divine inspiration. Their God was not accessible to the individual common man. He was the strong, remote, awe-inspiring God from whom Moses had received the Commandments on Sinai and who was approached through prophetic intermediaries.

The idea of unity in racial worship had been emphasised more than a century before Elijah's time by David's choice of Jerusalem as the national centre, and later by the building there of Solomon's Temple; but since that time the Israelite race had divided into two States. The Northern Kingdom of the Ten Tribes, with its capital at Samaria, was subject to special temptations. It was hemmed in by powerful States that knew not the God of Israel. On its seaward side were Tyre and Sidon, great in commerce. North-east was Syrian Damascus. Eastward was the dreaded warrior State of Assyria. But Israel had held its own with some renown.

Its King Omri, who is limited in the Biblical Book of Kings to five disparaging verses, had been necessarily interested in foreign affairs; he had made alliances and fought in several wars, and his name comes down to us recorded with respect in Assyrian archives. From him his son and successor King Ahab received a goodly heritage. Unfortunately Ahab married, from one of the allied States, a Sidonian wife, Jezebel by name, who was a worshipper of Baal, and she naturally wished to have a temple in which to worship her god when she came to Samaria as its Queen.

Let us be fair to all these ancient people who lived nearly 3000 years ago, whose names and doings come to us from legendary sources re-written as history from three to five centuries after the people themselves died. Let us be fair to Ahab, and to Elijah. Elijah was wholly absorbed in the defence of the Israelite kingdom from the slightest taint of Baal-worship or of the worship of any other false god. His demand was for absolute purity in the national faith. Failure by a king of Israel in this respect was a supreme calamity in his eyes, and he directly challenged all Baal-worship in the kingdom and prophetically pronounced Ahab's doom.

Elijah was the very embodiment of the spirit of thoroughness. Accepting the old Hebrew conception of a God commanding the wholesale slaughter of any people holding other faiths, his story, as it comes to us, is strewn with massacres. Elijah is a grim landmark in the ages. We must accept him as a man of his time. He was utterly sincere, and, though subject to fits of deep depression, finely courageous when he felt that the time for speech and action had come. He is represented in a series of disjointed incidents. Suddenly he appears, apparently from seclusion, and at once there is an intensely dramatic scene; and then he withdraws.

Born at Tishbeh in Gilead, beyond the Jordan, a rugged mountain land, he covers in his wanderings nearly all parts of the Northern kingdom. He is in Samaria, on Carmel, on the Tyrean coast, in the Desert of Damascus, the Sinai Peninsula, at Bethel, and by the unidentified Brook Cherith. The only personal glimpse we have of him is as "an hairy man, girt with a girdle of leather about his loins," and recognisable by that description.

He is always working alone, or nearly so, though he is widely known and honoured, and his faith is the official religion, still served by "men of God" whom King Ahab consults, though Queen Jezebel has been in hot pursuit of them in retaliation for the slaying of the priests of her god Baal. It was a

ELIJAH



Elijah in the Desert, Washington Allston

time of religious apathy when no one seems to have cared for religious ideals as Elijah cared; and certainly no one else dared to express their beliefs in such blunt words, fearsome warnings, and drastic deeds as this bold man from the wildernesses used.

Ahab was not such a bad fellow. He worshipped the God of his race and sought and followed the advice of His prophets; but he was weak, and what we moderns call tolerant. He gave way to the heathen wife he loved, for she was stronger in character than himself; and he let her build her private temple to Baal and have her prophets in the very capital of the Israelite State. She was an evil influence permeating his life. She tempted him to steal the coveted vineyard of Naboth, a good citizen, and she secretly and treacherously procured Naboth's death by forging the King's name.

This dastardly deed Ahab most bitterly repented when Elijah boldly charged him with it. Ahab had his good points. He was a magnanimous and chivalrous forgiver of his fallen enemies, and this supposed weakness was regarded by Elijah as one of his worst crimes. When anyone, like Elijah, was bold enough to tell him his faults fairly and squarely to his face he allowed it to be done and admitted there was some truth in their rebukes. In short, he was a politician hampered by heathen alliances and trying to suit the circumstances of the moment by being accommodating.

All this was contrary to the stern, whole-hearted devotion of Elijah to his conception of the Hebrew God, who, he believed commanded the wholesale slaughter of people brought up in other faiths. The reporters of these views and doings, through the centuries that followed, we must

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remember, held the beliefs of Elijah. They revelled in his grim fidelity. They magnificently dramatised his doings. But this grim Deity of very early times is not the God of Christianity. Between the belief in the One Tribal God of the early Israelites and the God and Father of Mankind the centuries of widening knowledge, of spiritual perception, of evolving ideas of the essence of goodness, of recognition of human brotherhood. Before we blame the Jewish race we must remember that it was that race, and particularly the later prophets of that race, who had the first visions of the sublime truths of the loveableness of God, of the loveableness of man, and the union of God and man in love, which is the very core of Christianity.

The story of Elijah, as it comes to us, is a late dramatic presentation of ancient legends, powerfully and consistently written to illustrate the religious theory of the Hebrew race that the destruction of the two Hebrew kingdoms was a punishment by God for the failure of their kings to preserve the religious purity of the race.

By the fifth century B.C. the Kingdom of Judah was annexed by Babylon, the Israel of the times of Ahab and Elijah had utterly perished, and the Hebrews existed only as a race, as they still exist with remarkable distinction.

The Judean part of the race gathered again, became religiously united, and wrote and rewrote, always with a religious motive, the history of their forefathers. Elijah's struggle with the influences of Baal is just as much literary drama as the book of Job, or Tennyson's Idylls of the King, or Milton's Paradise Lost. But the One God of Elijah was much the same as the One God of the most fanatical Moslems, or the God of War in the eyes of fanatical militarism.

In the history of his time Elijah is a very great hero, a man with a personality so intense that it shielded him from danger in the most perilous encounters with tyranny, though his own methods



Elijah and the Widow of Zarephath, Bartholomeus Breenbergh

ELIJAH

were sometimes those of tyranny, a strange but most human figure in his fervid exaltation and his collapses into weakness, undaunted by the terrors of Horeb yet susceptible to the “still small voice of conscience,” a haunting mystery man in his sudden appearances, his dignified resignation of his power, and his weird withdrawal in the whirlwind.

Chapter 5



Zoroaster

7th Century B.C., Babylon

Long before Darius lived in Persia, before even it was a kingdom with cities and palaces, there was a king who governed a pastoral people who had multiplied with their flocks and herds on the great grassy plains. There these Iranians sought to dwell in peace, though assailed by the fiercer Turanian tribes who, intent on plunder, ever harassed their borders. So long ago was all this that history confuses even the names of their rulers, and one of these, Vishtaspa, was no more than a name.

At the court of this king was a young prince who was of royal blood and so enjoyed the king's favour. When the young man was barely 20 the king went unwillingly to war with some of his fierce, unfriendly neighbours. The prince was given a command and was expected to win fame. So well he responded to these expectations that he captured with his own bow and spear the raiding chieftain and had him brought within his tent. He was about to have him put to death when the prisoner



Zoroaster from *The School of Athens*, Raphael

ZOROASTER



Life of Zoroaster, founder of Zoroastrianism, Wikimedia Commons

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begged for mercy in the name of his two children, who would be left with no one to protect them if he died. The young conqueror let the prisoner go. But with their chieftain back again the fierce Turanian horsemen rallied and fell again on the army of the king, scattering it with great loss.

This was the tale the prince had to bring back, but Vishtaspa, for the sake of the great honour in which the prince's father was held, would not punish him, and indeed gave him a second chance. In another battle he was put in charge of the rearguard reinforcements, and when the signal came was to bring them into line. He whiled away the time of waiting by wandering into the woods, where he saw a silver bird sitting on a bough. He spoke to the bird, and the bird, according to legend, began to sing. The prince listened, deaf to all other sounds, and when the signal came he heard it not. Once again the dark eagle of defeat perched on the king's banners.

There was no further military command for the failure. But as he was of royal blood and these were not very warlike people his punishment was only to be sent away from Court and to be made governor of a province in the peaceful south where he might redeem his lost laurels. He did his best; wise men surrounded him, grave with the wisdom of the East. One night, when he and his sages were discussing high matters of the birth of the world and the nature of the elements, a ragged messenger sought admittance with the news that barbarians had broken in from the southern hills. The prince waved the messenger aside, saying that he would attend to this small matter in a moment, and continued to discuss philosophy. All night he sat with his wise men and at dawn the hill tribes were ravaging his city and he had to fly in the garments of a beggar.

This failure failed again when he was called upon to make terms with the enemy because he was too engrossed in his poetry to see that he was being deceived. He failed when he tried to build a fortress. He failed when he was left behind as guardian to the king's palace, he failed even as a teacher of philosophy, and finally, his failures having exhausted all patience with him, he was exiled in disgrace and buried himself as a hermit in the desert to commune with the Sun and Moon and stars, the winds, and the changing seasons, and the Spirit that ruled them all.

He studied and meditated, and out of his musings arose a vision that was greater than the great King Vishtaspa or any that followed him or the empires they created or the cities they built. All these have had their day, yet his vision remains; it has influenced the lives of millions of people, it is a power with millions today. His name was Zoroaster.

He had another name and the writings that he left are prefixed with it: *Thus spake Zarathustra*. The things that Zarathustra spake are the beginnings of one of the great religions of mankind. We may call it the greatest, for in it we may discern the spirit and belief that were the first attempts to scale the heights reached only by the message that Christ brought. Zoroaster waved aside the petty gods of his day with their barbaric and unmeaning rites, and gave to the world instead his one God, *Ahura Mazudah*, the Lord of Wisdom, the God of gods, the first and last, the creator of all things by the holy spirit.

This was the god who clothed himself with the heavens as with a garment, a righteous and kindly god whose kingdom was the kingdom of peace. If there were others worthy of worship they were the deities of Truth and Piety, Obedience and Immortality, that proceeded from his holy spirit. If there were evil in the world (and Zoroaster did not deny the conflict of good and evil) these were the deities that the Lord of all had created so that mankind might combat what was evil and seek that which was good, for he had so created man that his life, of eternal and immeasurable worth,

ZOROASTER

should be devoted to saving his own soul.

There was no way, spake Zarathustra, for man except that of making himself into a likeness of God and seeking the good life and placing his soul and body and thought and word and deed at the service of his Maker. "Be not weary in well doing"; thus spake Zarathustra. Such were the teachings of this man who is so like ourselves yet lived so long ago that he seems almost a legendary figure. He was no legend, he was a living man, a reformer who fought the evils of his time. We may not doubt his heroism, for such a reformer had to fight the intolerance of the priests and the sanctity of superstitions long established. His fate we know not, but what he said and what he taught are immortal, for in them is the seed of eternal truth.

Chapter 6



Daniel

About 620-538 B.C., Babylon

Prophet, seer, Prince of Israel, he stood fearless in the face of death, boldly to speak to tyrants the Word of God that was within him.

In the age-old story of his indomitable race no figure stands out more clearly than this man; by the force of his character and the greatness of his soul he commanded the admiration of the oppressor and won for himself power among an alien and hostile people. He is in the line of the house of Abraham, a second Joseph who rose to supreme influence in a strange land.

But Joseph's supremacy in the land of the Pharaohs was founded on a brilliant administrative genius; Jew though he was, he became an Egyptian among the Egyptians. Daniel, cast in a different mould, stood aloof in the land of Babylon, a man set apart from the worshippers of heathen gods by the spirit of Jehovah, whose Word he spake. Always, even when the tyrant's favour was bestowed on him, he remained solitary, the man of God.

This secret inspiration colours all his story. He was one of the captives carried off by Nebuchadnezzar to Babylon after the fall of Jerusalem in the third year of the reign of Jehoiakim, about 600 B.C. It is uncertain



Daniel refusing the King's Food, Otto Adolph Stemler

DANIEL

whether he was a member of the family of the king of Israel or of an Israelitish noble. But noble he was, and of some consideration among his captors, who gave to him instead of the name Daniel (which means God is my image) the new one of Belteshazzar, a name which in the Chaldean tongue means "His life protect."

From excavations made in our own day in and about the site of Babylon we can reconstruct the appearance of the imperial city which met the eyes of the captives after their toilsome journey through Mesopotamia. The great towered, encircling walls of Babylon, the Gate of God, rose steeply above the wide plain, and above them rose again the immense tower of E-temen-an-ki, the famed tower of Babel, the "foundation stone of heaven and earth," and the high roofs of the king's palace and the temples of Marduk and Ishtar. Triple walls from 12 yards to 24 yards thick, with a fosse between two of them, and so wide that a four-horse chariot could be driven on the road along the top, ran for ten miles about the city within them.

A moat completed the defences on three sides; on the west was the broad ribbon of the Euphrates. Within the walls were three great groups of buildings, among them the king's palace, the temple of his god Bel Marduk whom the Greeks called Belus, the immense tower, and the temple of Ishtar. To the monstrous portals of the temple of Ishtar the way was by a long avenue of sculptured lions, the remains of which even to this day are 40 feet high, and the gates themselves, as we can see, were carved with nine rows of dragons and bulls. Among all this idolatrous splendour the streets were narrow, the houses flat-topped, the markets and bazaars differing little from those of an Eastern city today.

It was a wondrous sight for the weary Jewish captives, though to them the splendour betokened not a palace but a prison and little prospect beyond hunger and slavery. But there was one among them who had no mind to sit down by the waters of Babylon and weep. Daniel, who with his following evidently enjoyed some position of superior consideration among the rest, was swift to assert himself.

The king's chamberlain, as we may call him, who had given Daniel his new Chaldean name, as well as those of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego to his companions, set before them wine and meat. But Daniel openly demurred; he would not defile himself with the viands of the heathen but asked that he and his friends might be given their own food in accordance with the law of their fathers. The chamberlain, alarmed at the idea that the appearance of his charges might be spoiled by a different diet, said the king had commanded what they should eat, and he feared that if he changed it he would endanger his own head.

But Daniel persisted and suggested that they might be fed for ten days on pulse and water, and if then their conditions were not fairer than those who ate the king's meat the chamberlain might deal as he liked with them. So this ancient experiment in vegetarian ritual was tried, and Daniel's first victory in the Court of Babylon was won when he and the three faithful ones with him appeared fairer than all those who had eaten the king's meat.

So propitious a beginning was followed by a fairer sequel. Brought before Nebuchadnezzar they found favour in his eyes and by the caprice of his tyrannic rule became unwonted favourites. He inquired of them concerning the strange and mystic matters that were in this land of the Chaldeans, the province of the astrologers and the self-appointed magicians. Such as these interpreted the king's dreams, and there came a day when all their cunning failed. Nebuchadnezzar dreamed a

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dream that troubled his waking hours, and troubled him none the less because he had forgotten it.

So the tyrant called his wise men and commanded them to interpret the lost vision. They answered reasonably enough that if he would tell them the dream they would show him the interpretation. But that was no answer to give to him who ruled in Babylon, and he made haste to tell them that if they had no better answer they should be cut in pieces and their houses be made a dung-hill. They protested in vain, saying that only the gods could comply with his will; and in mounting fury he sent forth the decree that all of them should be slain.

Even Daniel might not be exempt from the slaughter, for on him, too, had been thrust the mantle of wisdom. But he, strong in the faith of Jehovah whose man he was, had no fear. He prayed, and to him while he slept his God, who revealeth the deep and secret things, who knoweth what is in the darkness, told him the dream and its interpretation. He presented himself before the king and, saying that it was no wisdom in himself that gave him the power to know the dream and its meaning, told it to Nebuchadnezzar and interpreted it.

It was a dream of a great image with a head of fine gold, a breast and arms of silver, thighs of brass, legs of iron, and feet that were part clay. The image was broken by a stone made without hands that smote it. And in this allegory Daniel the prophet laid before Nebuchadnezzar a future when there should be five great empires of the world. The Bible story tells the vision at length; the later interpreters have sought to find in it a fulfilment in the coming and going of the empires of Babylon, of Persia, Greece, and Rome, to be succeeded at last by the empire of Christ.

Nebuchadnezzar fell on his face and worshipped Daniel as a god. As to a god they offered him oblation. As the king's man who sat with the king he was made ruler over the province of Babylon.

It was no office of ease in spite of its dignity, for Nebuchadnezzar, who was still the enslaved devotee of his own god Marduk and in whom the seeds of madness were already sown, set up in the plain of Dura a golden image which in its vast dimensions reflected his own megalomania, and commanded that all should worship it; those who would not should be cast in a burning fiery furnace. Into the furnace Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego were cast and came forth whole, and once again by this miracle the king's heart was changed, and he commanded that none should speak against the God of the Jews, for there was no other god that could deliver after this sort.

All the story is not told, and as the Bible tells it Nebuchadnezzar dreamed yet another dream of a great tree that grew to the heavens, so that it was within sight of all the Earth; and the beasts of the field had shadow under it and the birds of the air dwelled in its branches. Yet was it hewed down. Again was Daniel summoned to interpret, and told his master it was a warning for his sins. If he should not break off from them and from his iniquities he should be driven from among men, and his dwelling should be with the beasts of the field, and he should eat grass as the oxen till he honoured God and his reason returned to him. So it was—madness descended on the king and great Nebuchadnezzar became as a dumb beast of the field.

His madness lasted a year, and during that time Daniel acted as his viceroy. In the reign of Belshazzar, son of Nebuchadnezzar, Daniel lived in a retirement dictated in part by necessity and no less by prudence, but his uncompromising spirit dwelled in him ready to leap forth on occasion. The occasion came with the Feast of Belshazzar, when the golden and silver vessels taken by Nebuchadnezzar out of the Temple at Jerusalem were brought so that the king and his boon companions might drink from them. On that scene of riotous revelry broke a portent. On the wall above



Belshazzar's Feast. Rembrandt

the golden candlestick lighting the king's table a hand stole forth and wrote mystic words in letters of fire.

Belshazzar saw and trembled, and in haste summoned the soothsayers to interpret the writing. None could read it or interpret it; and then Belshazzar's queen remembered Daniel. He was sought and brought to the hall of banqueting, and the king, half-contemptuously reminding him that once he had been a captive but that he had some skill in interpretation, required him to tell the meaning of the writing, promising him gold and honour for reward.

As unabashed as unafraid Daniel, with a greater than kingly disdain, set aside the offered gifts and rebuked him who offered them. He reminded him of his father's sins and their punishment by madness, and with fierce denunciation dared to foretell the fate of the king—his kingdom should be given to the Medes and Persians. They clothed Daniel in scarlet and gold, they loaded him with honours as if to avert the condemnation; but in that night was Belshazzar slain and Darius of the Medes took his kingdom.

One scene more in the life of the mighty Jew whom no threat could daunt nor disaster submerge.

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It is the story of the den of lions into which he was cast in the reign of Darius. He had been advanced to high honour under the new ruler; but his unabated power and influence inspired jealousy among the king's captains, counsellors, and governors. They laid a trap for him, begging the king for a decree to forbid any man to ask a petition of any divinity save only the king for thirty days. If such a man should pray to his god he should be cast into a den of lions.

So the king made his decree, a decree to the Medes and Persians not to be broken but neither was the spirit of Daniel to be broken. He prayed as he had always done: he was cast into the den of lions, and a stone set upon the entrance. There for a night he was imprisoned, and at dawn the repentent king hastened to the place of his imprisonment and called unto him. Had the living God saved His servant? And Daniel's firm voice answered that his God had sent His angel to shut the lions' mouths. He came out of the lions' den to ascend to greater honours.

No further trials awaited him and he prospered till the third year of Cyrus, remaining in favour. He was now of great age and he asked for dismissal from the king's service. The king would not let him go till he had found a successor in Zerubbabel. Then the aged prophet, according to his wish, returned to Palestine, where he would have rebuilt the Temple.

That was not permitted to him, but he lived at Shushan till his years numbered more than 90. For six centuries after his death the tradition of his greatness lingered there. His tomb was assigned by tradition to Susa, the modern Shustor. It was described by Benjamin of Tudela, who visited the Holy Land about 1160 A.D., and was shown the tomb in the facade of one of its many synagogues,



Daniel's Answer to the King, B. Pratt After Briton Rivière

DANIEL

some still standing. Benjamin declared that the tomb no longer contained the remains of Daniel. The inhabitants of both banks of the Persian river Choaspes disputed its possession and finally agreed that the bier should rest one year on either side.

The Persian Shah Sanjar, visiting the city after some years of this practice, stopped it because it was disrespectful to the prophet. A chapel was erected in the middle of the bridge for Jews and Gentiles, and the bier fastened with chains to the bridge. Fishing was forbidden within a mile, and many a strange legend about golden fish and the penalties for interference with the sacred relic grew about it. So undying was the story of this mighty captive who swayed kings till he became like a god among them, and the shadow of his name was revered by peoples who knew him not.

Chapter 7

80

Judas Maccabeus

Died 161 B.C., Palestine



The Triumph of Judas Maccabeus, Peter Paul Rubens

The scene is the Promised Land of Palestine in the second century before the coming of the Messiah. The Children of Israel, the seed of Abraham, worshippers of Jehovah, Keepers of the Word, whom Moses led out of Egypt and David ruled, are a remnant of the tribe of Judah, dwelling insecurely about the holy city of Jerusalem and fearful of further oppression.

Many a nation in the past had taken tribute of the Kingdom of Israel; her sanctuary had fallen into the hand of strangers, her young men and maidens cast into captivity, her infants slain in the streets. A new threat had arisen with Antiochus the Fourth, King of Syria. In this crisis of Judea's history a new priest and a new leader are raised up. The priest is Mattathias. The leader is his third son Judas Maccabeus, another Joshua.

Antiochus, surnamed Epiphanes, had sought to impose Greek Hellenism on Judea. Worship of the Greek gods and all that was implied in Greek beliefs was already widespread in Palestine. It had been aided by renegade priests: Jason and Menelaus were rival factions among them. Antiochus, intervening, had plundered the Temple, and later his general Apollonius devastated the city. A Syrian garrison occupied the citadel.

It was then that the courageous priest Mattathias, a man well advanced in years, raised the standard of revolt and enlisted his

JUDAS MACCABEUS



Woodcut for *Die Bibel in Bildern*, by Julius Schnorr von Carolsfeld, 1860

five sons, Joannan, Simon, Judas who was called Maccabeus, Eleazer, and Jonathan, to aid him. Of these Judas became the general, and his brothers and those who followed them were the Macca-beans. They were pledged to restore Jewish worship and to stamp out Paganism.

The answer of Mattathias the priest, when the servants of the Syrian king called on him for submission, is written in the first book of the Maccabees. He spake with a loud voice saying:

Though all the nations that are under the king's dominion obey him and fall away every one from the religion of their fathers, yet will I and my sons and my brethren walk in the covenant of our fathers. We will not hearken to the king's words to go from our religion either on the right hand or the left.

Mattathias quickly proceeded from these defiant words to action. He pulled down the altars of the idols, he pursued the renegade priests. But his time was to be short in the land. In less than three years he was gathered to his fathers, bequeathing the cause to his sons under the leadership of Judas.

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"Simon," said the father, "is a man of counsel; give ear unto him alway. But Judas Maccabeus he hath been mighty and strong even from his youth up; let him be your captain and fight the battle of the people."

Judas well justified his father's trust. He began swiftly and victoriously defeating the lesser Syrian generals sent against him and restoring the worship in the Temple. The regent Lysias, who was a long way from his base, made terms with the insurgent and granted freedom of religion to the Jews; but the Maccabees continued to fight for political as well as religious freedom. Judas was a soldier not only swift in action but elusive in tactics. Knowing his own numerical weakness, even when in the prime of his manhood he entered into a war against much superior forces, he avoided pitched battles. He favoured night attacks on the villages and small towns in Syrian occupation on the edge of the desert. He and his brothers were probably at first only a small band of fugitives. It was out of these small conflicts that he created an organised army.

His first victory of importance was when he was attacked by Apollonius Strategus of Samaria, whom he defeated, taking his sword. With that sword he fought all his life long. This triumph brought the Jewish leader many recruits. It brought also Seron Strategus, Prince of Syria, to march against him in the hope of triumphing where Apollonius had failed. Seron came in considerable force with an army reinforced by Jewish traitors. The small band of Judas prayed and fasted before the battle began. They were victorious at the narrow pass of Beth-Horon, north-west of Jerusalem. The enemy were routed and fled into the country of the Philistines.

These events at length aroused Antiochus, who gathered together a great army to put down this insolent rebel.

The revolt of the Maccabees was something more than an insult to the prestige of the Syrian king. The demands of the Romans for their war tax was emptying his own war chest. The tribute he could levy in his own dominions was failing. Therefore he determined to lead an expedition into Persia in search of plunder, leaving half his forces under the regent Lysias, who had charge of the king's son, with orders to visit the rebellious Maccabees with the full weight of his displeasure.

Lysias accordingly dispatched two experienced leaders, Nicanor and Gorgias, with 40,000 foot soldiers and 7,000 horsemen into Judea with orders to destroy it. They hoped by the sale of captives to raise money for the Roman war tax; and when the great army pitched its tents at Emmaus, among its camp-followers were Phoenician and other traders ready to bargain for the expected slaves.

Against this host Judas Maccabeus assembled at Mizpah his small force of 6,000 men divided into four companies under the command of his brothers. In sackcloth and ashes the devoted band observed a solemn day of prayer and repentance. The fifth Maccabean brother Eleazar read aloud from the Bible and gave the password "Help of God."

The accounts that have come down to us of the conflict are fragmentary and confusing. But it is said that by a stratagem the Jewish leader scattered the army of Gorgias and Nicanor, driving the Syrians before them and obtaining great spoil, including much taken from the Phoenicians.

A second victory at Beth-Zur followed the first, and Lysias and his forces were compelled to retreat to Antioch. Judas Maccabeus entered Jerusalem as a victor, and reconsecrated the Temple. The Acra, or citadel, remained in the hands of the Syrians, but with this compromise the first Maccabean revolt ended with a two-years peace.

The new Jewish ruler pursued with unalterable devotion the Zionist aim of recalling the scattered Children of Israel to Jerusalem. He suppressed revolts in neighbouring tribes and brought the

JUDAS MACCABEUS

few Jews in Galilee and Gilead back to the fold. After the death of Antiochus Epiphanes his forces besieged the citadel of Jerusalem.

The renegade Jews, whose undying enmity was fated at length to destroy all the edifice he had raised, sent emissaries to Lysias at Antioch. The regent, not unmindful of former defeats, came with a greater army than before. He brought, according to the Jewish historian of the Maccabees, 100,000 foot soldiers, 20,000 horsemen, and 32 elephants. The story of that battle, where each elephant was surrounded by a thousand Syrians with coats of mail and helmets of brass on their heads, forms one of the most striking chapters of the Apocrypha.

We may take from it the incident of the sacrifice of Eleazar. This one of the Maccabean brothers, perceiving that one of the elephants armed with royal harness was higher than all the rest, and supposing that the King was upon him, put himself in jeopardy, to the end he might deliver his people and get him a perpetual name. Whereupon he ran upon him courageously through the midst of the battle, slaying on the right hand and on the left, so that they were divided from him on both sides. Which done, he crept under the elephant and thrust him under and slew him, whereupon the elephant fell down upon him and there he died.

The army of the elephants was turned aside by Judas, but he could not altogether arrest it. The



Judas Maccabeus Pursues Timotheus, Illustration from Doré's English Bible by Gustave Doré, 1866

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Temple was besieged, but so stout a resistance was offered that at last Lysias, seeing his forces wasted and apprehensive also lest he should be supplanted by rivals in Antioch, made peace with the Jews, renewing the grant of religious freedom but retaining a suzerainty over them.

Judas Maccabeus had many battles to come. Sometimes the highest success of his dreams seemed to beckon him only again to elude him, as the Syrians, like Pharaoh of old, hardened their hearts, or as the Jews who had murmured against Moses turned their faces away from him who would have helped them. There was a time when he became ruler of the whole land. After the death of Alcimus, the High Priest who had gathered together the renegade Jews, the office was given to Judas. Priest and King, the ambition of his life would have been accomplished had he been possessed of nothing greater than ambition. He is said to have made a treaty with Rome. In the hour of this personal triumph his greater aim of Zionism was tottering to collapse.

One more Syrian army was sent against him. It overthrew him—why, we can hardly understand. It was a great army, but he had repelled great armies. Perhaps he was a victim of that fatal weakness of Jewry which manifests itself in jealousy of its leaders and treachery toward them.

There may have been some who, while Judas Maccabeus was in the full flight of his victorious career, regarded him as a Messiah. It was, we think, his highest honour to share a Messiah's fate. The force he assembled at Eleasa was alarmed at the size of the Syrian army. It slipped away from him like snow from the desert's dusty face. At the last only 800 men remained with their old leader, the Lion of Judah. Outnumbered, surrounded on all sides, without hope of escape, Judas Maccabeus and a few of his captains fought to the last, and fighting fell.

His brothers recovered his body and, taking it with them, buried it in the sepulchre of his fathers. The Jewish historian says that all Israel made great lamentation for him and mourned many days saying, "Now is the valiant man fallen that delivered Israel!" They should have written on his tomb instead, "Among the faithless, faithful only he," for he had followed the God of his fathers, yet fought not for power but for the freedom of his people; and they, when all had been done, left him naked to his enemies.

Chapter 8

Jesus

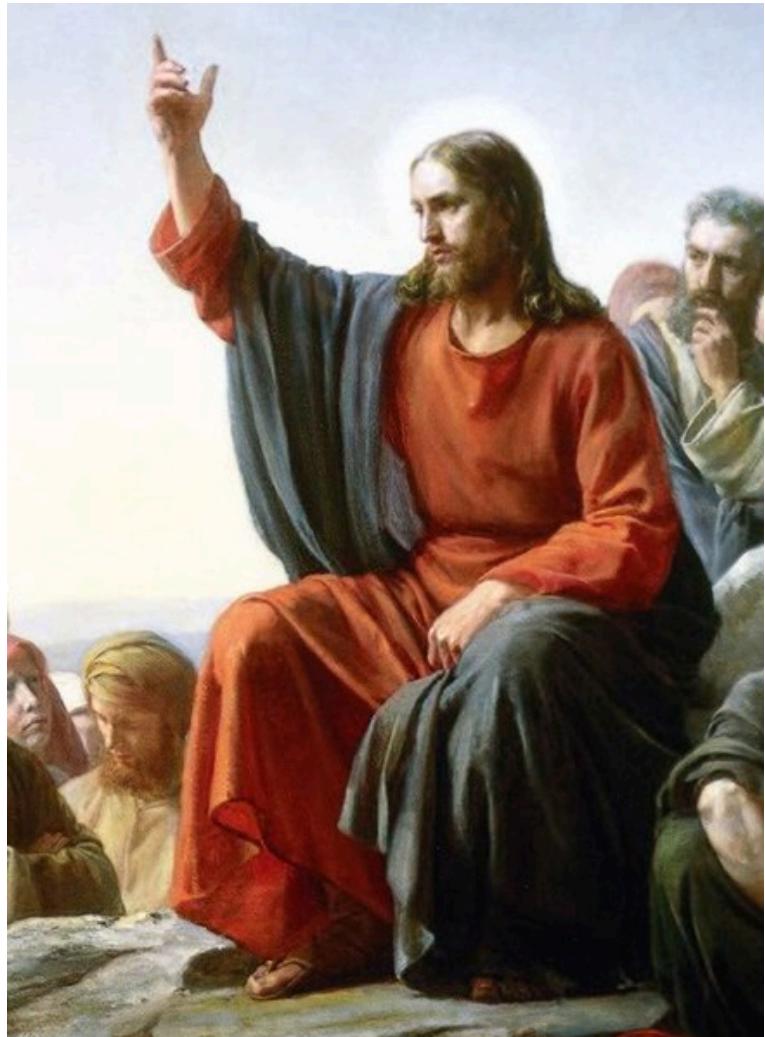
4 B.C.-about 30 A.D., Jerusalem

It is nineteen hundred years since one or two shepherds were abiding in the fields, and still we talk of them.

In that solemn midnight the news was brought to them of a child born in a stable, and still we talk of him. He walked about the hills of Palestine speaking to the people, and still his words ring through the world. They nailed him on a cross, and still there is no life on Earth more powerful than his.

If we would have a hero, where is such another? Hunted and hated from the cradle to the grave, stoned out of cities, trapped and tempted by the priests, rejected by his people, betrayed by his disciples, scourged and mocked and spat upon and crucified between two thieves, he yet stands before us as our man of men, something more than Galahad, more than hero, saint, and knight—the Saviour of the World.

It is not an idle saying, not poetry or just a phrase from the Bible, but is politically true. He went into the wilderness to think about the world. He came back after forty days of solitude, of temptation and struggle and decision, and began talking to the people. He would go into their villages and towns and talk with them by the way, sometimes in a little field or from a boat on the lake, or to little children on his knee, and at times he would confront them in the Temple. He



The Sermon on the Mount, Carl Bloch



Christ in the House of Martha and Mary, Henryk Siemiradzki

would walk on foot from place to place, sometimes nearly a hundred miles, and always he would talk of simple things.

Never man spake like this man. The priests had made themselves powerful with their cunning, and had set up great pretences and much ceremony; but this man spoke of things they knew in words they knew—of the wind blowing where it listeth, of the chaff growing in the wheat, of the beauty of the wild flowers, of a hen gathering her chickens, and a fox hiding in its hole. He noticed everything—the cunning of the serpent, the chirping of the sparrow, the lilies of the field, the stone that a builder rejected which at last became the chief stone of the house. He was sensitive to human need and simple feeling, to suffering and beauty; let a woman but touch the hem of his garment and so sensitive was he that it was talked of for a thousand years.

He told them little stories that they loved—of the sower going forth to sow, the rich man and his barns, the great supper, the king's son in a far country, the prodigal son, the lost piece of silver. He moved among the people and mixed with them all, at their feasts and their weddings, in their sick rooms and synagogues, in the marketplace and at the well.

He found a man by the Pool of Bethesda who had been stricken many years, and he gave him such power that he took up his bed and walked. He saw a tax-gatherer up in a tree and called him down, for he must abide at his house. He loved to go to the house of Mary and Martha and their brother at Bethany. He was so gentle that little children came to him. He was so calm that it seemed that even the winds and the seas obeyed him. He was known to weep but was rarely known to frown,

JESUS

and he kept his scorn for the hypocrite. In storm and danger his strength was for all:

Be of good cheer. It is I. Be not afraid.

He was in the world for thirty years of which we know almost nothing, save that wise men brought gifts to him in his lowly cradle, that Mary and Joseph the carpenter fled into Egypt to save his life, and that as a boy of twelve they found him in the Temple arguing with the doctors, who were astonished at his wisdom. Most of what we know of him is from the last three years, and altogether what we know is not equal to a day for every year he lived.

All that we know of him happened on about 35 days. There have been days since then and not one on which somebody would not have died for him. The memory of these 35 days remains the most precious possession of mankind. It has been the secret strength behind the forces that have made our modern world.

We owe our knowledge of these 35 days to four men, especially to Matthew, the journalist who wrote down his words. There are about 25,000 of them, about equal to one copy of the Children's News-paper, and they have changed the world for every one of us. If every paper in the world would print these words, and every reader of these papers would follow them, the world would be happy for all time.

What are they, these few words that have such power?

Some of them are little tales, the best short stories ever told, every one pure gold. There is the beautiful story of the Good Samaritan told in three inches of type like this yet with an immortal message. We all know the people in it, those who pass by and those who help. We all know the two kinds of people in the story of the Pharisee and the Publican, told in two inches of type like this. Everyone knows the Widow's Mite, the eternal story of the poor who give all. Every child understands the beautiful story of the Prodigal Son, yet it comes down the ages as a better tale than Shakespeare ever told, and it is true of life in every age. The Wise and Foolish Virgins have become the classic story of putting things off; the Rich Young Ruler belongs to every generation.

And were ever such practical politics as Galilee's? Every man knows how true are these words and how well they fit the lives of men and nations.

We remember a great crisis in South Africa when Cecil Rhodes sent a warning home by cable; at a time when a word from him meant something like a revolution it was just a few sentences spoken in Galilee that he cabled home. It matters nothing where we turn in these 25,000 words; our hero is for every time and place and situation.

By their fruits ye shall know them. Do not your alms before men. No man can serve two masters. Beware of those who love the best seats. Strain not at a gnat and swallow a camel. Judge not. Do unto others as you would that they should do unto you.

Resist not evil. Give to him that ask thee. Love your enemies. Do good to them that hate you. Forgive thy brother seven times in a day. Beware of covetousness. Lay not up for yourself treasure upon Earth. It were better that a millstone were hung round our necks than we should offend one of these little ones. Unto whom much is given of him much shall be required. Wo unto those who say long prayers. If we have faith we can remove mountains. Every man is our neighbour. With God all things are possible. The stars shall fall from Heaven, but he that endures to the end shall be

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Suffer the Children, Carl Bloch

JESUS

saved.

Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart and all thy soul and all thy mind and all thy strength, and thy neighbour as thyself.

It is not impossible; it is not difficult; and it is the salvation of the world. Men have made a mystery of it all, have woven it into creeds that no man understands, so that there is nothing in the history of the world so sad and dark and terrible as the history of the misunderstanding of these words; yet they are simple and beautiful and true. He left them with a few plain men who listened to them. He trusted to the simple power and truth of them to come down the ages. And they have come. Where else is such music?

Consider the lilies, how they grow; they toil not, neither do they spin, yet I say unto you that even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these.

Blessed are the pure in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of Heaven. Blessed are they that mourn, for they shall be comforted. Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the Earth. Ask and it shall be given you. Seek and ye shall find. Knock and it shall be opened unto you.

The Kingdom of Heaven is like unto a merchant seeking goodly pearls, who, when he had found



Christ Healing the Sick at Bethesda, Carl Bloch

MY WORLD STORY BOOK

one pearl of great price, went and sold all that he had, and bought it.

O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not.

When you shall hear of wars and rumours of wars be ye not troubled, for such things must come to pass; but the end is not yet. You shall be hated of all for my name's sake, but not a hair of your head shall perish. In your patience possess ye your souls. This is my commandment, that ye love one another as I have loved you. Greater love has no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends.

And lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world.

The 35 days drew to their end. They brought him an ass and he rode on it to Jerusalem, the people spreading their garments in the way. He went to the Temple and threw out the men who turned it into a marketplace. He healed the sick and opened the eyes of those who could not see. He told them that faith should move mountains, and bade them remember the things that are Caesar's and the things that are God's. He told them of the dark days that would come, when not one stone would be left upon another—O Jerusalem, Jerusalem!

And then came one who betrayed him, Judas followed by a multitude with swords and staves; and in that bitter hour all the disciples forsook him and fled—he whom Jesus loved, he who would lay down his life for him, all but a certain young man unknown, who followed until they laid hold of him and stripped off his clothes so that he fled away naked. He was the unknown hero, the last man to follow Jesus.

They hauled their captive before Pilate, who found no fault in him: it is to the eternal honour of the Roman Empire that her judges found no fault in him. And yet they crucified him. They set a murderer free and put him in his place. They scourged him, plaited a crown of thorns and put it on his head, and nailed him to a cross between two thieves; and as he prayed for his enemies the people mocked him and the soldiers tore his seamless coat and cast lots for it, all save one, who was filled with fear that they had killed a just man.

Now it was over, they said. But it was only beginning. It was the Roman Empire and not Christianity that was to pass away. It was Caesar and Pilate who were to be forgotten, not the Man of Galilee. He lives in all our lives and we cannot escape him. Nations come and go, empires rise and fall, the centuries roll on and races pass away, but he who was hunted and hated from Bethlehem to Calvary sways the lives of men and will yet lead us out of these dark days.

Chapter 9



The Apostles

About 30 A.D., Jerusalem

There are two things in the world which fill the modern mind with increasing wonder; no discovery of science and no labour of research has lessened their mystery by an iota.

One is the appearance of Life on this planet; the other is the appearance of Christianity in history.

For millions of years the heat of the Earth was greater than anything we can imagine. No life of any kind could have existed in the midst of that terrific furnace. Yet, when the Earth had cooled



The Exhortation to the Apostles, James Tissot

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and clothed itself with atmosphere Life appeared and began its stupendous evolution. Whence came this delicate, intelligent, and sensitive thing? No man can answer.

In something of the same manner we regard the coming of Christianity. In the darkest hour of His life the Apostles of Jesus, simple fishermen and peasants from an obscure province of the Roman Empire, forsook him and fled. The chief priests of the Jews were no longer afraid of Jesus. Rome reigned in undisputed majesty over the known Earth. The life of humanity proceeded in the course which it had followed for many centuries. No one could have dreamed that Jesus was to become the greatest force in the evolution of mankind.

How did this wondrous thing come about? It is one of the miraculous events of history, one of the noblest chapters of heroism that has ever been lived or written. Let us see how these Apostles and a little group of pioneers overcame all obstacles and set up Christianity on its way to conquer and capture the world.

Jesus had gathered about him twelve men. From synagogue to synagogue in Galilee He had gone with these Twelve proclaiming a New Age. He had sat with them on the hillside. He had been in their fishing-boats. He had stayed for some time in the house of Peter at Capernaum. Finally He had journeyed with these twelve men to the capital city of Jerusalem, had aroused the anger and the fear of the priests, had been betrayed by one of the Twelve, had been hurriedly tried, had been shouted to death by a mob, and had been brutally executed in the company of two thieves.

Bear in mind this tremendous fact: *with the death of Jesus nothing existed of Christianity save the impression of the character of Jesus in the memory of those who forsook him and fled in the hour of His shame.* The whole fortunes of the human race were committed to the memory of men like Peter and James. The future of civilisation turned on the question *Would they remember?*

Is it anything to wonder at, after all, that His eleven followers should have failed Jesus in that dark hour? Against them were arrayed not only the forces at the disposal of the Jewish priests, not only all the fierce and indignant hatred of the Jewish patriots, but the unbroken strength and majestic contempt of the Roman Empire. They quailed at the sight of the great city of Jerusalem; they fled at the appearance of the Roman soldiers; they departed for their humble homes in rural Galilee when Jesus died on the Cross.

There is no dispute about these things; they are historical facts, and the more thoroughly we get them into our minds the greater will be our hold upon the mystery which follows. Jesus died on the Cross forsaken by His friends, and after His death the Apostles dispersed to their homes in northern Palestine.

What brought them back to Jerusalem? Two of our greatest scholars have finely said that, though the empty tomb may have been the basis of Mary Magdalene's faith in the Resurrection it was not that of Peter's. *Peter believed because he had found a living Jesus, not because he could not find a dead one.*

The Gospel of Mark, the earliest and the safest in these matters, is clear on this point. Peter had fled to Galilee. The boldest, strongest, and most impulsive heart among the Twelve had broken with despair before the tragedy of Calvary. But in his bitter grief and fearful disappointment he received a vision of the Man he had so deeply loved and so earnestly followed, a vision which entirely convinced him that Jesus was not dead but alive, and with that vision his love was rekindled, his courage returned, and he set out once more for the perilous city of Jerusalem.

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Jesus and his Disciples on the Sea of Galilee, Carl Oesterley

Now notice a strange fact. The twelve Apostles were reduced by the death of the traitor Judas to eleven. What did they do? They elected a new member to fill his place. Why was this? Because, while Judas had ceased, by an act of moral infamy, for ever to be one of the Twelve, James, though dead, still continued to be of the sacred number, and when Jesus returned to usher in the New Age James would return with Him, and would occupy one of "the twelve thrones of Israel."

From this important fact we may see the faith that was in Peter. The vision vouchsafed to him had changed the whole nature of his life. He returned to Jerusalem with courage and with the sure conviction that Jesus would come again with power and glory to judge the Earth.

He gathered the believers together and formed a synagogue. They gave up their private property. They did not preach or teach, but simply waited for the return of their master. They gave no trouble to the Jews. The Romans were hardly aware of their existence. People spoke of them as the Nazarenes; the synagogue was known as the Synagogue of the Nazarenes. In everything they were pious and law-abiding Jews, differing from their fellow-countrymen only in these two respects: that they had no private property and that they believed Jesus would soon return to usher in the New Age. When the Sadducees, who did not believe in a resurrection, began to pester them, the followers of Jesus were defended by an orthodox Jew, the Pharisee Gamaliel, a teacher of Paul.

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But, although the Apostles were wrong in thinking Jesus would soon return to reign over the world, their memories were faithful to the impression His beautiful spirit had made upon them; and in their little synagogue often did they speak to those who came to them of the things that Jesus had said to them and of His attitude to God as the Father of men. Thus it came about that, simply from the memory of these few Galileans, before one word of the Gospels was written, there developed what we call the Christian Tradition, the Character of Jesus.

Peter was the recognised head of the synagogue. Everything went peacefully with the believers till the money in their treasury began to fail. Then some of the believers who came from Greece began to grumble that the widows among them did not receive what was regarded as a fair share of the common property.

This led to the community electing seven of their number to administer the funds and the food, leaving the other free to conduct the worship of the society. By a strange chance this step toward peace led speedily to strife, and out of that strife the Christian Church was born.

Among the Seven there was a young, ardent, and spiritual man named Stephen, and in the course of his work, probably in seeking fresh converts and a new accession to the funds, he offended the Jews. He offended them by saying that Jesus had come to save foreigners as well as Jews, and that foreigners were as precious to God as the Chosen People. As a consequence of this a cry of blasphemy was raised against him. A mob gathered and stoned him to death. Among those who took part in the death of the young Greek was Saul, a Pharisee.

The work of preaching Christianity fell chiefly to the Seven. Stephen and Philip were among the boldest of missionaries, Philip travelling as far as Samaria and Caesarea; others of the number went to Antioch, others to Damascus. Wherever they went the Greek-speaking Jews listened to them, and many were converted; always the people who became Christians were people who resented the arrogant religion of the orthodox Jews of Jerusalem. They were wider-minded than the home-keeping Jews. They could understand the idea of God as the Father of all men. The character of Jesus stirred their emotions. They became Christians gladly and publicly.

It was not till Philip's work had created difficulties that Peter left Jerusalem for Samaria and Caesarea, and it was not till the number of conversions at Antioch had aroused the alarm and anger of the Pharisees at Jerusalem that Barnabas journeyed thither.

In both cases the journey was undertaken either to stop or to curb the missionary activities of the Seven; but in both cases the result was the same: Peter and Barnabas were converted to a wider view of the meaning of Christianity.

Step by step, for some years had now gone by since the Crucifixion, the Disciples were brought to see a new meaning in Christ's words concerning a New Age. They became conscious of a world wider than any Pharisee could conceive—a world in which slaves were crying out for the gift of God as earnestly as any Jew at Jerusalem. Not easily did Peter surrender his Jewish ideas. He fought for them, brooded upon them, dreamed about them, and only after a vivid dream did he rise to a wider view of the love and charity of God. But with that conversion a new happiness came to him, and he laboured with all his strength to see that those foreigners who accepted the Christian religion should become like unto Christ in the beauty of His character and the sternness of His moral judgments. Almost everything turned on one point—Peter's memory of the Personality of Jesus.

Marvellous was the spread of this new religion. It moved over the world like flooding water. It

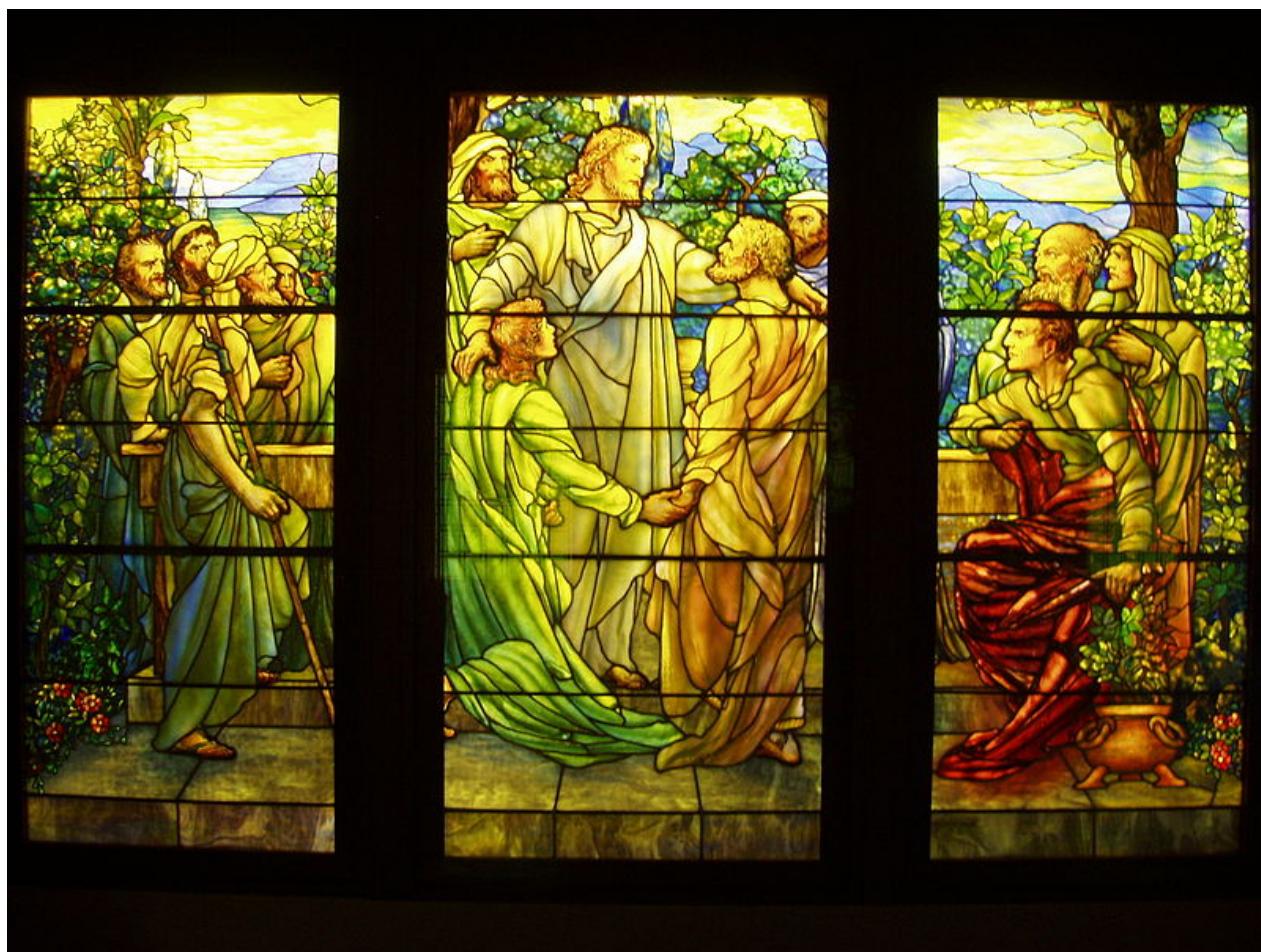
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gave new life to all sorts and conditions of men. It was fast becoming a world religion—no longer that of a Jewish sect.

In the city of Jerusalem James, the brother of Jesus, was at the head of a party which wanted to keep Christianity entirely for the Jews, a party which would have made men become Jews before they could become Christians. But Peter, after some doubt, had thrown in his lot with the wider view, and was now himself a missionary to other nations. In his absence from Jerusalem James became the head of the synagogue and rigorously enforced the Jewish law at Jerusalem. We observe that the orthodox Jews in Jerusalem, while they hated Paul above other men, were less bitter toward James, who is thought to have been unhurt by persecution until his last days in the city.

Very different was the lot of those who followed in the path blazed by Stephen and Philip. Peter, after many hesitations, threw in his lot with the Christians of Antioch; and it is from Antioch, not from Jerusalem, that Europe receives her religion. There came a clash between the Christians of Antioch and the stricter Christians of Jerusalem; and Antioch conquered the world, while the sect at Jerusalem disappeared from history.

Everywhere the spirit of God was moving, and a fresh quickening of spiritual life broke out in one country after another, even in the city of Rome itself. Peter's memory of his Master was creating



Christ and the Apostles, Tiffany Glass & Decorating Company

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a Gospel of Christ before any of the evangelists had written a word.

Paul was everywhere. He, too, had seen a vision of Jesus. Unlike the slow-moving and heavy-thinking Peter, this restless and brilliant intellect was consumed by one passionate idea—to convert the whole world to faith in a Christ living for ever within the individual soul. Peter still looked for the return of his Master. On the other hand Paul thought only of the Christ within and the world to be.

Think what it must have meant to the converted Greeks to visit men like Peter, James, Barnabas, and John—men who had actually known Jesus, who had shared His inner counsels, had eaten with Him, had seen Him arrested by the Roman soldiers in the Garden of Gethsemane. These converts would want to know all that there was to know about Jesus, for were they not giving up everything dear to normal men in order to follow His way of life?

From these visits came a new thing into the world: Christian Character. Men learned to be modest, to be gentle, to be unselfish, to be considerate for others, and to hunger and thirst after righteousness. We might almost say that a new race was born on the Earth. And this new race, created by the Apostles, came to be not merely a challenge to the Scribes and Pharisees in Jerusalem, but a challenge to the might and majesty of the Roman Empire. So swift was the spread of Christian Character that soon the statesmen of the world were confronted by no problem so great and so pressing as the destruction of the Christian religion. The Personality of Jesus was abroad in the world of men.

Then ended for Peter the peaceful days of the synagogue and the quiet journeys to Antioch. Like the others who followed Jesus he was sought out, cast into prison, and brutally executed.

It was the same in the case of nearly every other leading member of the community, save perhaps only John. Paul suffered endless tortures and punishments. He was attacked by the Jews; he was arrested by the Romans. His life was like that of a hunted criminal. And not only the Apostles and disciples were thus treated by the world; humble men and women, including boys and girls, were arrested in droves, tortured, scourged, imprisoned, and flung to the lions.

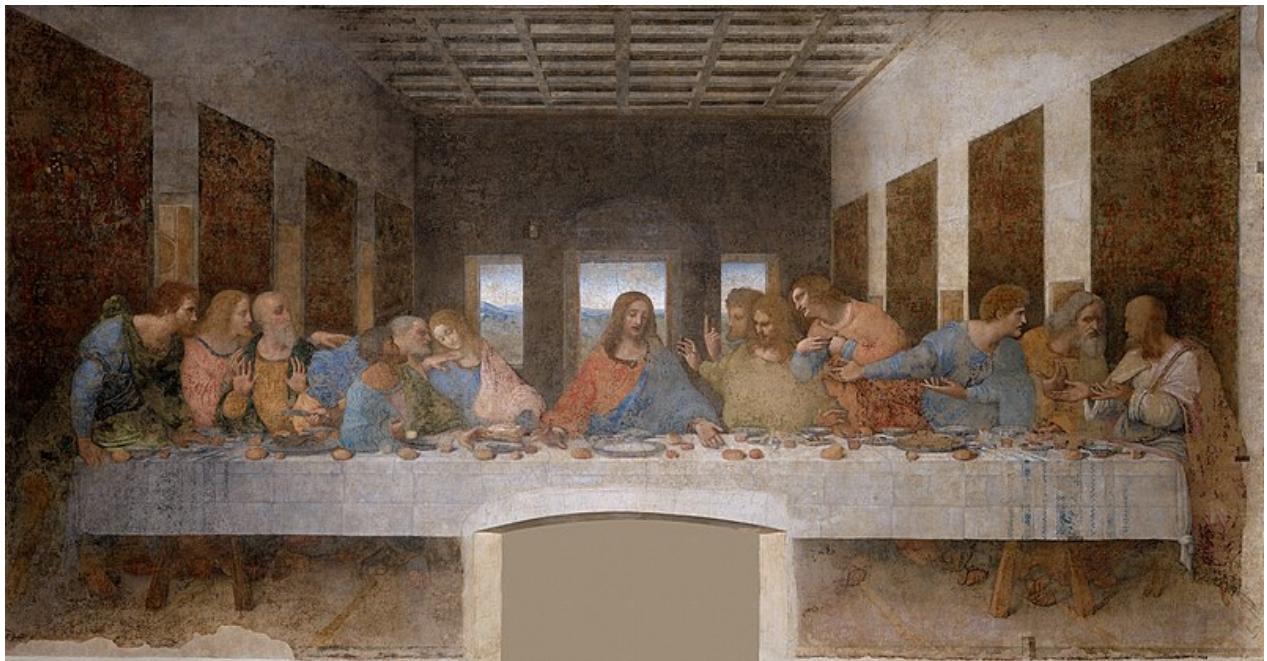
Yet nothing could daunt the hearts of these believers. Once converted their whole lives were changed and death had no fear for them; even torture could not shake them. It is said that the faces of many of them shone with a strange light as they met death. After every persecution the number of converts increased. It came to be realised that to love the character of Jesus was to be free of all fear of what men could do and to be sure of a resurrection from the dead.

We go back again and again to those times and ask how it was that Christianity prevailed against the power of Rome and the hatred of the Jews; and the one answer that remains is the reply of the Apostles that this thing was done by the Spirit of God.

For six years after the Crucifixion the Apostles were regarded with tolerance by the Jewish priests, and with contempt by such Romans in Jerusalem as chanced to hear of their existence.

At this time no Gospel had been written. Nothing existed that was comparable in any way with the Church of our times. Peter was the head of a synagogue, and the rest of the number were his brother officers of this small Jewish sect. It was not until foreign Jews and a few Greeks became converted to the idea of Christ's second coming that hostility arose on a small scale; and it was not until Paul, six years after the Crucifixion, became converted that persecution assumed a serious character. Yet this thing conquered the world. How can we explain such a miracle if we leave out

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The Last Supper, Leonardo da Vinci

the Power of God?

Dean Inge has said that to the historian there must always be "something astounding" in the magnitude of the task that Paul set himself, and in his enormous success.

The future history of the civilised world for 2000 years, perhaps for all time, was determined by his missionary journeys and his hurried writings. It is impossible to guess what would have become of Christianity if he had never lived; we cannot even be sure that the religion of Europe would be called by the name of Christ.

But behind Paul there stands the hesitating and impulsive figure of Peter, in whose Galilean home Jesus had lived for so long a period of His ministry and to whom Jesus had given the headship of His society. Paul converted Peter to a wider and more splendid view of Christianity, but Peter impressed on Paul the beauty and the tenderness of Christian character. It was this character which won the love of the human race; it was this character which conquered the world.

Under Nero Paul died a martyr's death; and by that time almost all the disciples who had followed Jesus must have died in one way or another. But the work was done. An age of which they could have had no conception was ushered in, and when Jerusalem fell, and afterwards the Roman Empire, the Spirit of Jesus moved westward across the world, creating a new heart in mankind and rearing the pillars of a new civilisation.

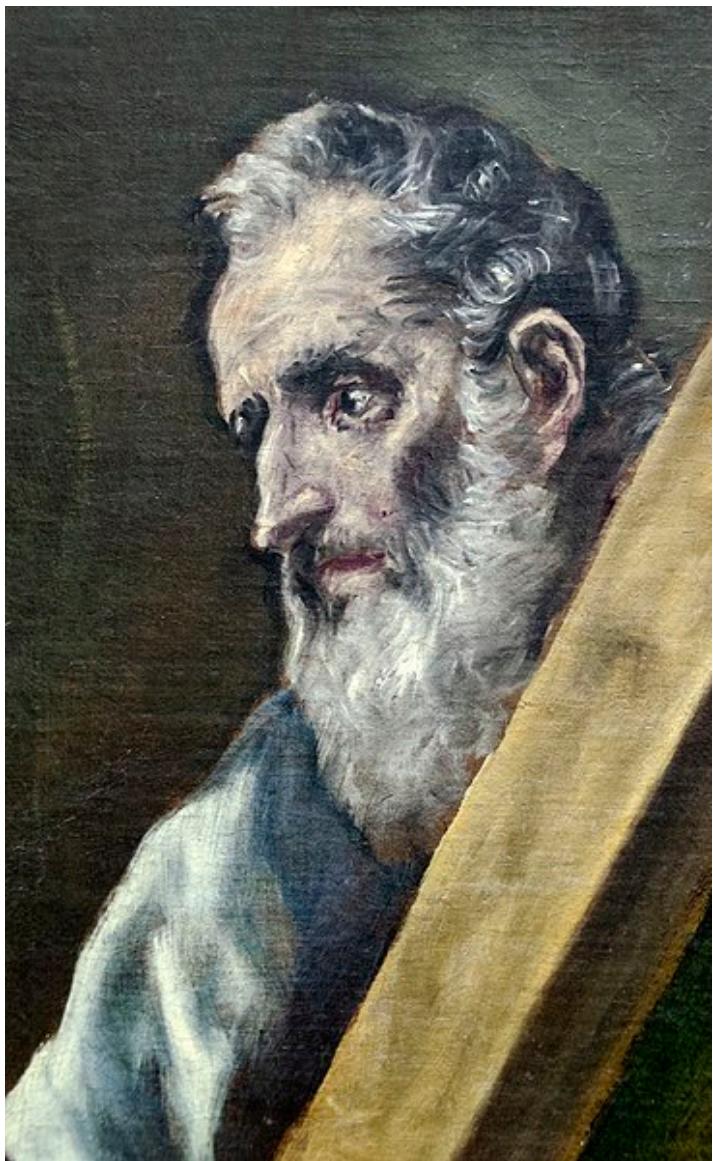
Baffling as it all is, the fact stands clear. Rome perished, and the empire raised on its ruins was the empire of Christendom. The fishermen of Galilee outlived the Caesars and the Gospel of Love overcame the princes of the world.

Chapter 10



Saint Andrew

Died 60 A.D., Galilee



Saint Andrew the Apostle, Ángel M. Felicísimo

Scotland chose this poor fisherman of the Lake of Galilee for her patron saint. The Greek Church names him the Protoclet, the First Called, because he was the first of the Disciples. The Russians say he preached the faith among them, and Peter the Great instituted his name as the first and foremost saint of Russia, founding the highest and most noble order of knighthood in his honour. Before that, Philip the Good of Burgundy founded the Burgundian order of the Golden Fleece to honour him. Each of these countries adopted the cross of St. Andrew as its emblem. This saint, as was said of the prophets, is most highly esteemed outside his own country.

The New Testament tells us all that is most truly known of him and the early Fathers of the Church have filled out his story with their legends. He lived at Bethsaida and was brother to Simon called Peter, one of those who listened to the preachings of St. John the Baptist in the wilderness. He stood by the Jordan at Christ's baptism, and when Jesus came out of the river heard the Baptist's cry, "Behold the Lamb of God." Hearing that exclamation he and another disciple of the Baptist followed after Jesus; whereat Our Lord, perceiving them, said, "What seek ye?" They said they desired to know

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where He dwelt, and He bade them come and see. Andrew went with Him and on that day learned and believed that Jesus was the Redeemer of the world. He resolved from that moment to follow Him, and so was the first of the Disciples.

Andrew told his brother Simon of the miracle thus revealed to him, and persuaded him also to see Christ, who received him and named him Peter. From that time forward the brothers followed Our Lord, intermittently for some time, because they were poor men who must needs follow their fishing. But they were with Christ at Cana in Galilee and afterwards baptized in His Name. He left them to go to Jerusalem for the Passover, and, coming back in the late autumn, He found Peter and Andrew fishing in the lake. He summoned them to a constant attendance on the Gospel, saying He would make them fishers of men; whereupon they immediately left their nets to follow Him and never went from Him again. When in the next year He formed the fellowship of His Apostles the names of Peter and Andrew headed all the rest.

We may know something of the unfaltering belief of Andrew from the story of the loaves and fishes. When Christ would not send away the multitude of 5000 persons who had followed Him into the desert, without giving them food one of the Disciples, Philip, said two hundred pennyworth of bread would not suffice. But it was Andrew who timidly said there was a boy with five barley loaves and two small fishes. They were nothing among so many; but we may read in his mind a trusting hope that his Master could make them suffice. These are a few of the references to Andrew in the Gospels; and from another of them, where he introduces to Christ certain Greeks who came to see Him when in Bethany at the house of Lazarus, he is given by the Venerable Bede the name of the



The Calling of Saint Peter and Saint Andrew, James Tissot



Lithograph of Saint Andrew, Marco Pittieri

testimonies to it in the writings of the Fathers, and most of them agree that he was crucified. No contemporary account of that sorrowful martyrdom has survived, but all who wrote of it afterwards joined in preserving the tradition that he met his end with joyfulness and without fear. St. Bernard writes thus of him:

"When he saw at a distance the cross prepared for him his countenance did not change nor did his blood freeze in his veins, nor did he lose his voice, nor did his body tremble, nor was his soul troubled, nor did his senses fail him, as it happens to human frailty. But the flame of charity which burned in his breast cast forth sparks through his mouth."

It is always said that the cross of St. Andrew was in the form of the letter X, styled in heraldry a cross decussate, and was made of two pieces of timber crossing one another. This cross, otherwise known as saltire, is the form appearing in the arms of Scotland, of Russia, and also of Burgundy.

His crucifixion was at Patrae, and from there his body was taken in 357 A.D. to Constantinople and deposited in the Church of the Apostles built by Constantine a short time before. According to the custom, which we deplore but cannot ignore, portions of the relics were at that time taken to Milan and Brescia.

Afterwards the greater portion of the relics were brought by Cardinal Peter of Capua to Italy and deposited in the Cathedral of Amalfi, where they have remained for seven centuries.

But this is not the whole tale of these dismembered relics of the saint. When the Turks had

Introducer.

All this is told of him by the Evangelists; the rest is part of the Christian legend resting on the testimony of the Fathers of the Church such as Origen, Jerome, and Paulinus. Origen says he preached the Gospel in Scythia. Jerome tells us of his journey to Greece and to Achaia, where he died. Paulinus declares that this divine fisherman preaching at Argos put all the philosophers to silence. For the Russian legends concerning him there is less authority, but their Church has long gloried in the belief that Andrew carried the Gospel as far as the mountains where Kiev now stands, and to the frontiers of Poland. This much is to be said for the tradition, that Scythia, as the Greeks understood it, extended to the north of the Black Sea. The Greek Church also steadily asserts that he planted the faith in Thrace, and particularly at Byzantium, which afterwards became Constantinople.

All agree that at Patrae in Achaia he laid down his life for Christ. There are many

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made themselves masters of Constantinople another churchman who was less pious than the Cardinal, but not less determined, brought what was believed to be the head of the saint first into Greece and then into Italy and presented it to Pope Pius in the year 1461.

The cross on which the saint was crucified has also its traditional story. It was said to have been brought out of Achaia and placed in the Abbey of St. Victor in Marseilles before the year 1250, and the Abbey still claims the possession of it. But a part of it was enclosed in a silver-gilt case and was carried to Brussels by Phillip the Good, Duke of Burgundy and Brabant.

The reverence of the Scots for the sanctity of St. Andrew and his relics is of a date still earlier. Their historians declare that an abbot called Regulus brought to Scotland from Patrae or Constantinople, about 370 A.D., relics of the Apostle, which he deposited in a church built in his honour, together with the Monastery of Abernethy. Many pilgrims came to this church from foreign countries and its monks were called Culdees. In those dark ages the Monastery of Abernethy long preserved its sanctity and was revered by chieftain as well as pilgrim. Hungus, King of the Picts, soon after the year 800, in thanksgiving for a great victory which he had gained over the Northumbrians, gave to it the tenth part of the land of his dominions. A generation later Kenneth, King of the Scots, having overcome the Picts and entirely extinguished their kingdom in North Britain, repaired and at the same time richly endowed the church where St. Regulus had deposited the arm of St. Andrew.

The relic has disappeared, the name of Regulus or Rueil is almost as mythical, but the city and university of St. Andrew preserve in the grey walls by the northern sea the name of a simple man and a great faith.

Chapter 11



Saint Paul

About 62 A.D., Tarsus

We think of him, perhaps, in that great hour when he stood before Festus, though indeed he lived through many immortal hours, this man of men, the greatest man in the Bible.

In the palace of Caesarea, the Roman seat of government in Palestine, Festus the new Roman Procurator sat in judgment in the Praetorium.

This was no common trial, but rather an occasion which Festus had taken to gratify the curiosity of two distinguished visitors, Agrippa the Second, the last of the Herods, and his sister Berenice, who had expressed a wish to see and hear the notorious man Paul, the Christian.

Festus had been willing to gratify the wish and at the same time to impress Agrippa, who, like all the Herods, was fond of display. The new Procurator was himself in scarlet. His lictors and bodyguard stood behind the gilded chairs prepared for him and his visitors. Agrippa and Berenice



Paul and King Agrippa, Vasily Surikov

SAINT PAUL

had come in state, she with all her jewels, he in his purple robes. It was a compliment to Festus.

They brought the prisoner in. A chilling contrast he made to the panoply of the high personages on the dais. A short, dark man, with a beard and thinning hair streaked with grey—he was pale and worn with sickness and long imprisonment.

Could this be the man who year after year had carried a fiery cross through Asia Minor? Was this the orator whose eloquence had roused the Jewish mob to murderous fury and had awakened in the Jewish elders an unstilled demand for his blood?

Was this the man who when the Roman soldiers had raised the scourge to lay it about his shoulders had then, and not till then, calmly put them aside with the authoritative assertion of his rights as a Roman citizen?

Was this the man who had as calmly put aside the procrastination of the Procurator Festus with the great words, I appeal unto Caesar?

Was this the man?

It was indeed. Hear that pale, worn man speak!

But first hear Festus, who outlined the case against him for the information of his royal guests, and did so with justice.

The Jews, he told the court and King Agrippa, were infuriated with this man, demanding his life, though as far as he could see the prisoner was entirely innocent of any capital crime. But the prisoner, as a Roman citizen, had appealed to Caesar. It was necessary, therefore, if he were to be sent to Rome for judgment, that some indictment should accompany him. The Procurator was glad to take the advice and opinion of Agrippa on anything the prisoner might have to say.

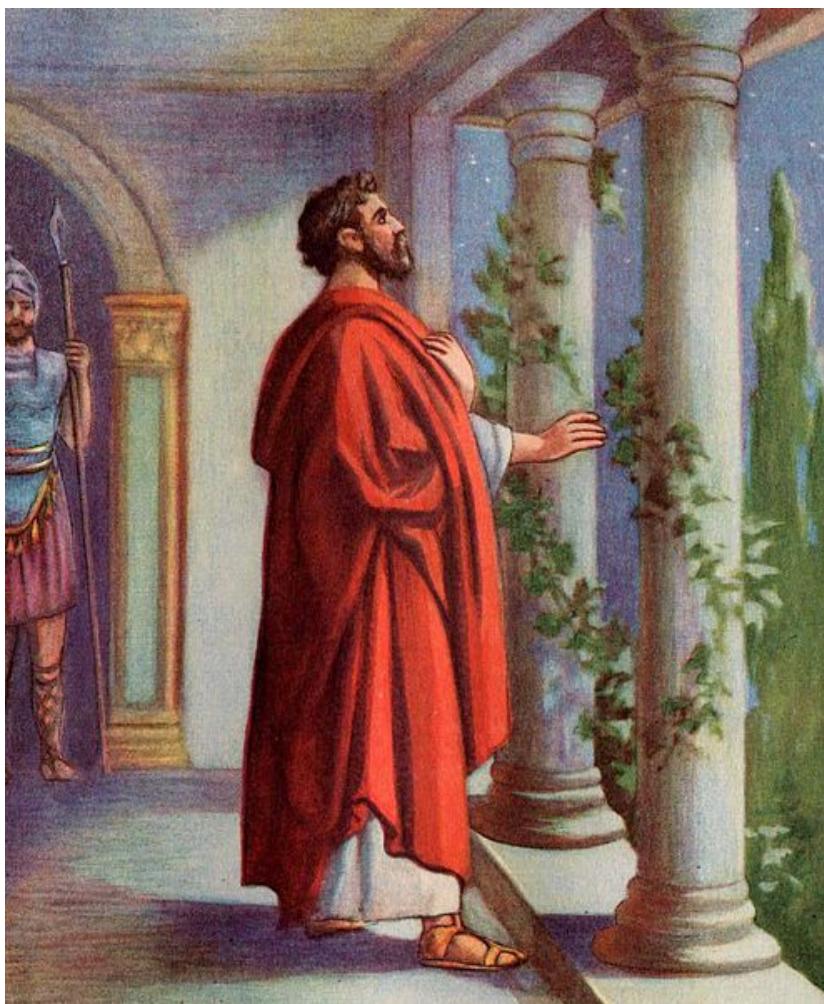
Agrippa thereupon indulgently told Paul that he was allowed to speak for himself.

Not for him any resentment because a show was being made of him. No attempt on his part to seize an opportunity to curry favour with authority. He was there not to plead his own cause, but to proclaim and glorify his Master.

He was completely at his ease, courteous to the high personages but not obsequious. They were souls whom the message he had to deliver might save. So therefore, begging Agrippa's patience, he told again the story of how truth had come to him, and what truth meant to all men. He spoke of the heavenly Voice he had heard on his way to Damascus, which had sent him forth to open the eyes of Jews and Gentiles that they might turn from darkness to light. He spoke of Christ crucified,



Saul, Andrey Mironov



St Paul of Tarsus in Rome, Publisher of Bible Cards

zeal which neither stripes nor fetters could quench, and he answered half-seriously that Paul was seeking to persuade him to become a Christian.

We can almost hear laughter in the court. But it was quickly suppressed as Paul answered in words meaning: "I could pray to God that whether in little or in much not thou only but all who are listening to me today might become even such as I am—except (raising his fettered hands), except these bonds."

This was the man who, with prison and death at his elbow, with none but himself to vindicate his right, could yet turn the moment of accusation to account, not to win from the tribunal the opinion freely expressed that he had done nothing for punishment, but to deliver his message. He had no other wish in the world. It stood with him above liberty, safety, or the desire of life. His very appeal to Caesar had been deliberately made so that he might carry the Word to Rome. For nearly a quarter of a century he had been carrying the message to all men. While breath was in him he would deliver it still.

and of the Messiah risen from the dead. He spoke with that sacred and impassioned oratory which had been so powerful in his mission work. He was delivering to kings and captains the testimony which he had made the object of his life.

Once Festus interrupted him with the ejaculation that his learning had turned his brain. The prisoner answered him with unruffled courtesy. "I am not mad, most noble Festus," he replied, "but speak forth the words of truth and soberness"; and then he turned with equal dignity to Agrippa, who was learned in the Mosaic tradition. "The king," he said, "knoweth of these things"; and then the prisoner with perfect equanimity became the cross examiner.

"King Agrippa, believest thou the prophets? I know that thou believest."

Even the cynical Agrippa could not repress his admiration for the burning

SAINT PAUL

He was growing old, though none could have believed it who saw the great light that shone in his worn face, or heard his voice attuned to eloquence. Gone then were the ravages of years and illness; gone it might have seemed, the shackles that bound his wrists. But the years of his mission had taken their toll of him. The trials he had undergone, the labours he had undertaken, had aged him in all but spirit, and the spirit itself, like an unquenchable fire, was burning down to its socket the feebler body. Yet always while life lasted the flame would leap.

It had been lighted a quarter of a century before that by that blinding awakening on the journey to Damascus, the story of which, as he told it to Festus and Agrippa, had provoked the Procurator's incredulous remark.

He had set out on the way as a persecutor of the Nazarenes. He was a young man then, as we should rate him, but in the eyes of the Jews and of the East he was a man of mature judgment, and of the authority which the Sanhedrin gave to him. A cultured Jew, he was, of the sect of Pharisees, one whose family, if not rich, was well connected. He had studied. He spoke Greek. He was one of those able, gifted Jews whom the Jewish community watches and fosters, and for whom it finds opportunity.

In the twinkling of an eye, the turning of an hourglass, the passing of a cloud, all is changed. Saul, the eldest son of the well-to-do and respected family of Tarsus, the clever young Pharisee employed and sent on a mission by the Sanhedrin to Damascus, is smuggled out of it a few days later by the Nazarenes he had come to scourge. From that moment onward, friends, family, prospects, nationality, are all forgotten and put aside. He went to Damascus the proud envoy of the High Priest; he comes out of it, humbled and penitent, the ragged messenger of Christ.

In a day, an hour, his mission is known to him. He is to be the organiser of the Christian religion. *Christ brought the Word. His servant Paul is the sower of the seed.*

The travelled ambassador of Christ, as he has been called, was at the outset of a



Conversion of St Paul, Domenico Morelli



St Paul, Adam Elsheimer

threatened to tear him to pieces? He could have borne it, for there was that in him which sustained him through weary night and famine-stricken day, which bore him up against the incessant wearing responsibility and his own sickness and weakness. All the outrages, the insults, the imprisonments, the noisome dungeon, the loneliness could not turn this man aside.

He spoke as an educated citizen of the world, attuned to the most gracious and polished tone of educated society. Mark how he seizes on the opportunity afforded to him by the sight of an image on the way to speak before the Council of the Areopagus at Athens, when all that was cultured in the city had gathered to hear the new philosopher arriving in the city:

"Ye men of Athens, in all ways I observe that you are more than others respectful of what is Divine, for as I was going through your city, and surveying the monuments of your worship, I found an altar To the unknown God. That divine nature then which for worship, not knowing what it is, I

mission which was to lift the creed of the Nazarenes to the level of a universal faith. His powerful word and mind were to turn the tide of history and thought. The man whose Roman citizenship was the highest claim he could put forward was to substitute the organisation of Christendom for the legions of Rome.

Yet how modest were the beginnings of this vast enterprise as Paul, with Barnabas and their youthful attendant, left the mountains and coast of Syria behind them to set sail for Cyprus! The pleasant voyage gave little promise of what was to come. Little could Paul know how trying in its apparent failures, how terrible in its hardships, was the future. Could he have borne it had he foreseen the scourgings, the stoning, the shipwrecks, the incessant toilings on foot along intolerable and dangerous roads, the dangers from swollen rivers, from brigands, from Jews and Gentiles, from false Christians in city and wilderness and at sea, from frantic crowds that

SAINT PAUL

am setting forth to you; the God that made the world and all things therein. He, Lord as He is of Heaven and Earth, dwelleth not in shrines made with hands, and is not served by human hands as though He needed anything, since He Himself giveth life and breath and all good things."

Can we not see Paul standing there, with shining eyes and arms uplifted, delivering his message? God indeed, as he said, was then not far from each one of them.

All this is but a fragmentary outline of the "journeyings often" that he made before the journey to Jerusalem which brought him before Festus and was the preface to his last great journey to Rome.

The outline of Paul's missionary work and teaching is filled in for us by Luke's chronicle in the Acts of the Apostles, but the real weight and import of it remains to be supplied by Paul's own words in his letters to the Churches he founded and fostered. They recalled to the minds of his spiritual children, as they bring before us still the tender, suffering, inspired, desponding, impassioned, humble, uncompromising teacher who had first won them to become imitators of himself and to turn from hollow ritualisms or dead idols to serve the living God. They were not, it seems, deeply premeditated, but came fresh and burning from the heart in all its passionate sincerity. To his triumphant faith and transcendent influence were due that fearless spirit of martyrdom which pervaded the life of the early Church.

No such letter-writer ever lived before him, no such exhorter, none with such inspiration. And here we may pause to mark those great prayers with which the Epistles glow as with a benediction,



St Paul Writing His Epistles, Valentin de Boulogne



Saint Paul Shipwrecked on Malta, Laurent de La Hyre

as in the Epistle to the Ephesians:

"That ye, being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend what is the breadth and length and depth and height, and to know the love of Christ which passeth knowledge;" or in that exhortation to the Colossians: "That ye might walk worthy of the Lord and increasing in the knowledge of God; strengthened with all might, according to His glorious power, unto all patience and long-suffering with joyfulness."

We might pursue that passage with its wondrous phrases: "For by Him were all things created that are in Heaven and Earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions or principalities or powers; for all things were created by Him and for Him."

And when will the world forget those ringing words which come down the corridors of time from the 13th Chapter of Corinthians, or those to the Philippians: "Whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report, think on these things."

Yet, when all is said, these are but the words of the preacher. The man who spoke them is greater. We can dimly realise the power he was among living men; we can by summing up the products of his matchless spirit comprehend the influence he exercised on generations then unborn. But it would remain incredible if it were not written in the history of mankind.

We may wonder if in his own day men recognised his greatness. The story of that last voyage to Rome, with the shipwreck on the way, is known. Known, also, is a little of the last days in Rome, where for two years he lived a virtual prisoner and struggled with apparent fruitlessness against the

SAINT PAUL

vast indifference of a city steeped in the viciousness of the days of Nero.

And in the end, according to what tradition tells us, Paul died a martyr, being hurried to execution with a file of soldiers and with none to mark his unknown grave.

In the closing episodes of his life was he seized with a pitiful feeling that all had been for naught, that all the strivings and trials had been unavailing? We think not, for in those last hours he was not alone. The great light that shone on the way to Damascus would blaze before his dying eyes to illuminate the future of which Paul had laid the sure foundations.

The captains and the kings depart. Paul remains. He was a man greater than Caesar, or Alexander, or Napoleon. Their conquests have passed. The Empire Paul founded will endure while faith and hope and charity, these three, live on in the heart of man. We may marvel at the splendour of his genius. If we look on him only as a writer how immensely does he surpass in his most casual Epistles the great authors of his own or succeeding epochs. As a moralist, in breadth and intensity he towers above Seneca or Marcus Aurelius. His chapter on Charity is worth more than all they ever wrote. As a theologian he formulated the doctrines of Christianity, and Saint Augustine is but a pale reflex of him. As a reformer he was greater than Luther or Savonarola. As a preacher he was greater than Saint Bernard; as a practical organiser he surpasses Pope Gregory; as a lover of souls a Whitefield or a Wesley. It is fruitless to pursue such comparisons. It is unnecessary to say that his monument is Christ's Church, as it is and has been through nigh two thousand years. His greatness was his soul, and no greater soul has ever been. No man has ever done more, no saint has climbed to greater heights. He was our man of men.

Chapter 12



Dionysius

1st Century A.D., Halicarnassus

In the transformation of mankind that followed the introduction of Christianity Dionysius had a double share: in the reality of his splendid life and work and in the influence, lasting 1500 years, of a body of writings that gained fame and acceptance through being ascribed to his pen. He first enters on the stage of Christendom as the one named male convert that St. Paul made during his visit to Athens.

When the Apostle reached Athens he found the most enlightened city in the world given wholly to idolatry. With all his wonted courage and energy he debated with the learned. The philosophers of the Epicurean and Stoic schools derided him as a babbler and a setter-forth of strange gods.

They took him to the Areopagus saying, "May we know what is this new doctrine whereof thou speakest?" It was there that Paul met Dionysius. The Areopagus was a hall named after the hill of Ares, which was the Greek name for the god of war, whom we know under the Latin title of Mars. Built on the hill of Ares the hall was called Areopagus, a name rendered familiar to English readers by Milton's famous *Areopagitica*.

Dionysius was called the Areopagite because he was a member of the Areopagus, which was the highest judicial tribunal of the city, having supervision over all political and religious matters.

In the Acts of the Apostles we read the magnificent oration that Paul made to the council. Some mocked; some said, "We will hear thee again on this matter"; but Dionysius, scholar, thinker, and open-hearted man, was convinced by the Apostle, St. Paul's first illustrious convert in Greece.

The little that we know of Dionysius comes to us from the next century, when a bishop of Corinth wrote of him. He was educated at Athens and also studied in Egypt. There he witnessed an eclipse of the Sun which it is said occurred at the



Portrait of Pope Dionysius in the Basilica of Saint Paul

DIONYSIUS



Dionysius the Areopagite Converting the Pagan Philosophers,
Antoine Caron

MY WORLD STORY BOOK

Crucifixion of Christ. He had never heard of Christ; he knew nothing of the meaning of an eclipse, but he said, "Either God suffers, or sympathises with one who is suffering."

His search for knowledge complete, he returned to Athens, to be chosen one of the chief counsellors of the State, and so it was as a foremost Athenian that he made one of the Apostle's audiences and converts. Such records as we have declare that Dionysius became the first Bishop of Athens, consecrated by St. Paul himself.

Paul eventually reached Rome and there fell a martyr to the faith that he was giving to the world. The martyrdom is supposed to have taken place during Nero's persecution, and apparently it was the same wave of bloodthirsty intolerance that submerged Dionysius, for he too died a martyr for the religion he had accepted from the teaching of the Apostle that day on the hill of Mars.

The after-fate of the two men was strangely contrasted. Paul extended the teachings of Christianity from a mere offshoot of Judaism to a creed embracing all peoples, nations, and languages. It was a tremendous test of faith for Dionysius to accept such a creed, for the Greeks thought all peoples but themselves barbarians.

After his martyrdom the memory of St. Paul sank into oblivion for 200 years. His teachings were working throughout the world without knowledge of the identity of their author, and it is only our own age that has recognised in him Christ's highest, noblest, and most understanding exponent.

But such was the wisdom of Dionysius, such the sanctity of his life and the bravery of his end, that his reputation assumed practically worldwide importance. A curious sequel attended. There grew up an extraordinary literature ascribed to him. It combined the teachings of Christ with those of Plato—the New Platonism, as the lovely, learned Hypatia had expounded it in the schools of Alexandria, with ingredients from Greek, Oriental, and Jewish thought welded into an organic system.

Christianity it was not, but for a thousand years it dominated the Christian world. It dealt with the principles and philosophy of religion, and sought not only to bring man to God, but to declare the impossible. It professed to describe and define the whole heavenly system, with the order and precedence of angels, archangels, cherubim, seraphim; to declare celestial names and their meanings, to analyse and reveal the mystic significance of everything named in Scripture, the symbolism of all the organs of the body, and, among a host of other things, the relation to sacred story of such materials as wands and axes, metals and precious stones.

Sublimity, with pagan echoes combined with touches of extravagant nonsense; but such was the celebrity of Dionysius that all passed as his teaching and therefore beyond question. All the legends we have concerning the heavenly system and its celestial occupants derive from this source; it has informed and inspired every poem, every prose rhapsody, and every painting that attempts to describe Heaven and its occupants in words or pictorial outline.

Without it men would have been left to imagine Heaven and angels for themselves after reading the Book of Revelation. The writings led to the creation of a school of thought that lasted many centuries. The influence can be traced to the work of such Christian philosophers as Peter Lombard, Albertus Magnus, Thomas Aquinas, and our own Spenser and Milton; while Dante twice figures Dionysius in his vision of Paradise, once criticising his presumption in fixing the order of the celestial spirits, and then taking advantage of his reading to do the same thing himself in his own way.

The influence of these writings throughout the ages passes modern understanding; but the fame

DIONYSIUS

and noble, courageous life of Dionysius himself were the foundation on which the whole immense structure of the centuries was raised.

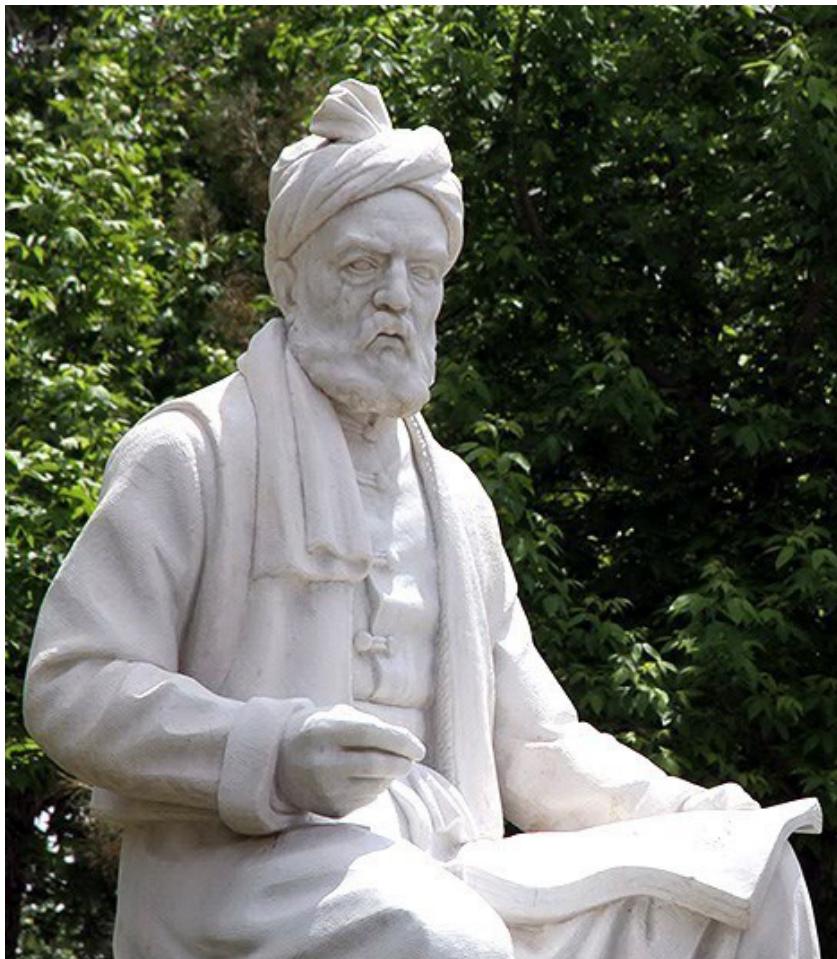
He must have been killed in the sixties of the Christian era, but the first of the books bearing his name cannot have been written for at least 200 years after his death, and the latest was produced four centuries after his martyrdom. Never in the history of the world did anyone else exert so vast an influence over the intellect of mankind by the magnetic sanctity of his name applied to writings of which he was not the author.

Chapter 13



Firdausi

940-about 1019 A.D., Persia



Statue of Firdausi in Tus, Iran

the Iliad is to Greece and the Aeneid to Italy. In the words of one of our greatest Persian scholars the epic is "a glorious monument of Eastern learning and genius, which, if it ever should be generally understood in its original language, will contest the merit of invention with Homer himself."

It runs to sixty thousand verses, and while it was in progress the delighted Mahmud promised the poet a thousand pieces of gold for each thousand verses.

There is nothing in the tales of the Arabian Nights more strange and moving than the life of Firdausi, as Abul Kasim Mansur is known to fame. A child of precocious genius, he attained great purity of language and poetical style in both Persian and Arabic, and began the great task of versifying a prose history of the Kings of Persia.

His fame reaching the Sultan Mahmud at Ghazna, where a galaxy of Persian poets had been gathered about the conqueror, Firdausi was summoned to Court. There, his work proving superior to that of all the rivals about him, he was commanded to write the whole history of Persia. He toiled with delight for 35 years at his task, embalming in verse history and legend that must otherwise have perished.

His book is to Persia what



Birth of Zal, Folio from the Book of Kings, Ferdousi

Firdausi waited for his payment to the end, preferring to receive it whole so that he might furnish his native city with a water supply. So it happened that he was often in want and misery while writing his masterpiece. When the work was completed Mahmud's vizier persuaded the Sultan to send only as many pieces of silver as he had promised gold.

On receiving it the enraged poet flung the money away, wrote a bitter invective against the Sultan, and set out with a staff and a dervish robe, a fugitive on the face of the Earth.

Time and better thoughts mollified the Sultan, who now regretted losing the majestic intellect of the fugitive and the lustre he had shed on the court. He sent in search of him, so that Firdausi crept back to his birthplace. There he heard a child in the street singing one of his verses, and the pathos broke his heart. He went to his house, sickened and died.

The penitent Mahmud loaded camels with the reward he had promised; the cavalcade entered the city by one gate as a mean little procession bore the dead poet out by another. His native city did receive its water supply, for, although his daughter refused the gold that Mahmud sent, the town did not, and the great epic of the East paid for the drinking water of the poet's townsmen, of whom none other was so poor, infirm, and unhappy as he had been.

His work became a classic, inspiring the painters who produced the pictures that have made Persian art renowned.



Statue of Ferdousi, Ferdousi Square in Tehran, Iran

Chapter 14



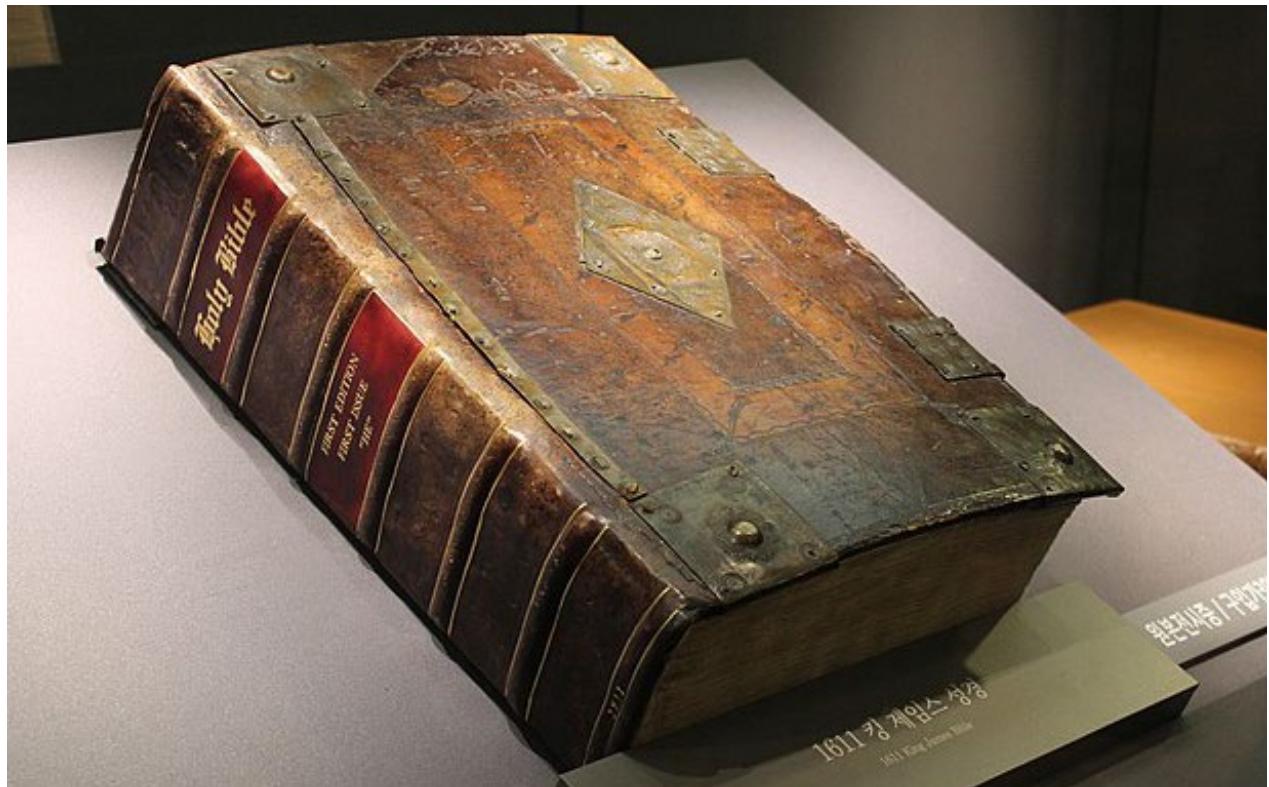
Makers of the King James Bible

Published 1611 A.D.

They did one of the most wonderful things a group of men has ever done, and it must be counted for ever heroic.

When the long persecution of a man for his belief was past, these were the scholars who, with a king's authority, joined to give to the English people their greatest Book.

Hardly in the reign of Elizabeth had the people the right to open and read the Bible, and in the Reign immediately before Elizabeth William Tyndale, with whom the history of our English Bible begins, had suffered death as the reward for his labours, the circulation and study of the Bible manuscript being both precarious and perilous. Liberty to read the Bible had been grudgingly given, received a disastrous setback in the reign of Mary Tudor, and scarcely recovered from it in the early days of Elizabeth.



King James Bible, 1611

The Great Bible was cumbrous, costly, and hard to procure, and we must give credit to James the First for having hastened the work of giving the people a Bible of their very own. He prided himself on his scholarship and announced to the Bishop of London that he had appointed 54 learned men for the translating of the Bible, asking him to charge the bishops to find out the names of any other scholars in their dioceses who had especial skill in the Hebrew and Greek tongues.

These were to send their observations to Mr. Lively, the Hebrew reader in Cambridge, or Dr. Hard-ing of Oxford, or Dr. Andrewes, Dean of Westminster, so that they might be imparted to the companies of translators whom the king had appointed. James was also rather anxious about the expenses of the work and suggested subscriptions. But from the life of one of the translators it appears that they received nothing but free entertainment in the colleges till some of them met in London for the final revision of the work.

It is hardly to be supposed that a Scottish king was well acquainted with the qualifications of 54 learned men in England. It is more likely that the 47 names appearing on the list of those actually engaged on the work were suggested by the universities and approved by him. The preliminaries were settled before the end of 1604; the revision was not seriously undertaken till three years after. It appeared at length from the press in 1611. When the whole plan was ready for execution the translators were divided into six companies, of which two met respectively at Westminster, Cambridge, and Oxford. Of those meeting in the Jerusalem Chamber ten were employed in the translation from Genesis to the second book of Kings, and seven from Romans to Jude in the New Testament. At Cambridge eight masters or Fellows of colleges were employed on the Chronicles to Ecclesiastes, and seven on the Apocrypha. At Oxford seven presidents, rectors, or Fellows translated Isaiah to Malachi, and eight deans or Fellows worked on the four Gospels, Acts, and the Apocalypse.

Here are the names of the 47; we give them because the work they did was in a sense a miracle and one of the most heroic achievements of our race.

These were Cambridge men: Roger Fenton, Michael Rabbett, William Dakins, John Richardson, Laurence Chatterton, Francis Dillingham, Thomas Harrison, Roger Andrewes, Robert Spalding, Andrew Byng, John Duport, William Branthwaite, Jeremiah Radcliffe, Samuel Ward, Andrew Downes, John Bois, Robert Ward, Richard Clark, Francis Burleigh, Geoffrey King, Richard Thomson, William Bedwell, Edward Lively.

These were Oxford men: John Harding, John Rainolds, Thomas Holland, Richard Kilby,



Portrait of King James, unknown artist

MAKERS OF THE KING JAMES BIBLE

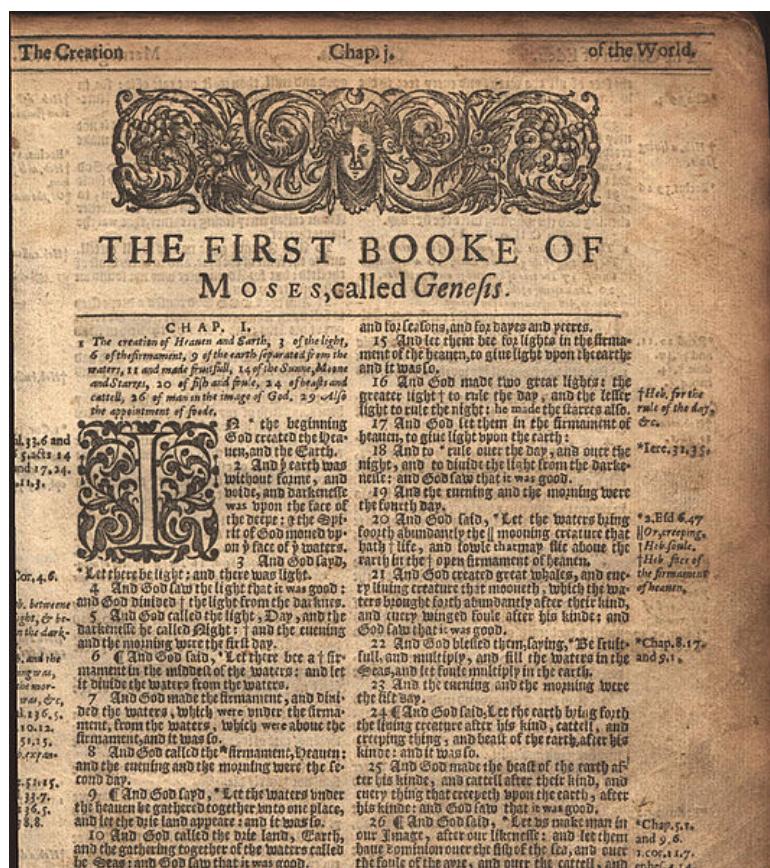
Richard Fairclough, John Perin, Dr. Ravens, John Harmar, John Spenser, Thomas Sanderson, Thomas Ravis.

These were archbishops and other scholars of the Church and public schools: Lancelot Andrewes, Dean of Westminster; John Overall, Dean of St. Paul's; Hadrian a Saravia, Canon of Canterbury; John Layfield, Rector of St. Clement Danes; Robert Teigh, Archdeacon of Middlesex; Miles Smith, Bishop of Gloucester; Richard Brett, Rector of Quainton, Bucks; George Abbot, Archbishop of Canterbury; Richard Edes, Dean of Worcester; Giles Thompson, Dean of Windsor; William Barlow, Bishop of Lincoln; William Hutchinson, Archdeacon of St. Albans; and Sir Henry Savile, Provost of Eton.

Of these scholars many have obtained an enduring reputation apart from this common work in which they were associated. Launcelot Andrewes was one of them whose name stands first among the Wesminster Ten whose province was to translate the Pentateuch and the historical books from Joshua to Chronicles. He was one of the king's Privy Councillors, a fine preacher as well as a writer. John Overall, Bishop of Norwich, was a great theologian and took a most important part in the discussions of his time concerning predestination and the form of the Sacraments. As a scholar he had a European reputation and was a correspondent of the great Grotius. John Rainolds, a famous Aristotelian and a man of prodigious learning, was the leader of the four members of the Puritan party selected by the king to appear at the conference held at Hampton Court for the discussion of

the Church Service. He was called by the Puritans their foreman, and we may observe of the Hampton Court conference that its chief outcome was the project of the Authorised Version.

Sir Henry Savile was Provost of Eton, a fine Greek scholar, a friend and helper of Bodley, who founded the Bodleian Library at Oxford, and one of the most learned Englishmen in foreign literature of his time. Others whose names are less familiar than these four were distinguished for special acquirements requisite for their task. Lively, Spalding, King, and Byng were in succession professors of Hebrew at Cambridge, and Harding and Kilby at Oxford. Lively received his education in Hebrew from the famous John Drusius and wrote a Chronology of the Persian Monarchy. Bedwell was the most distinguished Arabic scholar of the



Genesis Chapter One from a 1620-21 King James Bible

MY WORLD STORY BOOK

time. Saravia, a great friend of Richard Hooker, had for father a Spaniard and a Flemish mother. He was an accomplished student of modern languages. Thomson of Cambridge, Chatterton, Smith, and Bois were equally distinguished for their knowledge of ancient languages. Bois was famous for Oriental learning, and Smith, also an Orientalist, was an eminent classical scholar.

It will be perceived that there was a vast amount of learning of Hebrew and other Eastern languages at the disposal of the translators, or as they preferred to regard themselves, the revisors. We speak of the Bible as a book. It is in fact a library of manuscripts gathered from many sources. The Old Testament was originally written on papyri and the script used was that known as Phoenician, the written language of the Israelites and other peoples of Palestine. This script was eventually superseded by the square Hebrew characters. Parts of the Old Testament thus embodied were set out on scrolls such as are now unfolded in Jewish synagogues and whose form and employment give point to the Bible's utterance, "The heavens shall be unfolded like a scroll."

But such of these as still exist are not so old as the first Greek manuscripts. According to legend the earliest Greek translation of the Old Testament and the only one which has come down to us as a whole was made at the request of Ptolemy Philadelphus, king of Egypt in the third century B.C., and its name, the Septuagint, has reference to the 72 translators, six drawn from each of the 12 Jewish tribes.

These and other ancient documents were to a greater or less extent at the disposal of the revisers and called for all the learning they could command; but their object was not to make the Bible anew but only to assure that any mistakes or mistranslations in the older Bibles both of England and of other countries could be corrected. They treated the great Bible, the Genevan Bible, and all the labours of the great Englishmen who had preceded them, with respect: and as we know from Dr. Miles Smith, afterwards Bishop of Gloucester, who wrote in the name of his fellow-labourers, they did not hesitate to consult the translators or commentators, Hebrew, Syrian, Greek or Latin, or the later Spanish, French, Italian, or German, whose learning was at their disposal.

Nor, in the words of the noble preface written by Dr. Smith to the first edition of the Authorised Version, "did we disdain to revise that which we had done and to bring back to the anvil that which we had hammered; but having and using as great helps as were needful, and fearing no reproach for slowness nor coveting praise for expedition, we have at the length through the good hand of the Lord upon us, brought the work to that pass that you see."

When the revision was complete at the different centres two members were chosen from each company at Oxford, Cambridge, and Westminster to superintend the final preparation of the work for the press in London. It appeared in 1611 printed by Barker, and was said to be newly translated out of original tongues, with the former translations diligently compared with the revised by His Majesty's special commandment. A further notice adds that this Bible is appointed to be read in churches. Thus it has come down to us. From the middle of the 17th century it has been the acknowledged Bible of the English-speaking nations throughout the world simply because it is the best. It embodied the ripe fruits of nearly a century of labour, it appealed to the religious instinct of a great Christian people, and by its own internal character gained a vital authority which no edict of a king could have secured for it.

Of the men who consummated this version of its contents, some, as we have noted, were leaders by their knowledge and learning, were wise and eloquent in their instruction, and were honoured

MAKERS OF THE KING JAMES BIBLE

in their generation. These left a name behind them; and some there were who passed away with small reward, retiring to their college rooms or their country rectories, leaving only a quickly fading recollection of their knowledge, their personality, and their character. But we may never say of these men that they have no memorial, for our English Bible is their imperishable monument.

Chapter 15



Hal-Mehi

18th Century A.D., Persia

At the time when civil war gave place to victory for the Kadjarian dynasty at the end of the 18th century Hal-Mehi was living with an old aunt at Mendehli in a province of Persia.

She thought she was an orphan, but when she reached 18 she learned that she still had a father, and that this father, the famous general Meli-Abeth, had been a prisoner for 15 years.

From that day Hal-Mehi thought of little else but how to free her father. One morning she said she was going away.

"Where are you going?" asked her aunt.

"Where God sends me," replied Hal-Mehi.

Nothing could stop the girl now. For 32 days she walked till she reached the Tigris. There, in the middle of the river, she saw her father's prison, a tower on a rock swept on all sides by swirling water.

She came to a halt in the town nearest to the prison. Her money was exhausted. Fortunately she found a canvas manufacturer who engaged her as servant. For four months the young girl worked and schemed. Then she trusted her employer with her name and her secret.

The merchant was amazed.

"But, my child," he told her, "you do not seem to realise that one can only approach the tower by boat, and boatmen are forbidden to go within 70 yards under



Lady in Persian Dress, Frederick Richard Pickersgill

HAL-MEHI

pain of death. You would never find a man to take you."

"Then I go alone," replied Hal-Mehi. "But first I must learn to swim."

For six months the girl practised fighting against the strong river currents. Each day she covered a longer distance; and then came the day when she could see the prisoner through the iron bars of the window.

She tried many ways of attracting his attention. Would he never see her? Day after day she swam out, but sometimes he was not even near the window, and at other times he seemed to have no eyes for what was happening outside.

"Perhaps he will see me tomorrow," she would think, as she climbed out of the water; but there came an evening when she felt utterly discouraged. That night was spent in tears. What could she do? But hope, as ever, came with the morning. She begged a large piece of white canvas from her employer, and with a brush dipped in colour she wrote her name large upon it.

In the evening shadows she swam out once more, and close below the window she unfolded her roll of canvas and shouted. Her father heard her, came to the grating, and read the name on the canvas.

When she swam out the next day her father was waiting for her. He had spent the night undoing a piece of canvas, thread by thread, and making of it a thin rope which he let down the tower wall. Hal-Mehi tied it to the packet she had brought—two files to break through the iron bars, and a short note saying: "Try to climb down. I shall stay crouched between the stones of the rock all night. I shall wait for you."

The prisoner worked feverishly as the dark hours sped by. At length a creaking sound told the girl below that the bars had given way; a faint rustling against the wall, and her father fell exhausted by her side. They pressed close to each other for a moment, and then slipped into the river.

Meli-Abeth swam by his daughter's side for a few minutes, but he was wasted and worn with years of suffering, and his little strength soon gave out.

"Goodbye," he gasped. "I can go no farther, my daughter."

A little sob escaped the girl, but her courage gave her strength for two. She seized and held the man, and fought with him through the current till they reached the easier flow. She knew that the canvas-maker would be waiting on the other side of the river for them, having promised to give shelter to the prisoner.

But suddenly the moon lit up the dark water, and with it came a shower of arrows. The prisoner's escape had been discovered.

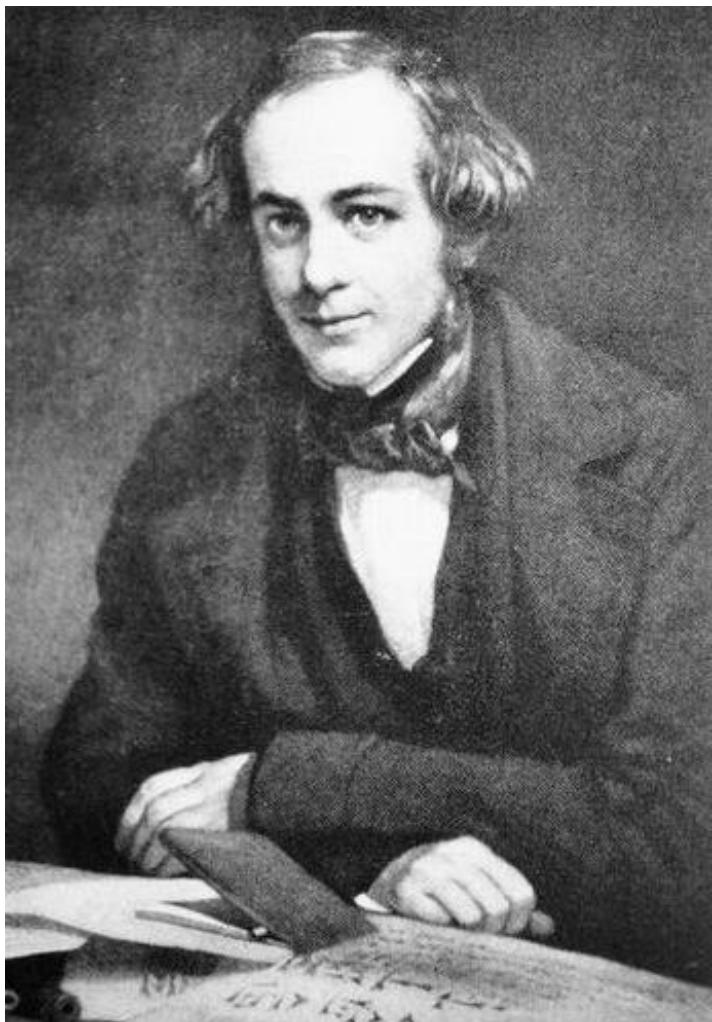
The end was swift and tragic. They escaped the arrows; but it was no friendly merchant who stood on the bank to help them out, but one who took them before the cruel Governor of Basra, and that day father and daughter died together.

Chapter 16

80

Sir Henry Rawlinson

1810-1895 A.D., Persia



Sir Henry Rawlinson at 40 years old

come, might know the writing on the rock it was inscribed in three languages.

One was in the old Persian alphabet of 40 letters, another in the more difficult writing of early Mesopotamia, and the third in the still more elaborate Babylonian symbols employed by the Semites

He unsealed a stone portal opening on a vista of the vanished empires of Assyria, Persia, Babylonia, and the tributary kingdoms of Sumer and Akkad. He read the riddle of the Rock of Behistun.

On the face of that rock in Mesopotamia the great Darius, who had overthrown Belshazzar of Babylon and had divided his kingdom among the Medes and Persians, had inscribed his name, his titles, his victories, 23 centuries before. Daniel, the prophet of Israel who had interpreted at Belshazzar's Feast the writing on the wall, looked on this writing, and knew its meaning. But the secret of those wedge-shaped signs was lost for thousands of years.

None could read them, though more than one learned traveller had tried. The key to them was in the great memorial to his renown which Darius the Persian had graved as if to last for ever on the soaring rock face at Behistun. Here, like the forgotten Egyptian king Ozymandias, he had set down his titles and his triumphs as one who should say:

"Behold my deeds, ye mighty, and despair!"

So that all the world, then and to

SIR HENRY RAWLINSON

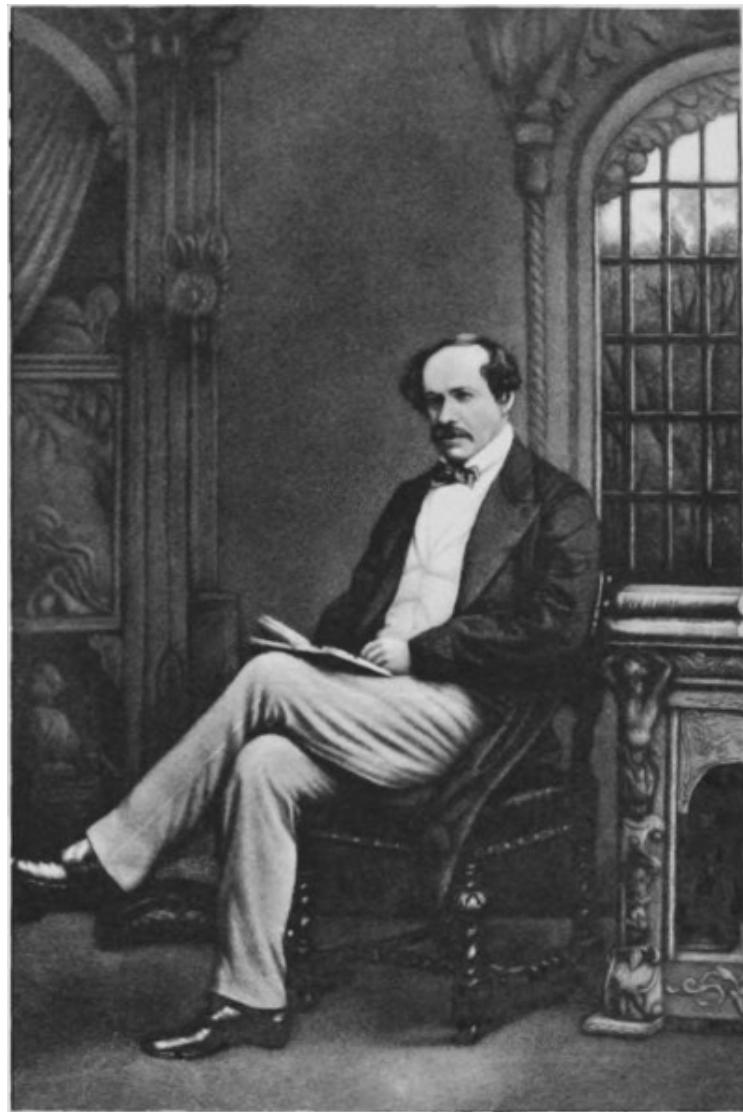
and the Elamites who stood on the threshold of the earliest Indo-European civilisation. This inscription, as now through Rawlinson we know, revealed the purpose of Darius in setting it there and the extent of his wide dominion among the most ancient peoples. Over the head of the king himself we read:

"I am Darius the king, the king of kings, the king of Persia, the great king of the provinces, the son of Hystaspes, the grandson of Arsames, the Achaemenian.... These are the countries which belong to me. By the grace of Ormuzd I have become king of them; Persia, Susiana, Babylonia, Assyria, Arabia, Egypt, and those which are of the sea (the lands of the Mediterranean), in all 23 countries."

These and other inscriptions are placed above a row of nine persons tied by the neck like slaves, approaching another of more majestic stature, the king, who treads on a prostrate body. Behind the king stand two warriors armed with bow and spear.

Great pains were taken to ensure the permanence of the monument; this is clear from its position more than 300 feet above the plain, with an ascent to it so steep that the engravers must have had a scaffold erected for them. Sir Henry Rawlinson in the description he afterwards wrote of it noted that after the engraving had been accomplished a coating of silica varnish had been laid on to give clearness of outline and protect the surface. The varnish is of much greater hardness than the limestone rock which is beneath.

This was the rock that drew Rawlinson to itself like a magnet. He was then Major Rawlinson, a fine Anglo-Indian soldier who had done great service on the North-West Frontier and in Afghanistan, and even more valuable work while military agent in Persia and at Bagdad. But from the earliest period of his career he had absorbed Eastern languages, becoming a magnificent linguist and a profound student of ancient dialects like that of Zend. The fascination of deciphering the cuneiform lettering, then a mystery of the highest order, seized him, and at the Rock of Behistun he



Sir Henry Rawlinson, Illustration from Assyrian and Babylonian Literature, unknown author, 1901

MY WORLD STORY BOOK

sought and found his opportunity.

His achievement in deciphering and interpreting these inscriptions belongs to the science of Ancient History; the feat of recording them is one of the most remarkable stories of daring. The Rock of Behistun had been known to him for 12 years and though he had attempted the transcription of some of the inscriptions more than once the task of making a complete copy was one of the utmost peril. The lowest line of writing stood 500 feet up. That was not impracticable to scale, but he wanted to copy all the inscriptions, which are grouped in nine tablets, seven in a row and two above. A ledge of rock about 18 inches wide remained beneath five of the seven tablets, a narrow platform probably used by the sculptors of Darius. The foothold below the others had been chiselled away.

His native servants were urgent in dissuading him, pointing out that when he got to the ledge he would only be able to read a few lines of the inscriptions, for each tablet was as high as three men. Rawlinson's only answer was to demand a ladder.

His courage inspired one or two helpers. By great exertions a ladder was hauled up. The English man and a native reared it up on the rocky ledge; but the foothold was so narrow that the ladder when set on it against the rock was perpendicular, and no one could climb it. The servant told him that he was seeking death, but Rawlinson said that he would have the ladder cut shorter. When it was short enough to stand at a slight angle he told the native to hold it while he went up. It had been cut so short that he had to climb to the topmost rung, lean his body and his left arm against the rock, and make copies of the cuneiform signs as best he could.

With muscles aching from the strain he doggedly copied the inscription beginning with the announcement of Darius the great king.

Line after line Rawlinson traced, heedless in his eagerness of the chasm below. His servant trembled, but he did not. At long last he succeeded in transferring to his notebook the inscriptions on the tall tablets which, though so dangerous of approach, his determination had proved accessible.

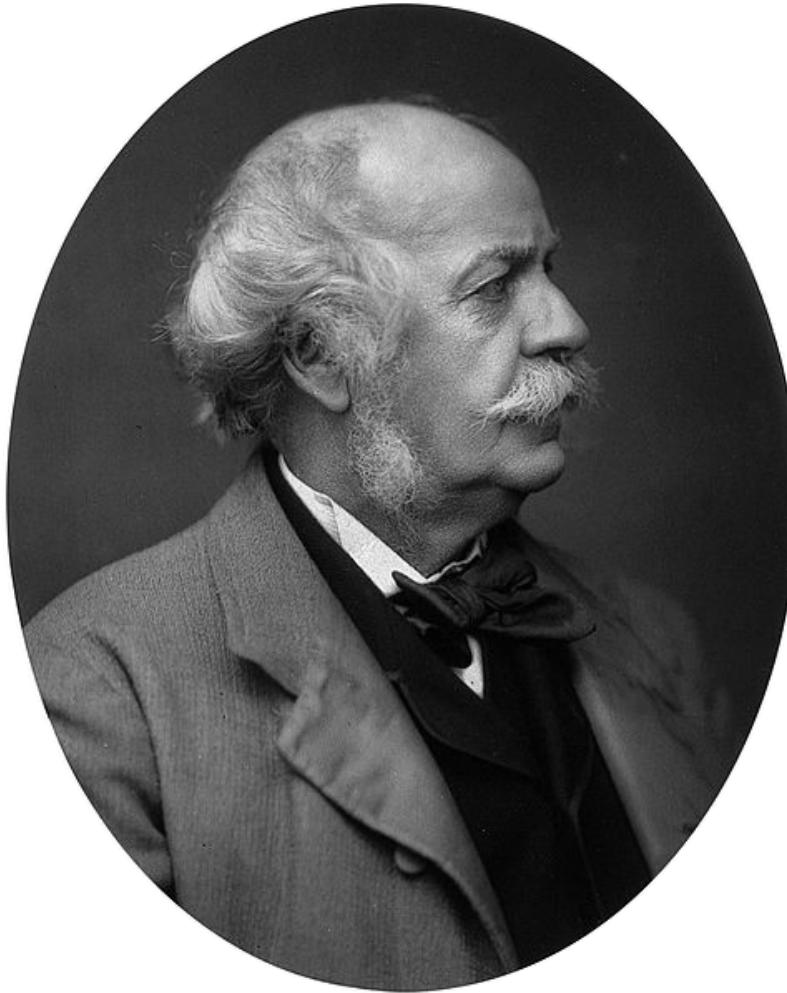
But there were two tablets still remaining separated from the others by a chasm. He was resolute to copy them also. His servant raised his voice in entreaty, telling him he had done enough and imploring him to tempt fate no further. The entreaties fell on deaf ears. Rawlinson had planned to lay his ladder across the chasm from the ledge where it had been standing to the broken one on the other side. He now found that, shortened as it was, it was not long enough to serve as a bridge.

The watchers below saw him turn the ladder upon its side and, fixing one end of the upper side on the rock of the ledge where he stood, push the other end toward a jutting-out piece of rock on the other side of the chasm. The ladder fixed like that would just hold. Then he began the slow journey across, resting his feet between the rungs on the lower side of the ladder and clinging with his hands to the face of the rock above. In and out went his brave feet. How many rungs were there? He did not count.

Suddenly there was a crash, the underside of the ladder broke under his weight. He heard the crack. Before he had time to think the rungs of the ladder had loosened themselves and were falling down the rock face. In that awful moment his presence of mind did not desert him, his hands came down to the upper side of the ladder and in a second of time he found himself hanging with his hands to a bar of wood which might snap at any moment. Below him yawned the gulf.

His servant, steadying the ladder, was fortunately too horrified to cry out and still held what

SIR HENRY RAWLINSON



Photograph of Sir Henry Rawlinson

task of those who had the knowledge to decipher them, among whom Rawlinson himself was one of the most learned. They accomplished this difficult task by comparison of the symbols.

The problem was like that solved by Champollion with the aid of the Rosetta Stone, where Egyptian hieroglyphs repeat inscriptions set out in two languages better known. By a similar process of comparison 40 letters of the lost alphabet were made out. In that alphabet, printed on innumerable clay tablets beneath the cities of Babylon and Nineveh, and others in Mesopotamia still being excavated, are to be read the histories, legends, laws, records, and even the business agreements of peoples whose civilisations had been swept away as utterly as the kingdoms whose cities were once strongholds of princes.

This was the greatest, if neither the first nor the last, service rendered by Henry Rawlinson to knowledge. His discoveries were the key to the meaning of Layard's great collections from Nineveh, one of the glories of the British Museum. To this museum Rawlinson added other treasures almost as significant by his own excavations in Babylonia, where he pursued his work of collecting inscriptions with the same industry as, if with less risk than, at Behistun. There is a picture of him, drawn

remained of it in place, though every moment he expected to see his master fall. But Rawlinson did not fall. He began working his way back, hand over hand, as if he were dangling from a horizontal bar in a gymnasium. His magnificent strength and his matchless courage saved him.

He was never known to tell anyone what it meant to hang suspended there, with the ledge of safety coming, foot by foot, nearer. At last he hauled himself on to the tiny platform he had left and was glad to crouch a minute, trembling, yet thankful to feel the solid rock under his feet. He was not deterred. Afterwards he had two ladders hauled up, laid one across the gulf, and, setting another upright on it, copied out the inscriptions of Darius for all to see.

In such a way were the sentences of Darius, written in three languages and in three varieties of cuneiform characters, laid before the world. It became the

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involuntarily by himself, with which we may end this account of him.

He speaks of a narrative he drew up in great haste amid torrents of rain in a little tent on the mound of Nineveh, without any aids beyond a pocket Bible, a notebook of inscriptions, and a tolerably retentive memory. Such was the simple, forthright, capable man who linked the 19th century with that far distant time when the first stirrings of civilisation began in the Nearer East and the first library was filled with tablets of clay.

Chapter 17



Sir Austen Henry Layard

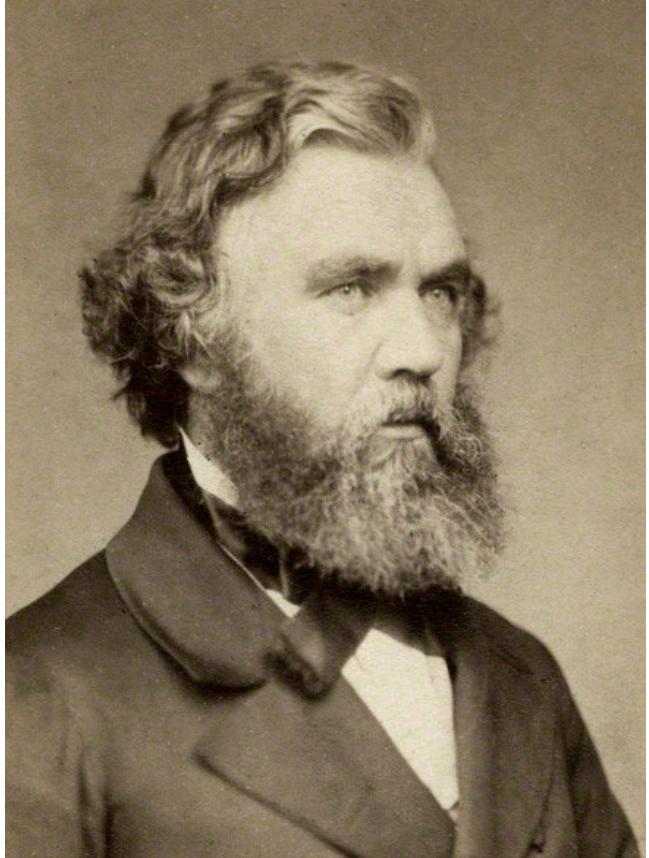
1817-1894 A.D., Assyria

Aladdin, seeing a hole open in the earth, went down to find a garden of delight. Sir Henry Layard opened a hole in the earth and went down to find a lost civilisation, to walk in the marvellous palaces of kings, to see sights the world had forgotten for over twenty-five centuries, to lay hands of fabulous wealth, to take a single step from the Victorian Era to the Old Testament days, to plant his feet, as it were, in the very pages of the Old Testament.

He discovered an old world whose ancient glories had crumbled into dust and vanished from the eyes of men 500 years before Christ. He brought Babylon to London, laid bare the sublime magnificence of Nineveh which Asshur went and builded. Of him it has been said that he put a tongue in the mouth of the dead centuries. He brought the hidden Past to light, and set men reading their Bibles again with a new understanding.

His was no easy task. Only a man with courage and strong determination could have done what he did. Others had tried and failed. He tried, and kept on trying, and his efforts were crowned with success beyond his dreams. He was more than an explorer and excavator. In his later years he was an M.P., an Under-Secretary for Foreign Affairs, an authority on all matters relating to the East. He wrote books on art, and was a well-known social figure in Florence and London. But his services in the realms of politics and art are hardly remembered now. He is Layard of Nineveh, and it is for his discoveries in Assyria that his name will live as one of the first men to open the eyes of the modern world to the astonishing splendours of forgotten civilisations.

He was born in Paris. His mother was the daughter of an English banker, his father was prac-



Photograph of Sir Austen Henry Layard

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tically an invalid who was compelled to live either in France or Italy. After being at school in England and France, Henry went to Florence. His father had only a small income, but it was big enough to allow him to rent part of one of the grand old 15th century houses in that city.

In Florence he learned to love beautiful things, and often he would go round the wonderful old city in the company of distinguished people, one of his best guides being Seymour Kirkup, the Englishman who discovered the only portrait in the world of Dante. From Florence Henry came back to England. He was a great friend of his uncle Henry Austen, a wealthy solicitor in London. Henry Austen sent him to finish his education at Richmond, where the boys called him Froggy and Organ Boy, because he had lived in France and Italy; but he was a plucky lad and made friendships that lasted all his life. After his schooldays he went into his uncle's office, intending to become a lawyer; but his mind was full of the wonder of art, his spirit kindled by the Arabian Nights, his soul longing for adventure.

No boy was ever less suited for a solicitor's office than young Layard. But he worked conscientiously and attained some proficiency. He had little money to spare, but what he had he spent in the strangest way, for it was his delight to gather a few odds and ends of starving humanity, take them to his lodgings, feed them on bread and sprats, and talk about politics and art and travel.

After his father's death he travelled abroad with an artist friend. When he came back to London he made himself attend to his books, and duly passed his examinations. Everything now pointed to his entering the legal profession. There was an opening for him in Ceylon; he determined to go out there and practice law. His mother had £600 in trust for him; half to be paid for his travelling expenses, half for his use when he arrived. To Ceylon, therefore, he must go.

And here a nervous young man stepped in and changed his life. He was a friend named Mitford, who was going out at the same time and dreaded the sea voyage. He chose the overland route, and Layard offered to go with him.

It was the beginning of a journey down 2500 years to Babylon.

His way took him to Constantinople. He saw the East, and the old passion conjured up by the Arabian Nights burned again. He parted from his friend, turned aside from his roundabout way to Ceylon, and gave himself up to the one thing he loved.

Sir Stratford Canning, the British Ambassador in Constantinople, helped him. He gave him journalistic work, and sent him on secret diplomatic missions, one of them taking him up the River Tigris. There he saw a Frenchman digging in some mounds, and his imagination was fired still more. A few treasures had been found hereabouts, but all the relics of the Babylonian Empire the world possessed were in a box three feet square.

He went farther up the Tigris and saw other great mounds. When he set eyes on them he felt that below them must lie the capital of Assyria. But even Layard did not dream of the treasures that were to be found. He thought of walls and foundations, not of priceless statuary and other relics still more precious. He came back to talk of his idea for excavating, and Canning was ready to help him. Most of the money was from Layard's own slender resources. His mother generously advanced him money out of her own small income, and years after he was proud to be able to return to her every penny that he had borrowed.

The Turkish Government gave him permission to dig in the mounds near the Tigris, and everything he found was to be his own. But he kept nothing, giving all his priceless treasures to England.



Artist's impression of Assyrian palaces, Illustration from
The Monuments of Nineveh by Sir Austen Henry Layard, 1853

His task was gigantic. The first diggings were at Nimrûd, and the work had to be done when war was in progress. Wandering desert tribes were a constant danger. Fanatical Turks attacked him. His work had often to be suspended because he was said to be disturbing "the faithful" who slept there. He was suspected of digging for gold and gems. He was accused of making measurements and plans with the intention of possessing the land. He was harassed and annoyed, and often in danger, but he kept on through it all. He showed great skill in dealing with people. He slept in a mud hut, and in wet weather often made his bed with a table over him as his only protection against the rain. Like a beggar lived this courageous young man who was to sit in the palaces of kings.

His work went on. He found that Nimrûd was the site of the city of Calah, of which we read in the tenth chapter of Genesis. Its walls were 7000 feet in one direction, and 5000 in another. Wandering tribes had crossed it century after century, and had never dreamed of the vast palaces under their feet. Then a young man who was supposed to be on his way to Ceylon removed some of the earth which had accumulated age after age, and laid bare the magnificent statues, the colossal figures made by an artistic people whose greatness had been the terror of their day. It was a greatness that had perished.

One day two Arabs came riding furiously to Layard, crying: "Hasten, O Bey! Nimrod himself has been found. It is wonderful, but it is true! There is no God but God!"

Layard hurried to the place where work had been going on, and found that a new trench had been cut and that an enormous human head carved in alabaster had come to light. The workmen had been terrified, thinking that one of "the faithful" was coming with vengeance. It was a thrilling

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discovery, the finding of this great head with its calm, centuries-old face.

Among many other treasures found here were carvings showing horses and chariots, all puzzling to the natives who had never seen anything like a chariot and did not know what a cart was. Layard had one made, and all the town turned out to wonder at it. He used his cart for taking some of his treasures to the Tigris, where they were shipped for England.

Three palaces were found at Calah, one belonging to that Shalmaneser who carried off ten tribes of the Israelites. Layard afterwards moved on to Nineveh, which was buried under huge mountains of rubbish by the Tigris, and there he found hundreds of records written in the reign of the terrible conqueror Sennacherib, who twice assailed Jerusalem when Hezekiah was King of Israel.

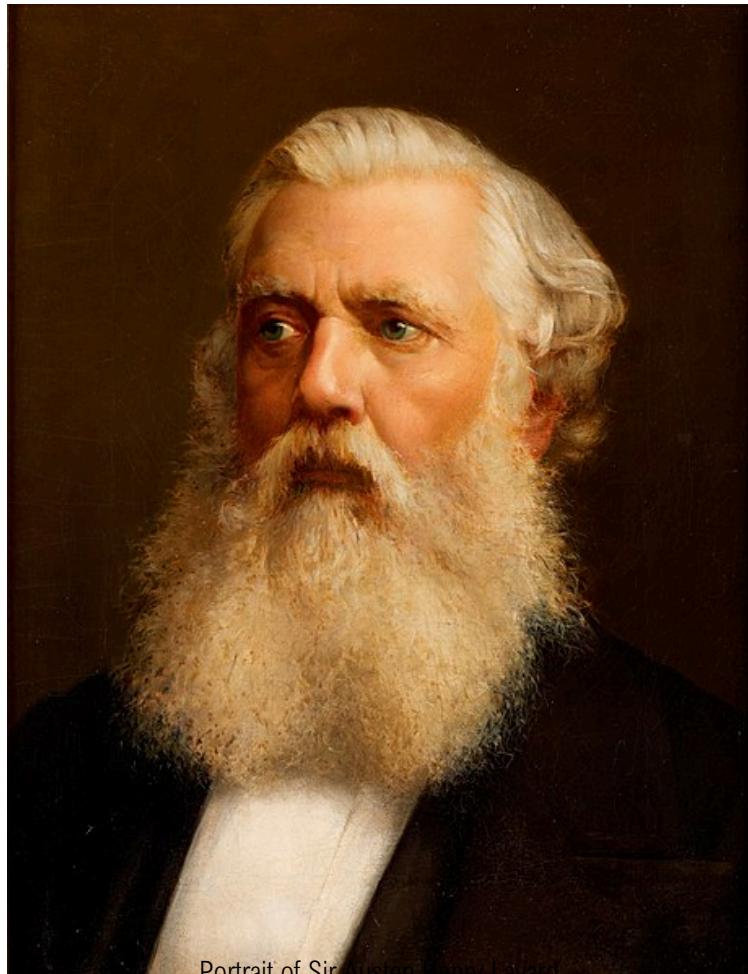
In Babylon Layard stood in the palace of Nebuchadnezzar. He found what were at first supposed to be the remains of the Tower of Babel, though he later proved them to have been parts of the Tower of the Seven Planets, each huge tower having been built of bricks glazed with the supposed colour of the planet to which it was dedicated.

Who can think of anything much more impressive than this bold Englishman standing in the palace of Nebuchadnezzar and picturing to himself the Bible story of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, remembering the burning fiery furnace, and the dream Daniel interpreted? Here stood

Layard, his feet on the floor of Nebuchadnezzar's palace, his head full of the romance of his great discovery, his heart filled by the wonder of the Past he had brought to light after nearly 3000 years of darkness. The sandstorm and the whirlwind had passed over this ancient city, covering the ruins and burying its greatness. Now it was revealed for all men to see; its magnificent carvings and writings brought out of darkness, its forgotten language read again.

This was perhaps the most wonderful thing of all. Among the palaces and buildings of the cities Layard excavated were hundreds of tablets with characters no one could understand at first though they have been read since. Layard helped to make this possible, and at the risk of his life he copied one of Sennacherib's proud boasts, which was carved on a precipice at a place called Bavian in what is now known as Kurdistan.

The inscription, telling how the



Portrait of Sir Austen Henry Layard

SIR AUSTEN HENRY LAYARD

king had had huge canals made to bring water to Nineveh, was set on the face of the rock, the workmen standing on a small ledge as they worked, and the ledge being cut away afterwards. But a small portion of it had been left, and Layard found it, climbed down to it, copied the writing on the wall, and climbed back. In his hurry to get back to safety he had left one of his papers, and when another traveller came that way 50 years later, there was the paper lying where Layard had left it.

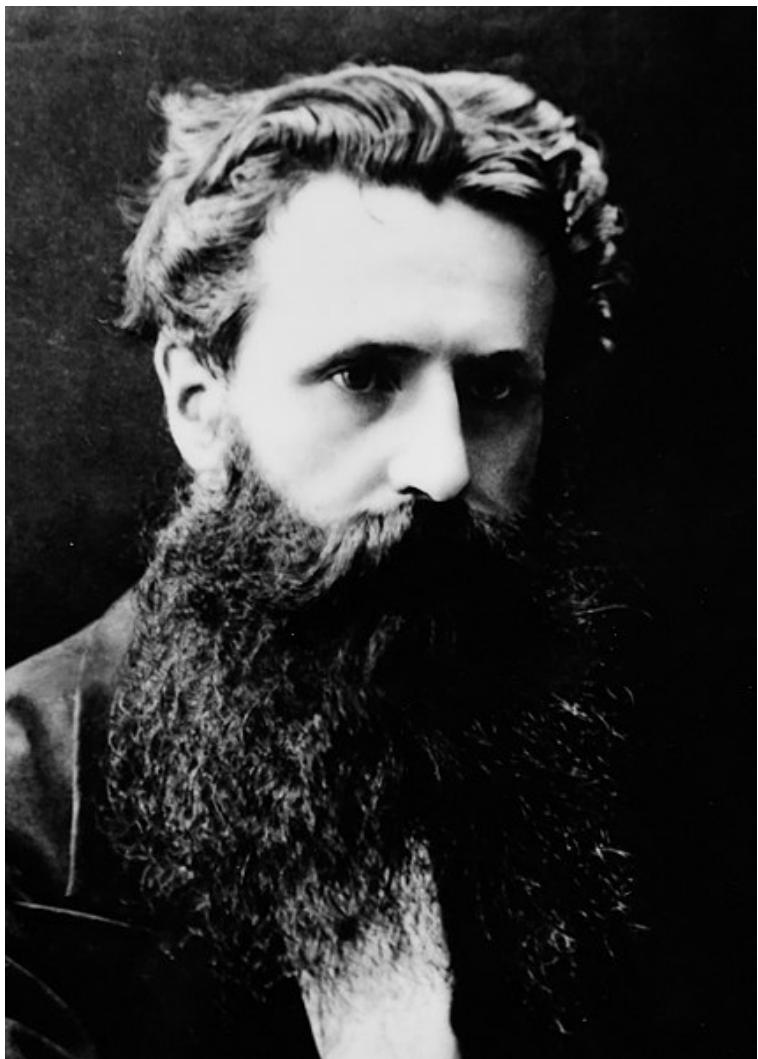
Today we may see Layard's gifts to the nation in the British Museum. They are there because a man had infinite patience, great faith, the will to work, and a passion for truth. Other excavators have perhaps done greater things than he ever did, but he stands out as the man who first unlocked the doors of the Past and revealed something of the immeasurable wealth of the ancient world.

Chapter 18



George Smith

1868-1928 A.D., Assyria



Photograph of George Smith

bulls that Layard had brought home, and devoted all his spare pence to literature dealing with the old kingdoms of the Bible.

In his brief life of 36 years George Smith, son of a poor workman of Chelsea, soared from poverty and wretchedness to world-wide fame, and then died of disease and starvation in a foreign land, a Crusader for learning fallen at the post of duty. He was apprenticed at 14 as an engraver of banknotes, and the delicacy of his work must have been beneficial in training him for it was to prove his mission. His thoughts, however, were not confined to his daily task. He lived in an imaginary world of the past. The astounding discoveries of Sir Henry Layard and later of Sir Henry Rawlinson on the site of the ancient Assyrian city of Nineveh had suddenly lifted the pall of oblivion from days and scenes that ended with their record in the Old Testament.

Layard discovered, Rawlinson began the translations, poor George Smith was to eclipse them both, and all the scholars of the world by his own untutored genius. In his boyhood he learned of the wonders that had been brought to light; he spent his dinner hours at the British Museum, saw the great winged

GEORGE SMITH

There lay at the Museum a great treasure of unexplored riches, thousands of undeciphered tablets of baked clay inscribed in characters that Rawlinson and one or two of his assistants were slowly and laboriously rendering into English.

Rawlinson was attracted by the eager enthusiasm of Smith, and out of sheer kindness of heart, never expecting any result, admitted him to his own room at the Museum and let him browse among the casts and rubbings of such inscriptions as had been submitted to these processes. Rawlinson was a hero of heroes to young Smith, for he was the man who, with infinite pains and at the peril of his life, had scaled the cliff at Behistun and brought home copies of the inscriptions carved on the rock high above the heads of marching armies and nations by Darius, the great Persian king. He had already published two volumes of translations, but there lay an enormous mass of tablets to be worked on. Their coming to England was in itself as much a romance as Smith's discoveries from them. Layard found them in two chambers in the palace of Assurbanipal, the last king of the great Assyrian Empire. They were stacked to a height of more than a foot on the floor of the two chambers, some with the marks on them of the melting they had undergone when the palace was fired by the Medes when they overthrew Nineveh. Some were scattered about the corridor and down to the river where the fleeing palace guards had left them 25 centuries before.

Layard, enchanted with the great sculptures, thought little of the tablets, which he regarded as decorated pottery, and had them tossed into baskets and sent home higgledy-piggledy on the deck of a warship, where they were seriously damaged. When Rawlinson and his colleagues set to work on them it was found that the so-called decorated pottery was in fact the library of Assurbanipal, the greatest scholar of his age, the man who boasted on one of the tablets that he could read and write all languages, and that he had sent far and near to collect the literary records of other nations and had stored them in the chambers where Layard found them.

The tablets that Layard despised were worth all the sculptures that the ancient empires of the East had ever possessed. Here were letters, contracts, spells and enchantments, matters dealing with slaves, with brides and their dowries, with signs and portents and omens, gathered from the behaviour of rivers and from examination



Tablet XI or the Flood Tablet of the Epic of Gilgamesh
in the British Museum in London, England

MY WORLD STORY BOOK

of animals sacrificed on the altars; and with all this matters of state and history throwing light on the events described in the Old Testament. All this treasure, untranslated and undigested, lay before the enraptured vision of George Smith.

He realized how incredible was the drama from which they had emerged. Nineveh the mighty, when Layard found it, was a colossal mound buried deep beneath the earth. Arabs in their black tents camped over the heads of dead kings of the Bible, while their sheep fed on the rich spring grass. The very name by which Nineveh is called today, Kuyunjik, is Turkish, meaning many sheep, in reference to the flocks that are pastured there.

The later groups of tablets were dug out of the mound by successors of Rawlinson, who had only a brief licence for their work and had to work stealthily by night at their task in order to finish it, for the local Chief who owned the ruins demanded possession for his sheep. The feeding of his flock was of more importance to him than the unearthing of the mightiest civilisation the Old World knew.

Some 25,000 tablets lay before Smith, yet with nothing to help him, with no scholarship to prepare his mind, he began slowly to pierce the mystery, to piece together the scattered members of the colossal jig-saw puzzle written by hands stilled by death thousands of years ago.

He made two splendid discoveries. One was the date of a total eclipse of the Sun 26 centuries ago, and the other the date of an invasion of Babylon by the Elamites in 2280 B.C. This was an astonishing success for a young workman, and Rawlinson was so impressed that he secured Smith's appointment as his assistant in sorting, classifying, and examining the great collection upon which he had already been many years at work, and in preparing a new volume of his translations.

Smith's interest lay in the discovery of historical tablets bearing on the Old Testament, but he was led to unexpected results. He proved a born translator and solved the riddle of the Past. He discovered the secret of the manner in which Greek was written in ancient Cyprus, and so furnished a key that has produced rich harvests in the hands of later scholars.

Poring over his cylinders and tablets he produced a magnificent translation of the history of Assurbanipal and the early history of Babylonia. Here was a man born for the task, and at 31 Smith was appointed a senior assistant in the department of Assyriology. Freed from other labour he now concentrated on the work of his heart, and gained the most wonderful success in the annals of modern scholarship.

Among the "decorated pottery" he found a series of tablets that he slowly read and transcribed, to give us the most astounding story in the world. It was the Babylonian story of the Creation and of the Flood, these two stories forming a part of the Epic of Gilgamesh.

It was a bewildering achievement, but Smith gave it to the world as though he had merely solved a simple crossword puzzle. He took the world by storm. Here was Creation as seen through the eyes of heathen races more ancient than the Jews, a version in which we see the precedent for the Greek story of the beginning of gods and men as told by Hesiod in the time of Homer.

Here was the Babylonian foreshadowing of the journey of Ulysses to the shades to learn his destiny. Here was the Babylonian Noah, Uta-Napishtim, and here was his story of the building of the ark, the taking in of the family and the animals, the coming of the Deluge, the sending out of birds, the grounding of the ark at the end of the flood, the landing of the survivors, and the offering of sacrifices to the gods, whereupon the gods "smelled the sweet savour and gathered together like flies

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over him that sacrificed."

Added to this work there was the immortal story of Gilgamesh himself, first of all the world's heroes, the model from which Hercules and all the giants of Greek fancy were to afterwards spring. The tablets from which Smith presented these astonishing results were incomplete, so the Daily Telegraph offered a thousand guineas to enable the Museum to send him out to seek for more.

He sailed in 1873. Within two months of his arrival at Nineveh, he found a vitally important section missing from the story of the Deluge, with many other tablets enabling him on his return to carry on his story of Gilgamesh and his world, with Babylonian accounts of the Fall of Man and of the building of the Tower of Babel. The Museum sent him out again in 1874, and a third time in 1876, with splendid results in new knowledge.

The third visit, however, was fatal. Each time he had trouble with the Turks, but in 1876, after being held up by plague at Aleppo, he made a series of brilliant explorations and discovered thousands of new tablets, but was unable to resume at Nineveh owing to the warlike operations of the Natives. His companion died of fatigue and famine, and Smith, who had borne up bravely in the face of almost overwhelming difficulties, struggled on in the wilds ill and slowly starving to death.

He broke down at a little village 60 miles from Aleppo. In his extremity he was taken to Aleppo, too late. The hand of death was already on him, and he died there in the British Consulate. His death was a calamity, for he had brought so much new material to light that the rest of his life, had he lived to be old, would have been fully occupied. But his example so inspired his generation that a new race of scholars was called into being, and between his day and ours we have learned so much of the ancient Past that we know a thousand times as much of Assyria, Babylon, and Egypt as we know of our own land during the first two hundred years after the arrival in it of our Saxon forefathers.

References

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