

**THE TESTIMONY OF THE TRUTH OF  
SCRIPTURE: HISTORICAL ILLUSTRATIONS  
OF THE OLD TESTAMENT, GATHERED  
FROM ANCIENT RECORDS, MONUMENTS  
AND INSCRIPTIONS**

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The testimony of the truth of scripture: historical illustrations of the Old Testament, gathered from ancient records, monuments and inscriptions by George Rawlinson & Horatio B. Hackett

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**GEORGE RAWLINSON & HORATIO B. HACKETT**

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## PREFACE.

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The good fight of faith is a perpetual but ever-changing conflict. The warfare is transferred from land to land, and handed down from generation to generation, as new phases of doubt, disbelief, and denial present themselves from age to age. A true faith cannot be hereditary; it must be based upon personal experience, personal investigation, and personal understanding. The investigations of the father do not work conviction in the mind of the son; each for himself must search, and learn, and be established.

Most of the skepticism of the present day springs from the ignorance of those who deny without investigating, and who have not the slightest idea of the amount of evidence for the truth of the Scriptures which past researches have disclosed. Skeptics imbibe and rehearse the second-hand doubts, stale cavils, and antiquated sneers of former generations; but they do not look up the answers to these obsolete objections, and they are ignorant of the facts and arguments by which these cavils were pulverized before they were born, and scattered away like the chaff of the summer's threshing-floor before they had ever heard of them.

There is no field of research or argument where infidelity has ever been victorious in the fight against the Gospel of Christ. Wherever her forces have been marshaled for combat, they have been defeated. Whether in heaven above, or earth beneath,

or in the waters under the earth; whether in the ranges of astronomy or geology, history or science, psychology or biology, the result has ever been the same. Unbelief has suffered defeat, and faith has kept the field. "Science," it is true, has contradicted the Bible, but then science has also contradicted itself, and is doing it every day. The science of yesterday is the foolishness of to-day; while the science of to-day will be the laughing-stock of to-morrow. And wherever science at last arrives at firm, well-considered, and permanent conclusions, she finds herself anticipated by divine revelation, and standing on ground which the Scriptures of truth have occupied for ages before.

In one respect the Old Testament has occupied a most peculiar position. So far as the New Testament is concerned, it is hemmed in on every side by the definite lines of authentic history. For ages, from the beginning of the world, we find no historic traces of Christ or of Christianity. During the 60 years reaching from the death of Julius Cæsar, B. C. 44, to the death of the poet Ovid, A. D. 18, there are preserved the works of such orators, poets, historians, and geographers, as Cicero, Sallust, Virgil, Ovid, Horac., Strabo, and Livy—men of culture, intelligence, and ability—but in none of their works have we the slightest mention of Christ or of Christianity. A generation later we find Christians everywhere, and writers, such as Josephus, Tacitus, Pliny, and Trajan, making explicit mention of the presence of that mighty religious fraternity which, within that brief period, had come into the life of the world, where it still exists as the grandest forming force of all historic ages.

The commencement and entire existence of Christianity thus lies within the range of authentic history, and the literature of the world bears witness to its wondrous and all pervading energy. But as regards the Jewish religion the case is different. The Hebrew Scriptures mostly antedated all authentic

history, and the Old Testament stood alone, a solitary witness, neither confirmed nor contradicted by any record of those ancient times.

The debauched and besotted idolaters of antiquity had perished in their own corruption, and left no descendants to preserve their traditions or their literature. Drunkenness, luxury, and lust had ended in overthrow and desolation; and the only ancient people which preserved the records of its origin, and the history of its progress, was that strange and mysterious race, which have been for centuries wanderers in every country, and who, though exiled, oppressed, down-trodden, robbed, and wronged, yet stand to-day, more numerous, wealthy, prominent and influential than ever before; and exhibiting a degree of fecundity, longevity, constitutional vigor, intellectual power, and physical health, such as no nation on the globe can boast.\*

In the absence of all contemporary and confirmatory testimony, it has become customary for infidels, skeptics, and modern critics, to give the rein to fancy, and contradict or question at pleasure the statements contained in the Old Testament. They had their own way about it. They denied and discredited what they pleased, and no one could stop their mouths. There was no other evidence on the points in question, and all the witnesses were dead.

Thus things went on until scoffers grew bold, skepticism increased, and timid Christians almost trembled for the Ark of the Covenant in the hands of the Philistines.

It is true there was the evidence from *prophecy*. These same books which contained historic records of the past, also contained predictions concerning the future; and the most ignorant and impudent criticism could not deny that the books had been in existence for more than fifteen centuries, and that

\* For facts confirming this statement, consult *Remarks on "The Mistakes of Moses,"* by H. L. Hastings; *Anti-Infidel Library* No. 6. Price 5 cts.

during all those centuries Jerusalem had been trodden under foot of the Gentiles; and Israel had been scattered among all nations without a king, a priest, an altar or a sacrifice, as Christ and the prophets had predicted;\* and the simplest logic would find in the demonstrated truth of the prophecy an argument for the probable truth of the history which preceded it. But this argument demands research, and skeptics are not fond of research, especially if it upsets their pet conclusions; and prophecy, even among many who profess to believe and teach the word of God, is too much a sealed and neglected book, being discredited by the rashness of the presumptuous and the unbelief of the indifferent. Hence, while those familiar with the subject, who were willing to adopt the methods of Christ and his apostles, and reason out of the Scriptures, found an unfailing anchorage for their hopes in the fulfillments of Scripture prophecy; multitudes too ignorant or indifferent to seek out such evidences, were left to drift away upon the tides of doubt and unbelief.

It needed new evidences to meet and confute these new forms of skeptical and destructive criticism, and whence they were to come was not clearly apparent.

The invasion of Egypt by Napoleon, in 1798, commenced a new era. French artists and savants explored the territory, investigated the natural history, examined the antiquities, and described and depicted the monuments of that ancient empire; and with all the zeal of skeptical enthusiasts collected the materials from which, in 1820, the French government issued its *Description de l'Egypte*, in twenty-five volumes, with more than 900 engravings. From that time to this such writers as Lepsius, Wilkinson, Sharpe, Lane, Kenrick, and others have increased and popularized information concerning this most ancient of nations.

Infidels hailed these discoveries with rapture, and hoped by means of them to overthrow the

\* Luke xxi. 24. Hosea iii. 4.



Scriptures and demolish Christianity. But their hopes have failed, and Egyptian literature in the camp of infidelity has proved like the wooden horse filled with Grecian warriors within the gates of Troy. Infidelity has been discomfited, while Scripture gathers fresh evidences of its truth from the pyramids, pictures, inscriptions, monuments, manuscripts, and mummies of the Land of the Pharaohs.\*

In 1845 Austen Henry Layard, after an extended course of Eastern travel, returned to Mosul, on the banks of the Tigris, and undertook those successful researches and investigations already inaugurated by Mr. Rassam, which have enriched the British Museum with a vast mass of inscriptions and antiquities, and which have brought back to us the splendors of ancient Assyria, Nineveh, and Babylon, and made us acquainted with facts, events, dynasties, kings, conquests, laws, and literature which had been buried and forgotten for ages, but which conduct us back to the sources of authentic history, along the very paths which the Jewish writers trod, and introduce us to the world which the prophets saw, the kings whose wickedness they denounced, the cities and nations whose overthrow they foretold, and the idols whose downfall they predicted; leading us back even to Ur of the Chaldees, the abode of Abraham, and making us acquainted with the kings and kingdoms mentioned in the early pages of the book of Genesis.

From the deep shadows of the past come to us not only new shapes and unknown names, but also others long familiar to the student of the word of God. We find here poems, romances, traditions, mythologies, legends, calendars, and legal documents in abundance. But we find also sculptures, statues,

\*While competent judges assert that twenty thousand dollars might be expended in the purchase of works bearing upon Egyptian history and antiquities, the ordinary reader will find the leading points embodied in *Egypt in History and Prophecy; or, Pharaoh Proclaiming God*, by Dr. Robert Patterson; it being Number 2 of the *Anti-Infidel Library*, issued by the publishers of this volume. Price 15 cents.

and official records, representations and memorials of the acts, exploits, campaigns, and victories of the great and mighty monarchs of those times, such as Darius, Cyrus, Artaxerxes, Sargon, Shalmaneser, Esarhaddon, Tiglath-Pileser, Nebuchadnezzar, Sennacherib, Merodach-Baladan, Hazael, Shishak, Tirhakah, Benhadad, Omri, Mesha, Jehu, Ahab, and Hezekiah. We find accounts of the battles fought with Israel and with other nations, of the tribute paid by Hezekiah to the Assyrian ruler,\* of the battle of Megiddo, and of the conquest of various kingdoms. We find Nimrod, the "mighty hunter," sculptured in solid rock, grasping a captured young lion in his hands; we find kings exhibited as tormenting and mutilating their captives; we find pictured representations of men, with Jewish faces, making brick in Egypt under the lash of the task-masters; and bricks yet remain mingled with straw and stubble. We find not only inscriptions dating back to the Pharaohs, but even the Pharaohs themselves, mummied and preserved to the present day;† in a word, we find a magazine of sculptures, inscriptions and royal records, which testify, at every point of contact, to the truthfulness of the Hebrew Scriptures that have come down to our own times.

Such evidence as this is cumulative. Every day the pickaxe of the explorer may unearth a new relic, or the acumen of the antiquarian may decipher a new inscription, and hence the evidence increases day by day; and we can only record that which has been developed, and await the new discoveries which are continually being made.

Among the many students who have given their time and labor to the recent investigation of Oriental

\*The apparent discrepancy in the account of the ransom paid by Hezekiah, 300 talents of silver (2 Ki. xviii. 13), and 800 talents as given by Sennacherib's inscriptions, may be explained as on p. 143 of this work; or more probably by the fact that there were different kinds of talents in different nations, 300 of one being equal to 800 of the other.

† See Dr. Patterson's *Egypt in History and Prophecy*, p. 15.

antiquities, perhaps none are more thoroughly equipped for the work than Rev. GEORGE RAWLINSON, Camden Professor of Ancient History, Oxford, and author of that elaborate series of histories, *The Seven Great Oriental Monarchies*.\* The following pages exhibit in the briefest form the results of some of his researches in this department of study, and illustrate and confirm the statements of Scripture history. The volume has had an extensive circulation in Great Britain, and the present edition has received additions and notes from the pen of the late Professor H. B. Hackett, so well known to all Bible students, as the editor of the American edition of *Smith's Dictionary of the Bible*, and as one of the American Revisers of the New Testament. Professor Hackett's additions to the Text are distinguished by brackets, his Notes by his initial; and the Appendices were also added by him.

The volume is now presented to the Christian public as exhibiting in a condensed and inexpensive form the results of some of the later researches in the department of Oriental antiquities.

These voices of the dead speak to us the strange names which for ages had only been uttered by the Hebrew prophets and historians. Infidelity had branded them as fictions and had scouted the Scripture accounts as utterly fabulous and unreliable. And lo! from the dust of ages, march forth these denizens of the dead and buried past. Here are records, chronicles, inscriptions, sculptures, memorials, traditions, legal documents by the hundred, volume after volume of which are now brought within reach of the English reader, containing the official records of those very kings of whose existence the Old Testament has heretofore been the only witness.†

\* To his elaborate volumes on the *Ancient Monarchies*, the author constantly refers for fuller details and pictorial illustrations. American editions place this splendid work within the reach of the people in 5 vols. 8vo.; price \$6 25. To be had of the publishers.

† See *Records of The Past*, being English translations of the Assyrian and Egyptian monuments. In twelve volumes. London. Bagster & Co. publishers, 15 Paternoster Row.