

PUBLISHER'S PREFACE.



THIS elementary history of the first ages of the world is intended as a child's first exposure to the history of man from the dawn of time to the ending of the Persian empire by Alexander the Great. As such, it relates the history of the Old Testament, and also the history of the Sumerians, the Egyptians, the Canaanites, or Phoenicians (for they were the same people), the Assyrians, the Babylonians, and the Persians.

The Story of the Ancient World begins with the text of *The Story of the Chosen People* by H. A. Guerber, but a comparison of that book to this will show immediate and numerous differences and additions. *The Story of the Ancient World* has been greatly expanded by chapters relating the history of the ancient peoples previously mentioned. As well, the greater story of the ancient world has been interwoven with Guerber's chapters, so that the Biblical history can be understood against that backdrop.

But it is not just Biblical history which benefits from the more complete picture drawn. I have taken the Biblical history as authoritative in all cases, and it has acted as the plumb line for the evidence left to us by archaeology and classical history. Looking at "secular" history through the lens of Biblical history has allowed, I trust, a complete and unified picture of the ancient world to emerge, which makes sense of the monuments, and the often disjointed facts children encounter in library books about this period.

This would not have been possible without the careful scholarship of many individuals, and a complete bibliography of sources is listed in the back of the book. But a few in particular were of enormous help, and this book would not exist without them. These were *The Defender's Study Bible* by Henry M. Morris; *Josephus: Complete Works* by William Whitson; *The Annals of the World* by James Ussher, revised by Larry and Marion Pierce; *A New System, or an Analysis of Ancient Mythology* by Jacob Bryant; and *The Five Great Monarchies of the Ancient Eastern World* by George Rawlinson.

In each of these works, the history related by the Old Testament was esteemed accurate, and the light they shed on the ancient world was invaluable. Any of the details of the ancient world which emerge in this book, then, which may seem surprising to modern readers because they are little known in our day, are not new, but were gleaned from one or more of these five sources, and have in some cases been supported, often

unwittingly, by modern books which deny the historicity of the Old Testament. A complete study of these sources will confirm, I trust, the history told in this book.

Changes were also made to Guerber's original text when her text did not agree with the historical account given by the Old Testament. For example, in her first chapter relating the creation of the world, she wrote, "The story is told very briefly indeed, and all the periods of creation are called days. Of course we now know that by days the writer of the book of Genesis did not mean twenty-four hours, as we do." This alteration from the Genesis account changes the history to conform to modern ideas about origins, but other scholars have convincingly shown that the writer of Genesis in fact meant twenty-four hour days, so the original meaning of the Old Testament account was restored.

All of the additional material has been woven into Guerber's narrative and worded as nearly alike to Guerber's style as I could manage. My purpose in doing this has been to provide as complete a history of the ancient world as possible, in an enjoyable and unbroken style. Maintaining the continuity of the whole narrative was my prime consideration throughout.

The illustrations and maps are from Guerber, and from many of the books listed in the bibliography, where such illustrations have passed into the public domain. As with the other Guerber histories previously republished by Nothing New Press, the first time a personal or place name is mentioned in the text the pronunciation is marked, and a comprehensive index concludes the book.

On Chronology.

There are many different, and sometimes conflicting, systems of chronology for dating the events of ancient history. In Biblical chronology, I followed Archbishop Ussher's dates without exception, as being the most learned, and logical, and completely consistent with Scripture's internal evidence.

In secular chronology, I also followed Ussher, only deviating from him in two instances, where Ussher was, I believe, relying on erroneous history of the Greeks, unknown to him. The first was in identifying Sardanapalus as the son of Pul, when he was, I believe, Assurbanipal; and the second was in identifying Xerxes' mother as Vashti, when she may have in fact been Esther.

It will be clear that I did not follow conventional secular chronology for dating events in the ancient world. I used a much-shortened chronology for Egyptian kings based on

the Old Chronicle, the oldest record of Egyptian dynasties we have. It was the belief of some ancient, as well as some modern, chronologers, that the standard list of Egyptian dynasties upon which conventional secular chronology is based, was exaggerated at some point in the past. Since the Old Chronicle harmonized with Biblical chronology, I have adopted it here. I would refer anyone interested in this question to Bryant's *An Analysis of Ancient Mythology*, especially "Of the Egyptian Kings and Dynasties," and "The Egyptians Dynasties from the Deluge," (vol. 4, 3rd edition, 1807) in which he exposes many errors which have become entrenched in the standard dynastic list. Especially in Amosis' dynasty, the dynasty under which Ussher placed the Hebrews in Egypt, I was suspicious of duplication in the standard dynastic list, a recurring problem.

The next thorn in secular chronology is the Assyrian Eponym Canon, which does not harmonize, at first glance, with the chronology of the divided kingdoms of Israel and Judah. My greatest help with this problem was Rawlinson's *Ancient Monarchies*, "Chapter IX: Chronology and History of Assyria" (vol. 2, 2nd edition, 1862), and James Jordan's *Biblical Chronology Newsletter*, especially "Jehu, Hazael, and Assyria: Chronologies and Kings IX," (vol. 4 no. 3, March 1992).

As far as I know, no one has identified the generation of Assyrian kings who repented at Jonah's preaching. A comment in Rawlinson, on the curious lack of military spirit shown by a particular generation of Assyrian kings, sparked the thought that here we might find them; and since their Eponym Canon chronology squared so nicely with Ussher's dates for Jonah, I adopted it.

I am convinced, along with Ussher, that Darius the Great is the Ahasuerus who chose Esther for his queen, instead of his son Xerxes, as most modern Bible commentaries claim. Darius fits the Biblical evidence (especially Es 1:1, where the king is identified by facts ascribed to Darius the Great's reign by secular historians), and the secular evidence, better (in that there were only four Persian kings who favored the Jews: Cyrus, Cambyses, his son, Darius the Great, who made Esther his queen, and Xerxes, who may have been Esther's son, the "Atossa" or Hadassah, of the Greek historians).

Any errors in dating or chronology are my own, and if anyone sees an error, and would like to open a dialogue supporting a change, I would welcome that.

Christine Miller
Nothing New Press