

# The Baptist Examiner

A nation-wide, independent paper, standing foursquare for the distinguishing doctrines of Baptists, and shunning not to declare all the counsel of God.

"To the law and to the testimony; if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them" (Isa. 8:20).

Vol. 2, No. 14

ASHLAND, KY., TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 1, 1932

Whole No. 30

## The Bible, A Revelation From God

The Second Article of a Series Presenting a Systematic Study of Bible Doctrine.

By THE EDITOR

Having now found that the existence of God is an established fact, a fact more certain than any conclusion from formal reasoning, because it is the necessary foundation of all reason, we pass on to the consideration of another matter. There is now, and has been for centuries, in this world a peculiar book, called the Bible, or the Book, which claims to be a revelation from God. Its writers speak in boldest terms of their authority as spokesman for God. This authority has been admitted by millions of the inhabitants of the earth, both in the past and in the present. We desire to ask, therefore, if this book is what it claims to be and what it has been and is believed to be by a multitude of people—a revelation from God. If it is not a revelation from God, then its writers were either deceived or else they were deceivers. But let us remember that a man is considered innocent until proved guilty. Therefore, let us give the Bible writers a fair hearing. We will begin by asking

### Is the Bible Historically Authentic?

By this question we mean: Is the Bible trustworthy as a record of historical facts? About a century ago critics held the Bible to be untrustworthy as history. They said that four kings mentioned in Gen. 14:1 never existed, and that the victory of the kings of the West over the kings of the East, as described in this chapter, never occurred. They denied that such people as the Hittites ever lived. Sargon, mentioned in Isa. 20:1 as king of Assyria, was considered a mythical character. But how is it now? We can say today, after far-reaching investigations concerning ancient nations have been made that not a single statement of the Bible stands refuted. The confident denials of early critics have been proved to be the assumptions of ignorance. Prof. A. H. Sayce, one of the most eminent of archaeologists, says: "Since the discovery of the Tel el-Amarna tablets until now great things have been brought out by archeology, and every one of them has been in harmony with the Bible, while nearly every one of them has been dead against the assertions of the destructive critics." And, just recently, the United Press broadcasted the testimony of A. S. Yahuda, formerly Professor of Biblical History at the University of Berlin and later of Semitic Languages at the University of Madrid, to the effect that "every archeological discovery in Palestine and Mesopotamia of the Bible period bears out the historical accuracy of the Bible." Professor Yahuda is reported as denying that Genesis was written during the Babylonian exile, saying: "If that were so, the language would have shown unmistakable evidence of Assyrian influence. On examining the origins of words I have found that there is very little trace of such influence. These stories are far older than the exile in Babylon. They belong to the time of the patriarchs of the great civilization of Ur. The story of Joseph in Egypt has been adjudged by Bible critics to be so faint and inconclusive that it must have been written many centuries after it happened. Yet examination of the language shows the influence of Egyptian words and phrases and familiarity with the life and customs of the country. The discovery of Professor John Garstang that the walls of Jericho did fall flat is another tribute to the Bible. Again, from the linguistic evidence, I contend that the account of the siege must have

been written under the influence of Egyptian culture. What is equally definite is that it would be almost an impossibility for such detail as is given in the Bible story to have been written centuries afterward. We can say now, from clear evidence, that the man who wrote the book of Joshua saw Jericho's walls collapse."

A very interesting instance of the testimony of archeological discoveries to the accuracy of biblical history is found in the case of Belshazzar. Previous to the time of comparatively recent archeological investigations the name of Belshazzar could not be found in secular history, although the list of Babylonian kings seemed to be complete. The name of Nabonidus stood where Belshazzar's should have been according to the Bible. Critics believed they had here a plain case against the Bible. But after a while the spade of the excavator wrested from them this choice ground for discrediting the Bible. Excavations into the ancient city of Ur of the Chaldees by Sir Henry Rawlinson in 1854 brought to light some terra-cotta cylinders containing some inscriptions by Nabonidus himself in which he mentions "Belshazzar, my eldest son." This inscription proved two things, viz., that there was a person named Belshazzar, and that he lived in Babylon at exactly the time Daniel affirmed that he did. Then it took only a little further investigation to clear up the remainder of the difficulty of how Belshazzar could have been king when Nabonidus was supposed to be a king. In 1876 Sir Henry Rawlinson found in ancient Babylon some jars containing over two thousand cuneiform tablets. On one of these was found an official account of the invasion of Babylon by no less a person than King Cyrus. This tells how Nabonidus first fled and was then taken a prisoner. And we know from other records that Nabonidus lived for a considerable time after the fall of Babylon. Therefore, when the record of the fall of Babylon goes on to relate that on a certain "night . . . the king died," it cannot be referring to Nabonidus. This makes room for the coming in of Belshazzar, the eldest son of Nabonidus, to take the place of his father after his father's capture. Moreover, another inscription proves that it was customary for Belshazzar to reign in his father's absence. This other inscription is a legal document, dated "in the third year of King Belshazzar." And the fact that Belshazzar was the second ruler of the kingdom, explains, as nothing else could, why Daniel was made third ruler in the kingdom instead of being made second ruler, as Pharaoh made Joseph.

Then it used to be denied that a whale could have swallowed Jonah. We will note first that, when correctly translated, the Bible does not say that it was a whale that swallowed Jonah. The Greek word for whale in Matt. 12:40 means simply a "sea-monster." On the other hand we will note that the idea that a whale cannot swallow a man is another ignorant assumption. In the "Cruise of the Cachalot," Frank Bullen characterizes the idea that a whale's gullet is incapable of admitting any large object as "a piece of crass ignorance." He relates how "a shark fifteen feet in length has been found in the stomach of a sperm whale," and he describes these monsters as "swimming about with the lower jaw hanging down in its normal position, and its huge gullet gaping like some sub-