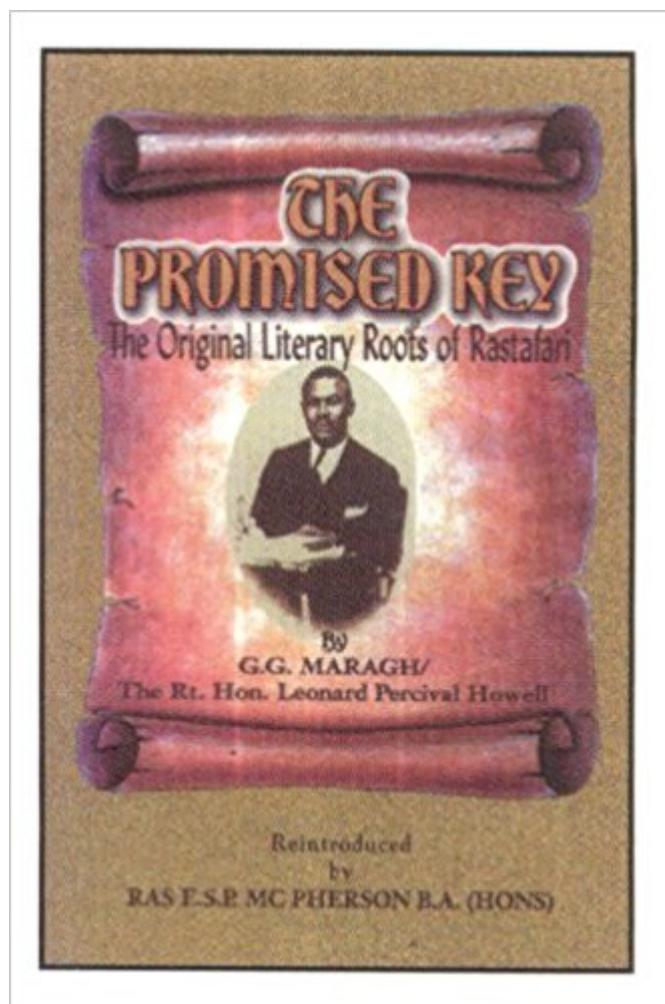


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The Promised Key: The Original Literary Roots Of Rastafari



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Customer Reviews

I wish this had more of the original text. Most of this book is the thoughts and opinions of the author that rewrote the book and not the thoughts of Leonard Howell.

Book was a gift so have had no complaints

G. G.MARAGH/LEONARD P HOWELL IS MY UNCLE. I FULL-JOY THIS BOOK. I HAVE MANY COPIES OF THIS BOOK BY ANOTHER WRITER WHO IS ALSO A DEAR FRIEND. PICTURE OF MY MOTHER AND TWO OF MY CHILDREN IS FEATURED IN THE RE-WRITE BY- RAS MIGUEL LORNE.

Leonard Howell is generally acknowledged as the true father of what we now call Rastafarianism (Erroneously attributed to Marcus Garvey. contrary to popular belief, Robert Hill's Marcus Garvey papers note that Garvey himself despised Selassie and thought even less of the early rastas, but that's another story).Most of the early rasta texts make for tedious reading for the non-faithful, with their overtly flowery rhetoric and tiresome pseudoscholarly and semibiblical rants to make them appear to be divinely inspired. This is a bit different. Edited down from the weighty and laborious "Royal Scroll of Black Supremacy," Howell breaks down the basic concepts of the need of Blacks to create their own culture and religion in distilled form and slogans to appeal to the masses. While the

actual contents may not be to everyone's liking or agreement, it is a quick and interesting read and essential to understanding the roots of the kind of thing Bob Marley and others were singing about.

This early 1930s text is the first known which can be described as being directly Rastafari. However, the continuing line of texts leading up to this one is very long. Nevertheless, such a "foundation paper" of a religion has to be rated with full stars. Non-Rastafari may not know what to do with it and/or even misinterpret it and give a different rating accordingly. Only 19 text pages long, this book includes (additional) 15 pictures and additional 29 introduction text pages. The latter includes a well-selected passage of H.I.M. Haile Selassie-I; a prayer; information on Marcus Garvey and Leonard Percival Howell. A lot of references to other early Rasta and pre-Rasta texts; early responses to The Promised Key; some rudimentary information on Rastafari and the context in which this text had been written. The Promised Key itself covers the coronation of Haile Selassie-I, "King of Kings".

This short pamphlet contains the entire text of 'The Promised Key', a proto-Rastafarian document from the mid-1930s. This document is primarily of historical interest. The text itself is a much edited-down redaction of another, earlier, proto-Rastafarian text, 'The Royal Parchment Scroll of Black Supremacy.' Along with the latter and 'The Holy Piby', this is one of the three root texts of Rastafarianism. Also included is an essay by a Rastafarian scholar which explains the historical context of this rare document (which is twice as long as the actual text of 'The Promised Key'). This pamphlet is a must-have if you are studying the roots of Rastafarianism or Jamaican religious history in an academic context. It will not be of interest to general readers or those looking for information on contemporary Rastafarian philosophy; there are many other books which are much more relevant.

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