

INSCRIPTIONS OF SENNACHERIB

TRANSLATED BY PROFESSOR ROBERT W. ROGERS

SENNACHERIB, in Assyrian *Sin-akhi-erba*, "The Moon-god has increased the brothers," ascended the throne of Assyria on the 12th day of the month Ab, in the year 705 B.C., succeeding to all the rights and honours of the great kingdom which his father Sargon had left. His reign continued, with many wars and frequent difficulties, until his life was ended by assassination in 681 B.C. (2 Kings xix. 37). Of all his campaigns against Babylon, Elam, and other places, none is so interesting to the Biblical student as the great campaign against Phœnicia and Philistia. This campaign is treated at considerable length and with much vividness in 2 Kings xviii. 13-xix. 36, and again in Isaiah xxxvi. 1-xxxvii. 37. Sennacherib's own account of this campaign is presented in the great Taylor prism here done into English, and a comparison of this account with the Old Testament story mentioned above would seem to give the main facts about as follows, each account mutually supplementing the other. The Kings of Phœnicia and Philistia, with Hezekiah of Judah

among them, made a coalition with the Egyptians and Ethiopians to throw off the Assyrian yoke and deliver themselves from tribute. Hearing of this confederacy in some way, Sennacherib speedily gathered an army, and marched by the usual route to Syria, suddenly appearing in the northern part of the land. His coming was so unexpected that the allies had not united their forces, and the skilful Assyrian was able to attack them one by one. He sent one body of the army toward Jerusalem, which met with immediate success in overcoming a number of cities of Judah, while the King himself led the other portion of his army towards Lachish. Hezekiah, fearing the army which was already advancing with victorious banners, sent ambassadors to Lachish with great gifts, and with protestations of his fealty to Sennacherib. Sennacherib, however, sent an army against the chief city, desiring to take possession of the city—a plan which did not succeed. Immediately afterwards the Assyrian army met the southern allies under Tirhakah (2 Kings xix. 9), and the battle, as may be read between the lines of Sennacherib's account, was not a decisive victory. His campaign closed suddenly and without the usual long list of spoil—a lack which he attempts to supply by representing that the presents sent by Hezekiah to Lachish were sent to Nineveh.

The first of the two inscriptions here given refers to the same campaign as that which is described at length in the Taylor cylinder.

The Taylor cylinder has been previously translated into English by Talbot in the *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society*, vol. xix. p. 135 sqq., and in the *Records of the Past*, First Series, vol. i. p. 33 sqq.; into French by Menant, *Annales*, p. 214 suivv.; into German by Hörning, *Das sechsseitige Prisma des Sanherib in transscribirtem Grundtext und Uebersetzung*, Leipzig, 1878; and by Bezold, *Keilinschriftliche Bibliothek*, ii. p. 80 ff. (Cf. criticism by W. Muss - Arnolt in *Hebraica*, vii. p. 56 sqq.) The original is a splendidly preserved prism of six sides, found by Colonel Taylor in 1830, and now in the British Museum. It is published in *W. A. I.* vol. i. pll. 37-42, and in autograph facsimile in Abel and Winkler's *Keilschrifttexte*, Berlin, 1890, pp. 17-21.

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INSCRIPTION ON A RELIEF¹

1. Sennacherib, the king of the world, the king of ASSYRIA,
2. sat on his throne,² and
3. the spoil of the city of LACHISH
4. marched before him.

THE TAYLOR CYLINDER

1. Sennacherib, the great king, the powerful king,
2. the king of the world, the king of ASSYRIA, the king of the four zones,
3. the wise shepherd, the favourite of the great gods,
4. the protector of justice, the lover of righteousness,
5. he who gives help, who goes to assist the weak,
6. who frequents the sanctuaries (?),³ the perfect hero,
7. the manful warrior, the first of all princes,
8. the great, he who destroys the rebellious,
9. who destroys the enemies ;
10. ASSUR, the great rock, a kingdom without rival
11. has granted me.
12. Over all who sit on sacred seats has he made my arms great,

¹ On a magnificent bas-relief, now in the British Museum, representing Sennacherib on his throne, receiving the spoil of the city.

² *Kussi nîmedi*, a doubtful phrase. The meaning of *nîmedi* is unknown. It has been translated "lofty," "portable," "dwelling-place," etc. In Sennacherib, iii, 76, and iv, 8, below, *kussu* and *kussu nîmedu* seem to be used without distinction. *Nîmedu* is apparently merely an epitheton ornans (so Evetts, *Z.A.* iii. 327) with *kussu*, "seat."

³ *Sakhîru damqati*.

13. from the upper sea of the setting sun ¹
 14. unto the lower sea of the rising sun ¹
 15. the whole of the black headed people ² has he thrown
 beneath my feet
 16. and rebellious princes shunned battle with me.
 17. They forsook their dwellings ; like a falcon
 18. which dwells in the clefts,³ they fled alone to an inac-
 cessible place.
-
19. In my first campaign I accomplished the destruction of
 Merodach-baladan
 20. king of KAR-DUNYASH,⁴ together with the troops of
 ELAM,
 21. his allies, near KISH.
 22. In the midst of that battle he left his encampment
 23. and fled alone, and saved his life.
 24. The chariots, horses, freight wagons, (and) mules
 25. which he left in the onset of battle, my hands seized.
 26. Into his palace I entered joyously and
 27. opened his treasure-house. Gold, silver,
 28. gold (and) silver utensils, costly stones of every kind,
 29. possessions and goods, without number, a heavy spoil,
 his women of the palace,
 30. *valets de chambre* (?), youths and maidens,
 31. all the artisans, as many as there were,
 32. the portable things of his palace, I brought forth and
 33. counted as spoil. By the power of ASSUR, my lord,
 34. 75 of his powerful cities, the fortresses of the land of
 KALDI ⁵
 35. and 420 smaller cities of their environs
 36. I besieged, captured, and carried off their spoil.
 37. The ARABIANS,⁶ ARAMEANS ⁷ (and) CHALDEANS ⁸ of
 URUK,⁹

¹ Lake Van and the Persian Gulf.

² The inhabitants of Babylonia.

³ So Dr. Muss-Arnolt.

⁵ In the south of Babylonia.

⁴ Babylonia.

⁶ Ur-bi.

⁷ A-ra-mu.

⁸ Kal-du. See *Records of the Past*, New Series, vol. ii, p. 164, note 5.

⁹ Biblical *Erech* (Gen. x. 10). Modern *Warka*, on the left bank of the Euphrates, in Southern Babylonia.

38. NIPUR,¹ KISH,² KHARSAK-KALAMMA,² KUTU,³ and
SIPPARA
39. together with the inhabitants of the city who had
committed transgression,
40. I brought forth and counted as spoil. On my return
march,
41. the TU'MUNA, the RIKHIKHU, the YADAQQU,
42. the UBUDU, the KIPRE, the MALAKHU,
43. the GURUMU, the UBULUM, the DAMUNU,
44. the GAMBULUM, the KHINDARU, the RU'UA,
45. the PUQUDU,⁴ the KHAMRANU, the KHAGARANU,
46. the NABATU, the LI'TAU, ARAMÆANS
47. who were rebellious, I conquered together.
48. 208,000 people, young (and) old, male and female,
49. (7200)⁵ horses (and) mules, (11,073) asses, (5230)
camels,
50. (80,100) cattle, (800,600) sheep,⁶ an immense
51. spoil, I carried away to ASSYRIA.
52. In the course of my campaign, I received from Nebo-
bel-shanati,
53. the prefect of the city KHARARATI, gold, silver,
54. tall palms (?), asses, camels, cattle
55. and sheep, a great present.
56. The men of the city KHIRIMME, a rebellious enemy,
57. I cast down with arms, I left not one alive,
58. their corpses I bound on stakes
59. and placed them round the city. That district
60. I took anew. 1 steer, 10 rams,
61. 10 measures⁷ of wine, 20 measures of dates, their
first fruits,
62. for the gods of ASSYRIA, my lords, I established
for ever.

¹ Mod. *Niffer*, in Southern Babylonia.

² See Delitzsch, *Paradies*, pp. 218, 219.

³ Cutha in 2. Kings xvii. 24, 30. Now Tel Ibrahim.

⁴ Biblical Pekod (Jeremiah l. 21).

⁵ The numbers given in parentheses are not found in the Taylor cylinder, but appear in various duplicate fragments.

⁶ After "sheep" in Taylor cylinder, "without number."

⁷ *Imeri*, i.e. "donkey-loads," the original meaning of the word *homer*.

63. In my second campaign ASSUR, my lord, gave me confidence.
64. Against the land of the COSSÆANS,¹ and the land of the YASUBIGALLAI,
65. who in former times to the kings my forefathers
66. had not submitted, I marched. Over high wooded mountains,
67. a rough country, I went on horseback.
68. I brought up the chariot of my feet, with ropes.
69. A steep place I climbed like a wild bull.
70. BIT-KILAMZAKH, KHardishpi, BIT-KUBATTI
71. his cities, powerful fortresses, I besieged and captured.
72. Men, horses, mules, asses,
73. cattle and sheep from them
74. I brought forth, and counted as spoil; but their small cities,
75. without number, I destroyed, wasted, and made like fields;
76. the tents, their dwelling places, I burned with fire,
77. I reduced to ashes. I made that city BIT-KILAMZAKH
78. into a fortress, stronger than before
79. I made its walls; the people of the countries,
80. the possession of my hands,² I made to dwell therein.
81. The people of the land of the COSSÆANS, and of the land of YASUBIGALLA,
82. who had fled before my arms,

COLUMN II

1. from the mountains I made them descend,
2. in KHardishpi [and] BIT-KUBATTI I made them settle;
3. in the hands of my deputy, the governor of ARRAPHKA,³
4. I placed them; a tablet I caused to be prepared;

¹ *Kasshi*. They lived in the mountains on the east of Babylonia.

² *Kishitti kataya*, *Kishitti*, from *kashadu*, hence something that is "taken" by force, later a "possession."

³ Hence the classical name of the district of Arrapakhitis, on the Upper Zab; now Albak.

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