

Sennacherib, king of Assyria (705-681 BCE)

The Rassam Prism Inscription (Iyar 700 BCE; a half year or so after the end of hostilities described here)

Compare with 2 Kings 18:13b-16 (A); 18:17-19:9:a, 36 (B₁); and 19:9b-35 (B₂), with v. 37 as a final editorial gloss.

In my third campaign, I marched against Hatti (i.e., Upper Syria). The awesome splendor of my lordship overwhelmed Lulli, king of Sidon, and he fled overseas far off. The terrifying nature of the weapon of (the god) Ashur my lord overwhelmed his strong cities, Greater Sidon, Lower Sidon, Bit-zitti, Sariptu, Mahaliba, Ushu, Akzib, Akko, walled cities (provided) with food and water for his garrisons, and they bowed in submission at my feet. I installed Tuba’lu on the royal throne over them and imposed upon him tribute and dues for my lordship (payable) annually without interruption.

The kings of Amurru (i.e., the West), all of them – Minuhimmu of Samsimuruna, Tuba’lu of Sidon, Abdili’ti of Arvad, Urumilki of Byblos, Mitini of Ashdod, Puduilu of Beth-Ammon, Chemosh-nadbi of Moab, Ayarammu of Edom – brought me sumptuous presents as their abundant audience-gift, fourfold, and kissed my feet.

As for Sidqa, king of Askalon, who had not submitted to my yoke – his family gods, he himself, his wife, his sons, his daughters, his brothers, and (all the rest of) his descendants, I deported and brought him to Assyria. I set Sharruludari, son of Rukubti, their former king, over the people of Ashkelon and imposed upon him payment of tribute (and) presents to my lordship; he (now) bears my yoke. In the course of my campaign, I surrounded and conquered Beth-Dagon, Joppa, Bene-berak, Azor, cities belong to Sidqa, who did not submit quickly, and I carried off their spoil.

The officials, the nobles, and the people of Ekron, who had thrown Padi, their king, (who was) under oath and obligation to Assyria, into iron fetters and handed him over in a hostile manner to **Hezekiah, the Judean**, took fright because of the offense they had committed. The kings of Egypt, (and) the bowmen, chariot corps and cavalry of the kings of Ethiopia assembled a countless force and came to their (i.e., the Ekronites’) aid. In the plain of Eltekeh, they drew up their ranks against me and sharpened their weapons. Trusting in the god Ashur, my lord, I fought with them and inflicted a defeat upon them. The Egyptian charioteers and princes, together with the charioteers of the Ethiopians, I personally took alive

in the midst of the battle. I besieged and conquered Eltekeh and Timnah and carried off their spoil. I advanced to Ekron and slew its officials and nobles who had stirred up rebellion and hung their bodies on watchtowers all about the city. The citizens who committed sinful acts I counted as spoil, and I ordered the release of the rest of them, who had not sinned. **I freed Padi, their king, from Jerusalem** and set him on the throne as king over them and imposed tribute for my lordship over him.

As for Hezekiah, the Judean, I besieged 46 of his fortified walled cities and surrounding smaller towns, which were without number. Using packed-down ramps and applying battering rams, infantry, attacks by mines, breeches, and siege machines, I conquered (them). I took out 200,150 people, young and old, male and female, horses, mules, donkeys, camels, cattle, and sheep, without number, and counted them as spoil. **He himself, I locked up within Jerusalem, his royal city, like a bird in a cage. I surrounded him with earthworks, and made it unthinkable (literally: “taboo”) for him to exit by the city gate.** His cities which I had despoiled I cut off from his land and gave them to Mitini, king of Ashdod, Padi, king of Ekron, and Silli-bel, king of Gaza, and thus diminished his land. I imposed dues and gifts for my lordship upon him, in addition to the former tribute, their yearly payment.

He, Hezekiah, was overwhelmed by the awesome splendor of my lordship, and he sent me after my departure to Nineveh, my royal city, his elite troops (and) his best soldiers, which he had brought in as reinforcements to strengthen Jerusalem, with 30 talents of gold, 800 talents of silver, choice antimony, large blocks of carnelian, beds (inlaid) with ivory, armchairs (inlaid) with ivory, elephant hides, ivory, ebony-wood, boxwood, multicolored garments, garments of linen, wool (dyed) red-purple, and blue-purple, vessels of copper, iron, bronze and tin, chariots, siege shields, lances, armor, daggers for the belt, bows and arrows, countless trappings and implements of war, together with his daughters, his palace women, his male and female singers. He (also) dispatched his messenger to deliver the tribute and to do obeisance.

Hezekiah of Jerusalem, Judah

Sennacherib of Nineveh, Assyria

Tartan the Viceroy

Rab-saris-Chief Eunuch

Rab-Saqe-Chief Butler

Tirhakah of Egypt/Ethiopia

Esarhaddon of Assyria