



## Notices of Paliestine in the Cuneiform Inscriptions

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tent of the congregation on Mount Gerizim, in the thirteenth year of the government of the children of Israel in the land of Canaan, with its boundaries round about. I thank the Lord."

The "fire-tried" MS. has no acrostic, but a note at the end of Genesis: "This holy Torah has been established by a wise, valiant, and great daughter" (?) "a good, precious, and intelligent leader, and by a master of all knowledge, from Shelomo son of Saba, a valiant man, a leader of the congregation, and an instructor of his generation, as well by his knowledge as by his intelligence; he was a benefactor and an interpreter of the Torah and a father of blessings; he was of the sons of Nun—may the Lord be gracious to them—and it was appointed to be a thing dedicated to the Lord, that men should read therein with fear and prayer in the house of the High Priest on the tenth day of the seventh month, and this was performed in my presence, and I am Ithamar, son of Aaron, son of Ithamar, the High Priest. May the Lord renew his strength. Amen." Thus far Dr. Kraus.

The MS. was obtained by Mrs. Ducat's late husband in the payment of a bad debt. Owing to the exaggerated price (£1,000) asked for it when brought to England a few years ago it has never been sold. It could now be purchased probably for about £200.

The survey is proceeding most satisfactorily, and in about another month we hope to begin measuring the second base-line on the plain of Esdraelon.

The other day we came across a volcanic outbreak which, as far as I am aware, has never been noticed. It appears beneath and west of Shaykh Iskander, a prominent tomb some nine miles W.N.W. of Jenin. Here I found volcanic clay, nodules of hard black basalt in beds of friable brownish-grey syenite (?). This accounted for the waterworn appearance so often assumed by basaltic boulders, and which had long puzzled me. The character of the superincumbent limestone seemed somewhat changed in places both in colour and texture.

For some distance to the south of this outbreak is a district covered with dense brushwood of *sindian* and *ballut* (*Quercus coccifera* and *Q. pseudococc*), of the *Arbutus andrachne*—locally *kykab*—mixed with a few trees of *kharrub* or locust. To the north, and extending as far as Carmel, is an arid uninhabited waste, treeless and waterless, rugged and pathless, covering perhaps some sixty or seventy square miles, which will take us a month to survey, and we shall doubtless feel glad when it is finished.

## NOTICES OF PALESTINE IN THE CUNEIFORM INSCRIPTIONS.

BY GEORGE SMITH.

THE Assyrian cuneiform inscriptions contain some of the most remarkable illustrations of biblical history and geography. During most of the period of the Jewish monarchs, the Assyrians were in direct com-

munication with Palestine; their armies traversed the country, and they conquered and took tribute from many of the kings so well known to us from the Bible narrative.

The earliest monarch whose inscriptions describe any Syrian conquests is Sargon, king of Agane, who reigned at least as early as the sixteenth century B.C.

Sargon, after making other conquests in Elam and Syria, started from his capital, Agane, which was situated near Sippara (the Sepharvaim of Scripture), and advanced to the Mediterranean Sea, on the shore of which he set up a monument to celebrate his victories. Sargon gives a curious account of his own history; according to which his mother, after his birth, placed him in an ark made of rushes and bitumen, and set it afloat on the River Euphrates. In this story there are several points of resemblance to the history of the infancy of Moses.

For several centuries after the expedition of Sargon, we know of no campaigns in Syria; but in the time of Tiglath Pileser I., *cir.* B.C. 1120, the Assyrian arms were carried across the Euphrates, and as far as Palestine. Tiglath Pileser reigned about the time of Eli, Judge of Israel. He defeated some tribes of Hittites, and captured the city of Carchemish; after which he advanced with his army to the slopes of Lebanon, and embarking in a ship of Arvad, killed a dolphin or porpoise in the Mediterranean Sea. The Assyrian empire at this time extended from near Babylon to the Mediterranean, and appeared likely soon to absorb the whole of Palestine; but the Syrians threw off the yoke of Assyria, and an Aramean monarch defeated the Assyrians about 1050 B.C., and drove them again across the Euphrates.

The defeat of Assyria left room for the growth of the power of the Israelites, under the rule of David and Solomon; and the Assyrian empire did not revive until after the death of Solomon, and the breaking up of his dominion.

The career of Assyrian conquest recommenced with Vul-nirari, who ascended the throne B.C. 912. His son Tiglath Ninip, B.C. 890, conquered Naharain; and the next monarch, Assur-nazir-pal, who began his reign B.C. 884, once more crossed the Euphrates.

About B.C. 870, Assur-nazir-pal marched into Syria; he crossed the Euphrates near the city of Carchemish, and Sagara, king of Carchemish, gave him tribute. Passing numerous kingdoms on his way, he then marched to Lebanon, and crossed the Orontes. Here he built a fortress and established an Assyrian garrison. Then skirting the foot of Lebanon he marched to the sea-coast and received presents from Tyre, Zidon, Gebal, Arvad, and other Phœnician cities. No permanent conquest was effected in this expedition, and Assur-nazir-pal died B.C. 859, and was succeeded by his son, Shalmaneser II., who made vigorous efforts to subdue Syria and Palestine.

After five years of war, having conquered all the intermediate countries, Shalmaneser in B.C. 854 advanced into Hamath, ravaging the country and destroying the towns. His advance was interrupted by

the forces of a league of kings of Syria and Palestine, under the leadership of Ben Hadad of Damascus. The army of the confederates was made up as follows:—

2,400 chariots and 20,000 footmen of Ben Hadad of Damascus; 1,400 chariots and 10,000 footmen of Irhulena of Hamath; 2,000 chariots and 10,000 footmen of Ahab of Israel; 500 footmen of the tribe of Goim; 1,000 Egyptian troops; 10 chariots and 10,000 footmen of Irqanata; 200 footmen of Matinu-bahal of Arvad; 200 footmen of Usanata; 30 chariots and 10,000 footmen of Adonibahal of Sizana; 1,000 camels of Gindibuh the Arabian; 10,000 (?) footmen of Baasha, son of Rechab the Ammonite.

Including the charioteers, the whole number of the confederate forces probably amounted to about 85,000 men.

A battle took place on the banks of the Orontes, in which Shalmaneser claims the victory; but the engagement stopped the Assyrian advance, and Shalmaneser returned to Nineveh.

Four years later, B.C. 850, Shalmaneser again advanced against Ben Hadad and his allies, and another indecisive battle took place. The next year, B.C. 849, the war was continued, and in the battle which followed the confederates were defeated with the loss of 10,000 men. This engagement did not open Palestine to Shalmaneser, any more than the others, and in B.C. 846 the Assyrian monarch made a more determined effort; and, raising the whole strength of Assyria, he crossed the Euphrates at the head of 120,000 men. Again he defeated Ben Hadad, but such was the strength of the league that he gained no advantage from his victory.

After this expedition the Syrian league was dissolved. Ben Hadad died, and was succeeded by Hazael. Other changes also had taken place in Palestine: Moab was independent of Israel; and the family of Ahab had been destroyed by Jehu, who now occupied the throne of Israel.

Shalmaneser now renewed his attack, and in B.C. 842 marched against Hazael, king of Damascus. The Syrian monarch posted his troops in a strong position on the mountains of Saniru (the Shenir of the Bible?) in Lebanon, and here he sustained a decisive defeat at the hands of Shalmaneser, 16,000 of the Syrian troops falling in the battle, while 1,591 chariots were captured by the Assyrians. Hazael fled from the battle-field with the wreck of his army, and shut himself up in his capital, Damascus, where he was followed and closely besieged by the Assyrians.

After wasting the neighbourhood, and cutting down the forests for use in the siege, Shalmaneser, unable to take the city, turned into the Hauran and wasted it with fire and sword. Afterwards he marched to the coast of the Mediterranean, to a place called Bahlirahsi, and set up a stele to commemorate his victories. Jehu, who is called "son of Omri," and the King of Tyre and Zidon, now gave tribute to the conqueror.

Three years later Shalmaneser again invaded Syria, but Hazael did not meet him in the open field. This time the Assyrians besieged and captured four cities of Hazael, and received tribute from the kings of Tyre, Zidon, and Gebal. Damascus, however, was not taken, and no road was yet open into Palestine.

The army of Shalmaneser was afterwards in Syria on the Orontes, but no further attempt was made against Damascus, and Shalmaneser died B.C. 823, and was succeeded by his son Samas-vul. Samas-vul carried on war principally in Naharain and Babylonia, and left his crown in B.C. 810 to his son Vul-nirari.

Vul-nirari III., who reigned twenty-nine years, made several expeditions to Syria and Palestine. In one of these he marched against Mariha, king of Damascus, and the Syrian monarch, overcome by fear, admitted him within the walls of the city, and made his submission to Vul-nirari; he likewise paid on the order of the conqueror 2,300 talents of silver, 20 talents of gold, 3,000 talents of copper, 5,000 talents of iron, and various articles of value. The occupation of Damascus by the Assyrians, for the first time opened Palestine to their inroads, and now Vul-nirari received tribute from the land of Omri (Israel), Philistia, and Edom.

Vul-nirari was succeeded in B.C. 781 by Shalmaneser III., who made two expeditions to Syria, one in B.C. 773, to Damascus, and another in the next year, B.C. 772, to Hadrach. No details of these expeditions have been discovered.

On the death of Shalmaneser, Assur-dan III. succeeded in B.C. 771. This monarch marched to Hadrach in B.C. 765 and 755, and to Arpad in B.C. 754, but the details of these expeditions are not known.

Assur-dan was succeeded by Assur-nirari in B.C. 754. Under this king the Assyrian power declined, and his reign was ended by a revolution in B.C. 745, which placed Tiglath Pileser II. on the throne. Tiglath Pileser soon revived the ancient glory of Assyria; he marched to Arpad in B.C. 743, and entering the city after a conflict with the Syrian forces, he received the submission of several of the kings of that region. The king of Syria at that time was Rezin, who is so often mentioned in the books of Kings and Isaiah. A heavy tribute was imposed on Rezin and upon the kings of Tyre, Hamath, and other cities. The next year the Syrians revolted, and Tiglath Pileser marched to Arpad, which he besieged for three years, B.C. 742 to 740, and on the capture of Arpad he advanced against Hamath. The people of Hamath obtained the assistance of Azariah, king of Judah, who sent a force to help them. This army was routed by Tiglath Pileser, who then overran most of Hamath, and annexed a large portion of it to Assyria. During his stay in Syria, Tiglath Pileser received tribute from Menahem, king of Samaria, and the expedition returned to Assyria in B.C. 738.

The Assyrian annals mention another expedition to Palestine by Tiglath Pileser in B.C. 734. The inscriptions of this period are imperfect, but this war appears to correspond with that mentioned in the second

book of Kings and Isaiah, when King Ahaz, pressed by Rezin and Pekah, sent to Tiglath Pileser to help him. The commencement of the expedition in the Assyrian account has not been found: the fragments of that record begin with the battle between the forces of Rezin, king of Damascus, and Tiglath Pileser. In this engagement the Syrians were routed, and Rezin fled to Damascus. The Assyrian monarch then ravaged Syria, and laid siege to Damascus with part of his force, while with the rest he marched into the land of Israel. Here he captured and spoiled the cities, carrying the people into captivity. From Israel Tiglath Pileser marched to Philistia. He attacked Askelon, but Mitinti, king of Askelon, who had rebelled, died, and his successor, Rukipti, submitted to Tiglath Pileser. The next place attacked was Gaza. Hanun, the king, fled into Egypt, and Gaza was captured and spoiled. Hanun then came and submitted to Tiglath Pileser. The Assyrians afterwards subdued Samsi, queen of Arabia, and various other princes and tribes, and the war was ended with the capture of Damascus in B.C. 732. Among the tributaries at the close of this campaign occurs the name of Yahuhazi (Ahaz) of Judah. One other event in Palestine is recorded in this reign. Tiglath Pileser states that on the death of Pekah, king of Israel, he established his successor Hoshea on the throne.

On the death of Tiglath Pileser, king of Assyria, B.C. 727, he was succeeded by Shalmaneser IV., who is mentioned in the second book of Kings; but the annals of this monarch have not been discovered, so we have not got the Assyrian version of his relations with Hoshea.

In the year B.C. 722 there was another revolution in Assyria, and Sargon ascended the throne. Samaria having revolted, he, at the beginning of his reign, besieged and captured that city, carrying away captive 27,290 people, and putting an end to the kingdom of Israel. He afterwards, in B.C. 720, crushed a rebellion in Hamath which had spread to Israel and Damascus. In the same year, advancing to the south of Palestine, he subdued the Philistines and Judah, and defeated Sabako of Egypt and Hanun of Gaza at the city of Raphia, where Hanun fell alive into his hand and was carried to Assyria.

Afterwards Sargon, in B.C. 715, received tribute from Pharaoh of Egypt, Samsi, queen of Arabia, and Ithamar the Sabea, and he transported some of the Thamudites and other rebellious Arab tribes into the cities of Samaria.

In B.C. 711 Sargon was again in Palestine. The people of Ashdod had revolted under Azuri, their king, and were subdued by Sargon in one of his earlier campaigns. Sargon placed Ahimiti, a brother of Azuri, on the throne, but the people of Ashdod revolted against him, and raised a man named Yavan to the throne. Yavan sent to Pharaoh of Egypt and other kings in the neighbourhood to make alliance against Assyria. Egypt at this time well merited the denunciations of Isaiah, for Sargon tells us that after encouraging the others

in their revolt, Pharaoh gave them no help when the Assyrians advanced against Palestine.

In B.C. 711 Sargon marched against Philistia and Judea, but Yavan fled into Egypt on the advance of the Assyrians, and Ashdod and Gimzo were captured and his country subdued. Pharaoh now crowned his treachery by delivering Yavan bound into the hands of Sargon.

Sargon died B.C. 705, and was succeeded by Sennacherib, one of his younger sons. Hezekiah, king of Judah, had revolted against Assyria and attacked the Philistine cities. Sennacherib, in B.C. 701, marched against him. On his way he first attacked Lulia of Zidon, who fled to Cyprus. Sennacherib then took in succession the greater and lesser Zidon, Zarephath, Hosah, Achzib, Accho, and other cities, and placed Tubal on the throne of Zidon. Most of the kings of Palestine now submitted. Their names given by Sennacherib are—Menahem of Samaria; Tubahal of Zidon; Abdalihiti of Arvad; Urumelek of Gebal; Metinti of Ashdod; Buduil of Beth-Ammon; Kemosh-natbi of Moab; Airammu of Edom.

From Phœnicia, Sennacherib advanced to Philistia, where Zidqa, king of Askelon, refused to submit. He deposed Zidqa, and carried him and his family into captivity, placing on the throne Sar-ludari, son of Rukibtî, the former king. Beth Dagon, Joppa, Bene Berak, and Azor, which would not yield, were stormed and plundered.

Sennacherib next marched against Ekron, the people of which had submitted to Hezekiah, and had delivered their king Padi into his hands. Ekron was taken and spoiled, and Padi later recovered from Jerusalem and again seated on the throne. The kings of Egypt and Ethiopia having sent an army against Sennacherib, he defeated them at Eltekeh, and spoiled Eltekeh and Timnah.

The Assyrian monarch then gives an account of his attack on Hezekiah, king of Judah. He captured forty-six of the fenced cities of Judah, including Lachish, and there is a series of slabs from the wall of one of the halls of his palace, on which is depicted the storming of this city, while Sennacherib is represented sitting on a throne in the vicinity of Lachish, and receiving the prisoners and spoil. Hezekiah he shut up in Jerusalem, and built towers round the city to prevent his escape. Hezekiah then submitted and gave to Sennacherib 30 talents of gold and 800 talents of silver, besides many rich presents. Sennacherib, in the course of this war, despoiled Judah of considerable portions of its territory and gave it to the kings of Ashdod, Ekron, Askelon, and Gaza. The Assyrian annals have not yielded any trace of the disaster which overtook Sennacherib's army, and he continued his career of conquest for several years after this campaign. Late in his reign, probably about B.C. 688, he made another expedition to Palestine; but the details of this war are most of them lost by the mutilation of the tablet recording it. Sennacherib, in this expedition, penetrated into Arabia and stormed the city of Edom. He carried

captivity the Queen of Arabia and the gods of the country, and returned to Assyria in triumph.

In the year B.C. 681 Sennacherib was murdered by two of his sons, and after a contest for the empire, Esar-haddon, a younger son, ascended the throne B.C. 680. When he had arranged the affairs of Babylon, Esar-haddon marched to Palestine, where Abdi Milkutti, king of Zidon, was in revolt. He captured and destroyed the city of Zidon, and then gathered the kings of Palestine and Cyprus who were subject to him. The rulers of Palestine were—

Bahal, king of Tyre; Manasseh, king of Judah; Kemosh-gabri, king of Edom; Muzuri, king of Moab; Zilli-bel, king of Gaza; Mitinti, king of Askelon; Itusamsu, king of Ekron; Melek-asaph, king of Gebal; Kulubahal, king of Arvad; Abibahal, king of Samaria; Puduil, king of Beth Ammon; Numelek, king of Ashdod.

Esar-haddon afterwards passed through Palestine on several occasions, but there are no details of any interest respecting these expeditions.

Esar-haddon appointed his son Assurbanipal king of Assyria in B.C. 668, and soon after died. Assurbanipal, who was the Sardanapalus of the Greeks, directed his first expedition against Egypt, and on his way received tribute from the kings of Palestine who had formerly submitted to his father.

After his second conquest of Egypt, Assurbanipal besieged Bahal, king of Tyre, who had revolted, and the Tyrians, after a long blockade, submitted. Yakinlu, king of Arvad, then gave tribute, but Assurbanipal afterwards deposed him, and placed his eldest son Azibahal on his throne.

During the troubles of the rebellion of Saul-mugina in Babylon, B.C. 651—648, the Arabs under Vahta invaded Palestine and overran Edom, Ammon, the Hauran, Moab, Zobah, and other places. From most of these they were driven out by the forces of Assurbanipal, and a portion of the Arab army under Ammuladin, king of Kedar, was defeated by Kemosh-halta, king of Moab, who sent Ammuladin in chains to Nineveh. In order to chastise the Arabs for their incursions, Assurbanipal sent an expedition to Arabia and made Damascus the basis of his operations. He afterwards punished the cities of Accho and Hosah on the coast of Palestine for revolting against Assyria. These events, which happened about B.C. 640, are the last referring to Palestine given in the Assyrian annals; but many portions of Assyrian history are still unknown to us, and when renewed excavations have supplied the rest of the Assyrian records, we may hope to have much more information on the geography and history of Palestine.

## THE HAMATH INSCRIPTIONS.

TO THE SECRETARY OF THE PALESTINE EXPLORATION FUND.

*Esher, Surrey.*

DEAR SIR,—In answer to your request for some brief explanation of the three remarkable inscriptions which appear in your present number,

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