

It is therefore clear that the account includes a good historical reminiscence along with anachronisms and legendary or novelistic elements resulting from changes in the course of the time until the final writing. The historian must try here to separate the straw from the wheat just as far as it may be possible. In view of the state of our knowledge of the events that preceded and were contemporary with the time of Hezekiah and before, ^{the need} ~~it~~ can hardly be completely fulfilled today. We will probably not even be able to succeed after we find new sources. We cannot ~~must not~~ entirely exclude what they say especially since the Assyrian sources must be examined extremely carefully on account of their propagandastic coloring and ^{certainly} cannot be considered to have simply been written down with a few slight retouchings.

If then the account of Sennacherib's attempts through propaganda to the dwellers of Jerusalem and the threatening letter to Hezekiah to secure the capitulation of Jerusalem, this in its kernel rests on old sources. It is then hardly reasonable to consider the account of the wonderful deliverance of Jerusalem in 2 Ki.19:13f. also as being entirely legendary and therefore worthless for the historian. Naturally the statement that a pestilence sent by the Lord killed 185000 Assyrians in a single night will not be accepted as it stands by any historian. It is in fact very unlikely that the entire Assyrian army including ~~XXXX~~ camp followers was as large as 200,000 ^{men. How} ~~not~~ would such a tremendous number of men be fed on the march and in Palestine? Also for an expedition against the small states of Syria and ~~XXXXXX~~ Palestine so great an army would certainly not be necessary. However, if someone wishes on account of this number to conclude that the whole account is a late legend, he should be reminded that according to our system of numbering counting by sixes was much used in the accounts of the Assyrians and also in those of the Old Testament. We noticed