

Assyria

Sennacherib 704-681

Ahaz

Reigned 16 yrs. (2 Ki. 16:2; 2 Chs. 28:1a). The figure of 16 yrs. is questioned. Evidence of Assyrian inscriptions seems to indicate that Ahaz was on the throne of Judah by ca. 734, and a terminal date for his reign would appear to be fixed by the yr. of Hezekiah's accession (ca. 715). Thus the reign must have lasted 20 yrs. Confusion may have arisen because of his age when he became king, or perhaps on account of the 16 yrs. assigned to his father.

Hezekiah

The date of his accession seems to be fixed by Sennacherib's campaign in 701, which took place in the 14th yr. of King Hezekiah (2 Ki. 18:13). The terminal date of his reign must be after the accession of Tirhakah (Taharqa), mentioned in 2 Ki. 19:9. Egyptian sources indicate that Tirhakah became king ca. 689. . . .

Sennacherib(705 - 681 B.C.) see Hezekiah(Vol. II, 599-600)

In 701 Sennacherib invaded Palestine and in an extensive campaign put down the rebellion. . . . Then Sennacherib turned against the fortified cities of Judah and seized them (2 Ki. 18:13). . . . Sennacherib's famous reliefs depict the siege of Lachish and the captives passing before the king. The exact sequence of events is not clear. While the seige of Lachish was still in progress, Hezekiah sent a message to Sennacherib, offering to surrender and promising to pay whatever tribute was imposed upon him (vs. 14a.). . . The Assurian king demanded an enormous tribute of 300 talents of silver and thirty of gold (vs. 14b). The Assyrian records contain an even larger figure -- 800 talents of silver.

2 Ki. 18:17-19:37 raises many difficult problems. Hezekiah had already submitted, but these verses tell of still further demands made by Sennacherib, calling for complete surrender. Further, they seem to consist of parallel accounts - 18:17-19:7; 19:8-37. Their historicity is open to question. It is possible that during the siege of Lachish, which Sennacherib had difficulty in capturing, he sent part of his army under Rabshakeh to Jerusalem in order to pin down Hezekiah's forces. The city was besieged but not captured. . . . As against the hypothesis of one campaign carried out by Sennacherib against Hezekiah, it seems preferable to adopt the hypothesis of two campaigns and to assume a second Assyrian invasion of Palestine between 689 and 686, the year of Hezekiah's death. . . . It would appear that considerable confusion arose regarding Sennacherib's activities in Palestine, and the accounts of two originally separate campaigns were telescoped into one.