

## The First Campaign of Sennacherib Translation – (Transcription)

\*The Assyrian Text by Sidney Smith, M.A., Assistant in the Department of Egyptian and Assyrian Antiquities, British Museum. The first campaign of Sennacherib Cylinder 113203

Sennacherib, the great king, the mighty king, the king of Assyria, the king without compeer, the shepherd who offers up prayers, who worships the great gods, who maintains honesty, loves righteousness, lends aid (to those in need), affords help to those in want, and renders favors, the perfect hero, the valiant male, pre-eminent among all kings, the mighty one who consumes the disobedient with fire and smites the enemy with lightning (am I).

Ashur, the mighty rock, bestowed a kingship without compare, and magnified my arms over all those who dwell in princely palaces. At the beginning of my reign, when I took my seat upon the throne with majesty, and sent the young men of Assyria, before me, with prayers and supplication.

Marduk-apal-iddin, king of Babylonia, the froward, the plotter of rebellion, the worker of wickedness, whom fear caused not to tremble, appealed to Shutur-Nahudu the Elamite, and bestowed gold, silver and precious stones upon him, and his abounding wealth,....

Imbappa, the tartan of Elam,...Tannanu, the second charioteer, ten commanders, together with Nergal-nasir the Sutean, the fearless in battle, 80,000 bowmen...horses with them, he (Shutar-Nahudu) sent to Shumer and Akkad to his help. And (he)...Ur, Eridu, Kullab, Kissik, Nimid-Laguda, (Bit-Yakin, Bit-Amukkani, Bit-Sa'alli), Bit-Dakkuri, all the Chaldeans of every tribe.

Who (dwell) on the bank of (the salt lake), the Tu'muna, the Rihihu, the Ubulu, the Yadaaku, the Kiprie, the Malihu who (dwell) on the bank of the Tigris, the Gurumu, the Ubulu, the Damunu, the Gambulu, the Hindaru, the Ru'ua, the Pukudu who (dwell) on the bank of the Karkhah, the Hamranu, the Hagaranu, the Nabatu, the Li'tau, Arameans who are not submissive, who take no heed of death.

Nippur,...Borsippam Kuthah, all the land of Babylonia he assembled together, he equipped for battle. To me, Sennacherib, whose courage is exalted, they reported his ill deeds, and I was grievously wroth, I ordered a march to Babylon to meet him.

That fellow, the prop of evil devils, heard of the setting out of my expedition, and the horse and bowmen of Elan, Aram and Chaldea under Nergal-nasir and the ten commanders of Elam, who take no heed of death, forces innumerable under them he dispatched as reinforcements, their battalions he (ordered) to enter Kuthah all together, and to keep a mighty onslaught in waiting for the approach of my expedition.

I had my teams harnessed, on the 20<sup>th</sup> of Shebat, I set out from the city of Ashur, like a wild bull of great strength I took post at the head of my soldiers, I did not suffer the leading file of my host to linger, and I did not take a pace backwards.

My chief officers and my district governors I dispatched on the road to Kish in advance of me, to take the road to Marduk-apal-iddin and to advance to form a strong guard.

That fellow saw my district governors, and sallied out of the gate of Illbaba with all his forces, and did battle with my captains in the neighborhoods of Kish.

As for my captains, the onslaught of the enemy in battle bore heavily upon them, and they could not prevail against him; they sent their couriers to me in the neighborhood of Kuthah.

In the anger of my heart I made an assault on Kuthah, and slaughtered the light troops about its wall with fire, and took the city. The horse and bowmen of Elan, Aram and Chaldea, the commanders of the king of Elam and Nergal-nasir together with the citizens who were chiefs of the rebels I had surrendered to me and counted as booty.

I was exceeding wroth and raged like a windstorm; along with my warriors, who gave no quarter, I set my face towards Kish, against Marduk-apal-iddin.

But he, the worker of wickedness saw the approach of my expedition from afar, and terror fell upon him. He left all his troops, and fled to the district of Guzumman.

Tannanu with the troops of Elam, Chaldea, and Aram, those who had espoused his cause and those who had been sent to his support, I defeated them and smashed his forces.

Adinu, the son of Marduk-apal-iddin's wife, and Baskanu, the brother of Yati'e, the queen of the Aribi, together with their troops I took prisoners alive.

I took possession of the chariots, wagons, horses, mules, asses, camels and two-humped dromedaries which had been abandoned in the fight.

With a joyful heart and a bright face I hastened to Babylon, and entered the palace of Marduk-apal-iddin, to take charge of his goods and property.

I opened his treasure-house, gold silver, gear of gold and silver, precious stones, beds, thrones, litters, his royal pavilion, the plating whereof is of gold and silver, goods and property of every kinds, beyond reckoning, a colossal treasure, his Consort, his wives, his concubines, the chief throne-bearers, the courtiers, the musicians male and female, the slaves of the palace, who rejoiced his princely understanding, all the craftsmen of every kind, who served in his palace, I had surrendered to me, and counted as booty.

I hastened to dispatch my light troops after him to the district of Guzumman into the district of swamps and marshes; and five days they searched for him, but no trace of him was found.

The remnant of the horse and of his infantry, who had forsaken the camp, fed like hinds from him and did not accompany him. I gathered them together from out of valley and hill.

In the course of my expedition the cities of Bit-Dakkuri, in all 33 fortified walled cities with 250 hamlets within their borders; the cities of Bit-Sa'alli, in all 8 fortified walled cities, with 120 hamlets within their borders; the cities of Bit-Amukkani, in all 39 fortified walled cities with 350 hamlets within their borders; the cities of Bit-Yakiu, in all 8 fortified walled cities with 100 hamlets within their borders; a total of 88 fortified walled cities of Chaldea with 820 hamlets within their borders; I besieged and took, I carried away their spoil.

The corn and dates which were in their plantations, their harvest in the fields I ordered my troops to eat; (the towns) I plundered, I sacked, I turned into forgotten tells.

The Arabians, Arameans and Chaldeans who were in Erech, Nippur, Kish and Harsagkamma, together with the citizens who led the insurrection, I had surrendered, and counted as booty.

The corn and dates which were in their plantations, the gardens of their houses, the harvest of the field... I ordered my troops to eat.

Bel-ibni, a son of the chief builder, a scion of Babylon, who had grown up in my palace like a young hound, I set up over them as king of Shumer and Akkad.

On my march back, the Tu'muna, the Rihihu, the Yadaaku, the Ubudu, the Kiprie, the Malihu, the Gurumu, the Ubulu, the Damunu, the Gambulu, the Hindaru, the Ru'ua, the Pukudu, the Hamranu, the Hagaranu, the Nabatu, the Li'tan, Arameans who were not subject, I conquered all together, and I carried off their spoil.

In the course of my expedition, I received the heavy tribute of Nabu-bel-shumate, the governor of Hararti, (consisting of) gold, silver, great musikanni trees, asses, camels, oxen and sheep.

The fighting men of Hirimme, obstinate foes who from days of old paid no allegiance to the kings my fathers I slew by the sword, and not a soul remained.

That district I settled afresh; one ox, ten sheep, ten omers of sesame wine, twenty omers of dates, the finest kind thereof, as the sacrificial dues of the gods of Assyria, my lords, I laid on them for ever.

With the huge number of 208,000 prisoners, 7,200 horses and mules, 11,780 asses, 5,230 camels, 80,050 oxen, 800,100 sheep I returned to Assyria.

I appeared. My men took away the prisoners, asses, camels, oxen and sheep from...they acquired as their own property, and the fighting men of the foe who had been captured, those who had not submitted to my yoke, I slew by the sword and bound on stakes.

At that time the exalted city of Nineveh, beloved of Ishtar, wherein all the shrines of the gods and goddesses, a lasting foundation, an eternal site, whereof the design was fashioned of old in a many colored writing, and the construction thereof was resplendent, a beautiful place, the abode of the oracle, wherein are brought works of art of every kind, all the shrines, the treasures of ....

Where of old the kings who preceded me, my ancestors in days gone by exercised, the lordship of Assyria, and ordered the realm of Bel, and yearly, without intermission, received therein an unceasing revenue, the tribute of the kings of the four quarters of the world.

None among them had paid heed to the palace therein, the place that was a royal abode, whereof the site was straight, none had pondered thereon in his heart.

None had given his mind to straightening the city's streets, broadening the open places, digging canals and planting fruit-gardens none had directed his attention thereto:

I, Sennacherib, king of Assyria, cherished the intent to perform that work according to the will of the gods, and roused my spirit thereto.

Folk from Chaldea, Aram, Mannai, Kue and Cilicia who had not been submissive to my yoke I tore away (from their lands) and made them carry hods, and they baked bricks.

I gathered the sedge which (grows) in Chaldea, and the luxuriant reeds thereof I made the fighting men of the foe who were my prisoners bear for the completion of its construction.

The former palace, which was 30 GAR in length and 10 GAR in breadth, which the kings of my predecessors had built without adorning the construction thereof. The side thereof the river Tebiltu had washed from days of old so as to cause damage to its foundation and make it terrace sink.

That small palace I dug up in its entirety and altered the course of the Tebiltu and made its outflow straight (from the city).

In a propitious month, on a favorable day, in the hidden bed of the river for a space 60 long 30 GAR wide I secured great boulders, and I made ground to rise out of the waters and turned it into dry land.

That its foundation might not be weakened in the course of time by the mighty flood, I set huge blocks of alabaster round it as a wall and made it rubble strong.

I filled the terrace upon them to a height of 170 "tipki" and added it to the dimensions of the former palace, broadening its site.

Thereon I had a palace built for my royal dwelling, of ivory, "ushu" wood, "musukkanni" wood, cedar, cypress, pine and pistachio wood, the palace "incomparable."

Beams of cedar, the product of Mt. Amanus, which they hewed from distant hills with difficulty, I made to stretch across their supports.

On lofty doors of cypress, which were well cut for opening and revolving, I had bands of bright bronze fastened, and I fixed them in their gateways.

A colonnade like a Hittite palace, which they call in the Amorite tongue a "bit-hilani," I had made within the gates for my lordly pleasure.

Eight lions, open at the knee, in the posture of advance, which were cast of 11,400 talents of bright copper, the lord of the Strong Hand caused to be made, and they were very splendid.

And two pillars which were cast of 6,000 talents of burnished bronze, together with two great pillars of cedar I stood on drums, and I laid timbers to crown their gateways.

Four mountain sheep, colossi, of silver and bronze together with mountain sheep, colossi, of mighty boulders I skillfully constructed, and posted them to face the four winds, their passages I adorned.

Huge blocks of stone the enemy folk, my prisoners, dragged amidst them, I set the blocks round about as a wall for them, I made them pass for marvels.

A park resembling Mt. Amanus, wherein was every kind of vegetable, fruit-tree, and tree, the products of the hills and of Chaldea, I planted beside the palace.

I divided off a plot of ground forming the upper environs of the city; two PI in area, for the Ninevites, that they might plant fruit gardens, and put it into their charge.

That the fields might be luxuriant I broke up hill and plain from the boundary of the city Kisiri to the environs of Nineveh with iron axes, and I made a canal to flow there.

I made flowing water to run from the midst of the Husur for a distance of 3 "biru" I distributed the water in those fruit gardens by means of canals.

After I had completed the work on my lordly palace, broadened the open places and the midmost parts, had built streets and made the city as bright as day, I summoned Ashur, the great lord, and the gods and goddesses who dwell in Assyria thereto, and I sacrificed multitudinous offerings of flesh, and presented my gifts.

In days that are to come may someone among the kings my descendants whom Asshur shall call unto the shepherdhood over land and people, when that palace has grown old and is falling down, repair its ruins, find the inscription with the writing of my name, anoint it with oil, offer sacrifices of flesh and return it to its place. Ashur shall hear prayers of such a one.