

(9) In the fourth year of King Hezekiah, which was the seventh year of King Hoshea son of Elah of Israel, King Shalmaneser of Assyria marched against Samaria and besieged it, (10) and he captured it at the end of three years. In the sixth year of Hezekiah, which was the ninth year of King Hoshea of Israel, Samaria was captured; (11) and the king of Assyria deported the Israelites to Assyria. He settled them in Halah, along the Habor [and] the River Gozan, and in the towns of Media. (12) [This happened] because they did not obey the LORD their G-d; they transgressed His covenant—all that Moses the servant of the LORD had commanded. They did not obey and they did not fulfill it. (13) In the fourteenth year of King Hezekiah, King Sennacherib of Assyria marched against all the fortified towns of Judah and seized them. (14) King Hezekiah sent this message to the king of Assyria at Lachish: “I have done wrong; withdraw from me; and I shall bear whatever you impose on me.” So the king of Assyria imposed upon King Hezekiah of Judah a payment of three hundred talents of silver and thirty talents of gold. (15) Hezekiah gave him all the silver that was on hand in the House of the LORD and in the treasuries of the palace. (16) At that time Hezekiah cut down the doors and the doorposts of the Temple of the LORD, which King Hezekiah had overlaid [with gold], and gave them to the king of Assyria. (17) But the king of Assyria sent the Tartan, the Rabsaris, and the Rabshakeh from Lachish with a large force to King Hezekiah in Jerusalem. They marched up to Jerusalem; and when they arrived, they took up a position near the conduit of the Upper Pool, by the road of the Fuller’s Field. (18) They summoned the king; and Eliakim son of Hilkiyah, who was in charge of the palace, Shebna the scribe, and Joah son of Asaph the recorder went out to them. (19) The Rabshakeh said to them, “You tell Hezekiah: Thus said the Great King, the King of Assyria: What makes you so confident? (20) You must think that mere talk is counsel and valor for war! Look, on whom are you relying, that you have rebelled against me? (21) You rely, of all things, on Egypt, that splintered reed of a staff, which enters and punctures the palm of anyone who leans on it! That’s what Pharaoh king of Egypt is like to all who rely on him. (22) And if you tell me that you are relying on the LORD your G-d, He is the very one whose shrines and altars Hezekiah did away with, telling Judah and Jerusalem, ‘You must worship only at this altar in Jerusalem.’ (23) Come now, make this wager with my master, the king of Assyria: I’ll give you two thousand horses if you can produce riders to mount them. (24) So how could you refuse anything even to the deputy of one of my master’s lesser servants, relying on Egypt for chariots and horsemen? (25) And do you think I have marched against this land to destroy it without the LORD? The LORD Himself told me: Go up against that land and destroy it.” (26) Eliakim son of Hilkiyah, Shebna, and Joah replied to the Rabshakeh, “Please, speak to your servants in Aramaic, for we understand it; do not speak to us in Judean in the hearing of the people on the wall.” (27) But the Rabshakeh answered them, “Was it to your master and to you that my master sent me to speak those words? It was precisely to the men who are sitting on the wall—who will have to eat their dung and drink their urine with you.” (28) And the Rabshakeh stood and called out in a loud voice in Judean: “Hear the words of the Great King, the King of Assyria. (29) Thus said the king: Don’t let Hezekiah deceive you, for he will not be able to deliver you from my hands. (30) Don’t let Hezekiah make you rely on the LORD, saying: The LORD will surely save us: this city will not fall into the hands of the king of Assyria. (31) Don’t listen to Hezekiah. For thus said the king of Assyria: Make your peace with me and come out to me, so that you may all eat from your vines and your fig trees and drink water from your cisterns, (32) until I come and take you away to a land like your own, a land of grain [fields] and vineyards, of bread and wine, of olive oil and honey, so that you may live and not die. Don’t listen to Hezekiah, who misleads you by saying, ‘The LORD will save us.’ (33) Did any of the gods of other nations save his land from the king of Assyria? (34) Where were the gods of Hamath and Arpad? Where were the gods of Sepharvaim, Hena, and Ivvah? [And] did they save Samaria from me? (35) Which among all the gods of [those] countries saved their countries from me, that the LORD should save Jerusalem from me?” (36) But the people were silent and did not say a word in reply; for the king’s order was: “Do not answer him.” (37) And so Eliakim son of Hilkiyah, who was in charge of the palace, Shebna the scribe, and Joah son of Asaph the recorder came to Hezekiah with their clothes rent, and they reported to him what the Rabshakeh had said.

4. II Kings 19

(1) When King Hezekiah heard this, he rent his clothes, and covered himself with sackcloth, and went into the House of the LORD. (2) He also sent Eliakim, who was in charge of the palace, Shebna the scribe, and the senior priests, covered with sackcloth, to the prophet Isaiah son of Amoz. (3) They said to him, “Thus said Hezekiah: This day is a day of distress, of chastisement, and of disgrace. The babes have reached the birthstool, but the strength to give birth is lacking. (4) Perhaps the LORD your G-d will take note of all the words of the Rabshakeh, whom his master the king of Assyria has sent to blaspheme the living G-d, and will mete out judgment for the words that the LORD your G-d has heard—if you will offer up prayer for the surviving remnant.” (5) When King Hezekiah’s ministers came to Isaiah, (6) Isaiah said to them, “Tell your master as follows: Thus said the LORD: Do not be frightened by the words of blasphemy against Me that you have heard from the minions of the king of Assyria. (7) I will delude him; he will hear a rumor and return to his land, and I will make him fall by the sword in his land... (32) Assuredly, thus said the LORD concerning the king of Assyria: He shall not enter this city: He shall not shoot an arrow at it, Or advance upon it with a shield, Or pile up a siege mound against it. (33) He shall go back By the way he came; He shall not enter this city —declares the LORD. (34) I will protect and save this city for My sake, And for the sake of My servant David.” (35) That night an angel of the LORD went out and struck down one hundred and eighty-five thousand in the Assyrian camp, and the following morning they were all dead corpses. (36) So King Sennacherib of Assyria

broke camp and retreated, and stayed in Nineveh. (37) While he was worshipping in the temple of his god Nisroch, his sons Adrammelech and Sarezer struck him down with the sword. They fled to the land of Ararat, and his son Esarhaddon succeeded him as king.

5. The Destruction of Sennacherib BY LORD BYRON (GEORGE GORDON)

The Assyrian came down like the wolf on the fold, / And his cohorts were gleaming in purple and gold; /
And the sheen of their spears was like stars on the sea, / When the blue wave rolls nightly on deep Galilee.
Like the leaves of the forest when Summer is green, / That host with their banners at sunset were seen:
Like the leaves of the forest when Autumn hath blown, / That host on the morrow lay withered and strown.
For the Angel of Death spread his wings on the blast, / And breathed in the face of the foe as he passed;
And the eyes of the sleepers waxed deadly and chill, / And their hearts but once heaved, and for ever grew still!
And there lay the steed with his nostril all wide, / But through it there rolled not the breath of his pride;
And the foam of his gasping lay white on the turf, / And cold as the spray of the rock-beating surf.
And there lay the rider distorted and pale, / With the dew on his brow, and the rust on his mail: /
And the tents were all silent, the banners alone, / The lances unlifted, the trumpet unblown.
And the widows of Ashur are loud in their wail, / And the idols are broke in the temple of Baal;
And the might of the Gentile, unsmote by the sword, / Hath melted like snow in the glance of the Lord!

6. Prism of Sancheriv



I laid siege to forty-six of his [Hezekiah's] strong cities, walled forts, and to the countless small villages in their vicinity, and conquered [them] by means of well-stamped earth-ramps and battering-rams brought [thus] near [to the walls] [combined with] the attack by foot soldiers [using] mines, breeches as well as sapper work. I drove out [of them] 200,150 people, young and old, male and female, horses, mules, donkeys, camels, big and small cattle, and considered [them] booty... His towns, which I had plundered, I took away from his country and gave them to Mitinti, king of Ashdod, Padi, king of Ekron, and Sillibel, king of Gaza. Thus, I reduced his country, but I still increased his tribute... beyond his former tribute to be delivered to me annually

7. Isaiah 1:7-10

(ז) אֲרָצְכֶם שָׁמְמָה עֲרִיכֶם שְׂרָפוֹת אֵשׁ אֲדַמְתֶּם לְגִנְדְּכֶם זָרִים אֲכָלִים אֹתָהּ וּשְׁמָמָה כְּמַהֲפַכַת זָרִים: (ח) וְנוֹתְרָה בְּתַצִּיּוֹן כְּסִפָּה בְּכָרֶם כַּמְלוּנָה בְּמִקְשָׁה כְּעִיר נְצוּרָה: (ט) לֹוֹלֵי ה' צָבָאוֹת הוֹתִיר לָנוּ שְׂרִיד כְּמַעֵט כְּסֹדֶם הֵיִינוּ לְעַמְרָה דְּמִינוּ: (ס) (י) שְׁמַעוּ דְּבַר־ה' קְצִינֵי סֹדֶם הֲאֵינִי תוֹרָתְ אֱלֹקֵינוּ עִם עַמְרָה:

(7) Your land is a waste, Your cities burnt down; Before your eyes, the yield of your soil Is consumed by strangers— A wasteland as overthrown by strangers! (8) Fair Zion is left Like a booth in a vineyard, Like a hut in a cucumber field, Like a city beleaguered. (9) Had not the LORD of Hosts Left us some survivors, We should be like Sodom, Another Gomorrah. (10) Hear the word of the LORD, You chieftains of Sodom; Give ear to our G-d's instruction, You folk of Gomorrah!

8. Micah 3:9-12

(ט) שְׁמַעוּנָא זֹאת רֵאשֵׁי בַיִת יַעֲקֹב וְקַצִּינֵי בַיִת יִשְׂרָאֵל הַמְתַעֲבִים מִשְׁפָּט וְאֵת כָּל־הַיִּשְׁרָה יַעֲקֹשׁוּ: (י) בְּנֵה צִיּוֹן בְּדַמִּים וִירוּשָׁלַם בְּעוֹלָה: (יא) רֵאשֵׁי אֶל־בְּשִׁחַד יִשְׁפֹּטוּ וְכַהֲנִיָּה בְּמַחֲרִיר יִורוּ וְנְבִיאִיהָ בְּכֶסֶף יִקְסְמוּ וְעַל־ה' יִשְׁעֵנוּ לֵאמֹר הֲלוֹא ה' בְּקִרְבָּנוּ לֹא־תָבוֹא עָלֵינוּ רָעָה: (יב) לָכֵן בִּגְלוֹלְכֶם צִיּוֹן שְׂדֵה תַחֲרָשׁ וִירוּשָׁלַם עֵינֵי תַהֲלֶה וְהָרַבִּית לְבַמּוֹת יַעֲר: (ג)

(9) Hear this, you rulers of the House of Jacob, You chiefs of the House of Israel, Who detest justice And make crooked all that is straight, (10) Who build Zion with crime, Jerusalem with iniquity! (11) Her rulers judge for gifts, Her priests give rulings for a fee, And her prophets divine for pay; Yet they rely upon the LORD, saying, "The LORD is in our midst; No calamity shall overtake us." (12) Assuredly, because of you Zion shall be plowed as a field, And Jerusalem shall become heaps of ruins, And the Temple Mount A shrine in the woods.

9. Jeremiah 7:3-11

(ג) כֹּה־אָמַר ה' צָבָאוֹת אֱלֹקֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל הִיטִיבוּ דְרָכֵיכֶם וּמַעַלְלֵיכֶם וְאִשְׁכַּנְהוּ אֶתְכֶם בַּמָּקוֹם הַזֶּה: (ד) אֲלֹתֵיבְתוֹתֵי לָכֶם אֲלֹדְבָרֵי הַשֶּׁקֶר לֵאמֹר הֵיכַל ה' הֵיכַל ה' הֵיכַל ה' הִמָּה: (ה) כִּי אִם־הִיטִיבִי תִיטִיבוּ אֶת־דְּרָכֵיכֶם וְאֶת־מַעַלְלֵיכֶם אִם־עָשׂוּ תַעֲשׂוּ מִשְׁפָּט בֵּין אִישׁ וּבֵין רֵעֵהוּ: (ו) גֵּר תוֹם וְאֶלְמָנָה לֹא תַעֲשֹׁקוּ וְדָם נָקִי אֲלֹתֵשְׁפֹכוּ בַּמָּקוֹם הַזֶּה וְאֶחָדֵי אֱלֹקִים אַחֲרָיִם לֹא תִלְכוּ לְרַע לָכֶם: (ז) וְשִׁכַּנְתִּי אֶתְכֶם בַּמָּקוֹם הַזֶּה בְּאַרְצָה אֲשֶׁר נָתַתִּי לְאֲבוֹתֵיכֶם לְמִן־עוֹלָם וְעַד־עוֹלָם: (ח) הִנֵּה אֲתֶם בְּטֹחִים לָכֶם עַל־דְּבַר־הַשֶּׁקֶר לְבַלְתִּי הוֹעִיל: (ט) הִגִּבְתִּי אֶל־רִצְחֵי וְנֹאף וְהִשְׁבַּע לְשֶׁקֶר וְקִטְרַת לְבַעַל וְהִלֵּךְ אַחֲרַי אֱלֹקִים אַחֲרָיִם אֲשֶׁר לֹא־יִדְעֶתֶם: (י) וּבְאֵתֶם וְעַמְדַתֶם לִפְנֵי בַּיִת הַזֶּה אֲשֶׁר נִקְרָא שְׁמִי עָלָיו וְאֶמְרַתֶם נִצַּלְנוּ לְמַעַן עֲשׂוֹת אֵת כָּל־הַתּוֹעֲבוֹת הָאֵלֶּה: (יא) הַמְעַרְתִּי פְרָצִים הִלָּה בַּיִת הַזֶּה אֲשֶׁר־נִקְרָא שְׁמִי עָלָיו בְּעֵינֵיכֶם גַּם אֲנֹכִי הִנֵּה רֵאִיתִי נְאֻמָּה־ה': (ס)

(3) Thus said the LORD of Hosts, the G-d of Israel: Mend your ways and your actions, and I will let you dwell in this place. (4) Don't put your trust in illusions and say, "The Temple of the LORD, the Temple of the LORD, the Temple of the LORD are these [buildings]." (5) No, if you really mend your ways and your actions; if you execute justice between one man and

another; (6) if you do not oppress the stranger, the orphan, and the widow; if you do not shed the blood of the innocent in this place; if you do not follow other gods, to your own hurt— (7) then only will I let you dwell in this place, in the land that I gave to your fathers for all time. (8) See, you are relying on illusions that are of no avail. (9) Will you steal and murder and commit adultery and swear falsely, and sacrifice to Baal, and follow other gods whom you have not experienced, (10) and then come and stand before Me in this House which bears My name and say, “We are safe”?—[Safe] to do all these abhorrent things! (11) Do you consider this House, which bears My name, to be a den of thieves? As for Me, I have been watching— declares the LORD.

10. Mishnah Taanit 4:6

(ו) חמשה דברים ארעו את אבותינו בשבעה עשר בתמוז וחמשה בתשעה באב. בשבעה עשר בתמוז נשתברו הלוחות, ובטל התמיד, והבקעה העיר, ושרף אפוסטמוס את התורה, והעמיד צלם בהיכל. בתשעה באב נגזר על אבותינו שלא יכנסו לארץ, וחרב הבית בראשונה ובשניה, ונלקדה ביתר, ונחרשה העיר.

Five [calamities] happened to our ancestors on the 17th of Tamuz, and five on the 9th of Ab. On the 17th of Tamuz, the tablets were broken; the continual sacrifice ceased, and Jerusalem was stormed; on it Opostamos burned the Holy Law, and placed an idol in the Temple; on the 9th of Ab, it was decreed that our ancestors should not enter the Holy Land; on the same day the first and second Temples were destroyed the city of Bethar was taken, and [Jerusalem] was ploughed [like a field]