

Him, and the Father in Him, that will "suffice" us. The inward "demonstration of the Spirit" affords the *personal verification* of our Christian beliefs, such a verification as every science demands in its own department, and which Christ has pledged to us from the beginning in regard to the knowledge of the Father through Him. It is in the realized answers to prayer which every humble Christian receives, in the help and comfort that never fail in the hour of weakness or of desolation, in the sensible "communion of the Holy Ghost" and the "pardon and peace and heavenly joys" that attend his visitations, in the obedient love that gains an ever growing revelation of "the only true God and Jesus Christ whom He has sent," in the establishment of that inward "kingdom of God" which is "righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Ghost," that "the promise of the Father is evermore fulfilled to all who 'wait for it.'" Christ's *I in you* seals and crowns his manifestation of the Father.

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ASSYRIAN AND BABYLONIAN INSCRIPTIONS IN  
THEIR BEARING ON THE OLD TESTAMENT  
SCRIPTURES.

XV. HOSHEA, SHALMANESER AND SARGON.

THE next scene in the drama of Jewish history brings Egypt on the stage as well as Assyria. "The king of Assyria found conspiracy in Hoshea; for he had sent messengers to So king of Egypt, and brought no present to the king of Assyria, as he had done year by year" (2 Kings xvii. 4). The king whose name appears in this monosyllabic form, is identified by Egyptologists with the Sabaco of Manetho and Herodotus (ii. 17) of the 25th or Ethiopian

Dynasty, founded *circ.* B.C. 766, by Piankhi Mamoun. Traces of the "conspiracy" or alliance thus referred to are found in an inscription at Karnak, in which Sabaco (or Shabak) claims Syria as a tributary province (Lenorm., *Anc. Hist.*, i. 277). A more definite record appears in the "Annals of Sargon," translated by M. Oppert (*R. P.*, vii. 26-29) who narrates his victory over both Israel and Egypt. "I plundered the district of Samaria and the entire house of Omri . . . I overpowered Egypt at Raphia. . . . I treated like a slave Hanon king of Gaza. . . . In the beginning of my reign . . . [name lost] "the Samaritans, . . . . with the help of the sun, who aided me to vanquish my enemies, I besieged. I occupied the town of Samaria, and I brought into captivity 27,280 persons: I took before all parts over them 50 chariots, the part of my kingdom. I took them to Assyria and instead of them I placed men to live there whom my hand had conquered. I instituted over them my lieutenants as governors, and I imposed on them tribute as over the Assyrians. . . ." Samaria, Hamath, Arpad (see 2 Kings xviii. 34) made, it would seem, a final but fruitless effort at resistance. "In the second year of my reign Ilubid of Hamath . . . he established himself in the town of Qarqar, and excited against me the towns Arpad, Simyras, Damascus and Samaria. . . ." Forty lines are here destroyed, which M. Oppert supposes to have contained an account of the defeat of the Ethiopian king at Raphia. The inscription then continues "Sebech (= Sabaco = So) had confidence in his armies and came towards me to deliver a battle. I defeated them in remembrance of the great god Assur, my god. Sebech went away with a shepherd who watched his sheep, and escaped. Hanon (the king of Gaza) was taken by me, and I took with me to my city of Assyria all that he possessed. I destroyed, I demolished his cities, I burnt

them with fire. I took with me 9,033 men with their numerous properties.”

It will be seen that this account agrees substantially with that of 2 Kings xvii. 5. “Then the king of Assyria came up throughout all the land, and went up to Samaria and besieged it three years. In the ninth year of Hoshea, the king of Assyria took Samaria, and carried Israel away into Assyria, and placed them in Halah and Habor by the river of Gozan, and in the cities of the Medes.” Common as the practice of deportation was with the conquerors, no king seems to have carried it to so great an extent as the Sargon who records these victories. The statement of the inscription that he brought new settlers into the depopulated country agrees with the records of 2 Kings xvii. 24, that “the king of Assyria brought men from Babylon and from Cuthah and from Ava, and from Hamath and from Sepharvaim, and placed them in the cities of Samaria instead of the children of Israel.” It falls in with the record in Isaiah xx. 1, that Sargon the king of Assyria had sent the Tartan (*i.e.*, as in the Black Obelisk inscription (*R. P.*, v. 37) the general of his armies, the word being a title of office and not a proper name) to fight against Ashdod, the attack on which would naturally follow on the capture of Gaza. It shows why the prophet connects the capture of that city with the strange symbolic act (“walking naked and bare-foot”) which foreshadowed the fact that “the king of Assyria should lead away the Egyptians prisoners and the Ethiopians captive” (Isa. xx. 4), and declared that this would be the end of the “expectation whither we flee for help to be delivered from the king of Assyria” (Isa. xx. 6). It throws light on the taunting speech of the Rab-shakeh (= chief cupbearer) under Sargon’s successor (Isa. xxxvi. 19): “Where are the gods of Hamath and Arphad? Where are the gods of Sepharvaim? And have they delivered Samaria out of my

hand?" It offers a probable explanation of the prophecy of Isaiah (xiv. 29, 30) against Palestina (= the country of the Philistines). They, it would seem, were exulting at the death of one Assyrian king, perhaps of Tiglath-Pileser II., and the prophet tells them that their exultation is misplaced. "Out of the serpent's root shall come forth a cockatrice, and his fruit shall be a fiery flying serpent." One Assyrian king should follow on another, Shalmaneser on Tiglath-Pileser, Sargon on Shalmaneser, Sennacherib on Sargon, each more mighty and terrible than his predecessor.

There is, perhaps, no single instance in which so much light has been thrown by the labours of Assyrian scholars on the complicated transactions of this period of Biblical history as that with which we are now dealing. Till they interpreted the tablets of Khorsabad, the name of Sargon had been the stumbling-block and perplexity of commentators. It did not appear in the historical books of the Old Testament. It was not mentioned by any Greek historian. In the absence of direct evidence accordingly, it was relegated to the region of conjecture. Some interpreters identified the king so named with Shalmaneser, some with Sennacherib, some even with Esarhaddon. Gesenius (*Thes.*, s. v. Sargon) and Ewald (*Gesch. Isr.*, iii. 628) with the historical sagacity which amounts almost to divination, were led to the conclusion that there must have been an otherwise unrecorded reign of Sargon from B.C. 718 to B.C. 706, coming between those of Shalmaneser and Sennacherib, and that he was the father of the latter. The interpretation of the "Sargon Annals," if we accept the consensus of Assyrian scholars in different countries, working independently, settles the problem by confirming that conjecture.

It is true that the discovery thus made requires us to correct what has hitherto been the traditional interpre-

tation of 2 Kings xviii. 10, that Samaria was taken by Shalmaneser. It may be noted, however, as Canon Rawlinson observes in the *Speaker's Commentary* (Note on 2 Kings xvii. 6) that there is no definite statement in the Biblical narrative to this effect. Shalmaneser began the siege, but the writer adds, with a singular change of phrase, "*they* took it," and the king of Assyria who effected the capture of the city and carried the population into captivity is not named, and may have been therefore Shalmaneser's successor. It was natural, we may add, that Isaiah, as a contemporary writer, should be more accurately informed on this matter, or, at least, should be more precise in his narrative, than the later annalists who compiled the Books of Kings.

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