

follow either the account of the conquest of Jerusalem or of a complete surrender of Hezekiah, and therefore perhaps a decision not to overwhelm and plunder the city. Instead of this we hear of the division of the Jewish territory and thereafter of a provision of a ~~xx~~ very large tribute by Hezekiah which he sends to Ninevah. We are not told why the siege of Jerusalem was previous to its overthrow and the siezing of tribute. This is a remarkable feature of the account of expedition which has impressed ~~xx~~ many readers. There is as yet no ~~x~~ unanimity of interpretation as to the reason for Sennacherib's silence about the end of his otherwise so wordy account of the third expedition therefore it is necessary that we now begin our consideration.

On p. 307 of his discussion, W. Baumgartner suggests, along with others, that news about another uprising in Babylonia had caused Sennacherib to depart quickly from Palestine. It is a fact that the fourth expedition, in 700, was directed against Babylonia. The rather short account of this expedition in the two inscriptions (Luckenbill 71, 33-37 and 34/5. 50-54) like the "Babylonian Chronicle" (CT 34,47: Col. II 25-30; ANET³ p.301b) show that the expedition was brought about through a rebellion. Sennacherib immediately in 700 to Bit-Jakin in South Babylonia, in order to carry further the pacification that he had not completed in 703, and it was on the return march that he repalced King Bel-ibni whom he had himself established in Babylon by his own putting in his place his own son, Assur-nadin-sum. The Chronicle does not tell us anything about the reason for this action here. Sennacherib would hardly have been silent about any rebellion by Bel-ibni previous to his removal, as this would have provided the best justification for what he did. Therefore this gives no evidence for the suggestion that the situation in Babylonia led Sennacherib, or in fact, compelled him, to the sudden end of besieging Jerusalem without bring-back an army to carry the siege further.