

Identifying King Tirhaqah I

*Part X of the Sabbath and Jubilee
of 701/700 and 700/699 B.C.E.*

The basic error made by the proponents of the two-invasion hypothesis, and for that matter even by those advocating a single invasion, is their careless presumption that there was only one king from this general period named Tirhaqah:¹ namely, the third Ethiopian pharaoh of Egypt's Dynasty XXV, known to us as Khu-Re' Nefertem Taharqa.² These scholars failed to ask the simple question, "Was there another king of Kush named Taharqa who could have attacked Sennacherib and his Assyrian forces in 701 B.C.E.?" The answer is a resounding "Yes." This king can readily be identified as Taharqa Piye, called Tsawi Terhaq Warada Nagash in the Ethiopian King List, the most powerful and greatest of all the ancient Kushite monarchs.

Dismissing Tirhaqah?

To begin with, it is unreasonable to write off the problem of King Tirhaqah, as some do, by rationalizing that his being mentioned in Scriptures was either an anachronism, misunderstanding, or outright error.³ The name "Tirhaqah of Kush" is testified to by several excellent early sources: i.e., the books of Isaiah and 2 Kings (supported by the LXX versions), as well as from the works of the Jewish priest Josephus (1st century C.E.), the Targum Jonathan, and others.⁴ We simply have no reason to doubt the authenticity of their reports. In each case, this Tirhaqah was claimed to be the king of Kush at the very moment that he moved against Sennacherib. He is never called the king of Egypt, as was the case with Nefertem Taharqa from the beginning of his reign. Tirhaqah of Kush also stands as an integral part of the story about Sennacherib's war in the west and his defeat at Jerusalem. Indeed, the fact that the authors of these

¹ Until now, this narrow assumption about the identity of Tirhaqah seems amazingly universal, this author not having been able to find a single contrary instance. Examples from those adhering to two invasions are TK, 1, pp. 18ff, n. 30; CAW, p. 82; HE, 6, pp. 148f; BASOR, 130, pp. 4-9; CAH, 3, p. 74; AHI, pp. 297f; BS, 63, pp. 610f; AUSS, 4.1, pp. 1-11; AATB, p. 21. Examples from those adhering to only one invasion are AHOE, 3, p. 296; HI, p. 268; AHJP, pp. 143f; NOT, p. 55, n. 3; AOT, pp. 268f; TIP, pp. 157-172. Examples from those uncommitted to either view are SIP, p. 51; LAP, pp. 177f.

² Often translated as Tirhaqah, Tirhakah, Taharqa, Taharka, Taharqo, etc. For the variations of the name, see Chap. IX, p. 149, n. 1.

³ As concluded by both Noth (HI, p. 268) and Tadmor (AHJP, p. 144); also see AHI, pp. 298-300.

⁴ 2 Kings, 19:9; Isa., 37:9; LXX 4 Kings, 19:9; LXX Isa., 37:9; Targ. Jon., 2 Kings, 19:9, & Isa., 37:9; Jos., *Antiq.*, 10:2:1.

texts would remember the names of Hezekiah's officials,⁵ relatively minor players in this history, yet would be confused about the identity of a major player, the king of Kush, is highly improbable.⁶

John Bright, an advocate of the two-invasion hypothesis, frames the argument by suggesting that we should regard the verses from 2 Kings, 18:17 to 19:37, "as late, legendary, and of minimal historical value, or must at the very least regard the mention of Tirhakah as an error." He then admits that if Tirhaqah's name is removed from the equation (assuming the reference is to Nefertem Taharqa), various one-invasion scenarios are more plausible.⁷

Even those who conclude that there could have only been one campaign against Judah by Sennacherib have carelessly accepted this incorrect identification. In most of these cases, they merely reason that the Israelite scribes anachronistically referred to Tirhaqah as a king many years before he actually came to power.⁸ The historian Kenneth Kitchen removes the problem by making the Hebrew words **מלך כוש** (*melek Kush*; king of Kush) a "gloss."⁹ Martin Noth, who also believes in only one invasion of Judah by Sennacherib, dismissed the difficulty by simply declaring that the mention of Tirhaqah in Scriptures was a "mistake."¹⁰ Others go so far as to distort the chronology of the Ethiopian kings who ruled Egypt during Dynasty XXV in order to make the details fit. Only in these ways could an allowance be made for Nefertem Taharqa to be the king who marched against Sennacherib.

A close examination of the ancient evidence, nevertheless, reveals that this popular identification of Nefertem Taharqa (Tirhaqah) as the powerful Kushite king who attacked Sennacherib in 701 B.C.E. is wrong. To cast this figure as Khu-Re' Nefertem Taharqa of Egypt's Dynasty XXV is not only unnecessary but unwarranted. Ancient records prove that during the early years of Sennacherib there lived a powerful monarch of Kush whose name was Taharqa (Tirhaqah). For a number of years, this earlier Tirhaqah ruled a vast empire covering western Asia and northern Africa. Like other Ethiopian monarchs during this period, he subsequently made himself a pharaoh of Egypt, but his pharaohship only took place well after he had formed his own empire. This empire made this particular Taharqa the most powerful of all the ancient kings of Kush. This earlier Taharqa is found in the Ethiopian archive list under the name of Tsawi Terhaq Warada Nagash.¹¹ In the Egyptian inscriptions he was known as Taharqa Piye.

Taharqa Piye

Today, the Tirhaqah mentioned in Scriptures would be more commonly recognized under the name Piye (Piankhi). As we shall demonstrate, Piye was also

⁵ Eliakim, Shebna, and Joah, see 2 Kings, 18:18; Isa., 36:3; Jos., *Antiq.*, 10:1:2.

⁶ See comments in AHI, pp. 298–300.

⁷ AHI, pp. 298, 300f.

⁸ E.g., AHOE, 3, p. 296; AHE, p. 552; AOT, p. 269; SIP, p. 34., n. 112, p. 51; TIP, pp. 158f.

⁹ TIP, pp. 158f.

¹⁰ HI, p. 268.

¹¹ CBN, app. A, p. 266, Dynasty IV, no. xiii. Charles Fernand Rey transliterates the name Tsawi *Terhaq* Warada Nagash to read Tsawi *Terhak* Warada Nagash instead of using *Tirhaqah* or *Terhaq*.

known as "Taharqa, Son of Ra, Piye (Piankhi)." After becoming a king of Egypt, Piye also used two other Egyptian throne names: Usimare and Snefer-Ra (Sneferre).¹² In addition, ancient inscriptions show that this king called himself "Meri Amun Piye."¹³ Meri (Beloved) was known to the Greeks as Ἀμμέρις (Ammeris), *Ameres*, and the like.¹⁴ He was counted by Manetho as the Ethiopian pharaoh who founded Egypt's Dynasty XXVI, appointing Tefnakht II (Stephinates) as the king over Sais after him.¹⁵ In this regard, we should be cognizant of the fact that the name ⲥ⩱⩱ (Piye, Py, Pye) was formerly read "Piankhi" but is now believed to have been pronounced "Piye."¹⁶

Fortunately, we have verification that Piye was also known as Tirhaqah (Taharqa). Proof is found on a unique scarab located in the collection of John Ward (see Fig. 1). This scarab has been a source of puzzlement for Egyptologists for only one reason: they refused to recognize that Piye (Piankhi) was also known as Taharqa (Tirhaqah). The inscription with a double cartouche reads:



Fig. 1. Scarab of Taharqa (Tirhaqah) Piye.
 Ⲉ⩱⩱ seten byt Taharqa S3-Rc Piye

King of Upper and Lower Egypt, Taharqa, Son of Ra, Piye (Piankhi).¹⁷

¹² For Sneferre (Snefer-Ra) and Usimare, see Jürgen von Beckerath in HAK, pp. 206–207.

¹³ TIP, p. 152 §123, p. 369 §328; FHN, 1, p. 48, l. 1. l. e, p. 49, 6. e, p. 50, 9. e, p. 55, l. 2, p. 57, l. 1, p. 65, l. 1, l. 2. Ameri Amun can be translated to mean "Beloved of Amun."

¹⁴ Manetho, frag. 69a, "Ammeris the Ethiopian," 69b, "Ameres the Ethiopian"; Sothis, no. 78, "Amaes." Also see Eusebius, *Inter. Arm.*, p. 9; Sec. Hier. Cod., p. 34. Also see the discussions above in Chap. XI and in App. D. Those who attempt to identify King Ammeris with Ta-Nuat-Amun (Tanutamûn, etc.) (e.g., Waddell, *Manetho*, p. 249, n. 1; JEA, 34, p. 60) do so out of whole cloth. Ta-Nuat-Amun only reigned 9 years, not the 12, 18, or 38 years recorded in the above-mentioned sources and other records. Furthermore, Ta-Nuat-Amun only became a king in Upper Egypt following the death of Nefertem Taharqa in 663 B.C.E., the last king of Dynasty XXV. He did not rule before Stephenates (Tefnakht II) of Dynasty XXVI (684 to 677 B.C.E.). Ammeris is listed even before Stephenates. Those who reject this obvious mistake speculate that Ammeris was an Ethiopian governor placed in the province of Sais by the Ethiopian rulers of Egypt (e.g., TIP, p. 145 §§116–118, & n. 259). They ignore the statement from Manetho that Ammeris was one of the "nine KINGS" of Dynasty XXVI, and not a mere governor.

¹⁵ Manetho, frags. 69a & b; Sothis, no. 79; Eusebius, *Inter. Arm.*, p. 9; Sec. Hier. Cod., p. 34. See Chap. XI and App. B & D.

¹⁶ I. E. S. Edwards states that the name Piye (Pye, Pi, Py, etc.) was "formerly misread as Piankhy" (CAH, 3.1, p. 569). They now believe that the signs ⲥ and Ⲉ coupled with ⲩ for the Ethiopians represented the sound *pi* or *p* instead of *Pi-ankh*. The Egyptian ⲥ⩱⩱ (*P-y*), therefore, becomes a variant of the Ethiopian ⲥ⩱⩱ (*Piankhi*). Also see MDAIK, 24, pp. 58–62; MIO, 14, pp. 166–175; JEA, 54, pp. 165–172; ZAS, 98, pp. 16–32. Yet Richard A. Parker (ZAS, 93, pp. 111–114), the first to propose the idea and whom Edwards and others cite, only believes it is possible that Piye is but a hypocoristic version of the name Piankhi and not a better reading. Parker does not allow that even this equation is proven. The translation of the Ethiopian King List provided by Charles Fernand Rey refers to this name as Piyankihi (var. Piankhi, Py-anhki, Wiyankihi, etc.), see CBN, p. 266, Dynasty III, no. xliv, Dynasty IV, nos. viii, xvii. In either case, this debate changes nothing as far as the history of those who carried this name. Accordingly, for convenience's sake, we shall continue with both Piye and Piankhi until further evidence becomes decisive.

¹⁷ PSBA, 22.9, pp. 386–401, pl. vii, #54.

Unable to believe the inscription, Petrie concluded that it must indicate the co-regency between Nefertem Taharqa and Senefer-Ra Piye (Piankhi).¹⁸ Nevertheless, the inscription cannot be based on co-regency, for in that case Piye would have also been designated “king.” Another view, expressed by John Ward himself, suggested that Taharqa had placed “his wife’s family title beside his own.”¹⁹ Ward based this idea on the belief that Nefertem Taharqa was not of royal blood. John Ward’s premise is now known to be completely false. Nefertem Taharqa was the son of Piye, a prince of full royal blood, and legitimate heir to the throne.²⁰ Furthermore, it is discredited by the fact that nowhere else can one find an example of an Egyptian or Kushite king placing the cartouche belonging to either his wife’s or his own family alongside that of his own on the same scarab.

On the other hand, we have numerous examples of a Kushite king referring to himself both by his *seten byt* (King of Upper and Lower Egypt) name and his *S3-R^c* (Son of Ra) name. The following are several important examples of this combination:

King of Upper and Lower Egypt, Nefer-ke-Ra, Son of Ra, Shabaqo.²¹

King of Upper and Lower Egypt, Beke-Re, Son of Ra, Ta-Nuat-Amun.²²

King of Upper and Lower Egypt, ‘Nkh-ka-Ra, Son of Ra, Anlamani.²³

King of Upper and Lower Egypt, Nefer-ib-Re, Son of Ra, Aman-Nete-Yerike.²⁴

King of Upper and Lower Egypt, Khu-Re’ Nefertem, Son of Ra, Taharqa.²⁵

The last example from Nefertem Taharqa should now be compared with the above-mentioned scarab belonging to Piye:

King of Upper and Lower Egypt, Taharqa, Son of Ra, Piye (Piankhi).

¹⁸ AHOE, 3, p. 290.

¹⁹ PSBA, 23.1, p. 27; cf. above n. 17.

²⁰ Nefertem Taharqa was the son of Taharqa Piye. To demonstrate, Abar, the mother of Nefertem Taharqa (Taharqo), was called “the king’s sister” and “Queen mother.” She was also the sister-wife of Piye. As a result, Piye was the father of Taharqa, see Kawa V:16f, 20f (see TK, 1, p. 16); FHN, 1, p. 131; KK, p. 134, n. 31, p. 260; BPENR, p. 176; THDAE, p. 237; EnBS, p. 301.

²¹ FHN, 1, p. 124, l. 3; ARE, 4, §886.

²² ARE, 4, §921.

²³ TK, 1, p. 46, l. 1.

²⁴ TK, 1, p. 51, l. 1.

²⁵ TK, 1, pp. 5, 15, l. 1, p. 23, l. 1, p. 33, l. 1, p. 42, l. 1; ARE, 4, §888. Taharqa is also called “King of Upper and Lower Egypt, Taharqa” (e.g., ARE, 4, §895; TK, 1, p. 6, l. 7, p. 7, l. 10, 11, p. 8, l. 15), but this title “King of Upper and Lower Egypt” is only found when the “Son of Ra” name is not used. When the “Son of Ra” title is utilized, Nefertem also makes it to be Taharqa.

Notice that the Son of Ra name for Nefertem is Taharqa, while the Son of Ra name for Taharqa is Piye (Piankhi). They represent two different kings: Taharqa Piye (Taharqa I) and Nefertem Taharqa (Taharqa II). Even more enlightening, these two kings happened to be father and son.²⁶

Another reflection of the accuracy of our construct comes with the manner in which the family of Piye named their heir. In each succession, the father's throne name was passed down to his son, the next ruler, as his birth name. Alara, for example, was also known as "King Piye Alara,"²⁷ Piye being his throne name while Alara was his birth name. In turn, Alara's son was named Taharqa Piye, Taharqa being his throne name (thus the Israelites referring to him as King Tirhaqah), while Piye became his birth name.²⁸ In the same way, Piye's son was named Nefertem Taharqa, Nefertem being his throne name and Taharqa being his birth name.²⁹

Throne Name	Birth Name
Piye	Alara
Taharqa	Piye
Nefertem	Taharqa

Nefertem Taharqa was succeeded by Urud-Amun, the son of Shabaqo, the son of Kashta.³⁰ In Kashta's line of kings, this tradition of giving the throne name to the heir as his birth name was not followed. Nevertheless, there is more than enough evidence for the line of Alara to demonstrate that there were two different kings who were named Taharqa: Taharqa Piye and his son Nefertem Taharqa.

The Empire of Taharqa Piye

No one has considered the ramifications arising from the fact that Sennacherib retreated from his war against Egypt when he heard that Tirhaqah of Kush was coming out to fight against him. No battle was ever fought. With such a powerful army at Tirhaqah's disposal and with the Assyrian army of Sennacherib in full retreat, the King Tirhaqah of Kush who came against Sennacherib would have been presented with an excellent opportunity for conquest deep into Asia. Yet the records of Nefertem Taharqa of Dynasty XXV make no mention of any great or important conquest outside of Egypt. Nefertem Taharqa, whose records demonstrate that he sought the most insignificant events in his reign to brag about, would certainly not have missed the opportunity to mention such a great victory over and over again.

Nevertheless, a record of great military conquest of northern Africa, western Asia, and Assyria has been left to us by an Ethiopian king named

²⁶ See above n. 20.

²⁷ E.g., FHN, 2, pp. 477f, l. 8, 16.

²⁸ See pharaoh.se/pharaoh/Piye.

²⁹ See pharaoh.se/pharaoh/Taharqa.

³⁰ See App. J.

Taharqa. At Medinet-Habu (the Pylon of the Ethiopians) we read that a king named Taharqa made the claim that he conquered Kamet (Black Land; i.e., Egypt), Tesher (the desert), and Tepa(?).³¹ Why would Khu-Re' Nefertem Taharqa claim to have conquered Egypt? He was the designated heir to the established Egyptian throne of Shebitku. No conquest was required. Yet the record does make sense for an Ethiopian king who came to control Egypt as the result of the failure of Pharaoh Shabaqo to defend that country against the Assyrian army of Sennacherib.

Next, Egyptologists were amazed to find a long list of captured cities written on the base of a statue found at Karnak which belonged to a King Taharqa.³² Each city represents a greater region under the control of this king. This record not only states that a king named Taharqa controlled Ethiopia, Egypt, and northern Africa, but it claims that he had some sort of sovereignty over Tunip (Upper Syria, west of the Euphrates),³³ Qadesh (Lower Syria/Palestine),³⁴ and over the Shasu (the Edomite region from the Negeb up

³¹ MH, p. 9. For a possible identification of Tepa, see App. H, n. 9.

³² KETA, Plate 45a; ETL, p. 187, List xxxvi. Mariette-Bey (KETA, pp. 66f), followed by Petrie (AHOE, 3, p. 297) and others, thought this list from Tirhaqah was copied from an identical one found on a colossus which they believed belonged to Ramesses the Great (cf. KETA, Plate 38f). This colossus was identified with Ramesses II because his name was found inscribed upon it. Yet the style and the execution of the colossus "are rather different from those of the period of Ramses II" (ETL, p. 52). J. Simons concludes from this evidence that the colossus, together with the pylon itself, was originally built by Haremhab and first inscribed by him. A later inscription was added by Ramesses II (ETL, p. 52, cf. p. 135). Because the above inscription, which is identical to the one belonging to Tirhaqah, bears no resemblance to any produced by either Ramesses II or Haremhab, it is highly probable that this secondary inscription was composed by Tsawi Terhaq (Tirhaqah I Piye), who viewed himself as a great conqueror like Ramesses II. He simply emulated his predecessor, placing his own record of conquest on a monument alongside that of Ramesses II.

³³ For the location of the city of Tunip, located north of Aleppo, see AEO, 1, pp. 179f.

³⁴ Since all of the regions are named after important capital cities and regional names, there are at least four possibilities for Qadesh (Sacred Place). Besides Qadesh on the Orontes, there is a Qadesh in northern Israel, called Qadesh of Naphtali (Judg., 4:6; Josh., 19:37, 20:7, 21:32; 1 Chron., 6:76), and another city of Qadesh (Kadutis) named in Herodotus, 2:159. The city mentioned in Herodotus is identified by modern-day historians with either Gaza or Jerusalem.

The Qadesh (Sacred Place) at question may not be Qadesh on the Orontes, for it might conflict with the context of the geographical statement given by Tirhaqah (Qadesh on the Orontes also lying in Upper Syria, south of Tunip). Qadesh of Naphtali is also eliminated because it ceased to be an important city after the deportation of the Israelites from that region several years before Tsawi Tirhaqah came to power. These details bring us to the Qadesh mentioned by Herodotus.

The Qadesh of Herodotus is identified by several present-day historians as Gaza, based upon a similar form of the name used by Herodotus (e.g., Godley, *Her.*, i, p. 473, n. 2; HH, 1, p. 411, n. 2, 2, p. 208, n. 2, p. 334, n. 7). But a closer look indicates that this Qadesh is Jerusalem, the main center of political power in Lower Syria during the time of Sennacherib's third campaign. Not only is Jerusalem referred to as Qadesh (Sacred) in Scriptures (e.g., Neh., 11:1, 18; Isa., 52:1, 66:20; Ezek., 45:1-4; Dan., 9:16, 24), and Judah called the Qadesh land (e.g., Zech., 2:12), but, as Rennel accurately concluded some years ago (GSH, 1, p. 324, 2, p. 362), the records of Herodotus show that he also called the region of Judaea and its capital city Qadesh. Herodotus states that the city and country of Kadutis (Qadesh, see GSH, 1, p. 324) was located south of Phoenicia, that it belonged to the "Syrians of Palestine," and that it was about the size of the city of Sardis (Herodotus, 3:5). At the same time, he elsewhere refers to the Jews, who practice circumcision, as "the Syrians of Palestine" (Ibid., 2:104). The size of the city by itself clearly points to Jerusalem, the only major city of any size during the time of Herodotus. (Those who hold that Gaza is meant,

to the Trans-Jordan),³⁵ as far north as Arzawa (western Asia Minor),³⁶ Khatti (eastern Asia Minor),³⁷ and Naharin (western and upper Mesopotamia),³⁸ reaching as far east as Assur (Assyria)³⁹ and Sinagar (Babylonia).⁴⁰

These conquests clearly do not reflect the political history of Khu-Re' Nefertem Taharqa of Dynasty XXV.⁴¹ Because these conquests were unhistorical for Nefertem Taharqa, the noted Egyptologist Ernest Alfred Wallis Budge branded this inscription an "example of the worthlessness, historically, of such lists."⁴² Petrie concludes that "Taharqa," by which he means Nefertem Taharqa, "was as much ruler of Qedesh and Naharaina as George II. was king of France, though officially so called."⁴³

Despite the fact that these inscriptions are presently shunned, the ancient Greek records actually confirm them. Strabo speaks of a great king named

on the basis that the word Kadutis in Herodotus is similar to the Egyptian word *G'-d'-y* [i.e., Gaza] seem not to have considered these factors).

Herodotus further states that the main road to Egypt ran from Phoenicia as far as "the borders of the city of Kadutis (Qadesh)," after which it passed to the city of Ienysus and the seaports belonging to the Arabians (Herodotus, 3:6). The region of Qadesh (Jerusalem) was named after its chief city, as the regions of Samaria, Babylonia, and Damascus were named after their capitals (i.e., city-states). The description of this road to Egypt is accurate. The main highway (the Palestim road) made its way south along the coast, passing along the coastal borders of Judaea before continuing through Palestia and then on into Egypt.

Herodotus also tells the story of how Pharaoh Nekos (Nekau II) of Egypt defeated the Syrians (Jews of Syria) at Magdolus (Megiddo) and then obtained the "great Syrian city of Kadutis (Qadesh)" (Herodotus, 2:159). In Scriptures Nekau II's victory at Megiddo was followed by the submission of Jerusalem (2 Kings, 23:29–35; 2 Chron., 35:20–36:4), which once again confirms the identity of Kadutis (Qadesh) with Jerusalem. Neither should we forget that the Ethiopian ruling house believed that they were connected by bloodline to King Solomon of Jerusalem (Kebra Nagast). At the same time, during the days of Tirhaqah, Judah was a close ally of the Ethiopians. There would be a natural tendency of the Kushite leaders to allow the Judahite definition for their own city and country to be Qadesh, the Sacred Place.

In either case, whether the Qadesh of Tirhaqah's inscription stands for Qadesh on the Orontes, Jerusalem, or Gaza, it represents Syria-Palestine.

³⁵ The Shasu were Edomites (ARE, 3, §§636–638, "the tribes of the Shasu of Edom"). They dominated Arabia Petraea, the Trans-Jordan, and they were themselves positioned southeast of the Dead Sea. The Shasu, therefore, represented the southernmost of the Asiatic conquest.

³⁶ For the location of the Arzawa lands, see GHE, pp. 83–100, and map 1.

³⁷ For the location of the Khatti lands, see GHE, pp. 1–31, and map 1.

³⁸ For the location of Naharin country, see AEO, 1, pp. 171–180.

³⁹ That Assur is Assyria, east of Naharin, see AEO, 1, pp. 191–194.

⁴⁰ That Sinagar is Babylonia, see AEO, 1, pp. 209–212.

⁴¹ Nefertem Taharqa's career largely consisted of fighting with Assyria over possession of Lower Egypt and then Upper Egypt. One record demonstrates an alliance between a "Tarkû, king of Kush" with "Ba'lu, king of Tyre" during the 10th year (771 B.C.E.) of Esarhaddon (ARAB, 2, §§554–556). Yet the very fact that this Taharqa was only called the king of Kush (the Assyrian definition of Upper Egypt) at a time when Nefertem Taharqa was also known as the pharaoh of Lower Egypt suggests that this Tarkû might possibly be Tsawi Terhaq (Taharqa Piye). Regardless of which Taharqa is meant, Nefertem Taharqa's role in neighboring Syria and Palestine was almost negligible, as demonstrated by those inscriptions which can clearly be identified with him. As Alan Gardiner points out, "Taharqa was nothing loath to publicize his fortunes and his achievements" (EP, p. 344). Nevertheless, these important inscriptions say nothing of any conquests of those lands outside of Egypt by Nefertem Taharqa (e.g., TK, 1, 4–44).

⁴² HE, 6, p. 157.

⁴³ AHOE, 3, p. 297.

"Tearko the Ethiopian,"⁴⁴ Tearko being the Greek form of the name Taharqa (Tirhaqah).⁴⁵ Tearko, he states, had led one of the greatest military expeditions of the ancient world which were not "matters of off-hand knowledge to everybody."⁴⁶ He lists the great kings of such expeditions as "Madys the Scythian, Tearko the Ethiopian, Cobus the Treran, Sesostris and Psammetichus the Egyptian, and the Persians from Cyrus to Xerxes."⁴⁷ In another place, Strabo, citing Megasthenes as his source, defines how far Tearko conquered:

However, he (Megasthenes) adds, Sesostris the Egyptian and Tearko (Taharqa) the Ethiopian advanced AS FAR AS EUROPE. And Nabocodroser (Nebuchadnezzar II), who enjoyed greater repute among the Chaldaeans than Heracles, led an army even AS FAR AS THE PILLARS (of Hercules).⁴⁸ This far (i.e., as far as to the Pillars of Hercules), he states, TEARKO ALSO WENT. And Sesostris also led his army from Iberia to Thrace and the Pontus.⁴⁹

Sulpitius Severus similarly reports that in the days of Sennacherib, "Tarraka, king of Ethiopia, invaded the kingdom of the Assyrians,"⁵⁰ indicating that his forces moved well beyond the northeastern frontier of Egypt and into the territory of the empire of the Assyrians.

Not considering that there were two Tirhaqahs, many historians have become puzzled by this evidence. T. G. H. James points out:

Even if Taharqa had engaged in potentially dangerous adventures in Asia during his early years, his surviving records recount nothing explicitly of them.⁵¹

Ernest Alfred Wallis Budge, mistakenly believing the above records referred to Nefertem Taharqa, comments:

Curiously enough, Tirhakah obtained the reputation of being a great traveller and conqueror, and Strabo, under the name of 'Tearko the Ethiopian,' mentions him . . . as one whose expeditions were not generally known.⁵²

⁴⁴ Strabo, 1:3:21, 15:1:6.

⁴⁵ HE, 6, p. 157.

⁴⁶ Strabo, 1:3:21.

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*

⁴⁸ The so-called Pillars of Hercules are the promontories that flank the entrance to the Strait of Gibraltar, being positioned one on each side. On the north side was the Rock of Gibraltar and the one on the south side is Jebel Musa in Morocco.

⁴⁹ Strabo, 15:1:6.

⁵⁰ Severus, 1:50.

⁵¹ CAH, 3.2, p. 696; cf. the list in CdE, 53, pp. 44-47.

⁵² HE, 6, p. 157. Budge denied the testimony that Tirhaqah conquered as far west as the Pillars of Hercules because it is tied in with the statement that Nebuchadnezzar II of Babylon did likewise. Based upon the idea that there are no records claiming that Nebuchadnezzar II went this far, he concludes that neither did Tirhaqah. Budge is in error. First, there is supportive evidence

Once we recognize that we are dealing with two different kings, both named Tirhaqah, all the facts fit into place. The Tirhaqah (Taharqa) who came out against Sennacherib and from whom Sennacherib retreated in fear was a powerful king of Kush who claimed to have an empire that extended across north Africa, Asia Minor as far as the Aegean Sea (therefore, bordering upon Europe), all of Syria-Palestine, Mesopotamia, Assyria, and Babylonia. Only Taharqa Piye, alone among all the kings of Kush, ever made these claims. Piye's Year 3 inscription (dated as an Egyptian king), for example, tells us:

ONE ALONE WHO EXPANDS KUSH, fear of whom
is put into THE LORDS OF FOREIGN COUNTRIES,
there being no boasting of great men.⁵³

In deity proclamations made in support of Piye kingship, we read, "Amûn of Napata has granted me to be ruler of EVERY FOREIGN COUNTRY"⁵⁴ and "Amun in Thebes has granted me to be ruler of Black-land (Egypt)."⁵⁵ Accordingly, as a king of Kush under the authority of the deity Amun of Napata, Piye was able to rule "every foreign country," while, as a king in Egypt under Amun of Thebes, he ruled Egypt. This evidence indicates that his conquest of "every foreign country" was accomplished as the king of Kush and not as the king of Egypt. Piye reiterates his claims when describing himself as, "Horus: Mighty-bull, who-appears-in-Napata," adding:

Golden Horus, Whose-diadems-are-holy, Whose-strength-is-powerful, at seeing whom every one lives like He-of-the-horizon, King-of-Upper-and-Lower-Egypt, Lord of Two Lands, [Piye], son-of-Rê, lord of diadems, [Meri Amun Piye], the good deity, KING OF KINGS, RULER OF RULERS, THE SOVEREIGN WHO SEIZES ALL LANDS, whose power is mighty whose *atef*-crown [is on] his head,⁵⁶ . . . ONE ALONE WHO EXPANDS KUSH, fear of whom is put into the lords of foreign countries, there being no boasting of great men.⁵⁷

With time, the empire of Taharqa Piye began to fade. The Assyrians, for example, quickly regrouped and reconquered Babylonia the next year

that Nebuchadnezzar II (by utilizing the Phocaean navy) did conquer regions along the Mediterranean Sea as far west as Spain. Josephus (Jos., *Antiq.*, 10:11:1), for example, citing Megasthenes, states that Nebuchadnezzar II "subdued the greater part of Libya (Africa) and Iberia (Spain)." Old records further testify that Nebuchadnezzar II ruled Spain for 9 years (RG, p. 697; UH, 18, p. 512). Second, the records of Taharqa Piye accommodate the fact that his domain stretched across northern Africa to tribes who would have extended to the Pillars on the African side (KETA, Plate 45a; ETL, p. 187, List xxxvi). There is no reason, therefore, not to accept the record provided by Strabo.

⁵³ Sandstone Stela of Piye (FHN, 1, pp. 58f, l. 3). As the king of Egypt, see FHN, 1, pp. 55, l. 3–13, Speech of Amun-Ra; Speech of Mut, p. 56, l. 1; Speech of Khons, p. 56 l. 1; Speech of the King, p. 57, l. 1–6; Main Text, pp. 58f, l. 3–6; Also see *Comments* in FHN, 1, p. 55, l. 1–5.

⁵⁴ FHN, 1, p. 57, l. 1–3.

⁵⁵ FHN, 1, p. 55, l. 1–5, p. 57, l. 3.

⁵⁶ The *atef*-crown is the white crown of Upper Egypt as the symbol of the Osiris cult.

⁵⁷ FHN, 1, pp. 58f, l. 1–3.

(700/699 B.C.E.). Nevertheless, vast stretches of Piye's Kushite Empire lying to the west of Assyria did continue for about 20 years.⁵⁸ It was notable enough so that centuries later its existence was still recognized by ancient writers. Nefertem Taharqa, meanwhile, appears not to have expanded his realm beyond Egypt and its immediate neighbors. Even then, these places had already been conquered by Taharqa Piye, who brought them under the authority of Kush.

Taharqa Piye (Tsawi Terhaq) ruled Kush many years prior to his son, Nefertem Taharqa, being placed upon a throne in Egypt. Nevertheless, an inscription from Wadi Gasus proves that the 19th regnal year of Piye (who is called "Ameres" by Manetho) over the cities of Thebes and Sais in Upper and Lower Egypt is equivalent to the 12th regnal year of Nefertem Taharqa over Thebes and Memphis in Upper and Lower Egypt.⁵⁹ Accordingly, Taharqa Piye and Nefertem Taharqa ruled Egypt together for a number of years, Taharqa Piye making his home in Kush while Nefertem Taharqa resided in Egypt.

Why Lost?

The failure of historians during the last two centuries to recognize two different Tirhaqahs was, in part, the result of the ongoing process to recover Egyptian chronology. During the Middle Ages, when the issue was reconsidered by Syncellus (died about 810 C.E.), the chronology of Dynasty XXV of Egypt was sorely misdated. Due to the similarity of name, it was believed that Khu Re' Nefertem Taharqa of Egypt was a contemporary with the early years of Hezekiah.⁶⁰ Later on, as the Egyptian records became better known, the chronology of this dynasty was corrected. Then it was realized that Nefertem Taharqa of Egypt could not possibly have ruled at so early a date. By the time this mistake had been rectified, the association of the Tirhaqah of the Scriptures with Khu-Re' Nefertem Taharqa was so deeply entrenched that almost no one questioned it.⁶¹

In addition, the possibility of an earlier Tirhaqah had not been considered for two other reasons. First, it was already decided that the report from Scriptures was fabricated or heavily flawed. If it had not been for the subtle bias against Scriptures—ingrained in modern-day schools of historical study to this day (with their tendency to discredit the scriptural records)—the solution of the existence of an earlier Taharqa (Tirhaqah) would have become

⁵⁸ See App. H.

⁵⁹ See App. I.

⁶⁰ Syncellus has Taharqa of Egypt's Dynasty XXV begin his reign 7 years before the beginning of Hezekiah's reign (Syncellus, *Chron.*, 2, pp. 208–211). Interestingly, in the much earlier records from Jerome and the Armenian text of Eusebius, the beginning of the reign of this Taharqa was more correctly placed as contemporary with the beginning of the reign of King Manasseh of Judah (694/693–640/639 B.C.E.) (see Schoene, *Eusebi*, 2, pp. 84 & 85).

⁶¹ The reaction of those who continue to follow the evidence that there was only one invasion of Judah by Sennacherib is to maintain that Nefertem Taharqa of Egypt was anachronistically referred to as a king. They assert that, at the time of Sennacherib's campaign against Judah, he was in reality only the general of Shabaqo's (others will claim Shebitku's), army (for examples, see above n. 8).

evident long ago. Yet the unwillingness to accept the correctness of the account found in Scriptures resulted in a blind spot with regards to this issue.

Second, the records connecting the identity of the Tirhaqah of the Scriptures with Taharqa Piye were ignored because many scholars had either already misidentified these other reports with his son, Nefertem Taharqa, or misdated the reign of Piye, placing Piye much too early for consideration. These problems blinded Egyptologists to Taharqa I's correct historical place.⁶² When records of this earlier Taharqa were unearthed, they were mistakenly grouped among those belonging to Khu-Re' Nefertem Taharqa; and, at the same time, they were discredited and ignored because these reports did not agree with the known historical facts regarding this Ethiopian monarch of Egypt's Dynasty XXV. When these restraints are removed, the identity of the Tirhaqah, the king of Kush, as mentioned in Scriptures is readily recognized as Taharqa Piye.

Conclusion

All of the available evidence reveals that the Kushite king named Tirhaqah (Taharqa) who came out against Sennacherib and his Assyrian army while they were besieging Pelusium in 701 B.C.E. was Taharqa Piye. King Piye was the most powerful Kushite monarch in history and boasted of his numerous and widespread conquests. To Manetho, Piye was known as "Ameres (Meri) the Ethiopian," derived from his name "Meri Amun Piye." In the Egyptian records he was also called Usimare Piye and Snefer-Ra (Sneferre) Piye. In the Ethiopian records he was called Tsawi Terhaq Warada Nagash.

The fact that Piye was also known as Taharqa Piye solves the problem of Tirhaqah's identity. There are no chronological conflicts. Taharqa Piye came to power in Kush in the year 706 B.C.E., reigning in that country for 49 years. It was 5 years after his accession to a throne of Kush that he made his attack upon Sennacherib (701 B.C.E.), and it was 5 years more before he became the dominant Kushite king in Egypt (696 B.C.E.).⁶³ Nefertem Taharqa, on the other hand, was Taharqa Piye's son. Under the direction of Piye, Nefertem Taharqa became the third king of Dynasty XXV, coming to power in Egypt in 689 B.C.E. when he was 20 years old.

The fact that Taharqa Piye was the king of Kush who came out against Sennacherib and the Assyrians in 701 B.C.E. fully supports our chronology and the System "A" construct. It eliminates the strained interpretation that the Tirhaqah mentioned in Scriptures had to be Nefertem Taharqa. It also completely eliminates any need for a second invasion against Judah by Sennacherib. As a result, this evidence supports the Sabbath and Jubilee cycle advocated by our investigation. The 15th year of Hezekiah (701/700 B.C.E., Abib reckoning) was a Sabbath year and the 16th year of Hezekiah (700/699 B.C.E., Abib reckoning) was a Jubilee year.

⁶² For a detailed discussion of Egyptian and Kushite chronology during Dynasties XXV and XXVI, see App. B-L.

⁶³ See App. D, H, I.

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