

## Chapter Three

### The Last Days of the Assyrian Empire

#### *610-609 B.C. - According to the Chronicle & the Hebrew Bible*

Six years after the Qablinu incident of 616 B.C. the Babylonian Chronicle again mentions activity on the part of the Egyptian army. In 610 B.C., and again the following year, Egypt's presence near the western bend of the Euphrates is documented (see table 2).

Table 2: Nabopolassar years 15-19 (611-607 B.C.)  
Wiseman's Summary of the Babylonian Chronicle

610	Nabopolassar 15/16	Babylonians march to Upper Euphrates. Army unopposed. Junction with Unnan-manda and march on Harran. <b><i>Assur-uballit and Egyptian(?) army abandon city and retreat to Syria.</i></b> Babylonians and Medes capture Harran. Nabopolassar leaves garrison and returns home.	Piankhi 28/29
609	Nabopolassar 16/17	Assur-uballit and Egyptian army advances on Harran. <b><i>Assyro-Egyptian siege of Harran ended on approach of Nabopolassar.</i></b> Babylonian operations in Izalla and up to Armenian border. Nabopolassar returns home.	Piankhi 29/30
608	Nabopolassar 17/18	Army called out. Expedition against Bit-Hanunia (Urartu). Nabopolassar returns to Babylon.	Piankhi 30/31
607	Nabopolassar 18/19	Nabopolassar with Crown-Prince (Nebuchadrezzar) leads armies to mountains. Nabopolassar returns. Nebuchadrezzar continues operations in Za.... Nebuchadrezzar returns to Babylon. Nabopolassar goes to Kimuhu (on Euphrates). Nabopolassar captures Kimuhu.	Piankhi 31/32

The first instance of renewed interaction between the armies of Egypt and Babylon is dated in the month of Marheshvan, October/November 610

B.C., mid-way through Nabopolassar's sixteenth year. Nineveh had fallen to the combined armies of Media and Babylon in the month of Abu (July/August) of 612 B.C., an event which resulted in the death of Sinsharishkun and the ascendancy of Ashurballit. Now, over two years later, the Medians and the Babylonians again "united their armies and to the city of Harran [after] Ashur-[uball]it who sat upon the throne in Assyria they marched." (lines 59-61a). An Egyptian army, or a contingent thereof in league with Ashurballit, awaited their arrival. It was quickly evident to the defenders of Harran that theirs was a lost cause. The combined armies of Egypt and Assyria were vastly outnumbered. They quickly abandoned the city and fled westward, seeking sanctuary west of the Euphrates. Apparently the city fell without a fight. In the words of Wiseman, who summarizes the relevant sections of the Chronicle:

The approach of the combined armies was sufficiently impressive to cause Ashurballit and the Egyptian troops who had come to his aid to withdraw west of the Euphrates, so allowing Nabopolassar and his supporters to move in and plunder the undefended city. ... A Babylonian garrison was established in Harran to take the first shock of any counter-attack by the Egyptian-Assyrian forces, and the Babylonians and the Umman-manda then withdrew to their respective countries.<sup>33</sup>

This was not the end of the matter. Ashurballit, noting the departure of the main forces of Media and Babylon, planned to retake his city. But for this renewed warfare he had first to wait for the arrival of further contingents of the Egyptian army. Finally, in the seventeenth year of Nabopolassar, in the month of Tammuz (June/July 609 B.C.), the remnant of his Assyrian army, fortified by the arrival of "a great Egyptian army ...crossed the river (and) marched against the city of Harran to conquer it." (line 67). They were unsuccessful.

The Median/Babylonian garrison withstood the counter-siege of Harran long enough for Nabopolassar to march to its relief. Though critical parts of the Chronicle text are "broken and uncertain", sufficient is preserved to determine that the attack was repulsed. For several years following 609 B.C. there is no further mention of the Egyptian army by the Chronicler. Ashurballit is never heard from again and may have

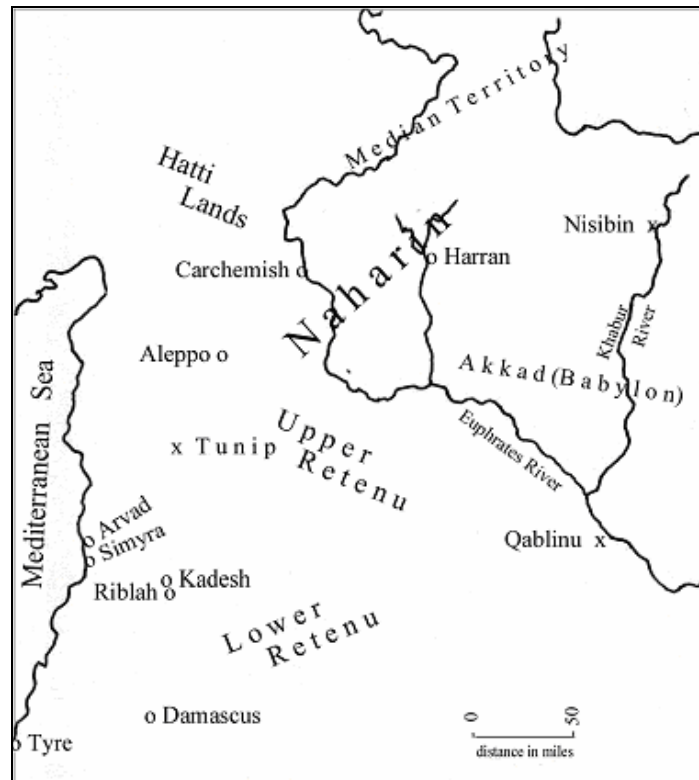
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<sup>33</sup> D.J. Wiseman, *Chronicles of Chaldaean Kings* (1955) 18-19

died in the attempt to recapture his city. The famed and much feared Assyrian empire ceased to exist, its lands divided as spoil among the two conquerors. When the Chronicle continues the historical record on another tablet (BM 22047), with discussion related to the eighteenth year of Nabopolassar, the king of Akkad has turned his attention to Urartu at the headwaters of the Tigris River.

Following 609 B.C. the map of the Ancient Near East to the east of the Euphrates changes dramatically. Media and Babylon now share the lands formerly held by Assyria. It is not known precisely how these lands were divided between the two allies, but the map below suggests a possible, if not probable, territorial distribution. We will return momentarily to discuss this altered geography.

Figure 6: The Bend of the Euphrates immediately following the fall of Harran in 609 B.C.



### *Identity of the Egyptian Pharaoh Necho*

When we documented the last days of the Neo-Assyrian empire in the early pages of *Nebuchadrezzar & the Egyptian Exile* we briefly enquired as to the identity of the Egyptian pharaoh whose army assisted Ashurballit in defense of his empire and whose military strength was sufficient to dissuade two great empires from immediately following up on the victory at Nineveh. We are not told his name in the Babylonian Chronicle. For this information we were dependent on Jewish historians.

Modern historians have supplied the name of the Egyptian ally of Ashurballit, and have added detail to the story of the counter-siege of Harran, thanks to Jewish archivists who document in the Hebrew Bible a particularly relevant incident. The counterattack by Ashurballit and the "great Egyptian army" which had arrived to assist him took place, according to the evidence of the Chronicle, in the two month period between Tammuz (June/July) and Elul (August/September) of 609 B.C. (the 17<sup>th</sup> year of Nabopolassar). In that same year, according to Jewish historians, Josiah king of Judah had an unfortunate and fatal encounter with an Egyptian army moving northward from Egypt along the Mediterranean coast.

While Josiah was king, *Pharaoh Neco king of Egypt went up to the Euphrates River to help the king of Assyria*. King Josiah marched out to meet him in battle, but Neco faced him and killed him at Megiddo. (2 Kings 23:29)<sup>34</sup> (italics added)

Pharaoh Necho was in a hurry when Josiah encountered him on the coastal plain.

But Neco sent messengers to him, saying, "What quarrel is there between you and me, O king of Judah? It is not you I am attacking at this time, but the house with which I am at war. God has told me to hurry; so stop opposing God, who is with me ... (2 Chron. 35:21)

The temporary delay at Megiddo had little bearing on subsequent events. The Egyptian king was on his way to join Ashurballit as the Assyrian king prepared to retake Harran. We have already noted how the attempt

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<sup>34</sup>All quotations from the Hebrew Bible, the Christian Old Testament, are taken from the New International Version (1973) unless otherwise stated.

was aborted within two months of engagement due to the arrival of the Babylonian army. The details are obscured in the damaged section of the Chronicle.

With some certainty we can date the Megiddo incident and Josiah's death to July, 609 B.C.. Three months later, following the failed attempt to retake Harran, Necho returned to his base of operations at Riblah, near Kadesh in central Syria. From there he sent a delegation to Judea where he deposed Jehoahaz, the son of Josiah, who had assumed the kingship of Judah at his father's death. Jehoahaz was transported to Riblah, and shortly thereafter was taken to Egypt by Neco. In his stead "the king of Egypt made Eliakim, a brother of Jehoahaz, king over Judah and changed Eliakim's name to Jehoiakim. (2 Chron. 36:4)

It is clear from the Josiah episode, as described by Jewish historians, that the pharaoh who assisted Ashuruballit in Harran was named *Necho* - not *Piankhi*, and not *Menkheperre*, as we claim. In the traditional history this Necho is identified as *Wahemibre Necao*, the second king of the Saite dynasty, who ruled Egypt for sixteen years from 610-595 B.C. The time is right. The name is right. The identification is considered axiomatic by scholars and serves as one of the primary confirmations of the reliability of the current Egyptian chronology. But that identification was challenged in the first book of this series, which demonstrated that Wahemibre Necao, the successor of Psamtik I, was not the pharaoh Necho named by the Jewish historians. It was argued instead that Wahemibre was the leader of the Egyptian rebellion against Darius II in 487- 484 B.C., at a time when that Persian monarch was preparing to escalate his war against Greece following the aborted battle of Marathon. The reader can follow the argument in chapter eight of the earlier book. We simply point out here, for the sake of the reader unfamiliar with the previous argument, that there exists absolutely no corroborative evidence supporting the identification Necho = Wahemibre Necao. The identification rests entirely on the correspondence in date of the biblical Necho and the Saite dynasty Necao. And that correspondence in date was challenged by the entire book length argument of *Nebuchadnezzar and the Egyptian Exile*.

In the revised chronology it is Piankhi, not Wahemibre Necao, who ruled

Egypt in 609 B.C.. It follows that Necho and Piankhi must be one and the same person. But then how do we explain the difference in name? Several explanations are possible. On the one hand we suggest that Necho is simply another of Piankhi's names. On the other we argue that the Jewish scribes in the passages in question are not providing us with a king's name, but with a nickname, a pejorative epithet created for the occasion. A few remarks on each of these proposals seems to be in order and must be deemed sufficient.

### Necho = Menkheperre Necao

The name Menkheperre is unusual. In spite of the fact that the name was borne by the author of the Karnak Annals, identified by historians as the 18<sup>th</sup> dynasty king Thutmose III, reputedly the most successful military figure in all of Egyptian history, it was not adopted by any of his immediate successors.<sup>35</sup> In addition to Piankhi, only three post 18<sup>th</sup> dynasty kings, all interesting in their own right, borrowed the name. One is the obscure Menkheperre, successor of Pinudjem I in the Theban branch of the 21<sup>st</sup> dynasty, whose other cartouche name is unknown. A second is Shabataka, relative and successor of Piankhi, twice removed. The third is an enigmatic figure named Menkheperre Necao, assigned by scholars to the time of the Assyrian occupation of Egypt. The latter is known from a single monument, a glazed statue of Horus, which contains nothing more than the king's cartouche names.<sup>36</sup>

This Menkheperre Necao is typically identified as the father of Psamtik I, the founder of the 26<sup>th</sup> dynasty, a conclusion based entirely on a genealogical entry provided by Manetho, who states that the father of Psamtik was named Necho. But the family connection is not confirmed from the monuments. A king Necho, father of Psamtik, is otherwise unattested in Egypt. Some support for the identification is said to be provided from the statue itself, which bears certain characteristic features of 25<sup>th</sup> dynasty sculpture, thus dating it to the time of Psamtik's immediate ancestors. But *we* argue that this same evidence argues for

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<sup>35</sup>Unless we include Menkheperre Thutmose IV whose prenomen varies only slightly from that of his (assumed) grandfather Thutmose III.

<sup>36</sup>Petrie, *Scarabs & Cylinders with Names*, pl. 54:25,5, I, cf. TIP 117.

the fact that Menkheperre Neco is a 25<sup>th</sup> dynasty king, not a 26<sup>th</sup> dynasty patriarch. And since we have already established that Piankhi used the prenomen Menkheperre, and was ambivalent about his nomen, it follows that *he* is probably the king who commissioned the Horus statue.

With the dates of the dynasties lowered by 121 years, this 25<sup>th</sup> dynasty Menkheperre Neco must have ruled Egypt in the late 7<sup>th</sup> century, precisely where we have located Piankhi. It is the time of the Josiah debacle. The time is right. The name is right. If traditionalist historians can base their conclusions solely on a chronological synchronism, there should be no argument if the revised history claims the same privilege. We argue therefore that Neco = Menkheperre Neco = Menkheperre Piankhi.<sup>37</sup>

An alternative explanation is provided by Jewish oral tradition which claims that the king who took the life of Josiah, and deposed his successor Jehoahaz, was not in fact named Neco. It is argued that the authors of the biblical text, when documenting the events of 609 B.C., substituted for the name of the Egyptian pharaoh a derogatory epithet (Neco) based on a Hebrew word meaning “stricken/smitten”. According to Allan Ginsburg, the eminent Jewish Talmudist, the consonants nkh, one of the two spellings of Neco’s name employed by the Jewish scribes, was intended to be translated “the lame one”, a sarcastic reference to some physical defect in the hated Egyptian pharaoh. The tradition is well documented.

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<sup>37</sup>There exists the possibility, not discussed in this book, that the pharaoh Neco referred to in the Hebrew Bible is not Menkheperre Piankhi, but a delta kinglet, successor to one of those mentioned on the great Piankhi stela. He might, for instance, be a son of Peftjuaawybast. Certainly these kings would have been required to assist Piankhi in his Asian adventures just as they earlier assisted Tefnakht in opposing him. And one or more of them may have led a contingent of the Egyptian army sent to assist Ashurballit. In support of this possibility we note that the Egyptian army at this time in history consisted of multiple contingents, distinguished in part on the basis of ethnicity. In referring to a battle which took place only four years later than the Josiah incident, one in which pharaoh Neco also participated, the Jewish historians note the presence of helmeted troops with large and small shields, mounted cavalry and charioteers, and warriors - “men of Cush (Nubia) and Put (Libya) who carry shields, men of Lydia who draw the bow” Jer. 46: 9. Not all these troop contingents need be dispatched at one time and certainly not all would be led by Piankhi who, as we have seen in the case of the invasion of the delta, was not averse to dispatching an army under secondary leadership.

The interpretation of Neco, the name of the Egyptian king, as though it were *nkh* “lame” is often found in Jewish and Christian writings; comp. Megillah 3a; Mo’ed Katan 28b; Targum Zech. 12.11, and 2 Chron 35:20; Peshitta on 2 Kings 23:29; Aphraates, 471. Legends of the Jews VI n. 123

Ginsburg states elsewhere that “this etymology of the name Necho, connecting it with Hebrew *nkh regolim* “lame”, is very old.<sup>38</sup>

It is impossible to determine at this late date precisely what was intended by authors writing twenty-six hundred years ago.<sup>39</sup> But we do not have to choose between the two possibilities. Both may be correct. We know that many, if not all Egyptian pharaohs had multiple popular names distinct from their titulary names. And we know that Piankhi included multiple variations of his titulary names. It should surprise no-one that he was known to his contemporaries by some Egyptian (or Nubian) title (or name), perhaps Neco, perhaps some homonym, which sounded to a foreign ear like the Hebrew word for “lame”. Further speculation is baseless. In the final analysis it is the comparison of the Chronicle and the Annals of Menkheperre for the years 610-609 B.C. which ultimately convinces us that pharaoh Necho is Piankhi.

As we turn our attention to the Annals we look for parallels to the two incidents recorded in the Chronicle, the loss of Harran by the combined armies of Assyria and Egypt in 610 B.C. and the failed counter-assault on Harran in 609 B.C. The first of these, the flight from Harran at the approach of the Median/Babylonian armies took place in the 8<sup>th</sup> month of Nabopolassar’s 16<sup>th</sup> year, thus the 29<sup>th</sup> of Piankhi. The counterattack on Harran took place late in the fourth month of Nabopolassar’s 17<sup>th</sup> year, the 30<sup>th</sup> of Piankhi. These dates correspond to the 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> campaigns of Menkheperre,. We expect to find, therefore, that on these campaigns the army of Menkheperre was in the vicinity of the Upper Euphrates. There should be some indication, particularly in relation to the 6<sup>th</sup> campaign (where we know that a portion of his army actually engaged in battle), that the Egyptians actually fought with an enemy near Carchemish. Piankhi may be reluctant to document the two encounters

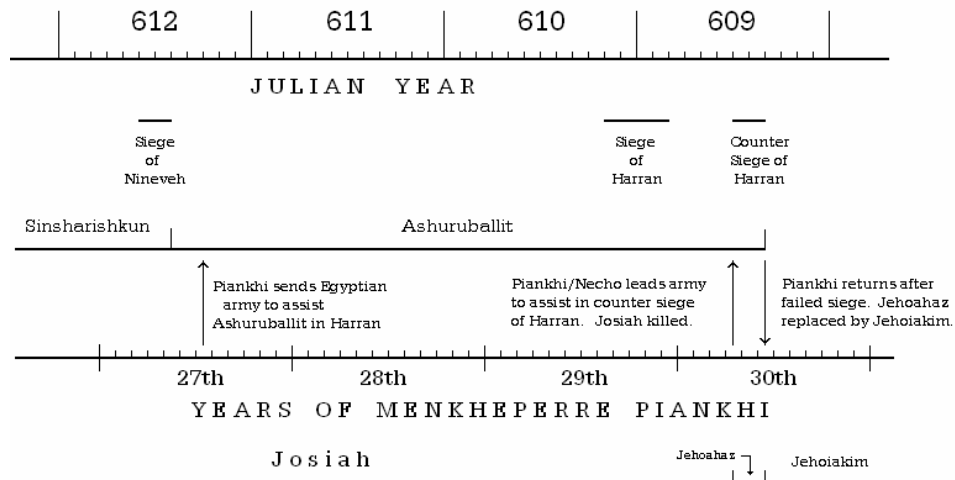
<sup>38</sup>Ginsburg, *Legends of the Jews* IV n. 71).

<sup>39</sup>The evidence seems to favor the fact that the king’s name was, in fact, Neco. One group of scribes state that the name of the Egyptian king was Nakah (*nkh* 2 Chr. 35:22; 36:4; 2 Kings 23:29,33,34,35) while others say Nako (*nkw* 2 Chr. 35:20; Jer. 46:2), suggestive of the fact that the name terminated with both sounds. The Septuagint translates pharao Nechao.



with the Medians and the Babylonians - after all, he lost both contests - but his presence in the region should be transparent. To assist the reader in following the argument we reproduce from *Nebuchadnezzar* a timeline<sup>40</sup> (see figure 7 below) summarizing the sequence of events described above. We make only one change. Rather than listing the Saite dynasty kings as the allies of Assyria, as we did in the earlier volume, we name Piankhi in their place. The regnal years assigned to Piankhi in figure 7 follow consistently from our earlier argument, where we (apparently correctly) identified his 23<sup>rd</sup> year as 616 B.C.<sup>41</sup>

Figure 7: Timeline of events in the last days of Assyria on the assumption that the Egyptian king assisting Assyria was Piankhi.



The argument in the following pages has but one purpose, namely, to show that the activities of Menkheperre Thutmose, as described in the Annals for his 29<sup>th</sup> and 30<sup>th</sup> years, parallel the actions assigned to Piankhi in the above timeline for those same years.

<sup>40</sup>Cf. *Nebuchadnezzar & the Egyptian Exile*, figure 3, page 7.

<sup>41</sup>Cf. figure 4 on page 27.

For reference purposes only, we reproduce below (table 3) the Babylonian Chronicle and Hebrew Bible references for those two years

**Table 3: Chronology of the 16<sup>th</sup>-17<sup>th</sup> years of Nabopolassar // 29<sup>th</sup>-30<sup>th</sup> years of Menkheperre according to the Babylonian Chronicle and the Hebrew Bible**

Nabopolassar 16 <sup>th</sup> Menkheperre Piankhi 29 <sup>th</sup>	Mar/April 610 Apr/May 610 May/June 610 June/July 610 July/Aug 610 Aug/Sept 610 Sept/Oct 610 Oct/Nov 610  Nov/Dec 610 Dec 610/Jan 609 Jan/Feb 609 Feb/Mar 609	Medes and Babylonian army advance on Harran Egypt & Assyria flee west of Euphrates. Babylonians and Medians occupy Harran.  Babylonian & Median armies leave Harran. Garrison remains.
Nabopolassar 17 <sup>th</sup> Menkheperre Piankhi 30 <sup>th</sup>	Mar/April 609 Apr/May 609 May/June 609 June/July 609  July/Aug 609 Aug/Sept 609  Sept/Oct 609  Oct/Nov 609  Nov/Dec 609 Dec 609/Jan 608 Jan/Feb 608 Feb/Mar 608	Ashurballit waits for Egyptian aid before attempting to retake Harran.  Neco en route to Damascus. Josiah killed. Counter-siege of Harran begins. Siege of Harran continues. Final assault on Harran repulsed. Babylonian army arrives to relieve garrison. Neco at Riblah, in vicinity of Kadesh. Jehoahaz deposed & brought to Riblah. Menkheperre (Neco) returns to Egypt taking Jehoahaz as captive.

*Menkheperre's 5<sup>th</sup> & 6<sup>th</sup> Campaigns*

According to Breasted, commenting on the 5<sup>th</sup> campaign of Menkheperre:

The first campaign extended no farther northward than the Tripolis of the southern Lebanon, and this was inland. The second and third campaigns were not aggressive, and apparently did not push far north; the record of the fourth campaign is lost, and it is not until the fifth, in the year 29, that we have certain information of an advance beyond the northern limits of the first campaign, and along the coast. This fifth campaign begins with a new caption, as if a new period of the wars had begun here, and it is clear that the revolt suppressed in the south in the year 23 was after six years not yet subdued in the cities of Zahi which the king had not yet visited. The wars in the Annals are thus divided into two great groups, the first group being in the south, and the second group, beginning in the year 29, being the wars in the north. BAR II 454

We have already argued that Breasted is mistaken concerning the northern extension of the 1<sup>st</sup> campaign. We can therefore safely disregard the opening lines of his commentary. But he correctly notes the increased presence of Egypt in the north of Syria beginning in the year 610 B.C. That fact alone is significant since this increased presence is demanded by the testimony of the Chronicle and the Hebrew Bible.

It is clear from the Annals that Menkheperre, on his 5<sup>th</sup> campaign, extended his influence at least as far north as Tunip, not far from Carchemish. Also for the first time he moved to control the coastal lands west of the Orontes, a territory known to the Egyptians as Zahi. As Breasted correctly notes, this campaign marks a distinct phase in the expansionist policy of the Egyptian king. And as he had done years before, in the midst of his battle with Tefnakht, Piankhi pauses in the midst of his north Syrian campaign to acknowledge the role played by the god Amun.

His majesty commanded to cause that the victories which his father [Amon] had given him should be recorded upon the stone wall in the temple which his majesty made anew [for his father Amon, setting forth each expedition by its name, together with the plunder which his majesty brought therefrom. It was done according to [all the command which his father, Re, gave to him] - - Year 29. Behold, [his] majesty was [in Za]hi subduing the countries revolting against him, on the fifth victorious campaign. Behold, his majesty captured the city of Wa - (*W3* -) - - . This army offered

acclamations to his majesty, giving praise to [Amon] for the victories which [he gave to] his son. They were pleasing to the heart of his majesty above everything.

After this his majesty proceeded to the storehouse of offering[s], to give a sacrifice to Amon and to Harakhte consisting of oxen, calves, fowl, [for the life, prosperity, and health of Menkheperre, who giveth life forever.

List of plunder taken out of this city, from the infantry of that foe of Tunip (*Tw-np*), the chief of this city, 1; (*T-h-r-*) warriors, 329, silver, 100 deben, gold, 100 deben, lapis lazuli, malachite, vessels of bronze and copper.

Behold ships were taken - - - laden with everything, with slaves, male and female, .... everything good. Afterward his majesty proceeded southward to Egypt, to his father Amon-Re, with joy of heart. BAR II 456-460

Although line 460 of the Annals notes the departure of Piankhi for Egypt, the narrative goes on to describe the siege and capture of Arvad, as if Piankhi were present. Either events are out of order, or a portion of the army continued the campaign in the absence of the king. We prefer the latter interpretation. The annals are careful elsewhere to preserve the order of events - why not here?

Behold, his majesty overthrew the city of Arvad (*3-r3-ty-wt*), with its grain, cutting down all its pleasant trees. Behold, there were found [the products] of all Zahi. Their gardens were filled with their fruit, their wines were found remaining in their presses as water flows, their grain on the terraces [upon - -]; it was more plentiful than the sand of the shore. The army were overwhelmed with their portions.

List of tribute brought to his majesty on this expedition: 51 slaves, male and female; 30 horses; 10 flat dishes of silver; incense, oil, 470 (mn-) jars of honey, 6,428 (mn-) jars of wine, copper, lead, lapis lazuli, green felspar, 616 large cattle, 3,636 small cattle, loaves, various (jfr.t-) loaves, clean grain in kernel and ground ----. All good fruit of this country. Behold, the army of his majesty was drunk and anointed with oil every day as at a feast in Egypt. BAR II 461-62

We are encouraged to find that Piankhi's armies are in the vicinity of the Euphrates during this 5<sup>th</sup> campaign. Tunip lies less than 100 miles from the great River, approximately 150 miles from Carchemish and therefore less than 200 miles from Harran. But there appears to be no place in the narrative in which to insert our hypothetical journey to Harran in support of Assyria. How do we harmonize the Annals and the Chronicle? The answer is not far off.

We are not informed in the annals precisely when during Piankhi's 29<sup>th</sup> year his conquests in Upper Retenu took place. We suspect it was during

the summer and early fall of the year, prior to the arrival at Harran of the combined armies of Babylon and Media. Our suspicion is confirmed by details included with the description of the overthrow of Arvad. The wine harvest has begun. Grain is more plentiful than sand on the shore. It is autumn, probably September/October. The siege of Harran began in October/November (see figure 7 & table 3). If, as we suspect, the conquest of Arvad took place after Piankhi concluded his 5<sup>th</sup> campaign and returned to Egypt, then he likely left Zahi several weeks before the arrival of the Median and Babylonian armies. Perhaps his departure was the signal for the combined armies to begin their siege of Harran.

It seems clear from the text that when Piankhi left for Egypt a portion of his army was left behind to secure the coastal area (thus the assault on Arvad). We surmise that other troops were sent to assist Ashurballit at Harran. The Assyrians remained the lone buffer state between Piankhi and Babylon. Assisting Ashurballit was in the best interests of Egypt.<sup>42</sup>

The lack of any record of the humiliating retreat from Harran is disappointing, but not surprising. In the first place Piankhi was absent from the event. His 5<sup>th</sup> campaign was officially over and he had returned to Egypt. And secondly, it was a non-event. There was no battle. His troops, along with those of Ashurballit, vacated Harran without contesting the take over of the city. But even if the retreat were viewed as a military defeat we would not anticipate any mention of the event. Piankhi expressly stated, in the introductory lines to this section of his annals, that these inscriptions were intended to record his successes, not his losses. He declared forthrightly: “His majesty commanded to cause that *the victories* which his father [Amun] had given him should be recorded “. In view of this expressed intention we should expect no substantial record of any defeats. As we will see in the records for subsequent years, Piankhi was loathe to blame Amun for any losses. Other dignitaries might mention them, but not Piankhi, whose devotion to the god was obsessive.

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<sup>42</sup>We assume throughout this entire argument that a) Egypt did lend troops to assist Ashurballit in 610 B.C. and b) that this assistance was marginal. But we are mindful of the fact that the reference to Egypt in line 61 of the Chronicle is questionable. Wiseman’s translation clearly indicates doubt concerning the reading: “As for Assur-uballit and the army of Eg[ypt(?)] which had come [to his help,] fear of the enemy fell upon them; they abandoned the city and ..... crossed [the river Euphrates].

The occupation of Harran by the Babylonian army lasted four months, extending into the following year. In the month Adar (Feb/Mar 609 B.C.) the army of Nabopolassar returned to Babylon, leaving only a garrison of troops to occupy and defend the city. It was the end of the 16<sup>th</sup> year of Nabopolassar, the 29<sup>th</sup> year of Menkheperre Piankhi.

### The 6<sup>th</sup> Campaign

The Piankhi annals for his 6<sup>th</sup> campaign are brief. In them we hope to find record of his attempt to assist his homeless Assyrian ally to regain his city. But we remain mindful that Piankhi does not like to publicize his losses. And at Harran he sustained a resounding defeat. This time his army actually engaged in battle. The loss cannot be rationalized.

According to the Annals:

Year 30. Behold, his majesty was in the land of Retenu on the sixth victorious expedition of his majesty.

(He) arrived at the city of Kadesh (*Kd-šw*), overthrew it, cut down its groves, harvested its grain. (He) came to the land of Š-y-wt, arrived at the city of Simyra (*D3-my-r3*), arrived at the city of Arvad (*3-r3-t-wt*), doing likewise to it.

List of the tribute brought to the souls of his majesty by the chiefs of Retenu in this year.

Behold, *the children of the chiefs (and) their brothers were brought to be in strongholds in Egypt. Now, whosoever died among these chiefs, his majesty would cause his son to stand in his place.* List of the children of chiefs brought in this year: (x+)2 persons; 181 slaves, male and female; 188 horses; 40 chariots, wrought with gold and silver (and) painted. BAR II 464-67 (italics added)

As we read this description of the 6<sup>th</sup> campaign we are encouraged to find Piankhi in the vicinity of Kadesh, precisely where he had to be if the Jewish scribes have correctly recorded the sequence of events (Riblah lies about 8 miles south of Kadesh). But where is the reference to a battle with the Medes and the Babylonians in the vicinity of Harran? Even if Piankhi has deliberately ignored the humiliating defeat, there appears to be no room in his military timetable in which to insert a trans-Euphrates battle? In fact, the sequence of military actions seems to be moving from central Syria toward the Mediterranean coast, not eastward toward the Euphrates. What is the explanation? The answer to our dilemma can

be found in a closer examination of the text of the Annals.

The counter-siege of Harran took place in the summer. Early in July Necho was on the move to assist Assyria. The combined Egyptian and Assyrian armies surrounded Harran from the month Tammuz (June/July) to the month Elul (Aug/Sept) at which time Nabopolassar responded, sending the main force of the Babylonian army. The Assyrian/Egyptian coalition abandoned their assault. The details thus far are supplied by the text of the Chronicle. At this point the Annals appear to take up the story. Following his loss at Harran Piankhi apparently retreated to the relative safety of Upper Retenu, where he was obliged to put down a rebellion initiated by his nemesis, the prince of Kadesh. In this endeavor he was successful, and Piankhi, accordingly, begins the Annals for his 6<sup>th</sup> campaign at this point. When viewed in this light we understand why the action begins in central Syria, moves to Simyra and Arvad on the Mediterranean coast, and then back to Egypt.

The Annals, read carelessly, have left scholars with the impression that Piankhi's 6<sup>th</sup> campaign began with the siege of Kadesh. That is clearly not true. The siege of Kadesh took place in the fall. The groves are ripe; the grain is ready for harvest. Piankhi's campaigns typically began in late winter or very early in the spring. Where was Piankhi during the summer of 609 B.C.? We know the answer, even if the Egyptian king is reluctant to acknowledge the fact.

Breasted was not the first to misinterpret the Annals for the 6<sup>th</sup> campaign, but he is representative. For the record we reproduce his comments:

This year the expedition went by water and landed at Simyra, the most convenient port for reaching Kadesh. This city had been the leader in the great coalition of revolters, defeated at Megiddo in the first campaign seven years before. It was doubtless also constantly supporting revolt in the Phoenician coast cities, as Tunip had done in the preceding year (29) causing the king to direct his forces thither in that year. Finally in the year 30 the king succeeded in reaching the source of the disturbance, capturing and severely punishing Kadesh, *a feat in which Amenemhab assisted*. He returned to his fleet at Simyra, proceeded to Arvad and punished it as in the preceding year. *On his return to Egypt he took with him the children of the native princes* to be educated in friendship toward Egypt, that they might be sent back gradually to replace the old hostile generation of Syrian princes. BAR II 463 (italics added)

Breasted has totally missed the point when he states that Menkheperre and his army arrived at Simyra by ship. There is absolutely no basis for this claim, nor for the underlying assumption that the Egyptian king possessed a fleet of ships of sufficient size and number to transport an army. But the famed Egyptologist was hard pressed to explain why the annals begin with the Egyptian army on the outskirts of Kadesh and the city in rebellion. Without the historical context which guides our thinking we might make the same mistake.

By placing the 30<sup>th</sup> year of Menkheperre in its proper late 7<sup>th</sup> century context we can also improve on Breasted's remarks concerning the rebellion at Kadesh, by supplying the cause. Piankhi has just engaged in a losing battle at Harran. His nemesis, the prince of Kadesh, has apparently misinterpreted Piankhi's withdrawal from the region as a sign of weakness, and has chosen the moment to challenge Egyptian authority. This was a mistake. Piankhi had no resolve to risk his army defending a foreigner, albeit an ally, in a losing cause. But he was not weak. And he had no intentions of loosening his hold on Syria.

Our comments thus far are not mere speculation. There is inscriptional evidence supporting our interpretation of the sequence of events, namely, that Menkheperre's battle with Kadesh came on the heels of an encounter with the enemy across the Euphrates near Carchemish. Piankhi might not record his defeats, but several of his officers are not so reluctant. And as Breasted indicates in remarks quoted above, one of them, named Amenemheb, who assisted Menkheperre on this 6<sup>th</sup> campaign, lived to tell the tale.

### *The Memoirs of Amenemheb*

Amenemheb, a wily and resourceful military officer, served Menkheperre through the course of his many campaigns, and nearing death had a summary account of several of the most memorable incidents of his long life engraved on the walls of his tomb in the necropolis of Thebes.<sup>43</sup> We shall have cause to return several times to Amenemheb's

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<sup>43</sup>The inscriptions contained therein were first published by Ebers in 1873, ZAS ... (1873) 3-9



tomb to read his memoirs. For the time being we are content with an introduction to this dignitary, and with the opening lines of his tomb inscription. Breasted provides an English translation of what he describes as a “very important supplement to the Annals” but complains that it “does not insert the dates of the campaigns nor follow a chronological order”. He is, of course, mistaken.

The old soldier seems to have narrated to some scribe, who recorded them, the more important incidents and adventures of his career as they occurred to him, without attempt at order, beyond the involuntary association of events that belong to the same campaign. BAR II 574

We disagree strongly with these remarks. The narrative does follow a chronological order, as we might have expected.<sup>44</sup> The problem for Breasted, and for the entire community of Egyptologists which follow him, is that Amenemheb’s inscription begins with a description of a campaign that reached the Euphrates (Naharin). And as we have explained at some length, scholars are of the opinion that the Euphrates was not reached until much later, the 8<sup>th</sup> campaign to be specific. It is important that we read Amenemheb’s remarks for ourselves.

The officer, Amenemhab; he says;

I was the very faithful one of the sovereign, L.P.H., the wise-hearted of the King of Upper Egypt, the excellent-hearted of the King of Lower Egypt. I followed my lord on his expeditions in the northern and southern country. He desired that I should be the companion of his feet, while he was upon the battlefield of his victories, while his valor fortified the heart.

I fought hand to hand in the land of Negeb (N-g-bA). I brought off three men, Asiatics, as living prisoners.

When his majesty came to Naharin (N-h-r-n) I brought off three men from the fight there; I set them before thy majesty as living prisoners. BAR II 579-81

There is no problem for the revised history, as there is for the traditional history, in the fact that Amenemheb begins his memoirs with reminiscences about a battle in the Negeb followed immediately by an

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<sup>44</sup>Detailed tomb inscriptions, such as those of Amenemheb, were very carefully planned and laid out. They were not the product of some hasty interview with a scribe, as Breasted claims. When Breasted claims that Amenemheb randomly narrated “to some scribe, who recorded them, the more important incidents and adventures of his career as they occurred to him” he is merely stating the only possibility open to the traditional history, however remote, since the narrative of this dignitary seriously contradicts that history’s understanding of the Menkheperre Annals.

excursion to the Euphrates region (Naharin). Where else to begin his story than with an account of the first and most successful year of his military life, the illustrious 1<sup>st</sup> campaign of Menkheperre.. The second to last line in his introductory remarks clearly refers to his participation in the battle of Megiddo in the land of the Negeb, and the concluding line confirms our suspicion that the army reached Naharin that same year. Any other interpretation is strained. The Negeb, Breasted agrees, is “clearly the Hebrew Negeb = “the south country”<sup>45</sup>, a term which, though loosely defined, is typically descriptive of southern Palestine, including areas as far north as Megiddo. Naharin is the typical Egyptian designation of the Euphrates region. There is no ambiguity in Amenemheb’s inscription. It is only because his remarks conflict with the established history that scholars are compelled to suggest that he is speaking out of turn.

Breasted, who is typical of the consensus scholarly opinion, considers the reference to a battle in the Negeb as a reference to Menkheperre’s later skirmish with the Shasu, a tribal group which occupied the Gaza region at sundry times in the late Egyptian period. The Shasu, he notes, were encountered by Menkheperre on his 14<sup>th</sup> campaign. Therefore Amenemheb cannot be following any chronological order.

We wonder why Amenemheb would begin his annals with the inconsequential Shasu incident, which, as we will soon see, deserved only a passing mention in the Annals, and why he would neglect to mention entirely the battle of Megiddo, by far the most significant incident in the illustrious career of Menkheperre. The battle of Megiddo was the dominant event in the 1<sup>st</sup> campaign. We expect it to be mentioned first. And the reference to Naharin immediately following agrees precisely with the substance of our argument in the previous chapter, that the Egyptian king, or at least his army, reached the Euphrates in his first campaign of victory. The first two lines, read in the most reasonable manner, describe the events of the year 616 B.C. precisely as we have described them. At least in this instance Amenemheb is not speaking out of order. We expect therefore that he will continue to detail the events of his life sequentially, and that the inscription following will document the next great Egyptian excursion into the north of Syria, the sequence of

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<sup>45</sup>Footnote (a) BAR II p. 231.

battles which took place on the 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> campaigns in the years 610 and 609 B.C. The memoirs continue:

Again I fought hand to hand (on) that expedition in the land of ‘The-Height-of-Wan’ (*W<sup>c</sup>-n*) on the west of Aleppo (*H<sup>3</sup>-r<sup>3</sup>-bw*). I brought off 13 Asiatics as living prisoners, 13 men; 70 living asses; 13 bronze [spears]; the bronze was wrought with gold —.”

Again I fought (on) that expedition in the land of Carchemish (*K<sup>3</sup>-ry-k<sup>3</sup>-my<sup>c</sup>-š<sup>3</sup>*). I brought off — — as living prisoners. I crossed over the water of Naharin (*N-h-r-n*), while they were in my hand, to — —; I [set] them before my lord. He rewarded me with a great reward; list thereof: — —.

I behold the royal victories of the King Menkheperre, given life, in the country of Senzar (*šn-d<sup>3</sup>-r<sup>3</sup>*), when he made a [great] sl[laughter] [among] them. I fought hand to hand before the king, I brought off a hand there. He gave to me the gold of honor; list thereof: — — two silver rings.

Again I beheld his bravery, while I was among his followers. [He] captures [the city of] Kadesh (*Kd-šw*); I was not absent from the place where he was; I brought off two men, lords (*m-r<sup>3</sup>-y-n<sup>3</sup>*) as [living prisoners; I set them] before the king, the Lord of the Two Lands ... He gave to me gold because of bravery, before the whole people — — —; list thereof: of the finest gold: a lion; 2 necklaces, 2 flies, 4 arm rings. BAR II 582-85

Two expeditions are recorded in these four lines of text. The first (line 1) refers to a battle in the region west of Aleppo. This must be a reference to the 5<sup>th</sup> campaign (610 B.C.) tour of conquest which, according to the Annals, reached the city *W<sup>3</sup>-* (the name was obscured in the Annals) assisted by troops from Tunip. Likely the city lay between Tunip and Aleppo. This detail in Amenemheb’s journal places the Egyptian armies less than a hundred miles from Harran, where, we argue, troops were dispatched to assist the threatened Assyrian garrison.

The second expedition, mentioned in lines 2-4, describes the 6<sup>th</sup> campaign (609 B.C.), a fact confirmed by the mention of the assault on Kadesh at its conclusion. Three distinct battles are recorded for this campaign. Only the third, the Kadesh incident, made its way into the Annals. The second battle must be viewed as an earlier phase of the assault on Kadesh and should not be distinguished from that incident. Sinzar is located no more than a days march north of Kadesh. An Egyptian army traveling from Carchemish to Kadesh would naturally pass through the country surrounding Sinzar. Apparently some skirmishes in that region preceded the assault on the town of Kadesh. Amenemheb distinguishes the Sinzar and Kadesh incidents for personal reasons.

Our attention is focused on the first of the three battles recorded by Amenemheb for this year, one which was fought in the “land of Carchemish”. In the context of the revised chronology this must refer to Piankhi’s loss to the Babylonian and Median armies at Harran. Although we find no specific mention of Harran, reference is clearly made to a crossing of the Euphrates, which implies a destination distinct from the city of Carchemish. Apparently the designation “land of Carchemish” was a regional term which included the former Assyrian stronghold. Support for this claim is forthcoming from the text of the Hebrew Bible. We recall that Necho, en route to Harran in support of Ashurballit, in his brief dialogue with Josiah prior to the death of the Judean king, specified Carchemish as his destination.

After all this, when Josiah had set the temple in order, Neco king of Egypt went up to fight at Carchemish on the Euphrates, and Josiah marched out to meet him in battle. (2 Chron 35:20)

It has often been supposed that the Jewish annalist made a mistake, supplying here the site name of a later battle (to be discussed in our next chapter). But there was no mistake. “At Charchemish” in the Hebrew text and “in the land of Carchemish” in Amenemheb’s journal are apparently generic phrases for the lands immediately east of the Euphrates near Carchemish. Both sources are referring to the same event. And it is clear from Amenemheb’s comments that there was no great victory here. The Egyptian officer managed to capture a few enemy troops, which he returned to Menkheppere, and for this he was rewarded. Thus the mention of the incident in his tomb. But there was no victory for Egypt and no list of the spoils of victory in the Annals. The army soon retreated to the safety of the Orontes River Valley.

### A Synthesis: The Sources Combined

The timetable reproduced below in table 4 summarizes the chronology of the years 610-609 B.C. argued in the preceding pages. We have simply duplicated the earlier timetable (table 3, p. 63), which summarized information provided by the Babylonian Chronicle and Hebrew Bible, and added the new information supplied by the Annals and by Amenemheb. This new information is distinguished from the earlier data

by its inclusion solely in capital letters.

**Table 4: Chronology of the 16<sup>th</sup> & 17<sup>th</sup> years of Nabopolassar // 29<sup>th</sup>-30<sup>th</sup> years of Menkheperre according to the Babylonian Chronicle, the Hebrew Bible, and the ANNALS OF MENKHEPERRE.**

<p style="text-align: center;">Nabopolassar 16<sup>th</sup> Menkheperre Piankhi 29<sup>th</sup></p>	<p>Mar/April 610 Apr/May 610 May/June 610 June/July 610 July/Aug 610  Aug/Sept 610  Sept/Oct 610 Oct/Nov 610  Nov/Dec 610 Dec 610/Jan 609 Jan/Feb 609 Feb/Mar 609</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">EGYPTIAN ASSAULT ON W3- IN VICINITY OF TUNIP &amp; ALEPPO. CAPTURE OF ARVAD. MENKHEPPERRE RETURNS TO EGYPT. Troops left to assist Assyria.  Medes &amp; Babylonian army advance on Harran. Egypt &amp; Assyria flee west of Euphrates. Babylon &amp; Media occupy Harran.  Babylonian &amp; Median armies leave Harran. Garrison remains.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Nabopolassar 17<sup>th</sup> Menkheperre Piankhi 30<sup>th</sup></p>	<p>Mar/April 609  Apr/May 609 May/June 609 June/July 609  July/Aug 609 Aug/Sept 609  Sept/Oct 609  Oct/Nov 609  Nov/Dec 609 Dec 609/Jan 608 Jan/Feb 608 Feb/Mar 608</p>	<p>Ashurballit waits for Egyptian aid before attempting to retake Harran.  Neco en route to Carchemish. Josiah killed. Counter-siege of Harran begins. Siege of Harran continues Final assault on Harran repulsed. Babylonian army arrives to relieve garrison. . Egypt leaves &amp; returns to Retenu. ASSAULT ON KADESH Neco at Riblah, in vicinity of Kadesh. Jehoahaz deposed &amp; brought to Riblah. Menkheperre (Neco) returns to Egypt via Judea. Jehoahaz taken to Egypt.</p>

### The 7<sup>th</sup> Campaign.

The 7<sup>th</sup> campaign of Menkheperre/Piankhi, which occupied the year 608 B.C., was apparently restricted to the Mediterranean coast, where he

received tribute from his vassal princes. In spite of his recent setback at Harran, and the downfall of his Assyrian ally, Piankhi continued to command the allegiance of Upper Retenu. There is no indication in the Annals that his sovereignty over the lands west of the Euphrates was forfeited. The rebellions in Kadesh and Arvad, which had immediately followed Piankhi's losses in the vicinity of Harran, and were perhaps encouraged by the earlier defeats, had been put down. Syria remained under Egyptian control.

There is no further mention of Egypt in the Chronicle until the year 606/605 B.C., which corresponds to the 8<sup>th</sup> campaign of the Egyptian king. That campaign, and the two which follow on its heels, will occupy our attention throughout the next chapter. There remains for us to discuss here two neglected issues from the 6<sup>th</sup> campaign - the Mariannu and the Josiah succession. Both contribute marginally to our argument.

### *Mariannu & the Josiah Succession*

#### The Mariannu

When Amenemheb mentions the siege of Kadesh in his discussion of the 6<sup>th</sup> campaign his attention is directed toward the honors he won. He personally captured "two men" whom he identifies as "lords (*m-r3-y-n3*)", for which he was duly rewarded. The term *mariannu* is Semitic. As recognized by Breasted in his translation, the Egyptian term here most likely represents the Aramaic word for "lord". But this raises a problem, not discussed by Breasted.

When Immanuel Velikovsky wrote *Peoples of the Sea*, his penultimate book in the *Ages in Chaos* series, he commented on the presence of this word in a text of Ramses III, supposedly written in the 12<sup>th</sup> century B.C. According to that inscription, Ramses is quoted as stating:

I organized my frontier in Zahi, prepared before them (to whit) the princes, the commanders of the garrison, and the Mariannu.<sup>46</sup>

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<sup>46</sup> Edgerton & Wilson, *Historical Records of Ramses III*. (Quoted in Velikovsky, *Peoples of the Sea*, p. 62.)

From this reference Velikovsky derived a supporting argument for his thesis of a late date for Ramses III. He argued, correctly, that since a text authored by Ramses makes reference to a Phoenician noble bearing an Aramaic title, Ramses must postdate the introduction of the Aramaic language into Syria. We quote him on the subject:

Who were these Mariannu, the only trustworthy allies of Egypt? At first it was suggested that Mariannu is the Aramaic word Mareinu, meaning “noblemen.” But who could they have been, the foreign warriors in the Egypt of the twelfth century, called by an Aramaic name? Aramaic is a Semitic language that supplanted Hebrew in Palestine after the Babylonian exile, in which parts of the Books of Ezra and Daniel, and later the Talmuds, were written; at the beginning of the present era it was the everyday language of the Jews in Palestine. The oldest Aramaic inscriptions date from the ninth and eighth centuries.<sup>47</sup>

Velikovsky argues that Ramses III could not have lived and ruled in the 12<sup>th</sup> century and yet have had intercourse with post 9<sup>th</sup>/8<sup>th</sup> century Aramaean nobility. We can apply the same reasoning, *a fortiori*, to Menkheperre. The presence of *mariannu* in Upper Retenu during the 5<sup>th</sup> campaign of Menkheperre, is yet another reason for believing that Amenemhet, and the king he served, did not live in the 15<sup>th</sup> century B.C.

### The Josiah Succession

We have several times quoted the Hebrew Bible in its references to the death of Josiah, the brief reign of his son and successor Jehoahaz, and the almost immediate replacement of Jehoahaz by Eliakim, another son of Josiah, all at the instigation of pharaoh Necho.

Jehoahaz was twenty-three years old when he became king, and he reigned in Jerusalem three months. The king of Egypt dethroned him in Jerusalem and imposed on Judah a levy of a hundred talents of silver and a talent of gold. The king of Egypt made Eliakim, a brother of Jehoahaz king over Judah and Jerusalem and changed Eliakim’s name to Jehoiakim. But Neco took Eliakim’s brother Jehoahaz and carried him off to Egypt. 2 Chron. 36:2-4

From the book of 2 Kings we are further informed that “Pharaoh Necho put him in chains at Riblah in the land of Hamath” from which location

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<sup>47</sup> Immanuel Velikovsky, *Peoples of the Sea* (1977) 62, 63

he was deported to Egypt, and we are told furthermore, that Jehoahaz died in Egypt. (2 Kings 23:33,34)

It is absolutely clear that these actions were taken subsequent to the loss at Harran and immediately following the suppression of the rebellion at Kadesh. There can be no doubt, in view of what we know about the circumstances of the rebellion in Kadesh, that Jehoahaz had also decided that the time was right to declare independence from Egypt. His removal from office and deportment was the result. Jehoahaz had reigned only three months. It was September/October, 609 B.C.

At the identical moment in the Annals, i.e., immediately following the account of the successful siege of Kadesh, we find Menkheperre declaring as a *fait accompli* the identical dual actions among his subject princes, namely, the appointment of a successor for a subject king (chief) who has died, and the deposition to Egypt of his son. Can there be any doubt that he has Jehoahaz in mind?

Year 30. Behold, his majesty was in the land of Retenu on the sixth victorious expedition of his majesty.

(He) arrived at the city of Kadesh (*Kd-šw*), overthrew it, cut down its groves, harvested its grain. (He) came to the land of Š-y-wt, arrived at the city of Simyra (*D3-my-r3*), arrived at the city of Arvad (*3-r3-t-wt*), doing likewise to it.

List of the tribute brought to the souls of his majesty by the chiefs of Retenu in this year.

Behold, *the children of the chiefs (and) their brothers were brought to be in strongholds in Egypt. Now, whosoever died among these chiefs, his majesty would cause his son to stand in his place.* List of the children of chiefs brought in this year: (x+)2 persons; 181 slaves, male and female; 188 horses; 40 chariots, wrought with gold and silver (and) painted. BAR II 464-67 (italics added)

This remarkable coincidence of words and actions argues strongly for the identity of Menkheperre (Piankhi) and Necho. And there is yet another document which contributes to this argument.

The sandstone stela of Piankhi found by Reisner at Napata (already discussed in our second chapter), that which contains the first three titulary names of Thuthmose III, contains in lines 16-23 a remarkable speech in which Piankhi declares his absolute sovereignty over subject princes. We quote Reisner's translation.



Speech of the Son of Ra, Lord of Crowns, ... . He says  
 Amon of Napata has given to me to be ruler of every land.  
*He to whom I say: You are king, he shall be king:*  
*He to whom I say: You are not king, he shall not be king.*  
 Amon of Thebes has given to me to be ruler of Egypt (*km*)  
 He to whom I say; make ceremonial appearance (as king),  
 [he shall make ceremonial appearance (as king)]  
 He to who I say: Do not make ceremonial appearance, he shall not make  
 ceremonial appearance.  
 Every one to whom I give my favor (face), his city can not be destroyed except it  
 be by my hand.  
 The gods make a king; the people make a king; but Amon made me.  
 Whoever of these governors does not make gifts to me, Weret-Hekauw....<sup>48</sup>

This declaration of absolute sovereignty, the divine right of the pharaoh to install and depose kings of subject nations, is unique in Egyptian literature. Among the thousands of inscriptions on stelae, tombs and temples in Egypt only two monuments preserve such a statement, identifying the author as king of kings - the annals of Menkheperre Thutmose for his 6<sup>th</sup> campaign and the sandstone stele of Piankhi. How coincidental is it that we identify them as one and the same person.

In September/October 609 B.C. Jehoahaz was deposed by Menkheperre Necho (Necho). That same month of that same year the event was the subject of boasting by Menkheperre Thutmose in his Annals. Some time later the memory of the event was acknowledged publicly on the sandstone stela of Menkheperre Piankhi. We wonder when Egyptologists will awaken to the fact that these epithets belong to one individual!

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<sup>48</sup>G. A. Reisner, "Inscribed Monuments from Gebel Barkal," ZAS 66 (1931) 92.