

SENNACHERIB'S PRISM

After conquering the smaller cities of Judah, the Assyrian king Sennacherib set his sights on Jerusalem. King Hezekiah's defense strategy had two parts: dig a water tunnel into the city (see *Hezekiah's Tunnel*) and strengthen the outer defenses. Hezekiah ordered a new wall built on the city's west side (2 Chronicles 32:5)—a "Broad Wall" twenty-three feet thick.

Hezekiah also turned to God in repentance and faith. God had spared Jerusalem before, and Hezekiah believed he would do it again. God promised Hezekiah that Sennacherib would return to his

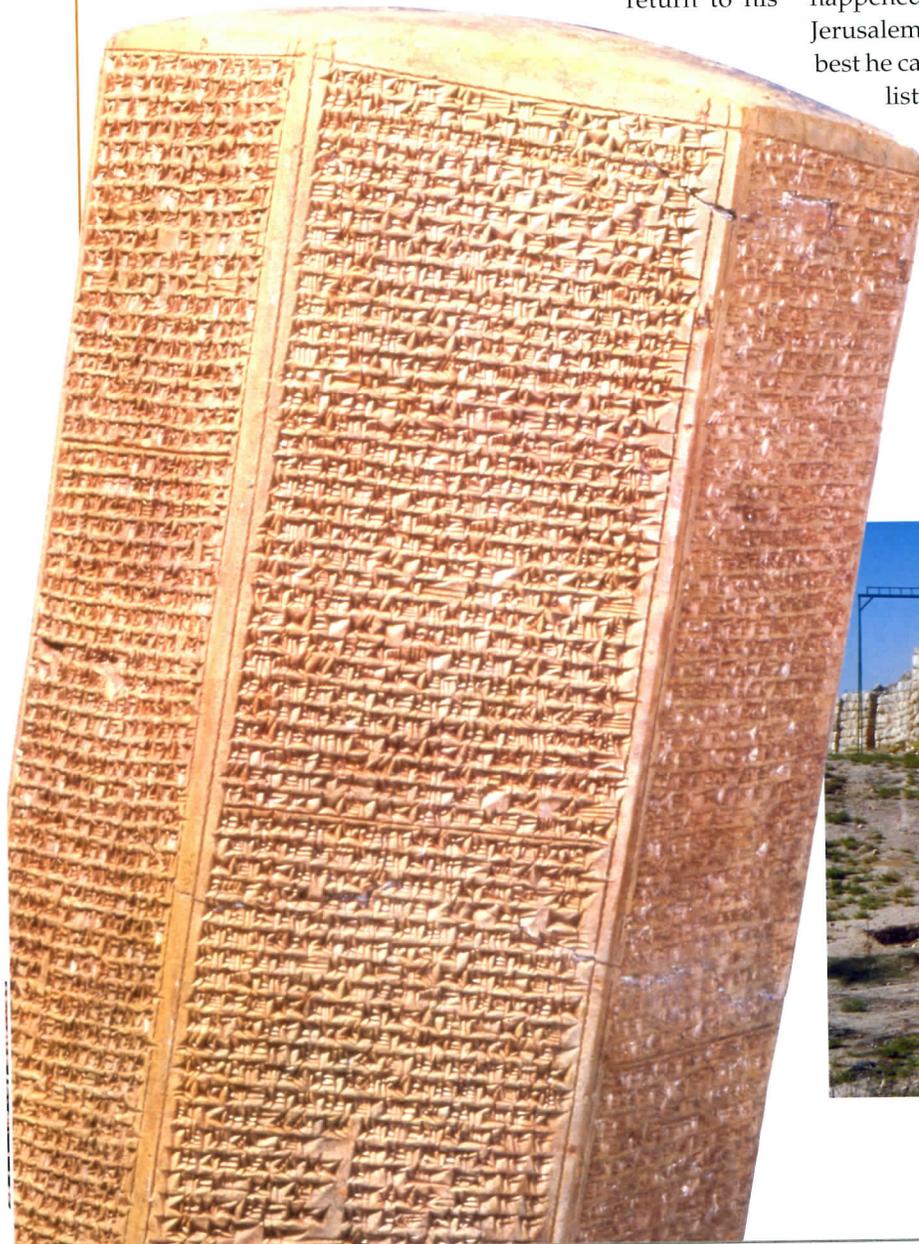
own land without capturing Jerusalem. That night an angel of the Lord swept through the Assyrian camp and 185,000 men died. Sennacherib reigned for twenty more years in Nineveh, but he never set foot in Judah again!

Several copies of Sennacherib's annals survive, recorded on six-sided clay prisms and written in Assyrian cuneiform script. Sennacherib put his own political "spin" on what happened in Judah, claiming that he "shut up Hezekiah in Jerusalem, his royal city, like a bird in a cage." But that's the best he can say. He besieged Jerusalem and nothing more! No lists of captured enemies, no descriptions of looting the city, just a silent acknowledgement that he came home empty-handed.

► **SPOILS OF WAR** being taken back to Nineveh after Sennacherib's conquests.

◀ **THIS COPY OF SENNACHERIB'S ANNALS** is called Taylor's Prism because it was discovered in Nineveh in 1830 by British Colonel R. Taylor. It is housed in the British Museum. Another copy is displayed at the Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago and is known as the Oriental Institute Prism.

▼ The walls of the fortress of Lachish, which was destroyed by Sennacherib in 701 B.C.



▼ **KING HEZEKIAH'S NAME** as it appears in the Akkadian language, the language of the Assyrians.

𐎧 𐎢𐎠 𐎶 𐎠𐎫𐎧 𐎶 𐎠𐎫𐎧

Kha - za - ki - a - u

Hezekiah

𐎠𐎢𐎽𐎢𐏁 𐎠𐎶𐎵 𐎠𐎶𐎵 𐎠𐎶𐎵 𐎠𐎶𐎵

la - u - da - ai

of Judah