

# New ADLG Armies II

## Violent, Biblical Fun in the Ancient Near East



### Introduction

As the Greeks were inventing hoplite warfare, the age of the chariot was coming to an end. The Achaemenid Persians were soon to dominate the eastern end of the Mediterranean (but had not yet decided to invade Greece, and wipe those pretentious, democratic sodomites off the face of the God-King's Earth!). In the period between the 8<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> Centuries BCE, a mix of combatants fought with – and then over the remnants of – the Assyrian Empire, slowly giving rise to the powers that were to dominate the Classical Age. Many of the conflicts of this period are described in the Old Testament. This period is bounded by the resurgence of the Assyrian Empire under Tiglath-Pileser III at the start, and the rise to prominence of the Achaemenid Persians under Cyrus and his son at the end.

This set of new ADLG armies depicts many of the forces of that period. Like the wars of the Diodachi covered in the first volume of this series, many of the combatants acted as mercenaries or allies, making it possible to field many different forces while reusing many of the same figures. The Neo-Babylonians, Urartians, and the Assyrians shared a similar appearance, and even army organization. The Medes and Persians likewise. Lydian forces resembled the Greeks, and indeed provided a large proportion of the Saitic Egyptian armies. The Philistines and the Hebrews fought as mercenaries in each others' armies (and very likely even when they fought against each other).

While not a comprehensive selection of forces, the armies described below provide a set of contrasting and fun combatants covering this era. This is not the period of chariot warfare commonly seen on the table – Kadesh – but is a later, and a more varied, transitional one.

## ADLG Armies

This section details the armies for which we have figures.

### List 8 – Neo-Babylonians

This army is built on the Assyrian model, equipped with 4-horse chariots and lots of cavalry. After defeating the Assyrians, and then beating all comers, they dominated the Middle East until defeated in turn by the ascendant Persians, and even then not going quietly, revolting from them into the 4<sup>th</sup> century BCE.

### List 9 – Assyrian Empire and Sargonid

This was the final period of the Assyrians, and they fought against almost everyone as their control of the entire region first blossomed and then dwindled. They represent perhaps the most fully developed expression of chariot warfare, featuring both heavy chariots and lots of cavalry of different types. (Given that there are no Romans in sight, these guys are a stand-in for the Borg, being considered by some historians as the original “world empire” due to their generally poisonous attitude regarding the subjection of everyone they encountered. Needless to say, it didn’t end well!)

### List 23 – Ancient Hebrew

This is the army of King Solomon and later, complete with chariots, including – by the end of the period – heavy ones. It is now an army suited to fighting in the open, with solid heavy infantry forces as well as the traditional medium infantry, archers, and javelinmen.

### List 25 – Philistine

The descendants of the Sea Peoples settled on the coast of Palestine (which is named after them, to be sure) and adopted chariots. They fought with (and for) the Hebrews, and against the Saitic Egyptians and the Assyrians. Unlike their ancestors, they are an army of spearmen, rather than impetuous swordsmen.

### List 27 – Urartu

This was a nation which was beaten by the Assyrian Empire, but never fully subjugated by it. They fielded a similar army, but one better suited to its more mountainous terrain to the north-east of Mesopotamia (What is today Armenia). They fought against the Assyrians, and many neighboring peoples, but were then conquered by the Medes.

### List 28 – Medes

This army is similar to that of the later Achaemenids, of which they formed a significant part. The Medes did not have an empire, but represented a culturally significant aspect of Iranian military heritage.

### List 57 – Saitic Egyptian

During the latter part of this period, the 26<sup>th</sup> Dynasty fielded an army which was no longer Kushite (those Egyptians having been pushed south into Meroe) and which had no chariot force to speak of. Employing many Greek mercenaries (really Lydians and Carians) they had some cavalry but were primarily an infantry force. They defeated the Assyrians and the Hebrews, but could not take control of Syria or

Palestine from the Neo-Babylonians. Ultimately, they were defeated by the Persians, representing the last “native” Egyptian dynasty. Interestingly, the New Kingdom was used as a model for Egyptian forces, so these can be plausibly fielded, albeit minus their chariots and with a lot of hoplite mercs in support.

#### List 60 – Classical Greek

Really here just to fight the Persians, they also sometimes fought the Lydians. These were not the Greeks of Thermopylae, but rather their Phokian, Aetolian, and Asiatic relatives, who faced the Persians as they intruded into their colonies. They also, of course, fought with other Greeks!

#### List 64 – Achaemenid Persian

The Persian army of Cyrus and his namesake, prior to Xerxes. They were the growing power late in the era, coming to rule from the Bosphorus to Egypt and eastward to India.

#### List 68 –Lydian

The Lydians were heavily influenced by the Greeks, but had an more-impressive cavalry arm, relying less strictly on the hoplite phalanx. They fought against many of the nations in the region, allying themselves with the Saitic Egyptians. Ultimately, they were defeated by Cyrus II at Sardis.

#### Other Armies

There are a number of other armies which could be fielded, but which did not seem to offer much in terms of specific period flavor or variety. (Besides, you have to draw the line somewhere!) This would include the Nubian/Kushite Egyptians, the Thracians, the Cimmerians/Skythians, the Elamites, the Phrygians, early Bedouins, Cypriot Phoenicians, and several others. If you have these armies, they could easily be worked in. Some of the armies listed will employ figures in common, so there is the potential for further expansion. (If I had to add one of these armies, it would be the Kushite Egyptians, but it is pretty difficult to find the right figures in 28mm.)

#### Who Was Where?

The map below shows the situation at the end of the period.



At this point, the Lydian Empire has – along with the Medes – come under the control of the Achaemenid Persians. The last Assyrian Empire has fallen: the Saitic Egyptians and the Neo-Babylonians have both tried to assert control over Syria and Palestine, with the Neo-Babylonians coming off the victors. The once-united kingdom of Solomon has split, with Judea remaining as a power, soon to fall to the Neo-Babylonians. The Philistines linger for a while in their Phoenician territories before being finally destroyed by the Neo-Babylonians under Nebuchadnezzar II. The Urartians occupied the area marked “Armenia”, but will be defeated by the Medes who in turn are conquered by the Persians. Ultimately, the Achaemenids will come to rule the lot.

The Neo-Assyrian Empire is shown below:



It should be noted that for 100 years prior to Tiglath-Pileser III, beginning in 824 BCE, the Assyrian domains had been reduced through the indolence of his predecessors – he had to re-assert control over a much-diminished empire, which the map doesn’t really show. Subsequent to this, he started a steady period of further conquest.

The “holy land” (that is, the land of Anu, Marduk, and Ishtar!) has become a battleground in the face of the decline of the Assyrians, providing the scene for a tremendous amount of fighting in the names of a lot of pretty strange gods!

## Who Fought Whom

The following table is based on the listing of DBA enemies, since ADLG does not provide this information with its lists.

|                                             | List 8 | List 9 | List 23 | List 25 | List 27 | List 28 | List 57 | List 60 | List 64 | List 68 |
|---------------------------------------------|--------|--------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| <b>List 8: Neo-Babylonians</b>              |        | X      | X       |         |         | X       | X       |         | X       | X       |
| <b>List 9: Assyrian Empire and Sargonid</b> | X      |        | X       | X       | X       | X       | X       |         |         | X       |
| <b>List 23: Ancient Hebrew</b>              | X      | X      |         | X       |         |         | X       |         |         |         |
| <b>List 25: Philistine</b>                  |        | X      | X       | X       |         |         | X       |         |         |         |
| <b>List 27: Urartu</b>                      |        | X      |         |         |         | X       |         |         |         |         |
| <b>List 28: Medes</b>                       | X      | X      |         |         | X       |         |         |         | X       | X       |
| <b>List 57: Saitic Egyptian</b>             | X      | X      | X       | X       |         |         |         |         | X       |         |
| <b>List 60: Classical Greek</b>             |        |        |         |         |         |         |         | X       | X       | X       |
| <b>List 64: Achaemenid Persian</b>          | X      |        |         |         |         | X       | X       | X       |         | X       |
| <b>List 68: Lydian</b>                      | X      | X      |         |         |         | X       |         | X       | X       |         |