
JEREMIAH - CHAPTER 39

In the month of July in the year of our Lord 2007, a cuneiform tablet which had been sitting dormant in the British museum was delivered and found to bear the name of a chief officer of Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon. The name of this royal official was **Nebo-Sarsekim** and he is mentioned in the Bible by Jeremiah the Prophet in chapter 39 verse 3 of his book.

The clay tablet is inscribed with the words:

“(In regards to) 1.5 minas (24 ounces) of gold, the property of **Nabu-sharrussu-ukin, the chief eunuch**, which he sent via Arad-Banitu the eunuch to [the temple at] Esangila: Arad-Banitu delivered [it] to Esangila. In the presence of Bel-usat, the son of Alpaya, the royal bodyguard, [and of] Nadin, the son of Marduk-zer-ibni. Month XI, day 18, year 10 [in the reign of] Nebuchadnezzar, the king of Babylon.”

Three other men that lived through Nebuchadnezzar's invasion of Jerusalem in 587 B.C. as described in Jeremiah 39 have also been previously confirmed in archaeology. The names of **Nebuzaradan** the captain of the guard (Jeremiah 39:9) as well as **Nergal-Sharezer** who is listed along with Nebo-Sarsekim in Jeremiah 39:3 were found on a clay prism from Babylon. The artifact mentions the names of various officers in the court of Nebuchadnezzar.

The translation of the prism is as follows:

“ I gave orders to the following officials of my court to carry out their duties; as royal officers:

Nebuzeriddinam the chief guardsman (executioner, butcher, cook), the officials of the land of Akkad (Babylon); Eadaian, the governor of the lands along the Sea, **Nergalsharusur** (listed along with other governors)”

Ancient Near Eastern Texts (308-309)

The Biblical account of when the lives of all these men came together is found in Jeremiah 39:

In the ninth year of Zedekiah king of Judah, in the tenth month, Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon and all his army came against Jerusalem, and besieged it. In the eleventh year of Zedekiah, in the fourth month, on the ninth day of the month, the city was penetrated. Then all the princes of the king of Babylon came in and sat in the Middle Gate: Nergal-Sharezer the Samgar, **Nebo-Sarsechim the Rabsaris** (rabsaris is a title meaning chief of the eunuchs), Nergal-Sarezer the Rabmag, with the rest of the princes of the king of Babylon. So it was, when Zedekiah the king of Judah and all the men of war saw them, that they fled and went out of the city by night, by way of the king's garden, by the gate between the two walls. And he went out by way of the plain.

But the Chaldean army pursued them and overtook Zedekiah in the plains of Jericho. And when they had captured him, they brought him up to Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon, to Riblah in the land of Hamath, where he pronounced judgment on him. Then the king of Babylon killed the sons of Zedekiah before his eyes in Riblah; the king of Babylon also killed all the nobles of Judah. Moreover he put out Zedekiah's eyes, and bound him with bronze fetters to carry him off to Babylon.



And the Chaldeans burned the king's house and the houses of the people with fire, and broke down the walls of Jerusalem. Then **Nebuzaradan** the captain of the guard carried away captive to Babylon the remnant of the people who remained in the city and those who defected to him, with the rest of the people who remained. But Nebuzaradan the captain of the guard left in the land of Judah the poor people, who had nothing, and gave them vineyards and fields at the same time.

Now Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon gave charge concerning Jeremiah to **Nebuzaradan** the captain of the guard, saying, "Take him and look after him, and do him no harm; but do to him just as he says to you." So Nebuzaradan the captain of the guard sent Nebushasban the Rabsaris, **Nergal-Sharezer** the Rabmag, and all the king of Babylon's chief officers; then they sent someone to take Jeremiah from the court of the prison, and committed him to **Gedaliah** the son of Ahikam, the son of Shaphan, that he should take him home. So he dwelt among the people.



Seal of Gedaliah's
son Hannaniah
Housed in the
British Museum

Meanwhile the word of the LORD had come to Jeremiah while he was shut up in the court of the prison, saying, "Go and speak to Ebed-Melech the Ethiopian, saying, 'Thus says the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel: "Behold, I will bring My words upon this city for adversity and not for good, and they shall be performed in that day before you.

"But I will deliver you in that day," says the LORD, "and you shall not be given into the hand of the men of whom you are afraid. "For I will surely deliver you, and you shall not fall by the sword; but your life shall be as a prize to you, **because you have put your trust in Me,"** says the LORD.'

TRUST IN THE LORD FOR YOUR DELIVERANCE:

Yes, we had the sentence of death in ourselves, that **we should not trust in ourselves but in God** who raises the dead, **who delivered us** from so great a death, and does deliver us; in whom we trust that He will still deliver us.

2 Corinthians 1:9-10 (NKJV)

Grace to you and peace from God the Father and our **Lord Jesus Christ, who gave Himself for our sins, that He might deliver us** from this present evil age, according to the will of our God and Father, to whom be glory forever and ever. Amen.

Galatians 1:3-5(NKJV)

Sources:

The Holy Bible, Author: The Lord God
Scripture taken from the New King James Version unless noted.

Biblical Archaeology Review Nov/Dec 2007 Page 18
Article "Cuneiform Tablet Confirms Biblical name" in regards to
Nebo-Sarsekim.

Ancient Near Eastern Texts Relating to the Old Testament
Edited by James Pritchard ISBN: 0-691-03503-2
ANET 307-308 The Court of Nebuchadnezzar prism found in
Babylon mentions Nebuzaradan and Nergal-Sharezer

The Revell Bible Dictionary, Author Fleming H. Revell
ISBN 0-8007-1594-2
Pg.422 Hannaniah son of Gedaliah photo (British Museum,
London)

The Bible in the British Museum (Interpreting the Evidence)
Author; T.C. Mitchell ISBN0-8091-4292-9
pg.85 Seal "Belonging to Hannaniah son of Gedaliah"

Artwork: Nebuchadnezzars' judgement of king Zedekiah
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