

Jeremiah 39:3

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And all the princes of the king of Babylon came in, and sat in the middle gate, even Nergal-sharezer, Samgar-nebo, Sarsechim, Rab-saris, Nergal-sharezer, Rab-mag, with all the residue of the princes of the king of Babylon.

Analysis

All the princes of the king of Babylon came in, and sat in the middle gate (הַתְּגִיר, sha'ar hatavekh)—The 'middle gate' (likely between the upper and lower city) became the seat of Babylonian judgment, symbolizing foreign dominion in the holy city. The act of 'sitting' (יָשַׁב, yashav) denotes taking authority—these conquerors held court where David's throne once reigned.

The naming of specific officials—**Nergal-sharezer, Samgar-nebo, Sarsechim, Rab-saris, Rab-mag**—demonstrates historical precision. 'Rab-saris' (רב-סָרִיס) means 'chief eunuch'; 'Rab-mag' (רב-מָג) means 'chief magician.' These pagan titles sitting in Zion's gates fulfill the warning that covenant-breakers would be ruled by uncircumcised foreigners (Leviticus 26:17, Deuteronomy 28:43-44).

Historical Context

Nergal-sharezer (Nergal-sar-usur) later became king of Babylon (560-556 BC), confirming the historical accuracy of this account. The Babylonian administrative system placed multiple officials over conquered territories. Archaeological evidence from Babylonian records confirms these administrative titles and the structure of Nebuchadnezzar's government.

Related Passages

Matthew 25:31 — Final judgment

Romans 2:1 – Judging others

Study Questions

1. What does it mean when ungodly authorities 'sit in the gates' of areas God intended for His people to govern?
2. How does seeing pagan officials ruling Jerusalem help you understand the consequences of spiritual compromise?
3. In what ways does Christ reverse this scene by triumphing over all principalities and powers (Colossians 2:15)?

Interlinear Text

בָּשָׁ	עַר	וַיֵּשֶׁב	וְ	בְּבָל:	מִלְּרָא	שְׁרִ	כִּל	וַיָּבֹא
came in	H3605	And all the princes		of the king		of Babylon	and sat	gate
H935		H8269		H4428		H894		H3427

סֵךְ יִם	שָׁר	נְבָ ۱	נְרָגָל	שְׁרָאָאָר	סְמָגָר	נְרָגָל	פְּתָאָר
in the middle	H0	Nergalsharezer	H0	Samgarnebo	H0	Sarsechim	H8310

רְבָּעָה	רְבָּעָה	שְׁרָאָצָר	נְרָגָל	סְרָרִיס	רְבָּעָה	מְגַדֵּל	וְכָל	שָׁאֵר יְהָת
H0	Rabsaris H7249	H0	Nergalsharezer H5371	H0	Rabmag H7248	H3605	with all the residue H7611	

בְּבָל: מֶלֶךְ שָׁרֵן
And all the princes of the king of Babylon
H8269 H4428 H894

Additional Cross-References

Jeremiah 21:4 (Kingdom): Thus saith the LORD God of Israel; Behold, I will turn back the weapons of war that are in your hands, wherewith ye fight against the king of Babylon, and against the Chaldeans, which besiege you without the walls, and I will assemble them into the midst of this city.

Jeremiah 38:17 (Kingdom): Then said Jeremiah unto Zedekiah, Thus saith the LORD, the God of hosts, the God of Israel; If thou wilt assuredly go forth unto the king of Babylon's princes, then thy soul shall live, and this city shall not be burned with fire; and thou shalt live, and thine house:

Jeremiah 1:15 (Kingdom): For, lo, I will call all the families of the kingdoms of the north, saith the LORD; and they shall come, and they shall set every one his throne at the entering of the gates of Jerusalem, and against all the walls thereof round about, and against all the cities of Judah.

Jeremiah 39:13 (Kingdom): So Nebuzar-adan the captain of the guard sent, and Nebushasban, Rab-saris, and Nergal-sharezer, Rab-mag, and all the king of Babylon's princes;
