

Daniel 3:12

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

There are certain Jews whom thou hast set over the affairs of the province of Babylon, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego; these men, O king, have not regarded thee: they serve not thy gods, nor worship the golden image which thou hast set up.

Analysis

Certain Chaldeans maliciously accuse the three Hebrews: 'There are certain Jews whom thou hast set over the affairs of the province of Babylon, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego; these men, O king, have not regarded thee.' The accusation combines religious and ethnic prejudice with political opportunism. Emphasizing 'Jews whom thou hast set over' stokes resentment over foreigners' authority. 'These men...have not regarded thee' frames religious conviction as political disloyalty. This pattern recurs throughout Scripture—faithful believers accused of undermining state authority when actually maintaining ultimate allegiance to God (cf. Daniel 6; Acts 16:20-21).

Historical Context

Court intrigue and rivalry characterized ancient Near Eastern bureaucracies, where officials competed for favor and position. The Chaldeans likely resented these Jewish exiles promoted over native wise men after their failure to interpret Nebuchadnezzar's dream (Daniel 2). Accusations of disloyalty were powerful weapons in absolute monarchies where kings feared rebellion. The requirement to worship the image created opportunity to target these successful foreign administrators. Ancient empires often scapegoated ethnic minorities during political tensions.

Related Passages

Matthew 25:31 — Final judgment

Revelation 20:12 — Judgment according to deeds

Psalms 19:1 — Heavens declare God's glory

Colossians 1:16 — All things created through Christ

Study Questions

1. How does faithfulness to God often get misrepresented as political disloyalty or cultural subversion?
2. What does the Chaldeans' opportunistic accusation teach about religious persecution often having political and economic motivations?

Interlinear Text

עֲבִידֹת	עַל	יְתֵהוֹן	מִן יֵת	דִּי	יְהוּדָאִי	גְבֻרֵי א	אֵיתִי
the affairs	over	whom	thou hast set	H1768	Jews	certain	There are
H5673	H5922	H3487	H4483		H3062	H1400	H383
גְבֻרֵי א	נְג ו	וְעַבְד	מִישַׁךְ	שְׁדַרְךָ	בְּכָ ל	מְדִינַת	
certain	and Abednego	H0	Meshach	Shadrach	of Babylon	of the province	
H1400	H5665		H4336	H7715	H895	H4083	
לֹא א	לֹא־לֵהִיךְ	טַעַם	מַלְכָּא	עַל יֵךְ	שֶׁ מוֹ	לֹא א	אֵלֶיךָ
nor	thy gods	regarded	O king	H5921	have	nor	these
H3809	H426	H2942	H4430		H7761	H3809	H479
סֻגְדִּין:	לֹא א	הֵקֵן יִמֶת	דִּי	זָהָבִי א	וּלְצָ לֵם	פְּלֹחֵי יֵן	
worship	nor	which thou hast set up	H1768	the golden	image	they serve	
H5457	H3809	H6966		H1722	H6755	H6399	

Additional Cross-References

Daniel 6:13 (Kingdom): Then answered they and said before the king, That Daniel, which is of the children of the captivity of Judah, regardeth not thee, O king, nor the decree that thou hast signed, but maketh his petition three times a day.

Daniel 2:49 (Kingdom): Then Daniel requested of the king, and he set Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego, over the affairs of the province of Babylon: but Daniel sat in the gate of the king.

Acts 17:7 (Kingdom): Whom Jason hath received: and these all do contrary to the decrees of Caesar, saying that there is another king, one Jesus.

Proverbs 27:4 (Parallel theme): Wrath is cruel, and anger is outrageous; but who is able to stand before envy?