

Daniel 3:15

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Now if ye be ready that at what time ye hear the sound of the cornet, flute, harp, sackbut, psaltery, and dulcimer, and all kinds of musick, ye fall down and worship the image which I have made; well: but if ye worship not, ye shall be cast the same hour into the midst of a burning fiery furnace; and who is that God that shall deliver you out of my hands?

Analysis

Nebuchadnezzar offers another chance: 'if ye be ready...when ye hear the sound of the cornet...ye fall down and worship.' The conditional 'if ye be ready' suggests merciful reconsideration. But the arrogant challenge 'who is that God that shall deliver you out of my hands?' reveals utter confidence in human power over divine authority. This directly challenges Yahweh's ability and willingness to save, inviting divine response. The king's boast echoes Assyrian Rabshakeh's earlier taunt against Hezekiah (2 Kings 18:35). Both times, human pride challenging God's power results in stunning divine vindication. Nebuchadnezzar sets himself up for devastating humiliation.

Historical Context

Ancient Near Eastern warfare and religion were intertwined—military victory demonstrated divine superiority. Nebuchadnezzar's conquest of Judah and temple destruction could be interpreted as Marduk defeating Yahweh. The king's challenge reflects common ancient thinking: gods' power was demonstrated through their peoples' military success. Babylon's dominance over all nations seemingly proved Babylonian gods' supremacy. The king's question isn't abstract

theology but concrete political reality—what god can match Babylonian military might?

Related Passages

Romans 1:17 — The righteous shall live by faith

Hebrews 11:1 — Definition of faith

Romans 2:1 — Judging others

Matthew 25:31 — Final judgment

Study Questions

1. How does human pride inevitably invite divine response when it directly challenges God's power and character?
2. What does the king's equation of political-military power with divine authority reveal about worldly thinking versus spiritual reality?

Interlinear Text

כַּעַן	אִם	אַתִּיכּוּן	רָאָה	דִּי	בְּעֵדָה	אִי	תִּשְׁמַע וְ
Now	if	ye be	ready	H1768	that at what time	H1768	ye hear
H3705	H2006	H383	H6263		H5732		H8086
קוֹל	אֶת־קוֹרְןָה	אֶת־מִשְׁרוּקִית	רֶסֶס	שַׁבָּבֶךָ	אֶת־קִיֹּת	פְּסַלְתֵּינִי	
the sound	of the cornet	flute		harp	sackbut	psaltery	
H7032	H7162	H4953		H7030	H5443	H6460	
וְ	כָּל־לַחֲמִידִים	וְכָל־זֶמֶר	אֶת־זֶמֶר	וְ	תִפְּלוּ	וְ	תִסְגְּדוּ
and	dulcimer	and all	kinds	of musick	ye fall down	and worship	the image
H5481	H3606	H2178	H2170	H5308	H5457	H6755	
אִי	עֲבַדְתִּי	אִם	לֹא	וְ	תִסְגְּדוּ	בֵּה	שָׁעָה
H1768	which I have made	if	not	and worship	H0	the same hour	
	H5648	H2006	H3809	H5457		H8160	
וְ	תִתְּרַם	לְ	אֶת־וְ	נוֹכַח	אֶת־	וְ	וְ
ye shall be cast	into the midst	furnace	fiery	of a burning	and who		H1932
H7412	H1459	H861	H5135	H3345	H4479		
אֵלֶּה	אֵלֶּה	אֵלֶּה	אֵלֶּה	אֵלֶּה	אֵלֶּה	אֵלֶּה	אֵלֶּה
is that God	H1768	that shall deliver	you out	of my hands			
H426		H7804	H4481	H3028			

Additional Cross-References

Acts 5:29 (References God): Then Peter and the other apostles answered and said, We ought to obey God rather than men.

Exodus 5:2 (Parallel theme): And Pharaoh said, Who is the LORD, that I should obey his voice to let Israel go? I know not the LORD, neither will I let Israel go.

2 Kings 18:35 (References God): Who are they among all the gods of the countries, that have delivered their country out of mine hand, that the LORD should deliver Jerusalem out of mine hand?

Daniel 3:17 (References God): If it be so, our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace, and he will deliver us out of thine hand, O king.

Acts 4:19 (References God): But Peter and John answered and said unto them, Whether it be right in the sight of God to hearken unto you more than unto God, judge ye.

Mark 13:11 (Parallel theme): But when they shall lead you, and deliver you up, take no thought beforehand what ye shall speak, neither do ye premeditate: but whatsoever shall be given you in that hour, that speak ye: for it is not ye that speak, but the Holy Ghost.

Isaiah 37:23 (Parallel theme): Whom hast thou reproached and blasphemed? and against whom hast thou exalted thy voice, and lifted up thine eyes on high? even against the Holy One of Israel.

Acts 6:15 (Parallel theme): And all that sat in the council, looking stedfastly on him, saw his face as it had been the face of an angel.

Exodus 32:32 (Parallel theme): Yet now, if thou wilt forgive their sin--; and if not, blot me, I pray thee, out of thy book which thou hast written.

Luke 12:11 (Parallel theme): And when they bring you unto the synagogues, and unto magistrates, and powers, take ye no thought how or what thing ye shall answer, or what ye shall say: