

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

תָּשִׁמְעַ וְ לֹא בָּעֵד אֲתָּה אַתָּה כְּבָעֵד |

Now if ye be ready H1768 that at what time H1768 ye hear H8086

פְּסִינְתְּרִין שְׁבָכָא קִיְתָרָס מְשֻׁרְקִיתָא קְרָנָא קְלָא |

the sound of the cornet flute harp sackbut psaltery

H7032 H7162 H4953 H7030 H5443 H6460

לְצַלְמָה אֲתָּה תִּסְכַּד וְ לְצַלְמָה נִי הָ

and dulcimer and all kinds of musick ye fall down and worship the image

H5481 H3606 H2178 H2170 H5308 H5457 H6755

שְׁעַת אֲתָּה בָּה תִּסְכַּד וְ לְאַיִן עֲבֹדָת

which I have made if not and worship the same hour

H1768 H5648 H2006 H3809 H5457 H8160

הַ וְאַ וּמָן יְזַדֵּם אֲתָּה נָזֵךְ אֲתָּה לְגֹא תִּתְרַמֵּן וְ

ye shall be cast into the midst furnace fiery of a burning and who H1932

H7412 H1459 H861 H5135 H3345 H4479

אַתְּנִי מִן יְשִׁיבָתְךָ וְ לֹא אַל הָ

is that God that shall deliver you out of my hands

H426 H1768 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: