

Daniel 3:4

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Then an herald cried aloud, To you it is commanded, O people, nations, and languages,

Analysis

The herald's proclamation 'To you it is commanded, O people, nations, and languages' emphasizes the decree's universal scope. Babylonian empire's multi-ethnic character required explicit address to all groups. The command will demand worship 'when ye hear the sound of' musical instruments, coordinating mass compliance. Music's use in religious manipulation appears throughout history—sensory experience bypassing rational judgment to evoke emotional conformity. The herald represents governmental authority communicating non-negotiable demands with implicit threats.

Historical Context

Ancient Near Eastern empires were multi-ethnic, governing conquered peoples of diverse languages and cultures. Royal decrees were proclaimed publicly in multiple languages (cf. Ezra 4:7). Heralds served as official messengers ensuring the king's words reached all subjects. The use of music in religious ceremonies was universal—psalms, hymns, and ritual chants accompanied worship in most ancient religions. Coordinating worship through musical cues created unity and emotional impact.

Related Passages

Romans 2:1 — Judging others

Revelation 20:12 — Judgment according to deeds

Study Questions

1. How is music used to manipulate compliance and bypass rational consideration of what is being demanded?
2. What does the universal scope of the command teach about totalitarian states' intolerance of any exception or dissent?

Interlinear Text

וְכָרֹזֶן אֶ	קָרָה א	בְּחַיִּל	לְךָ וְ	אֲמַרְיִן	עַמִּי א
Then an herald	cried	aloud	H0	To you it is commanded	O people
H3744	H7123	H2429		H560	H5972
אֲמֵי א	וּלְשׁוֹנָא:				
nations	and languages				
H524	H3961				

Additional Cross-References

Daniel 4:1 (Parallel theme): Nebuchadnezzar the king, unto all people, nations, and languages, that dwell in all the earth; Peace be multiplied unto you.

Daniel 6:25 (Parallel theme): Then king Darius wrote unto all people, nations, and languages, that dwell in all the earth; Peace be multiplied unto you.

Micah 6:16 (Parallel theme): For the statutes of Omri are kept, and all the works of the house of Ahab, and ye walk in their counsels; that I should make thee a desolation, and the inhabitants thereof an hissing: therefore ye shall bear the reproach of my people.