

Daniel 3:5

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

That at what time ye hear the sound of the cornet, flute, harp, sackbut, psaltery, dulcimer, and all kinds of musick, ye fall down and worship the golden image that Nebuchadnezzar the king hath set up:

Analysis

The musical instruments listed—'cornet, flute, harp, sackbut, psaltery, dulcimer, and all kinds of musick'—create an overwhelming sensory experience designed to elicit compliance. The Aramaic terms indicate a sophisticated orchestra, suggesting calculated psychological manipulation. When this impressive music sounds, 'ye fall down and worship the golden image' is commanded. The falling prostration demonstrates total submission. This passage reveals how totalitarian systems use pageantry, sensory manipulation, and social pressure to enforce conformity. The three Hebrew children's coming refusal becomes even more remarkable against this orchestrated compliance.

Historical Context

Babylonian civilization was highly cultured, with advanced musical traditions. Archaeological discoveries include instruments and cuneiform texts describing musical theory and practice. Public worship ceremonies employed elaborate music to create emotional impact and religious fervor. The variety of instruments—wind (cornet, flute), string (harp, psaltery), and percussion—produced rich, complex sound. Coordinated musical cues for mass prostration were common in ancient religious rituals, creating psychological pressure for conformity through spectacle and social expectation.

Related Passages

John 3:16 — God's love and salvation

Ephesians 2:8 — Salvation by grace through faith

Study Questions

1. How do sensory manipulation and spectacle in modern culture work to enforce conformity to ungodly values?
2. What does the emphasis on musical pageantry teach about the difference between genuine worship and coerced compliance?

Interlinear Text

בְּעֵדָנָא	דִּי	תִּשְׁמַע וְ	קָל	קֶרֶן אֶ	מִשְׁרוּקִיתָא
That at what time	H1768	ye hear	the sound	of the cornet	flute
H5732		H8086	H7032	H7162	H4953
וְסָבַב אֶ	סַבָּכָא	פְּסַלְתֵּינִי	סוּמָפִי נִי הֵ	וְכָל לֵ	זֶנֶי יֵ
harp	sackbut	psaltery	dulcimer	and all	kinds
H7030	H5443	H6460	H5481	H3606	H2178
וְנָפַל וְ	וְתִסְבְּדוּן	לְפָנֵי	וְהִבֵּי אֶ	דִּי יֵ	הֵקִי יֵם
ye fall down	and worship	image	the golden	H1768	hath set up
H5308	H5457	H6755	H1722		H6966
נְבוּכַדְנֶצַּר	מֶלֶכָא:				
that Nebuchadnezzar	the king				
H5020	H4430				

Additional Cross-References

Daniel 3:15 (Worship): 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?

Daniel 3:10 (Kingdom): Thou, O king, hast made a decree, that every man that shall hear the sound of the cornet, flute, harp, sackbut, psaltery, and dulcimer, and all kinds of musick, shall fall down and worship the golden image:

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