

# Daniel 3:7

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Therefore at that time, when all the people heard the sound of the cornet, flute, harp, sackbut, psaltery, and all kinds of musick, all the people, the nations, and the languages, fell down and worshipped the golden image that Nebuchadnezzar the king had set up.

## Analysis

The phrase "at that time" marks the moment of testing—when music sounded, immediate worship was required. The comprehensive listing of instruments (repeated throughout the chapter) creates a sense of overwhelming sensory manipulation through coordinated musical performance. Ancient cultures understood music's power to evoke emotion, create unity, and bypass rational thought, making it effective for inducing conformist behavior.

"All the people, the nations, and the languages" emphasizes universal compliance—the empire's ethnic diversity united in idolatrous worship. The threefold description (people, nations, languages) parallels Revelation's descriptions of end-times apostasy when "all that dwell upon the earth shall worship" the beast (Revelation 13:8). The verb "fell down and worshipped" describes both physical prostration and spiritual submission—outward gesture signifying inward allegiance.

This verse reveals the frightening ease with which masses comply with evil when backed by authority, spectacle, and social pressure. Only three men (Shadrach, Meshach, Abednego) refused among thousands present—a sobering reminder that the faithful are often a tiny remnant. The phrase "the golden image that

Nebuchadnezzar the king had set up" (repeated for emphasis) identifies the object as man-made, highlighting the absurdity of worshiping human creations. This points to Christ, whom every knee will worship—not by coercion but in recognition of His divine nature (Philippians 2:10-11).

## Historical Context

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Music played a crucial role in ancient Near Eastern religious ceremonies, creating emotional atmosphere and signaling ritual participation. The instruments listed (cornet, flute, harp, sackbut, psaltery, dulcimer) represent wind, string, and percussion instruments common in Babylonian culture. Coordinated musical performance at state occasions demonstrated the empire's sophistication and created powerful psychological pressure for conformity.

Mass public worship ceremonies were common in polytheistic cultures, serving both religious and political functions. They reinforced social cohesion, demonstrated loyalty to the king, and symbolically unified diverse populations under common religious observance. Refusing participation marked one as both religiously deviant and politically disloyal, justifying severe punishment.

## Related Passages

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**Romans 10:9** — Confession and belief for salvation

**Ephesians 2:8** — Salvation by grace through faith

## Study Questions

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1. How does music's emotional power make it effective for inducing conformist behavior, and how should this awareness affect what we allow to shape our affections?
2. What does the universal compliance of "all the people" teach about the rarity of genuine faithfulness when tested by overwhelming social and political pressure?

3. How does this mass idolatry prefigure end-times apostasy described in Revelation, and how should this shape our understanding of future persecution?

## Interlinear Text

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עָמָתִי אָ	כָּל	שָׁמָעַ יְ	כָּל	עָמָתִי אָ	כָּל	שָׁמָעַ יְ	כָּל
Therefore				at that time		when	
H1836	H0	H2166	H1768	H8086	H3606	H5972	
all				heard		all	the people
H3606	H6903						
לְ				קָרְנוֹתָ	שְׁבָכָא	פָּסִינְטָרָ	לְ
the sound	of the cornet			flute	harp	sackbut	psaltery
H7032	H7162			H4953	H7030	H5443	H6460
כָּל				כָּל			
עָמָתִי אָ	כָּל	תִּפְלַלְתִּי	עָמָתִי אָ	כָּל			
all	kinds	of musick	fell down	all	the people	the nations	
H3606	H2178	H2170	H5308	H3606	H5972	H524	
וְלִשְׁבָנִי אָ				לֹא לִם	סְגִידִי	בְּקָרְבָּנִי אָ	
and the languages	and worshipped			image	the golden	when	had set up
H3961				H6755	H1722	H1768	H6966
מֶלֶךְ אָ				לְ	כָּל	לְ	
the king				כָּל	עָמָתִי אָ	כָּל	
H4430					עָמָתִי אָ	כָּל	
תְּבַכְּדָנָאָ							
that Nebuchadnezzar							
H5020							

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