

Daniel 2:27

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Daniel answered in the presence of the king, and said, The secret which the king hath demanded cannot the wise men, the astrologers, the magicians, the soothsayers, shew unto the king;

Analysis

Daniel's response exemplifies humble boldness: "Daniel answered in the presence of the king, and said, The secret which the king hath demanded cannot the wise men, the astrologers, the magicians, the soothsayers, shew unto the king." He begins by affirming what everyone knows—human wisdom fails. The comprehensive list (wise men, astrologers, magicians, soothsayers) emphasizes that all categories of pagan expertise proved inadequate. Daniel doesn't boast personal superiority over these professionals but establishes that no human technique accesses such knowledge.

This response demonstrates strategic wisdom. By acknowledging universal human inability, Daniel prepares for demonstrating divine capability. He removes any suggestion that superior education, intelligence, or technique explains what follows. Only divine revelation can provide the answer. This sets up the coming demonstration that Yahweh, not Daniel, deserves glory. It also protects Daniel from appearing arrogant—he's not claiming personal superiority but serving as conduit for divine revelation.

Theologically, this models gospel proclamation. Effective witness begins by establishing human inability to save ourselves, creating context for demonstrating God's salvation. Paul follows this pattern in Romans—comprehensive demonstration of universal sin (1:18-3:20) precedes revealing God's righteousness

through faith (3:21-26). Daniel's methodology prefigures this—show human bankruptcy, then demonstrate divine sufficiency. This also points to Christ, the only mediator between God and man (1 Timothy 2:5), whose work accomplishes what no human priest, prophet, or king could achieve.

Historical Context

Daniel's exhaustive listing of professional classes—wise men, astrologers, magicians, soothsayers—represented Babylon's comprehensive intellectual and religious establishment. These weren't primitive superstitions but sophisticated systems developed over centuries. Yet all failed when genuinely tested. This failure validated biblical truth: human wisdom, however refined, cannot penetrate divine mysteries. Only revelation from the true God provides genuine supernatural knowledge. This demonstration strengthened Jewish faith throughout exile and continues validating Scripture's authority against all human alternatives.

Related Passages

Genesis 1:1 — Creation of heavens and earth

Colossians 1:16 — All things created through Christ

Study Questions

1. How does Daniel's beginning with universal human inability strategically prepare for demonstrating divine capability?
2. What does his comprehensive listing of failed professional classes teach about how biblical revelation surpasses all human wisdom systems?
3. In what ways does this pattern—demonstrate human bankruptcy, then divine sufficiency—model effective gospel proclamation?

Interlinear Text

לְמַלְכָּא:	אָמַר	כִּי אֵלֶּה	כִּי מְלָאָה:	בְּלֹא	בְּלֹא	בְּלֹא
answered	Daniel	in the presence	of the king	and said	The secret	H1768
H6032	H1841	H6925	H4430	H560	H7328	
לְמַלְכָּא:	שָׁא לְ	לְאַתְּ	מִכְפֵּלָה	אֲשֶׁר	מְרֹטְבִּים	
of the king	hath demanded	H3809	the wise	men the astrologers	the magicians	H2749
H4430	H7593		H2445	H826		
לְמַלְכָּא:	יְכַל	הַשְׁׁמַע	לְמַלְכָּא:	גַּזְעָה		
the soothsayers	cannot	shew	of the king			
H1505	H3202	H2324	H4430			

Additional Cross-References

Daniel 2:2 (Kingdom): Then the king commanded to call the magicians, and the astrologers, and the sorcerers, and the Chaldeans, for to shew the king his dreams. So they came and stood before the king.

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