

Daniel 4:9

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

O Belteshazzar, master of the magicians, because I know that the spirit of the holy gods is in thee, and no secret troubleth thee, tell me the visions of my dream that I have seen, and the interpretation thereof.

Analysis

Nebuchadnezzar addresses Daniel as 'master of the magicians'—acknowledging his administrative position over Babylon's wise men (cf. Daniel 2:48) while affirming his unique spiritual capacity. The king's confidence that 'no secret troubleth thee' reflects Daniel's proven track record interpreting chapter 2's dream. This establishes narrative expectation: if anyone can interpret, Daniel can. The phrase 'spirit of the holy gods is in thee' repeats verse 8, emphasizing the source of Daniel's ability. From God's perspective, this wasn't multiple deities but the one Holy Spirit; from Nebuchadnezzar's polytheistic framework, transcendent spiritual enablement suggested divine plurality. The king's request ('tell me the visions of my dream') shows he remembered the dream clearly (unlike chapter 2) but needed interpretive insight—understanding the dream's meaning and implications.

Historical Context

Ancient Near Eastern kings regularly consulted dream interpreters, believing dreams conveyed divine messages about political futures, military campaigns, or cosmic purposes. Professional oneiromancy (dream interpretation) involved complex symbolic systems—various objects, animals, or scenarios held specific meanings in dream lexicons. Nebuchadnezzar's repeated reliance on Daniel shows

his earlier interpretation (chapter 2) proved accurate, establishing Daniel's credibility. The title 'master of the magicians' reflects Daniel's administrative role heading Babylon's intellectual establishment—a remarkable position for a Hebrew exile, demonstrating God's providence in positioning His servants strategically.

Related Passages

Romans 2:1 — Judging others

Revelation 20:12 — Judgment according to deeds

Study Questions

1. How does Daniel's proven faithfulness and accuracy in chapter 2 lead to greater influence in chapter 4?
2. What does it mean to be 'in the world but not of it' when holding influential positions in secular institutions?
3. Why does God sometimes grant His servants administrative authority over institutions representing false worldviews?

Interlinear Text

בֶּלְטַשְׁאֲצַר	כ ב	חֲרָטְמִיָּא	דִּי יו	אֲנִי ה	יָדַעַת	דִּי י
O Belteshazzar	master	of the magicians	H1768	because I	know	H1768
H1096	H7229	H2749		H576	H3046	
וּמִי	אֱלֹהֵי יו	קִדְיָשִׁין	בְּךָ	וְכָל	כִּי ז	לֹא
that the spirit	gods	of the holy	H0	is in thee and no	secret	H3809
H7308	H426	H6922		H3606	H7328	
אֲנִי ס	לְךָ	חֲזוֹנִי	חֲלֹמִי י	דִּי	חֲזַי ית	
troubleth	H0	me the visions	of my dream	H1768	that I have seen	
H598		H2376	H2493		H2370	
וּפְשָׁרָהּ	אָמַר:					
and the interpretation	thee tell					
H6591	H560					

Additional Cross-References

Daniel 2:48 (Parallel theme): Then the king made Daniel a great man, and gave him many great gifts, and made him ruler over the whole province of Babylon, and chief of the governors over all the wise men of Babylon.

Daniel 5:11 (Holy): There is a man in thy kingdom, in whom is the spirit of the holy gods; and in the days of thy father light and understanding and wisdom, like the wisdom of the gods, was found in him; whom the king Nebuchadnezzar thy father, the king, I say, thy father, made master of the magicians, astrologers, Chaldeans, and soothsayers;

Daniel 4:8 (Holy): But at the last Daniel came in before me, whose name was Belteshazzar, according to the name of my god, and in whom is the spirit of the holy gods: and before him I told the dream, saying,

Genesis 41:38 (Spirit): And Pharaoh said unto his servants, Can we find such a one as this is, a man in whom the Spirit of God is?

Ezekiel 28:3 (Parallel theme): Behold, thou art wiser than Daniel; there is no secret that they can hide from thee:

Daniel 4:5 (Parallel theme): I saw a dream which made me afraid, and the thoughts upon my bed and the visions of my head troubled me.

Daniel 1:20 (Parallel theme): And in all matters of wisdom and understanding, that the king enquired of them, he found them ten times better than all the magicians and astrologers that were in all his realm.

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