

Daniel 5:11

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

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;

Analysis

The queen describes Daniel's credentials: '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.' She recounts Nebuchadnezzar's recognition of Daniel's unique abilities, his appointment as 'master of the magicians, astrologers, Chaldeans, and soothsayers.' The phrase 'spirit of the holy gods' echoes chapter 4:8-9, 18—recognizing supernatural enablement though using polytheistic terminology. The description emphasizes Daniel's proven track record: Nebuchadnezzar himself (thy father) had identified and elevated him. This recommendation is powerful: the great king Nebuchadnezzar trusted Daniel; surely Belshazzar should too. The reference to 'light and understanding and wisdom' uses biblical terminology for divine illumination—Daniel possessed what the current wise men lacked.

Historical Context

Daniel's apparent retirement or marginalization under Belshazzar's co-regency (Nabonidus's reign) meant the current king didn't know him personally, though he was well-known to the previous generation. This often happens in governmental

transitions: new administrations sideline previous advisors. The queen mother's institutional memory preserved knowledge of Daniel's abilities. Her description emphasizes his proven reliability—not untested claims but documented history under Nebuchadnezzar. This pattern appears throughout Scripture: God's faithful servants may face seasons of obscurity before being called back for crucial roles (Moses, David, Paul). Divine preparation often includes periods of waiting and apparent uselessness before strategic deployment.

Related Passages

John 3:16 — God's love and salvation

Romans 10:9 — Confession and belief for salvation

Study Questions

1. What does Daniel's period of marginalization followed by sudden recall teach about God's timing and providence?
2. How does proven faithfulness in previous seasons establish credibility for future ministry?
3. Why might God allow His servants to be sidelined before bringing them forward at crucial moments?

Interlinear Text

קְדִישִׁין אֱלֹהֵי יִרְיָה בְּמַלְכוּתְךָ גִבּוֹר אֵיתִי
There is a man in thy kingdom in whom is the spirit gods of the holy
H383 H1400 H4437 H1768 H7308 H426 H6922

כְּחָכְמַת וְשִׁכְלָתָהּ וְנֹהִיר וְאָב וְיָוִי וּבְיוֹמֵי יְהוָה
and in the days I say thy father light and understanding and wisdom
H0 H3118 H2 H5094 H7924 H2452

מֶלֶכָּא: יְהוָה הַשֹּׁתֵת חַת אֱלֹהֵי יִרְיָה כְּחָכְמַת
and wisdom gods was found in him whom the king
H2452 H426 H7912 H0 H4430

כַּשְׂדָּאִין אֲשָׁפִין חֲרָטִים יִרְיָה אָב וְנִבְכַּדְנֶצַּר
Nebuchadnezzar I say thy father master of the magicians astrologers Chaldeans
H5020 H2 H7229 H2749 H826 H3779

מֶלֶכָּא: אָב וְיָוִי הַקִּיִּם הַגִּזְרִין
and soothsayers made I say thy father in him whom the king
H1505 H6966 H2 H4430

Additional Cross-References

Daniel 4:18 (Kingdom): This dream I king Nebuchadnezzar have seen. Now thou, O Belteshazzar, declare the interpretation thereof, forasmuch as all the wise men of my kingdom are not able to make known unto me the interpretation: but thou art able; for the spirit of the holy gods is in thee.

Daniel 5:14 (Spirit): I have even heard of thee, that the spirit of the gods is in thee, and that light and understanding and excellent wisdom is found in thee.