

Daniel 7:16

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

I came near unto one of them that stood by, and asked him the truth of all this. So he told me, and made me know the interpretation of the things.

Analysis

Daniel's approach—"I came near unto one of them that stood by, and asked him the truth of all this"—demonstrates proper response to confusing revelation: seeking divinely provided interpretation rather than relying on human speculation. The angelic interpreter "stood by" ready to explain, indicating God provides understanding through authorized channels. Daniel's humility in asking "the truth of all this" acknowledges his need for divine explanation despite being a wise man himself.

The angel's willingness to explain—"So he told me, and made me know the interpretation of the things"—demonstrates God's desire to communicate clearly. Revelation isn't given to mystify but to inform and prepare God's people. The parallel phrasing "told me...made me know" emphasizes thoroughness—the angel ensures Daniel grasps the vision's meaning. This models proper prophetic interpretation: Scripture interprets Scripture, and God provides understanding through His Word and Spirit, not human ingenuity.

This passage establishes the principle that biblical prophecy contains divinely authorized interpretation, not infinite possible meanings. Daniel doesn't speculate about symbolic significance—he receives authoritative explanation from God's messenger. This warns against fanciful prophetic interpretation disconnected from biblical text and context. It points to Christ who "opened their understanding" of Scripture (Luke 24:45) and the Spirit who guides into truth (John 16:13).

Historical Context

Ancient Near Eastern dream interpretation relied on professional interpreters using omen texts and symbolic systems. Daniel rejects such human methodology, instead seeking divine interpretation from authorized heavenly messengers. This distinguished biblical prophecy from pagan divination—God reveals and God interprets, ensuring accuracy and preventing human manipulation.

Related Passages

Hebrews 11:1 — Definition of faith

James 2:17 — Faith and works

Genesis 1:1 — Creation of heavens and earth

Colossians 1:16 — All things created through Christ

Study Questions

1. How does Daniel's request for divinely authorized interpretation challenge modern fanciful prophetic speculation disconnected from biblical text?
2. What does the angel's ready explanation teach about God's desire to communicate clearly rather than mystify through revelation?
3. How should recognizing that Scripture interprets Scripture shape our approach to understanding difficult prophetic passages?

Interlinear Text

אָבְעָא	וְיָצִיב־אֶ	קִי אֲמִי אֵ	מִיָּה הַ	חַד	עַל	קִרְבִּי ת
and asked	the truth	them that stood by	him	one	unto	I came near
H1156	H3330	H6966	H4481	H2298	H5922	H7127
מְלֵי אֵ	וּפְשָׁר	לִי	וְאָמַר	דָּבָר הַ	כָּל	עַל
of the things	the interpretation	H0	So he told	this	of all	him
H4406	H6591		H560	H1836	H3606	H4481
וְהוֹדַעְנִי:						
me and made me know						
H3046						

Additional Cross-References

Revelation 5:5 (Parallel theme): And one of the elders saith unto me, Weep not: behold, the Lion of the tribe of Juda, the Root of David, hath prevailed to open the book, and to loose the seven seals thereof.

Zechariah 2:3 (Parallel theme): And, behold, the angel that talked with me went forth, and another angel went out to meet him,

Daniel 7:10 (Parallel theme): A fiery stream issued and came forth from before him: thousand thousands ministered unto him, and ten thousand times ten thousand stood before him: the judgment was set, and the books were opened.