

# Isaiah 19:12

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Where are they? where are thy wise men? and let them tell thee now, and let them know what the LORD of hosts hath purposed upon Egypt.

## Analysis

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'Where are they? where are thy wise men? and let them tell thee now, and let them know what the LORD of hosts hath purposed upon Egypt.' God challenges Egypt: let their wise men explain divine purposes. The repeated 'where are they?' indicates absence or futility—either the wise men don't exist, or they're incompetent to understand God's plans. This sarcastic challenge demonstrates that human wisdom can't comprehend divine purposes without revelation. Egypt's counselors, despite education and tradition, cannot 'know what the LORD of hosts hath purposed'—they lack access to divine counsel. Only revealed knowledge provides genuine understanding of God's purposes. This anticipates Paul's teaching that God's wisdom appears as foolishness to worldly wisdom, yet worldly wisdom cannot grasp divine purposes (1 Corinthians 1:18-25; 2:14). True knowledge requires divine revelation, not merely human reasoning.

## Historical Context

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Throughout history, Egyptian counselors couldn't accurately predict or prevent national crises. Despite elaborate divination systems (reading animal entrails, astrology, dream interpretation), they failed to foresee invasions, famines, or political collapses. In contrast, Isaiah accurately prophesied specific events through divine revelation—Assyria's victories, Egypt's failures, Jerusalem's deliverance. This empirically validated revealed knowledge's superiority over human wisdom traditions. Church history shows this pattern continuing: secular

philosophies and worldviews repeatedly fail to explain reality or guide societies successfully, while biblical revelation provides accurate understanding of human nature, history's trajectory, and ultimate purposes. Revelation trumps speculation.

## Related Passages

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**Romans 2:1** — Judging others

**Revelation 20:12** — Judgment according to deeds

**Colossians 1:16** — All things created through Christ

**Genesis 1:1** — Creation of heavens and earth

## Study Questions

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1. What does the challenge to Egypt's wise men teach about revealed versus speculative knowledge?
2. How does inability to know God's purposes demonstrate human wisdom's limits?
3. Why is divine revelation necessary for genuine understanding of history and reality?

## Interlinear Text

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אַיִם	אֵפּ וְאֵ	חֲכָמֵי יִבְ	וְיִגְּ יִדּוֹ	לָךְ נָא	
Where	are they where	are thy wise	men and let them tell	H4994	H0
H335	H645	H2450	H5046		
וְיִגְּ יִדּוֹ	וְיִגְּ יִדּוֹ	וְיִגְּ יִדּוֹ	וְיִגְּ יִדּוֹ	וְיִגְּ יִדּוֹ	וְיִגְּ יִדּוֹ
thee now and let them know	H4100	hath purposed	what the LORD	of hosts	H5921
H3045		H3289	H3068	H6635	
מִצֵּרַיִם:					
upon Egypt					
H4714					

## Additional Cross-References

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**1 Corinthians 1:20** (Parallel theme): Where is the wise? where is the scribe? where is the disputer of this world? hath not God made foolish the wisdom of this world?

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