

# Daniel 4 –3 July 2025

“So Close!”

## Introduction

\*Book’s Outline: 2 halves (historical chronology chap 1-6 & a is more detailed prophetic visions chap 7-12)

\*Chap 1 – Believer in an unbelieving world

\*Chap 2 – All world empires ended by the Kingdom

\*Chap 3 – Believer raptured while Israel goes thru the Tribulation

\*Chap 4 – King of Babylon as Satan is bound

\*Chap 5 – Earth’s ruler gathers for a last battle but is overthrow

\*Chap 6 – New world-ruling kingdom w/ unchanging laws is established

\*Dan 4 documents Nebuchadnezzar losing control of his life & kingdom for a time

\*Nebuchadnezzar is a great example of spiritual ambiguity – did he accept Yahweh for salvation or not

**Today, we’ll see 3 things that demonstrate that you’re so close to God’s will yet not in it**

# #1 – You have facts without faith (Vs 1-18)

Read Vs 1-3

1. This is one of just a few occasions in the Bible that we do not find in other secular history books
  - a. Doesn't make it any less authentic, many historians cover up the victor's deficiencies
  - b. These events are just as real as Pilate's
    - i. Skeptics doubted Pilate's very existence until his bust was discovered in Caesarea Maritime (1961)
2. This is third of 3 times Nebu recognized God
  - a. Dan 2 – says He's the God of Gods
  - b. Dan 3 – recognized He's the God that saves
  - c. Dan 4 – accepted His eternal rule & truth
  - d. Chance Nebu's in heaven (but don't know)

Read Vs 4-9

1. Nebu had a great respect & level of trust in Daniel & his God, yet there's a problem

- a. Nebu still respects other gods, in that he's proud he named Daniel after his god Bel (vs 8)
  - b. He still hasn't removed his false prophets that serve other gods (vs 6-7)
  - c. He puts Dan's God on par w/ others (vs 8)
    - i. Peter mistakenly put Moses & Elijah on par w/ Jesus & was corrected by God the Father
2. Many people act like Nebu in that they want God to act when in need – Genie in Bottle
- a. Read Job 41:11 – God owes us nothing, it's His mercy that He gives us good things
  - b. 'Thy Kingdom come, Thy will be done' – We're here for His will, not vice versa
3. What would change everything is if he sought God & God alone for all his needs
- a. Now that's placing your life in His hands

Read Vs 10-17

1. This tree had all & provided all

- a. This problem isn't b/c of its weakness or lack of benevolent
2. In Nebu's understanding, it's watchers that are proclaiming & pronouncing this judgement
3. Vs 17 makes it clear that this has to do with rulers over the earth
  - a. No doubt a dream against he himself

Read Vs 18

1. Thus Nebu wants to benefit from God, yet not have Him as Lord or Savior

## **#2 – You have candor without compassion (Vs 19-27)**

Read Vs 19

1. Another way to say it is, 'this dream is in favor of your enemy's position'
2. Notice Daniel had genuine concern for Nebu

Read Vs 20-22

1. Ok so I'm the tree [Nebu would say], that's good

## Read Vs 23-26

1. He's to be deposed in this way "7 times"
  - a. Could be 7 years – nails & hair grow
  - b. But since Babylon has 2 seasons per year, it could be 3.5 years
    - i. Prayer of Nabonidus w/i a Babylonian tablet at British Museum labeled BM 34113 reads, "For 4 years the king sent neither troops nor equipment to Akkad... He did not go out of his house, & he did not perform the duties of kingship."
2. God's intended purpose was to humble Nebu, hoping he'd repent & trust God for salvation
  - a. What grace!

## Read Vs 27

1. Daniel didn't hold back & give just some general revelation of this dream
2. We need to learn, like Daniel, how to speak the truth in love – both halves of this expression

3. But notice Daniel goes beyond his obligation & also gives his godly advice of what to do next

### **#3 – You have gain without gratitude (Vs 28-37)**

Read Vs 28-30

1. What stands out to you here?
  - a. How about he had 12 months to be humbled under the mighty hand of God, but didn't
2. Did he believe the interpretation at all?
  - a. Maybe he believed for 1 month, then came right back to his old nature
  - b. Maybe he believed for 12 months, then slipped back
3. Oh the pride of thinking he's a self-made man
  - a. Whether we think it about our material life or spiritual life; Jesus said whatsoever is highly esteemed among men is an abomination in God's sight

4. Thru this humbling he'll learn what he said in vs 17 – “that the Most High rules”
  - a. Human race only has what God has first given to us (Read John 19:10-11)
  - b. Read Psm 75:6-7 – Rush Limbaugh used to always say, “talent on loan from God”; well also, all power is on loan from God

Read Vs 31-33

1. Many a heathen has heard from God in dreams like Abimelech, Pharoah, Pilate's wife; but this is the only account of a voice from heaven
2. Known as boanthropy (thinking you're an ox)
  - a. Plenty of modern examples
    - i. 21 yr old Iranian male in 2018
    - ii. 60 yr old Iranian male in 2019
    - iii. 25 yr old Indian male in 2021
  - b. All diagnosed with severe depression
  - c. How many of today's 'mental illnesses' are actually a spiritual deficiency?

3. This is what Jesus said; that the way up is down; and the way down is up
  - a. What does it profit to gain the world if you lose your eternal life? Nothing

Read Vs 34-37

1. Notice Nebu's blessing encapsulates our Omni-God wonderfully
  - a. Omnipresent – *Who lives forever* (vs 34)
  - b. Omnipotence – *He does according to His will* (vs 35)
  - c. Omniscience – *All His works are true & just* (vs 37)
2. He's clear now that God returned to him his kingdom & humbled his pride
3. The history books are strangely quiet regarding Nebu's last years
  - a. He died of natural causes; his son [Evil-Merodach] rules 2 yrs & was assassinated
  - b. Did he withdraw from illness or Christian conversion?



## Conclusion

We don't have a definitive answer about what happened to Nebu, but we can have one about ourselves

1. **Do we have facts w/o faith?**
  - a. W/o faith it's impossible to please God
2. **Do we have candor w/o compassion?**
  - a. Love is the great sign you are of God
3. **Do we have gain w/o gratitude?**
  - a. Gratitude is the greatest motivator there is

When you enter eternity, I don't want Jesus to look at you and say, "Oh, so close!"

I want Him to say, 'Well done, good and faithful servant, enter into the joy of your Lord!'