

At the end of **verse 4**, the wisemen say, ^{4b}“O king, live forever! Tell your servants the dream, and we will show the interpretation.”

They all desired to provide the king with an interpretation he would be pleased to hear, or at least one that was so ambiguous it could mean anything.

However, much to their surprise, in **verses 5 – 6** the king added a requirement that he had never asked of them before. This time, he said, “I not only want you to tell me the meaning of my dream, I also want you to tell me the contents of my dream.”

Therefore, the stakes were very high. If the wisemen were successful, they would receive “gifts and rewards and great honor.”

However, if they could not follow through with an accurate recounting of the dream and its interpretation, they would be “torn limb from limb.” This was no idle threat (**Daniel 3; 2 Kings 25:7; Jeremiah 29:22**). Therefore, Nebuchadnezzar was a cruel and brutally vicious man.

Some commentators suggest (based upon **verse 3**) that Nebuchadnezzar couldn't remember his dream and that's why he asked his counselors to reveal its contents.

However, I'm more inclined to agree with other commentators who believe that Nebuchadnezzar was **testing** his wisemen. He perhaps suspected they were “Yes” men, always telling him what he wanted to hear.

But this “dream” was so disturbing, and seemingly so significant, that Nebuchadnezzar wanted to ensure he was receiving an accurate interpretation.

In **verses 8 – 9**, Nebuchadnezzar doubles down on his threat to kill them. He accuses them of stalling for time, perhaps hoping that his anger will subside, and cooler heads will prevail.

Their response in **verses 10 – 11** reveals the limits of human wisdom. **No one** “**on earth**...can meet the king's demand.” They were, after all, mortal men.

Therefore, the wise men were humiliated. They were forced to admit that Nebuchadnezzar was asking them to do what only a **divine being** can do. They were confessing, not only their inability, but also the inability of their gods.

This isn't the only time in Scripture that God exposed the foolishness of the world and the deceptiveness of Satan's minions (**Ex. 7 – 12; 1 Kings 18; Jer. 28; Acts 13:1 – 12**). But ultimately it is Christ, who by His Person and His work on the cross, has declared that the **wisdom of the world** and its **false religions** are foolishness (**1 Corinthians 1:18ff**).

In **verse 12**, we learn that Nebuchadnezzar not only wanted to kill the “wise men” who were present at this meeting, but also “**all** the wise men of Babylon.” He wanted them “destroyed” for **not** doing what was **impossible** in the first place.

Verse 13 says that even though they were likely only recent graduates of Babylon University, “Daniel and his companions” found themselves on the “kill” list.

Such is the brutality of Babylon's king. Therefore, “Arioch, the king's captain,” began rounding these men up, arresting them, and bringing them in for a formal execution.

However, the good news is, that contrary to Nebuchadnezzar's intentions, the stage is now set for the God of Daniel to do what these “wise men” and their “gods” could not do.