### Daniel

## Chapter 4

1‘NebuChadnezzar the king,  
  
 ‘To all peoples, tribes, languages, and to all that live in the land:  
  
 ‘May you have an abundance of peace!  
  
  
 2‘I’m pleased to announce to you that the highest God has performed signs and miracles to me… 3And His signs are great, His wonders are mighty, His kingdom is throughout the ages, and His authority is through generations.  
  
 4‘I, NebuChadnezzar, was prospering in my palace and my throne was thriving. 5But then I had a vision in a dream that struck me with fear and left me disturbed in my bed, for the vision that I saw in my mind really bothered me. 6So I decreed that all the wise men of Babylon should be brought before me so I could have them explain the meaning of the dream. 7Then all the sorcerers, priests, astrologers, and Chaldeans came to me, and I told them of the dream, but they were unable to explain what it meant.  
  
 8‘However, DaniEl (who is called BelTeShazzar, and who truly has the Breath of God) came in the Name of my God, and I told him my dream. 9[I said to him]:  
  
 ‘O BelTeShazzar, you leader of [my] wise men, and someone whom I know has the Breath of God, and is never powerless when it comes to understanding mysteries. Listen to the vision that I saw in my dream, and then tell me what it means. 10For this is the vision that I saw in my mind while I was in my bed:  
  
 ‘{Look!} There was a huge tree that stood in the center of the earth… It was very tall, 11and the tree kept getting mightier and larger until it reached into the heavens and it spread to the ends of the earth.  
  
 12‘Its leaves were beautiful and it was filled with enough fruit to feed everyone. So the wild animals of the fields camped under it, the flying creatures of the skies lived in its branches, and all flesh was being fed by it.  
  
 13‘Then in the vision that I had in my bed that night, I saw a holy observer (a messenger) coming down out of the sky, 14and he shouted and said:  
  
 ‘Now, you must cut down the tree…  
 Yes, cut off its branches and shake off its leaves,  
 Then scatter its fruit [on the ground].  
 Thereafter, you must chase off all the wild beasts  
 That are living under its branches,  
 And drive the flying creatures away!  
  
 15‘Leave nothing but its roots in the ground;  
 Then, bind it with iron and brass,  
 So that it will just lie there covered by grass,  
 Surrounded by the wild beasts of the fields,  
 And bathed by dew from the skies,  
 Just like grass on the ground.  
  
 16‘Then his heart will be changed from that of a man,  
 And the heart of a beast will be given to him…  
 For seven times, this is how he’ll be changed.’  
  
 17‘Then the observer said:  
  
 ‘This is a [vision] from the Most Holy One,  
 To show to all those who are living  
 That Jehovah is over all kingdoms,  
 And He gives them to whomever He chooses…  
 He can even appoint men who are viewed with contempt  
 To be in charge of it all.’  
  
 18‘So, this is what I saw in the dream (yes me, King NebuChadnezzar). Therefore, I [said to] BelTeShazzar:  
  
 ‘Now, explain it to me… Tell me what it means! Although none of the other wise men in my kingdom have been able to interpret it for me, I know that you can, O DaniEl, because the Holy Breath of God is within you!’  
  
 19‘Well, DaniEl was unable to say anything for an hour, because he was so disturbed by his thoughts. Then I asked:  
  
 ‘O BelTeShazzar, why are you taking so long in interpreting the dream?’  
  
 ‘And BelTeShazzar replied:  
  
 ‘O lord, leave the interpretation to those who hate you and to your enemies! 20For the tree that you saw, which became so strong and so tall that it reached into the heavens and covered the whole earth, 21and which grew such great leaves and had such an abundance of fruit that it fed all the wild animals that lived under it, as well as all the flying creatures that lived in its branches is you, O king! 22Because, your fame and greatness has been made to grow so much that it now reaches into the heavens, since you rule to the ends of the lands!  
  
 23‘And when the king saw a holy observer coming down from the sky who [was told] to [cut down] the tree and destroy it, but to leave its roots in the ground and to band the tree with iron and brass, then to let it lie there among the shoots of grass among the wild animals [where it is to be bathed by] the dew from the skies [and remain that way] for 7 times… 24This is what it means, O king:  
  
 ‘It is the highest form of interpretation, for this is what’s going to happen to you, O my lord the king.  
  
 25‘You’ll be driven away from mankind,  
 And be forced to live among beasts in the plains,  
 Where they’ll feed you with grass like an ox,  
 And you’ll [be bathed by] dew from the skies.  
  
 ‘For seven times, you’ll be changed,  
 Until you accept that Jehovah is higher  
 Than all the kingdoms of men,  
 And to those He selects, He gives all this [power].  
  
 26‘But, because they were told  
 To leave the tree’s roots in the ground,  
 Your kingdom will continue to be yours,  
 Until the time that you realize  
 That your power has come to you from the heavens.  
  
 27‘But because of this, O king (and may my council be pleasing to you);  
 You must pay for your sins by giving to the poor,  
 And you must also pay for your errors  
 By showing compassion to the needy.  
 Then, God may be lenient with you for your sins.’  
  
 28‘Well, all of these things happened to me (King NebuChadnezzar). 29For just 12 months later, while I was walking in the temple of my kingdom in Babylon 30and I was saying to myself:  
  
 ‘Isn’t this the great Babylon that I’ve built as my royal home through my own power, strength, honor, and glory…’  
  
 31‘Yes, while those words were still in my mouth, a voice came from the sky that proclaimed:  
  
 ‘To you, it is now being said,  
 O King NebuChadnezzar,  
 That your kingdom has been taken from you.  
  
 32‘For men will drive you away,  
 And you’ll have to live among the wild beasts,  
 Where they’ll feed you grass like an ox.  
  
 ‘For seven times, you’ll be changed,  
 Until you know that Jehovah  
 Is the One who’s over all kingdoms,  
 And He gives it to whomever He chooses.’  
  
 33‘Well, that’s what happened to me, King NebuChadnezzar, within that very hour! I was driven away from my people, I ate grass like an ox, I was bathed by the dew from the sky, my hair became as strong as that of a lion, and my fingernails grew long like bird’s claws!  
  
 34‘Then, after those days had been fulfilled, I, NebuChadnezzar, raised my eyes to the sky, and my senses were returned to me.  
  
 ‘So I praised the Most High who lives throughout the ages… I praised and spoke gloriously of His authority that lasts throughout the ages, and of His kingship [that lasts] through generations of generations.  
  
 35‘For before Him, those of us who live on the earth are like nothing at all, since He rules the armies of the heavens and those who live on the earth in any way that He wishes! No one can resist His hand, or ask Him why He does the things that He does.  
  
 36‘Then, after my senses returned, the honor of my kingdom was restored to me. My appearance returned to me, and my rulers and great men looked up to me once again. So thereafter, I went on to strengthen my kingdom, and more greatness was added to me.  
  
 37‘Now, I, NebuChadnezzar, praise, honor, and glorify the King of the heavens, because everything that He does is righteous, all of His ways are fair, and He humbles those who become too proud.’