

# Daniel 4:10

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Thus were the visions of mine head in my bed; I saw, and behold a tree in the midst of the earth, and the height thereof was great.

## Analysis

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Nebuchadnezzar begins recounting his dream vision (יִרְדָּ/chezo, vision/sight) seen 'upon my bed'—emphasizing this was divine revelation during sleep, not waking imagination. The tree 'in the midst of the earth' suggests centrality and prominence, visible to all. Trees frequently symbolize kingdoms or rulers in biblical literature (Ezekiel 31, Psalm 1, Matthew 13:31-32). The phrase 'the height thereof was great' foreshadows the tree's—and thus the king's—pride and exaltation. This opening establishes the dream's scope: a universal symbol (visible from earth's center) representing something of cosmic significance. The imagery draws from ancient Near Eastern art and literature where the world-tree (arbor mundi) represented cosmic order, divine kingship, or imperial dominion.

## Historical Context

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Tree imagery pervaded ancient Near Eastern royal propaganda. Assyrian and Babylonian reliefs depicted stylized 'tree of life' symbols representing royal authority and cosmic order. Kings were metaphorically described as trees providing shade and sustenance to subjects. Nebuchadnezzar himself planted extensive royal gardens and parks in Babylon—the famed Hanging Gardens represented his arboreal ambitions. The dream's tree 'in the midst of the earth' with worldwide visibility parallels Nebuchadnezzar's imperial self-understanding: Babylon as the center of civilization, his reign extending to earth's ends.

## Related Passages

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**Romans 2:1** — Judging others

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

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

**Psalms 19:1** — Heavens declare God's glory

## Study Questions

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1. What modern 'trees'—institutions, leaders, or ideologies—seem to stand 'in the midst of the earth' with worldwide influence?
2. How does the tree's central position and great height symbolize human pride and self-exaltation?
3. Why does Scripture frequently use tree imagery to represent kingdoms and rulers?

## Interlinear Text

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וַיֵּדּוּ י	רֹאשִׁ י	עַל	מִשְׁכְּבִי	הָ	יָדַיִת	וַיֵּדּוּ
Thus were the visions	of mine head	in	my bed		I saw	and behold
H2376	H7217	H5922	H4903	H2370	H1934	H431
אֵיל	בְּגֹוֹא	אֶרֶץ א	וְרוֹמֵה	שָׁמָיָה:		
a tree	in the midst	of the earth	and the height	thereof was great		
H363	H1459	H772	H7314	H7690		

## Additional Cross-References

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**Daniel 4:5** (Parallel theme): I saw a dream which made me afraid, and the thoughts upon my bed and the visions of my head troubled me.

**Jeremiah 12:2** (Parallel theme): Thou hast planted them, yea, they have taken root: they grow, yea, they bring forth fruit: thou art near in their mouth, and far from their reins.

