

# Daniel 4:5

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

I saw a dream which made me afraid, and the thoughts upon my bed and the visions of my head troubled me.

## Analysis

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This verse introduces Nebuchadnezzar's second prophetic dream, a divine communication that profoundly disturbed the mighty Babylonian king. The Hebrew word for "afraid" (dechal, דָּחַל) in Aramaic conveys intense fear and terror, while "troubled" (behal, בָּהַל) suggests mental confusion and alarm. The phrase "thoughts upon my bed and the visions of my head" employs parallelism to emphasize the comprehensive nature of this divine revelation—both the rational mind and the imaginative faculties were engaged.

Unlike false dreams or psychological phenomena, God-given dreams possess a distinctive quality that unsettles human pride and self-sufficiency. Nebuchadnezzar, despite his absolute power and previous encounter with divine revelation (chapter 2), finds himself helpless before God's supernatural communication. This demonstrates that God sovereignly communicates with both believers and unbelievers to accomplish His purposes.

The dream's troubling nature serves as divine preparation for the humbling message that follows—Nebuchadnezzar will be stripped of power and reason until he acknowledges that "the most High ruleth in the kingdom of men" (Daniel 4:25). God's revelation often disturbs before it instructs, breaking through human pride to prepare hearts for truth.

## Historical Context

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This episode occurred during Nebuchadnezzar's reign over the Neo-Babylonian Empire (605-562 BCE), likely in the latter part of his rule when Babylon stood at its zenith of power and architectural splendor. The Hanging Gardens, one of the Seven Wonders of the Ancient World, exemplified Babylonian magnificence. Archaeological evidence confirms Nebuchadnezzar's extensive building projects documented in cuneiform inscriptions.

Ancient Near Eastern kings regularly consulted dreams as divine communications, employing professional dream interpreters and maintaining dream books. However, Nebuchadnezzar's dream defied conventional interpretation, requiring divine insight.

## Related Passages

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**Romans 10:9** — Confession and belief for salvation

**John 3:16** — God's love and salvation

## Study Questions

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1. How does God use disturbing circumstances or revelations in our lives to break through pride and self-sufficiency?
2. What does Nebuchadnezzar's fear before God's revelation teach us about appropriate responses to divine truth?

## Interlinear Text

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מִשְׁכָּב־ עַל וּפְרָהָרִין יְהוָה לִמְךָ  
my bed upon and the thoughts

a dream I saw which made me afraid and the thoughts

H2493 H2370 H1763

H2031

H5922

H4903

וְבָבֶלְתִּי רָאָשׁ־ וְחַזְׁרָאָה־

and the visions of my head troubled

H2376

H7217

H927

## Additional Cross-References

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**Daniel 2:1** (Parallel theme): And in the second year of the reign of Nebuchadnezzar Nebuchadnezzar dreamed dreams, wherewith his spirit was troubled, and his sleep brake from him.

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