

Truth Plus Hope

“Then Daniel, whose name was Belteshazzar, was astonished for a time, and his thoughts troubled him. So the king spoke, and said, Belshazzar, do not let the dream or its interpretation trouble you.” – Daniel 4:19

It wasn't an easy message to deliver. Daniel had to tell King Nebuchadnezzar that he was about to be cut down. At that time, King Nebuchadnezzar was the most powerful man on the face of the earth. He did whatever he wanted, whenever he wanted. It was Nebuchadnezzar's world, and everyone else just happened to live in it.

But one night Nebuchadnezzar had a dream – a troubling dream. In his he saw a magnificent tree, a tree so big that the entire world could see it. There was an abundance of fruit coming from this tree, which everyone was eating.

Then an angel suddenly came down from Heaven and gave a command to cut down the tree. The stump, however, was to stay in the ground. When Nebuchadnezzar woke up, he called in his soothsayers, astrologers, and fortune-tellers to explain what his dream meant. None of them had the answer. Then he called for Daniel, who gave him the interpretation of the dream. It wouldn't have been easy to deliver this message to someone as powerful as Nebuchadnezzar. With one word he could have Daniel's head separated from his body.

Daniel took no pleasure in delivering this news to the king. But he told the truth.

Then he said, “King Nebuchadnezzar, please accept my advice. Stop sinning and do what is right. Break from your wicked past and be merciful to the poor. Perhaps then you will continue to prosper” (Daniel 4:27).

Daniel spoke the truth lovingly, boldly, and clearly, but he also pointed Nebuchadnezzar to the God of second chances, and we need to do the same. We need to tell people the truth, because they're not going to appreciate the Good News if they don't know the bad news. But we should always give them hope.

Donald