

The Four Great Beasts

In Daniel 7, Daniel experienced a dream from God. At the time, Babylon was nearing the end of their reign over the region. God was showing him what would happen in the future.

He was shown several pagan kings and their respective kingdoms that would be granted power over the region by God. He was also given insight into the interpretation of the last one in relation to end-time events.

Daniel 7:1-3

¹In the first year of Belshazzar king of Babylon Daniel saw a dream and visions in his mind as he lay on his bed; then he wrote the dream down and related the following summary of it.

²Daniel said, "I was looking in my vision by night, and behold, the four winds of heaven were stirring up the great sea.

³And four great beasts were coming up from the sea, different from one another;...

These beasts represent spiritual powers and dominions that make up the principality of Mystery Babylon. and its antichrist spirits. The influence of this principality is foreshadowed in several kings and their kingdoms in the Middle East, beginning with Nebuchadnezzar in this dream.

The Winged Lion

Daniel 7:4

⁴The first was like a lion and had the wings of an eagle. I kept looking until its wings were plucked, and it was lifted up from the ground and made to stand on two feet like a man; a human mind was also given to it.



This lion represents Babylon under the reign of king Nebuchadnezzar. Nebuchadnezzar experienced a mental breakdown from the Lord, grew claws and feathers, and lived in the wilderness for seven years as divine punishment for his immense pride. Through this, God demonstrated His divine sovereignty over the kingdoms of the earth (Pharaoh of Egypt and Shalmaneser of Assyria were also precursors of the antichrist spirit).

Nebuchadnezzar was also the king who set up a golden image of himself as an idol (as a type of antichrist) and ordered everyone to worship it. Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego would not, and were thrown into a fiery furnace. Jesus appeared in the fire with them and delivered them.



The Carnivorous Bear

Daniel 7:5

⁵And behold, another beast, a second one resembling a bear. And it was raised up on one side, and three ribs were in its mouth between its teeth; and thus they said to it, 'Arise, devour much meat!'

The bear is symbolic for Medo-Persia. This kingdom had enormous size and power and a ravenous nature. Being raised up on one side indicates the dual identity of the empire, with the Persian side dominating the Median side. The three ribs in its mouth symbolize the conquests of Babylon, Egypt and Lydia. It was in this empire that Darius the Mede made a statue of himself as an idol and imposed an edict that nobody could pray to any god or man besides him (acting as a type of antichrist). Daniel did not comply and was sentenced to visit the den of lions. God shut the lions' mouths and rescued Daniel.

The Four-Headed Leopard

Daniel 7:6

⁶After this I kept looking, and behold, another one, like a leopard, which had on its back four wings of a bird; the beast also had four heads, and dominion was given to it.



This creature represents Alexander the Great and his four generals who would rule over the entire realm of Greece, which included most of the Mediterranean rim and the Middle East. Alexander believed that he was a son of the gods and was worshipped as such. He was infatuated with the Middle East culture, and wanted to make Babylon the capital of his kingdom.

This kingdom would be recognized by God as acquiring dominion over the region in 331 BC, when Greece conquered the Persians. Alexander died at a young age, and he left no instructions on who would inherit the kingdom. It was then split between his four military generals (the four heads). Antiochus Epiphanes IV came through one of these dynasties. As a precursor to the antichrist, he desecrated the temple in 167 BCE.



The Exceedingly Dreadful Beast

Daniel 7:7-8

⁷After this I kept looking in the night visions, and behold, a fourth beast, dreadful and terrifying and extremely strong; and it had large iron teeth. It devoured and crushed and trampled down the remainder with its feet; and it was different from all the beasts that were before it, and it had ten horns.

⁸While I was contemplating the horns, behold, another horn, a little one, came up among them, and three of the first horns were pulled out by the roots before it; and behold, this horn possessed eyes like the eyes of a man and a mouth uttering great boasts.

This beast is significantly different and much more evil than the others. A different type of beast means it represented a different type of kingdom. This is not the Roman empire because they did not adopt an antichrist spirit, and the wording of these verses in scripture does not require these kingdoms to be chronologically successive (Note that Dan Ch 11 skips the Roman empire). This beast is better associated with the end-time false religion coming through Islam and the idolatry of the antichrist. Beastly Islamic forces gained control in 636 AD and have maintained a demonized presence ever since.

Dan 7:24 tells us that the horns are leaders that receive life from this dreadful beast that sustains them. The ten horns are best symbolic of 10 caliphs, supported by powers and principalities, that rule over regional caliphates who are enemies of Israel. These groups are seen in Psalm 83, vs 6-8. The ten "kingdoms" are; Edom, Ishmaelites, Moab, Hagrites, Gebal, Ammon, Amalek, Philistia, Tyre and Assyria. They will form a confederacy to try to wipe out Israel as a nation. These caliphs would represent second-heaven forces that impact radical religious factions across territories (Isis, Al-Qaeda, The Muslim Brotherhood, etc.).

The antichrist is the eleventh horn (the little horn with eyes and mouth) and is not actually one of them, but is associated with them, and takes authority over three of those factions. Possessed by the Deceiver, he presents false peace in the first 3-1/2 yrs of the tribulation period to a world in chaos. Think of this image as depicting radical, jihadist Islam in the last 3-1/2 years of the tribulation period - The Great Tribulation.