Four Beasts: The Antichrist Spirits of Mystery Babylon

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 pagan kings and their respective kingdoms that would contribute to the realm of Mystery Babylon. He was also given insight into the interpretation of the last one in relation to end-time events.

Daniel 7:1-3
[1]In 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.
[2]Daniel said, "I was looking in my vision by night, and behold, the four winds of heaven were stirring up the great sea.
[3]And four great beasts were coming up from the sea, different from one another;...

These beasts represent spiritual powers and dominions that are the foundational to the antichrist spirits of Mystery Babylon. The principalities contributing to this pagan empire are forshadowed in several kings and their kingdoms in the Middle East, beginning with Nebuchadnezzar.

The Winged Lion

Daniel 7:4
[4]The 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 precursers of the antichrist spirit, but not of Mystery Babylon).

Nebuchadnezzar was also the king who set up a goldem 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
[5]And 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
[6]After 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

[7]After 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.
[8]While 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, as it represents the demonic imperialism of the antichrist. This is not the Roman empire because Rome was actually not that different than its predecessors, and Rome was not a contributor to the realm of Mystery Babylon. The wording of these verses in scripture does not require these kingdoms to be chronologically successive (Note that Dan Ch 11 also skips the Roman empire). This beast is better associated with the cult of Islam and the idolatry of the antichrist. Beastly Islamic forces gained control in 636 AD and have maintained a presence ever since.

Dan 7:24 tells us that the 10 horns are symbolic of 10 regional leaders - caliphs that receive life from this beast, and are likely possessed by evil principalities. They will rule over people groups that are historical enemies of Israel, as 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 men will be leaders of radical religious factions across territories (Isis, Al-Qaeda, 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. Posessed by the Deceiver, the antichrist provides false peace during the first 3-1/2 yrs of the tribulation period to a world in chaos. Think of this beast as depicting radical, jihadist Islam in the last 3-1/2 years of this age - the Great Tribulation.