

Daniel 7:3

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And four great beasts came up from the sea, diverse one from another.

Analysis

The vision's beasts emerge: "And four great beasts came up from the sea, diverse one from another." These beasts represent four successive world empires (Babylon, Medo-Persia, Greece, Rome). The phrase "diverse one from another" emphasizes distinctive characteristics. Unlike Daniel 2's statue (human form, noble metals), chapter 7 depicts empires as beasts—from God's perspective, human kingdoms are predatory, brutal, and inhuman. This dual perspective (2's statue, 7's beasts) reveals truth: empires appear glorious to humans but beastly to God.

Historical Context

The four beasts parallel Daniel 2's four-part statue: lion (Babylon/gold), bear (Medo-Persia/silver), leopard (Greece/bronze), terrifying beast (Rome/iron). Historical fulfillment vindicated the prophecy—each empire succeeded its predecessor exactly as predicted. The bestial imagery influenced later apocalyptic literature, especially Revelation 13. Ancient Near Eastern art depicted empires as composite creatures combining fearsome animal features, so this imagery would resonate with Daniel's audience.

Related Passages

Hebrews 11:1 — Definition of faith

Romans 1:17 — The righteous shall live by faith

1 Corinthians 13:4 — Characteristics of love

1 John 4:8 — God is love

Study Questions

1. How does the shift from statue (human glory) to beasts (divine perspective) reveal the difference between worldly and godly assessment of power?
2. What does the bestial nature teach about human government apart from God —predatory, violent, inhuman rather than noble?

Interlinear Text

וְאַרְבָּעָה מִן־יָם־שָׁבֵט־אֶת־בְּרַכָּה | חִילָּה | סָלַק | מִן־אֶת־יָם־אֶת־שָׁבֵט | מִן־זָאָה:
And four beasts great came up from the sea diverse another from

H703

H2423

H7260

H5559

H4481

H3221

H8133

H1668

H4481

: זָאָה

another

H1668

Additional Cross-References

Revelation 13:1 (Parallel theme): And I stood upon the sand of the sea, and saw a beast rise up out of the sea, having seven heads and ten horns, and upon his horns ten crowns, and upon his heads the name of blasphemy.

Daniel 7:17 (Parallel theme): These great beasts, which are four, are four kings, which shall arise out of the earth.