

Daniel 7:6

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

After this I beheld, and lo another, like a leopard, which had upon the back of it four wings of a fowl; the beast had also four heads; and dominion was given to it.

Analysis

The third beast "like a leopard" with "four wings of a fowl" and "four heads" represents Greece under Alexander the Great. The leopard symbolizes swiftness and agility, while four wings (double the first beast's two) emphasize unprecedented speed of conquest. Alexander conquered the known world from Greece to India in merely twelve years (334-323 BC), fulfilling this imagery of extraordinary rapid expansion. The "four heads" prophesy the empire's division after Alexander's death among his four generals (Cassander, Lysimachus, Seleucus, Ptolemy).

The phrase "dominion was given to it" emphasizes divine sovereignty—Alexander's brilliant military success didn't result from mere human genius but from God's providential grant of power. Though Alexander likely never acknowledged the true God, he unknowingly served divine purposes by spreading Greek culture and language, preparing the world for the gospel. God's sovereignty operates through even unconscious instruments to accomplish redemptive purposes.

The leopard's beauty and agility contrast with the previous beasts' raw power, matching Greek culture's aesthetic sophistication. Yet Greece, too, remains a beast in God's sight—its philosophy and culture, though refined, couldn't produce salvation. This demonstrates that human culture's highest achievements, lacking divine revelation, remain beastly from God's perspective. Christ's wisdom

surpasses Greek philosophy (1 Corinthians 1:20-25), and His kingdom outlasts cultural brilliance.

Historical Context

Alexander the Great (336-323 BC) conquered Persia, Egypt, and territories to India with remarkable speed, establishing Greek (Hellenistic) culture across the ancient Near East. His death at 33 led to empire division among four generals (the Diadochi), exactly fulfilling the "four heads" prophecy. This Greek cultural dominance prepared the world for Christianity by establishing common language (Koine Greek) and infrastructure.

Related Passages

Ephesians 2:8 — Salvation by grace through faith

Romans 10:9 — Confession and belief for salvation

Matthew 25:31 — Final judgment

Romans 2:1 — Judging others

Study Questions

1. How does Alexander's rapid conquest, though serving his ambition, demonstrate God's sovereignty in using even unconscious instruments for redemptive purposes?
2. What does Greece's cultural sophistication yet beastly nature teach about human achievement apart from divine revelation?
3. How did God providentially use Greek culture and language to prepare the world for the gospel's spread?

