

# Deuteronomy 4:18

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

The likeness of any thing that creepeth on the ground, the likeness of any fish that is in the waters beneath the earth:

## Analysis

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The prohibition includes aquatic creatures—'likeness of any fish that is in the waters.' This completes the comprehensive ban covering all creation realms: land, air, and sea, corresponding to Genesis 1 creation domains. No aspect of creation may represent the Creator. Ancient religions deified seas and water creatures (Dagon, Leviathan mythology), yet Scripture insists these are merely creatures under God's sovereign control (Psalm 104:25-26). The exhaustive prohibition underscores God's transcendent otherness—He is categorically different from all created things.

## Historical Context

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Philistine religion centered on Dagon, depicted with human upper body and fish tail (1 Samuel 5:1-5). Mesopotamian creation myths featured Tiamat, the chaos sea-monster goddess. Canaanite religion included Yam, sea deity opposing Baal. Israel's coastal neighbors worshiped marine deities, making fish idolatry a constant temptation. God's absolute prohibition established that He alone controls seas and sea creatures, all of which serve His sovereign purposes.

## Related Passages

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**Matthew 25:31** — Final judgment

**Romans 2:1** — Judging others

## Study Questions

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1. How does the comprehensive nature of this prohibition (land, air, sea) emphasize God's absolute transcendence over all creation?
2. What does the prohibition of sea creature imagery teach about God's sovereignty over realms that ancient cultures considered chaotic and divine?

## Interlinear Text

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תְּבִנֵּי יֵת	כָּל	רֵמֵ שׁ	בְּאֲדָמָה	תְּבִנֵּי יֵת	כָּל
<b>The likeness</b>	H3605	<b>of any thing that creepeth</b>	<b>on the ground</b>	<b>The likeness</b>	H3605
H8403		H7430	H127	H8403	
דָּג הַ	אֲשֶׁר	בַּיַּם יָם	מִתַּחַת	לָאָרֶץ:	
<b>of any fish</b>	H834	<b>that is in the waters</b>	<b>beneath</b>	<b>the earth</b>	
H1710		H4325	H8478	H776	

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