

The 4 Living Creatures

Rev 4: 6-11

Ezekiel 1: 1-28

The 4 Living Creatures

- Whenever we study the Book of The Revelation, we must understand that there is some symbolism in the book.
- However, we must not fall into the trap that just because something is symbolic.....
 - It does not have an explanation in the Word
 - Such the case in our study for today.....
 - 4 Living Creatures who are they or what do they represent???

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- Rev 4: 6-11.....
 - John is seeing these creatures...
 - But I cannot think that he did not know Ezekiel saw them as well as described in Ezekiel 1
- Ezekiel 1: 1-28
 - Ezekiel has this vision while living in exile
 - John also has this similar vision while in exile
 - They see that same scene although Ezekiel is in greater detail
 - But make no mistake they are the same for both.....

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- To understand these creatures, we must look at the attributes of each one.....
 - One side had the face of a lion
 - Another side the face of bull or ox/calf
 - Another side the face of a man
 - Another side the face of an eagle
- The first thing we must note is that 3 of them are mammals
- One is not.....rather it is a bird

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- That is first thing we notice about them
- Secondly, they had (Vs 7) the feet of calf's hoof
 - What would this mean to the reader?
 - First.....the cloven hoof is a sign of cleanliness
 - Secondly, the legs of these beings do not have joints.....(their legs were straight)
 - This tells the reader these creatures are not compromised/bendable in any way
 - It also tells the reader the feet were of "burnished bronze"(Rev 1: 15)
 - Which means these creatures attest to the judgment and glory of the Risen Christ.....

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- Ezek 1: 6-7....
 - Note the number 4 used twice (faces and wings)
 - Interestingly, 4 used often Scripture as a sign of completeness
 - On the 4th day, God completed the material universe
 - Sun, Moon and Stars
 - These were to mark the 4 seasons
 - Spring, summer, fall and winter
 - The Tetragrammaton...."YHVH" in Hebrew
 - 4 horsemen of the Apocalypse (Rev 6)

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- There are also 4 wheels (Ezek 1: 15-21)
 - They were full of eyes (Rev 4: 8; Ezek 1: 18)
 - Rev 4: 8...these eyes were “around and within”
 - Heb 4: 13.... And there is no creature hidden from His sight, but all things are open and laid bare to the eyes of Him to whom we must answer.
 - But these eyes are also “within”
 - Telling us these creatures have a dual duty
 - To man....to warn of the wiles of the devil
 - To God...to be careful to give glory to Him which is due to Him alone.....

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- We must also note....Ezekiel 1: 8
 - “under their wings they had “human hands”
 - II Peter 1: 21.... for no prophecy was ever made by an act of human will, but men moved by the Holy Spirit spoke from God.
 - I Peter 1: 10-12...As to this salvation, the prophets who prophesied of the grace that *would come* to you made careful search and inquiry, seeking to know what person or time the Spirit of Christ within them was indicating as He predicted the sufferings of Christ and the glories to follow. It was revealed to them that they were not serving themselves, but you, in these things which now have been announced to you through those who preached the gospel to you by the Holy Spirit sent from heaven—things into which angels long to look.

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- Note the first face is that of a “lion”
 - Rev 5: 5.....”Behold the Lion that is from the tribe of Judah”
 - Matthew in his gospel begins with the genealogy of Jesus tracing Him back to Abraham through Judah. (Matthew 1)
 - Interestingly, Matthew in this gospel refers to the Kingdom of Heaven 32 times
 - He is the only Gospel writer to use this term
 - It is Matthew that first used the term “King of the Jews”for Matthew’s primary audience is to Jews

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- Next, we will see the face of a bull (Ezek 1: 10)
 - There are two things to know about bulls/oxen
 - First, they are the most powerful animal pound for pound in the world
 - Second, they are a beast of burden
 - Wagon train statements, horse trot, mules walk, oxen plod
- It is in the book of Mark that Jesus is shown as a servant
 - He was driven into the desert
 - Mark 1: 12.... And immediately the Spirit driveth him into the wilderness.
 - One does not “drive” a king, but a servant is another story

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- You will also find the in book of Mark this word
 - “Immediately” it is used repeatedly
 - Why is this important for us to know?
 - Mark’s primary audience is the Roman empire
 - Rome at this time has @ 60 million slaves (Ben Hur)
 - Slaves were highly valued in the Roman world
 - Jesus portrayed as the obedient and suffering servant intent on doing is Father’s will
 - Made huge impression on the Roman world

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- We will now note the "face of a man"
- Of the four gospels, only one refers to Jesus as the "Son of Man" frequently
- That is the gospel of Luke
 - Note Luke's genealogy goes all the way back to Adam....the first man
 - Jesus being fully man is portrayed in the gospel of Luke.
- Why is this important for us to know??
 - The Greek gods of mythology were gods with human flaws.
 - Yet Jesus is the perfect son....

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- Luke 2: 49-52.... And He said to them, “Why is it that you were looking for Me? Did you not know that I had to be in My Father’s *house*?” And they did not understand the statement which He had made to them. And He went down with them, and came to Nazareth; and He continued in subjection to them; and His mother treasured all *these* things in her heart. And Jesus kept increasing in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and men.
 - The Greeks also prized wisdom....
 - Repeatedly Jesus confused the Pharisees with His knowledge of the Word....(Luke 2: 47).... And all who heard Him were amazed at His understanding and His answers.

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- Now we move on the face of an eagle
 - In the gospels, there are 3 known as the synoptic gospels, they are Matthew, Mark and Luke
 - But there is one that is unique from these 3
 - It is the gospel of John
- In the Gospel of John, we find Jesus described as the “Son of God”
 - You will note that just as an eagle is not bound to earth in his mission neither was Jesus.

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- John begins his gospel with these words...(John 1: 1-4)..In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made. In him was life; and the life was the light of men.
- There is no genealogy in John....
 - Deity has no beginning
 - Repeatedly, John refers to Jesus as the “Son of God”

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- When John is finishing his gospel, he writes...(John 20: 30-31.... And many other signs truly did Jesus in the presence of his disciples, which are not written in this book. But these are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name.
- Ezekiel 1: 13.... In the midst of the living beings there was something that looked like burning coals of fire, like torches darting back and forth among the living beings. The fire was bright, and lightning was flashing from the fire.

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- In conclusion, who or what are these 4 Living Creatures?
- I believe they represent the living Word of God given to all men....
 - II Peter 3: 9.... The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.
- But should someone reject His offer of salvation...
- There will be a day of judgment and wrath
 - For this Word of full of grace.....
 - But it is also filled with the promise of judgment.....”