

Four Living Beings

Ezekiel 1:10

6/8/03

Intro

- Barbeque today

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Ezekiel was one of those who were exiled to Babylon during the second exile. Daniel was in the first exile. These were part of what the Lord called “good fruit” through Jeremiah.

Ezekiel is famous for the vivid visions he had, I fact the book begins with a mysterious vision which we will study from today.

Ezekiel had encounters with God, and he has many heavenly visions. For that reason alone, he is worth understanding because of the rich insights we will get into heaven.

Heaven will be full of surprises.

Illus – Babies are very content in the womb. They would stay there if the could choose, but because of contractions, they are delivered to this new and incredible world which is full of surprises. No one would choose to go back to the womb.

Today we will study the first of Ezekiel’s heavenly visions. Here he sees four living creatures in 1:10.

The Rabbis have taught that these four faces represent God’s greatest creations and was the standard used by each of the lead tribes when Israel camped in the desert:

East	Judah	Lion
West	Ephraim	Ox
North	Dan	Eagle
South	Reuben	Man

The early church fathers taught that these faces represent the qualities of Jesus Christ that He would desire to see in each of us.

I. The lion represents authority.

A. Authority requires boldness

- The solid word of someone who knows what God wants.

II Corinthians 3: 12, “Having therefore such a hope, we use great boldness in our speech.”

- Great leaders of the bible have boldness to say what needs to be said.

Joshua 24: 14-15, “Choose you this day whom you will serve...”

B. No Compromise

- There is a time to take a stand and not to compromise.

Illus- Keith Green’s album cover.

C. Full commitment to the Lord

- This is an essential part of being a man or woman of authority.

Ecclesiastes 9:10, “Whatever your hand finds to do, do it with all your might.”

II. The ox represents the power of serving

A. Being steady and faithful

- The ox the greatest beast used for plowing with power.
- It is steady and faithful to its purpose.

I Corinthians 4:2, “Moreover, It is required of stewards that one be found faithful.”

B. Not afraid to do the difficult job

- Jesus never backed away from a task because it was difficult.

Illus - dealing with our sins could not have been a pleasant task

**Illus – Steve S., “I’m not used to seeing you like this pastor.”
Or “It inspires me to see a pastor with gloves on cleaning out the sewer.”**

C. How do you know of you’re a servant?

- By how you react when people treat you like one.
- When you find true pleasure in the serving

Matthew 20:28, Jesus said, “Just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve and to give His life as a ransom for many.”

III. The eagle represents spirituality

A. The eagle soars higher

- And can look directly at the sun

Isaiah 40:31, “They will mount up with wings like eagles.”

B. Catch the right wind

- The eagle knows how to soars at the greatest heights by catching the right winds

Illus- When Matthew and I were standing on the mountain, the wind was strong... and downward.

- The Holy Spirit is the wind beneath our wings.

C. Rise above the turmoil of life

- Fly in peace rather than striving

IV. The face of man represents humanity

A. The bible sees humanity as weakness

- Jesus needed rest.
- He slept through a storm

B. We’re just people

- The Lord allows our frailty to be seen

Illus – Jamie Buckingham and lessons in humility (Baptizing on Easter, and conducting a funeral).

- We’ll fail without the infilling of the Holy Spirit

Conclusion

These also can be seen in the gospels, showing the character of Christ Jesus.

Matthew –	Lion –	Jesus as King
Mark	Ox-	Jesus the Servant
Luke	Man	Jesus the Son of Man
John	Eagle	Jesus the Son of God

Christ in us is the hope of glory. May these attributes be ours and always increasing.