

8644U

MANITOULIN BIBLE SCHOOL - 2003

## THE FOUR FACES OF CHRIST IN THE GOSPELS

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Study #6: The Faces and The Kingdom

Good morning brethren and sisters for the last and final time. Good morning! I'm getting use to that! That's not a New Zealand thing, but some of your brethren do it so well, and the response is so warm that one could get use to it!

So, this morning by way of our last study, we are going to look at what has been described as the Faces and the Kingdom, but in fact, we're going to speak a few extra things in it as well, if I possibly can in this last precious remaining hour.

But could you please firstly, turn to page 31 of your handbook, and I'm just going to get you to write something in first which we'll need, God willing, at the end of the session. So on page 31, you'll notice that again we now have the four faces, but now we've only got two lines and so on the two lines this time, now we've made some progress in our understanding; on the top line I'd like you all to write what the face stands for. So under the eagle we have now, the Judge and underneath that, the name of the tribe which is, of course, Dan. Then to the west which was the face of the ox, of course, the first line should be what the ox represents, which was the Servant, and underneath that the tribe Ephraim; then under the lion to the east we should write the word, King, which is what the lion symbolizes and the tribe, of course, of Judah. Then under the face of the man, this time now we should finally write the word, Priest, which is what the man as we suggested symbolizes and, of course, the name of the tribe is Reuben. Alright, so now that we've got that, we can now proceed to what we're going to look at, God willing, this morning. What we hope to look at, is first of all, I just want to take you on a brief survey through a couple of incidental details first.

Just one thing, I think is appropriate to mention and that's this, that while each of the four gospels relate to a particular face of the cherubim, that because all the gospels are presenting the work of our Lord Jesus Christ, and because the Lord was **all** the faces, that in fact in all the gospels we find glimpses of the other faces. Since there's nothing inconsistent with that, then we ought not to be surprised that in each of the gospels we will, from time to time, see flashes of the other cherubic symbols, because after all, **the Lord is all!** He's all four, but that each gospel, nevertheless, has a dominant face which is the dominant theme of that gospel. For example, do you remember in Luke 1, verse 26 to 33, it talks about the One who was going to be raised to sit on the throne of David. There's a little section in Luke 1 that's really about the King and yet it's in the face of the man, which is a symbol of the Priest, but it's about kingship. John 13 verses 1 to 17 has one of the most marvellous examples of our Lord at service, when He took

a towel and girded Himself and washed the feet of His disciples and yet it's in the face of the eagle which is the Judge; we will catch glimpses of the other faces, b&s, in the gospels but nevertheless, for all of that, one particular face of the cherubim is, we believe, at the forefront of each gospel.

You know, one of the most amazing things that I find about this study is this, we've separated the faces out so that we can understand them. We've gone to each gospel so that we might focus on that face and see it and try to get to know some of its principles. But here's the amazing thing, b&s, **Christ was living all those faces simultaneously**. Christ was conscious of all those faces every day of His life, He lived them all simultaneously! Can you imagine that? what sort of mind did this man have? to be able to live as a conscious reflection of the Father's glory and manifest all four faces in perfect harmony in every circumstance of life that came upon Him. What manner of man is this, b&s, with whom we have to do?

Now each face, I think, has a paradox. These faces are not quite what they first appear! because it isn't just a lion in Matthew, it's a gentle lion who's going to represent a merciful King. It's not just an ox in Mark, it's a sensitive ox who represents the caring Servant; and it's not just a man we will see in Luke, it's a weeping man who will portray the sympathetic priest; and surprisingly it isn't just an eagle in John, it's going to be a smiling eagle who will portray a loving Judge. Oh, these faces aren't quite what they seem to be !

Now I want to, for a few moments, cause you to think about the wonder of God, and how He in His mighty wisdom ordained the writing of these portraits of His Son. You see, I think what God did was, He took 4 men, and each man that He chose to paint one of these pictures of our Lord, was the right man to paint this portrait, selected in the providence of God. Now let me show you how that works out, because it's a wonderful, wonderful thing! If we come to the man, Matthew; why did God select this man to paint the portrait of the King? Well, if you come to Matthew 10, we're told in Matthew 10 verse 2 concerning the names of the twelve apostles, it says their names are these: Simon, who is called Peter, and Andrew his brother; James and John and Philip and Bartholomew and Thomas and **Matthew the publican**'. Did you notice, b&s, that in Matthew's gospel, the only apostle who's given the title or name of his occupation is Matthew. Matthew the publican it says. Now why would Matthew tell us that he was the publican? Well, because you see, the publicans were a people of content, weren't they? In Matthew 9 verse 11, the phrase there refers to publicans and sinners, in the same breath; in Matthew 18 verse 17 it talks about publicans and heathens; in Matthew 21 verse 31 it talks about (oh, by the way, I've done the wrong thing here; I should just suggest that there might be a good place for you to right these notes and it may not be where you think). If you come back to page 8, you'll notice at the end of each of the gospels there is a spare page for extra notes, and if that page hasn't been already used, you may find it helpful to, in fact, put those notes there, because when I finish this brief review of the four writers, then I'm going to come back to a later page and talk about the faces in the kingdom and you'll need those notes, believe me, you'll need

those pages when we talk about the faces and the kingdom, but it might be helpful to have the story of each writer of the gospel at the end of the section on that gospel. The first one would be page 8 for Matthew. So I'll just say that again! He calls himself Matthew the publican and chapter 9 verse 11 talks about **publicans and sinners**; chapter 18 verse 17, talks about **publicans and heathen**; and chapter 21 verse 31 he talks about **publicans and harlots**. How do you think that Israel thought about publicans? They hated them, b&s, they hated them. Now we're told by the way that there were two classes of publicans: the first class were known as the 'Gabbai', who were involved in the collection of what was known as the 'statutory taxes', 10% on grain, and 5% on anything else that came out of the ground, 1% income tax (how the Jews ever managed that I'm not sure, but 1% income tax and the poll tax of 0.30 . The Gabbai collected the statutory taxes of the nation, but there was a second class of tax gatherers to which we believe, that Matthew as a 'publicanus' was involved, and that was the category known as the Mokhes, and the difference was that these 'Mokhes' tax collectors, they collected the **customs' tax**, the import and export taxes and the road user's charges. The Romans had quite modern ideas on taxation and they ranged from anything of 2.5 to 12.5% but the difference was that those taxes were all collected under the direction and jurisdiction of Rome and the tax collectors reported directly for Rome and to Rome, to account for those particular matters. The Jews therefore, particularly despised these tax collectors most of all. The Jewish people disliked paying taxes, as well as us, b&s, they very much disliked paying taxes, but they especially hated paying taxes to the Romans.

Now Matthew was a 'publicanus', he was a Mokhes, he was a tax collector that was affiliated to Rome, and because of that, his occupation was that he served Caesar. As the Jews themselves would later declare, 'we have no king but Caesar', well, this was the king that Matthew served, and his other name, of course, Levi means 'joined' (3878), he was joined to king Caesar; he was Rome's man and he was in the employ of Caesar, this was the king or the master that he served. One of the things that we can be sure of, b&s, from his occupation as a tax gatherer, there was one thing he would never have seen in a king, or not the king he served, was **mercy!** Never heard of that with regard to kingship, not in the experience of Matthew's life of serving the particular king that he did!

Now come to Matthew chapters 8 and 9 and let me just show you what happened to this man, because you see, his life was changed, his life was utterly and marvellously changed by the providence of God. Now you'll know that Matthew in chapters 5 to 7 is the Sermon on the Mount; and immediately after the Sermon on the mount in Matthew 8 and 9 we have the **miracles of the King**, that are all brought together in close juxtaposition in these chapters. Now just have a look at them, just see how powerful this is: in Matthew 8 verse 2 it says, 'He came and healed a leper, and then the next miracle is the healing of the centurion's servant which begins in verse 5 and then the next miracle would be the healing of Peter's wife's mother in verse 14 and then the next miracle would be the healing of the tempest of the sea that begins in verse 23. Then the next miracle was the healing of the two that meet Him out of the Gergesenes

in verse 28 and then the next miracle in chapter 9 verse 2 is the man that's brought to Him who's sick of the palsy, and then the next miracle in verse 18 of chapter 9 is a certain ruler whose daughter has died; and then the next miracle is in verse 20, a woman who was diseased with an issue of blood, and then the next miracle in verse 27 is two blind men who accost Him and cry, 'thou son of David'; and then the next miracle in chapter 9 verse 32 is a dumb man. These two chapters, b&s, are the chapters of the King's miracles. And do you know what happens in the middle of those two chapters? in Matthew 9 verse 9, Matthew says, 'do you want to hear a great miracle? 'As Jesus passed forth from thence, He saw a man named Matthew sitting at the receipt of custom, and He said unto him, Follow me! and he arose and followed Him', and Matthew says that's one of the greatest miracles of all, was **that the shadow of the King fell afore my desk and I saw the mercy of the King**, and now I follow a different King and I understand mercy!

Did he understand mercy? Oh, yes, b&s, look what happens, verse 10, says, 'It came to pass' (you know, I think, by the way, that every gospel writer has a signature to his gospel; did you know that? every writer has a special little signature that marks off his gospel) Well, here's Matthew's signature in his gospel, verse 10, 'It came to pass, as Jesus sat at meat in the house, behold, many publicans and sinners came and sat down with Him and His disciples, and the Pharisees thought and said, Why does your Master eat with publicans? But Jesus when He heard it, verse 12, said, they that be whole have no need of a physician, but they that are sick. You go and learn what that means! verse 13, 'I will have **mercy**', and that statement of the Lord, b&s, about learning mercy was to be heard in the house where the feast was held in verse 10. Now, of course, in verse 10 of Matthew 9 it simply says, 'that Jesus sat at meat in the house', but it wasn't just any house, was it? because Luke 5 verse 29 tells us, that it was **Matthew's own house**! Because, you see, this was the feast of his change of allegiance; he invited all the publicans and sinners that they might come and see that he had renounced his old way of life. You see, he was just renouncing his allegiance and making money, so he left behind **the king whom he served** and he turned to another King who was Messiah. He was the man who began his life in service to the king of Rome and now he comes to Christ, he leaves behind everything he stood for, and he follow this man who speaks of mercy in his house! Oh, yes, this man's life was changed, and I think what happened, you see, b&s, is that when Matthew was touched by the hand of Christ, and heard the call of mercy, that could extend even to him, a hated tax collector serving another king, he joyfully changed his life and God said to Matthew, 'now Matthew, I can now use you to paint the face of the perfect King, and to write about the principle of that mercy which serves! Oh, I think God chose the right man, b&s, for the painting of this particular portrait!

Who wrote the gospel of Mark? Well, of course, the man whose name was John Mark; now we need to turn over the pages of our handbook, don't we? because the notes on Mark ideally then we could take on page 14 on the spare page. But just come to Acts 13, in Acts 13, I just want you to notice the language of 'service' here, because that's what this gospel is about; so in Acts 13 verse 2 it says, 'As they ministered to the Lord,

and fasted', (oh! as they ministered to the Lord, did you notice that? **as they ministered to the Lord**, that's a word of 'service', isn't it?) 'the Holy Spirit said, 'Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them'. Ah, they were going forth, you see, to manifest the face of the ox, the face of service. 'When they fasted and prayed, and laid their hands on them, they sent them away. So they, being sent forth departed . And when they were at Salamis, verse 5, they **preached** the word of God : and they had also John **to their minister**' says the record. John was their **servant** and this is John Mark, by the way, isn't it? John whose surname was Mark; this is the Mark whose going to write the gospel, he was on a mission with the apostle and his role was to be a faithful servant and yet we're told in this very chapter, verse 13 of Acts 13, 'that when Paul and his company loosed from Paphos, they came to Perga in Pamphylia: **but John departing from them** returned to Jerusalem'. Now we're not told, b&s, why it was that John Mark left the apostle on this occasion, some people suggest that he feared for the safety of his mother in Jerusalem, with persecution there. Some people suggest that he feared the dangers ahead as they entered an unknown region; some people feel that John Mark was in awe of the drive and vigour of the apostle Paul. Some believe that he desired the warmer companionship and guidance of Peter who was a family friend; some believe he shared the prejudice of Peter against the truth being extended to the Gentiles. We don't actually know why John Mark left, but what we do know is that **his spirit of service failed**, in fact, if you come to chapter 15, you'll remember that at the end of chapter 15, we have the rather unseemly and unhappy episode of the controversy between Paul and Barnabas, when on a subsequent journey, verse 37 says, 'Barnabas determined to take with them John, whose surname was Mark. But Paul thought it not good to take him with them, who departed from them from Pamphylia, and went not with them to the work'. You see, Paul felt that John Mark didn't understand the face of the ox, he didn't understand the spirit of service and so there was a controversy and Paul says, 'no, I won't use him, he doesn't understand how to serve with faithfulness, I cannot have him!' There was nothing personal, of course, in Paul's decision here, it was to do with what might best promote the cause of the truth. There was no personal animosity, in fact, we know that because you know, as it turned out, all that was needed with John Mark was time to strengthen his resolve to be faithful in the truth. The wonderful thing, b&s, about the story of John Mark is that as he matured, he learnt the spirit of faithful service, and we know that that's the case because do you know that later on in Colossians 4 verses 10 and 11, which you don't need to turn up, but Paul describes him there, 'Mark my fellow **worker**', and again in Philemon verse 24, he describes him later on in his life as, 'my fellow **labourer**', you see, they're both terms of the servant, b&s, my fellow worker and my fellow labourer, ah, John Mark understood finally the principle of service.

In fact, if you come to 2Timothy and to the very last letter that the apostle ever wrote, the last letter and the last chapter of the last letter, which is, of course, 2 Timothy 4 and Paul wrote this concerning Mark in verse 9, 'Do thy diligence to come unto me, for Demas hath forsaken me, having loved this present world and is departed unto Thessalonica; Crescens to Galatia, Titus to Dalmatia. Only Luke is with me. Take Mark, and bring him with thee: for (now look at this) **for he is profitable to me for the**

**service (ministry)**'. See that? Mark is profitable to me for the service, ah, you see, b&s, John Mark had finally appreciated the principle of faithful service! and when he did, he was able to serve the apostle in the advancement of the truth.

When we come to the gospel of Mark, where might Mark's signature be hidden in this gospel? Where's Mark's little signature? Well, I think he signs off his gospel in Mark 14 and this is how he signs it off, you see, this is his touch that says this is my gospel, because in Mark 14 verse 50, we're told that when the Lord was in the garden all the disciples forsook Him and fled, and verse 51 says, 'There followed Him a certain young man having a linen cloth cast about his naked body; and the young men laid hold on him; And he left the linen cloth, and fled from them naked'. Who was the young man in the garden of Gethsemane, b&s? I think it was Mark, of course, you know that only Mark tells us this little story. Only Mark's gospel tells us about the certain young man in the garden, and what do you think the purpose of the story is? Well, you see, this was Mark in his earlier immaturity who wanted to follow Christ, but he didn't actually have enough spirit of faithfulness to serve Him and not depart at the moment of crisis. The Lord would be faithful to the end, because the Lord cared for others, He was a caring servant, but you see, Mark didn't care enough about His Lord to stay there, so he fled from the scene. I think he puts that little story in, in Mark 14 by way of contrast with the Lord, who he now serves; as if to say, I didn't understand the spirit when I was young. I was not a faithful servant, I did not manifest the face of the ox, I would not go to sacrifice and my Lord did! and I think that's why that story's there in Mark 14, it's Mark's salute to the Christ that he serves as an older wiser man; and God said to His servant, 'ah, Mark, now that you have learned, I shall ask you to write the gospel of the face of the perfect Servant and to know His spirit of care!' and I think God chose the right man, b&s. In the wisdom and providence of the Father, He chose the right man!

So then, what about the gospel of Luke! Well, let's go to the right page of our handbooks to page 20 for extra notes, but the thing is we don't know a lot about Luke, but it's a funny thing, b&s, I think we know just enough to know he was the right person. If you come to Luke 1 verse 1, we're told there, 'Forasmuch as many have taken in hand to set forth in order a declaration of those things which are most surely believed among us. Even as they delivered them unto us, which from the beginning were eyewitnesses, and ministers of the word; I seemed good, **to me also, having perfect understanding of all things from the very first, to write unto thee in order, most excellent Theophilus**'. You see, what Luke tells us is that his gospel was written with such a degree of care, verse 3, that it actually was going to be in proper order. In fact, the word '**perfect**' in verse 3 is the Greek word 'akribos' (199) which means 'exact', not perfect but exact, he was going to write an exact gospel. Here is a man of logic, a man of intellect, a man of comprehension, there's going to be a sense of order and of sequential narrative in the gospel of Luke, like no other gospel. Luke is going to be written with precision that marks it out as special and different to the other gospels and, by the way, the gospel of Luke has the most eloquent Greek of the New Testament. This is a man of culture, a man of learning, a man of training.

Now what was his training about? Well, if you come to Colossians 4, we see not only what his training was about, but why he was so amazingly suitable for the writing of this gospel and the face of the priest. Because in Colossians 4, we're told this and we're going to pick up the record from verse 10, 'Aristarchus my fellow prisoner saluteth you, and Marcus, sister's son to Barnabas (touching whom ye have received commandments: if he come unto you, receive him); And Jesus which is called Justus, who are of the circumcision. These only are my fellow workers unto the kingdom of God, which have been a comfort unto me. Epaphras, who is one of you, a servant of Christ, saluteth you, and I bear him record, verse 13, of his great zeal. Verse 14, **Luke** the beloved physician and Demas, greet you'. Ah, Luke the beloved physician, ah, so Luke was a doctor, b&s, he trained as a doctor. Do you know, I think that training made him eminently suited to write the gospel of priesthood. Now just think about this, you see, a doctor was to disease, what a priest was to sin; one healed physical weakness and the other healed spiritual infirmity. The doctor saved from illness, the priest sought to save from death; both the physician and the priest were channels of healing; and their role focussed on the deliverance of those that they ministered among and scripture, of course, makes a strong connection between sin and its effects, so much so that ultimately the physician and the priest are linked in the bible, The climax of the connection is, you see, that under the Law what was perhaps the most dreadful scourge of a disease that could afflict a person? and the answer was **leprosy**; it was a physical illness. You know, b&s, surprisingly under the Law it wasn't treated by the doctor, it was treated by the priest, because leprosy was a type of sin itself. There's a strange connection between the doctor and the priest, b&s, they are very much the same in terms of the role that they play.

But he wasn't just any sort of doctor! because you see what it says in Colossians 4 verse 11, having listed the people, Onesimus, Aristarchus, Marcus and Jesus called Justus, who are of the circumcision. He says, 'these only are my fellow workers', and having said that he goes on to talk about Epaphras-verse 12, and Luke-verse 14 and Demas-verse 14, were these other men not his fellow workers? Well, yes, they were! but they were different because you see, verse 11, I think, is the list of workers as he says which **are of the circumcision**. Ah, these workers were his Jewish helpers, down to verse 11 were the Jewish helpers of the apostle, and I think that the conclusion that we draw from that is, that the other men of verse 12 onwards, is that Luke and Demas and so forth, were non Jewish, they were foreigners. Luke wasn't a Jew, he was a Gentile of some form or another, and yet the fact is, that despite that he was a Gentile, so he knew what it felt like, b&s, to be beyond the pale of Israel and of Jewish things, but for all of that, he came in contact with the Lord. I personally believe that Luke had seen Christ, that Luke had been touched by Christ. Of course, the one thing that Luke had to learn before he could write the gospel was this, that despite his medical training, there was one crucial difference between himself and the priest. You see, **doctors were trained to be professionally detached**, they never became emotionally involved with the person that they were seeking to heal because you couldn't do that as a doctor! They were caring but they never became emotionally involved, they had a sense of professional detachment, but I think Luke came into contact with a man who was

absolutely emotionally involved in His work of priesthood, and he was touched by that contact in his life even though he was non Jewish himself; and he comes to write the gospel of the priest because God calls him to that path.

Do you want to see the signature of Luke's gospel? Well, come to Luke 10 and I think this is Luke's signature. Now in Luke 10 we've got the parable of the good Samaritan, by the way, the parable of the good Samaritan is unique to the gospel of Luke; only Luke tells us this parable. By the way, do you know what the parable's about? The parable is about a man who was a Gentile, who shows a more spiritual and priestly spirit of compassion, than the priest and the Levite who come down from Jerusalem. Isn't that interesting in the gospel of Luke? A man who shows the true priestly spirit in contrast to the priest and Levite of the day, encumbered by the Judaism of the Law. But he wasn't just any sort of good Samaritan, because you see what it says in Luke 10 verse 33? It says, 'A certain Samaritan as he journeyed came where the wounded man was, and when he saw him, he had compassion on him and went and bound up his wounds, poured in oil and wine and set him on his own beast and brought him to an inn, **and took care of him**'. He showed **compassion** and he **took care of him**, and I think the thing that must have astounded Luke when he came in contact with Christ, was the emotional care and compassion that Jesus showed in His priestly ministrations. Luke had never seen that as a doctor, he was touched by his contact with this man. But I think this particular parable, b&s, was written (not just written by Luke, because I'm sure it was given by Christ) but I think it was especially included in Luke's gospel as a salute to his relationship with the Lord, because you see, the good Samaritan was a doctor; who else, b&s, in verse 34, when meeting a wounded man on the road, would have been able to open his bags and bring out bandages and medicines to heal the wounded man? I think the good Samaritan was a doctor! and I think that this parable was spoken by Christ in honour of His disciple, Luke, and Luke's whole life was touched by his contact with the Priest who was totally and emotionally involved in His labours. He alone records this parable of a doctor who showed the spirit of priesthood when the priest of Israel couldn't. And God said to Luke, 'now, you may write the gospel of the perfect Priest and the man who shows sympathy to others'. Oh, yes, b&s, I think the LORD chose the right man to write the gospel!

So what do we know about John. Well, we know a little bit about John and let's start in Mark 3, so now we need to be on page 26 of our handbook and in Mark 3. In Mark 3 we're told that the disciples who were chosen, well, some of them had surnames. Verse 16, 'Simon He surnamed Peter and James the son of Zebedee, and John the brother of James and He surnamed them Boanerges, which is, the sons of thunder'. Actually **Boanerges** is simply the Greek form of the Hebrew name and in the Hebrew it is **ben regaz** (993+7266) 'ben', of course, meaning 'son of' and 'regaz' which is a Hebrew word which doesn't actually just mean 'thunder', it's a word that simply means 'to show emotion' 'to be moved with rage or grief or anger, or awe or wrath or joy, to quiver with any violent emotion'. It's a very emotional word, so when Jesus said of John that he was 'ben regaz', what He was meaning was that John was a **very passionate and intense man**. Now let me show you just how passionate he was.

If you come to Mark 9, let me show you 3 things that demonstrate the spirit of John, the man who's going to write the gospel of the eagle face. In Mark 9 verse 38 it says, 'And John answered Him and said, Master, we saw one casting out devils in thy name, and he followeth not us: and we forbade him, because he followeth not us. but Jesus said, Forbid him not: for there is no man which shall do a miracle in My name, that can lightly speak evil of Me'. Do you see the spirit of John? John who, of course, loved His Lord so passionately said, 'Master, he wasn't following us, so we forbade them! See the spirit of judgment? John wants to bring down immediate judgment, did you notice that? What really happens to John in Mark 9 is **John is rebuked here for short-sighted aggressiveness**. Jesus says to John, 'no John, you need to learn a little more about the spirit of judgment, and when and how it might best be applied. You're too hasty, John!' He's rebuked for short-sighted aggressiveness. Come and have a look at Luke 9 and here's the second case where the spirit of John is revealed. In Luke 9 we're told of the circumstance when Jesus passed through the towns of Samaria and verse 53 says, 'They did not receive Him because His face was as though He would go to Jerusalem. And when His disciples, James and John saw it, they said, 'Lord, wilt Thou that we command fire to come down from heaven, and consume them, even as Elijah did? And He turned and rebuked them and said, Ye know not what manner of spirit ye are of. FOR (and notice verse 56 in the context of the face of the priest, by the way) b&s, 'For the Son of man (the Son of man) the Son of man is not come to destroy men's lives, but to save them'. You see, what John wanted to do was to blast the village off the face of the earth, with the fire of divine judgment; Jesus said that that's not even how judgment ought to be shown, John. So in Luke 9 he is **rebuked for vindictive intolerance**.

One more, Mark 10. In Mark 10, we have the story of two men that come to the Lord with a special request, the two men happened to be John and his brother. Verse 35 they say, 'Master, we would that Thou should do for us whatsoever we shall desire'. You know, b&s, although Jesus didn't have children, He obviously had the wisdom of what a parent has! All parents know that when a child comes and says, 'we would that thou shouldst do for us whatsoever we shall desire', most parents with some wisdom say, 'well, maybe you should tell me first what it is that you're thinking that you might desire'. Which is exactly what the Lord does and so He says, verse 36, 'What would ye that I should do for you? And they said, 'nothing much really, just grant unto us that we may sit one on thy right hand and the other on thy left hand in thy glory'. Jesus said, 'you know not for what you ask!' You see, **John here was rebuked for thoughtless ambition**, it sprang out of his love, of course, but he's rebuked for thoughtless ambition. He didn't mind what the consequences might be for the other 10, he just wanted to be totally near his Lord; you see, John's got a lot to learn about the spirit of the face of the Judge. He's got a lot to learn about the right spirit of his gospel.

Well, let me show you what happens! If you come now to John's gospel and chapter 5, and here's the spirit of the Judge; and you remember what we said at the start of this particular session, that the faces are not what they appear to be! do you know, that one of the key

words in the book of John is '**love**', now fancy 'love' being a key word in a book about the Judge, a Judge who loves. Oh yes, b&s, because that strangely enough is the spirit of the man who speaks forth the judgment of God's words in this gospel, He doesn't actually want to bring down the sentence of death upon any; the desire of this Judge is that He might bring down the sentence of 'life', if only they would believe Him. So you see what it says in John 5 verse 24, 'Verily, verily (oh, verily, verily!) I say unto you, He that heareth My word and believeth on Him that sent Me, hath everlasting life and shall not come into condemnation but has passed from death into life'. This was the Judge, the only Judge, b&s, that could bring them all the sentence of life, acquit them utterly, if only they would believe His words; that's the drama of this gospel-whether they would believe the words of the Judge; and John came face to face with this man, and he had to learn the spirit of the Judge who loves and wants to pronounce free!

Of course, you know what the signature of John is, don't you? It's one special phrase, it's written into the last few chapters of his gospel several times. **The disciple whom Jesus loved**, he's talking about himself, isn't he? b&s, that's about John himself. I think that's the signature to his gospel and the thing was, b&s, this man who was so hasty with his judgment and so passionate to destroy other people, finally came into contact with this Lord whom he served, and he writes with humility and calls himself a disciple whom Jesus loved because he came face to face with the Judge, who loved him, and when he finally understood, b&s, that the Lord loved him, God said, 'ah, John, now I'll permit you to write the gospel of the face of the perfect Judge, who wishes to acquit everyone that believes His words.

In the words of a hymn:

Here where the son of thunder learns  
The thought that breathes and word that burns  
Here where on eagle's wings we move  
With Him whose last best creed is love.

And God chose the right man, b&s, finally the right man. You see, I think the wonderful thing about this was that all of the men whom the LORD selected in His providence and wisdom to write these faces, **were all changed in their lives**, before they could write the gospel that they penned. That's the lesson for us, isn't it? the faces are designed to change us, to transform us, to turn our lives around, to touch us so that we might manifest Him, and that example is shown in these very four men.

Now, b&s, I would like you to come with me to Ezekiel 41 so that I could present you with a puzzle. (If there are any leaving for the boat and I can capture them for the next crucial 5 minutes, you shall have it all!) Ezekiel 41, do you know, that in Ezekiel 41 we're told something strange about the kingdom age and the temple. It says in verse 18 that it was made with **cherubim** and palm trees, so that a palm tree was between a cherub and a cherub; and every cherub had **two faces**, not **four**, did you notice that? Now which two might they be? Well, verse 19 says, 'So that the face of a man was

toward the palm tree on the one side, and the face of a young lion toward the palm tree on the other side: it was made through all the house round about'. The whole house was filled with cherubim, b&s, but there are only two faces! Ooh, now that's significant, isn't it? So now why might it be these two particular faces?

Well, let's come back and see what we've discovered in the course of our studies; well, first of all, do you think the face of Matthew's lion should be there? and the answer is, of course, because this is the face of the King, and does the Lord return to be the King over the kingdom? Well, yes, He does, this is the kingdom, so, of course, the face of the lion will be there, well, that's our Lord's primary work in the age to come for a thousand years, He'll be King over all the earth. So one of the faces that's to be found in the temple of the age to come is the face of the lion-King. Is everyone happy with that? I think so!

Now the second thing though is that Mark's face, the face of the ox is not there, now why would Mark's face of the ox not be there in the kingdom? b&s, and the answer is, of course, because Christ's work as a suffering servant finished with His first advent, will Christ be involved in service in the age to come? Of course, He will, but it's not the primary aspect of His work, is it? His work as a suffering servant was accomplished primarily at His first advent, so in the kingdom that face recedes as it were, into the background and it's not there, it's not prominent, it's not the key to the kingdom. He'll serve but it's not crucial!

Now what about Luke's face, the face of the man? is that there? why yes! now here it is, you see, b&s, if we said that the face of the man simply was the humanity of Christ then why would the face of His humanity still be there in the kingdom when He's glorified and made immortal and is a Spirit being? why would the face of His humanity still be there in the kingdom, referring to the days of His flesh, if that's all the face of the man means? It ought to be gone, should it not in the kingdom age? but it's still there! Why's it still there? because it's not the face of a man, it's the face of the priest. Will Christ be a priest in the age to come? Ezekiel tells us in the subsequent chapters that He ministers in the very temple as a priest.

Then John's face, the face of the eagle is not there! ah, now that's interesting because you see, if the eagle simply represents Christ as the divine manifestation of His Father, then shouldn't that be in the kingdom? if the eagle represents the Spirit, then shouldn't the Spirit be the one thing that continues throughout the kingdom, given that He's a man of the Spirit throughout the kingdom age? Why would the face disappear if that's what the eagle represents? that should be the one face, surely, b&s, that should remain but it's gone! says Ezekiel. Gone! but if the eagle is the face of the Judge then we understand why, and let me tell you, because Christ was a Judge upon guilty Judah in AD.70; when He returns He will be the Judge upon His household, then He will be the Judge upon Gog, then He'll be the Judge upon the nations, then He'll be the Judge upon the two houses of Israel, then He'll be the Judge upon Babylon and then He'll be the Judge upon **all flesh**, but by the time the temple doors swing open and the

millennial age begins, all the world has been subdued, and the judgments of Almighty God are done! and the sea is made like glass, and for thousands of years the world will be at peace.

Yes, I know that at the end of the millennial age there will be a final uprising and a final judgment, but that's not the spirit of the thousand years, is it? The thousand years is the spirit of **kingship**, in fact, what we're left with, therefore, b&s, is the face of the lion and the face of the man, and so the dominant aspects of the kingdom will be, **kingship and priesthood**. Mark this well! Whatever work of judgment is left, will be subsumed into His role as King; and whatever work of service is left, will be subsumed or merged into His role as priest. And Christ will be, why, a King-Priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek.

Now come and have a look at Revelation, of course, there are four faces in Revelation, isn't there? Revelation 4 says of the 4 beasts that are there (and the funny thing is, that although there are 4 beasts, do you see what Revelation 5 and verse 8 says, 'When He had taken the book, the 4 beasts, the 4 living creatures (that's the saints, b&s, who have learnt to manifest all 4 faces in their life) and yet when Christ comes and the kingdom is established, notice what happens to the four beasts, verse 9, 'They sing a new song saying, Thou art worthy to take the book and to open the seals, for Thou was slain and has redeemed us to God by thy blood out of every kindred and tongue and people and nation and hast made us unto our God, (not kings and priests and servants and judges) just kings and priests. Just the two faces of Ezekiel 41 because that's the spirit of the kingdom age, is it not, b&s?

Now let me show you the most wonderful thing of all! Revelation 7 and the sealing of the 144,000, the community of the saints that are sealed that they might be God's people for all time. Verse 4 says, 'And I heard the number of them that was sealed and there were a 144,000 of all the tribes of the children of Israel. (Then did you notice what Revelation went on to say) It says, 'Of the tribe of **Judah**, were sealed 12,000; so which comes first, b&s, in this symbolic sealing of the 12 tribes in the age to come? which one comes first? why Judah, why that's the face of the lion, why that's the King! Then which is the next tribe? why the tribe of **Reuben**, but Reuben is the face of the man, and the face of the man is the face of the priest; so the first two tribes that are sealed out of the 144,000 of the age to come, b&s, are those that shall be kings and priests with our Lord Jesus Christ. Isn't that interesting? And do you notice something else that is interesting about these verses, because strangely verse 7 goes on to say, 'that in the midst of the sealing, the tribe of Levi is sealed, why would Levi be sealed? Levi was the priestly tribe. Levi was never involved in the 12 tribes in the past, why would you seal Levi into the tribes unless to indicate that they are no longer unique as priests, but that a new priesthood has arisen; the priesthood of Melchizedek and the priesthood of the firstborn, that are counted through Reuben. So Levi now just becomes simply one of the tribes; and do you remember how Joseph received his inheritance among the tribes, wasn't it his two sons that received inheritance (Ephraim and Manasseh and yet the funny thing is that in Revelation 7 verse 8, we're told in the

middle of that verse that of the tribe of Joseph were sealed 12,000. How can you add Levi and Joseph into 12 tribes, b&s, and still get 12? wouldn't you get 14? Ah, but two tribes have been taken out, now you would never guess which tribes they might be? b&s, but the tribe of **Dan** which just happens to be the face of the eagle, and the tribe of **Ephraim** which is the face of the ox. That's the two faces that's been removed in the book of Ezekiel, and they're no longer in the kingdom says Revelation 7.

Do you know, b&s, I think I know why they've been removed as well! I think these two tribes were removed for a specific reason. If you come to 1 Kings 12 we're told, why Ephraim is removed! Not only are they removed because that particular face is to disappear in terms of the cherubic faces but, see what Ephraim was famous for in the nation in 1 Kings 12 verse 16, it say, 'So when all Israel saw that the king hearkened not unto them, the people said, what portion have we in David? To your tents, O Israel. and Israel departed to their tents. Verse 20 says, It came to pass that when all Israel heard that Jeroboam had come again, they sent and called him unto the congregation and made him king over Israel. Verse 25 says, Jeroboam built Shechem in Mount Ephraim and dwelt therein'. When the ten tribes broke away, b&s, who was the tribe who became the royal tribe of the 10 tribe kingdom to the north? and the answer is the tribe of Ephraim! You see, Ephraim stood for the principle of rival kingship, **rival kingship to the true King!** God says, there is no room for any rival kings in My kingdom, that tribe must go! that's what they stand for then they shall go! they're gone! **There's only My king who sits upon My holy hill!**

And you'd never guess what Dan represents in the nation, would you? In Judges 18 we're told that in the days of the judges a strange thing happened! because Judges 18 verse 30 says that, 'The children of Dan set up the graven image: and Jonathan the son of Gershom, the son of Manasseh (of course, who knows who Jonathan was? although it says Jonathan the son of Gershom, the son of Manasseh, the word 'Manasseh' is really Moses, isn't it? The Hebrews added an 'n' because they were so upset, that the man who did this was actually Moses's grandson, so they changed the Hebrew scroll to read, 'Jonathan the son of Gershom, the son of not Moseh but Manasseh', but it's really the grandson of Moses. And what did he do?) Well, verse 30 says, 'he and his sons were **priests** to the tribe of Dan until the day of the captivity of the land. And they set up Micah's graven image'. The tribe of Dan **established a rival priesthood in Israel**. God said, we're not having that in the kingdom, **there's only room for My priest!** So Ephraim and Dan are removed, not only because of the cherubic faces, b&s, but because all rivals to our Lord and to His saints will be gone! and there will only be the company of the true king-priests that rule with Christ in the age to come.

Isn't it marvellous, b&s, all scripture binds together. So now, we must go forth and manifest all faces, all 4 of them in our present life as best as we can, and seek to show the spirit of our Lord. As we read the gospels, b&s, we should try and be enriched by the spirit of the faces which we've seen. We need to go forth and remember in our lives, that **mercy which rules, that humility which serves, that compassion which saves and that spirit which discerns**, so that when our Lord Jesus Christ returns, b&s, He

might see in us, the manifestation of His own face.

As it says in a hymn:

Then the north and darkness shrouded  
Jacob's rising star shall bless  
And the eastern morn unclouded  
Brings the Son of righteousness  
Cheering, healing, cheering healing,  
Cheering, healing with the brightness of His face.