

5223U

OKANAGAN FALL CAMPAIGN - 2002

THE CHERUBIM - IN HISTORY, TYPE AND PROPHECY

Speaker: Brother John Siviour

Study 3: The Four Living Creatures

Reading: Revelation 4

Brother Graeme and my dear brethren and sisters and young people.

Well, yesterday we saw that initial vision that Ezekiel had given to him, there by the river of Chebar. Four living creatures, four faces, four wings, why #4? Well, if we go back to Ezekiel 1 and see where the record indicated to us the likeness of those four living creatures in verse 5, 'This was the appearance, they had the likeness of a **man**', so each one of those creatures, we're told, had a likeness of a man. 'Each had four **faces** and each had four **wings**', why the four? We think about 4 in scripture, and 4 was often associated with Israel. We're familiar with the foursquare encampment of Israel, there in the middle of the 4 square encampment was the tabernacle where God dwelt. The 4 square encampment, we think of the high priest and the breastplate and there was the square, and on that breastplate a gem for each one of those tribes. Usually that's the configuration that gets depicted, but one wonders whether or not it might have been like that, in a four square arrangement.....we pray, in the day of the kingdom.

The number 4 is also associated, of course, on the 4th day of creation, 'the sun, moon and stars' relevant; on the 4th day there appeared, we think of the stars, the true Israel of God; He was a special creation being pointed forward to, a literal creation, a spiritual creation. So these things come to mind, we think perhaps of the 4 square altar, the 4 horns on the altar, all this with #4, so there is a definite link with Israel. Now when we think about the 4 square encampment we go to the tribes: 3 tribes on the north, 3 on the east, 3 on the south and 3 on the west. When they moved away from Sinai, of course, it was Judah on the east that lead off, and then followed by Issachar and Zebulon, the 3 tribes on the east. Then following those Reuben would lead off with Simeon and Gad, then Ephraim with Manasseh and Benjamin, and finally Dan in the north with the other two tribes on the north. So they marched out of Sinai and according to Jewish tradition, the faces, the 4 faces that belonged to the standards were the four faces of the cherubim, on the banners as they marched out.

There was the face of the **lion**, leading out those three on the east, the lion of the tribe of Judah. So Judah lead off and there was the face of the lion on the standard according to tradition, and you can go to Numbers 10, Numbers 2, and you can list off

the movement as they move away. There was the face of the **man**, on the leading tribe of the southern section, then the face of the **ox** on the west, and finally the face of the **eagle** for Dan on the north. The four faces and there they are in the cherubim, those 4 faces. Now when we think about the faces of the cherubim, they are characteristics of the **saints**. All those symbols in Ezekiel 1 of those living creatures, obviously had lessons there for us to think about. What about the **lion**? King of the beasts, go and see a lion, royalty all over that beast! I can remember at one stage we were down in Kruger National Park in South Africa and we were driven around the park and you weren't allowed to get out of the vehicle, and there was this massive great male lion just sitting down on the ground a ways from us, and I desperately wanted a photograph. So the driver just opened the door and got out, and the big male stood up, click! king of the beasts, royalty, dignity, everything about that lion, the power seen in that beast. Most of the animal creation in fear of the lions; interestingly, of course, it is the lioness that does the hunting, so here is the face of a lion, b&s, we are aspiring to be kings in the kingdom, ought there not to be dignity somehow in our walk, decorum and so on, are important aspects of our walk in Christ. Things of royalty, where things are done well!

Then we come to the **man**, well of course, **man** in creation was the one aspect of creation that could give glory to God. Made in the likeness, the image of the elohim, not like the beasts, one that can think upon spiritual things, spiritual plain, that can give glory to God.

What about the **ox**? The beast of burden! don't see them so much today, but in early history, of course, the ox was a great worker; the yoke on the ox, plodding away, bearing the yoke, patient, uncomplaining, are we like that? always slaves, service, patient with it, not complaining about it. Sure footed hoofs that belonged to the ox, planted the feet in sure places, - knowing where we're going!

Then you have the face of an **eagle**. The great eagles, they move around in the high thermals, majestic! You know, an eagle is short eyed and long sighted, can spot a rabbit 3 kilometres away! Now we need the vision, sometimes it's a short-sighted vision; we set goals in our walk in the truth; right now the goal might be this 'week-end', what would we get out of this week-end, and out of the preaching work and so on, we've set that little short term goal; distributed out the leaflets or whatever it might have been, it's a short-term goal. Then we have middle term goals but the long term goal is in the kingdom, a vision of the kingdom, far sightedness to see beyond the immediate, the scene of the day of the future. There was the eagle, lofty heights, things above! things of the heavens, up in the high thermals, up in the high spiritual plain of the things of God. They were the faces!

Then we saw the faces are also associated, of course, with the character of the Lord Jesus Christ, He had the characteristics of the four faces. We have then, the four gospel records, and which of the faces are associated with which of the gospels? So you think about it, if we go to the **man**, which gospel record has so much about man, written about humanity, a lot about characteristics of people? It's Luke, we go to **Luke**

when we begin the record of the gospels because it's in Luke that we have the beginnings. You have the story of the birth of John the Baptist, you have the conception of the Lord Jesus Christ, the story with Mary and the angels, and so on. All about people, there's the face of the **man, Luke**.

If we go, say to the **ox**, it's **Mark's** little gospel; all about work, service; the smallest of the gospels, you begin and in a few verses it's the record of the Lord's work, and there's a certain amount of urgency about it, 'for with', 'henceforth', 'immediately' and so on, there's a urgency about the language in Mark's record; it's about the ox, the service!

Then you come to **John's** gospel; if we had marked up in our bibles our first principles, it's in **John's** gospel. The high and lofty things! 'I and my Father are one', 'I am that manna that came down from heaven', and so on. There's the **eagle**!

So that leaves **Matthew** as the **lion**. When you open Matthew and you have the genealogy, the aspects of Christ's life dealing with His Kingship, His royalty. So Matthew, Mark, Luke and John have those faces.

What about in the Old Testament? We've been looking at Ezekiel: Ezekiel-Son of man, son of man, son of man! there's the face of the **man** in **Ezekiel**.

You go to Jeremiah, what do we read about Jeremiah? The sufferings of Jeremiah, he said, 'I was like a lamb or an ox, brought to the slaughter'. You have the aspect of the **ox** in **Jeremiah**, the service that Jeremiah did, and when you think about Jeremiah, he wasn't allowed to marry, he wasn't allowed to go to any feasting, he wasn't allowed to go to any funerals and so on, all this service of labouring!

So that then leaves the **eagle** and the **lion, Isaiah** and **Daniel**. Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel and Daniel, the four great prophets and prophecies; can you marry up the lion and the eagle with either Isaiah or Daniel? Oh, a lot of people would say, ah, lion, Daniel in the lion's den, but **Daniel** is the **eagle**. You think of all the great prophecies in Daniel, this evening we'll look at Nebuchadnezzar's image; there was the vision, the history, from that day forward almost like visions that Daniel received. He was the aspect of the **eagle**.

Then you go to Isaiah and what do you read in **Isaiah**? All the things about the **kingship** aspect, the work of the Lord as a Ruler, the government on His shoulder and so on. It's all there in Isaiah, so when you put it all together, the fourfold view of Christ, it's in the 4 gospels, it's in the 4 major prophets, you have the four faces of the cherubim, and you have the fourfold division of Israel with the key tribes. Interesting! How do you remember it? Well, if you get two or three right, you're there! the interesting thing:

Matthew	the lion		Isaiah
Mark	the ox	have the same order as	Jeremiah
Luke	the man		Ezekiel

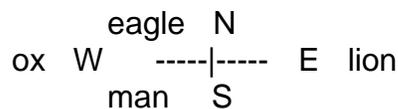
John the eagle

Daniel

You can always remember, Ezekiel-son of man, that's the 3rd of the prophets and it lines up with Luke; or if you remember Luke you've got Ezekiel. If you think of Mark as the ox, you've got Jeremiah. It's interesting that the order is the same in scripture, so you have the four faces. Or the regular biblical order with the word '**lome**' to remember the order.

Now when Ezekiel saw that vision come towards him from the north, it said in the record, if we read our bibles carefully, in verse 10 of Ezekiel 1, 'As for the likeness of their faces, they four had the face of a **man** (that's what it says first), and the face of a **lion** on the **right** side; and they four had the face of an **ox** on the **left** side (now Ezekiel is standing looking to the **north** and so the face that faces him is the **man**, on the right hand side is the lion, on the left hand side is the ox) and it said, 'and they four also had the face of the **eagle**', which of course, pointed to the north away from him. So that's how Ezekiel saw them.

So when he saw this vision in chapter 10, if we go over to Ezekiel chapter 10 verse 1, 'Then I looked, and behold, in the firmament that was above the head of the cherubim (so the cherubim are there) verse 3, 'Now the cherubim stood on the right side of the house, verse 4, 'then the glory of Yahweh went up from the cherub, and stood over the threshold of the house' (he is now standing looking at the temple, Solomon's temple). He's not at the southern side looking north, **now** he's on the **east** side. So in Ezekiel 1, he's on the south side and the whirlwind comes from the north moving south, now he sees the cherubim going out from the **east**, and he's over there watching it depart. When he speaks of the four faces, verse 14, 'Everyone had four faces: the first face was the face of a **cherub**; and the second face was the face of a **man**, the third was the face of a **lion**, and the fourth a face of an **eagle**'. You'll notice it doesn't have the face of an **ox**, it has a **cherub**, I wonder why? You might think about it! But the first face that he mentions is the equivalent of the **ox**, because now he's standing on the west and the **ox**. Here the first face mentioned was the face of the **man** which was moving to the **south**. What that's saying is that wherever that cherubic vision went, those faces never, ever changed direction. It was always the face of the man to the south, it was always the lion to the east, it was always the ox to the west, and always the eagle to the north.



That, of course, corresponded to the tribes. Judah was always on the east, and the lion of the tribe of Judah was associated with that tribe. Think of the word 'emlo' for 'n,s,e,w,'.

So now we look at one of the living creatures. Ezekiel saw it! the face of the man

directed toward him. What were some of the characteristics? 4 faces, 4 wings, it said that as they moved there were the two wings, the movement - that two always covered the body. Mention is made of the hands, mention is made of the feet, so all these aspects we ought to have a look at, well, what about the four wings? We come back to Ezekiel 1 and verse 6, 'everyone had 4 wings', they were joined one to another, so as this vision moved it all moved as one unit. The wings were joined meaning tip to tip to tip to tip, and two covering the body but these wings were joined; the wheels were where they were, the whole thing moved as a unit; wherever it went, everything stayed together. Two wings always down and the motion suggested, of course, **judgment**, but Ezekiel not only observed the cherubim in motion but he took notice of the noise made by these up-stretched wings. You don't pick that up until you go to verse 24, 'when they went, I heard the **noise** of their wings, as the noise of great waters', (as the voice of the Almighty, the voice of speech, as the noise of a host): 'when they stood, they let down their wings'. The mobility of the cherubim is speaking of the outpouring of the judgment; and it was interesting yesterday how one brother was speaking afterwards saying, 'you think about it, with all that work in the judgment of the saints, as this initially showed, in symbol upon the nations, compare the time period of judgment and this noise and this motion and this work, to the time when the wings are let down, when there is quietness, when there is peace in the earth; that work, a 1,000 years!' So the time of judgment for the saints is very, very small compared with the time of teaching and preaching and being a priest, the time of peace in the earth. Sometimes, perhaps, we get locked into looking at the aspect of judgment, but let our minds go to the day of the kingdom and the great work that will go on and on and on for 1,000 years the wings are let down. A far greater work then, than initially setting up the establishment of the kingdom.

When we think about wings, one of the psalms in Psalm 57 you have these words in verse 1, 'Be merciful unto me, O God, be merciful unto me: yea, in the shadow of thy wings will I make my refuge', there's comfort in that statement; 'in the shadow of thy wings there will be refuge, until these calamities be overpast'. In Psalm 17, the psalmist there in verses 8 and 9, 'Keep me as the apple of the eye; hide me under the shadow of thy wings. From the wicked that oppress me, from my deadly enemies, who compass me about'. Hide me under the shadow of thy wings', and there are the wings, the aspect of **protection**, and even in the movement of that cherubic host there, there was always the protection of the body by 2 wings. Ah! the movement and noise and the sound by the wings that were outstretched, and the outpouring of the judgments, but there was always the protection of the body, under God's wings we are kept. We probably think of the story of Ruth, when Naomi went back into the Land with Ruth and she said, 'under the shadow of God's wings there would be protection'. There was for Ruth coming back into the Land, a Moabite woman coming into the hope of Israel, was under the shadow of God's wings that she put her trust. The cover is always available and so once the work of judgment is over, those wings are let down, all nations are subdued, the saints cease the judgment work, and then into the work of the preaching and the teaching.

Now we read this morning from Revelation 4, and in Revelation 4 they had **six** wings, an extra pair. The pair in Revelation covered the **faces**, why not 6 wings in Ezekiel's

vision? why not 4 here? Well, here there's more association with Israel, here's the cherubic vision in Israel's final days then, the days of Ezekiel, the nation; but once we're into Revelation, we're in the kingdom. Christ is sitting on the throne, here are the 4 and 20 elders about him and now there's an extra pair of wings mentioned. Here the 4 wings speaking of the national channel of the manifestation of the cherubim. It's in the hope of Israel that we've become part of, but in Revelation it's the total picture, God manifest in the flesh. Here's His name, Yahweh now, He will be manifested in a multitude, and 6 is the number of flesh. So we have, in the aspect of 6, the link with man, what he was, to what he could become! There are other aspects because as soon as we start looking at this individual creature, we come to the hands of a man, and the hands of a man there you have symbols in the hands of **labour, of strength of service**, it's a wonderful part of a man's body. I say, anyone who's ever lost, say a finger or a thumb, suddenly you realize how valuable each part of that hand is! hands to work, b&s, so we labour.

Service, is the basis of exaltation is the end, human activities controlled by divine principles, Christ is the highest example of all. What did He do with His hands? what comes to mind about Christ's hands? Maybe it's John 13! We know the story, it's the Supper, the Feast, and in verse 3, 'Jesus knowing that the Father had given **all** things into His **hands**, that He was come from God, and went to God; that day, He rose up from supper, and laid aside His garments; He picked up a towel, He girded Himself with that, (tied the towel around Himself like a common slave would and you imagine the apostles watching the Lord doing this. In that silence they would have watched and thought, 'what's He doing? wrapping that towel around His body?') 'Then the Lord took a basin and filled it with water and then He began to wash His disciple's feet', and in silence no doubt, and feeling awkward and uncomfortable, not understanding really what the Lord was doing; the disciples submitted! What a scene in that Upper Room, and we know Peter said, 'Lord, dost Thou wash my feet?' and in verse 7 Jesus said, 'What I do thou knowest not now; but thou shalt know hereafter. Peter saith unto Him, Thou shalt never wash my feet', and Jesus said, 'If I wash thee not, thou hast no part with Me'. B&S, He washed His disciples' feet and to **wash** in a spiritual sense was to be **morally clean**, and Christ was humbling Himself to provide the means of the washing and that His followers, His disciples should also copy that; they were to be servants, they were to act like slaves!

At the end of verse 12, 'Know ye what I have done to you?' What was the principle? Do you know? 'If I then, verse 14, your Lord and Master, have washed your feet; ye also ought to wash one another's feet'. This is the example, service one to another, that's our work, b&s, that **we labour for one another**. Right now, we have those out in the Sunday School rooms, their service to those little ones, others, we've all got a work to do in the ecclesia; we all have different abilities, we all have abilities, we all have talents, the thing is to find where we can best use our talents in the work of the truth, to **service one another not self**. The world today is only interested in serving self but we're not part of that system. We wash one another's feet, we labour and serve, we give our best for others! That's what the Lord was teaching that day, and here the

hands are mentioned, the hand, the labour, the service. In the past, the work of judgment effected by the angels, **the angels, the hands of Yahweh**, and their hands are at work right now; they must be really excited as they see what's happening around everything coming to the day when the Lord will return. Exciting times to them, exciting for us, and in the future, the hands of the man, us, b&s, like unto the angels. Once part of Adam's race but in the day of the manifestation of the multitudinous Christ, we're like unto the angels. So the **hand** is symbolic of **power**, power here initially for the judgment, and then power for the work of the kingdom age. You think of the hand in Daniel, the hand that Belshazzar saw, writing on the wall, terrified Belshazzar, Babylon's doomed, the hand was all that was there, and of course, as it wrote from right to left it was covering up the letters until finally the letters were written and the hand was removed, and there were the words, the end of Babylon.

So back in Ezekiel 1 verse 7 it speaks of the **straight feet**, the word 'straight' meaning to be 'straight or even or to make right, or pleasant or prosperous' (3474) and maybe the clue to the meaning in Hebrews 12 verse 13, 'make straight paths for your feet', in the record of Hebrews 12 of '**the running**', you watch where you put your feet when you run! You watch the pathway, no holes, no stumbling blocks, no obstacles in the pathway; make that pathway clean, make **straight paths** for the feet'. Well, here are the feet, and in Ezekiel 1 verse 7, 'their feet were straight feet, and the sole of their feet was like the sole of a **calf's foot**'; and they sparkled like the colour of burnished **brass**'. The calf's foot, it goes back to the **ox**, think of the ox the symbol taken from the ancient method of threshing the grain, the hooves as they threshed the grain; around and around they would go threshing the grain. Hooves were shod with iron or copper, nations, b&s, are about to be gathered as sheaves for threshing. Here's the work in this picture that we see of the symbol when the saints will go forward and thresh the nations; well, here are the hooves of brass.

When we go to Micah 4 verse 13 there at the end of that chapter; 'Arise and thresh, O daughters of Zion: and I will make thine hooves brass, and thou shalt beat in pieces many people: and I will consecrate their gain unto Yahweh, and their substance unto the Lord of the whole earth'. **Brass**, it's all there! Last evening we sang that hymn, from the letters to the seven ecclesias, 'unto him that overcometh' and so on, Revelation 2 verse 18, a very interesting context, let's go over to that letter! It was to the leader of the ecclesia in Thyatira that these words were written; 'These things saith the Son of God, who hath His eyes like unto a flame of fire, and His **feet** are like **fine brass**', and this was a letter to the ecclesia in Thyatira, and in the days of the apostle John. Thyatira as a city was a city of trade deals. Complex labour organizations, unions, as we would use it today and there were two larger guilds, one was the guild of the dyers (particularly the purple dyers, and you think of Lydia) and the other was the guild of the bronze makers. The coins depict the city's association with both war and cloth, copper and bronze; you go to the place today and the little industries are still there in the backyards of the little shops in a section of the old town.

In this message to the ecclesia at Thyatira where Christ spoke of the aspect of the **feet**

of Revelation 1 but also were like **brass**, the One like unto the son of man, what was the message to the Thyatiran ecclesia's members? They had a problem, and interestingly Christ used and He never wasted any words in those letters to the seven ecclesias, and every letter had an aspect that they all understood, an aspect from this initial vision of the man like unto the Son of man. Well, here it was the aspect of the **feet** in this letter. When you read in Revelation 1, if we go back a page, and in verse 13, 'In the midst of the seven lampstands, one like unto the Son of man clothed with a garment, down to the foot, girt about the paps with a golden girdle, His head and his hairs were white like wool, as white as snow, and his eyes were as a flame of fire; and his feet like unto fine brass, as if they burned in a furnace; and his voice as the sound of many waters'. It's just like Ezekiel 1, isn't it? Then we come unto Revelation 1, 'one like unto the Son of man', but in Revelation chapter 2, to this ecclesia, it didn't say that, did it? 'Unto the angel of the ecclesia in Thyatira write, verse 18, These things saith the Son of God'. Revelation 1, like unto the Son of man, Revelation 2, saith the Son of God, this is the **first time**, the **only time** that title is mentioned in the book of Revelation, **Son of God**. Son of man represented the One who although He remained sinless, shared the fallen nature, and we're going to remember that this morning. The Son of God represented the One who has the **power and authority** to do His will at His return. He won't come at His return like a Lamb brought to the slaughter, He'll come with power and authority; now here's the statement **Son of God**. Son of man, able to judge, touched with the feelings of our infirmities, the Son of God will not tolerate fleshly ways, and that was the problem in Thyatira because in the ecclesia they had a problem with some who were spoken of as being like **Jezebel**; there was a class like Jezebel in that ecclesia. There was really war in that ecclesia between two classes symbolized by women, there was the 'Lydia' class upholding the things of God, and there was a 'Jezebel' class who thought like Jezebel of ancient history; you see, immediately the minds of the brethren and sisters in that meeting would have gone to the history of Jezebel. Christ had said, 'I know thy works, thy love and thy service and thy faith and thy patience and thy works; and the last works are more than the first' (there was development in that ecclesia). **BUT**, I have a few things against thee, because thou sufferest that woman Jezebel'.

What was the story of Jezebel? You think about her end, the brethren and sisters in those days would have been thinking about the story of Jezebel; how did Jezebel end? Jehu, Jehu was God's instrument of judgment that day, going to get rid of the Jezebel influence in Israel, and you can remember the scene how he drove furiously as he always did to Samaria, and he went to the palace walls, and there was Jezebel all painted up, looking out of her window. Jehu entered in at that gate and she said, 'Hath Zimri peace? who slew his master? Jehu didn't answer a word! he looked up at her and you can picture that his eyes would have burning as he saw that woman up there, and he said, 'who's on my side?' Then there looked out at him two or three eunuchs and Jehu said, 'Throw her down', and down she was thrown, and 'the who's' rose up and smashed them. It was **deceit**, the brass feet that smashed Jezebel; and here's the language here. In the vision of Revelation 1, 'His eyes were a flame of fire, feet like unto fine brass as if they'd burned in a furnace', there was the language that Christ used for

this letter to this ecclesia, because they had 'Jezebel types' in their meeting.

Here we have in Ezekiel 1, **feet, brass, shining, burning**, and in the apostle John's day history would have been remembered. We come back to Ezekiel chapter 1 and in verse 7, 'the **feet** were **straight feet**, the sole of their feet was like the sole of a calf's foot, and they sparkled like the colour of **burnished brass**'. Brass purified by fire, polished by friction, in scripture a symbol of **flesh purified**, and again you have the human origin of these living creatures, but in the multitudinous Christ, we pray we're part of that, with eternal life, that brass is polished, fiery, it's no longer flesh. We're now with the Son of God, one with Christ, and brethren and sisters, life today, the circumstances of life today really constitute a fire that can purify our characters. The final process of that purification will be at the judgment seat, and we've had a firm foundation; our labours in the truth, our walk in the truth, we've been blessed with resources, with brethren with sound foundation principles incorporated into our families, and our little children are receiving those same things now. How's our labour going? how's our walk going? If our characters are found **worthy**, then in the mercy of God, they will be burnished brass in the day of the kingdom, finally purified, and one with Christ.

Such are some of the aspects of some of the characteristics seen in Ezekiel 1. This morning, in a short while we'll assemble around the emblems, we'll think about the One who's made all that possible! We thank our God, for His mercy in these last days!