

Four Faces (The Bible Is Truth) (Jesus)

*11 I saw heaven standing open and there before me was a white horse, whose rider is called Faithful and True. With justice he judges and wages war. 12 His eyes are like blazing fire, and on his head are many crowns. He has a name written on him that no one knows but he himself. 13 He is dressed in a robe dipped in blood, and his name is the Word of God. 14 The armies of heaven were following him, riding on white horses and dressed in fine linen, white and clean. 15 Coming out of his mouth is a sharp sword with which to strike down the nations. 'He will rule them with an iron scepter.' He treads the winepress of the fury of the wrath of God Almighty. 16 On his robe and on his thigh he has this name written: King of Kings and Lord of Lords.
Revelation 19:11-16*

Their faces looked like this: each of the four had the face of a human being, and on the right side each had the face of a lion, and on the left the face of an ox; each also had the face of an eagle. Ezekiel 1:10

The first living creature was like a lion, the second was like an ox, the third had a face like a man, the fourth was like a flying eagle. Revelation 4:7

The Basic Bible Truth

Scripture contains passages which are difficult to understand. The first chapter of Ezekiel is arguably at the top of the list of the odd and strange. God is omniscient, omnipresent, omnipotent and beyond the scope of our limited intellect. He has chosen to reveal Himself to us in small increments, glimpses of the awesome majesty that is His essence. We find in the pages of the Bible everything we need to know about Him. An infinite God revealed to us in a finite number of pages means one thing—every one of those pages are important.

Diamonds are the most prized of gems. In the rough, uncut and unpolished, they are relatively unimpressive. Their ultimate beauty is realized when a truly gifted diamond cutter creates facets on the surfaces of the crystal, allowing the light to reflect and sparkle. An analogy can be drawn to our understanding of God. As we recognize and define an attribute of God, we cut an additional facet on the face of the “diamond” of our understanding of Jehovah. As those facets increase in number, the beauty of our Heavenly Father shines forth. Ezekiel 1, Revelation 4, and Revelation 19, together, define four facets on the face of that diamond.

Ezekiel struggles to find words to adequately describe the scene before him in the first chapter of his prophecy. One cannot read through the entire narrative without asking “What in the world are we seeing?” Hollywood would struggle to recreate what is described here, but we will focus on one particular aspect of what Scripture has for us to discover. Four creatures are introduced in the passage, completely beyond our comprehension, with four faces each. That particular attribute is more than just a bizarre oddity, it has significance. The Bible is not a mere piece of literature. It is an amazingly intricately interwoven collection of writings obviously inspired by God and put together by Him for our use to understand Him.

The Object

None: This is a lecture lesson. But I have included the best artist rendering that I have found to date.
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The Lesson

Read carefully the passage found in Ezekiel 1. Note carefully the living creatures described there. Each creature had four faces; the first, the face of a man, the second, the face of a lion, the third, the face of an ox, the fourth, the face of an eagle. A parallel can be drawn to the four Gospels found in the New Testament.

1. Luke wrote his gospel from the viewpoint of a medical doctor. He saw first-hand the humanity of Jesus. Jesus was indeed a human being, and Luke referred to Him often as the Son of Man. The first face mentioned was the face of a man.
2. The second face was that of a lion, a symbol of kings throughout history. A beginning to end reading of Matthew reveals that he saw Christ as a king. Matthew begins that portrayal with his record of the Magi visiting the Child shortly after His birth.
3. Mark saw Jesus through the lens of a servant. He recognized that Jesus came as the Servant of God,

a man who learned obedience as an example to us. An ox is a beast of burden whose life is dedicated to serving its master.

4. The final face was that of an eagle. The eagle represents divinity. Jesus was and is divine—He is God. No other inspired writer explained that more clearly than did John in the first verse of his gospel. And through the remainder of his book, he focuses on the reality that Jesus was God in human form.

Revelation 19 describes for us in detail, a rider on a white horse. That rider, found in verses eleven through sixteen, is Jesus Christ. When He returns in the fullness of His glory, He is described by four specific names.

1. Whose rider is called Faithful and True. No one is more loyal than is the faithful servant. Mark mentioned that attribute.
2. His name is the Word of God. Immediately, we recall John's opening words. Jesus is the Alpha and the Omega, the great I AM.
3. He has this name written: KING of KINGS and LORD of LORDS. Matthew couldn't have said it better.
4. He has a name written on him that no one knows but he himself. The fourth name is actually a secret in Revelation.

The greatest mystery of Scripture is this simple fact: Why would God, the Creator, the Almighty, lower Himself to the condition of his creation, man, and walk among us? His love for us is astounding, a great unknown quality to us were it not for the fact that He demonstrated His love toward us by going to a cross and dying a very human death on our behalf. Luke recounts in detail the human being he touched and talked to face to face, who he also recognized to be God.

Four unique Gospels, four unique faces, four key attributes of God, masterfully intertwined in the Bible. The Word of God is unlike any other piece of literature, and the deeper one looks into Scripture, the more there is to be learned. Never discontinue that thrilling discovery.