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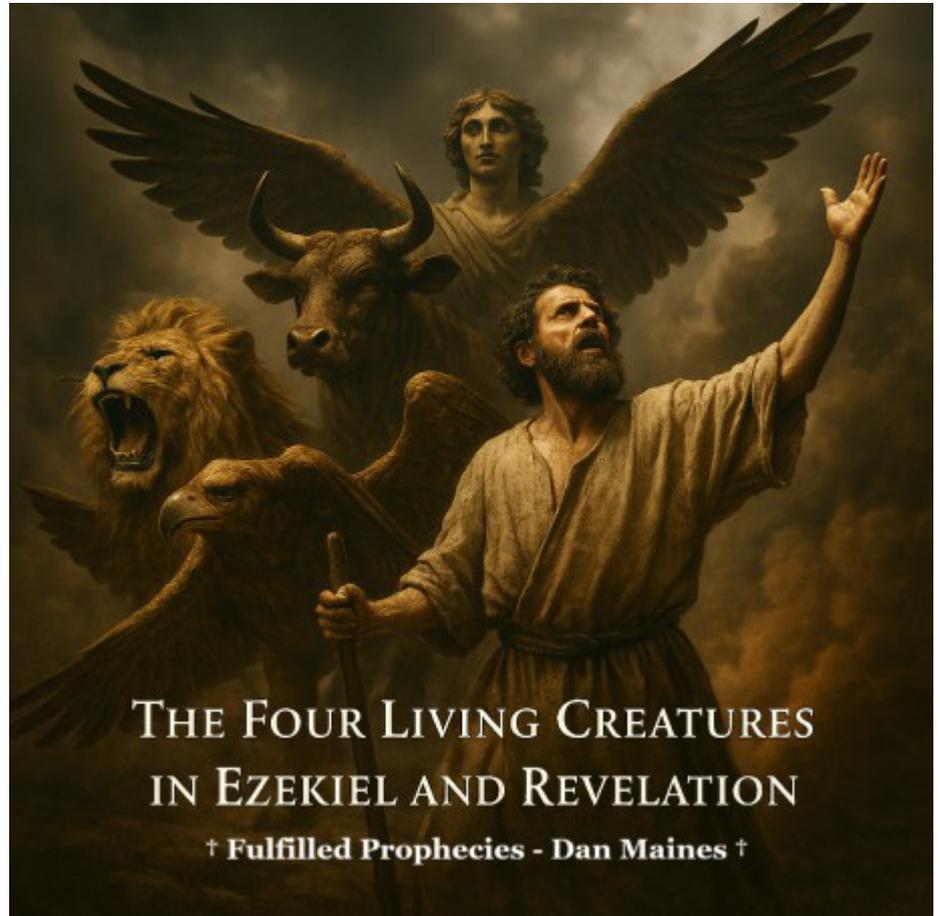
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Ezekiel - The Four Living Creatures in Ezekiel and Revelation



By Dan Maines

The Four Living Creatures in Ezekiel and Revelation

Ezekiel 1:5-6

Within it there were figures resembling four living beings. And this was their appearance: they had human form. Each of them had four faces and four wings.

† Ezekiel's vision revealed God's glory and presence moving among His people, represented by four living creatures symbolizing the fullness of His power and dominion (Ezekiel 1:26-28).

† The four wings represented swiftness and readiness to carry

out God's will, just as the Spirit directed wherever He pleased (Ezekiel 1:12, Psalm 103:20).

† These beings stood for divine governance, showing God's omnipresence, omnipotence, wisdom, and authority (Jeremiah 23:24, Proverbs 3:19, Psalm 115:3, Daniel 4:35, Psalm 103:19).

Ezekiel 1:10

As for the form of their faces, each had the face of a man, all four had the face of a lion on the right and the face of a bull on the left, and all four had the face of an eagle.

† The four faces symbolize the completeness of creation under God's rule, reflected in the arrangement of Israel's camp around the tabernacle and in Christ's supremacy over creation (Revelation 4:7, Numbers 2, Colossians 1:16).

† The man represents wisdom and understanding (Proverbs 2:6).

† The lion represents strength and kingship (Proverbs 30:30, Revelation 5:5).

† The ox (bull) represents service and endurance (1 Corinthians 9:9-10, Deuteronomy 25:4).

† The eagle represents divine vision and heavenly authority (Isaiah 40:31, Deuteronomy 32:11).

† Together they display every aspect of God's nature revealed in His kingdom (Psalm 145:13).

Ezekiel 10:14-15

And each one had four faces: the first face was that of a cherub, the second a human face, the third the face of a lion, and the fourth the face of an eagle. Then the cherubim rose up. These were the living beings that I saw by the river Chebar.

† Ezekiel identifies these beings as cherubim, confirming their connection to God's throne presence and His covenantal glory departing from Jerusalem before its destruction (Ezekiel 10:18-19, Ezekiel 11:22-23).

† The cherubim symbolized the Lord's authority extending beyond the temple, showing His rule wasn't confined to one nation but would reach all nations through His plan (Psalm

18:10, Malachi 1:11).

Revelation 4:6-8

And before the throne there was something like a sea of glass, like crystal, and in the center and around the throne, four living creatures full of eyes in front and behind. The first creature was like a lion, and the second creature like a calf, and the third creature had a face like that of a man, and the fourth creature was like a flying eagle. And the four living creatures, each one of them having six wings, are full of eyes around and within, and day and night they do not cease to say, Holy, holy, holy is the Lord God, the Almighty, who was and who is and who is to come.

† John's vision expands Ezekiel's, showing the same four living creatures before the throne, representing the fullness of creation and God's universal reign through Christ (Revelation 5:13, Psalm 99:1).

† The six wings parallel the seraphim in Isaiah 6, showing heavenly beings joined in unending worship (Isaiah 6:2-3).

† The added wings signify completeness in divine revelation, fulfilled in Christ's kingdom, where heaven's worship and God's glory unite with the New Jerusalem (Hebrews 12:22-24, Revelation 21:2-3).

† The eyes symbolize perfect knowledge and vision, representing God's omniscience and the Spirit's active awareness throughout His creation (2 Chronicles 16:9, Zechariah 4:10, Proverbs 15:3).

Revelation 5:8-9

When He had taken the scroll, the four living creatures and the twenty-four elders fell down before the Lamb, each one holding a harp and golden bowls full of incense, which are the prayers of the saints. And they sang a new song, saying, Worthy are You to take the scroll and to break its seals; for You were slain, and purchased for God with Your blood people from every tribe and tongue and people and nation.

† The living creatures join the elders in worshiping the Lamb,

showing that creation and covenant authority now serve under Christ's redemption (Philippians 2:9-11, Psalm 99:1).

† The new song is the covenant fulfilled in Christ, where heaven and earth together acknowledge His eternal reign (Revelation 11:15, Psalm 22:27-28).

† The four faces reflect the fourfold witness of Christ revealed in the Gospels (Revelation 4:7, Matthew 28:19-20).

† Matthew (Man, revealing Christ's humanity and royal lineage)

† Mark (Lion, showing His powerful kingship and authority)

† Luke (Ox, emphasizing His priestly sacrifice and service)

† John (Eagle, portraying His divinity and heavenly origin)

Historical References

† Irenaeus (Against Heresies, Book 3, Chapter 11, Section 8) associated the four living creatures with the four Gospels, each revealing a distinct aspect of Christ's nature.

† Jerome and later Church Fathers echoed this, affirming the unity between Ezekiel's and John's visions.

† Josephus (Antiquities 3.6.4) described the veil's embroidery as consistent with the biblical account of cherubim woven into the sanctuary (Exodus 26:31, 2 Chronicles 3:14).

How it applies to us today

† The four living creatures show that God's presence fills the earth and His throne reigns among His people through Christ (Ephesians 1:22-23).

† This vision reminds us our worship on earth joins with heaven, declaring Holy, holy, holy to the Almighty (Revelation 4:8, Psalm 29:2).

† As living temples of His Spirit, we reflect those same attributes: strength like the lion, service like the ox, understanding like the man, and heavenly focus like the eagle (1 Corinthians 3:16, Galatians 5:22-23, 2 Corinthians 3:18).

† The glory that once departed from Jerusalem now abides permanently among us in the New Covenant, through the indwelling of Christ (Revelation 21:3, John 14:23).

† This is the fulfilled perspective we proclaim at Fulfilled Prophecies †

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Source Index

† Ezekiel 1:5-10; 10:14-15; 11:22-23; Revelation 4:6-8; 5:8-9

† Isaiah 6:1-3; Numbers 2; Psalm 18:10; Psalm 99:1; Psalm 22:27-28; Psalm 29:2; Proverbs 15:3; Zechariah 4:10; Hebrews 12:22-24; Colossians 1:16; John 14:23

† Irenaeus, Against Heresies, Book 3, Chapter 11, Section 8

† Jerome, Commentary on Matthew, Preface

† Josephus, Antiquities 3.6.4; Exodus 26:31; 2 Chronicles 3:14

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