

Elder Vernon Johnson
Animals

Cattle and the Labor of Christ

Rev. 4:6 “And before the throne there was a sea of glass like unto crystal: and in the midst of the throne, and round about the throne, were four beasts full of eyes before and behind. 7 And the first beast was like a lion, and the second beast like a calf, and the third beast had a face as a man, and the fourth beast was like a flying eagle. 8 And the four beasts had each of them six wings about him; and they were full of eyes within: and they rest not day and night, saying, Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, which was, and is, and is to come. 9 And when those beasts give glory and honour and thanks to him that sat on the throne, who liveth for ever and ever, 10 The four and twenty elders fall down before him that sat on the throne, and worship him that liveth for ever and ever, and cast their crowns before the throne, saying, 11 Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honour and power: for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created.”

In the above passage of scripture, we are presented with a picture of four beasts. Each beast had a different face. All four beasts had six wings about him. All four beasts were full of eyes within. All four beasts continually cried, “Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, which was, and is, and is to come. All four beasts give glory, honor, and thanks to him that sat on the throne, who liveth for ever and ever. When the four beasts gave their testimony, the four and twenty elders fell down before him that sat on the throne and worshipped him.

All four gospels declare the holiness of Christ. They all declare him to be Lord God Almighty. They all declare him to be the eternal God which was and is and is to come. When these four gospels give their testimony, God’s born again children who are called kings and priests in chapter 1 of Revelation fall down and worship Christ and cast their crowns before the throne and say, “Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honor and power: for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created...”

Thus, there is a very strong parallel to the four gospels and the four beasts. However, each presents to us a different, yet completely consistent and perfectly harmonious, picture of Christ. The lion, in the scriptures, is associated with kings and kingdoms. There are more references to the kingdom of heaven and kingdom of God in Matthew than all the other three gospels combined. Moreover, the 1st chapter of Matthew gives us the genealogy of the promised king.

The book of Luke presents to us a picture of the man Christ Jesus. It gives more details of the birth and early life of Christ and more details of his humanity than the other three gospels combined.

The book of John presents to us a picture of the divinity of Christ. The eagle is a bird that flies very high and has great and long distant vision. Like the eagle, the book of John gives us a very exalted view of Christ as the Son of God and as the Great I AM. It declares to us details of God's everlasting covenant before the foundation of the world. Unlike the other three gospels, the book of John begins by declaring Christ to be the Word of God who created the heavens and the earth and all creatures therein in the morning of time.

The book of Mark presents to us a picture of Christ in his labors. Like the calf which is a beast of burden, Christ is continually pictured in this book as one who is and was constantly laboring. The key word in this book is the word, "and." The word, "And," begins the majority of the verses of scripture in the book of Mark. Mark does not begin with the birth of Christ, but begins with the work of Christ. It shows his baptism and his going immediately into his labors. While this gospel is shorter than the other three gospels, yet it is full of description of the labors of Christ.

Some have thought that the four beasts in Revelation and the four living creatures in Ezekiel are the same. However, the four living creatures, though they have many similarities to the four beasts, are more characteristic of the labors of the gospel ministers.