

Wavelength

November 2019



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The Wonderful Creatures of Heaven by Rory McClure

Heaven must be very wonderful - too wonderful for words. Despite this, God has chosen to reveal His truth to us using the written word because sometimes words are far more powerful than pictures or paintings could ever be.

Unfortunately, a picture can limit our imagination to just one way of thinking about a thing. For example, look at this old woodcut by Matthaeus Merian (1593

-1650).

There's no doubt that he tried to accurately draw Ezekiel's description of what he saw inside God's glory-cloud, but I doubt that you are filled with longing to be in heaven by looking at this strange multi-headed animal. Now contrast this with what Ezekiel actually wrote. Read these words slowly and let your imagination wander as you read.

“I looked, and I saw a windstorm coming out of

the north - an immense cloud with flashing lightning and surrounded by brilliant light. The centre of the fire looked like glowing metal, and in the fire was what looked like four living creatures. In appearance their form was that of a man, but each of them had four faces and four wings. Their legs were straight; their feet were like those of a calf and gleamed like burnished bronze. Under their wings on their four sides they had the hands of a man. All four of them had faces and wings, and their wings touched one another. Each one went straight ahead; they did not turn as they moved.

Their faces looked like this: Each of the four had the face of a man, 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. Such were their faces. Their wings were spread out upward; each had two wings, one touching the wing of another creature on either side, and two wings covering its body. Each one went straight ahead. Wherever the spirit would go, they would go, without turning as they went. The appearance of the living creatures was like burning coals of fire or like torches. Fire moved back and forth among the creatures; it was bright, and lightning flashed out of it. The creatures sped back and forth like flashes of lightning.” (Ezekiel 1:4 - 14)

I'm sure whatever image you now have in your head fills you with a greater sense of longing and wonder than Merian's woodcut could ever give you. As your imagination wrestles with ideas of glowing metal, fire and flashing

lightning, you can almost feel the scorching heat radiating from the molten bronze, smell the smoke of the fire and hear the awesome rumbling thunder. In all of these images there's nothing in all your experience that would

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give you the idea of life, the opposite in fact. Glowing metal, fire and lightning normally speak of death, not life. So, already we're filled with the astonishment and wonder of finding life where it is least expected.

Are you ever filled with

awe at being invited to “approach the throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need”? (Hebrews 4:16). Shouldn't our response be to be thankful, and so worship God acceptably with reverence and awe, for our “God is a consuming fire”? (Hebrews 12:28–29) Perhaps this is what God is trying to tell us through Ezekiel's description of the creature's straight legs that gleam like burnished bronze. These are creatures that walk in a straight line as they seek to obey God.

If you've ever treasured something made of silver or brass you'll know the hard work it takes to keep it looking at its best. You have to polish or burnish it repeatedly to remove the corrosion that produced by contact with the air. These creatures, even as they

inhabit the purity of heaven, need constant polishing. How much more should we long to walk a straight path through this life and keep ourselves polished by repeatedly applying to ourselves the promises of God's forgiveness and repeatedly brushing away ever regret, every self-loathing, every feeling of shame or inadequacy. Left alone to ourselves, our souls tend to corrode. However, if we keep polishing them with reminders of God's love and forgiveness, with the Lord's Supper, with praise and worship and prayer and Bible reading, more and more we'll see the true beauty of what God has created us to be - the more His glory in us will shine forth.

Those wings should remind you of God's assurances of love for you. "I carried you on eagles' wings and brought you to

myself." (Exodus 19:4). "He will cover you with His feathers, and under His wings you will find refuge; His faithfulness will be your shield and rampart." (Psalm 91:4). Those wings should also be a reminder that you can never run away from God's love for you. "If I

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rise on the wings of the dawn, if I settle on the far side of the sea, even there Your hand will guide me, Your right hand will hold me fast." (Psalm 139:9–10). So let me remind you again: "Those who hope in the LORD will renew

their strength. They will soar on wings like eagles; they will run and not grow weary, they will walk and not be faint." (Isaiah 40:31).

What of those mysterious faces of the creatures that John also saw in Revelation (4:6 - 9)? What are we to make of the faces of a man, a lion, an ox and an eagle? There is a very ancient tradition of associating these four creatures with the four writers of the gospels. That's one of the reasons you'll see a man, a lion, an ox and an eagle in so much traditional Christian art. Admittedly, there's no consensus about which creature is most closely associated with which gospel writer, so here is St Gregory the Great's take on it. He says that:

⇒ The man is Matthew, because he begins his gospel with Christ's genealogy (Matthew 1:1).

⇒ The lion is Mark, because he starts his gospel with John the Baptist crying in the wilderness with all the courage of a lion (Mark 1:1).

⇒ The ox is Luke, because he starts his gospel with Zechariah's work with the temple sacrifices (Luke 1:8).

⇒ The eagle is John, who “stretched toward the very substance of divinity” at the beginning of his gospel (John 1:1).

Gregory also believed

that each of the gospels join together to reveal more of Christ than any one of them could by themselves. It was Christ who became a man in the Incarnation, who became the sacrificial ox on the Cross, who was the conquering lion of the Resurrection, and the eagle who soared to heaven at His ascension. Finally, says Gregory, they symbolize “every one of the elect, who are perfect in the way of God.” In other words, the man points us towards our human ability to use reason, the lion points us towards

our need for courage to live the Christian life in public, the ox points us towards our need to endure as we labour in the Lord's fields and also our need to live the self-sacrificial life of an Old Testament offering and finally the eagle points us towards our need to rise up on the wings of faith and be lifted up on the winds of the Holy Spirit so we can approach the heavenly things of God.

Each of the creatures had six wings. The fact that their wings touched one another speaks of their mutual dependence on the work of one another. In the same way we need to support one another. None of us were designed to soar alone. Christians are supposed to be like a flock of birds flying on migration together. The creatures used their second set of wings to cover themselves with. Of course, these wonderful



creatures have never sinned, but we have. They have no need of forgiveness, but we do. Despite this, God invites you and me to call on Him with the words of the psalmists. Throughout this life, we can rejoice, saying, "Because you are my help, I sing in the shadow of your wings." (Psalm 63:7).

Through all the troubles and trials of life, we can long all the more for heaven, telling God; "Oh that I had the wings of a dove! I would fly away and be at rest" (Psalm

55:6), or "I long to dwell in your tent forever and take refuge in the shelter of your wings." (Psalm 61:4).

Then, as we endure this life's trials we pray, "Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me, for in you my soul takes refuge. I will take refuge in the shadow of your wings until the disaster has passed." (Psalm 57:1). And, "Keep me as the apple of your eye; hide me in the shadow of your wings" (Psalm 17:8)

Now reread Ezekiel's

description of those heavenly creatures again. Doesn't that thrill your heart with a deeper longing to be among those heavenly creatures? Aren't God's words more exciting than an old wood cut? Remember, dear Christian, Jesus has gone before you to prepare a place for you among those glorious creatures. And when you get there, you'll discover that the reality was far, far beyond anything that even Ezekiel's words could ever convey to you in this life.

The Annual London City Mission Meeting report by David Nickless



On Wednesday 9 October Parkside Evangelical Church hosted the annual Littlehampton area LCM meeting. It was a wet autumn evening but this did not dampen the spirits of the 40+ people who came along to hear the latest news of how

God is at work in this multi-cultural city. It was so good to see so many people representing a number of local churches. Malcolm did a great job chairing the meeting, welcoming and introducing us to the two LCM workers.

Simon the local area leader for Croydon spoke about this large urban borough of 300,000 people; the 2nd largest Borough in London after Barnet. (this is larger than the population of Brighton or Southampton.)

New Addington within this borough has a lot of poverty and there are many very lonely, elderly people whose only company is a TV. One elderly lady said she was just spending her days waiting to die. The London City workers are seeking to reach those on the margins of society. Homelessness and addictions are common to see, and there are other people who work very long hours just to be able to pay their bills. Such a contrast between those who are so busy and with not much time to listen; while others live aimless lives without hope.

John Dowling was born

and bred in South London and he shared what it was like in his daily work. From being fearful at doing door to door work, God gave him the courage and perseverance to reach out. He has a number of one to one Bible studies including with a man of 92. These people have yet to become Christians but this an ongoing ministry and he emphasised the need to revisit homes and to establish friendship and trust with those who are receptive.

During a time of illness he was encouraged to see church members going out to do door to door work and assisting him with some street evangelism. This is the aim of the London City Mission - to get churches involved with missionaries in their work.

The evening was very enlightening as we heard many stories of people

hearing the Gospel and receiving literature. We left with a fresh insight and this will also stimulate us in our prayers for this vital ministry.

I also had the opportunity of attending the main LCM meeting at All Souls Church in London a few weeks earlier. Six workers were interviewed including Tim Spring.

A few hundred people came along to All Souls and you sensed the unity and love among the LCM workers, their families and supporters. The message that came across was that all Christians in London need to be reaching out with the Gospel as the LCM can only reach a limited number. This is true for all of us. We all need to reach out to the communities where we live.

“There’s a work for Jesus only you can do...”

Parkside in November

Friday	1	7.30pm	Oasis-Ladies Bible Study	
Saturday	2	2.00pm	Arcade Knitters	
Sunday	3	10.30am 6.30pm	All Age Service with crèche Evening Service with Communion	Smashing Idols Philadelphia: Staying Faithful in Faithless Times
Monday	4	9.30am 1.30pm	Pastoral Care Team Meeting Paradise	
Tuesday	5	10.00am 2.30pm	Prayer Meeting Friendship Hour - Lindsay Leney	
Wednesday	6	7.30pm	Men's Bible Study	
Thursday	7	10.00am 10.30am 7.30pm	Oasis-Ladies Bible Study Service at St Winefride's Prayer Meeting	
Friday	8	7.30pm 7.30pm	Oasis-Ladies Bible Study Deacons Meeting	
Saturday	9	2.00pm	Renew and Refresh see page 12	
Sunday	10	10.30am 6.30pm	Morning Service with Communion with crèche and children's groups Evening Service	The Peaceful Warrior Laodicea: Wishy Washy or Following Faithfully
Monday	11	9.30am 10.30am 1.30pm	Pastoral Care Team Meeting Elders Meeting Paradise	
Tuesday	12	2.30pm	Home Group Meeting	
Wednesday	13	10.00am 7.00pm 7.30pm	Home Group Meeting Home Group Meeting Men's Bible Study	
Thursday	14	10.00am 7.45pm	Oasis-Ladies Bible Study Home Group	
Friday	15	7.30pm	Oasis-Ladies Bible Study	

Saturday	16	10.00am 2.00pm	Coffee Morning and Open Church Arcade Knitters	
Sunday	17	10.30am 6.30pm	Morning Service with crèche and children's groups Evening Service with Communion	A House Divided A Glimpse of Glory
Monday	18	9.30am 1.30pm	Pastoral Care Team Meeting Paradise	
Tuesday	19	10.00am 2.30pm	Prayer Meeting Friendship Hour - Martin Seymour	
Wednesday	20	7.30pm	Men's Bible Study	
Thursday	21	10.00am 7.30pm	Oasis-Ladies Bible Study Prayer Meeting	
Friday	22	11.00am 7.30pm	Service at Oakland Grange Oasis-Ladies Bible Study	
Saturday	23			
Sunday	24	10.30am 6.30pm	Morning Service with crèche and children's groups Evening Service with Communion	What is the Unpardonable Sin? The Lamb and the Scroll
Monday	25	9.30am 1.30pm	Pastoral Care Team Meeting Paradise	
Tuesday	26	2.30pm	Home Group Meeting	
Wednesday	27	10.00am 7.00pm 7.30pm	Home Group Meeting Home Group Meeting Men's Bible Study	
Thursday	28	10.00am 7.45pm	Oasis-Ladies Bible Study Home Group	
Friday	29	7.30pm	Oasis-Ladies Bible Study	
Saturday	30			

O, the Deep, Deep Love of Jesus

thoughts on a hymn shared by Jackie Kemp

O the deep, deep love of Jesus,
vast, unmeasured, boundless, free!

Rolling as a mighty ocean in its fullness over me!
Underneath me, all around me, is the current of Thy love
Leading onward, leading homeward to Thy glorious rest above!

O the deep, deep love of Jesus,
spread His praise from shore to shore!

How He loveth, ever loveth, changeth never, nevermore!
How He watches o'er His loved ones, died to call them all His own;
How for them He intercedeth, watcheth o'er them from the throne!

O the deep, deep love of Jesus,
love of every love the best!

'Tis an ocean full of blessings, 'tis a haven giving rest!
O the deep, deep love of Jesus, 'tis a heaven of heavens to me,
And it lifts me up to glory, for it lifts me up to Thee!

This was written by Samuel Trevor Francis (1834 - 1925).

- * He stood on London Bridge looking down at the water and its current, thinking: I could be washed away - his life felt completely pointless.
- * Suddenly he was overwhelmed by God's enormous love for him and he was never the same again.
- * Whenever he read these verses and thought about the love of Jesus, he remembered that night and the surging tide.
- * How many of us have felt the surging tide around our feet?
- * As we stand before the throne of God He pours down on each of us His love. Thanks go to our Father in Heaven.



While you're doing your shopping, please remember the Littlehampton Foodbank and drop your goodies off in the yellow box at church. Here is the latest updated list:

- * Jam, Peanut Butter and similar
- * Tinned tomatoes
- * Squash & UHT fruit juice
- * Rice pudding and custard
- * Tinned and instant soup
- * Deodorant, shampoo, soap, toothbrushes and toothpaste
- * Tinned fruit
- * UHT milk
- * Tinned carrots or peas
- * Instant coffee
- * Tinned potatoes
- * Tin openers

The Foodbank also needs financial help to buy essential items when stocks are low and to run the scheme. They also need more volunteer helpers. If you are interested, details are on their website. [https://
littlehamptondistrict.foodbank.org.uk/give-help/donate-food/](https://littlehamptondistrict.foodbank.org.uk/give-help/donate-food/)

Thank you!

*We invite you to an afternoon of rest, relaxation
and creativity in the presence of our loving God.*



Renew and Refresh

for all women

*... A selection of nurturing, pampering
and creative activities + space to be still ...*

Saturday, 9th November, 2019

2pm – 4.30pm

**Parkside Evangelical Church,
1 St Flora's Rd, Littlehampton. BN17 6EN.**

*Booking essential: please 'phone Charlotte on
01903 714670 or Sue on 07443 423 792 by 2nd November.*

You are invited to the

**Parkside Coffee Morning
and Open Church**

on Saturday 16 November
from 10.00am to 12.00 noon

Sale of cakes etc

all money raised will go to

Release International

During this time the church will be open
for quiet contemplation and prayer



Future Dates For Your Diary



Further details will be available nearer the time and please note that these events may be subject to change!

Items not included in previous issues or changed in some way are in bold.

- 9 NovemberR&R see page 12 for further details
- 16 NovemberCoffee Morning & Open Church
- 23 NovemberSussex Gospel Partnership Annual Conference, “A Praying Church”, Burgess Hill
- 15 December.....Christingle Service
- 18 December.....Holiday at Home - American Christmas
- 20 December.....Local Carol Singing
- 21 December.....Carol Singing in the High Street
- 22 December.....Carol Services and refreshments**
- 25 December.....Christmas Day Celebration**

2020

- 19 January.....Fellowship Meal
- 18 February.....Children’s Workshop
- 25 March.....Holiday at Home
- 9 AprilMaundy Thursday Communion**
- 10 AprilGood Friday**
- 12 AprilEaster Sunday**
- 17 June.....Holiday at Home
- 24 June.....Prayer Retreat
- 11 July.....Parkside Church Day Out

November Meditation

“With this in mind, we constantly pray for you, that our God may make you worthy of His calling, and that by His power He may bring to fruition your every desire for goodness and your every deed prompted by faith.

“We pray this so that the name of our Lord Jesus may be glorified in you, and you in Him, according to the grace of our God and the Lord Jesus Christ.”

2 Thessalonians 1:11-12

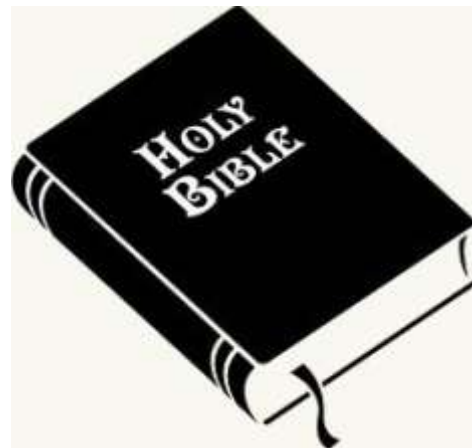


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Quote of the Month

Exhibit God with
your uniqueness.

Max Lucado

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