

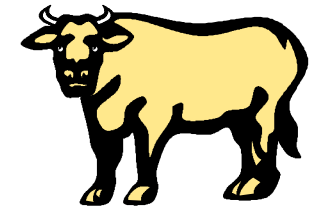
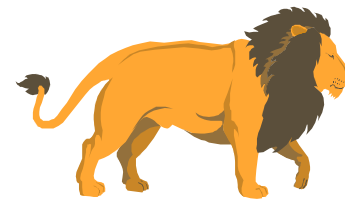
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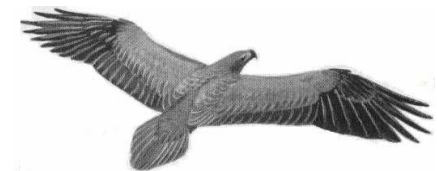
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Apr 2001



The Four Living Beings



is **Christ in you, the hope of glory**' (Col 1: 26, 27). It was hidden from generations before Paul, and has been hidden from generations since that day. But now, as then, God is again revealing it to his saints.

Many years later, John himself wrote, '**How great is the love the Father has lavished on us, that we should be called children of God!**' (1 John 3: 1). We too look in amazement at our calling.

The Spirit of Christ

We return now to Ezekiel's vision to read more of what he saw. Speaking of the living beings he wrote, '**Their wings were spread out upwards; 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**' (Ezek 1: 11,12). These four living beings moved together in perfect unison; and they moved **wherever the spirit led them**. Paul echoed this with the words, '**as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God**' (Rom 8: 14).

By nature we are not kings or servants or gods. We have neither the power to rule nor the humility to serve. We are nothing but degraded humans who are devoid of God. We can be none of these things by our own wisdom or strength or will power.

The Spirit of Christ is the great transformer. Even Jesus did nothing in his own strength. He himself said, '**The Son can do nothing of himself**' and '**I can of myself do nothing.**' He totally depended on the indwelling spirit of his Father for everything he did. That spirit in him was the authoritative king and the obedient servant. That spirit was the perfect man, and the almighty God.

That same spirit that was in him is now in us. What is impossible to the natural man is possible to God. The same spirit that made Jesus a king will make kings of the members of his body. That same spirit that made Jesus a servant will also make his body members servants. The same spirit that was God in Jesus will be God also in those who follow him. By that spirit they will become a glorious, united body, moving together in perfect unity and harmony. By that spirit they will be one with each other and one with God.

Introduction

The book of the prophet Ezekiel begins with a dramatic vision. He saw the heavens opened and in the middle of dazzling brightness he saw four living beings¹. He describes them as follows: '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' (1: 10). John had a similar vision, recorded in Revelation 4: 6,7: 'In the centre, around the throne, were four living beings, and they were covered with eyes, in front and behind. The first living being 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.'

What are the meanings of these visions and these four living beings?

Four men - a tax collector, a man of unknown occupation, a doctor, and a fisherman - wrote biographies of Jesus Christ. Their names were Matthew, Mark, Luke and John (probably not the John who wrote Revelation). They never imagined that their writings (with those of Peter and Paul and others) would be added to the sacred scriptures of the Jews, to make the book subsequently known to millions as the Bible. They never dreamt that what they wrote would be translated into hundreds of languages. The very idea would probably have shocked them.

Matthew, Mark and John, being Jews, certainly knew of Ezekiel's vision, but had no idea that what they wrote had any relation to it. Unknowingly they were playing a part in its fulfilment. These four gospels correspond in order to the four living beings.

Matthew

Matthew's gospel corresponds to the first living being, which is a lion. The lion is the king of the animals, and accordingly Matthew sees Jesus as a **king**. The Bible itself associates the lion with kingship and the tribe of Judah from which Jesus came. In Genesis 49: 9 and 10, Jacob prophesied: 'You are a lion's cub, O Judah; you return from the prey, my son. Like a lion, he crouches and lies down, like a lioness -- who dares to rouse him? The sceptre

¹For "living being", Ezekiel uses the Hebrew word חַיָּה ('*chaia*') and John uses the Greek 'ζῶον'. Both these words just mean 'living', and have no noun with them. 'Living Being' is, I think, a more accurate translation than 'Living Creature' or 'Beast' as in some Bible versions.

Jesus did not deny their accusation. Instead he again extended the accusation to include his followers! He quoted Psalm 82: 6: 'I said, "You are gods; you are all sons of the Most High."' This passage spoke of gods, in the plural. Jesus showed that it was totally in line with the scriptures for not only him, but also his followers to claim to be sons of God.

Jesus continued his answer to the Pharisees with the words, 'Do not believe me unless I do what my Father does. But if I do it, even though you do not believe me, believe the miracles, that you may know and understand that the Father is in me, and I in the Father'" (37, 38).

The miracles and the other actions of Jesus showed that God was his Father and he was God's Son. However he called and equipped his disciples to do the same things that he did. He said, 'I tell you the truth; anyone who has faith in me will do what I have been doing. He will do even greater things than these, because I am going to the Father' (John 14:12). The same miracles that proved Jesus was the Son of God will prove that his followers are sons of God.

Jesus emphasised that he 'did nothing of himself.' The Father who lived in him did everything. 'Don't you believe that I am in the Father, and that the Father is in me? The words I say to you are not just my own. Rather, it is the Father, living in me, who is doing his work' (John 14: 10). He went on to make the astonishing promise to his disciples that he and the Father would live in them also. 'If anyone loves me, he will obey my teaching. My Father will love him, and we will come to him and make our home with him' (John 14:23). The Father that lived in Jesus also lives in us.

Jesus said, 'I am the light of the world.' On another occasion he said to his disciples, 'You are the light of the world.'

Shortly before he left his disciples, Jesus said to Mary Magdalene, 'Go to my brothers and tell them, "I am returning to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God"' (John 20: 17).

Jesus did not look at his disciples as separate beings of a lower grade or status. Neither does he look at us as inferior beings. He died so that the divine spirit that lived in him should come and live in us, and make us one with him. That spirit is the great *I am* that lives in us also. That spirit makes us sons of God.

Paul spoke of this as 'the mystery that has been kept hidden for ages and generations, but is now revealed to the saints. To them God has chosen to make known among the Gentiles the glorious riches of this mystery, which

will not depart from Judah, nor the ruler's staff from between his feet, until he comes to whom it belongs and the obedience of the nations is his.' Matthew was a government official, and the most suited of the four gospel writers to see Jesus as a king.

Matthew begins his gospel with the words 'A record of the genealogy of Jesus Christ the son of David, the son of Abraham' He then traces the lineage of Jesus from Abraham down to David, and on through all the kings of Israel. What could be more appropriate for the one who was destined to sit on David's throne?

Only Matthew records the visit of the wise men, and their words: 'where is the one who has been born king of the Jews? We saw his star in the east and have come to worship him.'

At the end of Matthew, when commissioning the disciples, Jesus said: 'All authority is given to me in heaven and in earth.' These are the words of a king.

Mark

Mark corresponds to the second living being, the ox, which is a servant animal. Accordingly he sees Jesus as a **servant**, the exact opposite of a king. Servants are "unknown" people, and this fits the fact Mark was a man of unknown occupation. His opening words are simply: 'The beginning of the gospel about Jesus Christ.' (The following words *the Son of God* found in most Bibles were almost certainly not in the original text, but were a later addition.) There is no genealogy, nor any kind of birth story. You would not expect either of those for a servant. Neither does Mark record much teaching. His gospel is all about action. Jesus is serving his Father. Appropriately, for a servant, Mark's gospel is the shortest.

At the end of Mark, when commissioning the disciples, Jesus said: 'these signs will follow them that believe; In my name they will cast out devils; they will speak with new tongues; they will take up serpents; and if they drink any deadly thing, it will not hurt them; they will lay hands on the sick, and they will recover.' He was speaking of the actions his servants would perform.

How can a man be both a king and a servant? No two roles are more opposite. Here in England, as in various other countries, the queen is only the constitutional head of the country. In ancient times, Kings really ruled their countries and had absolute power. They were closer to today's presidents and

Does John's gospel present Jesus as God, and his followers as men, with an unbridgeable gap between the two? Is that the message of the New Testament, and indeed the whole Bible? For centuries, that is what the church has taught. In fact it is not very different from what the Greeks in ancient times believed, and the Hindus today, believe about their gods. For them gods are magical beings from another world, completely separate from the flesh and blood creatures that we are.

Did Jesus see himself as a different species from his followers? Did he regard himself as a totally separate class of being? Let us look at his words again.

Jesus said, 'I and the Father are one' (10: 30). The Jews reacted by picking up stones to throw at him. Jesus said to them, 'I have shown you many great miracles from the Father. For which of these do you stone me?' "We are not stoning you for any of these," replied the Jews, "but for blasphemy, because you, a mere man, claim to be God'" (31 - 33).

The words that so offended the Pharisees were 'I and the Father are one.' They took these words as a blasphemous claim to be God. Jesus not only made this claim for himself, but he also extended the claim to his disciples. He prayed for his disciples (and for all those that were to believe in him down through the ages), 'that all of them may be one, Father, just as you are in me and I am in you. May they also be in us so that the world may believe that you have sent me' (John 17: 21). His oneness with the Father was not something reserved for himself. He prayed that his followers would also know and experience that oneness.

What Jesus prayed was never just wishful thinking. He always prayed according to his Father's will, and consequently every prayer he prayed was answered. Any prayer that Jesus prayed was as good as a statement of fact of what was going to happen! He prayed that his followers would become one with him and the Father. We can therefore take it as a fact that his followers will and do become one with him and the Father.

The Pharisees accused Jesus of blasphemy. How did Jesus answer them? He said, "Is it not written in your Law, 'I have said you are gods'? If he called them 'gods', to whom the word of God came -- and the Scripture cannot be broken -- what about the one whom the Father sanctified and sent into the world? Why then do you accuse me of blasphemy because I said, 'I am God's Son?'" (34-36)

Jewish carpenter and itinerant preacher. His full body will be an expression and manifestation of God across the vast and varied spectrum that comprises mankind. How beautiful it will be to see Jesus manifested as male and female, in every race, at every age, in every occupation, with every physical appearance.

Pure light consists of all the individual colours added together. When all the different coloured lights of every member of Christ's body unite, they will produce the pure, brilliant light of God.

Through previous centuries, the church has claimed to manifest God. Millions, if not billions, of people have believed that claim. What a limited manifestation it has been! The clergy has been a very small subset of the human race. In Roman Catholicism, they have been restricted to celibate males mainly European who have only ever had one job – the “priesthood.” This was not God being made man. In that religious system, He was restricted to a minute minority of humanity.

Even the divinely ordained priesthood of the old covenant was available to only a very small group of people. They could only be male, between the ages of 30 and 50, and of the tribe of Levi. Women, the young, the old and those of other tribes were all excluded.

The true body of Christ, when manifested, will be fully human. It will reach across the whole spectrum of the human race. It will be a vast extension of Jesus, its head.

Gods

We move on to the fourth and most amazing part of our study. John's gospel, more plainly than the other three, reveals Jesus as God.

As we have previously noted, John simply states, ‘the Word was God.’ He also quotes the confession of Thomas, ‘My Lord and my God.’ In addition he records 21 instances of Jesus using the divine name ‘I am.’ Twice he relates how the Pharisees attempted to stone Jesus for what they regarded as his blasphemous claims. In these and other ways John's gospel presents Jesus as God. All the other New Testament writers also saw Jesus as God. Paul wrote that ‘God was manifest in the flesh’ (1 Tim 3: 16). The writer to the Hebrews described Jesus as ‘the radiance of God's glory and the exact representation of his being’ (Heb 1: 3).

prime ministers, but closer still to modern dictators. The early chapters of Samuel describe the coronation of Saul, the first king of Israel. Samuel summed up the relation of the king to his subjects with the words: ‘you yourselves will become his slaves.’ A king in ancient times could order the immediate execution of anyone who displeased him, and this frequently happened. A servant on the other hand was someone with no rights of any kind. He had to obey his master's every wish.

Jesus perfectly fulfilled the roles of both a king and a servant. He spoke and acted out the words of a king: ‘All authority is given to me in heaven and in earth’ He also spoke and lived the words of a servant: ‘For I have come down from heaven not to do my will but to do the will of him who sent me’ (John 6:38). He continually obeyed his Father's every wish.

Luke

The third gospel writer, Luke, corresponds to the third living being. He sees Jesus as a **man**. Luke was a doctor, concerned with people, and it is appropriate that he should view Jesus in this way. Only Luke gives us all the human details of Jesus' birth. He tells the story of Gabriel's visit to Mary and her conception. Only Luke mentions the inn at Bethlehem and the manger where Jesus first slept. Like Matthew, Luke gives the genealogy of Jesus, but not in the same way. Matthew begins with Abraham and goes down through David. Luke begins with Mary, and goes all the way back to Adam. The final words of Luke chapter 3 are ‘the son of Adam, the son of God.’ The word adam in Hebrew means man. So we may re-translate this, ‘the son of man, the son of God.’

We are indebted to Luke for other more personal details of Jesus' life. Only he tells us how the mob threw Jesus out of his own town of Nazareth. Only Luke recounts how Jesus sweated drops of blood in Gethsemane.

The commission at the end of Luke included the words: ‘repentance and forgiveness of sins will be preached in his name to all nations, beginning at Jerusalem.’ He focuses on repentance, the human response to the gospel and its reward, forgiveness.

John

John's gospel corresponds to the fourth living being, the flying eagle. The eagle belongs to the heavens and so represents God. John sees Jesus as **God**. The other three beings are creatures of the earth. As we would expect, John's gospel is very different from those of Matthew, Mark and Luke.

Matthew and Luke both have an earthly birth story and a genealogy. John cannot do that. God does not have such things. Instead he gives a heavenly birth story. We find the simple, direct and sublime statements: **'In the beginning was the Word, and the word was with God, and the word was God'**. Soon after we read, **'The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the One and Only, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth.'** In Luke the birth story is human; in John it is divine.

John is the gospel of **'I am'**. Only John records the great claims of Jesus. **'I am the bread of life.'** **'I am the light of the world.'** **'I am the door.'** **'I am the good shepherd.'** **'I am the resurrection and the life.'** **'I am the way, the truth and the life.'** **'I am the true vine.'** **'Before Abraham was, I am.'** Who but God can say such things? No other teacher or religious leader before or since has ever spoken words like these.

Jesus never directly said he was God, but 21 times in (the Greek text of) John's gospel he spoke the words, **'I am'** (ἐγὼ εἰμί). Centuries before, Moses asked God what his name was. In reply he received the famous words, **'I am who I am'** (Ex 3: 14). To the Jews, **'I am'** was part of the divine name. Amazingly the gematria (numeric value) of **'I am'** in Hebrew (ehyeh - אֶהְיֶה) is 21, the exact number of times that Jesus spoke those words. (21, some readers will note, is the product of 3 and 7, both numbers associated with perfection and with God.) When Jesus said, **'Before Abraham was, I am,'** the Jews took his words as a blasphemous claim to be God. They took up stones to throw at him. Death by stoning was the penalty for blasphemy in the law of Moses.

Near the end of his gospel, John quotes the words of Thomas: **'My Lord and my God'** (John 20: 28). Jesus accepted these words without protesting.

At the end of John we find the commission: **'Peace be with you! As the Father has sent me, I am sending you. ... Receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive anyone his sins, they are forgiven; if you do not forgive them, they are not forgiven.'** Like Luke, John's commission includes the forgiveness of sins, but this time the disciples themselves actually received the power to forgive. To the Pharisees and teachers of the law this was blasphemy. **'Who is this that speaks blasphemies?'** they said on another occasion, **'Who can forgive sins, but God alone?'** (Luke 5: 21). In a sense they were right. Only God can forgive sins. But God had come to live in man.

What contrasts! King and yet servant, man and yet God! How amazing! How wonderful! How far beyond human imagination! Has any other person in history combined such opposites? Yet that is what Jesus was and is: the servant-king, the man-God.

By nature, we are not willing servants of God. We follow our own desires, wishes and ambitions in everything we do. We are slaves to our own passions and appetites. Jesus put it simply: **'I tell you the truth, everyone who sins is a slave to sin'** (John 8:34).

How can we be faithful servants of Jesus? We can never do it by struggling and striving. We can never do it by the efforts of our own wills. Jesus is not a taskmaster who demands service from his followers. In Matthew 11: 28 he said, **'My yoke is easy and my burden is light.'** His yoke is easy and his burden is light, because we want to do his will. Just as Jesus was one with his Father and delighted to do his will, so we become one with him and delight to do his will. We become his servants by an inner transformation, and change of heart.

In John 15: 15, Jesus even took away the title of servants from his disciples. He said, **'I no longer call you servants, because a servant does not know his master's business. Instead, I have called you friends, for everything that I learned from my Father I have made known to you.'** When we are one with him, we can simply do our own pleasure, and miraculously and wonderfully we are doing his pleasure. We do what we want to do in total freedom, and find that we are serving him.

Humans

In Jesus, God manifested himself as a human being. Before Jesus came, he had manifested himself in other ways. The laws and rituals of the Old Testament were shadows of divine truth. The ancient priests also revealed God, but not clearly. The scriptures revealed God to those few who had them and could understand them. Jesus went far beyond all previous revelations when he came to reveal God in human form.

He was the perfect revelation of God, but even he had limitations. He said this himself, **'I have a baptism with which to be baptised; and how am I restricted until it is accomplished!'** He had accepted limitations when he came to earth in human form.

He was limited to one physical body. He could only be one type of person. He was a male, and could not also be female. He came as a Jew. He could not also be a Chinaman, an Indian or an African. He worked as a carpenter. He could not be a fisherman, a farmer, a nurse, an athlete, a musician or any other of the multitude of occupations now available to the human race. He only reached the age of 33. He never became a parent, or an older person. He expressed God totally in the one person that he was, a male,

follow him. They will act continually in total obedience to their heavenly Father and thus be qualified to share the throne with his first-born son.

Servants

As I have said, a servant in ancient times was the exact opposite of a king. A king had absolute authority and power. A servant was nothing more than a slave and a possession of his master. He had no rights of his own. His master's every wish was his command.

Jesus was the perfect servant of his Father. He said, '**For I have come down from heaven not to do my will, but to do the will of him who sent me**' (John 6:38). Just as an ancient slave was available to obey the wishes of his earthly master 24 hours a day, so Jesus gave every moment to his heavenly Father. He was not led, controlled and ruled by his natural desires and ambitions. His Father's will totally overruled his every thought, word and action.

Ancient slaves served their masters by compulsion. They had no choice. They did not want to spend all their time serving someone else. They would have preferred to live their lives according to their own desires and wishes. Sadly for them they had no rights and they were not free to choose.

Jesus served his Father by his own choice. He delighted to do his Father's will. For him it was no problem or hardship, because in every situation his own wishes and objectives were the same as his Father's.

This service to his Father was the foundation of his service to his fellow men. Wonderfully, service to his own creation is in the heart of the Father creator, and that same service is in the heart of his son. Jesus manifested his servant heart most beautifully when he washed his disciples' feet. He instructed them that they also should wash one another's feet.

His life was the pattern for his followers. He said to his disciples, '**If you love me, you will obey (keep) my commands**' (John 14:15).

In many of his letters Paul introduced himself to his readers as '**a servant (or slave) of Jesus Christ.**' In other letters he introduced himself as an apostle of Jesus Christ, but the original meaning of the word apostle is not too different from servant. It means simply someone who is sent. Peter, James and Jude also introduced themselves to their readers as servants of Jesus Christ.

A Vision of the Body of Christ

We may reasonably conclude that the prophet Ezekiel and John in Revelation were seeing visions of four different aspects of Jesus. Here we might close our study, contented with viewing the amazing patterns of scripture, and rejoicing in the fresh light they cast on the character and person of our wonderful Saviour. Many, no doubt, have seen this far, but seen no further.

But Ezekiel saw four living beings, rather than just one. And the four were moving together in perfect unison. John saw four living beings in the centre and round the throne. Why not just *on* the throne? The answer is that these visions were not visions of Jesus alone, but of the whole body of Christ! Ezekiel and John were not simply seeing Jesus, but also men and women who had been transformed into his likeness and were sharing his attributes. The living beings represented people who had become just like Jesus! What a wonderful gospel it is, that the king-servant, man-God came into the world 2000 years ago. The added good news is that He is the first born of a multitude of others who are to become king-servants and man-Gods. This is a gospel within a gospel.

We too are to reign with him. We too are to be servants of God and of man. Human though we are, we too are to be sons and daughters of God and become '**partakers of the divine nature**'.

The Holy Spirit that indwelt our Saviour Jesus was the spirit that made him a king, a servant, a man and a god. The Holy Spirit in us gives us kingly power and authority. He gives us the humble attitude of servants, and the power to serve. By the Holy Spirit we too will manifest the nature of God.

Now we will consider these four living beings more closely, and with the help of the Holy Spirit see something of the glory that is to be manifested in the body of Christ. May the visions of Ezekiel and John become new transforming visions for us!

Kings

Jesus was and is the king of kings. Paul describes him as '**King of kings, and Lord of lords**' (1 Tim 6: 15). John describes him as '**Lord of lords, and King of kings**' (Rev 17: 14) and sees the name '**King of kings and lord of lords**' written on his robe and on his thigh (Rev 19: 16). Originally, 'king of kings' was the title of the kings of Babylon and Persia. It is used of Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon (Ezek 26: 7 and Daniel 2: 37) and

Artaxerxes, king of Persia (Ezra 7: 12) These kings had great empires and ruled over many other kings, each of whom was the ruler of his own country. However, these lower kings were always subject to and dependent on the great central king of the whole empire.

This is a picture of the body of Christ. Jesus is the great King of kings, and each member of his body is a king under him. Each member is destined to have the power and authority of a king.

What does it mean then to be a king? We must look again at Jesus. What sort of a king was he? Like the ancient kings, he had absolute power. His every wish and command was obeyed. Everyone and everything were subject to him. Unlike the ancient kings, he exercised his power only for good. Also unlike them he willingly passed his power on to others.

Before starting on his public ministry, Jesus demonstrated complete authority over his own body. He showed that he ruled over himself. Matthew says, 'After fasting for forty days and forty nights, he was hungry' (4: 2). Only at the end of the 40 days was Jesus hungry. During the 40 days, it appears, he felt no desire for food. Real hunger pangs only begin when the body has used up all its spare fat. What we normally call hunger is no more than the body asking for its expected daily intake. When Jesus reached extreme hunger, he still refused the opportunity of food. He would not yield to any bodily appetite, however strong. Probably he faced death from starvation, but still he remained the master of his body.

Jesus also had authority over Satan. Following his fast, he was able to command Satan to depart from him. Throughout his ministry he had complete control over the spirit world. Jesus had this authority himself, and he made it plain that his followers would have it too. In Mat 10: 1, we read, 'He called his twelve disciples to him and gave them authority to drive out evil spirits and to heal every disease and sickness.' In Luke He said, 'I saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven. I have given you authority to trample on snakes and scorpions and to overcome all the power of the enemy; nothing will harm you' (Luke 10: 19).

Jesus also had authority over disease. 'When evening came, many who were demon-possessed were brought to him, and he drove out the spirits with a word and healed all the sick' (Mat 8: 16). No disease could stand before him. He gave a command, and the disease went. This authority also was not for Jesus alone. He passed it on to his disciples. 'They will place their hands on sick people, and they will get well' (Mark 16: 18).

Jesus also amazed his disciples by his control over the elements. 'What kind of man is this? Even the winds and the waves obey him!' (Mat 8: 27). In this also he was not alone in the scriptures. Centuries earlier, Elijah had called for a 3 year drought and then prayed for rain and the heavens were opened. When Jesus had no boat, he walked on the water. Peter, when he had faith, was able to do that too! When the food ran out, Jesus fed a multitude from a few loaves and fishes, but even that he did through the hands of others.

Surprisingly there is one kind of authority that is less visible in the life of Jesus. We do not see his authority over man! He was not like an earthly king. He plainly said that his kingdom was not of this world. In his temptation, Satan offered him all the kingdoms of this world in return for a momentary act of worship. Jesus refused. That was not his Father's way. His plan was to rule the hearts of his people by their willing cooperation; not to rule over their bodies by force.

Jesus will reign till all enemies are beneath his feet. But what are his feet? They are a part of his body! The feet are the last part of the body to be born, and symbolise those who overcome and reign with him.

Jesus passed all his kingly authority on to the disciples. Besides the verses previously quoted we also read the following: 'I tell you the truth; anyone who has faith in me will do what I have been doing. He will do even greater things than these, because I am going to the Father' (John 14:12). 'As the Father has sent me, I am sending you' (John 20:21). Much later John wrote, 'because as he is, so are we in this world' (1 John 4:17). In Rev 3:21 we read the words, 'To him who overcomes, I will give the right to sit with me on my throne, just as I overcame and sat down with my Father on his throne.'

In the world, kings are not servants and servants are not kings. Earthly kings and rulers have ruled for their own pleasure and benefit. Many have brought untold misery to their subjects. We have just finished a century in which cruel tyrants tortured and killed and starved millions of people to death. Hitler, Stalin and Mao Tse Tung exceeded all who went before them in the depth and extent of their brutality and the suffering they caused to multitudes of innocent people.

The rulers in the kingdom of God will be immeasurably different. They will be servants of God, constantly doing his will, and on that basis, servants of others. For Jesus, his total obedience as a servant to the will of his Father was the basis of his total authority as king. So it must be for those who