

Handout: Revelation chapter 4

The Four Living Creatures of Isaiah, Ezekiel, and John

ISAIAH 6:1-7	-4 Living Creatures
	-Called <i>Seraphs</i> which means “the burning ones.”
	-6 wings: 2 covered their faces, 2 their feet, 2 flying.
	-he couldn't see their faces; covered by their wings
	-They sing before the throne of God: “Holy, Holy, Holy”
	-One purified Isaiah with a burning coal
	-encircle the throne of God

Hebrew = *sarap*, plural serapim. Etymology = fiery one

EZEKIEL 1:1-26 10:1-18	-4 Living Creatures in what looked like fire
	-4 faces and 4 wings
	each face on 4 sides: (Ezekiel 1:10): man, lion, ox and eagle (Ezekiel 10:14): ox, man, lion, eagle
	-legs straight , feet like a calf, hands like a man
	-called cherubim (chapter 10)
	-full of eyes (10:12)
-they carry the fiery chariot of God. Ezekiel could see the throne above them in the throne room of God = 10:18 (some translations vary on how they list this verse but it comes after 10:17).	

REVELATION Chapter 4	-4 Living Creatures covered with eyes front and back
	-faces: a lion, ox, man, eagle
	-6 wings; eyes front and back, inside and out
	-sang Holy, Holy, Holy but different second verse from Isaiah
	-around the throne of God

Comparing the various passages, we seem to be dealing with two classifications of heavenly beings: Seraphs and Cherubs.

The Fathers of the Church saw the marvelous four living creatures as symbols of the four Gospels, however, they did not agree on which creature represented which Gospel.

Early Church Scholar	Creature with a human face	Creature with a lion face	Creature with the face of an ox	Creature with an eagle face
St. Irenaeus of Lyons	Matthew	John	Luke	Mark
St. Augustine of Hippo	Mark	Matthew	Luke	John
Pseudo-Athanasius	Matthew	Luke	Mark	John
St. Jerome	Matthew	Mark	Luke	John