

It is the same way in presenting Christ. If we are to get anything like an adequate portrait of Jesus Christ, it is necessary that we see how He appears to different men from different angles, so, in the providence of God, we have four men selected to give us four pictures. These four give us pictures from four different view points. Men particularly fitted to see Him from their particular angle so as to present Him to the group for which they primarily wrote. Each wrote to a different group of people, and each group of people were especially interested in seeing Christ from their points of view.

It is very interesting to take up the Gospels and look through them to see how each, while presenting the same Master, can show us an entirely different picture of Him from the other.

The first of these Gospels is the Gospel of Matthew. The longest Gospel, there are twenty-eight chapters in it. It was written by Matthew, a former tax gatherer, a man who is writing particularly to the Jews. And we find the Gospel of Matthew corresponds to one of the likenesses in the vision of Ezekiel. You remember, one of the faces was the face of a man, and one of the faces was a face of a lion. The lion is the king of the animals. Matthew, who was a former tax gatherer, a representative of the great Roman Empire, was interested in the Kingdom. He saw Jesus Christ as the greatest of Kings. He saw the kingly grandeur.

Matthew wrote particularly for the people who were looking for their King, his own people, the Jews. The Jews, you remember were looking for the Messiah, the King. One of the prophecies of the Old Testament is in the Gospel of Matthew; we find him saying, "Here is your King, the One you have been looking for." Let us look at this Gospel to see how it fits this description of the face, the face of the lion.

First, the genealogy tells His ancestry, and shows His right to reign. Then he tells of His wonderful birth. And then we read how, while He was still a young child wise men came and gave such presents as becomes a King. In the second chapter, Herod the King, under Rome, fears that this is a new King, and tries to take His life. Then Matthew jumps to the time when He began to preach. We find there His proclamation - the sermon on the Mount - giving the principles of His Kingdom. Naturally Matthew is interested in the principles - the way in which He wants His subjects to live. We find His teachings, His proclamation of His principles. Things suitable particularly for the Jews.

There are over one hundred cases in which there are quotations from the Old Testament. Many times we read "This was done that it might be fulfilled, that which was spoken by the prophets." Then the quotations are fulfilled. Case after case he tells how Christ was the fulfillment of the Old Testament. It is the Gospel for the Jews, showing the Christ who is to be the King of the Jews. The One who is so entirely fitted to be the King in the lives of every one of us. Fulfilling one of the greatest of the Old Testament prophecies.

Now it is odd to find the contrast between two books on the same subject. Matthew and Mark both tell of Christ. Many incidents are described by both. The contrast is very great. At first sight it may seem like an accident.

Matthew presenting the King, the One whose every word would demand attention. Mark knows not the King, but the Servant. Not a great One who can proclaim great things, but One who can do great things. Matthew describes in a leisurely way, while Mark emphasizes action. In Mark there is a word which appears in almost every fifth verse, from the Greek to the English, it is usually translated "straightway." "Straightway this and straightway that." Not the leisurely conduct of a great King, but the lowliest actions of a servant, one who does great things. We find Mark describing one of the likenesses that Ezekiel saw, the likeness of an ox; burden-bearing.

Mark is a young man who wrote for people who were especially interested in action. Mark wrote particularly for the Romans. The Romans were great do-ers. In many parts of Europe and Asia we find the remains of roads which they made. Some of them are in far better condition than some that we have built in the last ten years. We find the remains of great aqueducts. Remember the Romans were interested in the One who does things.