

# The Lion Face of the Cheribum

by Keith Malcomson

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*This sermon is about embracing the lion-like nature as depicted in the Bible, focusing on righteousness, strength, unity, courage, leadership, and the voice of a lion. It emphasizes the importance of having the boldness and courage of a lion in facing challenges, seeking the Lord for provision, and leading with authority and unity.*

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## Description

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## Transcript

Praise God. Here this morning I want you to turn again with me to Ezekiel chapter one. We're going to move on to part four in this series, the four seasons of life.

And we're taking this step by step through what the word of God reveals to us. But I want to go to part four here and I've called this the lion face of the cherubim. Last week we dealt with the human face of the cherubim, that season in life where all you feel like is a man.

You feel your humanity. But here this morning I want to go to the next of the four faces, the lion face of the cherubim, reading in Ezekiel chapter one and verse five. Also out of the midst thereof, that is the fire, came the likeness of four living creatures.

And this was their appearance. They had the likeness of a man. Then verse 10, as for the likeness of their faces, they four had the face of a man and the face of a lion on the right side.

And they four had the face of an ox on the left side. They four also had the face of an eagle. Let's pray together.

Father, I thank you for your grace and your mercy that you speak to us, that you open up your word, that you give us a desire for yourself and that we can feel the conviction of the Holy Spirit, that we can feel the drawn, nor God, that we're dissatisfied, oh God, when we lie at ease in Zion, oh God, there's no

satisfaction, nor God, when we neglect spiritual things, but oh God, there's a conviction, there's a drawn, there is a desire, and there's a dissatisfaction with anything else than walking in fellowship and communion with you. Now, nor God, I pray through these messages, oh God, nor God, no matter the season, whether it's wintertime or summer, whether it's springtime or autumn, Father, I pray by the power of your Holy Spirit that you'd quicken us, that you'd revive us, that you'd stir us, oh God, nor God, I pray that you'd work out your divine purpose. No matter the season we're walking through, whether we feel like a man or whether we feel like a lion, Father, I pray, nor God, perform your divine purpose, nor God, we know that you've things for every season of life, and Father, I pray that you'd lead us, you'd teach us, Lord God, that faith would stir within our heart, nor God, no matter whether we have to walk through a barren wilderness or a beautiful forest, oh God, that you'd show us and teach us and make us to know that you have a plan, a purpose, oh God, that there's a reason, oh God, that it works something within us of eternal weight and glory, and Father, I pray this morning, let something of that eternal weight and glory come down in this gathering that's not of the flesh, that's not of the imagination of man, that's not by mere atmosphere, oh God, but oh God, we pray that you'd work inside our innermost beings, that we would be your habitation, your dwelling place, your temple, oh God, that we'd be literally your skin tent, and that you'd come and reveal your glory and your fire and your power and the knowledge of the Holy One, nor God, we give you glory this morning, in Jesus' mighty name, amen.

My message, the lion face of the cherubim, we're looking at the four faces of each of these four cherubim, all four have the same four faces, each of them, though they have one body, they have four faces, those four faces are part of one creature, one being, or one Christian person, the face may be different at different times, depending on what angle you look at it, or what they are doing, or what direction they are walking in, or what they're going through, what season of life, but it's the same person, the same living creature, the same spiritual life, and yet there's four different faces, face depicts something, reveals something, and we've already seen that, that the word likeness that's used here in verse five, and again in verse 10, it means the closest resemblance that I can possibly describe to you, so when he looks at the beast and said, this is what their four faces resembled or looked like, he's saying, they're not an actual lion, they're not an ox, they're not an eagle, but this is as close as I can get it. Do you know these four creatures that come out of the fire? In verse five, he said, these four creatures have the full appearance of a man, and that's why it's so important for you, because although they're angelic beings that dwell in the presence of God, yet to you and to I, they reveal symbolically, in revelation, the appearance of a man, or what a Christian man in the church ought to be. When you study the cherubim, you see what you ought to be.

You see the potential of, through grace, what you can become in Christ. You may sit here and say, I'm not all that I desire to be. Well, join the club.

None of us are. We're all a work in progress, but do you know what? There's something about seeing a pattern and an example and an image that God says, this is what I want to make you. It should stir up faith and desire and a vision where you say, I'm not satisfied as an earth creature.

I'm not satisfied being wingless or eyeless or faceless. You know, in this world, if they say you're double-faced, it's a bad thing, but I want to tell you, when I say you're four-faced, it means something radically different. It is a good thing when you're four-faced like these characters, like these creatures, when you have that full expression that no matter whether you feel or look like a man or a lamb or an ox or an eagle, you're the same person living the same Christian life, walking in the same direction.

So whether you feel your humanity or your lamb-like nature that we're going to deal with this morning, you keep going forward. Remember what we said about them? They're always moving forward. They're always moving in the direction of the Spirit of God.

And so that's what we see. The second face here is that of a lamb. As you look at these living creatures, their front face that's looking right at you is the face of a man.

But listen to what verse 10 now tells us. The face of a lion is on the right. As you look at these living creatures, it is a human face looking at you.

But to the right, to your right, as you look at them, is the face of a lion. To the left is the face of an ox. To the back is an eagle.

All of this has meaning and symbolic imagery. It says in Revelation chapter 4 and verse 7, remember in Revelation, the four beasts are distinct animals. Each one don't have four faces.

They are that animal. And so in Revelation chapter 4 and 7, it says the first beast was like a lion. In other words, the entire cherubim was like a lion.

It embodied all the features of a lion. When you looked at that beast, you said, that is as best as I can describe it. It's like this cherubim is like a lion.

And you know what? That lion has six wings and it's a remarkable creature for us. When we go to the New Testament in 2 Timothy chapter 4 and 2, listen to what Paul the apostle writes to young Timothy, who's a young preacher. He says this, preach the word.

That's a command. No preacher has a right to preach who doesn't preach the word. I'm tired of mere testimonies and I enjoy testimonies.

I'm tired of dreams and visions. I am tired of little stories about cats and dogs. I am tired of all the fluff and the bubble whenever it's not the word of God.

A real preacher has a singular command, preach the word. If a preacher doesn't preach the word, he is an apostate. He is false.

He's not real. I don't care how quiet he is, how weak he is, how ungifted he is. I don't care about that.

I could care less if he stumbles over his words or can't put a message together. I don't care. This thing I care about, preach the word of God.

I will excuse a preacher for lack of gifting, but not for not preaching the word. Listen to what Paul says to the young preacher, preach the word, be instant, in season and out of season. To be instant means to stand on guard, to be ready, or as we used to say in the army, stand to.

You know when a soldier hears that command, stand to, it means immediately, whether you're sleeping, whatever you're doing, cooking, immediately you grab your rifle and you stand on duty. You don't talk, you don't ask, you don't ask, begin to say where, when, how, you immediately stand in your position. Paul says preach the word, be instant, stand in your place, Timothy.

Get your rifle and stand in your position. Listen to what he says, and preach the word in season and out of season. Paul is saying to this preacher, there's times you're going to have to preach in season and out of season.

It doesn't matter whether it's in season or out of season, you've got to preach the word. You do not have a choice about preaching. If it's out of season, you can't say, well, no preaching for me.

It's out of season, nothing is happening, no fruit, no one's responding, the climate isn't right, the rain isn't right, the moving of the spirit isn't right. A preacher doesn't have any right to do that. You know a preacher's got to preach out of season, just like he preaches in season.

What is in season? It's the right season. The sun is shining right, the rain is falling right, the climate is right, everything is right, and everything is growing and blossoming and happening. When you preach in season, everything works the way you want it.

And yet Paul says there's a place for preaching out of season. It's not wrong to preach out of season, it's wrong to hunt out of season, there's nothing there. You may not want to fish out of season, but a preacher has to preach out of season.

Do you realize in the Christian life, you may say it's out of season, it's the wrong season, all the elements aren't there, so I'll just draw back as a Christian. You have no right to do that. You've got to be a Christian in season when everything is so commodituous to it, and helpful to it, and beneficial to it, and it's so fruitful, and it all works so well.

What do you do when the whole climate is against your Christian life? The sun isn't shining, you're walking in a wilderness. You've got to be a Christian out of season. Oh, that those words are grippous this morning.

I've got to be like the cherubims, whether it's a human face or a lion face, let's just live a Christian life. You wake up this morning and go, well, I went to bed on fire, burning, praying, worshiping. I wake up this morning, I feel like spiritual death.

I don't think I'll go to church today. I can't sing in church today. I can't pray in the prayer meeting today.

You just need to understand, I'm in a certain place. Do you realize that it's okay if you're a young Christian and you're growing in this? If you're down the road a bit and you haven't learned, that is not an option. You need to rethink and retake your steps again, because you know what? We live this Christian life in season, out of season.

There's a consistency, a steadfastness, no matter what it is. What is the out of season? It's when it seems illogical and pointless to live this Christian life. That's the test of your Christianity.

It's not in season that you're tested. It's out of season that you really show your metal and show what sort of Christian you are. When everything is adverse to your Christianity and it's hard to live as a Christian, now we'll see the sort of Christian you are.

Anyone can be happy clappy in the right environment. Anyone. Anyone can rejoice when all the circumstances are in season, but let it go the other way.

When we begin to look at this lion face of the cherubim, we see the second season of the Christian life. Last week was the human season. Now I'm going to deal with the lion season of the cherubim, or the second face of this cherubim, the face on the right of the head.

One body, but four faces, four different seasons. When you go into the Old Testament, and like we said last week, as you looked at the camp of Israel, all 12 tribes camped around the tabernacle, the house of God, the place of God's glory and presence. On the front side was Reuben.

They had a banner. There was three tribes there, and they put a banner up and it had a man's face on it. As you looked at the house of God, to the right was the tribe of Judah with two other tribes, Issachar and Jebulon.

All three tribes were there. They also had a flag or a standard or a banner, and on that banner, guess what it was? It was the face of a lion. It was the image of a lion.

Now we're beginning to see a pattern here. So as you looked at the house of God, to the right, those three tribes, the tribe of Judah, they exalted their banner and it had this second face of a lion. Isn't it remarkable how all this ties in? On the right side of these four cherubim is the face of a lion, and so it was in the house of God.

All of this is tying in. It says in Genesis chapter 49 and verse 9, listen to this prophecy concerning the tribe of Judah. Judah is a lion's whelp.

From the prey, my son, thou art gone up. He stooped down. He crouched as a lion, as an old lamb.

Who shall rouse him up? And so we see Judah, Jacob's prophecy is all about the lion, this image of the lion. Jacob is a man. Jacob is a tribe.

Jacob is a portion of God's people who camp around God's tabernacle. And yet, although they're people, the image for them or the prophecy about them is this lion-like nature. Do you know men and women amongst God's people can be lion-like just like they can be man-like? You can have the imagery of these lion.

Listen to what else was prophesied. The scepter shall not depart from Judah nor a lawgiver from between his feet until Shiloh come and until him shall the gathering of the people be. And so it says that this lion tribe has the scepter of royalty within it.

In other words, kings are going to come out of Judah. Do you know we know that the lion is the symbol of a king. It's a symbol of royalty in our contemporary world.

But do you know what? It is the symbol of a king in the Bible. The lion is the dominant symbol of being king-like or royal in virtue. And so Judah was to raise up this royal household out of the line of David were to come mighty kings and great kings.

But the symbol of this tribe was the lion. Whether they were camped and static, the standard was always the lion. When they began to march, do you know what happened? It was Judah would take the lead.

Judah always went in the front as Israel began to march again out into the wilderness. It was always a banner with a lion on it that was at the front, not the flag with a human face. Why? When we feel our humanity, we don't want to move forward.

We don't want to go forward in the purpose of God. But do you know when the whole house of God begins to stir, it's not a human face looking at you, camped by the tabernacle. As soon as they begin to move, Judah has to go out in front.

You know why? The lion will always lead the way. This begins to reveal something of this lion-like face that ought to be a season in your life. If you're always a human in your Christian life, you need to begin to ask serious questions.

You need a time of seeking God's face. You need a time of searching the word of God. If you're dominated by humanity and you never have an eagle season, you never have a lion season, you never have an ox season, I would challenge your Christianity.

If all you feel is the normalcy of your humanity and your thoughts and your emotions, I would get very worried about you. But if you claim that you're always a lion, that all the time you function like a lion and have the courage of a lion, I would actually probably call you a liar or a hypocrite or a game player or someone who's deceived. No one is ever like that.

If you never have that human time, that valley time, that discouraged time, that time where everything is dry, I would actually worry about your spiritual state because it's not natural. It's not biblical. It's not even what's in God's pattern.

It takes different times and seasons to actually make you what you are. When we go over to the New Testament again, we see that the four gospels of Matthew, Mark, Luke and John correspond to these four faces. Remember last week we said that the man's face corresponds with Luke's gospel.

I also mentioned that Mark's gospel is the ox. John's gospel is the eagle. And so we see that Matthew's gospel reveals Christ the king.

That's the whole theme of Matthew's gospel is the kingship of the Lord Jesus Christ. It doesn't reveal him as an eagle or an ox or as a man. It reveals King Jesus in a very special way.

And you know what Matthew's gospel, the symbol of it is, is the symbol of the face of the lion. Now let me just take you into this. I'm going to give you six points about a lion and I'm not going to go much into Matthew.

I'm going to jump straight over that. I'm just going to give you a few facts about Matthew as the gospel of the kingdom and the gospel of the king. And then I'm going to give you six simple very short points concerning the lion like face of the cherubim.

Because I want us to see there has to be a lion like season in your life. There is a time where the spiritual life gets stirred. It's not you.

It's not a work of human ingenuity. This is a work of the spirit of God to make you lion like at certain distinct times. And so when we go to Matthew's gospel, the word kingdom is mentioned 148 times in the New Testament.

56 of those times are more than a third of the times it is mentioned in Matthew. In other words, no other book in the New Testament mentions the word kingdom more than Matthew talks about it. It dominates the gospel of Matthew.

Never think all the gospels are the same. They're not. They have a different emphasis.

They have a different purpose. They're trying to reveal a certain thing. They preach the same gospel about the same person to the same people.

And yet there is an emphasis that is very unique and you need to learn that. And so we see kingdom, the word kingdom dominates it. Do you know what a kingdom is? A kingdom is that realm ruled over by king.

A king actually has dominion, authority, superiority, and control of that realm. So if you find a kingdom, there is a king reigning and ruling and commanding. There are certain rules and legislation within a kingdom like a citizen.

You can't just do what you want. You can't drive at any speed unless you're driving between Tipperary and Limerick and they always drive at whatever speed they want to, as I found out this morning. But do you know what? You've got legislation, laws, ways of operating within a kingdom because there is a king reigning and ruling over that.

In Matthew's gospel, we have the term used kingdom of heaven 32 times. That term isn't mentioned anywhere else in any other book in our entire Bible. None of the other gospels use it.

Only Matthew talks about the kingdom of heaven. The others talk about the kingdom of God, but 32 times Matthew talks about the kingdom of heaven. In other words, a kingdom that's come from heaven, dominated by heaven, ruled by heaven.

If you have a Christian life and you say, well, I just want to do this and I want to mix a bit of Catholicism with a bit of the new age and a bit of secular society and it's all the same, you know nothing about this kingdom. Do you realize this kingdom is under the authority of a king? He makes the rules and if you're going to be a citizen or part of this kingdom, you either submit or you get cut asunder and that's what Jesus actually taught. You don't have a choice to make the rules of this kingdom.

You're either a citizen of it or you get rejected by this kingdom, but you cannot change the foundation of it. And so this term isn't used anywhere else. When Christ came preaching 600 years without a king, Israel had Herod.

They weren't rightful kings. They were half-breed. They weren't direct descendants of King David.

So there'd been 600 years and you've got a paper cut out king, a tyrant trying to claim to be of the seed of David. And so when you had Christ coming, it was a volatile time. Let's know how Matthew chapter 1 verse 1 opens.

The book of the generation of Jesus Christ, the son of David, the son of Abraham. So the very first verse of Matthew chapter 1 begins with his genealogy explaining his family line of the person of the Lord Jesus Christ. You know where it goes back to King David and then to Abraham.

In other words, he is of this royal line of Judah. He is of the tribe of, that's who Jesus Christ is. Do you know what his banner is? It is the banner of the lion.

You know what he's called about in Revelation? The son of David of the tribe of Judah. He is the lion of the tribe of Judah. Christ actually embodies this lion-like nature.

When you look at him, you see his full humanity. He wept, grew hungry, grew tired. But you also see this lion-like dominion of royalty where he is bringing a kingdom.

When you begin to experience this lion-like face, do you know what it means? You're operating in the kingdom of God. You're not living as a human person. You are a kingdom person.

You're beginning to think according to the kingdom of God. And there is a royal authority. You know what it says in Revelation 1? If you're washed in the blood of the lamb, if you've been forgiven, if you've been changed, you have actually become a king and a priest unto God.

If you're forgiven and washed in the blood here this morning, you are an actual king. And you know what that means? You shouldn't be getting defeated by the circumstance of life. You've been called to have dominion, to have authority, to make your stand, to draw a line in the sand and to roar like a lion.

I'm not into dominionism. Oh no, I don't believe that. There's a teaching that says we're going to usher in the kingdom.

That's heresy. That's a false teaching. You know what? When Jesus comes back, then the saints possess the kingdom.

They take over the kingdom after Jesus comes back. We're not going to usher in the kingdom. But you know what? When you really operate like a lion, you know what you begin to do? You begin to put down the standard of God and say, this is the kingdom of God.

I'm going to operate under this kingdom. Please remember here, before I go to these six points, remember that the lion can be the symbol of the devil, just like it can be the symbol of Jesus. That means an individual could think they're lion-like, act like a lion, and they could be acting like the devil.

1 Peter 5, verse 8, it says, be sober, be vigilant, because your adversary, the devil, as a roaring lion, he's not a lion. Remember who Satan is. He's a cherubim.

But look at this lion-like face. It takes on something very, very wicked and sinister. Now the devil, who was a cherubim, fallen in sin, become wicked.

That lion-like nature now seeks to devour the saints of God. And so the devil going about, roaring like a lion, trying to terrify you, threatening to destroy you, he walketh about seeking whom he may devour, whom resists steadfast in the faith. You need to stand against this lion-like devil.

You have the authority to resist him in Jesus' name. But then listen to what Paul says in 2 Timothy 4, 16. At my first answer, no man stood with me.

All men forsook me. I pray God that it may not be laid to their charge. Notwithstanding, the Lord stood with me, and he strengthened me, that by me the preaching might be fully known, and that all the Gentiles might hear.

Listen to this sentence. And it's in this context, men are against him, men deserting him. The battle is ferocious.

All these people lining up. Paul is in prison, about to die. Everyone has deserted him, but the Lord is with him.

Then he says, I was delivered out of the mouth of the lion. The lion represents the devil. You need to be aware, there is a character of the lion that's devilish.

There's a way of acting like a lion. I'm bringing this down very personal, because I'm scared as I deal with the lion. You could think you're being lion-like by being proud.

Proud could be mistook for the grandeur of a royal lion very easily. Are you being courageous and your enemy? Actually, you could become devilish and begin devouring the saints, accusing the saints. You could become like a demon from hell.

And it's a lion-like nature, but not God's lion-like nature. You need to be so careful here that you understand what I'm saying this morning. It says in 2 Samuel 23 verse 20, that one of David's mighty men called Benaiah, it says he was a valiant man or a warrior or a soldier who had done many great acts for God.

Listen to one of the acts he'd done. He slew two lion-like men of Moab. Remember Moab, we're dealing with Ruth the Moabitess.

These two men were from Moab, an idolatrous nation, a pagan nation, an unbiblical nation. And here are these two men. See, when you looked at them, when you looked at their face, they took on the character of a lion.

You go, I know they're not a lion, but there's something about their appearance, their muscles, their grandeur, their courage. They're fearful. And so here's David's mighty men.

He slew two lion-like men that were vicious and he killed them. You know what that tells me? You can have a human man or a human woman that takes on a lion-like nature of the devil. They are lion-like, but it is devilish, it is destructive, it is dangerous, and it's against the kingdom of God.

But listen also in 1 Chronicles chapter 12 and verse 8 about the Gadites who followed King David. It says the Gadites separated themselves unto David. In the hold, in the wilderness, men of might and men of war fit for the battle that could handle shield and buckler, and this and this, whose faces were like the faces of lions and were as swift as the rose upon the mountains.

So here's men who separate themselves on the King David. They are soldiers, they are fighters in the kingdom of God. They join themselves to a royal king of the house of Judah under the banner of the lion.

And you know what he said about this entire group of men, entire group of soldiers, that when you looked upon them, their faces were the faces of lions. So we see that men and women can take on the appearance of a lion. That's what the Bible is saying.

But you better be careful, you're not like those of Moab, instead of those of the Gadites. You need to be careful you're not fighting against David's army instead of for David's army. And so there's lion-like men in the kingdom of Satan and in the religious world.

And there's also lion-like men who walk with God and they've taken on, they've taken on the spiritual appearance of the saints of God. Let me just give you six simple points here about a lion. I want you to hear this concerning, because this comes out of the fire.

And I believe if you're to be a Christian in season and out of season, you're like a man, you feel your humanity. But there's got to be a place where you take on the appearance of lion likeness, the face of a lion, the nature, the appearance, or the attributes of a lion. I believe there's a season in a Christian life, sometimes you're like an ox, sometimes you're like a man.

We'll even look at what it's like to be an eagle. But there's going to be a time where God takes you through a period that you embody the traits of a lion. Not the lion, the devil, he devours, he's destructive, he leaves nothing after him.

But you take on the nature of King Jesus, his royal line, his authority, and it's very productive. I've got six points here. Number one, righteousness.

It says in Proverbs 28 verse 1, the wicked flee when no man pursueth, but the righteous are as bold as a lion. When we think of a lion or a person being lion-like, we think they're bold. And we're going to come to that in the other points.

But I want to start here with the backbone to boldness and being lion-like. What is the source of being lion-like? What makes you lion-like? What brings you in this season that no matter what it's like around you, you've got the face of a lion. It could be wintertime, it could be autumn, and everything's falling off the trees.

And yet your nature is such that you're lion-like. Well, let's hear in this verse, the wicked flee when no man pursueth. Do you know wickedness makes cowards? See all the big guys here that burn houses down and fight in the streets and laugh about their drugs and get thrown in prison.

You know this well enough. I've been here a short time. I want to tell you those guys are some of the, and I hope they watch the video as well, they are some of the biggest cowards in this city.

I've got more courage than all of them put together. I want to tell you that. I don't have a fear or a thought about them.

But I tell you those men are utter cowards. You know how I know that? Sin makes you very cowardly. You lose your courage.

You cannot have courage. And so it says here, the wicked flee when no man pursues him. You know why? His mind is everywhere.

No one's running after you. Who are you running from? Him. It's all in your mind.

It's your sin that has messed you up. You're lying awake thinking, they're against me, and they're against me, and they're against me, and this is going to happen, and I'm going to get them. You know what? It's all in your mind.

You're not important enough for that. You think you're so important that everyone is talking about you. You know what the effect of that is? That's sin.

That is wickedness. And so the Bible's very clear. A wicked man is a coward.

He runs from every stirring of the wind. He just runs. But look, the righteous are as bold as a lion.

If you want the boldness of a lion, I mean in your Christian life, do you want to stand in the face of the enemy, in the face of opposition, and act like a lion to have the boldness of a lion? The word bold means to trust, have confidence, to rest secure. If you want to be as bold as a lion, look at a lion. Have you ever seen a lion running from someone? Have you ever seen a scared lion? You know my little doggy beagle Shiloh isn't scared of much.

The big trucks come down the road. She attacks the big. She leaves the small ones alone.

The bigger the truck, the more angry she gets, and she will viciously go for it. I've seen her take on three big dogs. She's not a bit scared until yesterday.

The first time I ever, ever seen her scared. I was walking her past the house I don't normally go by, and here I could see the big black dog, and it got up on the fence. It was taller than me.

It made a bark that sounded like a, I don't know, a hurricane. And I went, oh, I wonder how she's going to respond. And she's looking for the dog.

As soon as she's seen this big massive thing bigger than a man, you should have seen her. I've seen her acting a way. The tail went down, the belly went down, and she began to run for one mile.

She kept looking over her shoulder to see if that big black monster was following her. Do you know what it says? The righteous are as bold as a lion. Righteousness gives you boldness.

I had talked to Shiloh. Is there something bothering your conscience? Is there something going on that I need to know about here? Where's your great courage gone? It disappeared. Do you realize that a good conscience gives you boldness? There is something about walking with God, being right with God that makes you very bold.

You go, God is with me. I'm doing the right thing. I'm not scared of man.

I'm not scared of what's going to happen to me. I'm not scared of the dangers of this world. Do you realize the righteous become as bold as a lion? If you want this lion-like nature, this is the pathway.

If your heart condemns you, you won't have courage. You won't have strength. You won't have a voice.

You won't have any of the things that mark a lion. It says over in Leviticus 26 and verse 7, and ye shall chase your enemies. That's what I'm talking about, being bold.

But you need righteousness. You know, in Leviticus, it talks about if when you're walking with God, this is what will happen. When you're not walking with God and you're walking in disobedience, this is what's going to happen.

And so he gives you a description. When you walk with God and obey God, you will chase your enemies and they shall fall before you by the sword. Five of you shall chase 100, and 100 of you shall put 10,000 aflight.

Look at this. Were you going to have five chasing 100? Do you realize where that boldness comes from? Righteousness, a right life, a right conscience before God. If your conscience isn't right, your heart condemns you, and you can't be sure you can stand in the fight.

There's something about being right with God. You go, I'm going to stand. Though all men desert me, like Paul was deserted in prison, all the churches of Asia left me.

All these individual preachers I trained, they left me. I'm alone in the prison, but God is with me. That's why he delivered me from the land.

I'm not scared one iota, I want to tell you. And yet it says in Leviticus 26, when you walk in disobedience, I will set my face against you, and ye shall be slain before your enemies. They that hate you will reign over you, and ye shall flee when none pursueth you.

Do you realize when you're running and there's no real problems there, you're scared, you're telling lies, you're manipulating. You know, when someone starts lying, it always reveals an awful lot about them. I never worry about a person who lies.

I go, as soon as they do that, I know exactly who you are. So this first thing about being lion-like, if we're to have the face of the cherubim, it is marked by righteousness, a right conscience before God, living in the light, being open, being washed in the blood of the Lamb, laying out your heart in the light of God's Word. Let the light of God's Word penetrate your entire being.

When you're like that before God, you'll have courage before men. The second thing about a lion is its strength, righteousness. Proverbs 30 verse 30, a lion which is strongest among the beasts and turneth not away from any.

This is the great second mark of a lion, is its strength. Who would doubt that it's one of the strongest animals in the animal world? Who would doubt that it is the strongest of cats in the entire creation? Strength actually marks it. You know what, you'd be a fool to have courage, or to stand against the enemy, or to oppose the enemy if you had no strength.

If you're a weakling, you're in dangerous ground. To attack the enemy when you have no strength, you've got to have strength. And so when we see the lion-like face on the cherubim, it means you have strength, not imaginary strength, not confessional strength.

I'm strong in the Lord, I won't be weak in the Lord. No, not that sort of stuff, where you really have strength in the Lord. What is strength? It means the ability to stand, power to accomplish.

You know, if I have strength, I can lift something. Now some of you guys, maybe you think you can lift more than you actually can. If the right girl was there, you'd be trying to lift rather big things.

And the more that atmosphere was there, you would just push that a bit, and everyone could tell you're just borderline. Do you know what that is? That's you thinking you have strength when you do not have strength. But what this strength is, is actually having strength to do certain things.

That's being lion-like. If I've got strength to live holy, if I've got strength to walk with God, if I've got strength to evangelize, if I've got strength to walk through this world in white. You know what that is? That is real.

That's not imaginary. You're one thing in church, and then you get into a workplace or with relatives, and suddenly you seem to lose all of your Christianity. That is a real lack of strength.

You know what it says here? It says, the mark of the lion, it turneth not from any. That's a mark. If you know that you have strength, you don't turn away.

This isn't seeing if you can overcome. You know that you have power. You know you've got ability.

And please remember, the backbone of strength is moral strength. This isn't just strength in yourself. This is a moral strength that actually comes from God.

You remember Samson, who was the strongest man in the Old Testament. Solomon was the wisest. Samson was the strongest, knew all the comic books.

Draw pictures of Samson with his big, bulging muscles. Let me give you a secret here. Samson nowhere, it's stated, he didn't have big muscles.

We're not told he was taller than other men. We're not told that. Do you know where his strength was? It was in his spiritual, moral, religious life.

That's why when he lived right and his hair grew, he was strong. As soon as his hair got cut, they didn't remove his strong muscles. They didn't do that.

They cut his hair. They took away his holiness, his sanctification, his righteousness, and he lost all of his strength. Remember, he could break things, chains.

He could carry off gates. But as soon as they cut his hair, he couldn't even break little ropes. I want to tell you there is strength of this land like nature.

It is so real. It is power to accomplish. And how you know you're strong? You do not turn away.

You do not back down. You stand your ground for righteousness sake. You remember King David as a little boy, 17 years old, and 1 Samuel 1734.

He goes to take a packed lunch to his brothers that are out on the battlefield. They're all in their armor. They're all in their military gear.

They're in Saul's armor, and they're standing facing the Philistines. All of them are in the trenches. They're all scared.

King Saul is scared. Nobody will go out and fight Goliath. And Goliath is there cursing them and blaspheming and mocking them and saying, someone come out to me.

Do you know what? There was no strength in the army because, and this is the reason. Do you know why they had no strength? They had the weapons, the swords, the shields, the numbers, the entire army. Do you know why they couldn't stand against Goliath? Because they had no righteousness.

David's brothers didn't, Saul didn't, and the entire army. Here comes a little shepherd boy with a packed lunch for his brothers, and he looks, he goes, who's this? I'll take him on. I'll go out and fight him.

This wasn't bravado. This was the spiritual strength of a young boy. You know what you see here is lion-like strength.

I mean supernatural strength. Where does a 17-year-old boy who looks after sheep get such strength as this? I'm going to tell you, he got it from his spiritual life. King Saul heard about him, sent for him, said, come in here.

I've heard things about you. You're saying about taking on that Goliath. He said, yeah, of course.

I look after my daddy's sheep. And you know what? One day a lion, a big, ferocious lion came along and was going to take one of my sheep, and I took him on. And you know what? I took him by the beard, and I slew him, and I killed him.

And then there was a bear coming and done the same thing, and I killed him also. And you know this Goliath? I'll go out and do the same to him. Don't you realize there is a strength in God? There's a season in your Christian life.

It'll shock some of you in the days ahead. If you live right before God, if you have righteousness in place, you're going to find there is a strength that comes that says, let me at that Goliath. I don't think I've convinced you.

You're not saying one amen amongst you. Point three, unity. Listen to me.

Righteousness, strength, unity. Do you realize one of the marks of lions when you study them is unity? If you ever find a lion alone, you better get worried. Don't you go near that lone lion.

Don't go near a pack either, but don't go near that lone lion. There's something wrong with that lion. It means it's been rejected, kicked out.

It's old. It used to have all the glory of a lion, but with age it's diminished, and it's living on a pipe dream now. It's living in the past.

That's what you get with a lone lion. When you get someone who looks like a lion, they're not in a church. They're isolated, and they don't want to be in the body of Christ.

They have all the old war stories. They know everything. They have a long history, but they're not abiding amongst God's people.

They're dangerous, I want to tell you. This third point about lions is their unity. They hunt in prides, in groups of anything from four to 40 lions, mostly lionesses, and they hunt together.

No other cat animal does that. No panther, no leopard. You have uniquely these lions.

They function together. They hunt together. They rest together.

They do everything together. You could think, I'm a lion. I've got the strength of a lion.

I've got the courage of the lion. I've got the appearance of the lion. I can just function alone.

A lone lion is a very dangerous animal. You need to be with others. You know the area they hunt can be a small area or an area the size of the entirety of Ireland.

When you get a hunting pack just of 40 lions, they'll say the entirety of Ireland is our area. We'll hunt it from coast to coast, top to bottom. This is our area.

Oh, that we had churches like that again, that were lion-like that said, oh, we can hunt within the city centre of Limerick, but we can also make the entirety of our Ireland. This is our parish. We'll cover the entire nation hunting for the souls of men.

And so there's a remarkable strength with unity. Paul writes in 2 Corinthians 13 and 11. Finally, brethren, farewell.

When you get an apostle closing his letter with farewell, this is my last letter to you. I'll never write to you again. This is my last statement.

Listen to what it is. Be perfect, meaning complete, mature. Be of good comfort.

Don't be disturbed. Be of one mind. Live in peace.

Can you imagine having a bunch of lions together and they're not fighting? They're hunting together for prey. They're functioning together for a task. You know, a lot of people in the church, when they become lion-like, there's no peace.

There's something wrong with that. Now you have the devilish lion-like nature. But there's something about having the strength of a lion that when it's real, when it's of God, it actually causes peace.

You dwell together. You function together. You're all lions.

There's a lion-like nature there. There's no cowards amongst you, but there is peace in the midst. You dwell together in peace.

And that's what Paul the apostle is saying. And the God of love and peace shall be with you. Number four, courage.

It says in Nahum chapter 2 and 11, where is the dwelling of lions and the feeding place of the young lions? Where the lion, even the old lion, walked and the lion swelled and none made them afraid. I'm talking about courage. Courage is a mark of a lion.

You're unperturbed. You're unbothered. I don't know where you've studied lions much or watched them in wildlife programs.

You need to. You need to look at a lion and just watch them for five minutes. Nothing bothers them.

They saunter around. They're in control. They're in dominion.

They have authority. They're not scared of anything. They're actually, nothing is going to bother them.

They're not filled with anxiety. They're not disturbed over things. They're not scared of the enemy coming over the hill.

They'll say, bring it on. We can handle it. We're lions.

That's what lions do. We've got righteousness. We've got strength.

We've got unity. Bring on the enemy. What can possibly come over the hill? And what you see is a fearlessness.

What is courage? You do not fear. There's no anxiety about tomorrow. What are you scared of here this morning? What is it that brings terror to your mind and heart? What is that one issue or one fear or one thing that could arise that would terrorize you in your mind? What are you scared of? Are you scared of

falling away from the faith? Are you scared of cancer? Are you scared what could happen in the week to come? Are you scared of people not loving you? Because whatever you're scared of can hold a fear over you.

It can bring you into bondage. You worry about it. You think about it.

You fear it. You concentrate on it. It dominates you.

And in fact, it's affecting you when it's not even a real thing. It's amazing what the mind can do. This thing of courage means you're unperturbed by anything around you.

I want you for a second to think of Daniel in the Lamb's den. Here's a man of prayer, a man of righteousness, a man of strength, a man who's in unity with other real genuine believers. And when, because of his prayer life, he gets put in the den of lambs.

I love that old painting by some artist. And it's out of the imagination, but I love it. And you've got Daniel with his hands tied behind his back.

And he's just looking. He's got his back to the lambs. There's all of these ferocious lambs.

And he's just looking up at the window, praying away into the presence of God. His mind isn't even on the lions or his situation. He's not a man wrecked with fear.

He's not a man wringing his hands going, what am I going to do? Here's a man with utter confidence in God, looking away to God. You know what? He was more land like than those lions. They just prowled in around.

Who is the real lion in there? I believe the angel of the Lord was there to shut the lion's mouth. But I'm sure those lions must have went, do you know, Jimmy, unless I'm mistaken, he has the appearance of a lion. Am I saying things? I need glasses here.

But if you look carefully at this man, Daniel, there is an appearance of the lion. I believe that's courage. There was real courage in the saints of God, whether they're facing Goliath, whether they're thrown in the fire, whether they're threatened over their life, there is a courage that you will not draw back.

You don't turn back. How do I know you've got courage? You refuse to draw back. You don't bend to the enemy.

Number five is leadership. The lion is the king, the leader of all animals. Oh yes, there's bigger animals.

There's animals who even kill more people. A hippo kills more people than lions do in Africa. You may think the lion's dangerous and the hippo's okay.

The hippo won't run fast. You'd be gravely mistaken. That hippo kills more than you could ever imagine.

But see that lion, it's the king. It's the symbol and mark of leadership. It's the biggest of cats and it demands respect and honour.

Do you realise when you have that lion-like nature, when you're in the lion-like season of life, you're going to take leadership. You know the curse of this city and our generation, men don't take leadership in the home anymore. You could be a bully.

That's not what I'm saying. I'm talking about leadership, leading from the front, meeting the enemy. Why don't you pray through? Oh, my wife will pray.

Why don't you pray through? Why aren't you fasting? Oh, I go out and work. That's not leadership. Your leadership is spiritual leadership in the home, men.

You ought to be a leader. You ought to be a lion. You ought to make your stand.

You know, if your wife knows more about the Bible than you do, you need to study. You need a few hours off from work and you need to begin to study that Bible. And you know what? The Bible commands that.

You ladies, if you have a husband and you get home, don't come to Keith and ask him hard questions. Just in the car on the way home, what about this? What about that? What about this? He'll have a headache by the time he gets home. I tell you, you are commanded to ask your husband the hard questions, not the preacher.

Praise God, I've got out of that. There is a leadership, a lion-like leadership. We need restored again in the house of God.

When a coward is in that home, the kids will go to hell, guaranteed. Where are the lion-like men? Let's say, no child's going to go out of this home into homosexuality. No child's going to go out into drugs.

No child is going to go to hell from this house. I'm going to have the courage, the strength, the leadership. You go, I don't have relationship with my kids.

Why not? I don't have the respect. Why not? God help us. What sort of men have we bred in the church of this generation? But sixth and lastly, the voice of a lion.

When you have the cherubim's face of a lion, the human face, the lion face, you're going to have the voice of a lion. When you're marked, that face of a lion carries the voice of a lion. It says in Psalm 104 21, the young lions roar after their prey.

If you lost your roar as a Christian, you're just glad the enemy doesn't bother you. He's leaving you alone and he's over the hedge. But do you know a lion, what it does when the enemy is at a distance, when the prey is at a distance, he actually roars.

You roar, you make your presence known. A lion is not a quiet animal. And do you know when it roars, it can freeze its prey.

We know there's some of those deer, I forget the name of it. And what the lions, what they said was when the lion roars, it paralyzes this animal, its prey. It actually gets frozen to the spot.

It could be a mile away. It could be half a mile away. And it gets terrified by the roar.

The roar of a lion is enough to terrify their prey and it freezes on the spot. And the lion just casually wanders along and comes up and devours the prey. The voice of a lion is remarkable.

There's nothing duplicit about it. It's clear, it's decisive, and it's authoritative. If you have the boldness of a lion, you're not whimpering around.

You're not indecisive. You're not there debating with yourself. There is an authority in what you say and how you speak.

It says, and they seek their meat from God. Do you know the lions, the Bible says a lion seeks for its meat from God. That means lions believe in providence.

Because they're saying we roar after our prey, but we're looking to God who provides our prey providentially to bring the right animal along at the right time. A lion believes in providence. It searches, it seeks, it roars.

Then in Psalm 34 and 10, the young lions do lack and suffer hunger. But they that seek the Lord shall not want any good thing. Lions can actually be starving, lacking.

But if you want to be lion-like, you need to seek the Lord and you won't lack any good thing. When you begin to study lions with their voice, you see that God is speaking about a lion. God himself is a lion.

And we read in Amos that when God begins to roar out of Zion, it's with the voice of a lion. He's making his voice heard. He is speaking prophetically.

And so the roar of a lion is the roar of God. Winston Churchill, who took over Britain during the Second World War, the war had already started. Hitler had arisen.

Britain was being attacked. All the experts said Britain is about to fall. Our army is lost.

We have little resources. Other nations are falling. We don't stand a chance.

Listen to what he said. I was not the lion, but it fell to me to give the lions roar. Do you know what we need in the church again? Is some people who give the roar of a lion.

You know what Churchill did? He stirred an entire nation that had its back against the wall and the enemy was advancing with power. And you had one man stand up and he said, I'm not a lion, but it falls to me. I've got the job to roar like a lion.

And you know what? He spoke to Hitler and he said, Mr. Hitler, I want you to know something. Oh yes, you're advancing. Oh yes, all these things are happening.

I want to tell you, we will never surrender. And he called on the people and he said, I promise you hardship. I promise you the loss of your children.

I promise you bloodshed, but I also promise you victory. There needs to be the roar of a lion in the church again. There needs to be courage back in the church.

This isn't about numbers or money or anything of the like. We need courage back in the church again. We need the lion-like nature back into the church again.

These streets will go on evangelized unless someone gets lion-like. There's going to be times somewhere in Ireland that don't have one person evangelizing them. Unless someone gets courage and says, I'm going to go to that door.

When's the last time you went to someone's door with the gospel track? When's the last time you went to a neighbor? You talk yourself out of it. They don't want to hear. Oh, I tried to approach the subject once.

Yes, I know you did. But where's the courage of a lion where you speak clearly, precisely the gospel saying you need to get born again. I've heard thousands of stories of lion-like Christians.

One of them in Scotland, she was a little toady girl, a faith mission pilgrim in Scotland, a holiness girl who evangelized on the streets with her little cap on. Well, in her town, there was a guy, a preacher, but he wasn't a Christian preacher. He was called Danny McVicar.

He was a communist, a socialist. And way back many decades ago, I seen him in the nineties. He was about 85 years old.

He used to go out in his town and he would stand up. He was a drunkard and a blasphemer and a God hater. And he would stand up in the street and he would preach communism and socialism radically.

And he'd fight anyone who wanted to fight in between his speeches. Well, this little girl, she decided, you know what? I'm going after Danny McVicar's soul. I heard him testify this.

And this day he's up in his bedroom in the house and all of a sudden he hears this cry on the street, Danny McVicar. He goes, who's that? Danny McVicar. He comes to the window, looks out and when she saw him, Danny McVicar, you're scared.

He goes, who is this wee girl? She said, what are you shouting about? Danny McVicar, I challenge you in the front of the whole street. I think you're a coward and you're scared. He says, what are you talking about? I challenge you to come to one Christian meeting and I think you're scared to come.

And she said, the entire street is listening and watching you now. She so provoked him, he come to the meeting and got born again that night, totally transformed and become a remarkable preacher of the gospel who operated in the gifts of the spirit in a tremendous unique way. And when I saw him at 85 years old preaching an old-fashioned fiery bloodstained gospel, I went, see that wee girl? We're all listening to this preacher now.

But I tell you, there was a land like girl who went out into the street on that dark night and began to challenge. We need some courage again. Ladies, if the guys don't have the courage, then you go get the Danny McVicars, begin to evangelize them.

You know, maybe you'd get off with something that one of us guys may not, we'd lose our life. Maybe you'd be able to provoke a reaction, but we're not talking about strange things here. I'm telling you about something real.

There's a lion-like season of life where it's not time to be an eagle or an ox or a man, but it's time to be a lamb. This is the season. This is the time.

This is the hour, and you must not miss the opportunity. Please stand. Thank you, Lord Jesus.

Father, we pray right now. Let's pray together, saints of God. Let's ask them to do this online and here.

Let's ask them to bring us into that season. Lord God, we're asking for the courage of our God. Lord God, have a deal with our hearts and lives.

Lord God, bring righteousness to these lives, a clear conscience, a good heart, a right spirit, O God. Lord God, come and walk with us. Change our hearts and lives, and O God, give us courage in this hour of

darkness.

Give us the strength of a lion. Give us the leadership of a lion. Give us the unity of a lion.

My God, we're asking, O God, that you'd make us a church of lions. O God, bring us into such an hour and a season as a church that we would rise up with the courage of a lion to face our enemy. Lord God, to say, who is this uncircumcised Philistine? Lord God, I pray, give us the power.

Give us the might. Give us the strength, O God, that it won't be mere bluster, but O God, it would be the power of the Holy Spirit upon us, that we might slay the enemies of God, that we might smite the adversaries of God. And Father, I pray, give us that purity of heart to walk in this in Jesus' mighty name.

Hallelujah.

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