

The contrasting nature of God: The Lion and the Lamb

The Bible is full of paradoxes – seemingly contradictions

Examples:

- Do you deeds in secret – Let your light shine before men
- Peace I give you – I haven't come to give peace but a sword.

Revelation 5: 1 – 6

This brings out the contrast in the nature of God – The Lion and the Lamb

PS 85:10 Love and faithfulness meet together; righteousness and peace kiss each other. (NIV)

Psa 85:10 Mercy and truth are met together; righteousness and peace have kissed *each other*. (KJV)

How can righteousness and peace or righteousness and mercy “kiss” one another? This seems unlikely.

- Righteousness says that the wages of sin is death. People have sinned so they must die.
- Mercy agrees but appeals for mercy saying “give them a chance”
- Righteousness says that if we show mercy then we don't uphold the righteousness of God.
- Mercy says that if people die for their sin then the mercy of God is not upheld.

Righteousness and mercy then meet at the cross where God's righteousness and mercy are both upheld. There is no other place where both can be demonstrated simultaneously.

1) The Lion

- Jesus refers to Himself as the Root and Offspring of David (Revelation 22: 16)
- David was a man of war – triumphant
- Revelation 19: 11 – 21 We see Jesus as the rider on a white horse who “with justice he judges and makes war” (v.11)

Characteristics of a lion

a) Stately – holds its head up high. Is known as the king of the beasts.

- Jesus is the King of Kings and the Lord of lords
- Although he owned nothing he walked confidently before all men
- He knew who He was
- He knew the word of God and knew what was right and stood for what was right.

b) Powerful – has the strength to overpower prey much larger than itself.

- God is all powerful
- Jesus rose from the death demonstrating his power over death, sin, sickness, and demonic forces.
- Jesus is triumphant
- He has the power to live a righteous life in the midst of a fallen world.
- He demonstrated a power and authority in his life and ministry that the teachers of the law did not have.

c) Ferocious – a seemingly placid animal yet ferocious

- The wrath of God
- Jesus is the righteous judge
- He spoke harshly to the Pharisees and teachers of the law
- He cleared the temple in righteous anger

2) **The Lamb**

- The Lamb, looking as if it had been slain.
- “had been” – past tense – implies that the Lamb was dead but now is alive
- This is referring to the resurrected Christ.

Characteristics of a lamb

a) Gentle and humble

- ^{MT 11:28} "Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. ²⁹ Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls
- Approachable – children, outcasts, lowly approached Jesus
- Teachable – Jesus was teachable.
- Luke 2: 46 “After three days they found him in the temple courts, sitting among the teachers, listening to them and asking them questions.”

b) Submissive – Follows the shepherd

- Jesus submitted himself to the Father’s will and was obedient to death.

c) Lovable

- 1 John 4: 19 “we love because he first loved us

Jesus’ responses to different people

- The Lion: Woe to you teachers of the law and Pharisees
- The Lamb: Come to me all you are weary and burdened
- The Lion: ^{MT 3:7} But when he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees coming to where he was baptizing, he said to them: "You brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the coming wrath? ⁸ Produce fruit in keeping with repentance.
- The Lamb: To the woman caught in adultery, "Then neither do I condemn you," Jesus declared. "Go now and leave your life of sin." (John 8: 11)
- The Lion: To the Pharisees: “You hypocrites! Isaiah was right when he prophesied about you:"
`These people honor me with their lips, but their hearts are far from me. (Matthew 15: 7,8)
- The Lamb justified the penitent sinner who couldn’t even lift his face to heaven.
- The Lion rebuked the self righteous Pharisee who didn’t give Him water to wash His feet
- The Lamb allowed an unclean woman wash His feet with her tears and wipe them with her hair.
- The Lion rebuked the self righteous for giving tithes and other gifts to the Lord but neglected justice and mercy.
- The Lamb commended a poor widow when she dropped a couple of coins into the offering

How would Jesus respond to us? As the Lion or the Lamb?