

THE CHERUBIM OF GLORY

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THE CHERUBIM OF GLORY

I. THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE NAME

- A. Cherub - singular - Psalm 18:10 (one)
- B. Cherubim - plural - Gen. 3:24 (many)

Note This term is not limited to symbolic images as in the tabernacle and temple, but can also relate to living personalities.

See: King of Tyre - singular - Ezekiel 28:14

The angelic guardians of the tree of life in the Garden of Eden are referred to as cherubim - plural - Genesis 3:24.

II. THE MEANING OF CHERUBIM

Dr. John Thomas... "Phanerosis, page 69

"We believe that the word is derived from the root 'RACHAV' meaning 'to ride' whether on an animal or in a vehicle. By transposing the first two letters and inserting 'WAV' before the last, we have cherub or that which is ridden--in the plural, cherubim. This convertability of the verb 'RACHAV' in the noun cherub, is illustrated in Psalm 18:10 "And he rode upon a cherub, and did fly; yea, he did fly upon the wings of the wind."

- A. This usage is employed throughout Scripture... I Chron. 28:18 "The chariot of the cherubim: - R.V. "The chariot even the cherubim" Note carefully the language of Psalm 18:6-13. The cherub here (verse 10) was a ministering spirit sent forth to minister for an heir of salvation, Heb. 1:14. He was an angel, mighty in strength, a doer of God's commandments, a hearkener to the voice of His word, Psa. 103:20--i.e. he obeyed the directions of Yahweh as a chariot and horses do the one who rides it.

Yahweh is represented as riding His cherubic chariot in Psalm 99:1... This will be the means by which the world will be brought into subjection by the immortalized saints, i.e. the cherubim of God: Isa. 66:15; Psa. 149; Hab. 3:8; Zech. 6:5.

Psalm 68 - Both messianic and millennial in character speaks of the future chariots of Yahweh V. 17 (Companion Bible) "The chariots of Elohim are twenty thousand thousand of angels, Yahweh among them hath come from Sinai into His sanctuary." (Rotherham) V. 18 "That Yah might settle down to rest." In these verses the saints are described as chariots in which Yahweh rides and now in prophesy of this future age, they are seen emerging from the site of the judgment seat (Sinai) and proceeding north in victory and power to finally enter the sanctuary in glory.

B. Exhortation and warning

Yahweh will not only be the invisible ruler of those chariots in the future, but He has already been so in the past. If we would be instruments of the Divine will in the future...we must be vehicles of the Divine will now.

1. Elijah - 2 Kings 2:12--One in whom God dwelt - one in whom God rode, i.e. Elijah was the chariot and Yahweh T'ZVAOTH comprised the horsemen. The prophet had been guided and driven by Yahweh and thus had comprised His cherubic-chariot in the midst of Israel.
2. Elisha and his servant in the city of Dothan, 2 Kings 6:16-18
3. Elisha himself, 2 Kings 13:14--He was guided and directed by Yahweh through His spirit, i.e. he was one in whom God dwelt - one in whom God rode.

C. In our own lives

Just as chariots and horses are completely subject to the will of the driver - so we must become pliable to the Divine will.

A person becomes spirit-guided when the Word takes possession of his heart and is reflected in his way of life. He is then led by the spirit of God. He is one in whom God dwells, one in whom God rides, Psa. 1; Gal. 5:18; John 6:63; John 15:3; Gal. 2:20; Eph. 4:11-15; Phil. 4:8-9; Col. 1:27.

Take heart dearly beloved...This is not an overnight process. Just as the wild horse needs to be broken in to the requirements of his driver, so our wild repulsive nature must be subdued through trial and purging. Heb. 12:11-13, "Now no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous: nevertheless afterward it yielded the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby. Wherefore lift up the hands which hang down, and the feeble knees; And make straight paths for your feet, lest that which is lame be turned out of the way; but let it rather be healed."

THE CHERUBIM IN EDEN

I. THE WAY OF LIFE - GEN. 3:22,23

- A. Access closed to the tree of life because of Adam and Eve's transgression - Gen. 3:22,23
- B. The angel saw their nakedness and provided them a covering-- coats of skin--made from a slain lamb. Gen. 3:21
- C. This taught the principle of sacrifice. It revealed that the way of life is through death. "Without the shedding of blood there is no remission." Heb. 9:22

NOTE

.This covering is in contrast to that which is spoken of in Gen. 3:7 which speaks of man's efforts to provide his own covering.

.See Job 31:33 where this man-made device of sewing fig leaves together is spoken of as a hiding of iniquity. Instead of a confessing of it to God that He might in mercy cover it.

.The divine slaying of the lamb was a typical foreshadowing of the lamb slain from the foundation of the world - Rev. 13:8

- D. The great lesson taught to Adam and Eve and that must be recognized by us: God alone can forgive sins. If we would have life we must come to him. This was dramatically set forth on the day of atonement, Lev. 17:11 "For the life of the flesh is in the blood: and I have given it to you upon the altar to make an atonement for your souls: for it is the blood that maketh an atonement for the soul." The result is expressed in Isa. 61:10, "I will greatly rejoice in the Lord, my soul shall be joyful in my God; for he hath clothed me with the garments of salvation, he hath covered me with the robe of righteousness, as a bridegroom decketh himself with ornaments, and as a bride adorneth herself with her jewels."
- E. Our constant exhortation...Before sin can be forgiven - sin must be exposed. David learned the same lesson in the same way as Adam. Adam tried to hide his sin by the fig leaf device he invented. David tried to hide his by murder, deception and lies. Both learned that the only way to forgiveness is:
 - (1) Confession of the sin
 - (2) A genuine manifestation of humility
 - (3) A tearful request for forgiveness

Following this principle David experienced the joy that can only come from God...Rom. 4:6, "Even as David also describeth the blessedness of the man, unto whom God imputeth righteousness without works."

- F. Our true covering...Jesus Christ - Gal. 3:27
To walk with him is to be "clothed" - Rev. 3:4
To walk without him is to be "naked" - Rev. 16:12
The final consummation...To "be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white." Rev. 19:8

NOTE: Adam and Eve were driven from the Garden in Eden that they might till the ground. The fruit of the soil would provide them with the means of temporary life.

1. As a tiller of the soil, he would be utterly dependent upon the mercy and goodness of God.
2. He was sent forth to perform work that required faith in the goodness of God to provide the means of life.

II. THE DUTIES OF THE CHERUBIM

- A. There is beautiful and significant harmony in Gen. chapter 3.
- V. 19...The sentence of death
 - V. 20...Adam's faith in the promise of life
 - V. 21...The means whereby this might be attained
 - VV. 22,23...The need of faith in the affairs of life
- B. At the entrance of the garden stood the cherubim, to keep or to guard the way of the tree of life.
- C. These cherubim were angelic beings. Dr. John Thomas renders Gen. 3:24, "cherubim, even a flaming sword," and directs attention to Psalm 104:4, "Who maketh his angels spirits; his ministers a flaming fire."
- D. The flaming sword was placed at the entrance to guard or to preserve. They did this in their functions of priests, receiving the sacrifices of the worshippers...THE SWORD TO SLAY, THE FLAME TO CONSUME.
1. This was the obvious reason Cain's offering was unacceptable
 2. The flaming sword was extended to Abel's offering but not to Cain's firstfruits of the ground.
 3. Because he refused to humble himself before God and avail himself of the sin offering that couched at the door (Gen. 4:7), he was excommunicated, banished to the "land of Nod" (exile). His recognition of this is shown in Gen. 4:14, "From thy face (Heb. "faces" i.e. the faces of the cherubim) shall I be hid."

EXHORTATION

The faces of the cherubim at the east of the garden reflected the glory of the Father, as will also the faces of the multitudinous Christ ultimately. 2 Cor. 4:6: "For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ."

- E. The cherubim in Eden...God's faces spoke of the divine presence in the earth. Just as He later dwelt between the cherubim in the tabernacle (Psa. 80:1) so He did in the cherubim in Eden.
- F. Gen. 3:24 - "He placed at the east of the garden of Eden Cherubims."
- "placed" is from the Hebrew "shakan" and signifies "to dwell." It is the derivative of Shekinah glory which signifies the indwelling presence of Deity. Shakan signifies to "have habitation," to "reside permanently"...it implies a dwelling place. This verse has been rendered "at the east of the garden of Eden, he caused to dwell in a tabernacle the cherubim." The exhortation is obvious.

III. THE CHERUBIM FORESHADOWED THE FUTURE

- A. There was organized worship in Eden
(1) Tabernacle; (2) Cherubim; (3) Altar
The cherubim were the immortal priests to whom were brought the offerings of the people.
- B. This foreshadowed the future as John saw a new race of cherubim, described also as the new Jerusalem, the Lamb's wife - Rev.21:22 "And I saw no temple therein: for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple of it."
- NOTE The title, Lord God Almighty, speaks of Deity manifested in a multitude, or Yahweh dwelling in his saints. In Rev. 5 they are identified with the cherubim. In as much as the Lamb comprises the antitypical mercy seat and the indwelling Divine glory, it is not difficult to see the antitypical fulfillment of that which was in the holy of holies in the tabernacle.
- C. This new race of cherubim will act as immortal priests (Rev.5: 9-10). To them will be brought the glory and honor of the nations...All things that defile shall be excluded.
- D. In the age to come there will be a repetition of Gen. 3:24.
1. Ezekiel tells us that immortal priests shall accept and supervise the offerings of the people. They will comprise the cherubim of the age to come.
 2. The cherubim in Eden were stationed east or towards the sun's rising. This was figurative of the purpose of God. The dawn is emblematic of the coming day of Yahweh when His rule will replace that of flesh. The tabernacle and temple also faced east so that man in his religious devotion would mentally visualize the coming morning without clouds. 2 Sam. 23:4, "And he shall be as the light of the morning, when the sun riseth, even a morning without clouds; as the tender grass springing out of the earth be clear shining after rain." Mal. 4:2, "But unto you that fear my name shall the Sun of righteousness arise with healing in his wings; and ye shall go forth, and grow up as calves of the stall." Cp. Ezek. 43:1,2, "Afterward he brought me to the gate, even the gate that looketh toward the east: And, behold, the glory of the God of Israel came from the way of the east: and his voice was like a noise of many waters: and the earth shined with his glory."
- E. The cherubim in Eden, standing east in the garden, presiding over the way to the tree of life, exhibited the mercy and redemption of God. The three steps to eternal life were manifested -
1. Sacrifice - Sacrifice of the flesh, Rom. 6
 2. God manifestation - Fruit of the spirit in our lives, Gal.5
 3. Eternal life - God manifestation in our lives will ultimately lead to an eternal inheritance, Rev. 2:7. "He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches; to him that overcometh will I give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the midst of the paradise of God."

THE CHERUBIM IN THE TABERNACLE

I. WHY GOD REDEEMED ISRAEL

- A. Two words completely describe God's purpose not only with Israel but with us - God manifestation.
- B. All creation--physical and spiritual have been designed to this end.
 1. Ex. 25:8 "Let them make me a sanctuary that I may dwell among them."
 2. Ex. 29:46 "They shall know that I am Yahweh their God, that brought them forth out of the land of Egypt, that I may dwell among them."
- C. To this end He commanded them to make for Him a sanctuary and the tabernacle in the midst of Israel should have been their constant reminder.
 1. Jer. 13:11 "I have caused to cleave unto me the whole house of Israel and the whole house of Judah, saith Yahweh; that they might be unto me for a people, and for a name, and for a praise, and for a glory. But they would not hear."
 2. This was the cause of Israel's failure. It was the reason the nation was rejected (Hos. 4:6) like the sons of Eli (1 Sam. 2:12) they knew not Yahweh. And because of this they were driven from the Divine presence.
 3. Christ emphasized the importance of this Divine knowledge in John 17:3, "This is life eternal that they might know thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent."

II. WHAT IT MEANS TO "KNOW" GOD

- A. To know God is more than mere academic knowledge. The priests of Levi knew Him in this manner.
- B. Mere academic knowledge is dangerous, it brings one into the state of accountability before God, but only that which proceeds from the heart can give us eternal life.
- C. The same word is used in the Bible for conception of natural seed as for conception of spiritual seed. The conception of the spiritual birth is the beginning of that which will lead to eternal life.
 1. Gen. 4:1 "And Adam knew Eve his wife; and she conceived, and bare Cain, and said, I have gotten a man from Yahweh."
 2. John 17:3 "And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent."
 3. John 3:3 "Except a man be born again, (margin from above) he cannot see the kingdom of God."
 4. I Pet 1:23 "Being born again not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth forever."

NOTE The truth is completely without value unless it takes hold of our heart--unless it becomes a driving force that permeates every phase of our life--thought, word and deed. Deut. 6:5; Mark 12:29

REMEMBER The meaning of the Cherubim--one in whom God dwells, one in whom God rides.

III. THREE STAGES TOWARD GOD MANIFESTATION

- A. Three reasons for man's failure in Eden
1. Mental.....Eve first hearkened to the voice of the serpent and became mentally defiled
 2. Moral.....She put into practice what she had heard and became morally defiled
 3. Physical...Because she hearkened, because she put into practice what she heard, the sentence of death was imposed upon the human race and brought about physical defilement.
- B. Three steps for redemption in Christ
1. Mental.....James 1:18 "Of his own will begat he us with the word of truth that we should be a kind of firstfruits of His creatures."
 2. Moral.....This mental absorption of the word of God changes us morally, James 1:21, "Wherefore lay apart all filthiness and superfluity of naughtiness, and receive with meekness the engrafted word, which is able to save your soul." See also Romans chapter 6.
 3. Physical...This constant walk in the way of life will eventually lead to a physical change even eternal life in the kingdom of God. 1 Cor. 15:54, "When this corruptible shall have put on incorruption and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory."

- NOTE All three of these stages are suggested in Acts 15:14:
1. "God at first did visit the Gentiles" - the call of the truth - i.e. God is inviting.
 2. "To take out of them" - separation from the nations
 3. "A people for His name" - dedication to God.

Purpose outlined in Phil. 2:15: "That ye may be blameless and harmless, the sons of God, without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, among whom ye shine as lights in the world." Also 1 Pet. 2:9, "But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvelous light."

IV. REVEALING LIGHT IN DARKNESS

- A. This is the purpose of the cherubim today. One in whom God dwells--one in whom God rides, 1 Pet. 4:11, "If any man speak, let him speak

as the oracles of God; if any man minister, let him do it as of the ability which God giveth: that God in all things may be glorified through Jesus Christ, to whom be praise and dominion forever and ever."

The medium of this manifestation is the word of God and if we are to be God-manifestation in the future, it is imperative that we be God-manifestation today.

John 17:17, "Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth." Col. 3:9-10, "Lie not one to another, seeing that ye have put off the old man with his deeds; And have put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him."

- B. Christ is our supreme example: 2 Cor. 5:19, "To wit, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation."
- C. Christ's true followers are to be his imitators: Col. 1:27, "To whom God would make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles; which is Christ in you, the hope of glory." Phil. 2:5, "Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus."

NOTE Christ could say "He that hath seen me hath seen the Father."

THE CHERUBIM - one in whom God dwells. One in whom God rides.

V. DIVINE GLORY IN THE MOST HOLY

- A. The symbology of the tabernacle carried the same theme of the cherubim, i.e. God-manifestation.
- B. God-manifestation was revealed in three stages in the tabernacle.
 - 1. Outer court = preparation
 - 2. The Holy place = application
 - 3. The Most Holy = glorification
- C. This was Israel's constant exhortation to what they had been called and to what they could attain.
- D. The furniture in the Most Holy told the same lesson. The account is given in Exodus 25:10-22.
 - 1. The ark -- A box some 3 feet 9 inches long; 2 feet 3 inches deep and 2 feet 3 inches wide.
 - a) It contained the two stone slabs with the ten commandments inscribed thereon. This was one of the reasons it was called the ark of the covenant, for the ten commandments formed the basis of the Mosaic covenant.
 - b) The ark was made of shittim wood or acacia. This is a desert plant. The Heb. word for Acacia has been identified with a Hebrew word which means that which is despised. Cp. Isa. 53:3
 - c) This wood figurative of human nature was hidden from sight by a covering of gold.

- d) This gold like God's precious son was taken out of Egypt.
 - e) Gold - symbol of tried faith, 1 Pet. 1:7. Both gold and faith are purified by being subjected to intense heat in the furnace of the earth, Psa. 12:6.
 - f) During this purification process the metal is in a state of extreme agitation until all the impurities have been withdrawn. The great lesson is obvious-- in this agitation, when the process has been completed, the agitation will cease and we shall shine forth as pure gold.
2. Exodus 25:15 - "The staves shall be in the rings of the ark; they shall not be taken from it."
 - a) A reminder that we are strangers and pilgrims in the earth, that we have here no continuing city.
 3. There was a crown of gold around the ark (v. 11)
 - a) This was the symbol of victory and glory.
 4. The contents of the ark of the covenant
 - a) The golden pot of manna = eternal life through faith, Rev. 2:17.
 - b) Aaron's rod that budded = selection and resurrection - See Numbers 16,17:8

NOTE The almond tree is a very appropriate symbol of resurrection. It is the first tree to blossom in Israel. It is called in Hebrew "the awakener." Our resurrection to eternal life will be proof positive of our divine selection. This was the case with Christ. All disputation was set aside when he arose from the dead. Rom. 1:3-4, "Concerning his Son Jesus Christ our Lord, which was made of the seed of David according to the flesh; and declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead:"

C. The two tables of the covenant

1. Five commandments were inscribed on each one. On the first were all the commands relating to God. On the second were those relating to man.
2. Christ sums up the law by dividing it into two commands, Mark 12:29-31, i.e. to love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, soul and strength, and thy neighbor as thy self. Without these two principles our service to Yahweh is meaningless.

THE CHERUBIM IN THE TEMPLE

1 Kings 6:23: "And within the oracle he made two cherubim of olive tree each ten cubits high."

I. CONTRAST BETWEEN TABERNACLE AND TEMPLE

- A. The Holy place and the Most Holy in the temple were twice as large as in the tabernacle.
- B. In the Most Holy of the temple there were constructed two large cherubim, some 15 feet high, with wings outstretched, under which was placed the ark of the tabernacle with its cherubim of gold. 1 Kings 6:23-28
- C. The large cherubim in the temple were of olive trees (trees of oil) covered with gold; those over the ark were all of gold made one with the mercy seat.
- D. The wings of the temple cherubim were outstretched, and of such a size as to extend the full length of the Most Holy; those over the ark were enfolded.
- E. The staves of the ark in the temple were drawn out in such a way as to be seen in the Holy place by the ministering priests, 1 Ki. 8:8; in the tabernacle they were retained in the sides of the ark.
- F. The golden pot of manna and Aaron's rod that budded were missing from the ark when it was placed in the temple. It was found to contain only the two tables of stone, 1 Ki. 8:9; in the tabernacle all three symbols were present.

II. THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE DIFFERENCE---

- A. The tabernacle in the wilderness, traveling from place to place represented the multitudinous Christ as strangers and pilgrims in the earth.

The temple in Jerusalem with the reigning monarch sitting upon the throne of Yahweh (1 Chron. 29:23) foreshadowed the kingdom in its glory. David had extended the kingdom into an empire. Solomon had added to its glory by building the temple. The power, wisdom and wealth of Israel was proverbial throughout the world (2 Chron. 1:15). The golden age of Israel's history had dawned, and even Gentiles were drawn to Jerusalem to hear the wisdom of its king, to observe the justness of its administration, and to witness the glory of its worship. If only the people had hearkened to Yahweh, it could have been the commencement of a millennium of glory extending to the manifestation of Messiah himself. Remember, God had declared, "This is the place of my rest for ever, where I desire to dwell in the midst of Israel." (Psa. 132:14) Because of the folly of flesh this was not to be.

- B. Israel in the days of David and Solomon represented the kingdom of the future for it will be but an extension of what existed then. This part is proven in the following illustration.

THE KINGDOM OF GOD

PAST

FUTURE

	PAST	FUTURE
THE THRONE OF YAHWEH Jerusalem	1 Chron 29:23	Jer 3:17
ISRAEL A Powerful Kingdom Chief Among Nations United Under One King	1 Kings 4:21 1 Kings 4:21 1 Kings 4:20	Mic 4:7 Mic 4:8 Ezekiel 37:22
ISRAEL'S KING Noted for Wisdom Noted for Unerring Judgment Noted as Prince of Peace Supervises Building of the Temple	2 Chron 9:23 1 Kings 4:29 1 Kings 5:12 1 Kings 6	Isa 11:2 Isa 32:4 Isa 9:6 Zech 6:13
THE TEMPLE Built with Assistance of Gentile Labor Built According to Divine Plans	2 Chron 2 1 Chron 28:11-19	Isa 60:10 Ezek 40-48
JERUSALEM Enjoying Peace After an Epoch of War The Repository of the World's Wealth Universally Honored The Object of World Wide Pilgrimage Noted for Fabulous Wealth The Mart of Nations	1 Kings 4:24 1 Kings 4:21 1 Kings 4:21 1 Kings 4:34 2 Chron 1:15 2 Chron 1:17	Isa 9:6-7 Isa 60:11 Isa 60:12 Zech 14:16 Isa 60:17 Isa 23:18
PRIESTS Serve Day and Night (figure of Immortality) Zadok is High Priest (compare Melchizedok)	Psa 134 1 Kings 1:26	Rev 5:9-10 Heb 7:11-12
ISRAEL IS A THIRD WITH EGYPT AND ASSYRIA	2 Chron 9:26	Isa 19:25
SATAN IS BOUND	1 Kings 5:4	Rev 20:2

There are many other comparisons, but these are sufficient to show that the kingdom of the future has been beautifully foreshadowed by the kingdom of the past.

III. WHY THE TEMPLE CHERUBIM WERE OF WOOD

- A. The two large cherubim in back of the ark of the covenant were not made from ordinary wood.
 - 1. They were not constructed of desert Acacia as were the walls of the tabernacle but from olive trees, 1 Ki. 6:23 (see margin "trees of oil") Oil is the symbol of spirit.
 - 2. The wood of oil, coated with the gold of tried faith, points forward to those born of the spirit in the age to come, those who will be changed from flesh and blood creatures to spirit beings. 1 Cor. 15:44

IV. WHY THE TWO WINGS OF THE CHERUBIM WERE OUTSTRETCHED

- A. Because the symbol points to the time when the influence of the cherubim will extend throughout the earth bringing the grace of God to all mankind.
 - 1. Note this numerical fact--
Each wing was of five cubits and five speaks of grace or mercy. The height of the cherubim was 10 cubits and ten speaks of ordinal perfection.
- B. The ark, however, remained. The cherubim over the ark with wings enfolded and faces turned toward the blood spattered mercy seat, speaks of the multitudinous Christ at one with him.

V. WHY THE STAVES WERE DRAWN OUT

- A. When the ark of the covenant was placed in the Most Holy of the temple under the shadow of the large cherubim they drew out the staves.

NOTE They were drawn out so that the ends were seen in the Holy place...these heads of the withdrawn staves peeping out into the Holy place were constant reminders to the fact--

1. The time of pilgrimage was at an end
2. There was no other place for Israel to go to worship.

- B. The withdrawn staves were thus symbols both of comfort and warning.

1. Comfort....

They taught that Israel had come to the place of rest and their days of wandering from place to place was over, i.e. Israel was no longer as a stranger and a pilgrim in the land, but had come into their inheritance.

2. Warning....

This also told Israel that there was no other place to go...that this was the only place that acceptable worship could be offered to Yahweh. It taught Israel as it should teach us that the one who constructed the temple will have no compunction about destroying it if His requirements are not complied with.

VI. WHY THE MANNA AND ROD WERE MISSING

1 Kings 8:9 "There was nothing in the ark save the two tables of stone which Moses put there at Horeb." See Heb. 9:4

- A. Aaron's rod that budded, and the golden pot of manna were thus missing

1. They were missing for now the kingdom was set up in its glory and that which the rod and manna typified was no longer necessary. The hidden manna typed eternal life and this mortal will have put on immortality.

Aaron's rod symbolized selection and resurrection. This also will be an accomplished fact, hence the absence of this article.

- B. The two tables of stone remained in the ark... These represent the law of Yahweh, and so we read of that age, Isa. 2:2-4:

"And it shall come to pass in the last days, that the mountain of the LORD'S house shall be established in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and all nations shall flow unto it.

And many people shall go and say, Come ye and let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths: for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the LORD from Jerusalem."

THE CHERUBIM IN EZEKIEL CHAPTER 1

I. INTRODUCTION

- A. Ezekiel was contemporary with Jeremiah and Daniel.
- B. Both of these prophets lived at a most tragic epoch of Israel's history.
 - 1. Divine judgment was about to fall with shattering force on guilty Jerusalem and its people.
 - 2. The beautiful temple of Solomon was to become a smoking ruin and the proud nation brought to an end by the invading Babylonian monarch who was to engage in the wholesale deportation of its people into Babylonia.
 - 3. This was not some event in the far distant future for preliminary judgments had already been felt. Three times Nebuchadnezzar had invaded the land and had taken prominent citizens of Judah captive.
 - 4. On the first occasion, Daniel had been among those taken along with some of the sacred vessels of the temple to be placed in his pagan shrines, Dan. 1:1-2. On the third invasion, Ezekiel was among the hostages taken by the Babylonians.
 - 5. In Babylonia, the captives were distributed into different settlements, divided one from the other. They formed small communities, developing their own organization with freedom to worship as they desired. One such colony was at Tel-Abib on the river Chebar, Eze. 1:1; 3:15.
 - 6. It was to this community that Ezekiel was deported and it was here that he became a dominant figure. He was recognized as a true prophet of God. They listened to his exhortations, but they did not act upon the advice, Ezek. 33:30-33.
- C. The theme of the prophecy
 - 1. Jeremiah, Ezekiel and Daniel comprise the apocalypse of the Old Testament. In subject and expression they are closely wedded to the book of Revelation.
 - a. Jeremiah's prophecy of the fall of Babylon chapters 50, 51 forms the basis of the judgment on Babylon the Great, found in Rev. 17, 18
 - b. Daniel's vision of the beasts (chap. 7) find their counterpart in those revealed to John in Patmos.
 - c. Ezekiel's vision commenced with those of the cherubim and concluded with a description of the temple of the age to come. The book of the Revelation does likewise for in the fourth chapter reference is made to the cherubim as four beasts and in the final chapters there is given the picture of the New Jerusalem, the spiritual temple of the future.

- d. Ezekiel ate the little scroll given him, Ezek. 3:4,14-- John did the same, and with similar effect.
 - e. Ezekiel speaks of the judgments of God being poured out upon Gog, Magog and Babylon, and so does Revelation.
 - f. Ezekiel's theme is expressed in the oft repeated statement, "They shall know that I am Yahweh." This declaration occurs about 70 times, this is significant for Yahweh is the covenant name of Deity proclaimed when He was about to move for the deliverance and redemption of His people, Ex. 3:14.
 - g. Israel and the nations shall yet know Yahweh for what He is, Jer. 16:21. Christ used this very expression in his prayer to the Father when he declared (John 17:3) "This is life eternal to know thee the only true God and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent." To know Him in this sense is to be drawn into such close and intimate relationship with Him as to be united with Him in His purpose and outlook. The seed of truth is formed in the individual in such a way that it is manifested in an entirely new way of life. It manifests the true meaning of the cherubim. One in whom God dwells--one in whom God rides.
2. The following visions that Ezekiel saw concerning the cherubim in chapter 1, picture the immortalized host (which no man could number, Rev. 5) going forth in militant manifestation, bringing the Gentile world to a knowledge of Yahweh that they too might know thee the only true God and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent.
 3. This in fact will fulfill God's eternal purpose in the earth (Num. 14:21) "But as truly as I live, all the earth shall be filled with the glory of the LORD."

II. MANIFESTING THE GLORY OF YAHWEH, EZEK. 1:28

- Verse 1 "fourth month: the month Thammuz the equivalent of our July, i.e. midsummer. An extremely brilliant time of the year. Even this brilliance was overwhelmed by Ezekiel's vision.
- "river Chebar" One of the main irrigation channels of the Euphrates. Identified as the Nar-kabari, the grand canal about 45 miles north of Babylon.
- Verse 3 "The word of Yahweh came expressly," i.e. assuredly or positively.
- "the hand of the LORD was upon him" Further assurance that this vision was authoritative.
- Verse 4 "behold, a whirlwind" The whirlwind was the symbol of divine judgment. Jer. 23:19, "Behold a whirlwind of Yahweh is gone forth in fury, even a grievous whirlwind; it shall fall grievously upon the head of the wicked." This was the inescapable judgment that God was about to bring upon guilty Judah.
- Isa. 17:13-14, "The nations shall rush like the rushing of many waters; but God shall rebuke them, and they shall flee

far off, and shall be chased as the chaff of the mountains before the wind, and like a rolling thing before the whirlwind. And behold at evening-tide trouble; and before the morning he is not. This is the portion of them that spoil us, and the lot of them that rob us." Just as Judah could not escape in the first instance so the present world order will not escape the coming holocaust. The cherubim will be the agents by which it will be accomplished.

Isa. 66:15,16, "For, behold, Yahweh will come with fire, and with his chariots, like a whirlwind, to render his anger with fury, and his rebuke with flames of fire. For by fire, and by his sword, will Yahweh plead with all flesh; and the slain of Yahweh will be many."

THE GLORY OF YAHWEH (MANIFESTED THROUGH THE CHERUBIM) WILL FIRST BE MANIFESTED IN A PURGING JUDGMENT OF SIN.

"Out of the north" Jeremiah likewise warned it was from this direction that divine judgment would fall upon Jerusalem.

Jer. 1:14, "Out of the north an evil shall break forth upon all the inhabitants of the land."

NOTE Jer. 27:6 where Nebuchadnezzar is described as God's servant, ordered to execute the decreed judgments. Because the destruction of Jerusalem was divine judgment, it was represented to Ezekiel as being supervised by the cherubim. Also...The overthrow of Jerusalem was an element in the development of the anti-typical cherubim. It was "for their sakes" (2 Cor. 4:15) These judgments came upon the wicked rulers of Jerusalem because of their treatment of God's people. The judgment removed from the city those that were worth saving, see Jer. 24:5.

The north is a place of obscurity from which the saints will be drawn to glory, Psa. 149.

North comes from the Hebrew word "Tsaphon" and signifies hidden, dark, unknown, and is derived from a root signifying "to hide by covering over." The root is found in Psa. 27:5: "In the time of trouble he shall hide me" Psa. 83:3, "They have consulted against thy hidden ones." See 1 Cor. 1:26-28

Strong points out that by implication Tsaphon signifies "to hoard" or "to reserve."

Scriptural use of the word north...

1. A place from whence comes fair weather, Job 37:22. Contrast with Job 37:9 where a different word occurs.
2. The great unknown void, Job 26:7.
3. The place to which Israel was scattered and from whence they shall be regathered, Jer. 3:12,18.
4. Ezekiel chapter 1, the cherubim is seen coming out of the north (hidden place), to pour out the judgments of God on a disobedient world.

"A great cloud"

In the natural a cloud is formed of minute particles of water, drawn into the heavens by the force of evaporation caused by the heat of the sun. A cloud is water that has been separated from the waters of the earth. The spiritual cloud of the cherubim is formed identically the same way. Christ is the sun of righteousness, Mal. 4:2. The nations of the world are referred to as seas, Isa. 57:20; Rev. 17:15.

John 12:32, "If I be lifted up from the earth, I will draw all men unto me."

Col. 2:12, "Buried with him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with him through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised him from the dead. Here the apostle shows the entire spiritual principle of the new birth wherein the warmth of Christ's teaching lifts us out of the dirt where the serpent dwells, purifies us through the waters of baptism, forms us into a cloud of white by the forgiveness of our sins. This will later be magnified by this mortal putting on immortality, and becoming the cloud of the cherubim upon which Yahweh rides as He goes forth to conquer the earth, Isa. 19:1; Ezek. 1:4. After the world is subdued, this cloud will fulfill Psa. 72:6, the grand counterpart of the four and twenty elders.

"A fire infolding itself"

Ezekiel describes this phenomena, "A brightness was about it." This was a symbolic representation of Yahweh in belligerent manifestation. A similar revelation was given at Sinai.

Ex. 24:17, "The sight of the glory of Yahweh was like a devouring fire on the top of the mount in the eyes of the children of Israel." This sight was calculated to remind Israel that Yahweh was not to be trifled with. That all rebellion would be met with a consuming fire.

The startled Roman legions saw the gleaming countenance of the angel at the resurrection of Christ. They were powerless to prevent the resurrection of Christ.

In the same way will the nations of the world be powerless to withstand the cherubim of God in the days just ahead. This destructive power is referred to in Deut. 4:24; 9:3; Lev. 10:2; Heb. 12:28,29; Num. 31:22-23; Isa. 1:25; Ezek. 22:18; Isa. 30:27-33.

"the color of amber"

In the Hebrew the word "color" is the word for "eye," i.e. Ezekiel saw an eye that gleamed forth with a piercing color of amber. In Ezekiel 10:12 we read that the cherubim were full of eyes, but from a distance Ezekiel sees this multiplicity of eyes merging into one. An interesting feature of this Hebrew word is the fact that it is also the root for fountain, i.e. it is the source of tears. Here we have the dual characteristic of Yahweh. The eye can express both anger and sympathy. See Matt. 6:22,23; Heb. 12:1-2; Acts 11:23; Phil. 3:13; Deut. 32:46-47. The Scriptures speak of the eyes of Yahweh, Zech. 4:10. This is speaking of God manifestation in the angels today, and the cherubim of the future, see 2 Chron. 16:9; Dan. 4:17; Heb. 1:14.

"Amber" The Hebrew word "chashmal" is rendered glowing metal in the A.R.V., in the Septuagint it is translated electron. Bochart says that electron was a metal compounded of gold and silver.

1. Gold is the metal of tried faith, 1 Pet. 1:7.

2. Silver is the metal of redemption, Ex. 30:13.

So Ezekiel saw the cherubim made up of those who had gained eternal life through tried faith and redemption.

Verse 5 "four living creatures"

In the scriptures number four is the creation number. According to Dr. Strong, the Hebrew word for "four" is derived from a root that signifies the four points of the compass and suggests the idea of birth or creation. In scripture four is frequently associated with Israel.

1. The twelve tribes encamped in a vast square that was divided into four sections. (Numbers 2)

2. The breastplate of the high priest was pre-eminently the symbol of Israel in that it was foursquare and contained 12 precious stones identified with the tribes, Ex. 28:16-21.

As the luminous cloud moved swiftly towards Ezekiel, he saw that it was composed of the likeness of four living creatures. Each of these had four faces and four wings (see notes on verses 5, 10 and 11).

"They had the likeness of a man"

This identifies the cherubim with the human race. The word "man" in Hebrew is "Adam." There are two Adams in scripture, i.e. the first and the second, 1 Cor. 15:45; and there is no doubt that reference is being made to the second Adam even the Lord Jesus Christ. The multitudinous Christ in its glorified state (Rev. chapters 5 and 7) will have a common likeness with him in fulfillment of John 17:22, 26. Paul makes that point very clear when he reveals the five forms of ministry that had been given the ecclesias for that very purpose, Eph. 4:11-13, "And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ."

NOTE this very important fact: one of the titles assumed by Christ was that of "the son of man." This is also a title adopted by Ezekiel the prophet who types the Lord.

Verse 7 "straight feet"

The word straight comes from the Hebrew "yasher" meaning "straight" or "even," to make right, pleasant, or prosperous. We have reference to what is meant in Heb. 12:13, "make straight paths for your feet." (note the margin) "even" i.e. a pathway in which there are no holes or stumbling blocks to those walking therein, a pathway that has been made clear.

The meaning is clear--there will be nothing capable of causing the glorified saints to stumble as they go forth upon the mission of Yahweh in the age to come. These straight feet are being formed

today in those who would be the cherubim of the future.

Luke 9:62, "And Jesus said unto him, No man, having put his hand to the plow and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God."

Phil. 3:13,14, "Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before. I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus."

Matt. 7:13,14, "Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat: Because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it."

Heb. 12:13, "And make straight paths for your feet, lest that which is lame be turned out of the way; but let it rather be healed."

Verse 7 "like the sole of a calf's foot"

The symbol is taken from the ancient method of threshing grain. Oxen were used for that purpose. Their hooves were shod with plates of iron or copper, and by that means they trod out the grain (Deut. 25:4).

In 1 Cor. 9:9 the apostle Paul draws on this fact to describe the work of the saints. Malachi, referring to the work of the glorified saints in the age to come uses the same symbol. Mal. 4:2 "But unto you that fear my name shall the Sun of righteousness arise with healing in his wings; and ye shall go forth, and grow up as calves of the stall.

Micah is referring to the same thing in Micah 4:13, "Arise and thresh, O daughter of Zion: for I will make thine horn iron, and I will make thy hoofs brass: and thou shalt beat in pieces many people: and I will consecrate their gain unto the LORD, and their substance unto the Lord of the whole earth."

The purpose of the coming judgments of God will be to purge the nations of their wickedness. The cherubim will be the medium by which Yahweh will accomplish this purpose.

"sparkling like burnished brass"

As Micah has just stated, their feet are shod with brass or copper to thresh the nations. Burnished brass is brass or copper purified by fire and polished by friction. It is used in scripture as a symbol of flesh purified and now in reference to the cherubim speaks of mortality transformed into immortality. The brass used in the tabernacle was taken out of Egypt. This is the area from which all brass (flesh) in a spiritual sense has been taken. Before it could be used in the service of Yahweh it had to be purified by

fire and the water of separation, Numbers 31:22,23.

We are experiencing this purification process today in the trials of our life. Our entrance into God's kingdom will depend entirely upon how well we have moulded into the image of our Lord in word, thought and deed.

Verse 8 "The hands of a man under their wings on their four sides"

The Hebrew is in the singular number...i.e. one hand on each of the four sides. The hand is the symbol of strength and labor. In the past, the hand of God expressed through the Elohim has been extended in judgment and here in Ezekiel chapter 1, we have a picture of this same hand in the role of judgment upon the nations as the cherubim goes forth in militant manifestation. Compare Psa. 32:4; 1 Sam. 5:6-7; Heb. 1:14; Dan. 5:5; with John 5:27; Psa. 149.

"They four had their faces and their wings"

Verse 9 adds to this thought by saying "they turned not when they went, but they went every one straight forward"; i.e. they worked as a unit going in any direction necessary. Being manifestations of Yahweh they are omnipotent as well as omniscient; and even though a multitude which no man can number (Rev. 7:9) they will be joined in one according to Christ's prayer. John 17; Zech. 14:9, R.V.

Verse 10 The four faces of the cherubim

The central theme of the cherubim is also the main subject of scripture, i.e. God manifestation. Multiplicity in unity. There are four living creatures yet one; there are four distinct wings that are joined together; there are four wheels that work as one, "a wheel within a wheel."

These four faces had one head...this speaks of the multitudinous Christ, composed of many members but having only one head, Eph. 4:15.

The four faces of the cherubim each manifested Yahweh in a different way, but it is very important for us to remember that they were attached to one head which did the thinking for all four. This must also be the case at the present time for those who aspire to form part of the cherubic glory of the future. We must let Christ do our thinking for us and be completely subservient to him, 2 Cor. 10:5; Phil. 2:5, Rom. 8:6.

Why four faces? These faces are the same as the standards under which Israel marched towards the promised land in four groups of three tribes each. These four divisions were under the leadership of Judah, Reuben, Ephraim and Dan. When they encamped they did so in four sections so that the encampment of Israel was four square, a type of the new Jerusalem, Rev. 21:16; Num. 10:14,18,22,25.

According to Jewish tradition, the standards of the four leading tribes were identical with the four faces of the cherubim.

- .Judah is identified with the lion, Gen. 49:9
- .Reuben with the man, Gen. 49:3; 30:14, 15
- .Ephraim with the ox, Deut. 33:17; Jer. 31:18
- .Dan with the eagle, Num. 2:25 (This tribe was on the north side, protecting and hovering over the camp as an eagle would hover over its young.)

These four faces definitely establish the cherubim as being Israelitish in character and also carry an exhortation that if we desire to be part of the cherubim of the future, then we must become a part of the commonwealth of Israel now, Eph. 2:11-13. Also Deut. 5:15; 6:22,23. In this new relationship our citizenship is in heaven awaiting its manifestation in the earth, Phil. 3:20.

The Message of the Four Faces:

- Judah -- signifies praise
- Reuben -- signifies see a son
- Ephraim -- signifies double fruit
- Dan -- signifies judgment

As Israel marched, this theme was constantly before them: "Praise the son whom you behold, he will reveal double fruit at the judgment."

In Elpis Israel, page 151, John Thomas points out that God is represented in three ways, i.e. light, spirit and fire.

1. Light - 1 John 1:5
2. Spirit - John 4:24
3. Fire - Deut. 4:24

In the cherubim we have these representations symbolized by two animals and a bird, and manifested through the intelligence of a man.

- .To the Hebrews light was represented by the lion
- .The relentless fury of the ox or bull was significant of fire
- .The eagle with its silent, lofty flight was indicative of the spirit.
- .For all of this to be revealed in intelligence, the face of a man was added.
- .The Lord Jesus Christ manifested all four faces.
- .He was the complete manifestation of God in flesh.
- .This is the reason his life is recorded in four gospels, each of which sets forth one of the four faces.

In Matthew he is the lion--the subject matter is his royal majesty, going back to Abraham.

In Mark he is revealed as a servant devoted to the needs of the people.

In Luke we see him as a man, and for this reason his genealogy is traced back to Adam.

In John he is the eagle, and his genealogy is traced back to

God--in the beginning was the word.

In the four gospels then we have: 1. Rulership; 2. Service; 3. Humanity; 4. Divinity. The vital exhortation to each of us is, that if we would rule, then we must serve, and though burdened with humanity, we must seek the strength that comes from the spirit word. This glorious truth is born out in Phil. 2:5-11:
v. 6 "the form of God" we see the spirit or the eagle
v. 7 "the form of a servant" here is the ox
v. 7 "made in the likeness of men" this answers to the face of a man
v. 9 "highly exalted him" answers to the lion, the royal majesty which is his.

As the four faces were attached to one head, and as the body went in the direction dictated by the head, so must the mind of Christ motivate us now if we would share the glory of the future. If we would reign (lion) we must serve (ox) and we will only serve acceptably in flesh (man) by the influence of God's word dwelling in us (eagle).

THE POSITIONS OF THE STANDARDS OF ISRAEL

Judah the lion - faced the east, Num. 2:3
Reuben the man - faced the south, Num. 2:10
Ephraim the ox - faced the west, Num. 2:18
Dan the eagle - faced north

Verse 10 Ezekiel sees the four living creatures, each having four heads in the same position as the standards that surrounded the tabernacle.

As the cherubim travelled east, the lion was the first face encountered. When it travelled south a man's face was seen, etc.

In Ezek. 10:14 the ox is replaced by the cherub. The answer lies in 1 Cor. 9:9-10 where the household of faith is referred to as an ox in their course of service to the master. In the same way the cherubim of the future in militant manifestation will be the servant of Yahweh as it has in the past.

Verse 6 "each one had four wings" These four wings like the four faces and the four living creatures identifies the vision with the foursquare encampment of the true Israel of God, Rev. 21:16. Each suggest different divine attributes:

The four faces speak omniscience
The four living creatures speak of political order and point to omnipotence.

The four wings giving swift mobility in any direction implies omnipresence.

Ezekiel saw the living creatures both in motion and stationary, cp. Ezek. 1:9 with 1:21. The cherubim in motion suggests judgment, see Mic. 4:3; Isa. 30:27; Rev. 19:11-14.

Verse 24 "like the noise of great waters" Great waters speak of a vast multitude, Rev. 7:9; 1:15; 19:6. Not only was their voice like that of a multitude, but "as the noise of the Almighty." Hebrew for "Almighty" = Shaddai, which is a plural noun. It comes from a root signifying either destroyers or nourishers. This will be the dual quality of the cherubim, i.e. to save those who are obedient and to destroy those that are defiant. Rom. 11:22; Luke 20:34; Psa. 19; Psa. 2:10-12; 2 Thess. 1:8; Psa. 18:23-27.

Verse 11 The two wings that covered their bodies--The dual aspect of Shaddai is portrayed in the two outstretched wings and the two that covered their body. The two outstretched wings speak of the cherubim in judgment while the two that covered their body speaks of divine mercy and protection, Isa. 26:20; Matt. 23:37; Ruth 2:12; Psa. 17:8,9; 36:7; Psa. 57:1; 91:4. Once the work of judgment is completed the cherubim will let down their wings.

Verse 13 "burning coals of fire" According to the Septuagint verse 13 should read: "And in the midst of the living creatures there was an appearance as of burning coals of fire, as an appearance of lamps turning among the living creatures; and the brightness of fire, and out of the fire came forth lightning. This thought is supported by Ezek. 10:6,7.
NOTE All of this verse is filled with descriptions of different manifestations of the spirit.

1. Burning coals of fire suggest the coals of fire upon the altar of sacrifice, Lev. 16:12.
2. This fire was divine fire from heaven, Lev. 9:24.
3. That fire was carefully preserved; it was never allowed to go out, Lev. 6:12-13.
4. That fire represented the consuming spirit of Yahweh. The burnt offering was only acceptable when consumed by that fire.
 - A. The burnt offering had to be dismembered, carefully washed inside and out, (speaking of inner and outer cleansing) and then placed in order upon the altar. First the head (mind); second the fat (strength); third the flesh (being), Lev. 1:8,9. This speaks of the mind, strength and body dedicated to Yahweh's service through the action of the spirit word consuming them. The exhortation for us is obvious, Rom. 12:1. When Paul exhorts (1 Thess. 5:19) "Quench not the spirit," he is likening the word to the flame that consumed the sacrifice.
 - B. These burning coals of fire could be used to consume the guilty as well, Lev. 10:2; Psa. 18:8,12,13. This is the power that will be in the hands of the cheru-

bim of the future when they go forth in judgment.

- Verse 13 "The appearance of lamps" The Septuagint renders this "turning lamps." Here we are given a further symbol of the spirit which speaks of illumination. In Rev. 4:5 it is described as the "seven lamps of fire burning before the throne, which are the seven spirits of God." There is but one spirit (Eph. 4:4) and is described as seven for seven is the number of spiritual perfection. In short, the turning lamps speak of the universal illumination of the world as the sun of righteousness arises with healing in his beams, Mal. 4:2.
- Verse 13 "went forth lightning" Lightning is used in Scripture as the symbol of Yahweh's spirit in belligerent and angry manifestation, Psa. 144:6; Zech. 9:14; Isa. 18:4; Rev. 11:19; 16:18. This is but another description of the cherubim in belligerent, militant manifestation.
- Verse 14 "the living creatures ran and returned as the appearance of a flash of lightning" In the Hebrew the word for lightning in this verse is different than the one that precedes it. In verse 13 the word means "to gleam" such as we see lightning in an electrical storm. In this verse, however, it signifies speed and speaks of the rapidity of movement that will characterize the cherubim in the future as they bring a wicked world into subjection before Yahweh.
- Verse 16 "The appearance of the wheels" There were four wheels (Ezek. 10:9), just as there were four living creatures, four faces, four wings. They represent the true Israel of God as a mobile force conveying the divine judgments wherever they are needed. These four wheels combined to form the "chariot of the cherubim" (1 Chron. 28:18).

"their work was like unto the color of a beryl" The certain man that Daniel saw, whose body was like the beryl (Dan. 10:6) represented the multitudinous Christ (Eph. 4:15-16).

The Hebrew name for beryl is "tarsheesh", which signifies "to break or subdue." This describes the work of the cherubim for they are to break in pieces and subdue the nations of the world.

The beryl was one of the stones that made up the Urim and Thummim in the breastplate of the high priest (Ex. 28:20). It finds its counterpart in the positioning of the tribes in Num. 2:25 which is Dan. Dan signifies judgment and indicates rulership for it is through the Lord Jesus Christ that Yahweh will "judge the world in righteousness." (Acts 17:31) The beryl stone then in the Old Testament stands for that which is to break or subdue, see Gen. 49:16-18; Psa. 49:5-9. Ezekiel seeing these wheels, the color of beryl, saw them rolling on to judgment to break and subdue that which is in opposition to God. When we come to the New Testament we find that the beryl stone is represented by Levi. This is deduced from the fact that the eighth stone of the New Jerusalem is a beryl (Rev. 21:20) and when we look at the corresponding order of the tribes in Rev. 7, the eighth tribe is Levi. Inasmuch as Levi is connected with the priesthood we find in the New Testament that the beryl

stands for priests. When we combine the overall picture we see that the beryl is indicative of kings in the Old Testament and priests in the New, fulfilling Rev. 5:10. This of course will be the dual purpose of the cherubim. First to conquer or judge the world and secondly to administer the priestly functions of teaching the nations of the world.

"a wheel in the middle of a wheel" The four wheels were interlocked with a wheel fitted into it at right angles. Each wheel had four sides and could roll in any direction without turning, Ezek. 1:17.

The wheel being a circle suggests eternity. The fact that there were four again speaks of the truth that eternal life can only be obtained through the hope of Israel. In Ezek. 10:11, we read how the wheels will be under the direction of the Lord Jesus Christ. In Ezekiel 1:20 he declared that the spirit of the living creatures was in the wheels. When this is complete, Jesus' prayer of John 17 will have been fulfilled.

Verse 18 "their rings, they were so high that they were dreadful"

As Ezekiel beholds this cherubic-chariot his attention is particularly drawn to four remarkable features relating to the rims.

1. They were high or lofty, so that they towered above him, installing in him a sense of inferiority and humility.
2. They were dreadful (from the Hebrew "yihrah," to fear or reverence).
3. They were living, and not inanimate, for they were full of eyes round about.
4. They formed a link between heaven and earth for they were the one part of the vision that touched the earth (v. 15) and yet were elevated high above it unto heaven (v. 18). Each of these qualities will be reflected in the cherubim during the millennium and their elevated nature will inspire the mortals to seek immortality.

"their rings were full of eyes" The cherubim will be the eyes of Yahweh as they oversee His affairs throughout the earth, see Ezek. 10:12; Zech. 4:10.

Verse 20-21 The true unity of the body -- In these two verses we have a picture of all the component parts of the cherubim moving in perfect unison one with the other. The great lesson of course is this: if this is the future characteristic of the cherubim then it should be manifested in the cherubim today, i.e. perfect unity in our ecclesial life, guided completely by the Lord Jesus Christ, see Eph. 4:3. All of this is expressed in the first word of the Lord's prayer "our." It finds its great climax in Christ's great prayer of John 17.

Verse 22 "the likeness of the firmament" The last six verses of Ezekiel 1, (22-28) provide an outline in sequence of the establishment of Christ's reign on earth in the age to come.

Note these five salient points:

1. V. 23--The cherubim supports a firmament that was

- stretched forth over their heads.
2. V. 24--Before stability was established they made a noise like a great army on the march.
 3. V. 25--After the outpouring of judgment was completed, they let down their wings, quietness prevailed and a single voice was heard.
 4. VV. 26-27--A throne, with a man sitting thereon was then seen upon the firmament above.
 5. V. 28--A rainbow was draped around the throne.

With the detailed consideration of each of these five points we will conclude this present study.

POINT #1 V. 23 "the firmament"

The firmament relates to the new heavens of the coming age (Isa. 65:17). In Psa. 19:1 we have a declaration of the future: "The heavens declare the glory of God (EL) and the firmament showeth His handiwork." In Malachi 4:1,2, we have reference to the Lord Jesus Christ being the Sun of that new firmament, see also Dan. 12:3; Rev. 4:1. The constituents of that new firmament will be the cherubim, truly Israelitish in character.

V. 22 "the firmament...was as the colour of the terrible crystal" The word terrible comes from a Hebrew word that means to fear, to be in awe of, to reverence. This will be the firmament of Isaiah 30:26; Rev. 4:6. Contrast this with the present condition described in Isaiah 57:20.

POINT #2 V. 24--"like the noise of great waters"

Noise of great waters speaks of a tremendous multitude such as "no man can number out of all nations, kindreds, people and tongues", Rev. 7:9. This is the voice of the cherubim in militant manifestation.

POINT #3 V. 25--After God's judgment, the cherubim let down their wings.

The standing still spoken of in this verse implies the end of judgment. The letting down of their wings suggest the ceasing of the tumult. It is a picture of God's kingdom bringing universal peace and righteousness to this earth, Num. 14:21; Isa. 26:9; Isa. 2:3. The four living creatures of the Revelation now become the four and twenty elders dispensing the priestly activities of the kingdom.

POINT #4 VV. 26,27--A throne with a man sitting thereon was then seen upon the firmament above.

The throne is David's promised to Jesus, Luke 1:32; Acts 15:14-16; Amos 9:11. The sapphire was blue in color, a very significant color. See Numbers 15:38-40. The ribband of blue was a constant reminder to Israel of their heavenly origin. It speaks of the power of God to heal; it speaks of Yahweh Ropheka, (I am Yahweh that healeth thee) Ex. 15:26; Zech. 8:23; Matt. 9:20-22.

"upon the throne the appearance of a man"

Man here is from Adam (the last Adam) 1 Cor. 15:45. His likeness is also as the glory of Yahweh, i.e. he is of human origin, but of divine nature and glory. In Verse 27 this king is shown to

be encased in fire. This fire will be used in the purging of the world. It will be the counterpart of the flaming sword. See Eph. 6:14; Heb. 13:10; 1 Thess. 5:19; Dan. 7:9; 2 Thess. 1:8.

POINT #5 V. 28 "As the appearance of the bow"

In the rainbow we have seven colors. Three of these are red, yellow and blue, and are known on the color wheel as primary colors. They cannot be made. Man cannot produce red, yellow or blue by mixing. These three colors, however, are the basis for all color when mixed with white.

When the white light of the sun is broken down through a prism it is always revealed in the pattern of red, yellow, blue. Is this accidental? Red in the scripture always speaks of flesh; yellow always refers to trial; blue as we have seen in our study of the sapphire refers to the healing power of God.

As Noah looked out upon a world cleansed from sin, he saw the rainbow, and as he followed its color progression from red (flesh) through yellow (trial) on into green (immortality) and finally purple (royalty), he saw in the rainbow God's completed redemptive process for mankind. (Rev. 5:10)

Now Ezekiel sees identically the same thing:

1. The restored throne of David
2. Christ the heir to this throne seated thereon
3. The multitudinous host of the redeemed
4. The rainbow arching over the throne speaking of the completed plan of redemption.

This is the glorious picture of the reward that awaits those who put their hope and trust in the God of Israel. May this vision become so vivid in our hearts and minds that the things of this life assume their true place as vanity and vexation of spirit.

As we conclude our study of this rapturous subject we are forced to cry out with the apostle Paul, (Rom. 11:33-36) "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are his judgments and his ways past finding out! For who hath known the mind of the Lord? or who hath been his counsellor? Or who hath first given to him, and it shall be recompensed unto him again? For of him, and through him, and to him, are all things: to whom be glory for ever. Amen."