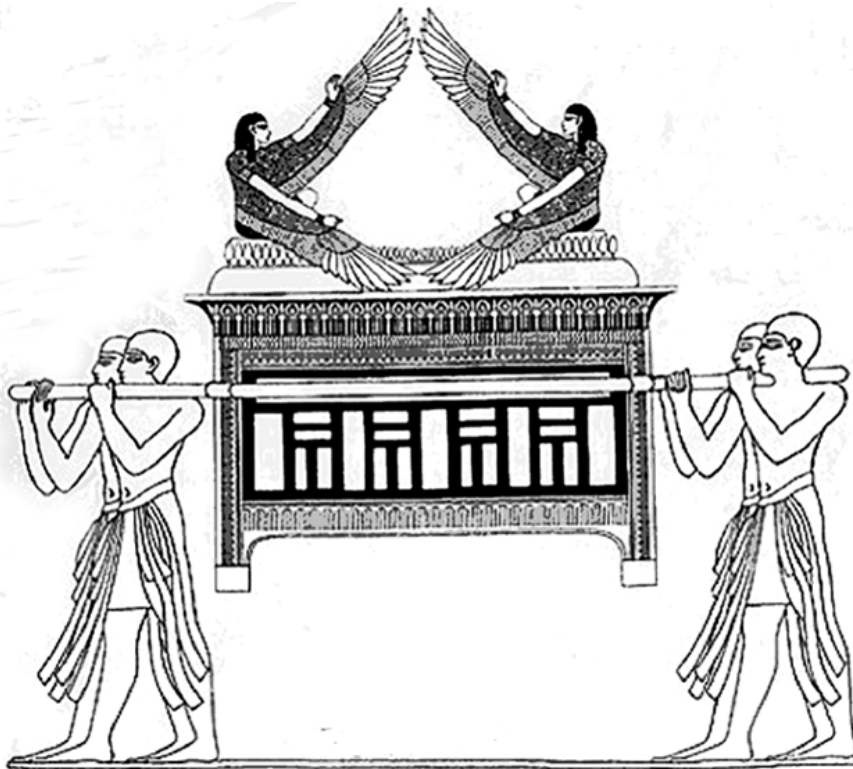


A Study on

Cherubim

Prof. M.M.Ninan



The word *cherub* (*cherubim* is the Hebrew masculine plural) is a word borrowed from the Assyrian *kirubu*, from *karâbu*, "to be near", hence it means near ones, familiars, personal servants, bodyguards, courtiers. It was commonly used of those heavenly spirits, who closely surrounded the Majesty of God and paid Him intimate service.

Hence it came to mean as much as "Angelic Spirit". (The change from *K* of *Karâbu*, to *K* of *Kirub* is nothing unusual in Assyrian. The word has been brought into connection with the Egyptian *Xefer* by metathesis from *Xeref=K-r-bh*.) A similar metathesis and play upon sound undoubtedly exists between *Kerub* and *Rakab*, "to ride", and *Merkeba*, "chariot". The late Jewish explanation by analogy between *Kerub* and *Rekûb*, "a youth", seems worthless. The word ought to be pronounced in English *qerub* and *querubim*, and not with a soft *ch*.

"So the Christian Church from the first accepted the personality of the cherubim and early adopted Philo's interpretation of the name. Clem. Alex.: "The name Cherubim intends to show much understanding (*aisthesin pollen*)." (Stromata, V, 240.) Though counted amongst the angels during the first centuries of Christianity, the cherubim and seraphim were not mentioned in the lists of the angelic hierarchy. At first but seven choirs of angels were reckoned, i.e. those enumerated (Eph., i, 21 and Col., i, 16), with the addition of *angeli et archangeli*. Thus St. Irenaeus, Haer.II, xxx, and Origen, *Peri archon*, I, v. But soon it was realized that the Apostle's list was not intended to be a complete one, and the Old Testament angelic beings

mentioned by Ezechiel and Isaias, the cherubim and seraphim, and others were added, so that we have eight, nine, or ten, or even eleven ranks in the hierarchy. The cherubim and seraphim were sometimes thought to be but other names for thrones and virtues (Gregory of Nyssa, "Contra Eunom.", I; Augustine in Ps., xcvi, 3). Since Psuedo-Dionys., De Caelesti Hier. (written about A.D. 500), the ninefold division of the angelic order has been practically universal; and the cherubim and seraphim take the highest place in the hierarchy, a rank which was ascribed to them already by St. Cyril of Jerusalem (370) and by St. Chrysostom (about 400), and which Pope Gregory the Great, once *apocrisarius* or *nuncio* at Constantinople, made familiar to the West. Pope Gregory divided the nine angelic orders into three choirs, the highest choir being: thrones, cherubim, and seraphim. Of the cherubim he says (Hom. in Ev., xxxiv, 10), that *cherubim* means "the fulness of knowledge, and these most sublime hosts are thus called, because they are filled with a knowledge which is the more perfect as they are allowed to behold the glory of God more closely". This explanation of St. Gregory is ultimately derived from Philo's similar statement, and was already combined with the Old Testament function of the cherubim by St. Augustine in his sublime comment on Ps., lxxix, 2, "Who sitteth upon the Cherubim":

Cherubim means the Seat of the Glory of God and is interpreted: Fulness of Knowledge. Though we realize that cherubim are exalted heavenly powers and virtues; yet if thou wilt, thou too shalt be one of the cherubim. For if cherubim means, Seat of God, remember what the Scripture says: The soul of the just is the Seat of Wisdom. “ (Catholic Encyclopaedia)

✻ **Cherubim are first mentioned in connection with the expulsion of our Adam and Eve from Eden**

Gen 3:24 So he drove out the man; and he placed at the east of the garden of Eden the Cherubim, and the flame of a sword which turned every way, to keep the way of the tree of life.

There is no intimation given of their shape or form.

✻ **They are next mentioned when Moses was commanded to provide furniture for the tabernacle**

God promised to commune with Moses "from between the cherubim"

On the Mercy Seat

Exo 25:17 And thou shalt make a mercy-seat of pure gold: two cubits and a half *shall be* the length thereof, and a cubit and a half the breadth thereof.

Exo 25:18 And thou shalt make two cherubim of gold; of beaten work shalt thou make them, at the two ends of the mercy-seat.

Exo 25:19 And make one cherub at the one end, and one cherub at the other end: of one piece with the mercy-seat shall ye make the cherubim on the two ends thereof.

Exo 25:20 And the cherubim shall spread out their wings on high, covering the mercy-seat with their wings, with their faces one to another; toward the mercy-seat shall the faces of the cherubim be.

Exo 25:21 And thou shalt put the mercy-seat above upon the ark; and in the ark thou shalt put the testimony that I shall give thee.

Exo 25:22 And there I will meet with thee, and I will commune with thee from above the mercy-seat, from between the two cherubim which are upon the ark of the testimony, of all things which I will give thee in commandment unto the children of Israel.

On the curtains of Tabernacle:

Exo 26:1 Moreover thou shalt make the tabernacle with ten curtains; of fine twined linen, and blue, and purple, and scarlet, with cherubim the work of the skilful workman shalt thou make them.

On the veils that separate the Holy of Holies from the Holies:

Exo 26:31 And thou shalt make a veil of blue, and purple, and scarlet, and fine twined linen: with cherubim the work of the skilful workman shall it be made.

Exo 26:32 And thou shalt hang it upon four pillars of acacia overlaid with gold; their hooks *shall be* of gold, upon four sockets of silver

They were placed one at each end of the mercy-seat, with wings stretched upward, and their faces "toward each other and toward the mercy-seat." They were anointed with holy oil, like the ark itself and the other sacred furniture.

✧ Yhvh sits on the cherubim throne:

1Sa 4:4 So the people sent to Shiloh; and they brought from thence the ark of the covenant of Jehovah of hosts, who sitteth *above* the cherubim: and the two sons of Eli, Hophni and Phinehas, were there with the ark of the covenant of God.

Isa 37:16 O Jehovah of hosts, the God of Israel, that sittest *above* the cherubim, thou art the God, even thou alone, of all the kingdoms of the earth; thou hast made heaven and earth.

Psa 80:1 Give ear, O Shepherd of Israel, Thou that leadest Joseph like a flock; Thou that sittest *above* the cherubim, shine forth.

Psa 99:1 Jehovah reigneth; let the peoples tremble: He sitteth *above* the cherubim; let the earth be moved.



Vishnu is identified as YhVh in the Bhavishya Purana coincident?

Garuda Vahana of Vishnu. Is this

❄ **Thrones of Cherubims were seats of Kings**

These can be seen from the art of the period.



Canaanite nobleman or prince sitting in sphinx-chair. This scene is drawn from an ivory carving found at the Canaanite stronghold of Megiddo. It appears in *Readers' Digest Great People of the Bible and How They Lives* (Readers' Digest Association, 1974), p. 100.



Throne of Tutankhamen found in his tomb (1361-1352 BC). Made of wood, it is overlaid with sheet gold, inlaid with precious stones, and ornamented with animal shapes such as winged cobras wearing the crowns of Upper and Lower Egypt. It is found in the Metropolitan Museum of Art, photo by Egyptian Expedition. In ISBE 4:845



Ahiemath, king of Byblos, seated on a cherub throne, before an offering table, from the National Museum, Beirut. ANEP 458. Appears as plate 126 in James B. Pritchard (ed.), *The Ancient Near East: An Anthology of Texts and Pictures* (Princeton University Press, 1958)



Solomon on his throne meeting the Queen of Sheba, by Henry J. Soulen appears in *Everyday Life in Bible Times* (National Geographical Society, 1967) pp. 230-231

In Ezekiel's vision (Eze. 10:1-20) they appear as living creatures supporting the throne of God.

Two cherubim were placed on the mercy-seat of the ark; two of colossal size overshadowed it in Solomon's temple.

Ezekiel (Eze 1:4-14) speaks of four cherubs

Eze 1:10 As for the likeness of their faces, they had the face of a man; and they four had the face of a lion on the right side; and they four had the face of an ox on the left side; they four had also the face of an eagle.

Ezekiel 1:10

(Individual)



Eze 1:11 And their faces and their wings were separate above; two *wings* of every one were joined one to another, and two covered their bodies.

Eze 1:12 And they went every one straight forward: whither the spirit was to go, they went; they turned not when they went.

Eze 1:13 As for the likeness of the living creatures, their appearance was like burning coals of fire, like the appearance of torches: *the fire* went up and down among the living creatures; and the fire was bright, and out of the fire went forth lightning.

Eze 1:14 And the living creatures ran and returned as the appearance of a flash of lightning.

Eze 1:15 Now as I beheld the living creatures, behold, one wheel upon the earth beside the living creatures, for each of the four faces thereof.

Eze 1:16 The appearance of the wheels and their work was like unto a beryl: and they four had one likeness; and their appearance and their work was as it were a wheel within a wheel.

Eze 1:17 When they went, they went in their four directions: they turned not when they went.

Eze 1:18 As for their rims, they were high and dreadful; and they four had their rims full of eyes round about.

Eze 1:19 And when the living creatures went, the wheels went beside them; and when the living creatures were lifted up from the earth, the wheels were lifted up.

Eze 1:20 Whithersoever the spirit was to go, they went; thither was the spirit to go: and the wheels were lifted up beside them; for the spirit of the living creature was in the wheels.

Eze 1:21 When those went, these went; and when those stood, these stood; and when those were lifted up from the earth, the wheels were lifted up beside them: for the spirit of the living creature was in the wheels.

Eze 1:22 And over the head of the living creature there was the likeness of a firmament, like the terrible crystal to look upon, stretched forth over their heads above.

Eze 1:23 And under the firmament were their wings straight, the one toward the other: every one had two which covered on this side, and every one had two which covered on that side, their bodies.

Eze 1:24 And when they went, I heard the noise of their wings like the noise of great waters, like the voice of the Almighty, a noise of tumult like the noise of a host: when they stood, they let down their wings.

Eze 1:25 And there was a voice above the firmament that was over their heads: when they stood, they let down their wings.

Eze 1:26 And above the firmament that was over their heads was the likeness of a throne, as the appearance of a sapphire stone; and upon the likeness of the throne was a likeness as the appearance of a man upon it above.

Eze 1:27 And I saw as it were glowing metal, as the appearance of fire within it round about, from the appearance of his loins and upward; and from the appearance of his loins and downward I saw as it were the appearance of fire, and there was brightness round about him.

We should remember that Ezekiel is describing something of which he has no idea. He sees the four living beings with several wings and he also sees wheels and wheels within the wheels. He sees all the four cherubs as one unity, united in motion and somehow related to the wheels. They rose up and flew and

landed. They used the wings to fly and let drop it when landed. Wheels turned and guided the flight. It is most like an man of the first century being asked to describe what he sees when a boeing 747 lands and take off. There is a vehicle involved. Inside Ezeiel could see the living beings. Did he believe that the wheels had life. He is not trying to give an interpretation, but was simply describing what he saw. In Revelation we do not see the wheels. We only see the Throne of God and the four living being around it. The vision of the wheels within wheels suggests that the living beings were in some mechanical vehicle. They are thus seen united with the vehicle itself. The human figure actually walks into it.

Eze 10:1 Then I looked, and behold, in the firmament that was over the head of the cherubim there appeared above them as it were a sapphire stone, as the appearance of the likeness of a throne.

Eze 10:2 And he spake unto the man clothed in linen, and said, Go in between the whirling *wheels*, even under the cherub, and fill both thy hands with coals of fire from between the cherubim, and scatter them over the city. And he went in in my sight.

Eze 10:3 Now the cherubim stood on the right side of the house, when the man went in; and the cloud filled the inner court.

Eze 10:4 And the glory of Jehovah mounted up from the cherub, *and stood* over the threshold of the house; and the house was filled with the cloud, and the court was full of the brightness of Jehovah's glory.

Eze 10:5 And the sound of the wings of the cherubim was heard even to the outer court, as the voice of God Almighty when he speaketh.

Eze 10:6 And it came to pass, when he commanded the man clothed in linen, saying, Take fire from between the whirling wheels, from between the cherubim, that he went in, and stood beside a wheel.

Eze 10:7 And the cherub stretched forth his hand from between the cherubim unto the fire that was between the cherubim, and took *thereof*, and put it into the hands of him that was clothed in linen, who took it and went out.

Eze 10:8 And there appeared in the cherubim the form of a man's hand under their wings.

Eze 10:9 And I looked, and behold, four wheels beside the cherubim, one wheel beside one cherub, and another wheel beside another cherub; and the appearance of the wheels was like unto a beryl stone.

Eze 10:10 And as for their appearance, they four had one likeness, as if a wheel have been within a wheel.

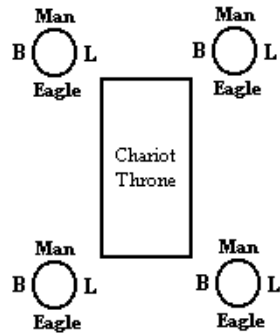
Eze 10:11 When they went, they went in their four directions: they turned not as they went, but to the place whither the head looked they followed it; they turned not as they went.

Eze 10:12 And their whole body, and their backs, and their hands, and their wings, and the wheels, were full of eyes round about, *even* the wheels that they four had.

Eze 10:13 As for the wheels, they were called in my hearing, the whirling *wheels*

Eze 10:14 And every one had four faces: the first face was the face of the cherub, and the second face was the face of a man, and the third face the face of a lion, and the fourth the face of an eagle

Ezekiel 10:14
(Carrying Position)



Eze 10:15 And the cherubim mounted up: this is the living creature that I saw by the river Chebar.

Eze 10:16 And when the cherubim went, the wheels went beside them; and when the cherubim lifted up their wings to mount up from the earth, the wheels also turned not from beside them.

Eze 10:17 When they stood, these stood; and when they mounted up, these mounted up with them: for the spirit of the living creature was in them.

Eze 10:18 And the glory of Jehovah went forth from over the threshold of the house, and stood over the cherubim.

Eze 10:19 And the cherubim lifted up their wings, and mounted up from the earth in my sight when they went forth, and the wheels beside them: and they stood at the door of the east gate of Jehovah's house; and the glory of the God of Israel was over them above.

Eze 10:20 This is the living creature that I saw under the God of Israel by the river Chebar; and I knew that they were cherubim.

Eze 10:21 Every one had four faces, and every one four wings; and the likeness of the hands of a man was under their wings.

Eze 10:22 And as for the likeness of their faces, they were the faces which I saw by the river Chebar, their appearances and themselves; they went every one straight forward

This is also number of "living creatures" is mentioned in Rev 4:6. Here the position of the cherubim are slightly changed and appears to be in the Guarding position. These have led to the explanation that Cherubim are body guards and vehicle carriers of the Lord. Ezekiel's vision of the Cherubim, which is practically the same in the tenth chapter as in the first, is one of the most difficult in Scripture, and has given rise to a multitude of explanations.

“The prophet first saw a luminous cloud coming from the north; from a distance it seemed a heavy cloud fringed with light and some intense brilliancy in the centre thereof, bright as gold, yet in perpetual motion as the flames of a fire. Within that heavenly fire he began gradually to distinguish four living beings with bodies as men, yet with four faces each: a human face in front, but an eagles face behind; a lion's face to the left and an ox's face to the right. Though approaching, yet their knees did not bend in their march, straight and stiff they remained; and for feet they had the hoofs of oxen, shod as it were with shining brass. They had four arms, two to each shoulder, and attached along each arm a wing. Of these four winged arms two were outstretched above, and two were let down and covered their bodies. These four living beings stood together, facing in four opposite directions, and between them were four great wheels, each wheel being double, so that it could roll forward or sideways. Thus this angelic chariot, in whatever of the four directions it moved, always presented the same aspect. And both angels and wheels were all studded with eyes. And over the heads of the cherubim, so that they touched it with the points of their outstretched wings, was an

expanse of crystal, and on this crystal a sapphire throne, and on the throne one resembling a man, the likeness of the glory of Jehovah.” (Catholic Encyclopaedia)

✧ Cherubim as Shekina Glory

Those on the ark are called the "cherubim of glory" i.e., of the Shekinah, or cloud of glory, for on them the visible glory of God rested. So in Hebrews we read:

Heb 9:5 and above it cherubim of glory overshadowing the mercy-seat; of which things we cannot now speak severally.

Was the cloud and lightning simply a fast movement of these living beings?.

✧ Are they Real or Imaginary?

Eston and other protestant theologians interprets them as simply symbolic and not real. This may be traditional obstinacy to accept other living beings.

While western rationalistic period refused to acknowledge extraterrestrials simply because it might overthrow the superiority of man.

However all the rest of the world accepted the coexistence of other beings both embodied and disembodied here on earth as well as outside the earth in this dimension and in other dimensions as well. For the Africans and the Indians a spiritual world is always near us and inside and around us.

“Notwithstanding the present common opinion of advanced Protestant scholars, that cherubim are only symbolic representations of abstract ideas, the Catholic Church undoubtedly holds that there are actually existing spiritual beings corresponding to the name. That Old Testament writers used the word *cherubim* to designate angels, not merely to express ideas, can be best gathered from Gen., iii, 24, where God sets cherubim at the entrance of Paradise. This sentence would bear no sense at all if cherubim did not stand for ministerial beings, differing from man, carrying out the behest of God. Likewise, it is difficult to read Ezechiel and to persuade oneself that the Prophet does not presuppose the actual existence of real personal beings under the name of Cherubim; in chaps. i and x he speaks again and again of "living beings", and he says the spirit of life was within them, and repeatedly points out that the bodily forms he sees are but appearances of the living beings thus mentioned” (Catholic Encyclopaedia)

The office of the Cherubim were,

(1.) on the expulsion of our first parents from Eden, to prevent all access to the tree of life; and

(2.) to form the throne and chariot of Jehovah in his manifestation of himself on earth. He dwelleth between and sitteth on the cherubim

1Sa 4:4 So the people sent to Shiloh; and they brought from thence the ark of the covenant of Jehovah of hosts, who sitteth *above* the cherubim:

Psa 80:1 Give ear, O Shepherd of Israel, Thou that ledest Joseph like a flock; Thou that sittest *above* the cherubim, shine forth.

But the Cherubims are not the throne as is evident in the Revelation scene.

Since the human rulers imitated the living beings and made themselves carved thrones of cherubim. They

all wanted to be like God. In the ark these carved images represented the living beings which actually exist in the heavenly dimension. These apparently had a material existence just like man while being an exalted spiritual being.

They were placed one at each end of the mercy-seat, with wings stretched upward, and their faces "toward each other and toward the mercy-seat." They were anointed with holy oil, like the ark itself and the other sacred furniture.

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“Ark may have been illustrated by an artist using the conventions of Egyptian art in the historic period of 1220 BCE. It is a characteristic of Egyptian art that nothing in the compositions was left to chance. Within Egyptian illustration, every gesture, symbol and glyph has a very specific meaning and the meaning of the whole is often enhanced significantly depending on the additive nature of its parts. As I built this illustration I couldn't help but marvel at the cumulative significance and consistency the Egyptian symbology had with literary and scriptural references to the Ark.

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However all the rest of the world accepted the coexistence of other beings both embodied and disembodied here on earth as well as outside the earth in this dimension and in other dimensions as well. For the Africans and the Indians the presence of the spirit beings are part of the daily life among the people.

❄ **Cherubim as an artistic expression**

It is possible for us to think of the cherubim as an artistic expression of God's throne of grace and presence. The Israelites were in Egypt for a very long time and assimilated most of the Egyptian culture. Among them was their art.

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It is characteristic of Egyptian iconography is to be read as if it were part of a text. The way the iconography is read and applied to an illustration gives its own meaning. These subtleties are rooted in the fact that the Classical Egyptian language was written in Hieroglyphics. Hieroglyphs and their meaning often were directly derived from pictographs and iconography, making the language replete with double meaning and pun. The ancient Egyptian language was very conservative in its evolution throughout its history and was the instrument of the scribes and the ruling classes. It was not until the time of the creation of the Phoenician Alphabet and its derivatives languages that words were written entirely phonetically and with no pictorial references.”

The earliest artistic representation and our first form of cherub is found in the walls of Zedekiah's cave. Because of its typical Assyrian style, it was dated to the time when Jerusalem was under the cultural influence of Assyria, which was the time of the first temple period. It also fit the Biblical description of a

cherub. Ron theorized that it was possible that when the Ark and other items were hidden just prior to the destruction of Jerusalem by the Babylonians, this "cherub" was carved on the wall near the tunnel through which they were taken, symbolizing the protection of God's angels over these holy things



In this sense the Tabernacle and all that is within and without which the Lord has described were a symbolic communication to the people. It is this Paul illustrates in Hebrews in detail. Hence there is in some sense to interpret Cherubims of the Tabernacle and furniture of Temple as symbolic expressions of the message of Salvation.

These are a very high order of angel whose primary duty is to guard the things of God.

Thus -- the many eyes for vigilance, the many wings for swiftness, and their nearness to the throne of God. (See: Genesis 3:24 and Exodus 25:18-22). They are often called as covering angels.

✻ **God in the midst of His People**

According to rabbinical tradition, the standard of Judah bore the figure of a lion, Reuben the likeness of a man, or of a man's head, Ephraim the figure of an ox, and Dan. the figure of an eagle.

"According to rabbinical tradition, the standard of Judah bore the figure of a lion, that of Reuben the likeness of a man or of a man's head, that of Ephraim the figure of an ox, and that of Dan the figure of an eagle." (Keil-Delitzsch)

These four tribal tents on the four sides of the tent of meeting and their standards were always flying on the four sides of the tent of meeting. He who resides on the praises of his people.

After the covenant the arrangement of the tribes around of the tabernacle were ordered by God.

At the center of this order was the tabernacle itself; the tribes would arrange themselves to the east, south, west, and north in relation to the tabernacle. Since the tabernacle was symbolically the presence of God with them, this meant all order in Israel began being centered around God Himself.

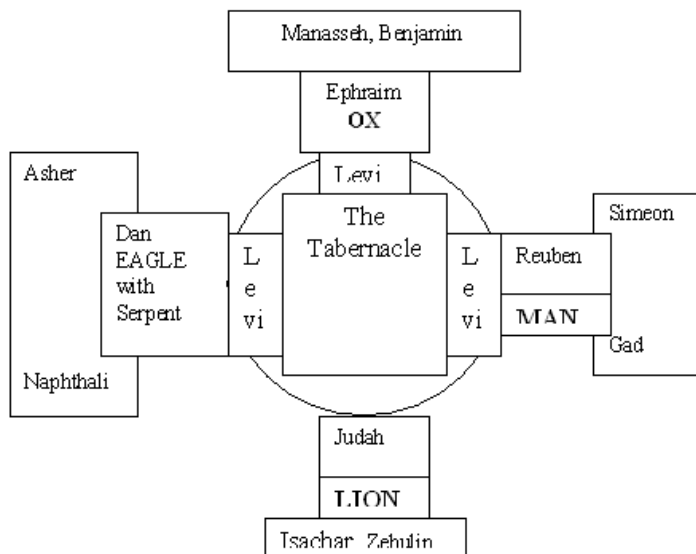
South of the Tabernacle: Judah was first, and closest to the tabernacle itself; then Issachar and Zebulun following. These tribes would order themselves after **the standard** (the banner or flag) of Judah, which was said to be a *lion*.

East of the tabernacle.: Reuben was first, and closest to the tabernacle itself; then Simeon and Gad following. The tribes would order themselves after **the standard** of Reuben, which was said to be a *man*.

West of the tabernacle.: Ephraim was first, and closest to the tabernacle itself; then Manasseh and Benjamin following. The tribes would order themselves after **the standard** of Ephraim, which was said to be a *calf*.

North of the tabernacle.: Dan was first, and closest to the tabernacle itself; then Asher and Naphtali following. The tribes would order themselves after **the standard** of Dan, which was said to be an *eagle*. "the four living creatures united in the cherubic forms described by Ezekiel were represented upon these four standards" (Keil and Delitzsch, Commentary on the Pentateuch, III, 17).

Here we see the idea of God residing in the midst of his people. The people are representative of the Cherubim symbols. His people are God's expression - God's faces. It is varied and in its unity gives His character.



But then this is not limited to the Israelic encampment.

A variant of this tradition gives as the standard of

Reuben, "unstable as water" (Gen 49:4 the King James Version), a Man and a River,
 Dan, "Dan. shall be a serpent in the way" (Gen 49:17), an Eagle and a Serpent.

These four forms are also found in the constellations in the four quarters of the heavens.

Aquarius, the man with a stream of water,

Leo were the original zodiacal constellations of the two solstices, Taurus was that of the spring equinox, and Aquila and Serpens were close to the autumnal equinox

Thus the four cherubim represented the entire cosmos – the four quarters of the cosmos also.

God chose the Jews as an example. The whole picture of the Tabernacle and the Jewish nation under God was a picture in miniature of God in relation to His creation. He stand enthroned in the midst of His people. The whole cosmos with God as the head is one organic unity. He is in the midst of His Sons.

It would probably suggest that these forms are forms of the creatures of the hosts of these heavens forming the Sons of God. Some fell later and was subjected to death just like man. PSALM 82:1

In the ultimate sense the cherubs represents the entire intelligent beings of his creation in unity with the throne of God at its center .

❄ Satan and the Covering Cherub

We know for certain that Satan was a covering Cherub.

“Thou, full of wisdom and perfect in beauty. In Eden, the garden of God wert thou, all precious stones were thy covering. Thou wert a cherub with wings outstretched in protection, thou wert on the holy mountain of God thou didst walk amongst fiery stones. Thou wert innocent in thy ways from the day on which thou wert created until iniquity was found in thee...thou didst sin, therefore I will cast thee out from the mountain of God and destroy thee, O protecting cherub away from the fiery stones. “

Some interprets that the initial two cherubs covering the real mercy seat were Michael and Lucifer. Michael is represented as the Commander in Chief of the Army of the Lord - a Male form while Lucifer is the female counterpart of Michael, foremost in beauty and wisdom. There is also a shade of resemblance here between Adam and Eve. Eve because of her beauty and cleverness was the cause of the fall of Mankind. At any rate the fall of Lucifer or Satan suggests the free will of Cherubim and in that sense they are similar to man and all the intelligent creatures of the cosmos who are Sons of God.

❄ Four Aspects of Jesus and the Perfected being

Early Christian Fathers saw in this model a description of Jesus and of the Gospel of God's Salvation. These four figures came to be represented as the four natures of Jesus



- LION = Strength - Kingship - Jesus the Lion of Judah as represented in the Gospel of Mathew. Here Jesus is represented as the King of the Jews and the expected mesia, the Jews were waiting for. Matthew revealed him as a LION; the Lion of the tribe of Judah. His genealogy was written as from David Matthew 1:1.



EAGLE = Swiftmess - Prophet – a wider vision beyond the narrow dimension of the Jewish nation as represented in John’s Gospel. Here Jesus is the Word became God, the incarnate only begotten Son of God



OX = forbearing, patient, the burden bearer, suffering servant and the sacrificial beast. *Servant as represented in Mark’s Gospel.* Mark showed him as an OX; the servant. His record commenced upon that note without any reference to his origin, birth or genealogy.



MAN = *Intelligence* - The perfect man as represented in Luke’s Gospel. He is the perfection for which the nations were looking for. Luke



These characteristics of the Lord, displayed during his life and ministry, all united to draw attention to his function in the Mercy Seat.

Again it is this unity that represents the perfection in every Son of God. Thus in one sense the Cherubs represent the perfected beings of the cosmos. Thus we do see many interpreters tend to identify the Cherubim as perfected saints in the presence of God serving him day in and day out and praising him and acting as angels of mercy.

If this looks like the Brahma, the creator with his four heads is it a coincidence? Remember that we are simply representing some concept in a visual artistic form. When a symbol becomes a target of worship it becomes an idol.

❄️ **The Covering Cherub Concept: Cherubs are human imagination**

The office of the Cherubim were,

(1.) on the expulsion of our first parents from Eden, to prevent all access to the tree of life; and
 (2.) to form the throne and chariot of Jehovah in his manifestation of himself on earth. He "dwelleth between and sitteth on the cherubim"

(1Sa_4:4; Psa_80:1; Eze_1:26, Eze_1:28).

- Cherubim covered the mercy Seat of God. God spoke from between the cherubs. No one can see God and live. So the form of God is covered by the wings of the cherubim.
- In a slight variation of thought . the Hebrew term may mean "cherub of anointing, who covers", therefore a royal, anointed being, overshadowing others with its wings to shelter them. If this be so, we must add royalty and beneficence to the characteristics of cherubim.
- Symbolicaly Cherubims become the covering which makes man difficult to see God as he really is.

Rather than beaming rays of sunshine, they will see *imaginary figures* streaking through their minds. For you see, according to Strong's Exhaustive Concordance the word, *cherubim*, comes from the Hebrew word, *keruwbim*, which is a transliteration and means "**imaginary figures.**" *Keruwbim (cherubim)* is the plural of *keruwb (cherub)*. Simply put, **THE CHERUBIM ARE IMAGINATIONS which find their roots in the imaginative mind of man.**

Perhaps we can see why the cherubim were sewn into the *veil*, that which represents *man's mind*, and is the obstacle which separates him from *the Most Holy Place*. The *curtains of the tabernacle* also contained cherubim, as well as the two *doors of the temple*, not to mention the *walls*. Everywhere in the tabernacle and the temple cherubim were sewn and made. This was for the purpose of keeping carnality out of the Holy of the holies, which is the same as the midst of the Garden.

“The heavenly mysteries are covered with a golden pot on earth” (Manusmriti)

* **Cherubims are the picture of Man**

Another interesting thought with great stretch of imagination is given below.

Seraphim and Cherubim are known to be Angels dwelling in the Angelic realm. The Seraphim and Cherubim live upon the sea of glass in the future from our day. The Angels in heaven are our future (or like our future as those beings that went ahead of us), just as we are their past. The Angels round about the sea of glass were once humans upon the earth.

God destroyed the first creation where the Angels of heaven had once lived as humans. God destroyed the first creation because God had created the first humans with hearts and minds knowing both good and evil, which God realized by experience would not work. God realized that evil and good could not live together in harmony side by side. Therefore, the first creation (the creation before that of Adam and Eve) was destroyed in a flood of water, as seen in Genesis 1:2 where the earth is shown to be covered in water. The Angels in heaven were once humans upon the earth in the first creation. There is nothing new in our world. All that has taken place since the re-creation of Adam and Eve, has already been.

When Adam and Eve were created (as described in the book of Genesis) they were told to REPLENISH (repopulate) the earth; which means to restore the earth with people as it once was in the first creation.

In Isa.6:2 the Seraphim have six wings as opposed to the Cherubim who have four wings in Eze.10:15,21. The Angels in heaven (upon the sea of glass) do not have literal wings. Their bodies are of a physical nature, however their bodies are more glorious than our human earthly bodies. The Angels being described as having wings reveals that they are heavenly beings who have ascended from the first earth to their new abode in heaven upon the sea of glass.

The Angels in heaven are upon all twelve planets in our solar system in the future of our day. As it was in the Garden of Eden at the time of Adam and Eve is how it is upon all twelve planets (stars) where the Angels dwell; however, the abode of the Angels is far more glorious than the earth at the time of Adam and Eve.

The sea of glass (diamond) is around the earth in the future. Upon the sea of glass are trees, rivers, animals and atmosphere, as the world upon the sea of glass is an image of the earth as it was at the time of Adam and Eve (Garden of Eden). Beneath the sea of glass (diamond) are the twelve foundations of gemstones; the sea of glass (diamond) is the top layer. Above the diamond covering are trees, plants, animals, and the Angelic beings. The city called New Jerusalem in Rev.21:10,14 has twelve foundations. The city New Jerusalem is of the future world that is upon the sea of glass (diamond). God's throne (Shekinah Glory) is within the city New Jerusalem. Before God's throne is the only section of the sea of glass that is not covered with soil, grass, trees and so forth, see Rev.4:6.

The Angels who dwell in heaven are in physical bodies which are like human bodies, yet are far more glorious than Adam or Eve's. The Angelic beings cannot physically leave their abode upon the sea of glass, though their spirit can leave their physical bodies and travel through time and space. The spirits of Angels are permitted to be among us upon the earth, and they can return to their physical bodies at will.

The spirits within the Angels are the same spirits within humans. In other words, it is as if two identical spirits are in two bodies (one Angelic, one human) in two different time periods (one of the future, one of the past).

The wicked angelic spirits who rebelled in heaven are of the same spirits who are in human form, who shall rebel against God by rejecting God's revealed word.

These are however too farfetched imagination verging on science fiction. We won't be able to find biblical foundation for this imaginative interesting concept.

✳ **The four worlds of the Kabbalah**

"Kabbalah" means "received teachings" or simply "traditions" and is derived from the Hebrew "kabel" which means "to receive." Kabbah (Muslim Kabbah came from it) means revelation. Kabbalah simply means revelations of God. It originally applied only to the Oral Law "received" after the destruction of the Second Temple, in the form of the Talmud. Though it was fully developed in the Middle Ages, the first seeds of a mystical trend began to emerge in the talmudic literature, written well after the destruction of the Second Temple--from 150 A.D. to 600 A.D.

Sepher Yetzirah or the "Book of Creation." is the canonical text for the later kabbalistic movement which developed the workings and the origin of the universe. It described the sefirot or "emanations," the ten so-called "manifestations of God." Knowledge of these mysteries was thought to confer magical powers on the initiated. .

An understanding of the kabbalah traditions gives the background information for the Biblical mythology. It talks about four worlds of existence that have emanated from Ein-Sof who dwells in darkness and who cannot be known. These are:

1. ATZILUTH

The Divine or Archetypal World.

The *Yod* of Tetragrammaton.

Secret Name: **AB** - Father

Element - Fire.

Atziluth is the highest plane of Creation. It is the well spring from which everything emerges. It is difficult for the Human mind to comprehend the workings or the ideas that are associated with such high realms of consciousness. The very essence of pure thought and to some extent the very mind of the Creator may be glimpsed briefly in the Realm of Atziluth.

Atziluth is administered by the Highest of Beings the Cherubim. They would appear to be extremely close to the Mind of God, in fact closer than any others. thought and is the backdrop for all that is. Without the Divine influence of Atziluth nothing is. Atziluth represents the ideas that are in the mind of God.

Atziluth, the "World of Emanation" or "Nearness (to the Godhead)", also called the Image and the Heavenly man (*Adam Kadmon*), is the Divine Reality; the Sefirot or attributes of the Godhead. They are the direct emanation from the En Sof, and hence most intimately connected to the absolute Deity, perfect and immutable. It is here that there is the conjunction of the King and Queen (Tifaret and Malkut, representing the male and female polarities of the Godhead), from which is produced the successive worlds

[C.D.Ginsburg, S.A.Cook, "Kabbalah", *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, 11th ed. 1911, vol xv, pp.620-1]. The Sefirot are arranged in three pillars, the Pillar of Mercy (Hesed) on the left, the Pillar of Judgment or Severity (Gevurah) on the right, and the Pillar of Balance or Compassion or Beauty (Tifaret) in the middle; which together constitute the Divine supervision of the lower worlds

2. BRIAHA

The Archangelic or Creative world.

The First Heh of Tetragrammaton.

Secret Name: *Seg*

Element - Water.

The world of Briah is the world of early Creation. The Archangels form the governing and ordering body. Briah is most commonly associated with the Element of Water. It is in Briah that the Mighty Archangels appear to establish the Will of God. Briah is where the plans are made and the "blueprints" are drawn.

Beriah, the "World of Creation" is also called "the Throne"

ten sefirot being further from the En Sof than the sefirot of the universe of Atzilut, are of a more limited potency, although their substance is still of the purest nature and without any admixture of matter. The angel Metatron inhabits this world. He constitutes the world of pure spirit and is the garment of *Shaddai*, i.e. the visible manifestation of the Divine. He governs the visible world, preserves its harmony, and is head of myriads of angels [C.D.Ginsburg, S.A.Cook, *Kabbalah*, p.621].

The world of Beriah is described in the Zohar as consisting of seven higher heavens or firmaments which emanate from the seven lower sefirot of Atzilut, and are beyond the traditional seven heavens to which the stars and planets are fixed [Paul Krzok, "The Cosmological Structure of the Zohar", p.32 *The Hermetic Journal*, no.20, Summer 1983)]. This is also the world of the angels centred around the throne of God.

In the Lurianic tradition this is the world where the tzimtzum is first felt, and hence individual beings are able to exist. (Jacob Immanuel Schochet, *Mystical Concepts in Hassidism* Kehot Publication Society, Brooklyn New York, 1979, p.110)

Inasmuch as the world of Beriah is identified with the Sefirah Binah (and vice-versa) this is region from which the divine soul (*Neshamah*) is derived.

3. YETZIRAH (Formation)

Olam ha-Yetzirah.

The Angelic or Formative world.

The World of thought.

The Vau of Tetragrammaton.

Secret Name: ***Mah***

Element - Air

Yetzirah is the World of Formation. This is the realm of logic and intelligence. The intellectual world represented by the Element of Air.

Yetzirah is the world of Angelic Choirs. Here are the Seraphim and the Elohim. Choirs of Angels bring the resources that are needed to bear for completion in Assiah.

Yet they are still non-material. This is the abode of the angels, who are wrapped in luminous garments. The myriads of angels are divided into ten ranks, according to the ten sefirot, and each angel is set over a different part of the universe, and derives his name from the element or heavenly body he guards

[C.D.Ginsburg, S.A.Cook, *Kabbalah*, p.621].

This region is interpreted in the Zohar as the world of the lower heavens, consisting of the seven planetary firmaments [Paul Krzok, "The Cosmological Structure of the Zohar", p.32 *The Hermetic Journal*, no.20, Summer 1983)]. The pseudepigraphical Massekhet Atzilut (early 14th Century), places the Archangel Metatron and the angels centred around him are sometimes placed in the world of Yetzirah rather than Beriahas later became the case [Scholem, *Kabbalah*, pp.118-9].

4. ASSIAH

Olam ha-Assiah

The Material world.

The Physical world.

The Final Heh of Tetragrammaton.

Secret Name: Ben

Element - Earth.

Assiah is the world of action. this is the material world in which the results of the efforts of God become material. The Ideas that were started in Atziluth reach manifestation in Assiah.

The physical universe and Malkuth are the representation of Assiah. The four Elements are the primary building blocks and are present in the physical sense in Assiah.

This is the region of are the grossest sefirot, consisting of material substance. There are ten degrees, each lower than the other. Alternatively, there are seven earths (the highest presumably being the earth of human beings, i.e. the physical universe) one beneath the other, and beneath the lowest of them, seven hells, again arranged in sequence. In contrast to Christianity, the souls of sinners are there not only to be punished but also to be purified, before ascending, the exception being the hell of Abadon, where the soul is apparently destroyed [Paul Krzok, "The Cosmological Structure of the Zohar", *The Hermetic Journal*, no.20, Summer 1983) pp.33-4].

