

tion to us. In one respect, indeed, his relation to men is invariable, that it always bears a truly moral character ; but in view of the moral changes constantly undergone by men, the moral immutability of God would scarcely deserve the name if it did not both admit of and require corresponding changes in his own mode of feeling and acting towards the human race.

---

## ARTICLE II.

### THE CHERUBIM.

BY REV. JOHN CRAWFORD, D.D., PROFESSOR OF HEBREW AND CHURCH HISTORY, CANADIAN LITERARY INSTITUTE, WOODSTOCK, ONTARIO.

THE subject of the present Article is one which has hitherto attracted but little attention from the best scholarship ; yet, one might reasonably suppose that the "Cherubim of Glory" would afford no mean theme for Christian contemplation ; but, on the contrary, one which would amply repay the most painstaking and devout investigation. Doubtless, the chief cause of this indifference has been the many wild and discordant interpretations which have been advanced upon the subject. Scarcely two interpreters agree on what these strange symbolical figures represent.

Bähr, and after him, Hengstenberg, who wavers, however, in his views, make the Cherubim "a representation of creation in its highest grade, an ideal creature. The vital powers, communicated to the most elevated existence in the visible creation, are collected and individualized in it."

Barnes says of the four living creatures (Rev. iv. 6), that "they are evidently like those which Ezekiel saw, symbolical beings ; but the nature and purpose of the symbol is not perfectly apparent." And yet, a little farther on, he ventures an interpretation : "The most natural explanation to be given of the four living beings is to suppose that they are symbolical beings, designed to furnish some representation

of the government of God ; to illustrate as it were, that on which the divine government *rests*, or which constitutes its support, to wit, power, intelligence, vigilance, energy." Somewhat allied to this view is that of Lange, who makes them the four fundamental governments.

Others regard the Cherubim as a symbol of the angelic host, the heavenly ministers of Jehovah who attend his throne and execute his commands. "We shall have no hesitation," says a writer of this class, "in determining the nature and species of these living creatures of the Apocalypse. They are the highest order of angelic beings, attending most nearly upon the throne. They are so near to the throne, so intermingling with its dazzling splendor, that human faculties must fail of attaining any precise and adequate idea of them."

Croly says of the living creatures, "They resemble the Cherubim and Seraphim of Isaiah and Ezekiel ; and the lion, the bull, the man, and the eagle are probably emblematical representations of the supremacy, strength, wisdom, and rapidity of Providence."

The Hutchinsonians regard the Cherubim as emblems of the Almighty in his trinity of persons ; and Michaelis had a strange opinion that they were a sort of "thunder-horses" of Jehovah, resembling the horses of Jupiter among the Greeks. Not unlike this view of Michaelis in its character, is that of Herder, "who regards the Cherubim as originally feigned monsters, like the dragons and griffins, which were fabled guardians amongst the ancients of certain precious treasures."

Philo regarded the Cherubim as signifying the two hemispheres ; while Irenaeus assigned to them a more comprehensive signification. He supposed them to represent the four gospels, the four elements, the four quarters of the globe, and the four universal covenants.

Stuart regards the Cherubim as representing the divine attributes ; whilst Hammond makes them the saints who are to attend Jehovah as assessors in the judgment.

I shall not detain the reader with a farther recital of the opinions advanced respecting the symbolic import of these cherubic forms, of which the above-mentioned are the principal. I say *opinions*, because they cannot with propriety be regarded as interpretations, as they rest on mere conjecture, but on no scriptural foundation.

It is scarcely possible, even upon the most cursory examination, to avoid the obvious conclusion, that the four living creatures of the Apocalypse (Rev. iv. and v.), the living creatures, or Cherubim, of Ezekiel (ch. i. and x.), and the Seraphim of Isaiah (ch. vi.), are one and the same. The same combination of animate forms, the lion, the ox, the man, and the eagle, obviously conduct us to this conclusion. The abundance of eyes in each, as well as the "Holy! holy! holy!" alike exclaimed by the living creatures and the Seraphim; together with their similar position of nearness to the throne,—all combine to indicate that these symbolic creatures are the same.

What, then, do these creatures represent? We cannot rationally suppose that we are here left to mere conjecture. If, instead of seeking a solid scriptural foundation, we trust only to our imagination, there will be no end to strange conjectures; nor shall we possess any reliable means for discovering which is the true conjecture, or for ascertaining whether they be not alike false.

I take Rev. v. 8-10 to be the scriptural, and therefore infallible, key with which to open the true symbolical import of the Cherubim. It has long been a cause of astonishment to me that so many interpreters seem to overlook or ignore the important fact that the living creatures of the Apocalypse, as well as the four and twenty elders, are represented in this passage as singing, "Thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood, out of every kindred and tongue and people and nation; and hast made us unto our God kings and priests; and we shall reign on the earth." Is it not most obvious that no creature, either in heaven, or on earth, or under the earth, could sing this song but the re-

deemed from among men? Angels could not sing, "Thou hast redeemed us by thy blood." Much less could they say that they were thus redeemed out of every *kindred and tongue and people and nation!* Nor could they say that they have been made kings and priests unto God; nor that they shall reign on the earth! If the angels cannot sing this song, is it not equally absurd to ascribe it to the *providences* of God, or the *attributes* of God; or, in fact, to any imaginable being or thing, but the redeemed from among men? I take it, therefore, from this passage to be as clear as an axiom, that the Cherubim, or living creatures, are the ideal representatives of the redeemed church of Christ in that new life which believers have in him.

Barnes attempts to evade this obvious conclusion, because hostile to his hypothesis, that the living creatures, or Cherubim, represent the government of God, or what that government rests upon, viz. the divine power, intelligence, vigilance, energy. "These living creatures," says he, "are apparently represented in chap. v. 8, 9, as uniting with the redeemed from the earth in such a manner as to imply that they were themselves redeemed. But perhaps the language in vs. 9, 'And they sung a new song,' etc., though apparently connected with the four beasts in verse 8, is not designed to be thus connected. John may intend there merely to advert to the fact that a new song was sung, without meaning to say that the four living beings united in that song. For if he designed merely to say that the four living beings and the four and twenty elders fell down to worship; and then that a song was heard, though in fact, sung only by the four and twenty elders, he might have employed the language which he actually has done." I am not surprised at the timidity with which our author ventures this interpretation; but I am amazed that, with so explicit and unambiguous a statement as we have in this passage, he could assert that the living creatures are only *apparently* represented in chap. v. 8, 9, as uniting with the "redeemed from the earth, in such a manner as to imply that they were themselves redeemed."

Can any language be more explicit than this passage is in its declaration that the living creatures participated in this song, "Thou hast redeemed us"? It would be just as legitimate to infer that the living creatures only, to the exclusion of the elders, sung this song, as to suppose that the song proceeded only from the elders. The passage most assuredly declares that it was sung by both.

Hengstenberg takes the same view as Barnes, that the song was that only of the four and twenty elders, and hints at a different reading; but, even taking his own translation of the passage, by no legitimate mode of interpretation can we infer from the passage that the elders only sang this song.

We must not, however, overlook the difficulty raised by a different reading, hinted at by Hengstenberg, who did not, however, adopt it as the true reading. I shall present the difficulty in the words of Moses Stuart, who I think has not only stated it, but has pretty nearly suggested its solution. On Rev. v. 9, 10, he says, "One difficulty still remains. In vs. 9, we have ἡγόρασας . . . ἡμᾶς, *us*, first person plural; in vs. 10, we have (according to the received text), καὶ ἐποίησας αὐτοῖς, *them*, third person plural. The vulgate text reads ἡμᾶς for αὐτοῖς, and βασιλεύσομεν for βασιλεύσουσιν, thus preserving the first person plural throughout. But the weight of authority seems to be against this; and it is rejected in the late critical editions. Thus constituted, there appears to be a serious discrepancy between vs. 9 and vs. 10, scarcely consistent with the supposition that the same speakers utter both. Ewald being unable to solve the difficulty, proposes to expunge the ἡμᾶς of vs. 9, and to read ἡγόρασας . . . ἐκ πάσης φυλῆς κ.τ.λ., i.e. thou hast redeemed . . . (some) of every tribe, etc. This is not an impossible sense; for ἐκ (like קַד of the Hebrews) is frequently used in such a way in the New Testament (see Lex. ἐκ, 3. h.). But still, as there is *no authority* thus to change the text, it is better to choose some other method, if we may do so, for solving the difficulty. . . . If the text then, as it now stands, be correct, we must suppose that the first person plural is

dropped at the end of vs. 9, and that αὐταῖς in vs. 10 is referred by the speakers to φυλῆς, γλώσσης κ.τ.λ.; i.e. thou hast made every tribe, etc., to be kings and priests. Of course this meaning must be limited to such as were, or were to be, actually redeemed."

As thus stated by Prof. Stuart, it appears that, because there is pretty strong evidence from manuscripts for the pronoun and verbs in vs. 10 being in the third person, rather than in the first, according to the received text, it is presumed by some that the pronoun ἡμᾶς, *us*, in the preceding verse, should be omitted as spurious; but, for this omission, they have no authority, as ἡμᾶς is found in all but one codex. It cannot, therefore, be thrown out. If the third person being employed in vs. 10 be *really* inconsistent with the use of the first person in the verse preceding, I would rather, with the received text, retain the first person throughout the passage, than expunge without authority the ἡμᾶς in the ninth verse. We have a considerable amount of evidence for the received reading in vs. 10, while there is but the authority of one codex, the Alexandrian, and one version made from that codex, the Ethiopic, for the rejection of the ἡμᾶς in the ninth verse. It would, moreover, be much easier to account for the alteration of the tenth verse by some transcribers, than to account for the insertion of ἡμᾶς in vs. 9 in nearly every codex and version. If, however, there be sufficient evidence for departing from the received text in vs. 10, and I am inclined to think there is, Granville Penn has given the proper rendering thus: "And they sung a new song, saying, Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open its seals; for thou wast slain, and hast purchased *us* for God, by thy blood, out of every kindred and tongue and people and nation; and hast made *them* to become kings and priests to our God; and *they* shall reign on the earth." Elliott says, "the received ἡμᾶς is more simple; the sense in either case is substantially the same."

The change of person should present no difficulty. In the first part of the sentence (vs. 9), the elders and living crea-

tures view their salvation subjectively, while in the following verse, they view it objectively. We have another remarkable instance of a change of person of a somewhat similar kind in Zech. xii. 10 : "And they shall look upon me (חֲזֹק), whom they have pierced; and they shall mourn for him (חֲזֹק), as one that is in bitterness for his first-born." This change of person, where the same individuals are intended, is not unfrequent in impassioned discourse. Take the following as an example :

"Hence end their wooings? May they hence depart  
Never, and may the banquet now prepared,  
This banquet, prove *your* last." — *Cowp. Od.*

It must also be borne in mind that both the living creatures and the elders in the Apocalyptic vision, are but symbols of the redeemed. While they begin, therefore, by singing, "Thou hast redeemed *us*, it was quite natural for them after mentioning those whom they represented, viz. the redeemed out of every kindred and tongue and people and nation, to continue to speak objectively, in the third person, not of themselves, the symbols, but of the parties symbolized. The use of the ἡμᾶς in the commencement of their song, was sufficient to indicate their own symbolic signification, while the change of person in the succeeding verse appears designed by the divine Spirit to draw the reader's attention from the symbols, and to fix it upon those symbolized.

If the four living creatures, and the four and twenty elders, be not the redeemed of mankind, who are they? Or whom do they represent? They cannot be the angels, for these are also mentioned as being present in the vision, and as distinct from both the living creatures and the elders. These living creatures and elders are also distinct from the rest of the creation; for "Every creature which is in heaven, and on the earth, and under the earth, and such as are in the sea," joined on that occasion with the angelic hosts in singing the chorus of redemption, "Blessing, and honor, and glory, and power be unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever."

That the four living creatures and the four and twenty elders represent the redeemed of mankind is also evident, from the fact that the vials, or cups, full of odors which they bear, represent the "prayers of saints" (vs. 8).

We arrive at the same conclusion by considering the position which they occupy. Of all creatures they are represented as taking a position nearest to the throne of God, while the angels appear standing in an outer circle. Man was, indeed, created "a little lower than the angels"; but the great Creator in his incarnation, took into eternal union with the divine nature, not that of angels, but that of man; and thus elevated redeemed man above all other creatures. Is it possible to conceive of God's so honoring man's nature, by taking it into inseparable and everlasting union with his own; and yet not elevating that creature nature above every other?

The interpretation which we have given of this passage is confirmed by chap. xiv. 1-3, where we find the hundred and forty and four thousand, having the Father's name written on their foreheads; and who are said (vs. 4), to be redeemed from among men, singing a "new song" before the throne; and it is said (vs. 3) that "no one could learn that song but the hundred and forty and four thousand, which were redeemed from the earth." This *new song* is evidently the same as the *new song* sung by the four and twenty elders, and the four living creatures in the passage under consideration. I think Barnes has brought out the signification of *new* in this connection, thus: "*New* in the sense that it is sung consequent on redemption, and distinguished, therefore, from the song sung in heaven before the work of redemption was consummated." Now, none could learn that new song, much less sing it, "but the hundred and forty and four thousand which were redeemed from the earth"; but both the four and twenty elders, and the four living creatures are represented as singing this new song. Is it not, therefore, manifest that if none but "the redeemed from the earth" could sing this new song, and the four living creatures do

sing it, these must be none other than "the redeemed from the earth." In other words, the Lamb has "redeemed them with his blood, out of every kindred and tongue and people and nation."

Some interpreters take the four living creatures to represent the Gentile portion of the church, and the four and twenty elders the Jewish. Others again think the ministers of the church are represented by the four living creatures, while the four and twenty elders are representatives of its lay members. Against both these views is the fact that a number of completeness is employed with each of these symbols. Four, the signature of the earth from which the symbol is taken, is employed in the case of the living creatures; and four and twenty, the double of twelve, the number of completeness when applied to the church, is the number of the elders. Twelve, the double of six, and the multiple of twelve, as the perfect or complete number for the church, has its foundation in the fact that the Old Testament church was based upon the *twelve* tribes of Israel; and that of the New Testament on the *twelve* apostles of the Lamb (see Rev. xiv. 1-3; xxii. 12-17). For the reason now assigned, I regard each of these symbols, taken separately, as representing the whole church of Christ.

Here, I may be asked, how the whole of the redeemed can be represented by the four living creatures, if the four and twenty elders also represent the same redeemed company. To this I would reply, that it is common in Scripture to employ several types, or symbols, to represent the same person or thing. There are, for example, many types employed to represent Christ. It is sufficient that no two of these types represent its antitype in precisely the same aspect. These two symbols, therefore, the living creatures and the elders, may separately represent the whole redeemed church, provided they represent that church in different aspects. May not the four and twenty elders, with their crowns of gold, and seated upon thrones around the throne of God, represent the redeemed in their *exalted position*; while the four living

creatures represent the same redeemed multitude in the new *life* which they possess, and which they are yet to attain in much greater perfection in Christ Jesus ?

That the church in its *life* is the pregnant idea of the Cherubim, is evident from this, that in the Apocalypse and Ezekiel they are called *living* creatures (ζῶα and חַיִּים) nearly thirty times. Life is the predominant idea ; and life in its highest development of power and activity. Not only is this indicated by the appellation "living creatures," but also from the nature of the symbol. We have in it a combination of the most perfect specimens of animal life with which we are acquainted. The lion the king of the forest, the ox the most important domestic animal amongst the Jews, the eagle, the most perfect of the feathered tribe, and man, the intelligent lord of this lower world, all combined in one symbolic figure, in order to convey an idea of the perfection and fulness of that life in its manifold development which the redeemed are destined to possess in Christ. Hence, the ancient Jewish proverb, — "Four are the highest in the world, the lion among wild beasts, the ox among tame cattle, the eagle among birds, man among all (creatures); but God is supreme above all."

The abundance of eyes with which the Cherubim as well as the wheel-work accompanying them were replenished also indicates the same idea ; the eye being the symbol of intelligent life, the organ and index of the life-giving spirit. This view is also confirmed by the ceaseless activity ascribed to them. In Ezekiel they were "running and returning" with lightning speed ; while in the Apocalypse they are described as "resting not day or night."

I would here observe that, while we have in the symbol a combination of these four living creatures, man nevertheless predominates. This is evident from Ezek. i. 5, etc. : "And this was their appearance ; they had the likeness of a man ; and every one had four faces," etc. While each had four faces, they had all the general appearance of a man. Also, in Rev. iv. 7 it is said of the third living creature that it had

a face as a man; which, as Fairbairn justly observes, "is best understood to mean that, while the other creatures were unlike man in the face, though like in the body, this was like in the face as well."

The erect position ascribed to the Cherubim also bears out this interpretation. Does not the likeness of man predominating in the Cherubim strongly confirm our view, that they symbolize the redeemed "out of every kindred and tongue and people and nation?"

Let us next inquire whether any light is thrown upon our inquiry by the derivation. In his "Typology of Scripture" (p. 277) Fairbairn declares it a hopeless task to seek for the derivation of the word. "It is customary," says he, "in discourses on the Cherubim, both in this country and on the continent, to spend much labor in considering the derivation of the word 'Cherub,' with the view of determining the precise form and object of the Cherubim. This line of inquiry, however, is now abandoned, as one that can lead to no certain or profitable result. The real origin and import of that word is still a matter of doubtful disputation." I am, nevertheless, inclined to believe that the discovery of the true derivation is not so difficult as is here affirmed. I take it to be a compound word, from  $\text{כ}$ , the particle of similitude or likeness, and  $\text{כַּבֹּד}$ , a *multitude*. It appears to point to that "great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations and kindreds and people and tongues" (Rev. vii. 9). Names compounded in this manner are not uncommon in Scripture. Thus we have Caleb, as the heart; Calah, as verdure; Chased, as destroyer.

The derivation of the word Seraphim is still more apparent. It is obviously derived from the verb  $\text{שָׂרַף}$ , *to burn*; and is apparently designed to convey the idea of their burning ardor and zeal in the service of God.

Thus, of these two appellations, applied evidently to the same symbolic creatures, one conveys the idea of a multitude, while the other intimates that this multitude excels in zeal for the glory, and in the service, of their Creator and

Redeemer. The fact also that the name ζῶα, most commonly applied in Scripture to those cherubic and seraphic forms, is a term expressing life, clearly indicates that their zeal in the divine service is the outgrowth of that life which is given them in Christ.

Elliott understands the Cherubim or living creatures of Genesis and Ezekiel to be of "angelic nature,"<sup>1</sup> but the living creatures of the Apocalypse to represent the redeemed from among men. In speaking of the four and twenty elders and the four living creatures of the Apocalypse, he says: "Whatever their distinctive characters respectively, both the one and the other were unquestionably representatives of the redeemed from among the children of men. For this was the song of thanksgiving to the Lamb in which they were heard uniting in common chorus soon afterwards: 'Thou hast redeemed us unto God by thy blood, out of every kindred and tongue and nation.'" And in a note<sup>2</sup> he says: "Dean Woodhouse explains the Apocalyptic living creatures as angels; observing that no objection has been made to this explanation but their joining in the song 'Thou hast redeemed us by thy blood.' We might have thought that that one objection would have sufficed to convince him of its untenableness."

On the other hand, our author maintains, but without any attempted proof, that the Cherubim of Ezekiel are angelic. "The nature of the four ζῶα of Ezekiel was evidently angelical."<sup>3</sup> And to this assertion he appends the following note: "This seems to me so clear with reference to the Cherubim of the Old Testament that I am surprised that Fairbairn in his Typology, after Bähr, and Dr. Wilson in the Addenda at the end of his Bible Students' Guide, after Fairbairn, should have explained them as symbols of redeemed and glorified manhood." Now to me it seems still more strange that Elliott, after contending that the cherubic forms or ζῶα of the Apocalypse represent the redeemed, should assume, without a particle of proof, that the Cherubim or

<sup>1</sup> Horae Apoc. Vol. i. p. 88.

<sup>2</sup> Vol. i. p. 87.

<sup>3</sup> Vol. i. p. 89.

צִבְאוֹ of Ezekiel are not also symbols of "redeemed and glorified manhood." If the living creatures of the Apocalypse be symbolical of the redeemed, the Cherubim of the Old Testament must be the same. But of this presently.

Having ascertained, by the clearest testimony of the New Testament Scripture, that the Cherubim are a symbolical representation of the redeemed in their new life in Christ, let us now turn our attention to the Old Testament, to see whether its teachings be not in harmony with our interpretation of the New.

The first mention of the Cherubim is found in the history of our first parents' expulsion from the garden of Eden, as recorded in Gen. iii. 22-24: "Behold the man is become as one of us, to know good and evil: Therefore the Lord God sent him forth from the garden of Eden, to till the ground from whence he was taken. So he drove out the man; and he placed at the east of the garden of Eden Cherubims, and a flaming sword which turned every way to keep the way of the tree of life." Some interpreters suppose that the Cherubim are here represented as being placed in the garden to guard the way of the tree of life, and that the flaming sword was wielded by them for this purpose. Elliott, for example, says: "They are described as having been placed by God at the east end of the garden of Eden, and, with flaming swords that turned every way, keeping the way of the tree of life."<sup>1</sup> While we by no means deny the significance of the Cherubim being mentioned in immediate connection with the flaming sword, the passage does not, however, represent the Cherubim and the flaming sword as inseparably connected. The Cherubim were placed in the garden when our first parents were expelled, but not as the custodians of the tree of life. It was the flaming sword only which was placed there for this purpose. This is apparent from the Hebrew. וַיִּשְׁמֵר סָבִיבָהּ לְגַדְיָנָהּ אַדְיָתִיבִים, "and placed in the east of the garden of Eden the Cherubim," וַיָּבֵא לְהִשָּׁרְטָהּ, "and the flaming sword," etc., "which

<sup>1</sup> Horae Apoc., Vol. i. p. 88.

infolded itself to keep the way of the tree of life." It is not the Cherubim which turns to keep the way of the tree of life, but the flaming sword, infolding, like a devouring flame, to exclude fallen man from the tree which he had forfeited by transgression. The participle is here in the feminine singular, agreeing not with the Cherubim, which is in the masculine plural, but with the flaming sword. While man for his disobedience is banished from the garden, and excluded by the avenging sword of divine justice from all access to the tree of life, the Cherubim, the symbol of redeemed man in the new life which he has in Christ, takes his place, and in near proximity also to the tree of life. Here we have a gracious pre-intimation that, although man by transgression has brought death and banishment upon himself and his posterity, a great multitude of these by sovereign mercy shall be reinstated in the divine favor, and obtain through the obedience unto death of the second Adam, a life far superior to that which was forfeited in the first; and shall yet inherit the heavenly paradise, of which Adam's was but the type. While, in the clear light of the New Testament, we can discover the full import of this transaction, it is impossible to say how far its meaning was understood by our first parents; yet I am inclined to think that, "When the eye of man looked to the sword, with its burnished and fiery aspect, he could not but be struck with awe at the thought of God's severe retributive justice; but when he saw, at the same time, in near and friendly connection with that emblem of Jehovah's righteousness, living, or life-like forms of being, cast pre-eminently in his own mould, but bearing along with his, the likeness also of the choicest species of the animal creation around him; when he saw this what could he think but that still, for creatures of earthly rank, and for himself most of all, an interest was reserved by the mercy of God in things which pertained to the blessed region of life? That region could not now, by reason of sin, be actually held by him; but it was ideally held by composite forms of creature-life, in which his nature appeared as the

predominant element. And for what end? if not to teach that when that nature of his should have nothing to fear from the avenging justice of God, it should regain its place in the holy and blessed haunts from which it had meanwhile been excluded?"<sup>1</sup>

The next mention made of the Cherubim is in connection with the tabernacle, of whose furniture they formed a very important part. They had their place in the holy of holies, which was a type of heaven. "For Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands, which are the *figures of the true, but into heaven itself*, now to appear in the presence of God for us" (Heb. ix. 24). As the garden of Eden, where the Cherubim first make their appearance, was the type of the heavenly inheritance; so, also, is the holiest, in the tabernacle or temple. This is obviously the most appropriate position for those cherubic forms which symbolize the church in the manifold fulness of its heavenly life.

The Cherubim stood in the holy of holies, upon the mercy-seat, or propitiation (*τό ἱλαστήριον*, Heb. ix. 5); and the mercy-seat was typical of the Mediator, who is set forth as a "propitiation (*ἱλαστήριον*, Rom. iii. 25), through faith in his blood." The mercy-seat, or propitiation, was the exact measurement of the ark which contained the law; thus signifying that Christ as the surety and substitute of his people has fully met all the demands of the law on their behalf, rendering God propitious to all believers. Thus it is made to appear in the type, that in the salvation by Christ, "God is just, and yet the justifier of them who believe in Jesus."

As the Cherubim stood upon the mercy-seat, we are thus taught that the redeemed have no other foundation on which to stand in the presence of their offended, but reconciled God, but upon the finished work of their divine surety, who on their behalf, has fully met the claims of law and justice. The blood-stained mercy-seat is the only refuge for the guilty.

The Cherubim were not simply placed on, or attached to, the ends of the mercy-seat; but they were beaten out of the

<sup>1</sup> Fairbairn's *Typology of Scripture*, Vol. i. p. 267.

same mass of gold of which it was itself composed. It would have been much easier to make them separately, and attach them to the mercy-seat; but this would not have so distinctly prefigured the intimate and vital union of Christ and his redeemed people. They are "members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones." This union,—this oneness of Christ and his people, was forehadowed in the formation of our first parent Eve from the side of Adam (see Eph. v. 25–32). "I am the vine, ye are the branches." "I in them, and thou in me." "He that is joined to the Lord is one spirit." "For he that sanctifieth, and they who are sanctified, are all of one; for this cause he is not ashamed to call them brethren."

The Cherubim in Solomon's temple were made of olive-wood, and overlaid with pure gold; thus signifying that the redeemed are inwardly anointed with the oil of gladness, while outwardly they are adorned with a glorious righteousness.

The wings of the Cherubim touched one another, while they extended also from wall to wall; thus intimating that those many mansions which Christ has gone to prepare for his chosen people will be fully occupied by the great multitude of God's redeemed, and each one shall occupy the place prepared for him. The Redeemer "shall see of the travail of his soul, and be satisfied."

The attitude of the Cherubim on the mercy-seat was indicative of the communion of saints, as well as of their communion with God and with Christ. "The Cherubim shall stretch forth their wings on high, covering the mercy-seat with their wings; and their faces shall look one towards another; towards the mercy-seat shall the faces of the Cherubim be." The shekinah glory dwelt between them; and while their faces were towards one another, they were also towards the mercy-seat. How sweet is the fellowship of saints when God's glory illuminates every soul, and when the ground of their fellowship one with another is their mutual fellowship with Christ.

"In such society as this my weary soul would rest;  
The man who dwells where Jesus is must be forever blest."

The Cherubim in the holy of holies were two, — one on each end of the mercy-seat; and yet they were united, and their bond of union was the mercy-seat itself; for we have seen that they were beaten out of the same mass of gold as the mercy-seat on which they stood. Here we are taught that Christ, the true propitiation, is the bond of union in the church. The redeemed, both which are in heaven and on earth, are all one in him. In his death, moreover, he has broken down the middle wall of partition between Jew and Gentile; and now in him neither circumcision availeth anything, nor uncircumcision, but a new creature. Moreover, just in proportion as the believer realizes his interest in and union with Christ will he also realize and enjoy communion with those who bear the image of his divine Master.

Cherubim were also embroidered upon the vail of the temple. Now we learn from the apostle that the vail was typical of the humanity of Christ: "Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way, which he hath consecrated for us, through the vail, that is to say, his flesh" (Heb. x. 20). But the vail was the only way of access into the holy of holies; there was no passage from the holy to the holiest but through it. So Christ says, "I am the way, . . . . no man cometh unto the Father but by me." The Cherubim embroidered on the vail, therefore, indicates the way in which the true Cherubim, the redeemed church, enter heaven; it is "through the vail, that is to say, his flesh." In this dispensation of the fulness of time, the way into the holiest is clearly made manifest. When the true vail, the humanity of Christ, was rent asunder, — when the soul and body of the Crucified were separated in death, — the vail of the temple was also rent from top to bottom, thus declaring not only that the types of the law have been forever abolished, but that now the way into the holiest has been made clearly manifest in the death of Christ.

We have much additional light thrown upon our subject in the first and tenth chapters of Ezekiel. The prophet here

sees in vision the God of Israel coming in judgment from the north, the land of the Chaldeans, to which he is about to deliver into captivity backsliding Judah for their increasing declensions; and he appears accompanied by the Cherubim.

Above the heads of the Cherubim or living creatures there was a firmament, which is said to be as the color of the "terrible crystal." "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 the likeness as the appearance of a man above upon it. And I saw as the color of amber, as the appearance of fire round about within it; from the appearance of his loins even upward, and from the appearance of his loins even downward, I saw as it were the appearance of fire; and it had brightness round about. As the appearance of the bow that is in the cloud in the day of rain, so was the appearance of the brightness round about. This was the appearance of the likeness of the glory of the Lord." The crystal firmament here represents the divine *glory*, his moral perfections, especially his holiness. This may be seen by comparing the eleventh verse of Rev. xxi. with the twenty-third verse of the same chapter. In the former verse we are told that the light of the new Jerusalem was like the jasper stone, "clear as crystal"; and in the latter we learn that the light of the heavenly city was "the glory of God and of the Lamb." The clear crystal is, therefore, the same as the glory of God and of the Lamb. And what is this glory but the moral perfections of God, which appear in the face of Jesus Christ? This firmament beneath the throne, sustaining the throne, was like the "terrible crystal." How terrible are the moral perfections of God to those who are his enemies? Even the Seraphim, while in rapt admiration of these perfections they cried "Holy, holy, holy," in reverence veiled themselves with their wings; and at the sight the prophet exclaimed, "Woe is me! for I am undone; because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips; for mine eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts" (Isa. vi. 1, etc.).

Again, let us observe the appearance of fire in connection with the throne. Fire, in Scripture, is the most common symbol of God's punitive justice; and its appearance here indicates that the God of Israel is about to punish his rebellious people. But if we have the fire of avenging justice, we have also the "appearance of the bow that is in the cloud in the day of rain," which reminds us of God's covenant of mercy, of which his covenant with Noah was the type. In the midst of wrath God remembers mercy. Mercy to his covenant people, but judgment to his enemies.

Not only in the midst of the throne, but in the midst of the Cherubim who immediately surround the throne, is there fire; and this fire, moreover, which was to be scattered over the devoted city, was handed to him to whom it was given to execute this divine judgment by one of the Cherubim (Ezek. x. 2, 7). By this we learn that God's redeemed church has much to do in bringing divine judgments upon an ungodly world. As it was for Israel's sake that the plagues came in old time upon the Egyptians, so for the church's sake the ungodly world in subsequent ages has been made to feel the weight of the divine displeasure.

In Ezekiel's vision we have also, accompanying the Cherubim, enormous wheels, which I take to represent the unerring and irresistible power of God's providential operations. These wheels were so high that they were dreadful. How much above and beyond the comprehension of mortals are the ways of divine providence! "My thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the Lord. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts" (Isa. lv. 8, 9).

These wheels were so wonderfully constructed and impelled, that wherever the Cherubim were to go the wheels accompanied them, and moved with them in perfect unison; thus teaching that every turn in the wheels of divine providence tends to advance the best interests and to promote the ultimate triumph of God's redeemed people. "All things

work together for good to them that love God, and are called according to his purpose." The Mediator has been made "head over all things *to the church*."

These wheels, as well as the living creatures themselves, were full of eyes, the symbol of knowledge and intelligence. "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 which they four had" (Ezek. x. 12). Here we are distinctly taught that the wheels of providence are not moved by blind fate, but are infallibly guided and controlled by the unerring wisdom of the God of providence.

We observe, further, that the same spirit which was in the living creatures was also in the wheels which accompanied them. "Whithersoever the spirit was to go they went, thither was their spirit to go, and the wheels were lifted up over against them; for the spirit of the living creature was in the wheels. When those went these went; and when those were lifted up from the earth the wheels were lifted up over against them; for the spirit of the living creature was in the wheels" (Ezek. i. 20, 21; see also x. 17). I think we are here taught that the same spirit of Jehovah which dwells in the church, both that which is in heaven and on earth, moves forward and controls the complicated machinery of providence; so that in the variety of its operations it is made to move forward in perfect unison with all his gracious purposes of mercy. The same animating spirit that rules in the church presides and impels in providence.

In chapter nine, where God is represented as about to abandon the rebellious city to judgment, the glory of God appears on the *threshold* of the house (vs. 3), about to take its departure from the devoted city, and to allow judgment to do its work; and then a little farther on (Ezek. xi 22, 23), the glory of God had receded still farther, even to the Mount of Olives, accompanied by the Cherubim. "Then did the Cherubim lift up their wings, and the wheels beside them; and the glory of the God of Israel was over them above. And the glory of the Lord went up from the midst

of the city, and stood upon the mountain, which is on the east side of the city." In like manner, when the Jews of later times had provoked God by the rejection and crucifixion of his son, Jesus Christ, he abandoned them to judgment; and Jesus, who is "the brightness of his glory and the express image of his person," departed from them, and ascended from the Mount of Olives; but as the glory of God in Ezekiel when departing was still accompanied by the Cherubim, so when Jesus departed from the apostate people who had rejected him, he did not forsake his true people, represented by the Cherubim. They are "risen with him," and "made to sit together with him in heavenly places"; and "where two or three are met together in his name there is he in the midst." "Lo," says he, "I am with you always, even unto the end of the world."

Before concluding this Article I would make a few observations upon the shekinah, or visible glory of Jehovah, which dwelt between the Cherubim, over the mercy-seat.

The word *שִׁכִּינָה* is not found in this form in the Hebrew Scriptures. It was employed by the ancient Jews, especially in the targums, to designate the visible symbol of the divine glory. The word is derived from the Hebrew root *שָׁכַן*, to dwell; and this word is frequently employed to express the indwelling of the divine glory in the midst of Israel; but especially in the tabernacle or temple. Take the following as examples: "Let them make me a tabernacle, that I may dwell among them" (Exod. xxv. 8); "And I will dwell among the children of Israel, and will be their God" (Exod. xxix. 45); "This is the hill in which God delighteth to dwell; yea, the Lord will dwell in it forever" (Ps. lviii. 16); "Remember this Mount Zion, wherein thou hast dwell" (Ps. lxxiv. 2).

Not only did the shekinah glory dwell between the Cherubim, in the most holy place, but the visible symbol of the divine presence also dwelt in the midst of the camp of Israel in the desert, resting over the tabernacle, and moving forward when they were to pursue their wilderness journey

under its guidance. "The Lord went before them in a pillar of cloud by day, and by night as a pillar of fire" (Exod. xiii. 21).

There is a Rabinical tradition, with how much of truth it is hard to determine, in which it is said that the four standards, borne by the four standard-bearing tribes, Judah, Ephraim, Reuben, and Dan, were respectively the animals composing the Cherubim. Judah's standard, we are told, was a lion, that of Ephraim an ox, Reuben's a man, and that of Dan an eagle. This tradition, it is said, is confirmed by an apparent allusion to these standards in Scripture. Judah is said to be "a lion's whelp; and we have "the lion of the tribe of Judah." Ephraim is said to be "an ox unaccustomed to the yoke." The word Benjamin signifies behold a son, and his standard was a man. The eagle is, in Scripture, the symbol of judgment; and Dan, which bore this standard, signifies judgment. Now if there be any truth in this tradition it is remarkable that these four standards of Israel, as they encamped around the tabernacle, with its mercy-seat and shekinah glory, were the same as the Cherubim surrounding the throne of glory, and representing the true Israel redeemed by the blood of the Lamb, out of every kindred and tongue and people and nation.

If the visible symbol of the divine glory dwelt in the tabernacle between the Cherubim, the true shekinah dwelt in Jesus Christ, the true temple. "In him dwelt the fulness of the Godhead bodily" (Col. ii. 9). "We beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth" (John ii. 19).

Jesus, also, by his spirit operating through the truth, dwells potentially in the hearts of his redeemed people. They thus become the temples of the Holy Ghost; so that even on earth the true shekinah dwells in the church of the redeemed. A much more glorious and complete fulfilment, however, of what was symbolized by the shekinah's dwelling between the Cherubim and in the camp of Israel will yet take place. But the final judgment must intervene.

When our blessed Lord comes the second time, without sin, unto salvation, to judge the world in righteousness and to gather his redeemed into his eternal kingdom of glory, then "the tabernacle of God will be with men, and he will dwell with them; and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God" (Rev. xxi. 3).

---

### ARTICLE III.

#### EARLY NEW ENGLAND PSALMODY.

BY REV. INCREASE N. TARBOX, D.D., BOSTON, MASS.

WHEN the Pilgrims landed at Plymouth they brought with them, for the service of praise in their public worship, Mr. Henry Ainsworth's version of the Psalms. A well-preserved copy of this book (not of the earliest edition) belongs to the Prince Library, now in the keeping of the Boston Public Library. On a fly-leaf of the book is a brief entry by Rev. Thomas Prince himself, which reads as follows: "T. Prince, Plymouth, May 1, 1782. I have seen an edition of this version, in 1618. And this version of Ainsworth was sung in Plymouth Colony, and, I suppose, in the rest of N. E. till the New England version was printed."

Mr. Henry Ainsworth was the teacher in the English church at Amsterdam where he was associated in the ministry with Mr. Francis Johnson. It is not unlikely that the copy of Ainsworth's version which Mr. Prince saw (printed in 1618) was the earliest edition of the work.

Governor Bradford, in his Dialogue, written in 1648, between "some young men born in New England and sundry ancient men that came out of Holland and old England," has this pleasant descriptive passage touching Mr. Ainsworth:

"Mr. Henry Ainsworth, a man of a thousand, was teacher of this church at Amsterdam, at the same time when Mr. Johnson was pastor. Two worthy men they were, and of excellent parts. . . . He [Mr. Ainsworth] ever maintained good correspondence with Mr. Robinson at