

## The cherubim : their meaning, design, and use as symbols and an hieroglyph, unfolded in an exegetical tract.

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THE CHERUBIM...

by

G. Duffield

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THE  
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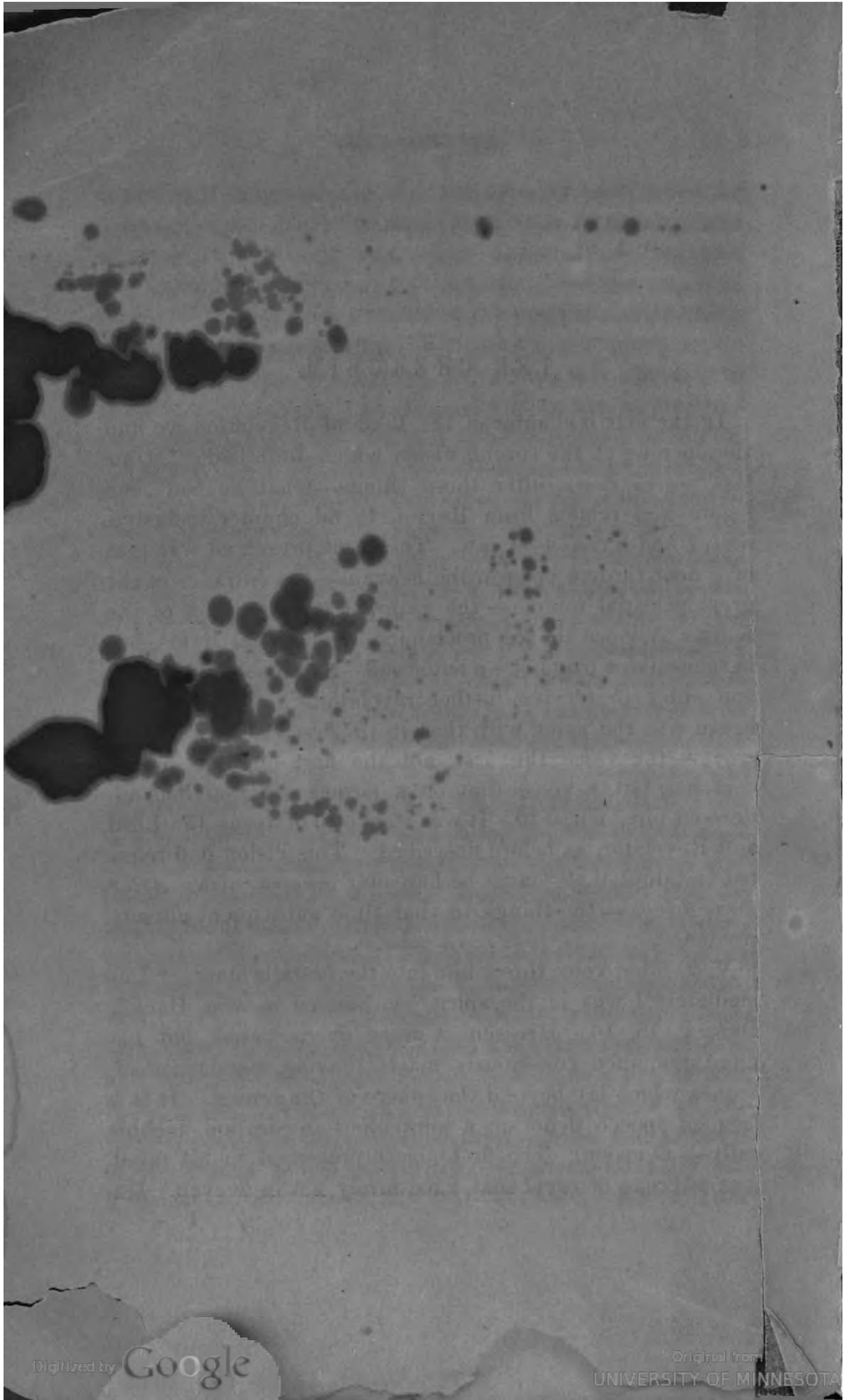
(REPRINTED FROM "WAYMARKS IN THE WILDERNESS.")

BY  
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PASTOR OF THE FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CONGREGATION OF DETROIT, MICH.

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IN the fourth chapter of the Book of Revelation we find the opening of the second vision which John had: "*After this*"—*μετὰ ταῦτα*, after those things—what he had seen before and relates from Rev. i. to 3d chapter inclusive. *εἶδον*, I had a vision—I saw. The scene presented was that of a door thrown open in the heavens—the entrance of the great celestial temple—the gateway to the palace of the King. A voice thence proclaimed in colloquial terms, but in tones like a trumpet—a bugle call—that he should ascend and enter to receive further revelations. The voice he heard was the same with that in the first vision—*ἡ φωνὴ ἡ πρώτη*—the voice the first, not the first on that special occasion, but a voice that on a former occasion had addressed him. Ch. i. 10. It was the voice of Jesus, the Lord and Revelator, as before described. This vision had referred to things that "must be hereafter"—*μετὰ ταῦτα*. *After these things*—the things to that time subsequent already predicted.

V. 2. That voice threw him into the ecstatic state. "Immediately I was in the spirit," entranced as was Daniel. Dan. x. 15, 16. His senses were overpowered, but his mind remained consciously active, having cognizance of scenes which lay beyond the sphere of the senses. It is a form of speech denoting a miraculous inspiration, technically—a vision. The first object presented to his mind was a throne or royal seat, fixed firmly, set in heaven. He

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describes it in accordance with the perceptions of sense, for it was not possible to make it intelligible to us, creatures of sense, in any other way. That throne (v. 3,) he says, was occupied. "One sat on the throne" — καθήμενος; it is in the participial form, describing the position, but nothing more of the form apparent. The inference or presumption is that that form was human, resembling what he saw in the first vision. Rev. i. 12, 16. Yet it is not so said — ὁ καθήμενος — the seated, "he that sat." Nothing farther of the aspect and form of the occupant of the throne is related, but that, he that sat on the throne was to look upon — ὅμοιος ὄρασει λίθῳ ἰάσπιδι καὶ σαρδίῳ — "like for appearance to a stone, a jasper, and sardius" — a most brilliant gem, blending the intensely lucid, crystalline white, of the jasper, with the flame-like redness of the sardius — "the stone" destined to destroy (Dan. ii. 35) the nations of the earth, "the brightness of the Father's glory." Heb. i. 3. Described by Moses, (Exod. xxiv. 10, 17,) as he saw him on Sinai. It sublimely denotes the nameless majesty of God. "And there was a rainbow round about the throne, in sight like unto an emerald." Ezek. i. 28. The rainbow was the token of God's covenant with Noah for the perpetuation of the seasons, and the exemption of the world from any future destruction by a flood. It was painted by His Almighty hand upon the dark and stormy clouds of the retiring tempests of the deluge. It implied that while the throne or government of Christ should be maintained amid storms and convulsions, yet should they prove ineffectual for its overthrow. The covenant of God will stand firm and sure, and, under the administration of the incarnate Son of God, nothing shall overcome it. The emerald green color predominated in the bow, denoting the thickness and darkness of the clouds, which proportionately gives intensity and brilliance to this above the other iris hues. Green is the

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rich, refreshing, luxuriant hue of the vegetable creation, of nature generally, and is above all others most pleasant to the eyes. So the covenant of God encircling the throne, is the enlivening object of faith, which inspires with hope and joy all that behold it.

V. 4. "And round about the throne were four and twenty seats (*θρόνοι*, thrones,) and upon the seats I saw four and twenty elders sitting, clothed in white raiment, and they had on their heads crowns of gold." This scene presents to view a grand company or congress of royal dignitaries, subordinate to, yet associated with, the Sovereign occupying the central highest throne at the apex of the semicircle, the celestial Divan. They do not represent *angels*, for the description afterwards of their adoration and praise, ch. v. 9, 10, shows that they were "the ancients" (Isa. xxiv. 23) before whom the Lord reigns gloriously, — redeemed saints of the human race. Their garments of white indicated their priestly character, and the crowns of gold on their heads show royal priests and kings, (chap. v. 10,) they affirm.

5. "And out of the throne proceeded lightnings, and thunderings, and voices"—the very force and fury of the tempest. Terrific judgments should be ordered by the Sovereign King. The instruments of vengeance should come at His command. The Lord Christ shall reign till He hath put all enemies under His feet. He lacks not means for the infliction of His wrath, but rides in the whirlwind and directs the storm. This scene displays the pomp and majesty of the Divine providence administered by Him.

"And there were seven lamps of fire burning before the throne, which are the seven Spirits of God." The golden candlestick in the temple had seven lamps, and it stood before the entrance to the Holy of holies. The interpreta-

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tion of this symbol was given to John, who says it denoted the Spirit of God complete in all His offices. Ch. i. 4. His agency in enlightening, purifying, reproof, transforming, regenerating, beautifying, quickening, transforming, is the glorious element of Christ's power, the efficient force of His dominion. John v. 21, 27.

6. "And before the throne there was a sea of glass like unto crystal." This symbol corresponds with "the molten sea" in the temple, which stood in front of the altar. It was thirty cubits, forty-five feet in circumference, and five cubits or seven and a half feet deep; a reservoir of water, furnished with vents or fascets, through which the water might be drawn into ten lavers or troughs on its side, in which the priests were to wash the offerings, and themselves in the sea. 1 Kings, vii. 23, 39; 2 Chron. iv. 6. The symbol aptly represents the purifying virtue of the atoning sacrifice of Christ. Mal. iii. 3; Tit. ii. 14; 1 Pet. i. 19; 1 John i. 7. It is this which opens the way, and is the only means of access, to the throne of our Saviour God.

"And in the midst of the throne and round about (κύκλω, in the circle) of the throne, were four beasts, (ζωα, living creatures, things, forms,) full of eyes before and behind. The word ζωα, translated beasts, does not mean θηρια, wild, ravenous creatures. Daubuz translates it "wights," an obsolete expression, which was derived from the Saxon *wiht*, denoting lively, nimble, active, swift; though the German *wicht* has an opposite signification of heavy, weighty. The original word ζων denotes whatever possesses or is endowed with life. Woodhouse (on the Apocalypse, p. 106, in note,) says, "Plato has been observed to apply the term Ζων to God. (Dial. Timæus.) To which we might add, that Aristotle has done the same: φαμεν δε τον θεον ειναι Ζων αιδιον, αριστον. (Metaphysic, lib. xiv. cap. viii. Ζων is anything which has life, and in its highest signification, may

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be applied to Him who alone "has life in Himself." John v. 26. Christ, in Apoc. i. 18, calls Himself ὁ ζῶν, the living. It is the same word which is used by the Septuagint translation to designate the **חַיִּוֹת** seen by Ezek. i. 5, afterwards in chap. x. 1, 2, &c., called **כְּרוּבִים**, *χερσβιμ*, Cherubim. It is used in Gen. i. 24, to designate a portion of the beasts or animals created on the fifth day; frequently, more especially quadrupeds, the creatures domesticated and used to assist man in working and bearing burthens. In 2 Sam. xxii. 11, and Ps. xviii. 10, it is said of God, "He rode upon a cherub. **וַיִּרְכַּב עַל-כְּרוּב**, did fly; "yea, he did fly upon

the wings of the wind"—"was seen upon the wings of the wind." The cherub was one of the faces of the cherubim, especially that of the ox, the calf, the bull, differently named, but of the same species, the beast of burden; what the Latins called *jumentum*, the worker at the plow, in the cart, or wagon.

Solomon directed that "the molten sea" should be supported by twelve oxen, whose bodies were under the laver, their backs being its resting place, and showing outside of it but the face and head. 1 Kings vii. 27, 37. To the beholder they appeared to be "within and round about the sea"—*ἐν μέσῳ καὶ περιγῶ*. In the vision of John, the *Zωα*, as seen by him, are said to be "*in the midst of the throne and round about the throne*;" that is, the bodies were under toward the centre, and the heads outside and around on the sides of the throne. Their office and use evidently were those of supporters, bearers, carriers of the throne. The description given of the cherubim in Ezek. i. 2, 10, of the seraphim in Isa. vi., and of the hieroglyphic forms attached to the ark of the covenant, and mercy seat, as described in Exod. xxxvii. 7, 9; xxv. 19, 23, shows that the *Zωα*, of which the cherubic figures were the hieroglyphic representation, what-

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ever might be their nature and meaning, held the same relation and performed the same functions toward the throne of Jehovah of Hosts. The circumstantial differences do not impair the general identity, any more than do the varying accounts we have of the same thing by different persons, and under different aspects and conditions, when observed from different points of view. Whatever the *Zwa* therefore might be, they were the supports and bearers of the throne; in other words, according to the analogy of the symbol, the instrumental agencies or forces employed by the great Sovereign Lord, in maintaining and carrying forward His providential government. Their being full of eyes before and behind, aptly represents their abundant fitness for the service they render; for the eyes, being the inlets of knowledge, the means of perception and observation, and being plentifully on all sides provided, qualified them for the work assigned them, just as the keen visual powers and intelligence of trained steeds in a chariot, fit them to receive the direction and instruction of the driver for the employment of his force and accomplishment of his will.

This simple, obvious, and generic idea, will enable us to determine satisfactorily, we think, the meaning of the cherubim in every stage of their history, under the various aspects in which they have been presented to view, from the very expulsion of our first parents from Eden, down through the patriarchal ages and those of the Israelitish theocracy, whether in the lifeless metallic furniture of the tabernacle, the seraphim seen by Isaiah, or the *Zwa* of Ezekiel, or of John in this last and magnificent vision which he had of their forms and functions.

The word כְּרֻבִים, is in the plural of the noun sing. כְּרוּב. It is differently derived, but that derivation, to us

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most satisfactory, makes it a compound word, consisting of the prefix כִּ caph, simul, as, like as, and רִבִּים or רֹבִים, signifying great ones, mighty ones, princes, prefects, workers, strugglers, contesters, many, large, vast, according to the nature of the object whose property is meant to be designated by it, and according as it may be literally or metaphorically used. The word translated, as thus derived, explains itself. The cherubim were representative resemblances of the mighty ones, as, like as רִבִּים the mighty ones, the great, powerful, magnates, potentates, &c. But who or what were the רִבִּים, or רֹבִים, or רַבִּים, *Rubim, Roubim, Rabbim?* The word denoted the persons of Deity, and, as applied to Jehovah, was equivalent with אֱלֹהִים; whence *Rabbi, Magister*, Lords spiritual, and *Elohim*, plural always, but not correctly translated in the singular number, God, θεός. 2 Kings vi. 16, "For they are the great רִבִּים, who are with us." Ezra v. 8, "The house אֱלֹהֵא רַבָּא of the great God." Prov. xxvi. 10, רַב "the great one who formed all things." Especially Isa. liii. 11, "By his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many." יְצַדִּיק shall make justification, or cause vindication, render satisfaction, לְרַבִּים to the mighty ones; "therefore will I divide him a portion with the great," בְּרַבִּים, with the mighty ones, "because He hath poured out His soul unto death," made naked for death His soul; and "He bore the sin of many," נָשָׂא חַטָּאת רַבִּים, rendered an offering, made a sacrifice, a sin-offering to the mighty ones. The term רֹבִים, or רַבִּים, being a title applied to Jehovah, and equivalent therefore with אֱלֹהִים, Elohim, it is pertinent and necessary, in this attempt to analyze its meaning, to

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determine what the latter meant. That it is a plural noun, and is used in close connection with the singular יהוה Jehovah, to denote the one only living and true Creator of all things, will be denied by none. That no form of speech could more aptly express the Scriptural idea of a triune God, the divine nature essentially one, existing and exerting its infinite energies in three persons, or distinctive personal subsistences, is unquestionable. No other language of later date than the Hebrew, and its cognate dialects, possesses terms which, without a periphrase, can express the precise and full import of the words אֱלֹהִים, יהוה, Jehovah Elohim, rendered incorrectly by the Greek Septuagint, ὁ κυριος ὁ θεος, and in the Latin, Dominus Deus, and in the English, *the Lord God*. The denials and criticisms of Jews, rationalists, and other anti-trinitarians, have no force against the significance of such a peculiar, and unique, idiomatic form of speech as this; especially when we take into view that the Scriptures are miraculously inspired; that it is the designation of Himself, which God, from the very beginning, has used in His addresses and communications to men, whether directly or through His prophets, who have reported the same to us from His own mouth; and that this Trinity, or Tripersonality, in One Essence, pervades and is kept perpetually in view in the Sacred Scriptures. "There are three that bear record in Heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost, and these three are One," 1 John v. 7, Jehovah Elohim. As to the meaning of the word Jehovah, compounded from different tenses of the verb יהיה, or of יה and יהוה, and aptly denoting the self-sufficient, self-existing, essential, supreme Being, all are agreed. The word Elohim אֱלֹהִים, designating three personal agencies in that essence, Jeho-

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vah, is derived from the verb **הִלַּף**, juravit, he swore. It denotes the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, not only as objects of adoration, by whom men make oath, but themselves, as having brought themselves, under the obligation of their own oath. This oath is that under which Jehovah, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, bound Himself in the covenant made for the redemption of fallen man; to which reference is often made in the Scriptures. See Heb. vii. 16; xiii. 20; Isa. xlix. 8; Heb. vi. 17. For, in the fulfilment of that covenant, the divine essence, Jehovah, in the person of the Son, the second of the glorious Trinity, has assumed human nature into permanent union, and thus constituted the God-man, Jehovah Jesus, the representative of the Godhead, and the efficient Sovereign of the universe. The declared design of the whole scheme of redemption, to which God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, by oath are committed, is the enthronement of the Son as the glorious exhibition of the Godhead in union with humanity. He is the appointed Sovereign Ruler of the universe, and is sustained by all the forces and agencies of the Infinite Eternal Three in One. This glorious constitution forms the warp and woof of the entire web of revelation, as unfolded in the sacred Scriptures. It pervades the word of God from Genesis to Revelation. The cherubim form its hieroglyphic representation. A careful examination of the Bible account will show that in and through them, as significant symbols, grouped in one impressive and marvellous display, we are taught the fact that the divine agencies of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, the triune Jehovah, all mutually and severally stand pledged to each other, by oath, and to man by promise, to co-operate for the redemption of sinners; that, in the prosecution of this work, the human nature is to be exalted, and incorporated into permanent union with the divine, in the person of the Son

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of God; that God in Christ is the declared and destined Lord and Ruler of the universe; that subservient to His will, and efficiently directed and controlled by Him, are all the mighty forces and energies, and whatever agencies may be necessary to maintain and establish His universal dominion. The cherubim always appear as bearers, supporters, or carriers of the throne of the Lord, while prosecuting and accomplishing the glorious work of redemption. Being presented to us therefore in this relation and aspect, as the bearers and supporters of His throne, the surroundings of His majestic presence, the resemblance directs us obviously to the forces and agencies by which the Lord, Christ, Jehovah of Hosts, carries out and executes the great interests of His government.

Now this government of God is twofold; 1st, that of His physical providence, as the creator and upholder of all things in heaven and earth; and 2d, that of His mediatorial rule or dominion.

The first is natural and rightful to Him as one of the Elohim, God equal with the Father. The last is a totally different thing, being an extraordinary device of infinite wisdom and power, a mystery hid from the foundation of the world, not revealed in the natural creation, but to be unfolded and executed by the Son of God incarnate, who, by the triune, Jehovah Elohim, has been appointed heir of all things, Heb. i. 2, and is efficiently executing His administrative sway, Eph. i. 10, "that in the dispensation of the fulness of time he might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in Heaven and which are on earth."

In confirmation of these views we trace, through the history of the past, as given in the Bible record, the cherubic manifestations made in different stages or dispensations under this administrative rule of the Lord God, destined,

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as God incarnate, to be the Sovereign Lord of all. In the divine Word, he first appears after the fall of man in Eden, as the voice of the Lord God **קוֹל יְהוָה אֱלֹהִים**, the voice or word of Jehovah Elohim, walking, **מִתְהַלֵּךְ**. The voice is a personal title, for what was heard was the tread of his footsteps. He came the representative of Jehóvah Elohim, one of the mighty personages of the Godhead. This title identifies him with the *ὁ λογος τῆ Θεου*, the word of God, (John i. 1, 14), that pitched His tent, *εσκηωσεν*, dwelt among men. The first representation or display of Himself made by God to man was in the creation, and in the particular arrangements and ordinances, or constitution granted and provided in Eden. Of these we have but a few hints recorded, in what we read concerning the tree of life and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. Adam was created in the image and likeness of God, in righteousness and holiness; and, so endowed, he was able, intuitively, like God, to discern the nature of things in the material and animate world around him. Of this, proof was given in the names used by him to designate the creatures, which are according to and expressive of their natures. Gen. ii. 19, 20, 23. While innocent and obedient he could look through nature up to nature's God. Creation was the bright mirror in which to discern the glories of his Creator, and worship and commune with Him. In himself he might discern traces of the divine moral perfections. He was nature's high priest, so to speak, God's picture of Himself; His image and likeness, and endowed with sovereign dominion over all the earth. Lord of this lower creation, he had no reason to fear harm from God, or dread His presence. As God's representative and vicegerent, he had authority over all the earth. But he had no sooner sinned than he had rebelled and forfeited all his possessions, au-

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thority, and life itself. All was changed. The threatened penalty had certified to him what he might expect—dying, he should die. The prospect filled him with dismay. He was liable at any moment to have that sentence of death executed, and through the promptings of instinct, under consciousness of guilt, he fled for escape from God. But the whole created universe was inadequate to give him any knowledge of God that might inspire hope or comfort his heart after he had sinned and fallen. He needed, as a guilty, ruined sinner, condemned by the law he had violated, to know what God might, and could, or would be pleased to do, if anything, to deliver him from the death and destruction to which he had become liable. His own reason was inadequate to it, so was the light of nature. He must be indebted for it, therefore, to a new revelation from God Himself, if ever he could know that escape was possible, that there were pardons with the Most High, or anything but wrath and terror for the guilty.

This, as we learn from the history given in the third chapter of Genesis, was mercifully vouchsafed by God to our fallen parents. A deliverer, the seed of the woman, was promised afterward. They were expelled from Eden, but not cast out from God in utter despair. In their own righteousness and innocence they could not confide, for they had lost them—defaced, destroyed them, by their own guilt. To a sacrificial victim they were taught, by “the voice of God,” to look for atonement and forgiveness. “The Lord God made coats of skins and clothed them.” These were significant, symbolical procedures. Animal sacrifice, for expiatory purposes, directly instituted by God, had their origin, and man was taught to look for covering, from the sacrifice, for his guilt and nakedness. Heb. xi. 4, teaches, that animal sacrifices were divinely authorized; for on no other ground could Abel have offered such in faith, and been

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approved and accepted of God. The paradisaic institutions and ordinances, all being arrangements for the worship of innocent creatures only, were no longer suitable. It was an act of mercy, on the part of God, to exclude fallen man from having access to them. "And the Lord God said, behold the man! He was as one of us, to know good and evil, and now, lest he put forth his hand, and take also of the tree of life, that he should eat and live forever!" v. 22. It is the language of deep emotion; an unfinished sentence, suppressed, as it were, amid the sobbings of grief, rendering utterance difficult. The ellipsis may be as well, and better, supplied: "I will send him, or lead him, forth from the garden." This was done, in fact. "So He drove out the man," as a shepherd drives his flock, with sufficient demonstrative violence to let him know he must forthwith hasten from the garden; and it is added, "He placed, at the east of the Garden of Eden, cherubims." (וַיִּשְׁכֵּן *habitavit, caused to dwell, tented*; מִכְרָס, from the East, לְגַן-עֵדֶן to the garden of Eden אֶת-הַכְּרֻבִּים the cherubim.) The transaction was that of putting or placing in a tabernacle, perchance some bower, enclosure or copse, near the entrance or gateway, the cherubim, "and a flaming sword, on the eastern side or edge of the garden, which turned every way, to keep the way to the tree of life." וַיֹּאֵת לַחַט הַחֶרֶב, and the flaming of the sword, הַמְתַּחַפֶּכֶת that turneth itself,—revolving, thus acting as a guard to prevent entrance into the garden, and access to the tree of life. Moses here speaks of the cherubim as something well known, and needing no description. What was its appearance or form, we learn not from this or any account of it, in the sacred Scriptures, until the period when, at the direction of Moses, Bezaleel made the hieroglyphic forms attached to the mercy-seat, overlying the ark

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✓ of the covenant, in the holy of holies, and which were placed in the inner chamber of the tabernacle; and they are partially described, Exod. xxv. 17, 22; xxxvii. 6, 9. These hieroglyphic forms had faces, but of what form is not here stated. They were the appointed place for access to and communion with God. Oracular responses were thence to be had also. Instances of their use for such purposes, and of answers having been obtained, are noticed, Exod. xxviii. 30; Num. vii. 39; 1 Sam. ix. 9, 19; xiv. 37; xxviii. 6, 15; xxiii. 11, 12. These hieroglyphic forms, there is every reason to believe, were resemblances of the cherubim first placed at the entrance to Eden. The patterns of them were shown to Moses in the Mount. Exod. xxv. 40; xxvi. 30. Acts vii. 44. Heb. viii. 5; ix. 9. These patterns were representations, diagrams, models, probably, in some circumstances, varying from the original forms placed at the gate of Eden; something intended to be exemplars to him, and give him an idea or view, not so much backward to them, but forward to the heavenly or spiritual realities of which the cherubim were the hieroglyphic. But however modified in form and material of structure the cherubic figures of the tabernacle may have been from the cherubim of Eden, by reason of being adapted to a different dispensation, and its relations and restrictions of divine worship, there undoubtedly was a general substantial agreement, especially in the visage or facial appearances of the image forms. The original or paradisaic hieroglyphic had faces; for Cain, when, by the sentence of God, after the murder of Abel, he was expelled from his father's family, and condemned to be "a fugitive and a vagabond in the earth," said, "From thy face shall I be hid." Gen. iv. 14. The word מַפְּנֵי is in the plural, *from thy* (Jehovah's) *faces*. Gen. iv. 14 In the 16th verse, it is said, "and Cain went out from the

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presence of the Lord," מִלְפְּנֵי יְהוָה *from the faces of Jehovah.* The faces, in all subsequent cherubic manifestations, were those of the lion, the bull, calf or ox, the man and the eagle. Doubtless these were the faces, also, of the first cherubim shown to Adam, and ordained to be some permanent, abiding manifestation of the presence of Jehovah, and, hence, naturally arose the current familiar phrase, the faces of God. In some way, most probably by the flaming sword, revolving, hovering, overshadowing, vibrating, God gave tokens to the senses of men of His immediate presence. This flaming sword answers to the brilliant light or Shekinah—the shining of the glory of God over and from between the cherubic figures in the holy of holies, by which the presence of Jehovah Elohim was visibly, to the eyes of the High Priest, made known. The ark of the covenant, on which rested the mercy-seat, with the cherubic figures on each side, formed the throne or seat of Jehovah of Hosts, the Elohim of Israel. The form or figure assumed by the light beaming forth over it, is not described. The Jews called that light the Shekinah; but the Scriptural use of this word expresses the idea of sacred indwelling. The holy of holies was the presence-chamber of the Lord God of Israel. See Exod. xxv. 8; xxix. 45. Num. v. 3. Ps. lxxviii. 16; lxxiv. 12. It designated, also, the brilliant light or glory that dwelt on Sinai, when God descended there. Exod. xxxiv. 16. The light or glory, therefore, naturally, was regarded as the symbol of the Lord's presence, and so was called the glory of the Lord. In Num. vii. 89, the same idea is intimated, though not so explicitly stated as to formal appearance. His effulgence, Rom. ix. 4, ἀπαύγασμα τῆς δόξης, Heb. i. 3. Ezekiel, in his vision of the cherubim, (ch. i. 26, 29,) speaks of this brilliant light as though it were an intense irradiation from or around the appearance of a man upon the throne. It

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was, he says, "the likeness as the appearance of a man above, upon it" — on the throne. "This was the appearance of the likeness of the glory of God," *i.e.*, Jehovah of Hosts presented visibly in human form effulgent. In Ps. lxxx. 1, He is addressed: "He that dwelleth between the cherubim"—inhabiting the cherubim יֹשֵׁב הַכְּרֻבִּים. So in Ps. xcix. 1. "He sitteth (dwelleth) between the cherubim"—inhabiteth the cherubim יֹשֵׁב הַכְּרֻבִּים. 2 Sam. vi. 2, 'The ark of God הָאֱלֹהִים the three persons bound by covenant, the divine covenanters, or oath-pledged, where is invoked the name,—“the name of Jehovah of Hosts, who dwelleth in the cherubim, upon it” צִלְיוֹ הַכְּרֻבִּים, inhabiting the cherubim—over it or upon it. 1 Sam. iv. 4 has the same phrase, which is somewhat modified in 1 Chron. xiii. 6, the ark of the divine oath-bound covenanters הָאֱלֹהִים, Jehovah inhabiting the cherubim יֹשֵׁב הַכְּרֻבִּים, who is invoked there, אֲשֶׁר נִרְאָה שָׁם. Ezekiel, chap. x. 20, leaves no room for doubt as to what they were. "This is ✓ the living creature that I saw *under* the God of Israel, and I knew that they were the cherubim." אֱלֹהֵי-יִשְׂרָאֵל הַתַּחַת, not under but *pro*, instead of, Gen. xxx. 2; L. 19, in the place of, for, the substitute, — here, therefore, the representation. They were the hieroglyphic exhibition. In estimating them and their import, the unity of the hieroglyphic must be kept in view. The throne, or ark of the covenant, mercy-seat, four-faced figures, and glory, together have a joint, general, and comprehensive significance. The cherubim, therefore,—that is, the *tout ensemble*, the throne, its supporters or attendant guardians, the four-faced figures, and the beaming glory over them in human form—we must regard to have been a visible manifestation of the enthroned-

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ment, in human nature, of the person of the Son of God; one of the triune Deity bound in covenant, by oath, for man's redemption, whose throne, or divine mediatorial government, is supported by the concurrent, co-operating agency of the persons of the Godhead, in the various forces and methods employed in the omnipotent providence or dominion of Jehovah God יְהוָה הֶאֱלֹהִים. Such being the design and use of this hieroglyphic, in the antediluvian and postdiluvian patriarchal ages, as the knowledge of the true God, and the faith delivered to Adam and preserved by Noah, died out of the world, through the migration and succession of generations who would preserve still the outward forms and representations of things, it is easy to see how naturally idolatry arose. The attributing of some indwelling of deity to images set apart as representatives, such as in the first place were authorized by God in the cherubic forms, naturally led to a similar sacredness on the part of men's own fictile, metallic, wood, engraven, or molten or carved, rude or exquisite imitations or copies of them, whether large, or of miniature size to be used as amulets on the neck, and manufactured for aid and excitement in private or family worship. Hence, also, the colossal cherubic figures of the man-bull, lion-man, eagle-headed man and winged monsters that occupied so conspicuous a place in the ancient temples in Nineveh, Babylon, Thebes, and the triple-headed monsters of Egypt, Greece and Rome, objects of worship.—Serapis, Jupiter, Sol, Diana, Geryones, Janus with four faces, the many-eyed and many-handed Geryones, Hecate, Cerberus, &c. Hence, also, the teraphim brought by Rachel, from the family of Laban, her father—representative images, in miniature exhibitions, of the cherubim used as private memorials. But a slight dialectic change of pronunciation is needed to change the words, viz., by sub-

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stituting the **ת** for **כ** and **פ** for **ב** sounds easily convertible, and not easily distinguishable when inarticulately spoken. Jacob called them Laban's Elohim, **אֱלֹהֵיךָ** (thy gods, En. Tr.) Gen. xxxi., xxxii., v. 35. The penates of the Greeks and Romans, endlessly varied, were used in like manner to represent their deities.

✓ The cherubim, therefore, being representative figures of the Elohim, or persons of the Godhead, co-operating by covenant and oath for the support, establishment, and glorification of the dominion of the Son, the second person, as incarnate Redeemer and Purifier, this vision of John, in which he saw the four ζωα, or living creatures, four hieroglyphic forms becomes magnificently significant. It was sustained by the entire Godhead in the administration of His lofty mediatorial rule; in other words, a display of the Lord Christ as the great God of providence. ✓ Jesus Christ, the brightness of the glory of God, enthroned in heaven, in the exercise of His mediatorial dominion, employs and directs the energies of the Godhead in all the forces and agencies, appropriate to, and ordained ✓ by them, both in nature and in providence. He rides upon the cherubim—the chariot of the Lord—still, as truly as when He descended on Sinai. Ps. lxxviii. 17. What are these forces in the physical universe, but, as the philosophic ✓ and learned call them, *the laws of nature*? These exist not independent of God. They are not to be referred to as forces controlling Him from all eternity, existing anterior to or irrespective of His will or creative fiat. We know not how one, believing the Scriptures to be miraculously inspired, a divine authoritative revelation—i. e., *the word* of the Lord, can do it. The eternity of creation or of matter was assumed and taught by pagan priests and philosophers. But it is directly at variance with the teachings of

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the Bible. "By faith," says Paul, "we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that things which are seen were not made of things which do appear." Heb. xi. 3. And so Moses, by inspiration, has unmistakably affirmed. "In the beginning God אֱלֹהִים created the heavens and the earth." Gen. i. 1. This comprehends the entire physical universe, and affirms two things in opposition to the ancient Egyptian and Oriental philosophy, 1st, that they had a beginning, and 2d, that they owed their origin to the will and power of the אֱלֹהִים. The earth, הָאָרֶץ, is this globe which man inhabits. The heavens, הַשָּׁמַיִם, is space, with its stellar hosts, all outside of and beyond this planet—the vast expanse. "God called the firmament (הַרְקִיעַ, the expanse) heaven." Gen. i. viii. The word הַשָּׁמַיִם may literally and properly be translated, the names, being taken as plural of שֵׁם. The name is that by which any person or thing is designated or made known, and distinguished from others. These names, therefore, which God אֱלֹהִים created, must, of necessity, be His or their names, that is, the things by which the persons of Jehovah אֱלֹהֵינוּ made themselves known, i. e., revealed themselves. We are therefore, to regard the expanse—the infinitude of space called heaven, (הַשָּׁמַיִם—the names of God), the original manifestation of God, that by which He reveals Himself, or makes Himself known. But why is space called the names or revelators of God; in other words, how does the vast expanse of the universe present or reveal to us the Being that made it? It may be replied, as it is a type, shadow, or representation in some way. Jehovah is a Spirit, some essence immaterial and not directly cogni-

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zable by our senses. We have no direct spiritual perception or cognition of God, but must form our conceptions of Him from analogies or resemblances attributed to Him, of somewhat perceptible or cognizable by means of or through our senses. His image or resemblance, His invisibility, Paul says, is clearly seen by the creation. Rom. i. 20. It is his Godhead of which he speaks; His essential Being and persons, for the word includes both. The Godhead, *θειότης*, in Greek, is in Hebrew, **יְהוָה אֱלֹהִים**—Jehovah Elohim. The essential, self-existent, personal agents, a unity of essence involving a tripersonality of agency or subsistency, as Paul has it, *ὑποστάσις*. The word *ὑποστάσις* signifies foundation, base, substratum, and is applied to God by analogy or verisimilitude, and designates His essence, substance, nature, Heb. i. 3, *χαρακτήρ τῆς ὑποστάσεως αὐτοῦ*, or literally a delineation of the essence or being of Him; an image of the invisible immutable essential Godhead. As applicable to the Lord Jesus Christ, the Bible is uniform in its teaching. "He that hath seen me hath seen the Father." John xiv. 9, etc. He is the brightest and most glorious and perfect likeness of Jehovah Elohim; but only one, *χαρακτήρ*, a character. Man was at first created to be such. Gen. i. 26. But is there any other? Yes, space or **הַשָּׁמַיִם**. If these are the names of God, then must they be some resemblance or manifestation of Him. Is there, then, anything predicable of the vast expanse of the universe, or space, which constitutes it, *χαρακτήρ τῆς ὑποστάσεως τοῦ θεοῦ*, a representative image of the triune God, i. e., the essential Deity, existing and operating as the Jehovah Elohim, the three agents, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit? In other words, does creation present any image of the triune Godhead? Has nature a Trinity? If so, that which is called the names **הַשָּׁמַיִם**, the heavens—space—the universe must contain it. If what

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we call space be not a vacuum, but a plenum, or some universal, primordial, essential fluid, containing all the stellar worlds, involving the earth, and all beside it, then may we be able to read the *χαρακτήρ του θεου*, the lineaments or representation of God. Is there reason to believe there is such a thing? The deductions of science are against the old theory of a vacuum, and corroborative of the truth or fact, that there exists an exceedingly subtle, elastic fluid, and possessing various mechanical properties or modes of action, which may be and has been variously named spiritus, halitus, air, ether, electricity, more properly *ουσια*, essence, substance, which has certain characteristic modes of action, called laws of nature.

We talk of gravitation, repulsion, centripetal and centrifugal forces, chemical affinities, vital power, etc., and call them laws of nature; but what intelligible view can we take of these forces, agents, etc., other than that they are established modes of the Creator's agency—some continued, uniform, efficient causality, originally brought into action by God himself, and ordained thereafter to operate with invariable certainty. Whether this continual causal force, exhibited in the conservation of matter, is to be regarded as a continued creation; whether eternity of being with God, who lives not by succession, is an ever present now; in other words, whether supporting and creating acts of power Almighty, differ essentially from creating energy, are questions wholly metaphysical, which, in the nature of things, we can never satisfactorily resolve, and which it is utterly unnecessary for us to attempt to do. It is one of those incomprehensible things that God alone can understand. We can but look on, observe, and carefully scrutinize the modes or laws of His agency—the action of forces dependent at first on His will for their rise, and as certainly and equally on that will for their continuity. The great, essen-

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tial forces in the mechanism of the universe, however diversified and developed in their action, varied operations and results, may all be found in the three elements, if we may so speak, or modified conditions of force, which we call light, heat, elastic *spirit*, as Newton called electricity, whether it be magnetism, ether, spiritus, or by whatever other name we may deem appropriate. And what are these so named, but modified action or modes of agency of some one universal fluid or essence, that pervades all things—fills the universe? Heat or fire, light, and electro-magnetism so called, or that force or agent essential to or connected with all development of life are correlate forces. Tyndal proves the first to be a peculiar motion of the corpuscles or ultimate atoms; light is another, and galvanism or electro-magnetism a third. How related, whether as diverse, varying vibratiuncular motions of some one universal fluid or element, perhaps it were in vain to search. But if one essence or fluid, filling the universe, possesses and exerts these great generic modes of action or forces, in accordance with a triple condition, within which may be ranged, as in their proper categories, the entire phenomena of the material creation—then have we a very remarkable type or representation of the triune God, a marvellous significance in the Hebrew names, by which Moses, under divine miraculous inspiration, designated His essential being and personal subsistencies. Without entering into the scientific discussions on this subject, it is sufficient to remark that investigations and deductions of men learned in natural science, have led some to the opinion that caloric, or fire, or heat, however designated, light, and what is called electricity, are but modified conditions and actions of some one simple elastic element pervading all things. (See Newton's *Principia*, p. 507. "And now we might add something concerning a certain most subtle spirit which pervades and lies

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hid in all gross bodies ; by the force and action of which spirit, the particles of bodies mutually attract one another at near distances, and when contiguous; and electric bodies operate to greater distances, as well repelling as attracting the neighboring corpuscles; and light is emitted, reflected, refracted, inflected, and heats bodies; and all sensation is excited, and the members of animal bodies move at the command of the will, namely, by the vibration of this spirit, mutually propagated along the solid filaments of the nerves, from the outward organs of sense to the brain, and from the brain into the muscles. But these are things that cannot be explained in a few words, nor are we furnished with that sufficiency of experiments which is required to an accurate determination and demonstration of the laws by which this electric and elastic spirit operates." (See also Faraday, vol. iii.)

Assuming this to be fact, we discern peculiar force and significance in the terms or names by which the Scriptures designate the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. The natural elements or forces being constituted by Jehovah the symbols or resemblances of the personal agencies, the names fire, light, spirit, designating the created element or type, become appropriate as illustrative titles of the persons of the Godhead. That they are so used, every careful student of the Bible knows. God is called Fire, as He, and especially the Father, is revealed to us as the Avenger, exercising his punitive justice, punishing sin by consuming sinners. Deut. iv. 24. "The Lord thy God is a consuming fire." Heb. xii. 29; Deut. xxxii. 22. "A fire is kindled in mine anger." Isa. x. 17; lxvi. 15, 16; Ezek. xxi. 31; Nahum i. 6; Psalm xviii. 8. The divine appearances or interpositions were made by means of this element or force. Gen. xv. 7; xix. 24; Exod. iii. 2; Deut. xxxiii. 16; Deut. iv. 24; ix. 3; 2 Sam. xxi. 9, 12; 1 Kings xviii. 24, 38; 2

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Chron. vii. 1, 3; Ps. l. 1; xcvi. 1; Lam. ii. 3. Whether as a representative emblem or as a metaphorical expression, the fire of God's wrath is a phrase, which, for thousands of years, from the very beginning, whatever may be men's philosophy or hermeneutics, has been in familiar use. The most vivid idea we can have of the intensity of heat or fire is the glory or irradiation of the sun. Hence the sun became an object of worship very early in the history of the world, first as the emblem, and afterward as the very substance or fiery flashing eye of God.

The Son of God, the second person of the Godhead, is spoken of as the Sun of Righteousness. Jer. iii. 15; Mal. iii. 20; iv. 2; Isa. xlvii. 6; xlix.; Luke ii. 32; John i. 4; viii. 12; xii. 35, 36; Acts xiii. 47; Heb. i. 3. As the Father is the avenging fire, Christ is the irradiating saving illuminator. The Spirit of God is the third name or title more especially used to designate the third person, but equally, with the names Fire and Light, sometimes expressive of the entire Godhead. In Gen. i. 2 it is said the Spirit of God, רִיחַ אֱלֹהִים, moved upon the face of the waters, מְרַחֵף, moved itself or himself. He was the originator of motion, the formative force, which in the Scriptures is represented as especially the office or work of the third person of the Godhead. All that relates to motion, crystallization, garnishing, beautifying, vitalizing, is spoken of as pertaining to the Godhead exerting their divine energy through or by the Spirit.

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JOB xxvi. 13: "By His Spirit He hath garnished the heavens." Psalm xxxiii. 6: "By the word of the Lord were the heavens made, and all the host of them, by the breath (רוּחַ spirit) of His mouth." Isaiah xxxii. 15: "Until the spirit be poured upon us from on high, and the wilderness be a fruitful field, and the fruitful field be counted for a forest." The prediction looks forward to the change that is to take place in the renovated condition of the land, overrun with briars and thorns, when restored, reïnhabited, and transformed by luxuriant growths of grain and timber. The agency of the Spirit is referred to here—whatever view may be taken as to any emblematic, allegorical, or spiritual import of the expressions—as the vitalizing, fructifying force in the vegetable kingdom. In Ezek. xxxvii. 6–14, the production and development of animal life are in like manner referred to the agency of the Spirit as their prime efficient cause, whatever view may be taken as to any typical, emblematic, or spiritual meaning of the prophet's language. The Spirit of God is called "the Spirit of Life," Rom. viii. 2: and it is His office to impart or produce life. John vi. 63.

Answering to this His office, is the created element employed as the means by which he operates, and which is His appropriate emblem or representative in nature, namely, the "subtle spirit" of which Newton speaks. Call it æther, electricity, electro-magnetism, or by whatever other name, it is that imponderable elastic fluid which gives impulse, or is the instrumental cause of all the changes and motions in matter, whether cosmical, chemical, or vital, and which Professor Faraday says is "the most extraordinary and universal power in nature."\*

Here, then, in the very constitution of the physical uni-

\* "Experimental Researches in Electricity," vol. i. p. 360.

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verse, we discern the emblematic representation or "similitude" of Jehovah Elohim, the triune God. Fire, *קֶמֶה*, light, *אֵשׁ*, whence the Greek *αἴρ*, the Latin *aura*, and the English word *air*, have been derived, and spirit, *רוּחַ*, are the three great physical agents in the mechanism of the visible creation. What is their essential nature we may never be able to discover, no more than we can that of spirit or of matter. The latest researches in physical science lead to the conclusion, that what we call light, heat, electricity, may be and probably are but relations or directions of force, or in other words, the infinitesimal ultimate particles or molecules of matter, whatever they may be, in varying modes of action. The nearest approximation yet made to a definite conception of these mechanical forces of nature—heat, light, electricity—is, that they are different waves or vibrations of one universally diffused element; modifications of force pertinent to different conditions or different movements of some one all-pervading, imponderable elastic fluid, the universal interstellar PLENUM, called by the ancients *אֵתֶר*, and *αἴρ*, and æther, which last name perhaps we may preferably use, till we can get a better. If this be so, then nature has her trinity as well, upon a grand scale, in space, as she has in man, originally created the formal image or likeness of God, possessed of body, *σωμα*, soul, *ψυχη*, and spirit, *πνευμα*, so named by the Apostle Paul, who describes the constituent, cooperative, diversified, moral, intellectual, and vital functions and forces in one human being.

The mechanical, chemical, and vital forces, in physical nature are mighty, and often, in some of their phenomena, inspire with wonder and even terror. The solar ray, as it is called, combines light, heat, actinic power, which scientific men think are modifications of the electricity diffused throughout nature. "In the thunder-cloud, swelling with

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destruction, it resides, ready to launch its darts and shake the earth with its explosions ; in the aërial undulations, silent and unseen, it passes, giving the necessary excitement to the organisms around which it floats. The rain-drop, the earth-girdling ocean, and the singing waters of the hill-born river, hold locked this mighty force. The solid rocks, the tenacious clays which rest upon them, the superficial soils and the incoherent sands, give us evidence of the presence of this agency ; and in the organic world, whether animal or vegetable, the excitement of electrical force is always to be detected. In the solar radiations we have perhaps the prime mover of this power." ("Hunt's Poetry of Science," p. 194.)

No wonder that philosophic heathen, ignorant of the true triune God and His moral perfections, made their Jove this universally-diffused æther, and addressed him in their amazement—

O thou who, by the air's convulsive force,  
Drives in its constant circulating course ;  
Thou shining vortex of the heaven's vast sphere,  
Jove Dionysius, mighty father, hear !  
Of earth and sea thou radiating flame,  
That's changed through all, and yet in all the same,  
All generative sun !

The verses of Orpheus, taken from Apulcius, unfold their pantheistic idea.

Jove is the spirit of all nature's frame,  
Blows in the wind and blazes in the flame ;  
The deep beneath, the radiant sea above,  
The morn's reflected light, are parts of Jove.

When men lost the knowledge of the triune God, they naturally substituted and worshipped His emblem for Himself. Would that there remained nothing among those professing Christianity, yet denying the Trinity, of the same

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ignorance and pantheism. Theories of the ubiquity of God, as being an infinitely diffused essence, and of His Spirit being but its physical energy, still lurk within the very precincts of the Church of God. Rejecting the plain and pointed teachings of the Scriptures as to the personalities of the Godhead, three in one, 1 John v. 7, the names originally employed by God to designate Himself—Jehovah Elohim—lose their significance. ~~It is but a natural consequence, that His own established similitude—the Cherubim—as or like the mighty ones—~~should be regarded inexplicably mysterious and unintelligible. But, in view of what has been suggested in this article, may we not find an easy and satisfactory reply to the question, what were the Cherubim?

Whether they were a visible representation of Jehovah Elohim, the Triune God, made to our first parents while yet in innocence, or were first instituted upon their expulsion from Paradise, is a question we care not here to discuss. Good and learned men have advocated the idea, that when placed at the east of the garden by God, they were removed from a more central position, having been part and parcel of a system of symbolic revelations of the same general character with the typical and sacramental trees of life, and of the knowledge of good and evil. But to us it seems most probable that, regarded as a symbolic representation of God, they were adapted rather to man's fallen and sinful than to his innocent condition.

As an innocent being, created perfect in knowledge, Adam was not ignorant of the constitution of nature. Space itself, with the mighty forces operating in its PLENUM, was, itself, a fit emblem of Jehovah Elohim. Nor was this Triune God, revealing himself in the mechanical structure of creation, by means of marvellous, mighty, magnificent forces, in one essence, representative emblems of His being and operations—

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an object of dread or terror; because there was no consciousness of guilt, to make innocent man fear that these potencies would be turned against him. He could readily trust Him, that their action would be so guided and regulated, as to promote his good. Innocence would not be made to suffer. Regarding the heavens, therefore, as Jehovah's throne, and earth His footstool, innocent man could read on the bright pages of creation the proofs and record of the eternal power, wisdom, and goodness of the Godhead; and that without any dread or dismay. In other words, the natural or physical government of JEHOVAH ELOHIM would be peacefully, confidently, joyfully contemplated, by innocent man, as the basis of his security, the promoter of his happiness. No sooner, however, had he sinned, and by his rebellion forfeited all favor and protection from God, and rendered himself obnoxious to punishment, both He and the mighty agencies of His government became his dread and horror. The mighty forces in nature have ever since been made, in the divine providence, • the means of inflicting punishment on man for his sin. Pain, disease, suffering, death, are the legacy of woe, left by our guilty primogenitors. "The wrath of God is revealed from • heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men." Rom. i. 18. Nature has no solace for human woe. It looks with grim visage upon guilty, fallen man. Earth has become a charnel-house. "Dying thou shalt die," is all the response man can get from nature in his flight from God. The tokens of His presence naturally excite alarm. "I was afraid—and hid myself," said guilty, naked, and fallen Adam. It has been the experience of his race. We start back, with amazement and horror, at the view of those irresistible powers, incessantly at work, in the physical universe, conscious of our utter weakness and liability to become their prey, upon

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any disturbance of their marvellously adjusted equilibrium. Poetic fancy has sought to relieve our aching hearts ; but it has been by ridding the mind of the thought of that infinite, mighty, and exalted Being, who is the maker of the heavens and the earth, and substituting for His presence and agencies, spiritual beings of inferior order, with whom imagination may commune, in forest, valley, mountain, spring, lake, river, ocean, animals, trees, plants, and flowers, working their secret offices, and moulding alike the beautiful and terrible. But they are the inane creations of weak, finite minds, to hold the thoughts and heart aside from the one great, only true and living God, for whose glory all things were made, and by the word of whose power alone they are upheld.

Poor, fallen, guilty man needs another revelation of the nature, perfections, and will of God ; something clearer, brighter, and more adapted to our lost, guilty, and degraded state, than any thing we can discover in the works of creation. Whether on earth or in the heavens, nature's names or manifestations of God, His emblems throughout space, wherever traced, give no intimations of pardon for sin, or of the admissibility of free, friendly, familiar intercourse or communion with his Creator, by guilty, corrupt man. All such knowledge is sought for utterly in vain, penetrate as deeply as we may into the mysteries of nature and the structure of creation. We are indebted for it to an extraordinary, miraculous revelation ; to a manifestation of God to us made by Himself, far excelling, and totally above and beyond, the whole sphere of the created universe. It is extolled in the Eighth Psalm, and explained by the Apostle Paul in Heb. ii. 6-9. It is the Revelation which God has made of Himself, in and through the manifestation, mission, and redemption of Jesus Christ—a remedial scheme, designed to supply what the natural creation would not furnish.

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It commenced with the first promise of deliverance from the thralldom and dominion of "that old serpent called the Devil, and Satan, which deceiveth the world," Rev. xii. 9, and which was implied in the predicted crushing of the power usurped by him over the race, pronounced before the eyes and in the hearing of our first and fallen parents, when God said: "I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it (HE) shall bruise thy head." Gen. iii. 15. Upon man's departure from Paradise, he was not banished from the gracious presence of God. The cherubim were placed at the edge or entrance of the garden, and became thenceforth the great centre of religious and holy solemnities of worship, provided, ordained and adapted by God for our guilty and fallen race. That consecrated hieroglyphic, not like any thing in creation, became the external visible manifestation of the special presence of the Triune God, of Him who, in His several personal subsistences, had pledged to the eternal Son—who was to become incarnate, and be the predicted seed of the woman—a perfect triumph over "the enemy and avenger," the destroyer of our race, and redemption from his power.

By this hieroglyphic, God taught the wonders of His gracious covenant of redemption through Jesus Christ, which He is accomplishing by the coöperative agency of the glorious Three in One. The fulness of the Godhead dwelleth now bodily in our glorious Redeemer, the God-Man, Christ Jesus. Col. ii. 9. The cherubim were a marvelous anticipative representation of this visible memorial and pledge of God, for the destruction of Satan, and the redemption of man. In a word, it proclaimed that God should appear, and live, and reign on earth, enthroned in our nature. The teachings of this hieroglyphic, in connection with the sacrificial offerings instituted by God, and pre-

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✓ sented by man before it, were in sum and substance those of the glorious gospel of the grace of God, revealing to us the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit—the Triune Jehovah condescending mercifully to be our all-sufficient covenant God and Saviour.

✓ The faces of the cherubim are spoken of as the faces of God. When Cain was banished from his abode, and condemned for his murder of Abel, to be a fugitive and vagabond on the earth, he said to God: “From *Thy* face (Hebrew, *faces*) shall I be hid.” Gen. iv. 14. When he left the parental abode, or the land where he lived in proximity to the abode of Adam, it is said: “And Cain went out from the presence (Hebrew, from the *faces*) of the Lord.” Gen. iv. 16. In the hieroglyphic cherubim we have a simple and natural explanation of the origin and significance of this singular expression, the faces of the Lord, as equivalent with His presence, or *before, in front* of, in its subsequent prepositional, idiomatic use. The cherubic faces were, as has been noticed, those of the bull, the lion, man, and the eagle. See Ezekiel’s description, chapter i. 10 and x. 14. In the enumeration, the second of the facial representations was the duplex form of the lion and human face, joined together, and forming the most prominent and impressive figure. Why, it may be here asked, were the lion, the bull, and the eagle faces combined in this hieroglyphic? and some may be ready to say, is it not too coarse and monstrous an idea that such representations of Himself should have been adopted by God? But a second thought will relieve from such impressions.

The bull, the lion, and the eagle are all powerful and ferocious creatures. The bull among the domestic, the lion among the wild animals, and the eagle among the feathered tribes, are conspicuous, and often objects of terror. They

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are fitting emblems of forces that may be terrific and destructive. The mighty natural forces operating in space are such. Heat or fire, light, spirit, whether wind or electricity, causing the tempest, or let us call it æther, as already spoken of, are all of them potencies or elements, whatever they may be, which have been made from the earliest periods of human history emblems of the divine energy, and in the Scripture, often, of the different persons of the Godhead. God in nature is a terrific Being, when He marshals His mighty forces around Him. The ferocious animals used as emblems in the hieroglyphic cherubim imperfectly represent these natural and terrific forces. The fact is unquestionable that from the remotest period men have actually made these animals emblems of physical forces, and idolatrously worshipped God by them or in them. The bull was the known emblem of the intensest form of heat or fire, especially that at the orb of the sun; the lion was the emblem of the light that issues thence; and the eagle of the spirit or æther, represented sometimes in denser condition, and sometimes rarer and more subtile. It is unnecessary to quote from the ancient mythologies in proof of these positions. It abounds in them, as those acquainted with them know. These animals afforded the most frequent and illustrious emblems employed in their idolatrous worship, whether as philosophic symbols of solar forces among the worshippers of the sun, or as separate objects of the more ignorant and popular adorations.

In the cherubim, the lion and human faces were joined together; and in the description given by Ezekiel of the cherubim he saw, he says, there was "over their heads 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 upon it." Ezek. i. 26. This description corresponds with John's, in Rev. iv. 2, 3, 7, which when

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compared with Isaiah vi. 1, etc., and John xii. 41, conducts us to the conclusion, that the human face-form being associated with the bestial faces, the representative emblems of the physical forces of fire, light, spirit, or æther, which are the means and channels of the Triune Jehovah's mighty energies, being, as it were, incorporated with them as the chief, prominent, controlling director of all, there was no reason for man to be dismayed or filled with dread and terror from their action. In looking on this representation of God, however, the emblematic bestial faces might inspire awe or excite alarm, the human face and form exciting love, confidence, and sympathy, appropriate to a being possessing man's own nature, and having fellow-feeling with him, there was enough to assure the mind and heart that, notwithstanding, Jehovah Elohim's operations and forces in nature, are so mighty and marvellous, yet might He be approached, adored, and confided in by fallen guilty sinners of mankind. The physical forces and government of the Lord God, terrific in their nature and manifestations sometimes, as they are, being all subordinated to and under the pacificating, harmonizing agent enthroned in human nature, and supported by them severally and conjointly, we need not fear to approach His presence and worship at His feet. Humanity sits enthroned upon the terrific powers of nature. The glorious persons and powers of the Godhead, in the energies symbolized by the terrific faces of the cherubim, all support His sway and manifest themselves coöperative at His feet. Jehovah Elohim, becoming incarnate in the person of the Son of God, subordinates to the glorious God-man, Mediator, Christ Jesus, the forces of creation. The predicted destined sovereign King of earth and heaven was exhibited borne up by, and riding, as it were, upon the cherubim. Our fallen race has thus been taught what now we know

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more clearly, that there is hope, salvation, and communion with God for man. The mediatorial dominion of the Son of God, head over all things, supersedes and will raise and exalt poor ruined man to more than primitive blessedness in Eden. It was in our nature that the Apostle John, in vision, saw Him, Rev. iv. 2-7, the object of heavenly adoration, the grand centralizing and controlling authority of the universe, the Lord God Almighty, in whom "dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily." Who will not join in the ecstatic acclaim—"Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honor and power: for Thou hast created all things; and for thy pleasure they are and were created. 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 kings and priests unto our God; and we shall reign on the earth." Amen and amen.



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