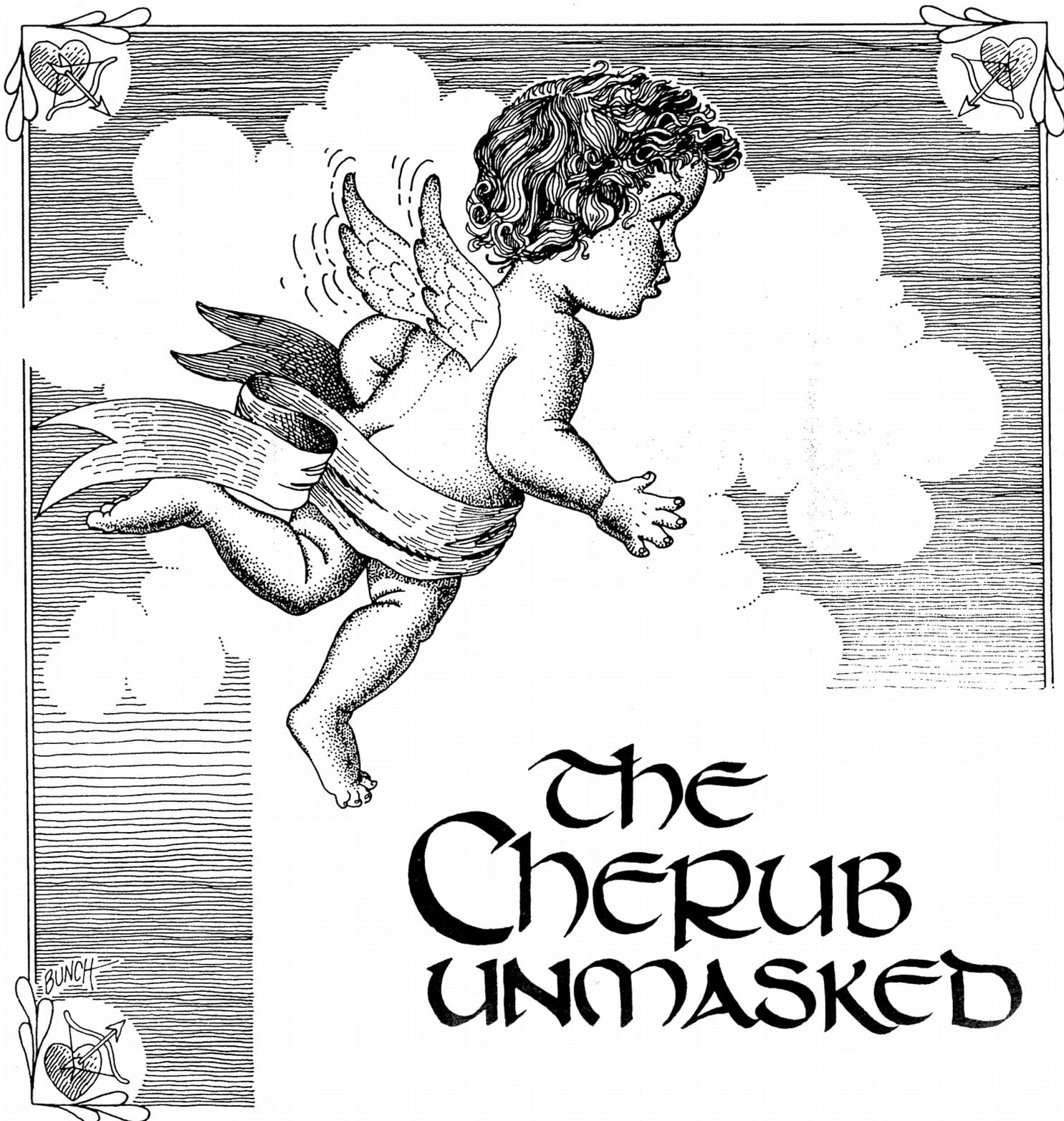


T H E
AMERICAN CHRISTIAN

JAN-FEB 1993

“... let Facts be submitted to a candid world.”



The
CHERUB
UNMASKED

THE CHERUB UNMASKED

PT 1: The Logo of God's Elect

by Paul Bunch & Ben Williams

THERE are many references to cherubim (plural) in the Bible. A cherub (singular) is typically depicted by the churches as a winged baby angel. It is generally accepted that the cherubim (plural) of the Bible are supernatural ANGELS.

However, the Bible passages relating to cherubim give us an amazing array of representations, including: *an ox, an eagle, a lion, a man, fantastic monsters, idols, sculptures on the ark of the covenant, sculptures in the temple, the camp of Israel, guardians in the garden of Eden, Adam, the king of Tyrus, fire, and, God's elect!* That's quite a line up of images – most of which do not even begin to resemble the popular concept of a cherub.

The fact is, it's hard to relate the popular angel stereotype to the cherubim found in the Biblical passages themselves. There seems to be a strange body of religious mythology that lends this stereotype its validity.

As you read this two-part study, you will see how all these seemingly unrelated subjects come together to actually DISPROVE those mythical superstitions among churchgoers, and show that they are quite different from their usual portrayal by the churches.

NO BABIES WITH WINGS

In the fifth century A.D. Christian Mystics redefined the cherub into the popular misconception still with us today. Some unidentified person, thought by scholars to be a Syrian Monk, wrote four treatises which outlined a complete theology mixing Christianity with Mysticism. They were titled *Divine Names, Mystical Theology, Celestial Hierarchy, and Ecclesiastical Hierarchy*. This anonymous mystic published his works under the pseudonym "Dionysius the

Areopagite" ... after the man of some 300 years earlier mentioned in Acts 17:34. This pseudonym gave the writer's treatises and letters an air of credibility. But because he was not the real Dionysius, scholars have called him "Pseudo-Dionysius."

Pseudo-Dionysius gilded his fantastic treatises of supernatural beings by claiming there were three hierarchies, each containing three orders or "choirs" of heavenly beings. The cherubim were supposed to be the second of nine orders. Thus, the foundation was laid for the perversion of the Bible term.

Medieval and Renaissance religious writers became interested in Pseudo-Dionysius' fantasies and produced a body of commentaries concerning them – giving them more importance to the religious communities. This body of additional literature was instrumental in establishing the fantasy

and superseding the original meaning.

This magical misconception of cherubim has prevailed down to modern times. Today, most everyone mistakenly thinks that the concept of winged angels came from the Bible ... not realizing it actually came from 5th-century religious mystics.

Over the centuries "cherub" has been defined variously as: "*the seat or dwelling of God,*" "*the fullness of knowledge,*" or "*a celestial virtue.*" It was also applied to persons to describe surpassing intellect, a beautiful, beloved woman, or an innocent child. And there was even a provincial definition saying that a cherub was a barn owl! But the most popular definition was that of a heavenly supernatural being. This image was later combined with that of the innocent child to create the vision of a cute baby angel with tiny, feathery wings.

Since then, flocks of cute babies

"Cherub" or "Cherubim"

AS FOUND IN THE BIBLE

1. In the Garden of Eden

Gen. 3:24, "Cherubim" are described in relation to the Garden of Eden, Adam, and guarding the way to the Tree of Life.

were, what they were fashioned out of, and where they were located in the temple.

2. On the Ark of the Covenant

Ex. 25, 26 describes how the cherubim were positioned atop the ark and what they were made of.

4. Where God Dwells

1 Sa. 4:4; 2 Sa. 6:2; 2 Ki. 19:15; 1 Ch. 13:6; Ps. 80:1; Ps. 99:1; Isa 37:16: God dwells "between the cherubim."

Ex. 37:7-9 gives details of how the craftsman, Bezaleel, made the ark according to the directions given to Moses by Yahweh.

5. In Ezekiel's Vision

Ez. 10; Ez. 11: Ezekiel's strange vision filled with flying cherubim. Note: Ezekiel **does not** actually see real live cherubim; they are only in his vision.

3. In Solomon's Temple

1 Ki. 6:23, etc., 1 Ki. 7:29, 36; 1 Ki. 8:6-7; 1Ch. 28:18, 20, 25 give a detailed description of how the cherubim

6. The King of Tyrus

"Cherub" - Ez. 28:14, 16

with wings, flitting about like canaries in an aviary, carrying ribbons, flowers, etc., have decorated millions of pages, posters, wall papers, greeting cards, movies, and feminine decor. The winged baby has become an established LOGO in the public mind.

And because churches have been equated with Christianity, few if any Christians see the problems with this image.

BIBLICAL CHERUBIM

The Biblical cherub is truly a logo ... but one that is entirely different from the superstitious fantasies of the churches. Contrary to the dreamy church cherub, Ezekiel describes a cherub as a mixture of four creatures: a lion, an ox, a man and an eagle:

4. *And I looked, and behold, a whirlwind came out of the north, a great cloud,*
5. *Also out of the midst thereof came the likeness of four living creatures. And this was their appearance; they had the likeness of a man.*
6. *And as one they had four faces and as one they had four wings.*
7. *And their feet were straight feet; and the sole of their feet was like the sole of a calf's foot: and they sparkled like the color of burnished brass.*
8. *And they had the hands of a man under their wings on their four sides; and they four had their faces and their wings.*
9. *Their wings were joined one to another; they turned not when they went; they went every one straight forward.*
10. *As for the likeness of their faces, they four had the face of a man, and the face of a lion, on the right side: and they four had the face of an ox on the left side; they four also had the face of an eagle.*

Ezekiel 1:4-10

Ezekiel finished chapter one without using the terms "cherub" or "cherubim." He referred to them, instead, as

"the living creatures." Yet throughout chapter ten he describes the creatures again, calling them "cherub" and "cherubim," and explaining that these are the same creatures he saw in chapter one by the river Chebar:

20. *This is the living creature that I saw under the God of Israel by the river of Chebar; and I knew that they were the cherubim.*
22. *And the likeness of their faces was the same faces (man, lion, ox and eagle) which I saw by the river of Chebar, their appearances and themselves: they went every one straight forward.*

Ezekiel 10: 20,22

Keep in mind that Ezekiel is describing a VISION, not real flesh-and-blood creatures. In fact the Hebrew word for "cherub" and "cherubim" (the plural form) is "k'ruwb" (Strong's #3742) which means an "imaginary figure." This, in itself, tells us that winged humanoids and ferocious four-faced monsters – called "cherubim" – are symbolic figures rather than real beings.

But notice the difference between how the Bible describes cherubim and how the church describes them. Ezekiel's depiction of a cherub is like a monster out of a horror movie! This is a far cry from the churches' pleasant angels who flit softly around lending heavenly atmosphere to pleasant scenes.

The Bible, instead, has fearsome-looking monsters reminiscent of pagan mythological inventions like the creatures in the right column. →

The pagans portrayed these mythical creatures as real supernatural beings and not visions!

The Babylonian winged bull, or "sedu," was believed to be a certain type of demon which served as a protecting guardian spirit. Great statues of these winged bulls were placed on either side of entrance doors to ancient dwellings. There, they stood guard "to turn away the evil one."

The Sphinx, which originated in Egypt and spread to Asia, Greece and other parts of the Mediterranean world, was thought to be a guardian spirit and was used for protection in



A. The Assyrian Winged Bull (part eagle/part ox/part man)



B. The Sphinx (part man or woman/part lion/part eagle)



C. The Griffin (part eagle/part lion)

temples, thrones, and tombs.

The Griffin, which appeared both in the middle east and the far east, was believed to have guarded treasures in lofty mountain caves, and laid eggs of agate in nests of pure gold.

As you can see, these were

thought of as living creatures of protection: "spirit guards."

The cherubim in the Bible, on the other hand, were *not* depicted as real living creatures.

The difference, as we will see in part two of this study, is that the pagan cherubim guarded mighty men (rulers) and their treasures, whereas the Biblical cherub represents The Way of Yahweh and interests of all men.

Obviously, the Bible depiction of cherubim conflicts with the popular teachings of religion. If the popular church concept is correct in describing cherubim as babies with wings or pleasant humanlike magical beings, then the Bible must be incorrect. If cherubim are an actual race of spiritual beings that are a literal mixture of different creatures, like pagan mythology teaches, then the churches are right. This, then would put the churches in apparent harmony with other world religions. This harmony, however, causes a dilemma for present-day churches since they purport to be different and separate from pagan world religions. If the churches' doctrines are in common with the pagan religions it would identify the religion of the churches as pagan.

Maybe the subject of cherubim is not important enough to worry about. It would be much easier and less nerve-racking to leave the Bible in the hands of the "experts": the church leaders. After all, the clergy, will tell us what Biblical subjects are important and which are trivial ... won't they?

THE IMPORTANCE OF CHERUBIM

The subject of cherubim is important to the serious Christian. There is no doubt that cherubim were significant to the ancient Israelites. Yahweh commanded Moses to have sculptures of these creatures placed on the ark of the covenant, and King Solomon went to great lengths to have them sculpted and placed inside his temple.

Furthermore, Yahweh is described as dwelling "between the cherubim":

2. *And David arose, and went with all the people that were with him from*

Baale of Judah, to bring up from thence the ark of God, whose name is called by the name of Yahweh of hosts THAT DWELLS BETWEEN THE CHERUBIM.

2 Samuel 6:2

There are also six other instances in the Bible that refer to Yahweh as dwelling between the cherubim: 1 Sa. 4:4; 2 Ki. 19:15; 1 Ch. 13:6; Ps. 80:1; Ps. 99:1; Isa. 37:16. Think of the important position of cherubim. The Creator of the universe was depicted as dwelling between them!

No wonder cherubim were so significant to the ancient Israelites. Here are the Biblical instructions given to Moses concerning the cherubim:

1. *And the LORD spoke to Moses, saying,*
2. *Speak to the children of Israel, that they bring me an offering: of every man that gives it willingly with his heart you shall take my offering.*
8. *And let them make me a sanctuary; that I may dwell among them.*
9. *According to all that I show thee, after the pattern of the tabernacle, and the pattern of all the instruments thereof, even so shall you make it.*
10. *And they shall make an ark of shittim wood: two cubits and a half shall be the length thereof, and a cubit and a half the breadth thereof, and a cubit and a half the height thereof.*

I Kings 6:1,2,8-10

Yahweh then proceeded to spell out in detail exactly how the ark was to be constructed. Then in verse 18 He directed Moses how the cherubim were to be made:

18. *And you shall make two cherubim of gold, of beaten work shall you make them, in the two ends of the mercy seat.*
19. *And make one cherub on the one end, and the other cherub on the other end: even of the mercy seat shall you make the cherubim on the two ends thereof.*

20. *And the cherubim shall stretch forth their wings on high, covering*

the mercy seat with their wings, and their faces shall look one to another; toward the mercy seat shall the faces of the cherubim be.

I Kings 6:18-20

Also, we read that King Solomon had cherubim painstakingly sculpted for his temple:

23. *And within the oracle he made two cherubim of olive tree (wood), each ten cubits high.*
24. *And five cubits was the one wing of the cherub, and five cubits the other wing of the cherub: from the uttermost part of the one wing to the uttermost part of the other were ten cubits.*
25. *And the other cherub was ten cubits: both the cherubim were of one measure and one size.*
26. *The height of the one cherub was ten cubits, and so was it of the other cherub.*
27. *And he set the cherubim within the inner house: and they stretched forth the wings of the cherubim, so that the wing of the one touched the one wall, and the wing of the other cherub touched the other wall; and their wings touched one another in the midst of the house.*
28. *And he overlaid the cherubim with gold.*

1 Kings 6: 23-28

A VIOLATION OF GOD'S LAW?

To further add to the dilemma of what cherubim really are, we have the problem of applying God's Law which prohibits graven images. Yahweh says it is very important that His people, Israel, refrain from making graven images as the heathen do:

4. *You shall not make to thee any graven image, or any likeness of any thing that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth:*

Exodus 20:4

"Graven" means carved or

sculpted. The word “beaten,” in Exodus 25:18 (where Moses was instructed by God to make cherubim to put atop the Ark of the Covenant) is simply another way of saying “graven,” or “sculpted.” The Hebrew word for “beaten” is “miqshah” (Strong’s #4749) and means rounded work; moulded by hammering (one of several ways of sculpting something).

Also, in Deuteronomy the command is spelled out in more detail:

15. *Take you therefore good heed to yourselves: for you saw no manner of similitude on the day that the LORD spoke to you in Horeb out of the midst of the fire:*

16. *Lest you corrupt yourselves, and make you a graven image, the similitude of any figure, the likeness of male or female,*

17. *The likeness of any beast that is on the earth, the likeness of any winged fowl that flies in the air,*

18. *The likeness of any thing that creeps on the ground, the likeness of any fish that is in the waters beneath the earth:*

19. *And lest you lift up your eyes to heaven, and when you see the sun, and the moon, and the stars, even all the host of heaven, SHOULD BE DRIVEN TO WORSHIP THEM, AND SERVE THEM, which the LORD thy God has divided to all nations under the whole heaven.*

Deuteronomy 4:15-19

A reading of this passage may seem a bit confusing at first. It might seem that God gave command that we are not to make graven images, and then turned around and commanded Moses to make graven images.

However, a careful reading of the commandment forbids images of real things of the Earth. The images Moses was instructed to make were NOT OF REAL ANIMALS OR MEN. They were symbolic representations of concepts ... not actual beings.

A SYMBOL – NOT AN IDOL

The key is to realize the distinction between fantasy and reality.

The pagan’s life is guided by superstition and fantasy. Therefore, he occupies himself with inventing imaginary creatures to which he attributes life and supernatural powers. Then, he worships them as REAL supernatural entities (gods). He views their graven images as physical forms in which these intangible creatures reside. The pagan worships the sculpture because of the supernatural creature thought to reside inside it. The sculpture is something the pagan can see and touch, thereby making the intangible creature more real to his senses.

In Exodus 20:3-5, Scripture focuses on this point of deifying creatures, whether men or animals:

3. **YOU SHALL HAVE NO OTHER GODS BEFORE ME.**

4. *You shall not make to thee any graven image, or any likeness of any thing that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth:*

5. **YOU SHALL NOT BOW DOWN YOURSELF TO THEM, NOR SERVE THEM: for I the LORD thy God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children to the third and fourth generation of them that hate me.**

Exodus 20:3-5

When verse four is read by itself, it seems that the command is against any type of SCULPTURE. However, notice that when the three verses are all read and understood together, the point in question is the actual USE of the sculpture. We are not to *serve, bow down to and acknowledge belief in, such mythical creatures believed to live inside the sculpture, or represented by it.* The deification of men, animals, or fantastic imaginary creatures is the point of this commandment – not the art of sculpture.

A Christian’s life should be guided by truth and reality. Instead of dwelling on superstition and fantasy, a Christian should occupy himself with discovering the laws of Yahweh, and finding practical ways to apply them.

This does not stifle creation and invention. The Christian can still invent and imagine things like the cherub

... but use it in a practical way. Instead of believing it to be a literal magical beast, he should see it merely as a symbol: a depiction of an idea.

The cherub depicts a concept – not a real creature – and Moses wasn’t worshipping it. If the cherub is symbolic rather than literal, it is obvious that Yahweh did not defeat His own law by having Moses place them on the Ark of the Covenant. The Bible is not in agreement with the doctrines of pagans. Furthermore, this explains the strange vision given to Ezekiel. The vision depicted a symbol; a concept – not a literal supernatural creature.

This alleviates the otherwise apparent contradictions in God’s Law, and does away with the pagan myth of a hierarchy of lesser gods (mislabelled “angels” and “demons” in church jargon). As we shall see later in this article, it also opens up our understanding of important passages of scripture which have been buried by false church doctrine.

LOGO AND HERALDRY

But why did they use cherubim as a symbol? Is there any precedent for this kind of symbolism?

The following list gives some examples of tools commonly used to depict, symbolize, label, or identify:

ANCIENT HERALDRY

1. “standards”
2. “ensigns”
3. “coats of arms”
4. “insignias”

MODERN HERALDRY

1. “trademarks”
2. “logos”

Whichever term you use they are all essentially the same thing: a visual mark used to communicate a trademark or an identity: a LOGO. (The Greek word, “logos,” actually means “communication.”) Heraldry is an important facet of Israelite history, especially in terms of following Israel’s identity into our day and time.

THE FOUR "FACES" OF ISRAEL

The Book of Numbers gives more information about Israel heraldry.

While the Israelites were in the wilderness, each tribe and family had its own standard (logo):

1. *And the LORD spoke to Moses and to Aaron, saying,*
2. *Every man of the children of Israel shall pitch by his own standard, with the ensign of their father's house: far off about the tabernacle of the congregation shall they pitch.*

Numbers 2:1,2

Yahweh even had a specific plan for the encampment layout. There were to be FOUR main camps, each one forming a side of a rectangle.

The East Camp

3. *And on the east side toward the rising of the sun shall they of the standard of the camp of Judah pitch throughout their armies:*

Numbers 2:3a

The east camp was named after the tribe of Judah, with the tribes of Issachar and Zebulun as "those that do pitch next to" (or share the camp of) Judah.

The South Camp

10. *On the south side shall be the standard of the camp of Reuben according to their armies:*

Numbers 2:10a

The South camp was named after the tribe of Reuben, with the tribes of Simeon and Gad sharing the camp. In verse sixteen the total of all three tribes in the camp of Reuben is given.

The West Camp

18. *On the west side shall be the standard of the camp of Ephraim according to their armies:*

Numbers 2:18

The West camp was named after the tribe of Ephraim with the tribes of Manasseh and Benjamin sharing the camp. In verse 24 the total of all three tribes in the camp of Ephraim is given.

The North Camp

25. *The standard of the camp of Dan shall be on the north side by their armies:*

Numbers 2:25

In this verse the North camp is named after the tribe of Dan with the tribes of Asher and Naphtali sharing the camp. In verse 31 all three tribes in the camp of Dan is given.

Remember, we are pursuing a point about ensigns and logos, and attempting to solve the Biblical instructions mentioned earlier in this article. And, we can now see the first connection to the symbol of the cherub: the number FOUR. Ezekiel's cherub had FOUR faces (of FOUR different creatures) and the encampment of Israel in the wilderness had FOUR camps.

Now let us consider the four creatures that made up the cherub – the eagle, the ox, the lion and the man.

IDENTIFYING THE FOUR FACES

In modern society it is common to see animals used in logos symbolizing football teams and cars for instance. Animal symbols are common.

The Assyrians, Babylonians, Egyptians, Hittites, Persians, and Romans used eagles, stags, bulls, wolves, unicorns, serpents, lions and horses routinely as symbols in their standards and insignias. Animal logos were used on standards among the ancient Israelites, as well.

Our clues as to exactly what animals were used are in the Bible. Symbolic language was a very common technique employed by the writers of the Bible. And, since this deals with the "IDENTITY" of Israel, we shouldn't take this symbolic language lightly.

The symbols God used for people were carefully chosen for a definite purpose. These are clues for deciphering the Bible message about Israel and her identity.

Let's see how these symbols were historically associated with the Israelites in terms of the four-faced cherub of Ezekiel's vision.

Judah

Judah's logo was a LION. Jacob compared him to a lion in the following verse:

9. *Judah is a lion's whelp: from the prey, my son, you are gone up: he stooped down, he couched as a lion, and as an old lion; who shall rouse him up?*

Genesis 49:9

Ephraim

Even though Joseph was one of the original twelve sons of Jacob, a tribe was not named after him. However, two tribes were named after Joseph's two sons: Ephraim and Manasseh. Ephraim and Manasseh were, in effect, the representatives of Joseph. This is an important detail to note in the following verse which reveals that the OX was the logo of Ephraim, for whom the west camp was named:

17. *His (Joseph's) glory is like the firstling of his bullock (ox), and his horns are like the horns of the wild ox: with them he shall push the people together to the ends of the lands: and they are the ten thousands of EPHRAIM, and they are the thousands of Manasseh.*

Deuteronomy 33:17

The migrations of the Israel people took them from the Middle East up into Europe and Great Britain. Their tribal logos came with them. The national seal of Great Britain has both a LION and a UNICORN within it ("unicorn" was the mythical twist of the Hebrew phrase meaning "wild ox.")

Even though the unicorn is depicted as a horse with a single horn growing out of its forehead, the term, "unicorn," actually means "OX." And it's no coincidence that the national nickname of Great Britain is "John BULL."

Dan

J.H. Allen (*Judah's Sceptre and Joseph's Birthright* [1902]) concludes that the logo of Dan was the eagle.

The eagle turns up also as a logo of Israel as a whole. As a logo of Israel it carries with it the aspect of the strength of Yahweh, the God of Israel:

11. *As an eagle stirs up her nest, flutters over her young, spreads abroad her wings, takes them, bears them on her wings:*

12. *So the LORD (Yahweh) alone did lead him (Jacob), and there was no strange god with him.*

Deuteronomy. 32:1 1,12

20 a. *Therefore hear the counsel of the LORD, that he has taken against Edom; and his purposes, that he has purposed against the inhabitants of Teman:*

22. *Behold, he (Yahweh) shall come up and fly as the eagle, and spread his wings over Bozrah: and at that day shall the heart of the mighty men of Edom be as the heart of a woman in her pangs.*

Jeremiah 49:20-22

Reuben

Reuben has been assigned the logo of "A MAN" by traditional researchers. It is not totally clear as to how this logo came to symbolize Reuben. However, the name "Reuben" means "Behold a son." A son presupposes a man.

THE LOGICAL CONCLUSION

It was perfectly logical for Moses to place LOGOs (cherubim), representing Israel, on the Ark of the Covenant and in the tabernacle so there would be no doubt as to which people the Ark belonged to. And it would be just as logical for King Solomon to incorporate that same identifying logo

into the design of an Israelite temple. It certainly makes more sense than the theory of real live supernatural creatures/monsters. God simply gave Ezekiel a vision of symbols of the identity of the tribes of Israel.

Logically then, the cherub was used as a logo of ancient Israel and was not some pudgy, winged being. Neither was it the mythical, magical "spirit" creature conjured up by wizards to stand guard beside their doorways and their hidden treasures.

The cherub logo can be traced as one of the "marks" of Israel.

This conclusion has been drawn

• Why is a king called a "cherub" in Ezekiel 28:14?

• Are there supernatural cherubim, or anyone else, still guarding a tree (the Tree of Life) in the garden of Eden ... somewhere?

• How can cherubim be just trademarks, monograms or logos when Ezekiel refers to them as "living creatures?"

A study of cherubim does not end here. There is more to it than simply a logo of Israel.

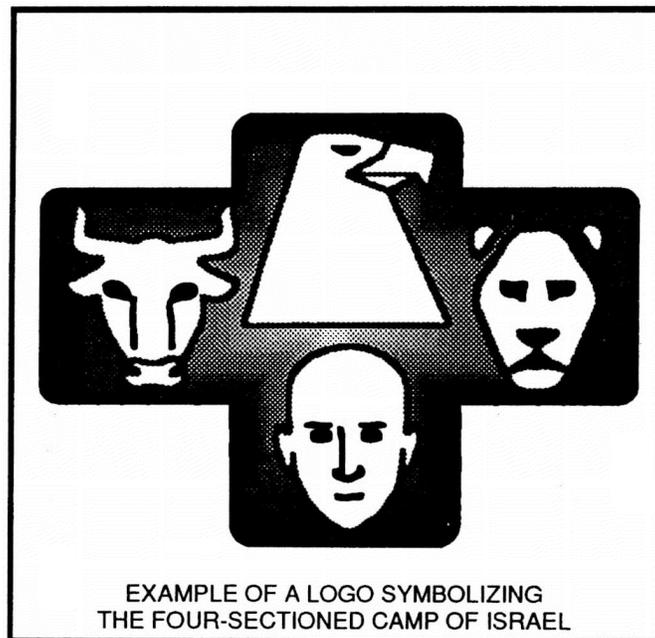
Are there such creatures as supernatural angels? Also, we must make a decision as to the existence, or nonexistence, of a supernatural Devil (since the Devil is called a "fallen angel" and a "cherub" by the church system).

Will we accept the churches' Garden of Eden tradition? Or, will we learn its real significance?

And, more to the point of our day, we must ask what cherubim have to do with God's ECCLESIA system and EONIAN life.

In the next issue we will answer these questions. God willing, we will not only show the carelessness and improper use of the term "angel" by the church, but we

will also destroy the supernatural devil doctrine, and, simultaneously, reveal the identity of ANOTHER group of people WITHIN the "race" of Israel - namely, "the elect": those "called out" for special service.



EXAMPLE OF A LOGO SYMBOLIZING THE FOUR-SECTIONED CAMP OF ISRAEL

before, at least in part, by other Bible scholars. It makes a good study into the identity of Israel down through the centuries ... but there are still many unanswered questions:

• If the churches have erroneously stereotyped cherubim as real angels, is it possible that they are mistaken about other "angels" as well?

• What is the importance of Israel's ancient logo to us in modern times?

• Is the cherub still considered the logo of Israelite descendants in modern times?

(Part two of THE CHERUB UNMASKED in next issue of *The American Christian*)

THE BLIND MEN AND THE ELEPHANT

*It was six men of Indostan
To learning much inclined.
Who went to see the Elephant
(Though all of them were blind),
That each by observation
Might satisfy his mind.*

*The First approached the Elephant,
And happening to fall
Against his broad and sturdy side,
At once began to bawl;
"God bless me! But the Elephant
Is very much like a wall!"*

*The Second, feeling of the tusk,
Cried, "Ho! What have we here
So very round and smooth and sharp?
To me 'tis mighty clear
This wonder of an Elephant
Is very like a spear!"*

*The Third approached the animal,
And happening to take
The squirming trunk within his hands,
Thus boldly up and spake:
"I see," quoth he, "the Elephant
Is very like a snake!"*

*The Fourth reached out an eager hand,
And felt about the knee.
"What most this wondrous beast is like
Is mighty plain," quoth he;
"Tis clear enough the Elephant
Is very like a tree!"*

*The Fifth, who chanced to touch the ear,
Said: "E'en the blindest man
Can tell what this resembles most;
Deny the fact who can,
This marvel of an Elephant
Is very like a fan!"*

*The Sixth no sooner had begun
About the beast to grope,
Than, seizing on the swinging tail
That fell within his scope,
"I see," quoth he, "the Elephant
Is very like a rope!"*

*And so these men of Indostan
Disputed loud and long,
Each in his own opinion
Exceeding stiff and strong,
Thought each was partly in the right,
And all were in the wrong!*

*MORAL:
So, oft in theologic wars,
The disputants, I ween,
Rail on in utter ignorance
Of what each other mean,
And prate about an Elephant
Not one of them has seen!*

—John Godfrey Saxe (1816-1887)