

The contents of the second Tabernacle, or Most Holy Place, are now to be considered; these were an ark or chest containing the two tables of the decalogue, over which was placed a propitiatory or mercy-seat of pure gold, at each end of which, and forming part of the same plate, was fixed a *Cherub*, or sculptured image so called. The directions for the fabrication of these images are not accompanied by any description of them. They are spoken of as objects well known to the Jews; but in the prophecy of Ezekiel they are described as each having four faces and four wings; the faces were those of a man and a lion on the right side; the face of an ox on the left side; and the face of an eagle; with regard to their wings, two were stretched upwards, and two covered their bodies. Many other particulars are mentioned by the prophet, which I shall not here enlarge upon.*

A great variety of opinions have been held, both in ancient and modern times, concerning the meaning of these symbols, and what they are designed to represent, some of which I shall mention in another place. By most modern theologians they seem to be regarded as *angels* of the highest rank. The first mention of them in Holy Scriptures is upon the occasion of the expulsion of our first parents from Paradise. "*And he drove out the man, and he placed at the east of the garden of Eden cherubims, and a flaming sword which turned every way, to keep the way of the tree of life.*"† The word which in our translation is rendered *placed*, means properly *caused to dwell, or placed in a tabernacle*,‡ and it was on this account probably that in the Septuagint translation the expression is referred to Adam. "*And he cast out Adam, and caused him to dwell opposite the garden of Eden. And he placed in order the cherubim, and the flaming sword which*

* Ezek. i. 6, 10, 11.

† Gen. iii. 24.

‡ Heb. ישכן.