

cherubim, describing the fire that preceded their appearance, says that it infolded itself.*

The last words of the passage in question, *to keep the way of the tree of life*, admit of two opposite interpretations—either to shut it up from all access, or to prevent it from being wholly closed. Perhaps the following interpretation—that the end for which the cherubim and flaming sword were placed at the east of the garden of Eden, was to close for ever the way to the *old* tree of life, and also to open the way to one better suited to man's altered circumstances and situation—will reconcile both interpretations. As soon as man was expelled from Paradise, the original covenant was ended, and he was cut off from all the means of grace and spiritual life that it held forth; and therefore it might be expected that his merciful and beneficent Creator would, in pursuance of the great scheme of salvation, through the promised seed of the woman, which he had thrown out to him as an anchor of hope, supply him with other means suited to his fallen state, by which he might be renewed unto holiness, and gradually nourished in grace, so as at last to be prepared to undergo the sentence passed upon him with a prospect before him of entering into that rest that remaineth for the people of God.

Having, I trust, not upon slight grounds, made it appear probable, that the cherubim, by the Deity himself, were placed in the original temple or tabernacle, and were intimately connected with that form of worship which was instituted by him in consequence of that sad event, the fall of man from his primeval state of holiness and happiness; I shall next endeavour to ascertain what these multiform images represented. But I must first premise a few observations upon the legitimate mode of collecting truths of this description from Holy Scripture, and I must here recall to

* Ezek. i. 4. Heb. מַחֲלֶקֶת אֵשׁ