

else is a symbol of the sun.* Metaphysically, he considers the two cherubim as symbolizing the Power and Goodness of the Deity, and the flaming sword the Logos or his essential Word; and this interpretation he seems to think was divinely suggested to him.† Clement of Alexandria, in some degree, seems to incline to the opinions, on this subject, of his compatriot Philo, but he expresses himself obscurely,‡ and, after alluding to other interpretations, concludes with mentioning “*The doxologizing spirits whom the cherubim symbolize.*” § Irenæus, the learned Bishop of Lyons, who had conversed with Polycarp, St. John’s disciple, regards these mystic objects as physical and ecclesiastical symbols, taking chiefly into consideration their *number*. The *four* quarters of the globe, the *four* winds, the *four* gospels, the *four* universal covenants given to man—each of these he appears to regard as figured by the cherubic animals; || and he might have added the *four* physical cherubim, spirit or wind, light, expansion, and the clouds. Justin Martyr has a singular opinion on this subject. He thinks Ezekiel’s cherubim symbolized Nebuchadnezzar when he was driven out from the society of man as a beast; ¶ when, according to the Septuagint which Justin used, he ate grass like an *ox*, his hair was like a *lion’s*, and his nails like a bird’s or *eagle’s*. Athanasius has a remarkable passage, before alluded to, in which he says of Christ, that when he appeared upon earth, *He bowed the heavens and came down*, and that he again mounted the cherubim, and ascended into heaven,** from whence it should seem that he had adopted the opinion, that

* De Cherubim, 1613, 85, D. E.

† Ib. 86, F. G.

‡ Clem. Alex. Stromata, l. v. 241, ed. Sylburg, 1592.

§ In allusion probably to Isa. vi. 3, and Rev. iv. 8.

|| Adv. Hæres. l. iii. c. 11.

¶ Quæst. et. Resp. ad. Orthodox, Quæst. xlv.

** Quæst. ad. Antioch. cxxxvi.