

WHAT ARE CHERUBIM?

Images of Cherubim were:

- Placed on the Mercy Seat, i.e. the lid of the Ark ([Exodus 25:18-21](#))
- Embroidered on the inner covering of the Tabernacle ([Exodus 26:1](#))
- Embroidered on the veil separating the Holy Place and the Most Holy Place ([Exodus 26:31](#); [II Chronicles 3:14](#))
- Placed in the Most Holy Place of the Temple ([I Kings 6:23-28](#); [II Chronicles 3:10-13](#))
- Engraved on the walls of the Temple ([I Kings 6:29](#); [II Chronicles 3:7](#))
- Engraved on the doors of the Holy Place and the Most Holy Place ([I Kings 6:32,35](#))
- Engraved on the bronze carts that carried the basins ([I Kings 7:29](#))



Cherubim are kind of a mysterious creature that been represented in various ways by different artists and historians. Some believe they look like winged lions. Others think they look more like winged human figures common in Egyptian and Assyrian art. Some think they have heads like hawks, but others think they are more like human heads.

We do know they are some sort of angelic creature used in service or worship of God. In Genesis (3:24) Cherubim were stationed to guard the “way to the tree of life” after Adam and Eve were kicked out of the Garden of Eden. We also know that sculptures of Cherubim were atop the ark of the testimony and woven into curtains of the tabernacle and plated on the wall of Solomon’s temple. We know they have wings and faces and hands that can be stretched



out from Exodus and Ezekiel, and that they can fly from psalm 18, and they exist in God’s throne room (Ps 99:1). Cherubim are also mentioned in visions by Isaiah and Ezekiel of heaven. They may be the same creatures as “living beings” in Ezekiel or “living creatures” in Revelation.

But Josephus says that no one knows or can even guess what form they had. And Hebrews tells us that “and above [the

tabernacle] were the cherubim of glory overshadowing the mercy seat; **but of these things we cannot now speak in detail.**” (Heb. 9:5). Whatever it is they are, the writer of Hebrews didn’t feel it was the time or place to discuss, and perhaps its not a point the author intended us to dwell on. Or maybe God didn’t want us hanging images of a creature designed to worship God from our rear-view mirrors.

