

## ~SERAPHS (282)

[Hebrew, *sera-phim'*, burning ones]

- No Description Is Given Of The Divine Person
- Of High Rank
- Their Function And Duty
- Their Visionary Form

- Spirit creatures stationed about Yehowah's throne in the heavens.
- **Seraphs** were standing above him. Each one had six wings. With two he kept his face covered, and with two he kept his feet covered, and with two he would fly about. (**Isaiah 6:2**)
- At that, one of the **seraphs** flew to me, and in his hand there was a glowing coal that he had taken with tongs off the altar. (**Isaiah 6:6**)
- The Hebrew word *sera-phim'* is a plural noun derived from the verb *sa-raph'*, meaning, **burn**.
- He must have the entire bull taken out to the outskirts of the camp to a clean place where the fatty ashes are poured out, and he must burn it upon wood in the fire. Where the fatty ashes are poured out it should be burned. (**Leviticus 4:12**)
- Thus the Hebrew term *sera-phim'* literally means, **burning ones**. Elsewhere the noun occurs in singular, Hebrew, *sa-raph'* or plural and refers to earthly creatures. In this usage the meaning is variously **poisonous, fiery, or inflammation-causing, and fiery snake**.
- So Yehowah sent **poisonous** serpents among the people, and they kept biting the people, so that many people of Israel died. (**Numbers 21:6**)
- Then Yehowah said to Moses; Make for yourself a **fiery snake** and place it upon a signal pole. And it must occur that when anyone has been bitten, he then has to look at it and so must keep alive. (**Numbers 21:8**) Footnote

- The prophet Isaiah describes his vision for us, saying; In the year that King Uzziah died I, however, got to see Yehowah, sitting on a throne lofty and lifted up, and his skirts were filling the temple.

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- Each one had six wings. With two he kept his face covered, and with two he kept his feet covered, and with two he would fly about. And this one called to that one and said,

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- **Seraphs** were standing above him. Each one had six wings. With two he kept his face covered, and with two he kept his feet covered, and with two he would fly about. (**Isaiah 6:2**)

- And this one called to that one and said; Holy, holy, holy is Yehowah of armies. The fullness of all the earth is his glory. (**Isaiah 6:3**)

- And the pivots of the thresholds began to quiver at the voice of the one calling, and the house itself gradually filled with smoke. (**Isaiah 6:4**)

- And I proceeded to say; Woe to me! For I am as good as brought to silence, because a man unclean in lips I am, and in among a people unclean in lips I am dwelling, for my eyes have seen the King, Yehowah of armies, himself! (**Isaiah 6:5**)

- At that, one of the **seraphs** flew to me, and in his hand there was a glowing coal that he had taken with tongs off the altar. (**Isaiah 6:6**)

- And he proceeded to touch my mouth and to say; Look! This has touched your lips, and your error has departed and your sin itself is atoned for. (**Isaiah 6:7**)

#### ·· No Description Is Given Of The Divine Person

- However, the skirts of his majestic garment are said to have filled the temple, leaving no place for anyone to stand. His throne did not rest upon the ground but, besides being **lofty**, was **lifted up**.

- The **seraphs standing** may mean **hovering**, by means of one of their sets of wings, just as the cloud was standing or hovering by the entrance of Yehowah's tent in the wilderness.
- Then Yehowah appeared at the tent in the pillar of cloud, and the pillar of cloud began to stand by the entrance of the tent. (**Deuteronomy 31:15**)
- **Professor Franz Delitzsch** comments on the position of the **seraphs**: The seraphim would not indeed tower above the head of Him that sat upon the throne, but they hovered above the robe belonging to Him with which the hall was filled. [Commentary on the Old Testament, 1973, Vol. VII, Part 1, p. 191]
- The **Latin Vulgate**, instead of saying **seraphs were standing above him**, says they were standing above it.
- In the year that King Uzziah died I, however, got to see Yehowah, sitting on a throne lofty and lifted up, and his skirts were filling the temple. (**Isaiah 6:1**)
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## •• Of High Rank

- These mighty heavenly creatures are angels, evidently of very high position in God's arrangement, since they are shown in attendance at God's throne. The cherubs seen in Ezekiel's vision corresponded to runners that accompanied the celestial chariot of God.
- And I continued to see, and, look! There were four wheels beside the cherubs, one wheel beside the one cherub and one wheel beside the other cherub, and the appearance of the wheels was like the glow of a chrysolite stone. (**Ezekiel 10:9**)
- And as for their appearance, the four of them had one likeness, just as when a wheel proves to be in the midst of a wheel. (**Ezekiel 10:10**)
- When they would go, to their four sides they would go. They would not change direction when they went, because the place to which the head would face, after it they would go. They would not change direction when they went. (**Ezekiel 10:11**)

- **And all their flesh and their backs and their hands and their wings and the wheels were full of eyes all around. The four of them had their wheels. (Ezekiel 10:12)**
- **As regards the wheels, to them it was called out in my ears, O wheelwork! (Ezekiel 10:13)**
- **This idea of positions of rank or authority in the heavens is in harmony with,**
- **Because by means of him all other things were created in the heavens and upon the earth, the things visible and the things invisible, no matter whether they are thrones or lordships or governments or authorities. All other things have been created through him and for him. (Colossians 1:16)**
- **Which speaks of things in the heavens and upon the earth, the things visible and the things invisible, no matter whether they are thrones or lordships or governments or authorities.**

#### •• **Their Function And Duty**

- **The number of **seraphs** is not mentioned, but they were calling to one another, evidently meaning that some were on each side of the throne and were declaring Yehowah's holiness and glory in antiphonal song, one, or one group, repeating after the other or responding to the other with a part of the declaration; Holy, holy, holy is Yehowah of armies. The fullness of all the earth is his glory. The reading of the Law and the peoples answering;**
- **And Moses went on to command the people on that day, saying; (Deuteronomy 27:11)**
- **The following are the ones who will stand to bless the people on Mount Gerizim when you have crossed the Jordan. Simeon and Levi and Judah and Issachar and Joseph and Benjamin. (Deuteronomy 27:12)**
- **And the following are the ones who will stand for the malediction on Mount Ebal: Reuben, Gad and Asher and Zebulun, Dan and Naphtali. (Deuteronomy 27:13)**
- **And the Levites must answer and say with raised voice to every**

man of Israel. (**Deuteronomy 27:14**)

- **Cursed is the man who makes a carved image or a molten statue, a thing detestable to Yehowah, the manufacture of the hands of a wood-and-metal worker, and who has put it in a hiding place. And all the people must answer and say; Amen! (**Deuteronomy 27:15**)**
- **Cursed is the one who treats his father or his mother with contempt. And all the people must say; Amen! (**Deuteronomy 27:16**)**
- **Cursed is the one who moves back the boundary mark of his fellowman. And all the people must say; Amen! (**Deuteronomy 27:17**)**
- **Cursed is the one who causes the blind to go astray in the way. And all the people must say; Amen! (**Deuteronomy 27:18**)**
- **Cursed is the one who perverts the judgment of an alien resident, a fatherless boy and a widow. And all the people must say; Amen! (**Deuteronomy 27:19**)**
- **Cursed is the one who lies down with his father's wife, because he has uncovered the skirt of his father. And all the people must say; Amen! (**Deuteronomy 27:20**)**
- **Cursed is the one who lies down with any beast. And all the people must say; Amen! (**Deuteronomy 27:21**)**
- **Cursed is the one who lies down with his sister, the daughter of his father or the daughter of his mother. And all the people must say; Amen! (**Deuteronomy 27:22**)**
- **Cursed is the one who lies down with his mother-in-law. And all the people must say; Amen! (**Deuteronomy 27:23**)**
- **Cursed is the one who fatally strikes his fellowman from a hiding place. And all the people must say; Amen! (**Deuteronomy 27:24**)**
- **Cursed is the one who accepts a bribe to strike a soul fatally, when it is innocent blood. And all the people must say; Amen! (**Deuteronomy 27:25**)**

- Cursed is the one who will not put the words of this Law in force by doing them. And all the people must say; Amen! **(Deuteronomy 27:26)**
- With humility and modesty in the presence of the Supreme One, they covered their faces with one of their three sets of wings, and being in a holy location, they covered their feet with another set, in due respect for the heavenly King.
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- And this one called to that one and said; Holy, holy, holy is Yehowah of armies. The fullness of all the earth is his glory. **(Isaiah 6:3)**
- The cry of the **seraphs** concerning God's holiness shows that they have to do with seeing that his holiness is declared and that his glory is acknowledged in all parts of the universe, including the earth.
- One of the seraphs touched Isaiah's lips to cleanse away his sin and his error by means of a glowing coal from off the altar. This may indicate that their work is in some way associated with cleansing away sin from among God's people, such cleansing being based on the sacrifice of Jesus Christ on God's altar.
- And this one called to that one and said; Holy, holy, holy is Yehowah of armies. The fullness of all the earth is his glory. **(Isaiah 6:3)**
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### .. Their Visionary Form

- The description of the **seraphs** as having feet, wings, and so forth, must be understood to be symbolic, their likeness to the form of earthly creatures being only representative of abilities they have or of

**functions they perform, just as God often speaks symbolically of himself as having eyes, ears, and other human features.**

- **Showing that no man knows the form of God, the apostle John says; Beloved ones, now we are children of God, but as yet it has not been made manifest what we shall be. We do know that whenever he is made manifest we shall be like him, because we shall see him just as he is.**
- **Beloved ones, now we are children of God, but as yet it has not been made manifest what we shall be. We do know that whenever he is made manifest we shall be like him, because we shall see him just as he is. (1 John 3:2)**