

Revelation – Victory Of Christ And His People!

A Glossary Of Symbols In Revelation

The following glossary is presented so the student may have a quick reference of the possible meanings of the symbols used in Revelation. It should be understood that space does not allow an exhaustive discussion of each and some symbols have a diverse scope of meanings. Only brief attention will be given each.

Altar – sacrifice for one's faith
Alpha & Omega – The encompassing authority of Christ; His preexistence, sovereignty and deity
Armageddon – Conflict between good and evil
Armies – Those aligned with either God or Satan
Babylon – Luxury; immorality; worldliness; deception
Beast from the abyss – Satan
Beast from the land – False religion; evil teachers; deceptive prophets
Beast from the sea – Rome; ungodly government
Black horse – Famine; prejudice against saints
Book of Life – Eternal record of faithful believers
Bottomless pit (abyss) – Torment; the place of evil spirits
Bowls of wrath – Judgment process of God on evil men
Bride – The church of Christ
Brimstone, fire, smoke – Chastening by God; plagues arising on earth because of sin
Chains – Restraint; control; limitation
Court without – Those outside the Temple; the lost
Crowns – Reward for faithfulness; victory; authority and power
Dragon – Satan
Eagle – Swiftmess; disaster
Earth – Worldliness; evil governments; persecution of saints
Elders – The representatives of God's covenant people
Euphrates – Boundary beyond which God's judgments on sinful Israel had come, thus judgment; restraint; long-suffering of God
False Prophet – Religious error; same as land beast
Forehead – Thoughts, attitudes and intents of the mind
Fire – Judgment; cleansing process; trials and tribulations
Four Living Creatures – Angelic order of Cherubims
First resurrection – Baptism; spiritual renewal by obedience
Frogs – Uncleaness; sin; allies of Satan who oppressed saints
Gates – Access; entrance
Gog and Magog – All enemies of God
Gold – Purity; preciousness
Great Harlot – Worldly seduction of saints causing them to turn from devoted service; compromise
Great Multitude – Saved of God from all earth
Harps – Worship
Horns – Power; authority
Immorality – Compromise with Satan; spiritual fornication

Jewels – Used to picture beauty; kingly richness; grandeur and splendor of deity
Keys – Authority
Kingdom – The church of Christ; the rule and reign of Christ on earth through His believers
Kings – Earthly leaders devoted to Satan and opposed to God
Lamb – Christ as the sacrificial atonement for sin
Lion – Strength; power; destruction; Christ as the Messiah
Little Book – The gospel plan of salvation
Locusts – Evil cohorts of Satan
Man – Intelligence ("face of a man")
Mark – Identification as a follower of Satan by thought and deed
Mark of the beast – Performance of sin; certificate of compliance to edicts of Emperor Worship
Marriage of the Lamb – The Second Coming of Christ to the saved
Marriage Supper – Joy filled eternity with God
Measuring Rod – Judgment according to God's Truth; divine standards
Mount Zion – The heavenly church; New Jerusalem
Mystery of God – The Gospel plan of redemption
Natural Disasters – Stars, sun, earthquakes, etc. point to the judgment upon this earth and its failing; punishment for evil
New Jerusalem – The church in heaven; Mt. Zion
One day, one hour – Swiftmess of God's judgment
Pale Horse – Death; the grave
Palm Branches – Expression of respect for Deity
Priests – Believers consecrated to Christ's service
Rainbow – Deity; long-suffering of God; opportunity to repent
Red Horse – War; bloody persecution of the saints
Reign – Man in covenant relationship with God; salvation
Right Hand – Power; authority; strength; deeds and actions in life
River of the water of life – Abundant eternal life; peace
Robe – One's life; actions; activities. A "white robe" was life dedicated wholly to God.
Sackcloth – Mourning; sadness; humility; meekness
Scarlet Beast – Ungodly governments; Rome
Scroll (book) – God's scheme of redemption
Sea – Separation; distance in fellowship
Sealed of God – Identified as God's person; obedient to the Gospel's commands
Seals – Hindrances to God's scheme of redemption being fulfilled
Second Death – Eternal Hell
Serpent – Satan
Seven Churches – Applies to those specified but also encompasses ALL churches of Christ

Sodom and Egypt – Carnal; idolatrous; opposed to God; persecuting God's followers

Song of Moses and the Lamb – Victory; triumph; trust

Sword – Destruction; death; sacrifice; the Gospel message

Tabernacle – Presence of God; fellowship with God

Tail – Power; strength

Throne – Power; dominion; authority; governments

Tribes of the earth – The world's population

Tribulation – The trials and struggles of the world. There are "great tribulations" used by Satan to persecute saints.

Trumpet – Warnings; announcements; used for emphasis

Virgins – Purity from sin and free from compromise with Satan

Wall – Protection; safety; security

Waters – Population of earth deceived by Satan

Washed robes – Baptism for remission of sins

White – Purity; righteousness; sinlessness

White Horse – Christ; Christ's triumphant victory

Winepress – Divine Judgment

Wings – Swiftmess in serving God

Woman #1 – Faithful Israel through which Christ came (12:1)

Woman #2 – Babylon; seduction; evil compromise (17:3)

Women – Deception; seduction by sin (9:8)

(The preceding information was taken from John L. Kachelman, Jr., Studies In The Book Of Revelation, pages 130-133. Some information has been edited.)