

Key Bible Symbols

God consistently uses certain symbols throughout Scripture
Understanding these symbols makes the Bible much easier to understand

Celestial Symbols (things pertaining to the Heavens)

Light	Truth and understanding	Psa.119:105,v130; Isa.60:3; John 8:12; Rev.21:23
Heavens	Ruling political powers on earth	Isa.1:2, 49:13, 66:22; Jer.2:12; Luke 21:25-26; 2 Pet.3:7
Sun	The absolute ruler, source of light	Gen.37:9-10; Psa.84:11; Mal.4:2; Rev.1:16, 6:12, 12:1
Moon	Religious authority, a symbol in the female sense, reflects the light	Joel 2:31; Matt.24:29; Rev.6:12
Stars	Prominent people eg political leaders	Dan.12:3; Mark 13:25; Rev.6:13, 8:10, 9:1
Dawn (morning)	A new beginning or new era	Psa.49:14; Isa.58:8; 2 Pet.1:19; Rev.2:28, 22:16
Day	The judgement and kingdom to come	Isa.2:17; Mal.3:17; 1 Pet.2:12; 2 Pet.3:10-12; Rev.16:14
	Can represent a year of time in Bible Prophecy	Dan.9:24-27, 12:11-13; Luke 13:32-33; Rev.2:10
Darkness	Lack of wisdom and truth, a cover for wicked deeds	Psa.18:28; Prov.4:19; Isa.60:2; John 3:19
Clouds	People en masse	Ezek 38:9; Jer.4:13; Jude v12
	Dry clouds for evil people	Prov.25:14; 2 Pet.2:17; Jude v12
Rain	God's Spirit guided instruction and help	Deut.32:2; Psa.72:6; Isa.45:8, 55:10-11; Joel 2:23; Rev.11:6
Hail	Removal of falsehood by force	Isa.28:17; Rev.11:19, 16:21

Terrestrial Symbols (things pertaining to the Earth)

Earth	Subjects of the political authority	Gen.11:1; Isa.1:2, 34:1, 49:8,13, 66:22; Jer.6:19; Rev.20:11
Mountains	Large political powers	Psa.72:3; Isa.2:2; Jer.51:25; Dan.2:35
	Problems in life which can seem to be overwhelming	Matt.17:20, ch21:21; 1 Cor.13:2
Islands, hills	Smaller political powers (coastlands, NKJV)	Psa.72:3; Isa.41:1, 42:15, 59:18; Rev.6:14, 16:20
Valleys	Human suffering and judgement	Psa.23:4, ch84:6; Isa.22:1-5; Jer.7:32; Joel 3:12-14
Earthquake	Political unrest or change	Matt.27:51, 28:2; Rev.6:12, 8:5, 11:13, 19, 16:18
Dew	The resurrected saints or natural Jews in the Kingdom	Psa.110:3; Isa.26:19; Mic.5:7
Water	Truth and enlightenment	Prov.18:4; Isa.12:3, 44:3, 55:1; Jer.2:13; John 4:14, 7:38
	God's Word in Kingdom	Rev.1:15, 7:17, 14:2; 22:1
Waters	Many nations or multitudes of people	Num.24:7; Isa.17:12-13, 57:20; Rev.17:1,15
Rivers	God's spirit help, instruction	Psa.1:3, 46:4; Rev.22:1
	National powers or their invading armies	Isa.8:7-8; Jer.46:7-8, 47:2; Zech.10:11; Rev.16:12
Sea	The many nations of the earth	Dan.7:2-3; Amos 8:12
	Rough sea, wicked nations; calm sea, peaceful nations	Isa.57:20; Jude v13; Rev.13:1; 15:2
Wind	God's Spirit Power	John 3:8; Acts 2:2
	Destruction from the Lord	Psa.1:4, 35:5, 83:13; Isa.11:15, 57:13, 66:15; Jer.4:11-12, 30:23; Dan.2:35; Hos.13:15
Breath, vapour	Vanity and brevity of human life and endeavour	Job 7:7; Psa.78:39; Isa.41:29; James 4:14
Trees	People and Nations	Psa.1:3, 52:8; Isa.10:33-34, 61:3; Jer.11:16-19, 17:8; Ezek.ch31; Dan.ch4; Luke 6:43-44
Grass	God's Word as sustenance	Psa.23:2; Ezek.34:14
	Brevity of life	Isa.40:6-8, 42:3; James 1:10-11
Fire	Affliction, punishment or trial	Jer.4:4; Zech.12:6; 1Cor.3:13-15; 2 Thess.1:7-8; 1 Pet.1:7
Smoke	Evidence of past punishment	Isa.9:18, 34:10; Rev.14:11, 18:9, 19:3

Human Life Symbols

Cities	People en masse ("holy city = God's elect, "great city" = God's enemies)	Luke 19:17; Rev.18:16, 21:2
Women	Wisdom and understanding	Prov.ch8
	Falsehood and wickedness	Zech.5:7-8; Rev.2:20-23, ch17
Virgins	God's elect	2 Cor.11:2; Rev.14:4
	Israel or disciples	Jer.18:13, 31:4, 21; Amos 5:2; Matt.25:1-13
Linen clothing	Righteousness	Ezek.16:10,13; Dan.10:5, 12:6-7; Luke 23:53; Rev.16:15, 19:8,14
Thrones	A symbol of authority	Ezek.26:16; Dan.7:9; Hag.2:22; Matt.19:28; Rev.3:21
Prison	Sin and death	Isa.42:7, 49:9, 61:1; Heb.2:15
Furnace	Affliction and punishment	Isa.31:9, 48:10; Ezek.22:18-22; Matt.13:42,50
Harvest	Judgement or decision time	Jer.51:33; Joel 3:13; Matt.13:39; Rev.14:15
Stubble (chaff)	Wicked people or nations	Psa.1:4, 35:5, 83:13; Isa.5:24, 33:11, 40:24, 41:2; Jer.13:24; Mal.4:1
Supper (food)	Accepting and doing God's will	Psa.37:3; Luke 14:15-24; John 4:34, 6:27, 54; Rev.3:20, 19:9
Bread	Spiritual sustenance and truth	John 6:35,48; 1 Cor.5:8
	The body of Jesus given in life and sacrifice	Matt.26:26; Mark 14:22; Luke 22:19; 1 Cor.11:23-24
	Fellowship of the saints	1 Cor.10:16-17
Wine	Represents the New Covenant in Jesus' blood	Matt.26:28; Luke 22:20; 1Cor.11:25
	Forceful punishment (winepress)	Isa.63:3; Jer.25:15-17; Hab.2:16; Rev.14:10, 16:19, 19:15
	False teaching (often enforced) which makes people spiritually drunk	Jer.51:7; Rev.14:8, 18:3
Lamp (oil lamp)	God's Word of life	Job 29:3; Psa.119:105; Prov.6:23; Isa.62:1; Matt.25:8-9
Incense	Prayers of the saints	Luke 1:9-11; Rev.5:8, 8:3-4
Fruit	Righteousness and holiness (bad fruit for lack thereof)	John 15:1-8; Rom.7:5; Gal.5:22; Eph.5:9
Cups, drinking	Something shared ie fellowship	Matt.26:27; 1 Cor.10:16
	Punishment or falsehood	Psa.11:6, 75:8; Isa.51:17; Jer.23:15, 25:15, 49:12; Rev.16:19, 17:4
Birds of prey	Protection or destruction	Exod.19:4; Isa.31:5; Jer.48:40; Ezek.17:1-10; Hos.8:1; Mal.4:2; Matt.24:28
	Military power carrying out God's will	Jer.2:15, 49:19, 50:17, 44
Animals	Nations at peace, historic order	Isa.11:6; Dan.ch7-ch8