

Explanation of Symbols and Images

Third Lesson from the book of Revelation

For the appointed time is near (1:3) Jesus spoke of His return repeatedly during His ministry, which naturally prompted questions from His disciples. One of their questions was, "When will these things happen?" (Mark 13:4). Jesus responded, "Of that day or hour no one knows, not even the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but the Father alone. Take heed, keep on the alert; for you do not know when the appointed time will come". It is important to remember in any discussion of eschatology that God does not intend for us to fully understand the timing of His plans. However, the Bible says that Jesus' return is near, and we are to wait eagerly for it (Rom 8:19-25). James encourages us to "be patient and stand firm, because the Lord's coming is near" (James 5:8).

Jesus taught His disciples to watch for His return. "You also must be ready, because the Son of Man will come at an hour when you do not expect him" (Luke 12:40). The command to "be ready" implies imminence. Throughout the New Testament, the church is told to be ready (1 Thes 5:6). If the disciples and the early church were to expect the coming of the Lord at any time, how much more should we be waiting in keen expectation? Like the five wise virgins in Jesus' parable (Math 25:1-13), we must be ready. "Be on the alert then, for you do not know the day nor the hour" (Matt 25:13). At the Last Supper the Lord himself directed his disciples' attention toward the fulfillment of the Passover in the kingdom of God: "I tell you I shall not drink again of this fruit of the vine until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom" (Mt 26:29). Whenever the Church celebrates the Eucharist she remembers this promise and turns her gaze "to him who is to come." In her prayer she calls for his coming: "**Marana tha!**" "Come, Lord Jesus!

Seven spirits (1:4): The "seven spirits of God" are mentioned several times in the book of Revelation (1:4-5/ 3:1/ 4:5/ 5:6) The identity of "the seven spirits" is not explicit in the passage, but arriving at the proper interpretation is fairly straightforward. The "seven spirits" cannot be seven angelic beings such as seraphim or cherubim because of the context of Rev 1:4. John says that "grace and peace" are coming to the churches from three sources: "he who is, and who was, and who is to come" (verse 4). This is a depiction of the Trinity: grace and peace are given by the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, the three co-equal Persons of the Godhead.

In Rev 3:1 Jesus "holds" the seven spirits of God. In Rev 4:5 the seven spirits of God are symbolized as seven burning lamps that are before God's throne. This picture agrees with Zechariah's vision in which he sees the Holy Spirit symbolized as "a solid gold lampstand . . . with a bowl at the top and seven lamps on it" (Zech 4:2). Once we identify the "seven spirits" as the Holy Spirit, the question remains, why are there "seven" of Him? The Bible, and especially the book of Revelation, uses the number seven to refer to perfection and completion. John's vision includes a picture of the perfect and complete Holy Spirit.

Isaiah 11:2 also references the Holy Spirit using a seven-fold description: "The Spirit of the LORD will rest on him—the Spirit of wisdom and of understanding, the Spirit of counsel and of power, the Spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the LORD." The prophecy is that the Messiah would be empowered not by seven individual spirits but by the One Spirit, described seven ways:

1) The Spirit of the LORD 2) The Spirit of wisdom 3) The Spirit of understanding 4) The Spirit of counsel 5) The Spirit of power 6) The Spirit of knowledge 7) The Spirit of the fear of the Lord. Thus the “seven spirits of God” in the book of Revelation are a reference to the Holy Spirit in the perfection of His manifold ministry.

Throne (1:4) There are several references to the throne of God in the Bible. Jesus calls heaven “God’s throne” in Matt 5:34, recalling God’s statement in Isaiah 66:1, “Heaven is my throne, and the earth is my footstool.” Other references to God’s throne are found in 2 Chronicles 18:18; Psalm 11:4; Hebrews 8:1; 12:2; Revelation 1:4; 3:21; 4:2; and many other verses.

A throne is a special seat reserved for a monarch. When the Bible speaks of God’s “throne,” the emphasis is on God’s transcendence, dignity, and sovereign rule. The fact that His throne is in heaven further underscores the transcendent nature of God’s existence. The throne of God need not be thought of as a literal throne. God the Father is incorporeal (John 4:24). Not having a physical body, God does not literally “sit.” References to a divine throne are akin to biblical allusions to God’s “hand” or “mouth” or “eyes”—they are anthropomorphisms, descriptions of God couched in human terms out of deference to our limited knowledge. God has to describe Himself in ways we can understand.

Isaiah sees the Lord “high and exalted, seated on a throne; and the train of his robe filled the temple” (Isaiah 6:1). At that time, the prophet was having an inspired vision. God’s throne (and His robe) are not to be taken as literal, physical objects. Rather, God was communicating to Isaiah the magnificence, splendor, and exaltation of His Being. Other descriptions of the throne of God are found in other prophetic visions (Ezekiel and John).

God’s throne is a place of power and authority. God’s throne is a place of majesty and honor. The Bible says that, when Jesus ascended to heaven, He “sat down at the right hand of the throne of God” (Heb 12:2). There is no higher place than heaven. God is the King of heaven, and Jesus holds the place of honor at God’s right hand. God’s throne is a place of perfect justice. The final judgment, described in Rev 20:11, is held before “a great white throne”. God’s throne is a place of praise. John’s vision of heaven includes a scene in which a “new song” is sung in praise to the One who occupies the throne (Rev 14:3). God’s throne is a place of eternal life. God is the Source of life. In heaven, John sees “the river of the water of life, as clear as crystal, flowing from the throne of God and of the Lamb” (Rev 22:1).

God’s throne is a place of grace. Not only does the throne of God represent judgment for the unbeliever, but it also represents mercy and grace for His children. “Let us then approach God’s throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need” (Heb 4:16). One day, all creation will bow to the majesty of God’s throne (Phil 2:9–11). The regal beings surrounding the throne of God will “lay their crowns before the throne and say: ‘You are worthy, our Lord and God, to receive glory and honor and power’” (Rev 4:10–11).

Clouds (1:7) what does it mean that Jesus will come in the clouds? Rev 1:7 says, “‘Look, he is coming with the clouds,’ and ‘every eye will see him, even those who pierced him’; and all peoples on earth ‘will mourn because of him.’ So shall it be! Amen.” This verse brings together two other passages: Matt 26:64, in which Jesus tells the Sanhedrin they will see the Son “coming on the clouds of heaven”; and Zech 12:10, which says that Jerusalem’s inhabitants will mourn when they see “the one they have pierced.”

Some have tried to allegorize Rev 1:7 by assigning various figurative meanings to the “clouds.” But there is no need to look for hidden meanings here, for the passage means

just what it says, as do the two passages it quotes. There is nothing more to make of the statement that “He comes with the clouds.” It simply means that Jesus will appear to all people as He comes to earth out of the heavens.

After Jesus gave His disciples the Great Commission, “he was taken up before their very eyes, and a cloud hid him from their sight” (Acts 1:9). As the disciples stood there, gazing after the Lord, two angels appeared and told them, “This same Jesus, who has been taken from you into heaven, will come back in the same way you have seen him go into heaven”. A cloud is mentioned at His ascension, and the clouds are mentioned at His return.

I am the Alpha and the Omega (1:8) What does it mean that Jesus is the Alpha and the Omega?

Greek Alphabet and Symbols					
A α Alpha	B β Beta	Γ γ Gamma	Δ δ Delta	E ε Epsilon	Z ζ Zeta
H η Eta	Θ θ Theta	I ι Iota	Κ κ Kappa	Λ λ Lambda	Μ μ Mu
N ν Nu	Ξ ξ Xi	Ο ο Omicron	Π π Pi	Ρ ρ Rho	Σ σ, ς Sigma
Τ τ Tau	Υ υ Upsilon	Φ φ Phi	Χ χ Chi	Ψ ψ Psi	Ω ω Omega

Jesus proclaimed Himself to be the “Alpha and Omega” in Rev 1:8; 21:6; and 22:13. Alpha and omega are the first and last letters of the Greek alphabet. Among the Jewish rabbis, it was common to use the first and the last letters of the Hebrew alphabet to denote the whole of anything, from beginning to end. Jesus as the beginning and end of all things is a reference to no one but the true God. This statement of eternity could apply only to God. It is seen especially in Rev 22:13, where Jesus proclaims that He is “the Alpha and the Omega, the First and the Last, the Beginning and the End.”

One of the meanings of Jesus being the “**Alpha and Omega**” is that He was at the beginning of all things and will be at the close. It is equivalent to saying He always existed and always will exist. It was Christ, as second Person of the Trinity, who brought about the creation: “Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made” (John 1:3).

Christ, as the Alpha and Omega, is the first and last in so many ways. He is the “author and finisher” of our faith (Heb 12:2), signifying that He begins it and carries it through to completion. He is the totality, the sum and substance of the Scriptures, both of the Law and of the Gospel (John 1:1, 14). He is the fulfilling end of the Law (Matthew 5:17), and He is the beginning subject matter of the gospel of grace through faith, not of works (Eph 2:8-9). He is found in the first verse of Genesis and in the last verse of Revelation. He is the first and last, the all in all of salvation, from the justification before God to the final sanctification of His people. Jesus is the Alpha and Omega, the first and last, the beginning and the end. Only God incarnate could make such a statement. Only Jesus Christ is God incarnate.

Caught up in spirit (1:10) What does it mean that John was caught up in spirit? This expression (“in spirit”) is used four times in John (1:10; 4:2; 17:3; 21:10), and each time it is used, John is whisked away to a new vision. It isn’t certain whether or not John was taken physically or just given a vision—although 17:3 says that the angel “carried me away in the Spirit.” This seems to imply that he was taken as a person. This seems to fit with Paul’s language of seeing heaven, where he writes, “Whether in the body I do not know, or out of the body I do not know, God knows” (2 Cor. 12:2). This same sort of experience happened to Ezekiel the prophet:

*Then I looked, and behold, a likeness as the appearance of a man; from His loins and downward there was the appearance of fire, and from His loins and upward the appearance of brightness, like the appearance of glowing metal. He stretched out the form of a hand and caught me by a lock of my head; and the Spirit lifted me up between earth and heaven and **brought me in the visions of God** to Jerusalem, to the entrance of the north gate of the inner court. (Ezek. 8:2-3)*

Here, Ezekiel explains that he was lifted up “in the visions” that God was giving him. It doesn’t say that he was physically moved—just given visions. This notion of a spiritual trance would fit with Ezekiel’s earlier experience (Ezek. 2:2; 3:12, 14), Peter’s vision (Acts 10:10-11; 11:5), and Paul’s vision (Acts 22:17-18). In either event, the expression seems to be saying that John was given a vision from the Holy Spirit

Lord’s Day (1:10): What is the Lord’s Day? The Lord’s day is different the day of the Lord. The Lord’s day is Sunday and it is used only once here in the entire Scripture. Since the apostle John does not elaborate on the meaning of “Lord’s day,” we can assume that his target audience, first-century Christians, were already familiar with the expression.

The Lord’s day is different from Sabbath day. The Sabbath day was instituted by God for the nation of Israel to commemorate His deliverance of them from Egypt (Deut 5:15). Sabbath began Friday at sunset and ended Saturday at sunset and was to be a day of complete rest from all labor, symbolic of the Creator’s resting on the seventh day (Genesis 2:2–3).

Sunday was the day that Jesus Christ rose from the dead, an act that forever separated Christianity from any other religion (John 20:1). Since that time, believers have gathered on the first day of the week to celebrate His victory over sin and death (Acts 20:7; 1 Cor 16:2). The Catechism of the Catholic Church states that “You shall attend Mass on Sundays and holy days of obligation and rest from servile labor.” The obligation is binding every Sunday. It is a holy day of obligation, a day for us to grow in our faith, and we are required to attend to the extent that we are able to do so.

Private Worship Is Not Enough. From the earliest days of the Church, Christians have understood that being a Christian is not a private matter. We are called to be Christians together. While we should engage in the private worship of God throughout the week, our primary form of worship is public and communal, which is why Sunday Mass is so important. Can we be excused from Sunday Mass? The precepts of the Church are the requirements of the church that are deemed necessary for us to fulfill upon pain of mortal sin. Mass is one of those requirements, but there are a few situations, where you may be excused from Mass.

If we have a debilitating illness or if there is extremely bad weather that would make our attempt to getting to Church unsafe or if travel conditions are unsafe or If we are traveling and we cannot find a Catholic Church nearby or cannot make it for a good reason, then we may be excused from attending Mass. check with your priest to make sure that your reason was valid and that you did not commit a mortal sin. You are required to be in a state of grace when you attend your next Mass and to participate in Holy Communion. If your reason was not acceptable by the Church, you will require absolution by your priest.

Gold lampstands (1:13) What are the seven lampstands in the book of Revelation? The apostle John experiences a vision of Jesus Christ standing amid seven lamp stands. Jesus spoke to John in the vision and explained what the seven lampstands were: “The mystery of the seven stars that you saw in my right hand and of the seven golden lampstands is this: The seven stars are the angels of the seven churches, and the seven lampstands are the seven churches” (Rev 1:20).

The seven churches, represented by the seven lampstands, were actual churches that existed at the time John experienced the vision. (Ephesus, Smyrna, Pergamum, Thyatira, Sardis, Philadelphia, and Laodicea). In Rev 2 - 3, Jesus Christ addresses a letter to each of these churches, a letter that included words of commendation, criticism, and consolation.

Most scholars agree that the seven lampstands carry a meaning beyond those seven Asiatic churches in John’s day, representing in some way the entire church of Jesus Christ. Because the number seven often represents wholeness or completion in Scripture, many conclude that the seven churches represent all churches or the church universal. Still others see the seven individual churches as symbols of the local church.

Some commentators view these seven candlesticks as representatives of the church in every age. Others see them as predictive of the church in different stages throughout history, with the first, Ephesus, symbolic of the apostolic church and the last, Laodicea, symbolic of the present-day, postmodern church.

These lampstands were made of gold, the most precious and valuable of all metals. In this sense, the golden lampstands symbolize the preciousness of the church as God’s most valued possession. The gold of the lampstands may also be symbolic of purity and holiness. The church is called to be an example of God’s holiness to the world (1 Peter 1:15–16).

And of course lampstands are designed to bring light to dark places. God’s purpose for the church is to hold forth the light. Jesus said, “You are the light of the world. A town built on a hill cannot be hidden. Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a bowl. Instead they put it on its stand, and it gives light to everyone in the house. In the same way, let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven” (Matthew 5:14–16).

In John’s vision, Jesus Christ stands in the center of the seven lampstands, in the midst of His people. Christ is always present with His church. Jesus is the light of the world (John 8:12), and, as candlesticks, the church’s mission is to hold that light up for the world to see.

Seven stars (1:16) What do the seven stars represent? In chapters 1—3, “seven stars” are referenced four times. There are other “sevens,” as well: seven lampstands, seven spirits, and seven churches. John sees a vision of the Lord Jesus in His glory. He is standing in the midst of seven golden lampstands, and “in his right hand he held seven stars”. John falls down at Jesus’ feet “as though dead”. Jesus then revives John and strengthens him for the task of writing the coming revelation.

The fact that the stars are in Jesus’ right hand indicates that they are important and under His authority. The right hand is a sign of strength and control. Jesus explains to John that the “stars are the angels of the seven churches” (Revelation 1:20). An “angel” is literally a “messenger.”

It could be that every local church has a “guardian angel” who oversees and protects that congregation. Even if that is the case, a better interpretation of the “messengers” of Rev 1 is that they are the pastors or bishops of the seven churches, symbolized by the lampstands. A pastor is God’s “messenger” to the church in that he is responsible to faithfully preach God’s Word to them. John’s vision shows that each pastor is being held in the Lord’s right hand.

A sharp two edged sword (1:16) The author of Hebrews described the Word of God as “sharper than any double-edged sword.” Paul called it “the sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God” (Eph 6:17). This sword imagery also appears in Isaiah 49:2, Rev 1:16 ; 2:12. As a sharp, double-bladed sword, the Word of God is our definitive offensive weapon against the assaults of a spiritual enemy. When Satan tempted our Lord in the wilderness, Jesus wielded the sword of God’s Word to counter the devil’s attacks (Matthew 4:4). His example teaches us to do the same. The depiction of Jesus holding a sharp, two-edged sword refers to the Lord’s readiness to bring judgment (Rev 1:16).

Keys to death and the netherworld (1:18)

Jesus says, “I am the Living One; I was dead, and now look, I am alive for ever and ever! And I hold the keys of death and Hades.” Possessing the “keys of death” means that the risen Christ has control and authority over death. In John 10:17–18, Jesus says, “The reason my Father loves me is that I lay down my life—only to take it up again. No one takes it from me, but I lay it down of my own accord. I have authority to lay it down and authority to take it up again. This command I received from my Father.” When Jesus died, He died according to His own timing, when He “gave up his spirit” (John 19:30). Pilate was surprised to hear that Jesus was already dead (Mark 15:44). Jesus, who has the authority over death, had the unique power to give up His spirit and to rise from the dead. Moreover, He has the authority to release His followers from death in order that they may be with Him forever.

Isaiah 37:2 speaks of Eliakim, the son of Hilkiyah, an honorable man sent on an important errand. In chapter 22, it was written that Eliakim would be given authority and that God would “place on his shoulder the key to the house of David.” By the “key to the house of David,” it is meant that the Lord would place Eliakim in a position of authority. Later, Eliakim becomes the governor of the palace in Jerusalem. Jesus having the keys of death means He has the power to release from death those who receive the gift of salvation He offers.

Nicolaitans (2:6) Who are the Nicolaitans? The exact origin of the Nicolaitans is unclear. Some Bible commentators believe they were a heretical sect who followed the teachings of Nicolas—whose name means “one who conquers the people”—who was possibly one of the deacons of the early church mentioned in Acts 6:5. It is possible that Nicolas became an apostate, denying the true faith and became part of a group holding “the doctrine of Balaam,” who taught Israel “to sin by eating food sacrificed to idols and by committing sexual immorality.” Clement of Alexandria says, “They abandoned themselves to pleasure like goats, leading a life of self-indulgence.” Their teaching perverted grace and replaced liberty with license.

Other commentators believe that these Nicolaitans were not so called from any man, but from the Greek word *Nicolah*, meaning “let us eat,” as they often encouraged each other to eat things offered to idols. Whichever theory is true, it is certain that the deeds of the Nicolaitans were an abomination to Christ. They, like the Gnostics and other false teachers, abused the doctrine of grace and tried to introduce licentiousness in its place (2 Peter 2:15, 19; Jude 1:4).

The tree of life in the garden of Eden (2:7) What is the meaning of tree of life? The tree of life, mentioned in the books of Genesis and Revelation, is a life-giving tree created to enhance and perpetually sustain the physical life of humanity. The tree was planted by God in the Garden of Eden: “The LORD God made all kinds of trees grow out of the ground—trees that were pleasing to the eye and good for food. In the middle of the garden were the tree of life and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil” (Gen 2:9).

More details concerning the tree of life come after Adam and Eve's sin: "The LORD God said, 'The man has now become like one of us, knowing good and evil. He must not be allowed to reach out his hand and take also from the tree of life and eat, and live forever'" (Gen 3:22). In his disobedience, Adam lost his eternal life. The tree of life in Eden must have had some role to play in maintaining the life of Adam and Eve. Adam would "live forever," even in his fallen condition, if he had eaten the tree of life after his sin.

In His great love, God provided One who would redeem fallen mankind. Through one man, Adam, sin entered the world, but through another Man, Jesus Christ, redemption through the forgiveness of sin is available to all (Rom 5:17). Those who avail themselves of the sacrifice of Christ on the cross will be resurrected to see the tree of life again, for it stands in the middle of the Holy City, the New Jerusalem.

The assembly of Satan (2:9): An assembly is made up of the individuals who say they are Jews, and are not. Those in the "synagogue of Satan" say they are spiritual Jews—pretend to be real Christians—but are not. This false church was already developing in the days of the apostle John, masquerading as God's true church. It had congregations in the cities of Smyrna and Philadelphia in Asia Minor even at that early time. It and its daughter churches are further described in Revelation 17.

One of the hallmarks of Satan's activities is deception, particularly counterfeiting the things of God. "For such are false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into apostles of Christ. And no wonder! For Satan himself transforms himself into an angel of light. Therefore it is no great thing if his ministers transform themselves into ministers of righteousness, whose end will be according to their works" (II Cor 11:13-15). Jesus says we will know such false ministers by their fruits (Matt 7:15-20). Thus, we should make sure that the church we attend and its ministers are following biblical doctrines and producing the fruit of righteousness. Otherwise, it may well be an "assembly of Satan."

Crown of life (2:10) There are five heavenly crowns mentioned in the New Testament that will be awarded to believers. They are the imperishable crown (1 Cor 9:24-25), the crown of rejoicing (1 Thes 2:19), the crown of righteousness (2 Tim 4:8), the crown of glory (1 Pet 5:4) and the crown of life (Rev 2:10).

"Do not be afraid of anything that you are going to suffer. Indeed, the devil will throw some of you into prison, that you may be tested, and you will face an ordeal for ten days. Remain faithful until death, and I will give you the crown of life" (Rev 2:10) This crown is for all believers, but is especially dear to those who endure sufferings, who bravely confront persecution for Jesus, even to the point of death. In Scripture the word "life" is often used to show a relationship that is right with God. It was Jesus who said, "I have come that they may have life and that they may have it more abundantly" (John 10:10). Just as things such as air, food, and water are vital for our physical lives, Jesus provides us what is required for our spiritual lives. He is the One who provides "living water." He is the "bread of life" (John 4:10, 6:35). We know that our earthly lives will end. But we have the amazing promise that comes only to those who come to God through Jesus: "And this is the promise that He has promised us—eternal life" (1 John 2:25).

James tells us that this crown of life is for all those who love God (James 1:12). The apostle John responds: "For this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments. And His commandments are not burdensome" (1 John 5:3). As His children we must keep His commandments, obeying Him, always remaining faithful. So, as we endure the inevitable trials, pains, heartaches, and tribulations—as long as we live—may we ever move forward, always "looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith" (Hebrews 12:2) and receive the crown of life that awaits us.

Second death (2:11) The second death is mentioned on multiple occasions in the book of Revelation and is synonymous with the lake of fire. It is a “death” in that it is a separation from God, the Giver of life. It is called the “second” one because it follows physical death.

Rev 21:8 explains the second death in the most detail: “The cowardly, the unbelieving, the vile, the murderers, the sexually immoral, those who practice magic arts, the idolaters and all liars – their place will be in the fiery lake of burning sulfur. This is the second death”. The second death is exclusively for those who have rejected Christ.

The second death is also mentioned in Rev 20:14-15: “Then death and Hades were thrown into the lake of fire. The lake of fire is the second death. If anyone’s name was not found written in the book of life, he was thrown into the lake of fire.” At the end of time, even death and the grave (Hades) will be thrown into the lake of fire. In addition, every person not included in the book of life will be thrown into the lake of fire. This condition will be final; the destination is permanent.

In summary, the second death is a reference to the lake of fire where those who are separated from God by their sin will dwell for eternity. This judgment was recorded in Scripture as a warning to unbelievers to seek the salvation that Jesus Christ provides.

Days of Antipas (2:13): One Christian in Pergamum named Antipas is mentioned as a “faithful witness.” Church tradition says that Antipas was a physician suspected of secretly propagating Christianity. The Aesculapians (members of the medical guild) accused Antipas of disloyalty to Caesar. Upon being condemned to death, Antipas was placed inside a copper bull, which was then heated over a fire until it was red-hot

Hidden Manna (2:17): what is hidden Manna? The hidden manna is a symbolic picture of Jesus Christ. As the manna of the Exodus sustained and strengthened the Israelites for the forty years of desert wanderings, so Jesus strengthens and sustains us spiritually as we walk through this life on our way to heaven. Jesus is the “manna” from heaven—the spiritual sustenance we need. Jesus Himself made the connection between the manna of Moses’ day and His own provision of salvation: *“I am the bread of life. Your ancestors ate the manna in the wilderness, yet they died. But here is the bread that comes down from heaven, which anyone may eat and not die. I am the living bread that came down from heaven. Whoever eats this bread will live forever. This bread is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world. . . . This is the bread that came down from heaven. Your ancestors ate manna and died, but whoever feeds on this bread will live forever”* (John 6:48–51, 58). The manna that sustained the Israelites was a foreshadowing of the sacrifice of Christ; the manna mentioned in Rev 2:17 is another, symbolic reference to Christ.

White amulet (2:17) At the time the book of Revelation was written, a white stone was equivalent with innocence. If you were to be tried for a crime, a white stone signified acquittal, and a black stone signified guilt. To receive a white stone means that you are free from condemnation. You have been tried and have been found worthy. The white stone is a symbol of whom you have become through your faithfulness and your determination to rule over sin. It is rock-hard faith and purity. Here on earth your faith is being tested – there in eternity it will have been proven; it’s withstood the testing. Written on this stone of flint-hard faith will be your new name.

This name will reflect the battles that you have stood in, and sufferings that you have endured. It will illustrate who you’ve become because of your faithfulness and God’s grace.

Deep secrets of Satan (2:24): Jesus recognized that at least some members of the church at Thyatira had resisted Jezebel's corrupt teaching and behavior. He addresses those individuals in this verse. The teaching they had renounced was presented as secret and profound, but it came from Satan and had snared many undiscerning members of the church. Jesus promises in this verse to spare the remnant of faithful believers any other burden.

In every period of history, a remnant has opposed evil, resisted the Devil, and honored the Lord. Noah was a remnant when the human race was thoroughly evil (Genesis 6:5). The patriarchs from Abraham to Moses were each a remnant in the pagan world. When the vast majority of Israelites worshiped Baal in the time of Queen Jezebel, a remnant of 7,000 remained faithful to the Lord (1 Kings 19:18). Daniel and his three friends were a godly remnant in pagan Babylon (Daniel 1:1–7).

Book of life (3:5). The Book of Life is the set of names of those who will live with God forever in heaven. It is the roll of those who are saved. This Book of Life is also mentioned in Rev 3:5; 20:12; and Phil 4:3. The same book is also called the Lamb's Book of Life because it contains the names of those who have been redeemed by the blood of the Lord Jesus (Rev 13:8; 21:27). Once our name is written in the Book of Life, it is never erased (Rev 3:5; Rom 8:37–39). No true believer should doubt his eternal security in Christ (John 10:28–30). The fate of the ungodly is sealed; their names are not in the Book of Life; their punishment is sure. God keeps good records. He knows His own, and He has set the names of His children permanently in His book. Surrounding the throne I saw twenty-four other thrones on which twenty-four elders sat, dressed in white garments and with gold crowns on their heads (4:4)

The four living creatures (4:8): The four living creatures are found in Rev 4:6–9; 5:6–14; 6:1–8; 14:3; 15:7; and 19:4. they are real, actual beings. The four living creatures (literally “beings”) are a special, exalted order of angelic being or cherubim. This is clear by their close proximity to the throne of God. Eze 1:12–20 suggests that they are in constant motion around the throne.

Rev 5:6–14 describes the duties or purposes of the four living creatures. They fall down and worship the Lamb, Jesus Christ, offering the same reverence to Him that they did to the Father (Rev 4:6–9). Along with the twenty-four elders, they have “harps and golden vials full of incense, which are the prayers of the saints” (Rev 5:8). Harps are frequently associated with worship in the Old Testament, as well as with prophecy (2 Kings 3:15; 1 Chr 25:1). Incense represents the prayers of the saints. Therefore, taken together, the four living creatures and twenty-four elders hold in their hands all that prophets ever prophesied and believers ever prayed for—all about to come to pass.

The purpose of the four living creatures also has to do with declaring the holiness of God and leading in worship and adoration of God, and they are involved in some way with God's justice, for when He opens the first four seals and sends out the four horsemen to destroy, their powerful voices, like thunder, command “come” (Revelation 6:1–8). The horsemen respond to the summons of the four powerful creatures, indicating the power the creatures possess.

The four living creatures are very similar, if not the same, beings as those in Ezekiel chapters 1 and 10 and Isaiah 6:1–3. They are four in number, full of eyes, have faces like the beings in Ezekiel 1:10, have six wings (Isaiah 6:2), and offer worship as the beings in Isaiah 6:3, saying, “Holy, holy, holy is the Lord.” They may not be the exact same beings, but they definitely are comparable and probably of the same order.

In summary, these beings are an exalted order of angels whose purpose is primarily that of worship (Revelation 19:4). They are very similar to the beings in Ezekiel 1 and 10 and Isaiah 6:1-3, and they are in some ways involved in God's divine justice.

The Evangelists' Symbols: Lion, Ox, Man, Eagle

Revelation 4:7 "And the first beast was like a lion, and the second beast like a calf, and the third beast had a face as a man, and the fourth beast was like a flying eagle."

	Matt Lion	Jesus as the righteous King of the Jews, the Lion of the Tribe of Judah Matthew dwells on his royal majesty ;
	Mark Ox	Jesus as the Servant of the Lord & People Emphasis on His Miracles, Burden Bearer , and Sacrifice
	Luke Man	Jesus as the Great Physician and Friend of Sinners The Son of Man , and Mercy. Luke traces his genealogy back to Adam
	John Eagle	Jesus as the Word of God , the Living Bread that " came down from heaven " Emphasis on His <i>Divinity</i>

Scroll in the right hand (5:1) In this verse John tells us he saw God holding a scroll in his right hand. It was likely a papyrus document that was rolled up tightly. The verse tells us it contained writing inside and on the back and it was closed with seven seals. It had the appearance of an official document, although most first-century official documents had writing only on one side and bore a title and address. Scrolls written on both sides were called opistographi. Likely the scroll in God's right hand contained official verdicts and sentences against unbelievers on earth, and the number seven symbolizes God's judgments as perfect. The sentences or judgments would have to be carried out before Jesus could inaugurate His kingdom on earth. Revelation 6—8 describes those judgments, one at a time, as each seal is broken.

Seven seals (5:1): The seven seals are one of a series of end-times judgments from God. The seals are described in Revelation 6:1–17 and 8:1–5. In John's vision, the seven seals hold closed a scroll in heaven, and, as each seal is broken, a new judgment is unleashed on the earth.

John is looking for a worthy person to open the seven seals as they contain the judgement of God. The fact that no one was worthy to open the seals made John sad and weep over

the situation and that time he receives the good news that the Lion of the tribe of Judah will open the seals. The Lion is Jesus Christ.

The first seal introduces the AntiChrist with authority to conquer the world. The second seal reveals great warfare upon the earth. The third seal opens famine. The fourth seal talks about death. The fifth seal talks about the martyrs who will be killed for their faith in Jesus. The sixth seal opens earthquake. The seventh seal shows solemn silence in heaven.

White robe (5:11) In response to the martyrs' question about God's plans for His day of vengeance, the Lord provides each of them with a white robe, and they are told simply to "rest a little while longer" (v. 11). We see white clothing in other places in Revelation: The white robes given to the martyrs in Revelation 6 no doubt symbolize that they were made white by the blood of the Lamb, and that those clothed in Christ's righteousness may wait in confident expectation that He will avenge their untimely deaths. Day of wrath (5:17)

The white robes show the immaculate purity of their character. White signifies perfection. Those who are wearing the white robes are the ones who have survived the time of great distress; they have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb (7:14). In most cultures and religions, *white* symbolizes purity, innocence and humility. It is considered a sacred color that holds significant power over the belief of people. Priests wear white robes during mass which are known as *Cassocks* to oversee funeral ceremonies and also wear the robes during Easter and Christmas. It is worn because it symbolizes life and death, however, it celebrates life as opposed to dwelling on the departure of a loved one in death. White robes are worn by Christians who are being baptized to symbolize being born anew in Christ and the absence of sin.