

Symbols in Bible Prophecy

What is a Symbol?

A symbol is a thing that represents or stands for something else, especially a material object representing something abstract.

Examples of Symbols

In **Music**, a note is a symbol of a specific tone.



If everyone chose a different tone for the same symbol, music would just be a lot of noise with clashing melodies that no one would want to listen to.

In the **Periodic Table** the different elements are given a one or two letter symbol:

- **C**: Carbon
- **O**: Oxygen
- **N**: Nitrogen
- **S**: Sulfur
- **Al**: Aluminum

If everyone assigned each symbol a different element, all kinds of chemical reaction disasters including poisoning and explosions would be the result.

Mathematics is a very exact symbolic language. Each symbol represents an action or relationship of mathematical objects used for structuring other mathematical symbols in formulas or mathematical expressions.

Examples of mathematical symbols are +, -, x, =, etc., and all of the symbols used in Calculus and other categories of mathematics.

If everyone assigned their own meanings to each symbol, it would literally cause absolute chaos in the entire world. Everything in life is related to mathematics in one way or another.

Symbols **usually** only represent one specific thing. The meaning is either an established meaning that everyone agrees on, or it is a symbol that is defined by the author of the symbol. All of the examples above depend 100% on everyone knowing exactly what each symbol means.

Bible Prophecy

In the Bible, symbols are used primarily in prophetic dreams, visions and also in parables. If everyone assigned different meanings to the symbols...oh wait, they do! That's why there are so many conflicting views on Bible prophecy.

Rules for Interpreting Symbols In the Bible:

- The symbols are often defined in the context in which they're found, or
- They have been defined or alluded to somewhere else in the Bible.
- Each symbol has ONE meaning, unless another is specifically given in Scripture.
- Although the symbols are figurative, they have a LITERAL meaning. You CANNOT interpret them allegorically, and you should NOT "spiritualize" them.

We do not have the permission to give our own meaning to symbols in the Bible. It is important to recognize and interpret symbols in prophecy and parables according to the author of the symbols—God.