

A Biblical Symbol Reference

Scripture is the first dictionary. Every symbol below is tied to actual verses so you can go look it up yourself. This is a starting point for prayer, not a lookup table, and it does not replace the Holy Spirit.

Read this before you use the list

1. **Scripture first, always.** Ask what the image does in the Bible before you ask what a book says it means.
2. **The same symbol can carry opposite meanings.** A lion is Christ in Revelation 5:5 and the devil in 1 Peter 5:8. Context and the Spirit decide, never the list.
3. **Your personal symbols outrank this page.** If a place or person carries a specific meaning in your own life, that meaning is real data about your dream.
4. **The meaning is its own gift.** "Do not interpretations belong to God?" (Genesis 40:8) Ask Him, then use this to sharpen what He shows you.
5. **Never build doctrine on a symbol,** and be very slow to give another person a directive word based on one.
6. **Numbers and colors are the least consistent of all.** Be slowest there. Numerology is not interpretation.

The Spirit, Presence & Revelation

Water	The Holy Spirit; cleansing by the Word; also peoples and nations, or overwhelming trouble John 7:38-39 · Ephesians 5:26 · Revelation 17:15 · Psalm 69:1-2
Living water	The Spirit and eternal life welling up from within John 4:10-14
Fire	God's presence; refining and testing; the Spirit; God as a consuming fire Exodus 3:2 · Malachi 3:2-3 · 1 Peter 1:7 · Acts 2:3 · Hebrews 12:29
Oil	Anointing and the Spirit; readiness that others cannot lend you 1 Samuel 16:13 · Psalm 23:5 · Matthew 25:1-13
Wind or breath	The Spirit moving; life returning to what was dead John 3:8 · Acts 2:2 · Ezekiel 37:9-10
Dove	The Holy Spirit; also innocence and gentleness Matthew 3:16 · Matthew 10:16
Cloud	God's guidance and His glory settling on a place Exodus 13:21 · Exodus 40:34-35
Light	God Himself, truth, revelation; the Word guiding your steps 1 John 1:5 · John 8:12 · Psalm 119:105
Rain	Blessing and teaching; the Spirit poured out Deuteronomy 32:2 · Hosea 6:3 · Joel 2:23

Creatures, People & the Body

Creatures

Lion	Christ the Lion of Judah, AND the enemy prowling. Context decides, never the list Revelation 5:5 · 1 Peter 5:8
Lamb	Christ, sacrifice, innocence John 1:29 · Revelation 5:6
Sheep	God's people, those who know His voice Psalm 100:3 · John 10:27
Serpent	Deception and the enemy; also shrewdness when Jesus commends it Genesis 3:1 · Revelation 12:9 · Matthew 10:16
Eagle	Renewed strength; God carrying His people Isaiah 40:31 · Exodus 19:4
Wolf	A destroyer among God's people, often disguised Matthew 7:15 · Acts 20:29
Locusts	Devastation and loss, and the years God promises to restore Joel 1:4 · Joel 2:25

People & the Body

Eyes	Understanding and revelation; the lamp of the body Ephesians 1:18 · Matthew 6:22
Hands	Works, impartation, blessing 1 Timothy 4:14 · Acts 8:17
Right hand	Strength, favor, authority Psalm 110:1 · Isaiah 41:10
Feet or shoes	Your walk and readiness with the gospel Ephesians 6:15 · Psalm 119:105
Bones	Inner strength, or the true condition of a people Ezekiel 37:1-14 · Proverbs 17:22
Heart	The inner person, what you actually are underneath Proverbs 4:23 · 1 Samuel 16:7
Blood	Life, covenant, atonement Leviticus 17:11 · Hebrews 9:22
Bride	The church in covenant union with Christ Revelation 19:7 · Ephesians 5:25-27

Watch the two-sided ones. Lion, serpent, and leaven all appear in Scripture as both something good and something dangerous. If your dream had one of these, the rest of the dream tells you which one it is. Do not decide from the word alone.

Places & Structures

Places

House or building	A life, a family, or the church being built Matthew 7:24-27 · 1 Peter 2:5
Foundation	What a life is actually built on 1 Corinthians 3:11 · Matthew 7:25
Door or gate	Opportunity and access; also authority Revelation 3:8 · Matthew 16:18-19
Key	Authority to open and to shut Isaiah 22:22 · Matthew 16:19 · Revelation 1:18
Window	Revelation, heaven opening over a life Genesis 7:11 · Malachi 3:10
Mountain	A kingdom, or an obstacle; also the place you meet God Daniel 2:35 · Zechariah 4:7 · Exodus 19
Valley	Humbling, testing, a place of decision Psalms 23:4 · Joel 3:14
Wilderness	Testing and preparation, and where God speaks tenderly Matthew 4:1 · Hosea 2:14
City	A people, or a seat of government and influence Revelation 21:2 · Matthew 5:14
Field	The world, and a harvest of people Matthew 13:38 · Matthew 9:37-38
Well	A source, refreshing, the wells of salvation Genesis 26:18-22 · Isaiah 12:3
Threshing floor	Separation, testing, what survives the winnowing Matthew 3:12 · Ruth 3

Objects, Seasons, Numbers & Colors

Objects

Sword	The Word of God, living and sharp Ephesians 6:17 · Hebrews 4:12
Shield	Faith, and God Himself as your protector Ephesians 6:16 · Genesis 15:1
Crown	Reward, victory, delegated authority 2 Timothy 4:8 · Revelation 2:10
Garment or mantle	Identity, calling, righteousness put on you Isaiah 61:10 · 2 Kings 2:13-14
White garments	Purity and righteousness Revelation 3:4-5 · Revelation 19:8
Bread	Christ Himself, and daily provision John 6:35 · Matthew 6:11
Wine	Joy, covenant, His blood Psalm 104:15 · Matthew 26:28
Salt	Preservation, covenant, influence that must not go flat Matthew 5:13 · Numbers 18:19
Seed	The Word of God; also offspring and promise Luke 8:11 · Galatians 3:16
Tree	A person's life; also a kingdom Psalm 1:3 · Daniel 4:10-22
Vine and branches	Abiding in Christ as the source of fruit John 15:5
Leaven	Influence that spreads quietly, usually sin or false teaching Matthew 16:6 · 1 Corinthians 5:6
Net	Gathering people Matthew 4:19 · Matthew 13:47
Yoke	Bondage to break off, or partnership to take up Galatians 5:1 · Matthew 11:29-30
Scroll or book	God's word, a record, or an assignment to take in Ezekiel 2:9-3:3 · Revelation 5:1

Times & Seasons

Night	A season of testing or hidden work, and the time God opens ears Job 33:15-16 · John 9:4
Morning or dawn	New mercy, breakthrough after a long night Lamentations 3:22-23 · Psalm 30:5
Storm	Trial, and Christ's authority over it Mark 4:37-39 · Psalm 107:29
Harvest	The end of an age, and reaping what was sown Matthew 13:39 · Galatians 6:9

Numbers & Colors

Handle these last and hold them loosest. Scripture uses numbers and colors with far less consistency than it uses objects and creatures. A number in a dream is often just a number.

Numbers

Three	Resurrection; the third day Jonah 1:17 · Matthew 12:40
Seven	Completeness and rest Genesis 2:2-3 · Revelation 1:4
Twelve	Government and the people of God Revelation 21:12-14
Forty	Testing and preparation Matthew 4:2 · Exodus 24:18

Colors

White	Purity and righteousness Revelation 19:8
Red or scarlet	Blood, sacrifice, and sin that can be made white Isaiah 1:18
Purple	Royalty and wealth Judges 8:26 · Mark 15:17
Blue	The commandments, the heavenly Numbers 15:38-40

Where people go wrong. Numerology treats a number as a code to crack. Interpretation asks the Author what He meant. If the only thing carrying your interpretation is a number or a color, you do not have an interpretation yet. Go back and ask Him.

When a symbol is not in this list

1. **Search the word in Scripture** and read every place it appears. Let the Book teach you its own picture language.
2. **Ask what it means to you personally.** Your history is part of the vocabulary God speaks to you in.
3. **Ask Him directly,** and be willing to wait. Peter was "inwardly perplexed" about his vision (Acts 10:17) and the meaning arrived through the men at the door.
4. **Tell it to someone walking with God** and let them weigh it. "The spirit of the prophets is subject to the prophets." (1 Corinthians 14:32)