

THE INTERPRETATION OF SYMBOLS IN THE BOOK OF REVELATION

By Brother Mike Sutherland

1. Seven Stars = angels (pastors) of the seven churches (Revelation 1:20)

²⁰ The mystery of the seven stars which thou sawest in my right hand, and the seven golden candlesticks. The seven stars are the angels of the seven churches: and the seven candlesticks which thou sawest are the seven churches. *Revelation 1:20*

2. Seven Golden Candlesticks = seven churches (Revelation 1:20)

²⁰ The mystery of the seven stars which thou sawest in my right hand, and the seven golden candlesticks. The seven stars are the angels of the seven churches: and the seven candlesticks which thou sawest are the seven churches. *Revelation 1:20*

3. White stone = a symbol of victory and innocence in John's time (Revelation 2:17)

¹⁷ He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches; To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the hidden manna, and will give him a white stone, and in the stone a new name written, which no man knoweth saving he that receiveth it. *Revelation 2:17*

4. Seven lamps of fire = the seven Spirits of God (Revelation 4:5)

⁵ And out of the throne proceeded lightnings and thunderings and voices: and *there were* seven lamps of fire burning before the throne, which are the seven Spirits of God. *Revelation 4:5*

5. Four beasts = cherubim (Revelation 4:6; Genesis 3:24; Ezekiel 1:5-14; Ezekiel 10:12, 20)

⁶ And before the throne *there was* a sea of glass like unto crystal: and in the midst of the throne, and round about the throne, *were* four beasts full of eyes before and behind. *Revelation 4:6*

²⁴ So he drove out the man; and he placed at the east of the garden of Eden Cherubims, and a flaming sword which turned every way, to keep the way of the tree of life. *Genesis 3:24*

⁵ Also out of the midst thereof *came* the likeness of four living creatures. And this *was* their appearance; they had the likeness of a man. ⁶ And every one had four faces, and every one had four wings. ⁷ And their feet *were* straight feet; and the sole of their feet *was* like the sole of a calf's foot: and they sparkled like the colour of burnished

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brass. ⁸ And *they had* the hands of a man under their wings on their four sides; and they four had their faces and their wings. ⁹ Their wings *were* joined one to another; they turned not when they went; they went every one straight forward. ¹⁰ As for the likeness of their faces, they four had the face of a man, and the face of a lion, on the right side: and they four had the face of an ox on the left side; they four also had the face of an eagle. ¹¹ Thus *were* their faces: and their wings *were* stretched upward; two wings of every one *were* joined one to another, and two covered their bodies. ¹² And they went every one straight forward: whither the spirit was to go, they went; *and* they turned not when they went. ¹³ As for the likeness of the living creatures, their appearance *was* like burning coals of fire, *and* like the appearance of lamps: it went up and down among the living creatures; and the fire was bright, and out of the fire went forth lightning. ¹⁴ And the living creatures ran and returned as the appearance of a flash of lightning. *Ezekiel 1:5-14*

¹² And their whole body, and their backs, and their hands, and their wings, and the wheels, *were* full of eyes round about, *even* the wheels that they four had. *Ezekiel 10:12*

²⁰ This *is* the living creature that I saw under the God of Israel by the river of Chebar; and I knew that they *were* the cherubims. *Ezekiel 10:20*

6. Lion of the tribe of Juda = the Lord Jesus Christ (Revelation 5:5, Genesis 49:8-10)

⁵ And one of the elders saith unto me, Weep not: behold, the Lion of the tribe of Juda, the Root of David, hath prevailed to open the book, and to loose the seven seals thereof. *Revelation 5:5*

⁸ Judah, thou *art he* whom thy brethren shall praise: thy hand *shall be* in the neck of thine enemies; thy father's children shall bow down before thee. ⁹ Judah *is* a lion's whelp: from the prey, my son, thou art gone up: he stooped down, he couched as a lion, and as an old lion; who shall rouse him up? ¹⁰ The sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh come; and unto him *shall* the gathering of the people *be*. *Genesis 49:8-10*

7. Four winds = four spirits (Revelation 7:1, Jeremiah 49:36, Ezekiel 37:9, Daniel 7:2, Daniel 8:8, Daniel 11:4, Zechariah 2:6, Matthew 24:31, Mark 13:27). These are spirits that are used as instruments of God judgment.

⁵ And the angel answered and said unto me, These *are* the four spirits of the heavens, which go forth from standing before the Lord of all the earth. *Zechariah 6:5*

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¹ And after these things I saw four angels standing on the four corners of the earth, holding the four winds of the earth, that the wind should not blow on the earth, nor on the sea, nor on any tree. *Revelation 7:1*

³⁶ And upon Elam will I bring the four winds from the four quarters of heaven, and will scatter them toward all those winds; and there shall be no nation whither the outcasts of Elam shall not come. *Jeremiah 49:36*

⁹ Then said he unto me, Prophesy unto the wind, prophesy, son of man, and say to the wind, Thus saith the Lord GOD; Come from the four winds, O breath, and breathe upon these slain, that they may live. *Ezekiel 37:9*

² Daniel spake and said, I saw in my vision by night, and, behold, the four winds of the heaven strove upon the great sea. *Daniel 7:2*

⁸ Therefore the he goat waxed very great: and when he was strong, the great horn was broken; and for it came up four notable ones toward the four winds of heaven. *Daniel 8:8*

⁴ And when he shall stand up, his kingdom shall be broken, and shall be divided toward the four winds of heaven; and not to his posterity, nor according to his dominion which he ruled: for his kingdom shall be plucked up, even for others beside those. *Daniel 11:4*

⁶ Ho, ho, *come forth*, and flee from the land of the north, saith the LORD: for I have spread you abroad as the four winds of the heaven, saith the LORD. *Zechariah 2:6*

³¹ And he shall send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other. *Matthew 24:31*

²⁷ And then shall he send his angels, and shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from the uttermost part of the earth to the uttermost part of heaven. *Mark 13:27*

8. **Locusts = the northern army of Joel 2:20 (Revelation 9:3, Joel 2:25)** These are hideous creatures that have wings, the faces of men, the long hair of women, and stingers. Their purpose is not to kill, but to torment for 150 days.

³ And there came out of the smoke locusts upon the earth: and unto them was given power, as the scorpions of the earth have power. *Revelation 9:3*

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²⁰ But I will remove far off from you the northern *army*, and will drive him into a land barren and desolate, with his face toward the east sea, and his hinder part toward the utmost sea, and his stink shall come up, and his ill savour shall come up, because he hath done great things. *Joel 2:20*

²⁵ And I will restore to you the years that the locust hath eaten, the cankerworm, and the caterpillar, and the palmerworm, my great army which I sent among you. *Joel 2:25*

9. Sorceries = Drugs (*Revelation 9:21, Revelation 18:23*)

²¹ Neither repented they of their murders, nor of their sorceries, nor of their fornication, nor of their thefts. *Revelation 9:21*

²³ And the light of a candle shall shine no more at all in thee; and the voice of the bridegroom and of the bride shall be heard no more at all in thee: for thy merchants were the great men of the earth; for by thy sorceries were all nations deceived. *Revelation 18:23*

The word “*sorcery*” in these two passages is based upon the Greek word “*pharmakeia*”. “*Pharmakeia*” is the same Greek word that gets transliterated into our English word “*pharmacy*”. What is being talked about here in *Revelation 9:21* and *Revelation 18:23* is drugs. Almost without exception, drugs are associated with ancient pagan religions.

10. The two witnesses = the two olive trees = the two candlesticks (*Revelation 11:3-4, Zechariah 4:3-14*) = the two anointed ones of *Zechariah 4*

³ And I will give *power* unto my two witnesses, and they shall prophesy a thousand two hundred *and* threescore days, clothed in sackcloth. ⁴ These are the two olive trees, and the two candlesticks standing before the God of the earth. *Revelation 11:3-4*

³ And two olive trees by it, one upon the right *side* of the bowl, and the other upon the left *side* thereof. ⁴ So I answered and spake to the angel that talked with me, saying, What *are* these, my lord? ⁵ Then the angel that talked with me answered and said unto me, Knowest thou not what these be? And I said, No, my lord. ⁶ Then he answered and spake unto me, saying, This *is* the word of the LORD unto Zerubbabel, saying, Not by might, nor by power, but by my spirit, saith the LORD of hosts. ⁷ Who *art* thou, O great mountain? before Zerubbabel *thou shalt become* a plain: and he shall bring forth the headstone *thereof with* shoutings, *crying*, Grace, grace unto it. ⁸ Moreover the word of the LORD came unto me, saying, ⁹ The hands of Zerubbabel have laid the foundation of this house; his hands shall also finish it; and thou shalt

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know that the LORD of hosts hath sent me unto you. ¹⁰ For who hath despised the day of small things? for they shall rejoice, and shall see the plummet in the hand of Zerubbabel *with* those seven; they *are* the eyes of the LORD, which run to and fro through the whole earth. ¹¹ Then answered I, and said unto him, What *are* these two olive trees upon the right *side* of the candlestick and upon the left *side* thereof? ¹² And I answered again, and said unto him, What *be* these two olive branches which through the two golden pipes empty the golden *oil* out of themselves? ¹³ And he answered me and said, Knowest thou not what these *be*? And I said, No, my lord. ¹⁴ Then said he, These *are* the two anointed ones, that stand by the Lord of the whole earth. *Zechariah 4:3-14*

11. **The woman clothed with the sun and the moon with a crown of twelve stars upon their head (Revelation 12:1, Genesis 37:9-11) = the nation of Israel**

¹ And there appeared a great wonder in heaven; a woman clothed with the sun, and the moon under her feet, and upon her head a crown of twelve stars: *Revelation 12:1*

⁹ And he dreamed yet another dream, and told it his brethren, and said, Behold, I have dreamed a dream more; and, behold, the sun and the moon and the eleven stars made obeisance to me. ¹⁰ And he told *it* to his father, and to his brethren: and his father rebuked him, and said unto him, What *is* this dream that thou hast dreamed? Shall I and thy mother and thy brethren indeed come to bow down ourselves to thee to the earth? ¹¹ And his brethren envied him; but his father observed the saying. *Genesis 37:9-11*

12. **The great red dragon with seven heads, ten horns, and seven crowns upon the heads (Revelation 12:3, Revelation 20:2, and 11 more times) = Satan himself**

³ And there appeared another wonder in heaven; and behold a great red dragon, having seven heads and ten horns, and seven crowns upon his heads. *Revelation 12:3*

² And he laid hold on the dragon, that old serpent, which is the Devil, and Satan, and bound him a thousand years, *Revelation 20:2*

13. **Horns when representative of men (Revelation 12:3 and seven more times)(Daniel 7:20-24) = political and/or military leaders**

³ And there appeared another wonder in heaven; and behold a great red dragon, having seven heads and ten horns, and seven crowns upon his heads. *Revelation 12:3*

²⁰ And of the ten horns that *were* in his head, and *of* the other which came up, and before whom three fell; even *of* that horn that had eyes, and a mouth that spake very

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great things, whose look *was* more stout than his fellows. ²¹ I beheld, and the same horn made war with the saints, and prevailed against them; ²² Until the Ancient of days came, and judgment was given to the saints of the most High; and the time came that the saints possessed the kingdom. ²³ Thus he said, The fourth beast shall be the fourth kingdom upon earth, which shall be diverse from all kingdoms, and shall devour the whole earth, and shall tread it down, and break it in pieces. ²⁴ And the ten horns out of this kingdom *are* ten kings *that* shall arise: and another shall rise after them; and he shall be diverse from the first, and he shall subdue three kings. *Daniel 7:20-24*

14. The Beast = Antichrist (Revelation 13:1, and 32 times more)(Daniel 7:3-26)

¹ And I stood upon the sand of the sea, and saw a beast rise up out of the sea, having seven heads and ten horns, and upon his horns ten crowns, and upon his heads the name of blasphemy. *Revelation 13:1*

15. THE MARK OF THE BEAST is mentioned 8 different times in the book of Revelation. THE MARK OF THE BEAST is not 666. Contrast the Mark Of The Beast in *Revelation 13:16-18* with the mark that was placed upon the innocent in *Ezekiel 9:4-5* and the seal that was placed in the foreheads of the innocent in *Revelation 7:3-4* and *Revelation 9:4*. That Mark Of The Beast

¹⁶ And he causeth all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and bond, to receive a mark in their right hand, or in their foreheads: ¹⁷ And that no man might buy or sell, save he that had the mark, or the name of the beast, or the number of his name. ¹⁸ Here is wisdom. Let him that hath understanding count the number of the beast: for it is the number of a man; and his number *is* Six hundred threescore *and* six. *Revelation 13:16-18*

³ Saying, Hurt not the earth, neither the sea, nor the trees, till we have sealed the servants of our God in their foreheads. ⁴ And I heard the number of them which were sealed: *and there were* sealed an hundred *and* forty *and* four thousand of all the tribes of the children of Israel. *Revelation 7:3-4*

⁴ And it was commanded them that they should not hurt the grass of the earth, neither any green thing, neither any tree; but only those men which have not the seal of God in their foreheads. *Revelation 9:4*

⁴ And the LORD said unto him, Go through the midst of the city, through the midst of Jerusalem, and set a mark upon the foreheads of the men that sigh and that cry for all the abominations that be done in the midst thereof. ⁵ And to the others he said in mine hearing, Go ye after him through the city, and smite: let not your eye spare,

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neither have ye pity: *Ezekiel 9:4-5*

16. **666 is the number of the Beast (Revelation 13:16-18)**

17. **Voice of many waters = the Lord Jesus Christ (Revelation 14:2, Revelation 19:6, and Revelation 1:15)**. Read the entirety of Psalm 29 to get further insight on the voice of the LORD.

¹⁵ And his feet like unto fine brass, as if they burned in a furnace; and his voice as the sound of many waters. *Revelation 1:15*

² And I heard a voice from heaven, as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of a great thunder: and I heard the voice of harpers harping with their harps: *Revelation 14:2*

⁶ And I heard as it were the voice of a great multitude, and as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of mighty thunderings, saying, Alleluia: for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth. *Revelation 19:6*

18. **Great whore = MYSTERY BABYLON THE GREAT = THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS = all false religious systems combined into a one world religion (Revelation 17:1,5,15-16; Revelation 19:2)**. Babylon is the fountainhead of all false religious systems. It is the place of the Tower of Babel and the confusion of tongues.

¹ And there came one of the seven angels which had the seven vials, and talked with me, saying unto me, Come hither; I will shew unto thee the judgment of the great whore that sitteth upon many waters: *Revelation 17:1*

⁵ And upon her forehead *was* a name written, MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH. *Revelation 17:5*

¹⁵ And he saith unto me, The waters which thou sawest, where the whore sitteth, are peoples, and multitudes, and nations, and tongues. ¹⁶ And the ten horns which thou sawest upon the beast, these shall hate the whore, and shall make her desolate and naked, and shall eat her flesh, and burn her with fire. *Revelation 17:15-16*

² For true and righteous *are* his judgments: for he hath judged the great whore, which did corrupt the earth with her fornication, and hath avenged the blood of his servants at her hand. *Revelation 19:2*

19. **Woman upon the scarlet coloured beast = that great city: six times so called in the book**

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of Revelation. The Woman = Babylon (*Revelation 17:3-9, 17:18*) (Many even take Babylon to be symbolic. I do not because Babylon has not been destroyed as prophesied in Isaiah chapters 13 and 14 and Jeremiah chapters 50 and 51.). Note that the city called “that great city (Babylon)” is to be distinguished from the city “the great city”[Jerusalem (*Revelation 11:8*)].

³ So he carried me away in the spirit into the wilderness: and I saw a woman sit upon a scarlet coloured beast, full of names of blasphemy, having seven heads and ten horns. ⁴ And the woman was arrayed in purple and scarlet colour, and decked with gold and precious stones and pearls, having a golden cup in her hand full of abominations and filthiness of her fornication: ⁵ And upon her forehead *was* a name written, MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH. ⁶ And I saw the woman drunken with the blood of the saints, and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus: and when I saw her, I wondered with great admiration. ⁷ And the angel said unto me, Wherefore didst thou marvel? I will tell thee the mystery of the woman, and of the beast that carrieth her, which hath the seven heads and ten horns. ⁸ The beast that thou sawest was, and is not; and shall ascend out of the bottomless pit, and go into perdition: and they that dwell on the earth shall wonder, whose names were not written in the book of life from the foundation of the world, when they behold the beast that was, and is not, and yet is. ⁹ And here *is* the mind which hath wisdom. The seven heads are seven mountains, on which the woman sitteth. *Revelation 17:3-9*

¹⁸ And the woman which thou sawest is that great city, which reigneth over the kings of the earth. *Revelation 17:18*

⁸ And their dead bodies *shall lie* in the street of the great city, which spiritually is called Sodom and Egypt, where also our Lord was crucified. *Revelation 11:8*

20. Abominations = the idolatry that is abominable: the idolatry as one of several things that are an abomination to God. The word “abomination” occurs 176 times in the Bible.

21. Waters = peoples, multitudes, nations, and tongues (*Revelation 17:1,15*)

¹ And there came one of the seven angels which had the seven vials, and talked with me, saying unto me, Come hither; I will shew unto thee the judgment of the great whore that sitteth upon many waters: *Revelation 17:1*

¹⁵ And he saith unto me, The waters which thou sawest, where the whore sitteth, are peoples, and multitudes, and nations, and tongues. *Revelation 17:15*

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22. **The ten horns = tens kings (In Revelation 17:12, it is directly stated to be so) (See also Revelation 12:3, 13:1, 17:3, 17:7, 17:16, and Daniel 7:24).**

¹² And the ten horns which thou sawest are ten kings, which have received no kingdom as yet; but receive power as kings one hour with the beast. *Revelation 17:12*

²⁴ And the ten horns out of this kingdom *are* ten kings *that* shall arise: and another shall rise after them; and he shall be diverse from the first, and he shall subdue three kings. *Daniel 7:24*

23. **The seven kings = the Seven heads that reign over Seven mountains (Revelation 17:9-10)**

⁹ And here *is* the mind which hath wisdom. The seven heads are seven mountains, on which the woman sitteth. ¹⁰ And there are seven kings: five are fallen, and one is, *and* the other is not yet come; and when he cometh, he must continue a short space. *Revelation 17:9-10*

24. **The Seven mountains = 7 kingdoms or empires (Revelation 17:9).** In a short search for the word “mountain” I found at least 10 cases where the word “mountain” was used to identify a whole nation or political entity. Mountain has been used figuratively to refer to at least the following : of Babylon the destroying mountain in *Jeremiah 51:25*; of Israel 6 times in *Ezekiel 36*; of Samaria in *Amos 6:1*; and of the Lord Jesus Christ twice in *Daniel 2*. The seven mountains in *Revelation 17:9* are not the literal mountains or hills of the city of Rome or any other city for that matter. A consistent interpretation of the symbols in the context will not support that conclusion. In *Revelation 17:9*, the seven mountains are not literal mountains, but rather are symbols for kingdoms or empires. *Revelation 17:10* clearly states that five of those kingdoms have fallen, one is, and one is yet to come. The five that were fallen included Egypt, Assyria, Babylon, Media-Persia, and Greece. The kingdom that “is” at the time of John’s writing was Rome. The seventh kingdom that was to come will be the kingdom of the Antichrist.

25. **Another Mighty Angel = the Lord Jesus Christ (Revelation 10:1, Ezekiel 1:28)**

¹ And I saw another mighty angel come down from heaven, clothed with a cloud: and a rainbow *was* upon his head, and his face *was* as it were the sun, and his feet as pillars of fire: *Revelation 10:1*

²⁶ And above the firmament that *was* over their heads *was* the likeness of a throne, as the appearance of a sapphire stone: and upon the likeness of the throne *was* the likeness as the appearance of a man above upon it. ²⁷ And I saw as the colour of amber, as the appearance of fire round about within it, from the appearance of his

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loins even upward, and from the appearance of his loins even downward, I saw as it were the appearance of fire, and it had brightness round about. ²⁸ As the appearance of the bow that is in the cloud in the day of rain, so *was* the appearance of the brightness round about. This *was* the appearance of the likeness of the glory of the LORD. And when I saw *it*, I fell upon my face, and I heard a voice of one that spake. Ezekiel 1:26-28