



2025 Allusions, Images, Symbols: How to Study Bible Prophecy

Lesson 7: Foundations for Prophecy

SABBATH

Also I heard the voice of the Lord, saying: 'Whom shall I send, and who will go for Us?' Then I said, 'Here am I! Send me' (Isaiah 6:8, NKJV).

God's right to rule the universe is founded upon His position as the Creator of all things (*Rev. 4:11*) and also upon His character. It is in discovering God's righteous character that we begin to understand how and why sinful human beings fall short of the glory of God (*Rom. 3:23*).

(Adult SS Guide Q2 2025, Allusions, Images, Symbols, pg 56)

Is it just me or, does this paragraph make you feel a little uncomfortable?

It's correct that God is the "Creator of all things" and His character is perfect, however, the use of the words "right to rule the universe" sound a bit dictatorial to me. I may be splitting hairs, but after coming to a better understanding of the contrast between a "Design Law" and "Imposed law" viewpoint, these subtle word choice distinctions get my attention more than the used to. As humans, we only know earthly governments - established in violence; built on a set of imposed laws; those laws enforced by threat, coercion, loss of liberty, or more violence; and occupied by men & women who crave the power to lord their agendas and rule over the "profane masses". Language like "right to rule the universe" makes God sound like this in my ears.

In fairness to the author/editor, there are two different "governments" operating in the universe— God's government of Love [John 15:13], and Satan's government of serving self [Rom. 8:2]. God's government consists of Grace and Mercy and Gifts. Satan's government consists of rights and rules and force.

God designed Life to function around a certain set of protocols [aka Laws] that, rightly understood, are revelations of His Character - the infinite perfection of Truth and Love. Satan cannot create life or reality so he has to convince intelligent beings to believe lies, like God's Laws are arbitrary and have no other purpose than consolidating power, and God takes pleasure in punishing those who "break" those laws.

Human rebellion, ultimately and forever, will be ended. And, more than that, God's loving character, His self-denying and self-sacrificing character, will shine even brighter than it did in His original design for humanity. Though God never intended for humanity to fall, through the Cross, God's loving character has been put on display in a remarkable way.

(Adult SS Guide Q2 2025, Allusions, Images, Symbols, pg 56)

This is well said. Intelligent beings will have a much greater appreciation and understanding of God's character in the aftermath of the Great Controversy than they would have if sin had never entered the universe. The cynic might say that God allowed / endorsed the sin problem simply to prove Himself right. Sin could have **only** developed in an environment of perfect Love and Freedom. If God were of the character that Satan alleges, then rebellion would have been met with force [see <https://text.egwwritings.org/read/84.68>. PP Ch 1 for further insights].

In the New Heaven and New Earth, intelligent beings will retain perfect memories of the damage that sin did within themselves and loved ones, and every time we see Jesus, who gave up the Godly nature of omnipresence, with His scarred hands, feet, and torso, we will understand the infinite cost of sin, and this will be the prevention of any future rebellion.

SUNDAY

Here I Am, Send Me.

I saw the Lord. He was sitting on his throne, high and exalted, and his robe filled the whole Temple. [The scene is the heavenly temple, where the altar that the angel of Revelation 14 comes from is located.] Round him flaming creatures were standing, each of which had six wings. [What kind of fire is this? Is it combustion or something else?] Each creature covered its face with two wings, and its body with two, and used the other two for flying. They were calling out to each other:

"Holy, holy, holy! The LORD Almighty is holy! His glory fills the world."

The sound of their voices made the foundation of the Temple shake, and the Temple itself was filled with smoke.

I said, "There is no hope for me! I am doomed because every word that passes my lips is sinful, and I live among a people whose every word is sinful. And yet, with my own eyes, I have seen the King, the LORD Almighty!"

Then one of the creatures flew down to me, **carrying a burning coal that he had taken from the altar** with a pair of tongs. He touched my lips with the burning coal and said, "**This has touched your lips, and now your guilt is gone, and your sins are forgiven**"

(Isaiah 6:1–7 GNT. emphasis mine)

[for more insights see: <https://comeandreason.com/fire-from-rev14-angel/>]

This is a fascinating passage. Isaiah was touched by “God’s Fire” and lived. How is this different from Nadab and Abihu’s experience in Leviticus 10?

What made Isaiah’s contact with the “Fire of God” a healing experience, whereas Aaron’s sons were put to sleep by it?

Aaron’s sons Nadab and Abihu took their censers, put fire in them and added incense; and they offered unauthorized fire before the Lord, contrary to his command. **So fire came out from the presence of the Lord and consumed them**, and they died before the Lord. Moses then said to Aaron, “This is what the Lord spoke of when he said:

“ ‘Among those who approach me
I will be proved holy;
in the sight of all the people
I will be honored.’ ”

Aaron remained silent.

Moses summoned Mishael and Elzaphan, sons of Aaron’s uncle Uzziel, and said to them, “Come here; carry your cousins outside the camp, away from the front of the sanctuary.” **So they came and carried them, still in their tunics, outside the camp, as Moses ordered.** (Lev 10:1-5. emphasis mine)

Was Isaiah unforgiven until he had the coal touch his lips or was God’s posture toward him always one of forgiveness?

What was the purpose of the vision then?

Wasn’t God meeting Isaiah where he was — perhaps unsure of being forgiven and hesitant to be God’s ambassador?

Consider Isaiah’s change of position from one of fear [“Woe is me...”] to one of service [“... here I am, send me”] after being touched by God’s “Fire”.

Isaiah was purged of his sin when a seraph took a coal from the altar and touched his mouth with it. This was likely the altar of incense, where intercession was made by and for God’s people (see Rev. 8:3, 4). His sins were forgiven, and he was now

considered fit to stand in God's presence—but, more than that, he was also commissioned to represent God to the world.

(Adult SS Guide Q2 2025, Allusions, Images, Symbols, pg 57)

Was Isaiah “purged of his sin” when touched by the fiery coal, or did he accept / appreciate God's inherent forgiveness with that object lesson?

MONDAY

The Two Cherubim.

As soon as our first parents were expelled from the Garden, God offered the hope of Messiah (Gen. 3:15). Then He established a powerful symbol at the gates of Eden: two cherubim with a brilliant flashing light between them. It should not be lost on us that this scene so closely resembles the ark of the covenant, a symbol of God's throne (Exod. 25:18).

(Adult SS Guide Q2 2025, Allusions, Images, Symbols, pg 58)

I like the author's connection between the two cherubim at the garden and on the ark of the covenant.

Is the ark a symbol of “God's throne” or something far greater — like the entire plan of salvation in one object lesson?

- The ark was made of porous wood covered in gold symbolizing our defective characters covered within / by Christ's perfect character.
- The contents of the ark were [in order] manna symbolizing taking in Truth / Bread of Heaven / Bread of Life; The unbroken tablets of stone with “God's Law” symbolizing having the Law written on our hearts / minds; Aaron's rod that produced almonds / fruit symbolizing our transformed characters producing the fruits of the Spirit.
- The lid was solid gold symbolizing Christ connecting Heaven / Earth, and restoring humanity back in to harmony with the original design.
- The cherubim on top of the ark symbolize the onlooking heavenly intelligences watching and participating in the plan of salvation / healing. [see <https://comeandreason.com/most-holy-place-metaphor/> and <https://comeandreason.com/category/media/sanctuary-feast-days-seminar/> for further insights].

While the cherubim were certainly given the responsibility to keep sinners from accessing the tree of life (Gen. 3:22), they also were a symbol of hope, of promise, that one day humans would be restored to Paradise. “The Garden of Eden remained upon the earth long after man had become an outcast from its pleasant paths. The fallen race was long permitted to gaze upon the home of innocence, their entrance barred only by the

watching angels. At the cherubim-guarded gate of Paradise the divine glory was revealed. Hither came Adam and his sons to worship God. Here they renewed their vows of obedience to that law the transgression of which had banished them from Eden. . . . But in the final restitution, when there shall be 'a new heaven and a new earth' (Revelation 21:1), it is to be restored more gloriously adorned than at the beginning.
(Patriarchs and Prophets, pg 62)

In order to possess an endless existence, man must continue to partake of the tree of life. Deprived of this, his vitality would gradually diminish until life should become extinct. It was Satan's plan that Adam and Eve should by disobedience incur God's displeasure; and then, if they failed to obtain forgiveness, he hoped that they would eat of the tree of life, and thus perpetuate an existence of sin and misery. But after man's fall, holy angels were immediately commissioned to guard the tree of life. Around these angels flashed beams of light having the appearance of a glittering sword. None of the family of Adam were permitted to pass the barrier to partake of the life-giving fruit; hence there is not an immortal sinner.
(Patriarchs and Prophets, pg 60)

TUESDAY

Like Burning Coals of Fire.

Cherubim, either as living beings (Ezek. 10:8) or the gold symbols of them (Exod. 25:18), appear all through the Old Testament. They are often depicted as standing immediately next to God's throne, radiating His glory to the universe. Cherubim also are embroidered into the curtain before the Holy of Holies (Exod. 26:1). In the book of Psalms, God's supreme power over creation is poetically pictured as God being borne through the air by cherubim (Ps. 18:10). God commanded that the ark of the covenant be topped by two solid gold cherubim with their wings extended toward one another (Exod. 25:18–20).

(Adult SS Guide Q2 2025, Allusions, Images, Symbols, pg 59)

Angels are God's messengers from His throne to humanity. All intelligent beings are to reveal God's Glory [His Character]. The Angels embroidered on the Sanctuary curtain are symbolic of fallen angels spreading Satan's lies that obstructed our full view of God [see <https://comeandreason.com/what-does-the-veil-represent-satan-or-jesus/>].

The lesson references Ezekiel's vision from Chapter 1. Note the "4 living beings" having 4 faces each [lion, eagle, ox, man] in verse 10 and 4 wings in verse 11 & 23, and the wheels within wheels in verses 15-18. Any thoughts on the symbology of these?

The first idea expressed by the image of the throne represents, by symbolism, royalty. As the King of all creation, God rules and controls all the universe. For us, this idea implies obedience to His laws and trust in His power and His leadership. Furthermore, because royalty is often associated with the function of a judge (Ps. 122:5), all creatures, including humans, should see God as their judge, which means that God is the One who sees, and can evaluate, all our actions, good and bad (Eccles. 12:14). Not only that, we see that God is the One who will save us from evil. In the Bible, the judge is also the “savior” (Judg. 3:9, 15; Judg. 6:36; Judg. 12:3). By locating the throne of God in heaven, the Bible shows that judgment and salvation are not in our hands. Only God judges, and only He will save us.

Does this description of God and His throne give you any comfort?

Or does it cause some fear?

WEDNESDAY

God Among His People

Numbers 2 details the layout of the tribes around the Sanctuary. The Levites were in the middle serving in the Sanctuary. On the East side — Judah, Issachar, and Zebulun. On the South side — Reuben, Simeon, and Gad. On the West side — Ephraim, Manasseh, and Benjamin. On the North side — Dan, Asher, and Naphtali.

What is the symbolism with the layout of the tribes?

Levites — Priesthood of Believers

Surrounding Tribes — The unconverted world.

Notice that each dominant tribe flew its own “standard,” or special flag, to designate who they were. While the Scriptures are not explicit in describing what was on each flag, there is an interesting tradition—loosely based on the tribal characteristics described in Genesis 49 and Deuteronomy 33—that assigns one of the four faces to each of the four compass points.

According to rabbinical tradition, the standard of Judah bore the figure of a lion, that of Reuben the likeness of a man or of a man’s head, that of Ephraim the figure of an ox, and that of Dan the figure of an eagle; so that the four living creatures united in the cherubic forms described by Ezekiel were represented upon these four standards.— *Carl Friedrich Keil and Franz Delitzsch, Commentary on the Old Testament, (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 2011), vol. 1, p. 660.* [emphasis mine].

(Adult SS Guide Q2 2025, Allusions, Images, Symbols, pg 60)

This is a great insight connected with Ezekiel's vision of the four living beings having four faces each [lion, eagle, ox, man]. God has been working to draw mankind back to Himself since Adam and Eve's fall.

- God dwelt with Adam and Eve, walking in the garden [Gen. 3:8]
- God walked with Enoch. [Gen. 5: 22]
- God walked and talked with Abraham [Gen. 15: 6-21, Gen. 18.]
- God walked and talked with Moses.
- God appeared to Manoah, Gideon, Samuel, and many others in the OT.
- God appeared to all of humanity in the Birth, Life, Death, Resurrection of Jesus of Nazareth.
- God appeared to his followers after his resurrection [1 Cor. 15:6]

Of course, we don't live in the camp of Israel. But how can we, in our own lives now, draw close to the presence of God?

(Adult SS Guide Q2 2025, Allusions, Images, Symbols, pg 60)

Any thoughts?

THURSDAY

The Fall of Lucifer

Son of man, take up a lament concerning the king of Tyre and say to him: 'This is what the Sovereign Lord says:

'You were the seal of perfection, full of wisdom and perfect in beauty. You were in Eden, the garden of God; every precious stone adorned you: carnelian, chrysolite and emerald, topaz, onyx and jasper, lapis lazuli, turquoise and beryl. Your settings and mountings were made of gold; on the day you were created they were prepared. You were anointed as a guardian cherub, for so I ordained you. You were on the holy mount of God; **you walked among the fiery stones.** You were blameless in your ways from the day you were created till wickedness was found in you. Through your widespread trade you were filled with violence, and you sinned. So I drove you in disgrace from the mount of God, and I expelled you, guardian cherub, **from among the fiery stones. Your heart became proud on account of your beauty,** and you corrupted your wisdom because of your splendor. So I threw you to the earth; I made a spectacle of you before kings. By your many sins and dishonest trade you have desecrated your sanctuaries. **So I made a fire come out from you, and it consumed you, and I reduced you to ashes on the ground in the sight of all who were watching.** All the nations who knew you are appalled at you; you have come to a horrible end and will be no more.' (Ezekiel 28: 12-19, emphasis mine)

How you have fallen from heaven, morning star, son of the dawn! You have been cast down to the earth, you who once laid low the nations! You said in your heart, "I will ascend to the heavens; I will raise my throne above the stars of God; I will sit enthroned on the mount of assembly, on the utmost heights of Mount Zaphon. I will ascend above the tops of the clouds; I will make myself like the Most High." But you are brought down to the realm of the dead, to the depths of the pit. Those who see you stare at you, they ponder your fate: "Is this the man who shook the earth and made kingdoms tremble, the man who made the world a wilderness, who overthrew its cities and would not let his captives go home?" (Isa. 14: 12-17)

I have often wondered about the above passages referring Satan to a "man" , but compare / contrast with the following:

Now Satan prepares for a last mighty struggle for the supremacy. While deprived of his power and cut off from his work of deception, the prince of evil was miserable and dejected; but as the wicked dead are raised and he sees the vast multitudes upon his side, his hopes revive, and he determines not to yield the great controversy. He will marshal all the armies of the lost under his banner and through them endeavor to execute his plans. The wicked are Satan's captives. In rejecting Christ they have accepted the rule of the rebel leader. They are ready to receive his suggestions and to do his bidding. **Yet, true to his early cunning, he does not acknowledge himself to be Satan. He claims to be the prince who is the rightful owner of the world and whose inheritance has been unlawfully wrested from him. He represents himself to his deluded subjects as a redeemer, assuring them that his power has brought them forth from their graves and that he is about to rescue them from the most cruel tyranny.** The presence of Christ having been removed, Satan works wonders to support his claims. He makes the weak strong and inspires all with his own spirit and energy. He proposes to lead them against the camp of the saints and to take possession of the City of God. With fiendish exultation he points to the unnumbered millions who have been raised from the dead and declares that as their leader he is well able to overthrow the city and regain his throne and his kingdom. (Great Controversy, pg 663, emphasis mine)

Lucifer in heaven had sinned in the light of God's glory. To him as to no other created being was given a revelation of God's love. **Understanding the character of God, knowing His goodness, Satan chose to follow his own selfish, independent will. This choice was final. There was no more that God could do to save him.** But man was deceived; his mind was darkened by Satan's sophistry. The height and depth of the love of God he did not know. For him there was hope in a knowledge of God's love. By beholding His character he might be drawn back to God. (Desire of Ages, pg 761)