

**Twelve Lessons**

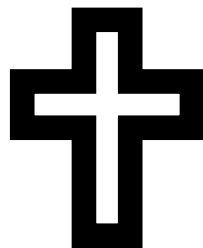
*on*

***Hermeneutics II***

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## **BIBLE SYMBOLS – LESSON 1**

**Introduction:** Symbols are a form of communication. A symbol is forceful. The stars & stripes represent the U.S.A. and say a lot. So do other symbols – the maple leaf to Canada and the bull dog to Great Britain. Sometimes the symbol is explained in the immediate context as in Revelation 1 (Candlestick – Church, Stars –Angels).

1. Sometimes the symbol is explained in other scriptures.
  - a. Rev. 8:8 – mountain & sea
  - b. Explained in Isa. 51:25 – Babylon
  - c. Explained in Isa. 57:20 – sea – restless, warring nations
2. The point is that a symbol will always be interpreted in Scriptures. When a student finds a symbol like “the sea” and it is not explained in the immediate context, search through a concordance until you find a scripture that explains the symbol.
3. Anything but a scriptural explanation gives rise to foolish and unsupported statements.
  - a. Job 41:1-34 – Leviathan – (not a submarine)
  - b. Rev. 9 – Demonic Creatures – (not helicopters)

### **Lesson Goals:**

1. To study the principle of symbols as a means of interpreting a passage of Scripture.
2. To see an example of the principle through a study of the symbols of the Holy Spirit.

### **Definitions of Important Terms and/or Phrases:**

1. Symbol – An object or signal that stands for something else; usually a visible image which represents a concept. Obviously, concepts are invisible. We cannot point to the idea of democracy as we can point to a car or a dog. A symbol, however, gives us a visible point of reference for these invisible things (Nelson's Illustrated Bible Dictionary).
2. Omnipresent – A theological term that refers to the unlimited nature of God or His ability to be everywhere at all times (Nelson's Illustrated Bible Dictionary).

## **SYMBOLS DEPICTING THE HOLY SPIRIT**

### **I. THE WIND – HIS REGENERATING POWER** – Gen. 1:2

#### **A. Symbolizes the Holy Spirit as:**

1. The mighty, invisible, omnipresent God,
2. Who manifests Himself in power and might,
3. Who goes where He wants,
4. Who does what He wants,
5. Is subservient to no one,
6. Who is absolutely sovereign in His freedom of action.

**B. Point:** We do not command the Holy Spirit. We can only take advantage of His movement. Like a ship on the sea when the waters are calm, we cannot cause the wind to blow. But when we feel a breeze, we can hoist our sails.

1. He passes through a meeting – One gets saved – another does not respond (seek the Lord)
2. He passes through a church – Revival breaks out

#### **C. Point:** Two things the Spirit did;

1. Dealt with darkness – “Light”
2. Dealt with deadness – “Life”

There can be no life without light!!

### **II. THE WATER – HIS REVIVING POWER**

#### **A. Water – Has two symbols**

1. Water – in cleansing – refers to the Word of God
2. Water – in drinking – refers to the Spirit of God

#### **B. The Spirit of God is like water to a thirsty man – IT REVIVES HIM!**

1. Exodus – The rock was smitten and out of that rock came water to revive Israel. When Amelek (the flesh) came, Israel smote him with the edge of the sword (the Word) only after being REVIVED!!!
2. One sign of revival is victory over the flesh.

### **III. THE FIRE – HIS REFINING POWER** – Acts 2 – Pentecost – Fire (purifies, burns away the dross) – They

were changed men from that time forward.

**A. Peter** – No longer a coward

**B. Thomas** – No longer a doubter

**C. These men** – went out to set the world on fire!

**D. James & John** – Always seeking preeminence – Fire burns that away.

#### **IV. THE OIL – HIS REVITALIZING POWER** – Matt. 25 – Ten Virgins

##### **A. All were virgins.**

1. All had lamps.
2. All had oil to begin with.
3. All went to sleep.
4. Difference – The foolish virgins took no extra oil.

##### **B. Symbols**

1. Lamps – Word of God – We must have the energizing power of the Holy Spirit.
2. Vessels – The individual's life

##### **C. Point:** The virgins with the extra oil in their vessels could rekindle their lamps.

1. Real salvation won't go out.
2. The Word of God, the lamp, can always be rekindled, even when it has been neglected. The flame may flicker, but if you trim the wick, the fire will be rekindled.

#### **V. THE DOVE – HAS REDIRECTING POWERS**

##### **A. He could not find rest in a world under condemnation** – Gen. 8:9

1. The first time he could not find a resting place speaks of the Old Testament when He came and went.
2. The second time He brought an olive branch (peace) back which speaks of His resting upon Christ and the peace He provided through His death, burial, and resurrection.
3. The third time He did not return. Our Lord promised that He, the comforter, would abide with us forever!

##### **B. Doves – born with a homing device**

1. When we yield to the Holy Spirit – He turns us in the direction of home.
2. Some examples:
  - a. Lost – He'll take you to Jesus
  - b. Backslid – He'll bring you back to Jesus
  - c. Discouraged – He'll take you to Jesus
  - d. Wander – Like the Dove, Noah turned loose – He would not defile his feet in a condemned world, but came back home.

##### **Conclusion:** As we seek to interpret symbols we must remember a few things:

1. It is not safe to say that anything is a symbol unless we have Scripture to support it.
2. We should not build doctrine from a symbol.
3. We must be careful not to become extreme in our use of symbols.
4. Every symbol should be studied in light of the context where it is found.