Extracted from the

Apocalypse of John Card Set

Handbook Two

40 ‘Minor’ images
   each with
   related quotation
   summary of Bible passage
   spiritual significance
   personal application.

Adapted for use on the

New Christian Bible Study website

by the Apocalypse Study Group who produced the Card Set using images commissioned from the artist, G Roland Smith
CHURCH 1

Tree of Life

“To him who overcomes I will give the right to eat from the tree of life, which is in the paradise of God.” Rev 2:7

Narrative Summary (Rev 2:1-7)

This is the reward for the church in Ephesus for their hard work and perseverance in rooting out those who would lead others astray ‘who claim to be apostles but are not’, and their willingness to endure hardships.

The risen Christ points out how they have forsaken their ‘first love’, and need to repent by returning to it. The reward He will give to those who overcome is the right to eat from the tree of life in paradise.

Spiritual Significance: Growth in Loving-kindness

Each of the seven churches symbolises a different facet of incomplete spiritual growth within us. Each image shows the God-given gift that will enrich and spiritually transform a facet of our inner life if we persevere throughout any spiritual trials still to be faced.

The promised reward of the tree of life represents a growing God-given love for living what is good and true. Sadly there is a tendency in human nature to regress, becoming argumentative (even aggressive) people of principle rather than people who lovingly and caringly actually practise what they preach. This is changing from initially eating from the tree of life to eating from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.

Returning to that ‘first love’ will bring the reward of receiving and channelling God’s love - feeling loved and full of love and life, experiencing a taste of paradise.

Personal Application

This image may be calling you to look carefully at your beliefs and way of living. You may have many strongly held, deeply felt beliefs as to what is true and what is right or wrong. Take a look at some of your beliefs to see if there are any to which you are only paying lip service – without realizing it?

Now maybe it is time to re-examine your life a little more carefully and deeply. The reward suggests that a more authentic spiritual life is possible, growing in loving-kindness and tasting heavenly joy.
Crown of Life

“Be faithful, even to the point of death, and I will give you the crown of life.” Rev 2:10

Narrative Summary (Rev 2:8-11)

This is the reward for the church in Smyrna. The risen Christ first acknowledges this church’s difficulties and lack of resources, but goes on to declare that in reality it is rich!

He warns of a coming testing period of imprisonment and persecution by the ‘devil’, but to those who are faithful ‘even to the point of death’ he promises the reward of the crown of life.

Spiritual Significance: Governed by Wisdom

Each of the seven churches symbolises a different facet of incomplete spiritual growth within us. This image shows the God-given gift that will enrich and spiritually transform our inner life if we persevere throughout any spiritual trials still to be faced.

The promised reward of the crown of life represents true wisdom. Sensitivity to our spiritual deficiencies can cause us to feel spiritually afflicted and very lacking in genuine truth or wisdom, i.e. ‘poor in spirit’. As such sensitivity intensifies it can tend to make us feel trapped in a prison of self-centredness, and becoming spiritually ‘dead’!

Yet humility is paradoxically a form of spiritual richness - a key and necessary step in spiritual growth! Remaining faithful to our highest aspirations will result eventually in our lives becoming crowned with a pure wisdom that comes only from God.

Personal Application

This image may be an indication that you are now ready to grasp and accept a great spiritual paradox in your life. This is the paradox of how your recent spiritual growth can cause you to feel more self-centred than you were before. What can feel like a step backwards is actually a mark of an increasing spiritual light shining within, causing you to detect your ego working in ways you had not previously realized.

Try now to grasp this paradox, and receive the spiritual comfort and encouragement that this should bring to you, and you will be blessed (crowned) with an element of true and deeper wisdom.
CHURCH 3

White Stone

“To him who overcomes, I will give some of the hidden manna. I will also give him a white stone with a new name written on it, known only to him who receives it.” Rev 2:17

Narrative Summary (Rev 2:12-17)

This is the reward for the faithful church in Pergamum. Yet the risen Christ points to some who follow Balaam, in sexual immorality, eating ‘idolatrous’ food, and following the erroneous teaching of the Nicolaitans. By overcoming the problem in their midst they receive some of the ‘hidden manna’, and also a ‘white stone’ with a new name written on it.

Spiritual Significance: Intuitive Insight

Each of the seven churches symbolises a different facet of incomplete spiritual growth within us. Each image shows the God-given gift that will enrich and spiritually transform our inner life if we persevere throughout any spiritual trials still to be faced.

Pergamum pictures a state in which, while still endeavouring to remain true to the Christ light within us, we are nevertheless tending to be led astray in our thinking (being deceived by ‘Satan’). This can occur by doing good from either a hypocritical motive (Balaam) or from a merit-seeking motive (the Nicolaitans). We are called upon to recognize and acknowledge this tendency to self-centred ‘do-gooding’, and to turn from it.

The reward of ‘hidden manna’ is the joy that comes from doing good for its own sake. The linked reward of a ‘white stone with a new name written on it’ suggests a fresh and purer understanding of truth from doing genuine good.

Personal Application

This image may be indicating that you need to take a deeper look at the motivation lying behind some of the good that you have been endeavouring to do in your life. Have you, perhaps, been doing it with an eye on a ‘return’ from the recipients, or with an eye to admiration in the eyes of others?

Try to recognise and acknowledge the distorting effect your ego tends to have on the good you do. This will open the way not only to a genuine purity in your endeavours to do good, but also to a new and deeper insight into the truth about life.
Morning Star

“To him who overcomes and does my will to the end, I will give authority over the nations... I will also give him the morning star.”  Rev 2:26, 28

**Narrative Summary** *(Rev 2:18-29)*

This is the reward for the church in Thyatira. The risen Christ commends their love, faith, perseverance, and progress. But they tolerate a self-styled prophetess named Jezebel, who is leading the people into immorality and eating ‘unclean idolatrous’ food. His call is to hold on to developing good qualities, resisting Jezebel’s influence until he comes and gives them authority over the nations and the gift of the morning star.

**Spiritual Significance: New Beginning**

Each of the seven churches symbolises a different facet of incomplete spiritual growth within us. Each image shows the God-given gift that will enrich and spiritually transform our inner life if we persevere throughout any spiritual trials still to be faced.

The morning star suggests a new beginning. But it is just when we feel we have made good progress that we tend to overlook the fact that our continuing natural delight in our self-development still threatens to lead us astray, and to take over in our spiritual life. This is our ‘Jezebel’ covertly at work within us!

Our Higher Self calls us to be aware of such dangers subtly adulterating our spiritual delight in genuinely heavenly living. The reward of ‘authority over the nations’ indicates greater control over our lives for genuine good, and the beautiful image of the morning star represents the dawn of a new depth of spiritual intelligence and wisdom in our minds and lives.

**Personal Application**

Consider areas of your life that give you a sense of pride in your spiritual maturity. How does this make you feel in comparison with others? Superior? Look at and acknowledge the effect this ‘Jezebel’ in you may be having on your relationships.

This acknowledgement opens the door to a new beginning in the way you relate to and value those around you. This is a new inspiration gifted by the Divine, the beautiful ‘morning star’.
CHURCH 5

White Garment

“He who overcomes will... be dressed in white.”
Rev 3:5

Narrative Summary (Rev 3:1-6)

This is the reward for the church in Sardis. The risen Christ gives a wake-up call, calling it to strengthen what remains, which is in danger of dying. He warns that he will come suddenly like a thief. He acknowledges that there are some whose clothes are already white. Those in this church about to die who wake up will also be ‘dressed in white’, and never have their name erased from the book of life.

Spiritual Significance: Purified Living

Each of the seven churches symbolises a different facet of incomplete spiritual growth within us. Each image shows the God-given gift that will enrich and spiritually transform our inner life if we persevere throughout any spiritual trials still to be faced.

This is the reward for the church in Sardis – one inclined to states of complacency. In this state we are tending to rely on our outward religious conformity to what we have been taught and to moral correctness, as an indication of our spiritual development. Such apparently spiritual life lacks a love for truth and goodness for its own sake. It is actually ‘asleep’ and on the point of spiritual death. It needs to become ‘clothed’ in the ‘white garments’ of living truth, truth seen for oneself to be true, and loved for its own sake because it directs us to genuine goodness in our lives. Then the truth can be indelibly written in our heart’s book of life.

Personal Application

This image may well be asking you to look out for where there is any spiritual complacency in your life at the moment. Where in your life are you relying too much on outward appearances of spirituality? Where are you not in touch with a love for genuine truth and goodness? Do you need a wake-up call, and are you ready to respond to it?

This is an opportunity to become spiritually alive – filled with a pure shining radiance from the higher Spirit within you.
CHURCH 6

Pillar in God’s Temple

“Him who overcomes I will make a pillar in the temple of my God. ...and I will also write on him my new name.” Rev 3:12

Narrative Summary (Rev 3:7-13)

This is the reward for the church in Philadelphia. The risen Christ declares that he has placed before it an open door which no one can shut. Despite it having little power, it has kept God’s word and not denied his name. The synagogue of Satan will be made to acknowledge God’s love for it. Having endured patiently it is spared further trial and testing. The church is to hold on to what it has gained so far.

Those who overcome will be made a ‘pillar in God’s temple’, and have written on them the risen Christ’s new name.

Spiritual Significance: Steadfastness

Each of the seven churches symbolises a different facet of incomplete spiritual growth within us. Each image shows the God-given gift that will enrich and spiritually transform our inner life if we persevere throughout any spiritual trials still to be faced.

This church represents a state where, despite having little strength, we have persevered in our spiritual trials, and the way into the heavenly state lies open before us. Any doubts about being loved by God will soon vanish. But we need to hold on without backsliding just a little longer, and then our spiritual testing will end with the coming of the Christ into our lives. His power and strength will cause us to become a ‘pillar’ of strength in the ‘temple’ of the ‘body of Christ’.

Personal Application

This image may be taken as a word of encouragement to you. Where in your life are you striving to hold fast to what you know to be good and true? How might spiritual strength or a lack of it be an issue for you?

Hold on to those times when you feel loved and cared for by the divine within you, when the strength to endure sustains you, steadfast as a pillar. How is this relevant to your present circumstances?
CHURCH 7

Shared Throne

“To him who overcomes, I will give the right to sit with me on my throne.”  Rev 3:21

Narrative Summary  (Rev 3:14-22)

This is the reward for the church in Laodicea. The risen Christ declares they are only lukewarm; claiming to lack nothing, but are in reality ‘wretched, pitiful, poor, blind and naked’. He counsels this church to buy from him gold refined in the fire and white clothes to cover its nakedness, pointing out that, ‘Those whom I love I rebuke and discipline. So be earnest, and repent.’ He stands at the door knocking, offering to share his throne with them, if only they overcome and let him in to eat with them.

Spiritual Significance:  Union with the Divine

Each of the seven churches symbolises a different facet of incomplete spiritual growth within us. Each image shows the God-given gift that will enrich and spiritually transform our inner life if we persevere throughout any spiritual trials still to be faced. ‘Lukewarm’ Laodicea represents a state in which our enthusiasm to become a spiritually better person has become diluted by a self-conscious ‘knowing’ that we have become spiritually ‘rich’. We feel we have become very knowledgeable (wealthy) and possess much goodness (riches). The reality that of ourselves we can only ever remain ‘poor and naked’ is escaping us. Here the risen Christ is revealing this truth to us, calling for us to look a little more deeply into ourselves from a higher perspective (earnestly repent). This in-depth revelation makes us aware of the Christ at our very doorstep! He is knocking on our door, yearning to come in. But opening the door is such a brave and great step. Yet isn’t this what deep down we have really been hoping and striving for all along – to let Christ into our life? His will and ours to be one (sharing his throne) - living in and from God’s love and wisdom.

Personal Application

This image may be a call to take a serious look at how you have been feeling, perhaps unconsciously, about any spiritual progress you believe you have made. Is there any underlying sense of self-satisfaction, smugness or spiritual superiority lurking within? Are you tending to lose any genuine humility, forgetting that in reality you can never possess any goodness or wisdom you can rightly call your own? Yet the Christ is longing to come into your life and share these with you.
SEAL 1

Rider on White Horse

“Its rider held a bow, and he was given a crown, and he rode out as a conqueror bent on conquest.” Rev 6:2

Narrative Summary (Rev 6:1-2)

This first of the four horses with their riders emerges out of the Lamb’s Scroll as he breaks open the first of its seven seals. White in colour, its rider holds a bow and wears a crown on his head. He rides out as a conqueror bent on conquest.

Spiritual Significance: Pure Truth

The breaking open of a sealed book symbolizes the emergence into conscious awareness of previously unconscious or ‘buried’ thoughts and feelings.

A rider on a horse symbolises the mind under the rational control of the intellect, in distinct contrast to being buffeted by the emotions or by dominating physical sensations.

White indicates purity or genuine truth within the mind.

A bow engages the enemy from a distance, avoiding close quarters combat. Similarly the mind can combat wrong and bad ideas and philosophies from a distance - without needing to have the feelings and emotions strongly engaged.

The crown (given to this rider) denotes God’s wisdom guiding one’s life by means of wise principles. These principles, coming from a desire to become a more loving and spiritual person, can overcome self-centred thoughts and ideas.

Personal Application

This image may be a sign for you to recall and review a key truth you have gained that is needed to do battle with some self-centred thinking that may be about to be brought to your attention. How might you use this whilst engaging in combat against such opposing thoughts which appeal to your ego?
SEAL 2

Rider on Red Horse

“Its rider was given power to take peace from the earth and to make men slay each other. To him was given a large sword.” Rev 6:4

Narrative Summary (Rev 6:3-4)

This second of the four horses with riders emerges out of the Lamb’s Scroll as he breaks open the second of its seven seals. Fiery red in colour, its rider is given a large sword and stirs up great discord, setting people mortally at each other’s throats.

Spiritual Significance: Loveless Truth

The breaking open of a sealed book symbolizes the emergence into conscious awareness of previously unconscious or ‘buried’ thoughts and feelings.

A rider on a horse symbolises the mind under the rational control of the intellect, in distinct contrast to being buffeted by the emotions or by dominating physical sensations.

Colour reflects the mental attitude. Fiery red is an indication of where one’s passion for the ‘truth’ is really an ego passion for one’s own truth as the only truth. Such fanaticism leads to dissension and bitter conflict in which any genuine truth (which engenders love, understanding and compassion), is in danger of being destroyed.

The great sword is a symbol which points to the destructive element of this ‘passion for the truth’ - passion the human ego always possesses for its own ‘truth’.

Personal Application

This image may be a sign that in some way you are investing too much of yourself in your version or understanding of the truth. Is your ego perhaps inclined to want to ride on its ‘high horse’? How vital is it to you to prove to others that your views are right? Is there unconscious fear your ‘faith’ might be flawed?

Discovering and acknowledging your ‘high horse’ is real progress in beginning to control it for the sake of good.
Rider on Black Horse

“Its rider was holding a pair of scales in his hand. Then I heard what sounded like a voice among the four living creatures, saying, ‘A quart of wheat for day’s wages, and three quarts of barley for a day’s wages, and do not damage the oil and the wine!’”  Rev 6:5-6

Narrative Summary  (Rev 6:5-6)

This third of the four horses with riders emerges out of the Lamb’s Scroll as he breaks open the third of its seven seals. Black in colour, its rider holds a pair of scales. A voice calls for a fair price for wheat and barley, and no damage to the oil and wine.

Spiritual Significance: Distorted Truth

The breaking open of a sealed book symbolizes the emergence into conscious awareness of previously unconscious or ‘buried’ thoughts and feelings.

A rider on a horse symbolises the mind under the rational control of the intellect, in distinct contrast to being buffeted by the emotions or by dominating physical sensations.

Black is an indication of ‘blackened’ or ‘tarnished’ truth. It is illusory or false, because loved only for its intellectual content. It no longer directs us to the prime importance of living a life of love and wisdom not concerned for itself, represented by the oil and wine. By undervaluing genuine truth, in the ‘scales’ of misguided judgement we could be damaging it - at great cost to our spiritual welfare (wheat and barley).

Personal Application

This image may be a sign that you are tending to place more importance on the intellectual examination of truth, rather than on its potential to lead you to live a wiser and more loving life. This is one way your ego works (usually unconsciously) to cling to its self-centred concerns. Be willing to recognize and acknowledge this as part of your human fallibility lacking the perfection of God.

What guidelines and principles in your life do you value as ideas rather than living by them? Recognizing and acknowledging this failing can open the way for good and loving actions in your life.
Death on Pale Horse

“Its rider was named Death, and Hades was following close behind him. They were given power over a fourth of the earth to kill by sword, famine and plague, and by the wild beasts of the earth.” Rev 6:7-8

Narrative Summary (Rev 6:7-8)

This fourth of the four horses with riders emerges out of the Lamb’s Scroll as he breaks open the fourth of its seven seals. Pale in colour, its rider is named ‘Death’, and ‘Hades’ follows close behind. He kills by a string of woes – sword, famine, plague, and wild beasts.

Spiritual Significance: Lifeless Truth

The breaking open of a sealed book symbolizes the emergence into conscious awareness of previously unconscious or ‘buried’ thoughts and feelings.

A rider on a horse symbolises the mind under the rational control of the intellect, in distinct contrast to being buffeted by the emotions or by dominating physical sensations.

Colour reflects the mental attitude. Pale, a vestige of colour only, indicates the lifeless heart of the self-centred ego itself, where there is no real spiritual life – only intellect and its ‘pale’ ‘truths’! Ego can think only of itself to the exclusion of all others except insofar as they can be used. Whatever it manages to touch becomes infected with strife, a sense of lack, being plagued by hurts, and attacked by wild emotions. Spiritually speaking, it is Death and Hell on its own without love!

Personal Application

This image may be an indication that you are now ready and able to bring into focus and acknowledge the deathliness of some of the ways of your self-centred ego. How might acknowledging the ‘deathly heart’ of self-centredness relate to your own need for new life?

Try to identify one area in your life where things seem dead. What self-centred thought or action do you suspect might be associated with this state of things?
SEAL 5

How Long?

“The souls of those who had been slain because of the word of God... called out in a loud voice, ‘How long, Sovereign Lord, holy and true, until you judge the inhabitants of the earth and avenge our blood?’”  Rev 6:9-10

Narrative Summary (Rev 6:9-11)

As the Lamb breaks open the fifth seal souls faithful to the word of God are seen hidden under the altar protected from their adversaries. They are concerned at the delay of judgment against their enemies, and cry out, ‘How long?’ They are given white clothes to wear and told that they will have to wait a little longer.

Spiritual Significance: Longing for Wholeness

The breaking open of a sealed book symbolizes the emergence into conscious awareness of previously unconscious or ‘buried’ thoughts and feelings.

These ‘souls’ represent good and caring intentions within us which have been ‘ridiculed’, stifled by orthodoxy, and despised or rejected by the self-interested reasonings of ourselves and others. Tending to be overridden by natural worldly and selfish aims, they would be in danger of permanent eradication were they not safely confined close to the Higher Self within us.

Purity of purpose (white robe) surrounds them but can they make their influence felt? - Not until we fully experience the damage self-interest causes to our desires and judgments, and there is a complete longing to overcome this.

Personal Application

This image may mark a new understanding of why you need to bear patiently with spiritual trials. Let this realization (the white robe) envelop you in a sphere of feeling loved and protected as a longing for a practised life of genuine goodness and truth intensifies.
SEAL 6

Black Sun

“The sun turned black like sackcloth made of goat hair.” Rev 6:12

Narrative Summary (Rev 6:12-14)

On the breaking open of the sixth seal the sun turns black, the moon turns blood red and the stars fall from heaven. All this is rounded off by the whole heaven becoming rolled up like a scroll, ending the ‘former’ or old heaven.– signs of the imminent second coming of the Christ.

Spiritual Significance: Inner Darkness

The breaking open of a sealed book symbolizes the emergence into conscious awareness of previously unconscious or ‘buried’ thoughts and feelings.

The awful image of the sun turning black indicates a traumatic change in how we perceive the source of what we have thought of as the ‘bright’ wisdom and ‘warm’ goodness in the way we live our life. Instead, the naked self of our ‘black’ ego’s interest is exposed to view - in the very place where all seemed rosy.

The moon turning blood red is a revelation of how our faith has unconsciously been used to attack others or make them feel guilty.

Our ‘star’ principles that support our sense of righteousness ‘fall to the ground’. So our mental ‘scroll’ listing our meritorious good deeds becomes ‘rolled up’ to indicate their spiritual worthlessness.

Paradoxically, to acknowledge our ‘darkness’ is a sign of greatly increased spiritual awareness and hence progress. A part of true wisdom is the humility that is able to uncover the often unconscious workings of ego and self-interest within us.

Personal Application

This image may be a sign that you are now ready to perceive something of the ‘blackness’ of your ego and its subtle effects within you. In achieving this, if you can, there will be great humility and wisdom.

Try to identify the ‘black sun’ in your life. How has blind enthusiasm for your way of doing things taken the heart out of them?
SEAL 7

Silence

“When [the Lamb] opened the seventh seal, there was silence in heaven for about half an hour.” Rev 8:1

Narrative Summary (Rev 8:1)

After many people dressed in white robes have gathered together around the divine throne, the final seal of the great scroll is at last opened. This time, instead of complex imagery and turbulent incidents, there is now nothing but a stunning silence in heaven – for about half an hour.

Spiritual Significance: Stunned

The breaking open of a sealed book symbolizes the emergence into conscious awareness of previously unconscious or ‘buried’ thoughts and feelings.

After the tumultuous effects of the opening of the previous seals, the breaking open of the last seal produces a jaw-dropping silence of astonishment in our higher spiritual mind.

Just how wrong could we have been about our previous judgment of ourselves! To experience one’s inner world suddenly turned upside down is enough to take anyone’s breath away in a state of speechlessness.

There is going to be so much change in our perception of ourselves. To take that in we need space and time to cope with it. We need time-out to digest these new revelations about ourselves.

Personal Application

This image may be a sign that you need to pause for a while to take in the impact of any recent revelations you may have received.

Give yourself some time to reflect. Quietly allow your inner ‘John’ to absorb your latest insights. Remember, new food always takes time to digest.
TRUMPET 1

Fiery Hailstones

“The first angel sounded his trumpet, and there came hail and fire mixed with blood, and it was hurled down upon the earth. A third of the earth... the trees... and all the green grass was burned up.” Rev 8:7

Narrative Summary (Rev 8:7)

After the Lamb unseals the scroll, seven angel trumpeters herald dramatic changes. The first trumpet announces a violent storm with hail, lightning, and fire. This wipes out all vegetation, destroying trees and devastating the land.

Spiritual Significance: Destructive Thinking

A trumpet blast symbolises going beyond a mere increase of spiritual awareness. It is a wake-up call arousing us to action, or at least, to preparation for imminently required action.

Whereas rain is beneficial to the earth and its vegetation, heavy hail is destructive. So truths that should be refreshing and stimulating to the mind can feel or become destructive in a cold critical heart, the ‘fire mixed with blood’. Then the mind becomes spiritually barren without ‘green grass’ and ‘trees’.

Personal Application

This image may be a wake-up call for you to begin to take more seriously criticism and coldness towards others (hail). Whenever your ‘blood boils’ notice how this affects your judgement. What are the consequences? Now is perhaps the time to recognise this spiritual foolishness that afflicts all of us from time to time.
TRUMPET 2

Blazing Mountain

“The second angel sounded his trumpet, and something like a huge mountain, all ablaze, was thrown into the sea. A third of the sea turned into blood, a third of the living creatures in the sea died, and a third of the ships were destroyed.” Rev 8:8-9

Narrative Summary (Rev 8:8-9)

Following a violent storm the second trumpet heralds a huge upheaval as a great volcano crashes into the sea causing shipwreck and major loss of life.

Spiritual Significance: Selfish Pride

A trumpet blast symbolises going beyond a mere increase of spiritual awareness. It is a wake-up call arousing us to action, or at least, to preparation for imminently required action.

Some mountains are noble. They lift us up in mind and body towards the heavens above. But some may be barriers to our forward progress, leading to the need for lengthy detours. Selfish pride flaring up with righteous indignation can become such a ‘blazing mountain’. It eradicates from the ‘sea’ of our consciousness the ‘living creatures’ of our natural common sense and decency. The sound spiritual principles that normally carry us through our daily life are shipwrecked.

Personal Application

This image may well be a wake-up call to notice the destructive effect of ‘flare-ups’ on your normal good sense and sound principles. What causes such flare-ups? Reflect on how self-righteous anger might wreck clear thought and hinder spiritual development.
TRUMPET 3

Falling Star

“The third angel sounded his trumpet, and a great star, blazing like a torch, fell from the sky on a third of the rivers... – the name of the star is Wormwood. A third of the waters turned bitter, and many people died from the waters that had become bitter.”  Rev 8:10-11

Narrative Summary (Rev 8:10-11)

Following a major landslide the third trumpet heralds dramatic celestial change as a star falls to earth, poisoning the water sources of the rivers.

Spiritual Significance: Humbled Arrogance

A trumpet blast symbolises going beyond a mere increase of spiritual awareness. It is a wake-up call arousing us to action, or at least, to preparation for imminently required action.

A star, such as the star of Bethlehem, is symbolic of a heavenly principle that can light and guide us to find true happiness in life. Spiritual intelligence is to see and follow such a star. But a star which blazes and falls is symbolic of misapplying that intelligence to further one’s own sense of spiritual elevation - as did the fallen ‘star’ Lucifer, whose name means ‘Light-Bearer’ (see Isaiah 14:12). When we do this, normally refreshing truths about wise and humble living ‘taste bitter’, because they deny that we are spiritually superior to others.

Personal Application

This image may be a wake-up call to look at the part of your self that tends to admire its own spiritual enlightenment and importance. How might your ego need to ‘fall’ and be humbled (tasting bitter waters)? Try to keep under observation its subtle but baleful effects.
TRUMPET 4

Darkness

“The fourth angel sounded his trumpet, and a third of the sun was struck, a third of the moon, and a third of the stars, so that a third of them turned dark.”  Rev 8:12

Narrative Summary (Rev 8:12)

Following on from major disasters that threaten life on earth, the fourth trumpet heralds increasing darkness as heavenly bodies cease to give light on earth.

Spiritual Significance: Misunderstanding

A trumpet blast symbolises going beyond a mere increase of spiritual awareness. It is a wake-up call arousing us to action, or at least, to preparation for imminently required action.

We normally think of spiritual revelation as the emergence of enlightenment – light appearing where there is the darkness of ignorance or inability to comprehend. However, the opposite is often the case. That is to say, when we think we are enjoying the light of understanding, a revelation brings us awareness that really we are, and have been, spiritually in the dark. True light shows up areas of darkness which we have been misunderstanding as areas of genuine spiritual light!

Personal Application

This image may be a wake-up call for you to recognise misunderstanding (darkness) where you thought you had a clear understanding. Try to recall an instance when you were sure you knew what was true and then discovered that you were really in the dark. To be on the way to a new spiritual dawn, might you need to rethink other ideas previously taken for granted?
TRUMPET 5

Smoke from the Pit

“The fifth angel sounded his trumpet... When he opened the Abyss, smoke rose from it... And out of the smoke locusts came down upon the earth and were given power like that of scorpions of the earth.” Rev 9:1-3

Narrative Summary (Rev 9:1-6)

After a period of storm-filled darkness and destruction that threatened all life on earth, the fifth trumpet sounds, the ground splits open, and from the abyss a terrifying locust plague emerges, and people become suicidal.

Spiritual Significance: Sensual Addiction

A trumpet blast symbolises going beyond a mere increase of spiritual awareness. It is a wake-up call arousing us to action, or at least, to preparation for imminently required action.

Left to ourselves we crave freedom from pain and discomfort, and tend to indulge in enticing sensual pleasures of various kinds, whether healthy or depraved. When these are demanding our total attention, they form a smokescreen of erroneous judgments as to what is truly beneficial. Such ‘locust’ thoughts, when they rise up and billow forth from our unconscious self-centredness, persuasively poison our minds, and all too easily overwhelm us.

Personal Application

This image may be a wake-up call for you to look for where or when you are tending to let bodily needs and demands blind you to higher needs or uses. For example, are there times when your hobbies or sensory needs tend to take over your life to the detriment of your responsibilities and care for others?
TRUMPET 6

Angels of Destruction

“The sixth angel blew his trumpet, and I heard a voice... [saying] ‘Release the four angels who are bound at the great river Euphrates.’ And the four angels... were released to kill a third of mankind.” Rev 9:13-15

Narrative Summary (Rev 9:13-19)

After a locust plague and the onset of darkness and destruction on all sides, the sixth trumpet brings angels of death riding through the ranks of mankind. It heralds an unstoppable cavalry charge of fire-breathing horses, engulfing all like a sea of lava from an erupting volcano.

Spiritual Significance: Self-justification

A trumpet blast symbolises going beyond a mere increase of spiritual awareness. It is a wake-up call arousing us to action, or at least, to preparation for imminently required action.

Stubborn resistance to the true angelic call for change can release a hidden yet powerful desire intent on self-justification, symbolised here by the release of four destroying angels, who mobilise a vast army mounted on fire-breathing horses.

The horse, as a noble and intelligent creature, is symbolic of the human capacity to receive an understanding of spiritual matters, but when the riders are bent on destruction, this spiritual ability is distorted - angelic in appearance only. Such self-centred reasoning seeks to appear in us as genuine spiritual rationality. It can now be seen that its real concern is to justify self-serving motivations, and to destroy any threat felt by our ego. It fears any challenge to our personal ambitions or to our position and standing in society. The sounding of the sixth trumpet heralds the exposure of this spiritually destructive dynamic.

Personal Application

This image may be a wake-up call for you to look for where or when you are tending to let apparently sound spiritual reasoning blind you to higher, more spiritual needs. For example, might you sometimes put your own priorities before any willingness to respond to the more immediate needs of others? Remember the saying that ‘The devil can quote scripture’? So can your ego!
TRUMPET 7

Ark in Heaven

“The seventh angel sounded his trumpet...

And the twenty-four elders, who were seated on their thrones before God, fell on their faces and worshipped God...

Then God’s temple in heaven was opened, and within his temple was seen the ark of his covenant.” Rev 11:15, 16, 19

Narrative Summary (Rev 11:15-19)

After a significant interlude the seventh and last trumpet sounds triumphantly. The twenty-four elders are seen making an act of willing submission, worship and thanksgiving. Following this God’s temple in heaven is opened revealing the ark of the covenant. Yet there still remains a sense of foreboding, with thunder and lightning, an earthquake and a great hailstorm.

Spiritual Significance: Accepting God’s Will

A trumpet blast symbolises going beyond a mere increase of spiritual awareness. It is a wake-up call arousing us to action, or at least, to preparation for imminently required action.

The overall effect of the previous six trumpet blasts was to awaken in us a realization of the destructiveness of the ego’s hidden manipulation of our inner spiritual life. Our higher self (the elders) willingly submits to the divine will. This expresses humble gratitude to God for enabling us to have greater self-awareness or self-judgment. There is an acceptance that God’s will (the 10 commandments in the ark) is to take over from our own self-centred will. However, this fundamental change will inevitably challenge us greatly.

Personal Application

How might your fearful ego be discouraging you from responding to the power of God’s love within you, perhaps making you feel angry or unfairly judged by Him? This image may be a wake-up call for you to get in touch with your higher self, so as to humbly and thankfully accept God’s will into your life.
Painful Sores

“The first angel went and poured out his bowl on the land, and ugly and painful sores broke out on the people who had the mark of the beast and worshipped his image.” Rev 16:2

Narrative Summary (Rev 16:2)

A great dragon and his beast have challenged the heavens, and the harvest of the earth’s vine is pressed in the winepress of God’s wrath. Now a voice commands that the bowls of God’s wrath be poured out. The first bowl causes painful sores for those who worship the beast.

Spiritual Significance: Contempt

The effects of the pouring out of a ‘bowl of wrath’ go beyond the new awareness and wake-up calls to action symbolized by the opening of the seals and the sounding of the trumpets. The pouring out of the bowls symbolises the emerging of some negative unconscious desires causing us to experience great inner anguish, (painful sores) –which previously we might have misinterpreted as caused by some other person or situation.

There is a ‘beast’ that lurks within all of us, ready to burst forth in anger and contempt towards others. Normally, we may have it so under control, as a result of social and religious conditioning, that we are not aware that it is there. We tend to deny it and its subtle unconscious negative influence beneath the surface.

But on any occasion when it does break forth, we project its ugliness onto the other person and feel its painfulness as an attack upon ourselves.

Personal Application

This image may be an indication to you that now might be an appropriate time to acknowledge the presence of this inner ‘beast’ of hatred, despising and contempt, and allow yourself time to feel - and then realize, just how ugly and spiritually painful it is.

Discovering and experiencing this ugly ‘beast’ is actually a key step in the process of spiritual growth.
**Sea of Blood**

“The second angel poured out his bowl on the sea, and it turned into blood like that of a dead man, and every living thing in the sea died.”

Rev 16:3

**Narrative Summary** (Rev 16:3)

After the first bowl was poured out on the land, the second angel pours out his bowl on the sea. It becomes lifeless blood, and the resulting pollution causes all marine life to die.

**Spiritual Significance: Destructive Criticism**

The effects of the pouring out of a ‘bowl of wrath’ go beyond the new awareness and wake-up calls to action symbolized by the opening of the seals and the sounding of the trumpets. The pouring out of the bowls symbolises the emerging of some negative unconscious desires causing us to experience great inner anguish, (here an experience like death) – which previously we might have misinterpreted as caused by some other person or situation.

‘Water’ corresponds to the effect that truths can have in purifying the mind of self-centred thinking, and refreshing it with their spiritual beauty. (‘Turning water into blood’ is a biblical symbol which is the opposite of the turning of water into wine by Jesus at Cana.) Instead of the truths we know beginning to have a stimulating and enlivening effect on us, we may, often unconsciously, distort them - as when destructive criticism is used to bolster our self-esteem. The effect is to drain the spiritual life out of everyone involved.

**Personal Application**

Criticism unlovingly offered is a misuse of truth. This image may be an indication that now is an appropriate time for you to get in touch with how destructive such criticism is likely to be on your own mind and spirit, as well as the devastating effect on the other person. On reflection can you recall such an occasion? How might the issue have been approached with genuine love and understanding for the other person? How might considering the situation from their point of view have changed your approach?
BOWL 3

Deathly Blood

“The third angel poured out his bowl on the rivers and springs of water, and they became blood. Then I heard the angel in charge of the waters say: ‘You are just in these judgments... for they have shed the blood of your saints and prophets, and you have given them blood to drink as they deserve!’”

Rev 16:4-6

Narrative Summary (Rev 16:4-7)

After God’s wrath is poured onto land and sea, the third bowl is poured on the freshwater, and the rivers and springs turn to blood. The angel proclaims this is God’s justice for those with bloodstained hands, who have killed both saints and prophets.

Spiritual Significance: Despising

The effects of the pouring out of a ‘bowl of wrath’ go beyond the new awareness and wake-up calls to action symbolized by the opening of the seals and the sounding of the trumpets. The pouring out of the bowls symbolises the emerging of some negative unconscious desires causing us to experience great inner anguish, (here drinking the blood of one we have ‘murdered’) – which previously we might have misinterpreted as caused by some other person or situation.

Here the angel’s declaration is a symbolic form of the spiritual law that sooner or later evil returns upon the doer. If through self-centredness we attack, criticise or disparage others, we ‘shed the blood of saints and prophets’. Then inside us such actions will cause the onset of negative feelings of guilt and self-despising that will taint any pure feelings of love flowing into us.

Personal Application

This image may be an indication to you that now is an appropriate time to realize the spiritually deadening effect of despising or disparaging others. Allow yourself to experience how badly this contemptuous attitude rebounds negatively upon your own state of mind.

Recall some of your down states. Might some of them be due to your despising others, consciously or unconsciously?
BOWL 4

Scorching Sun

“The fourth angel poured out his bowl on the sun, and the sun was given power to scorch people with fire. They were seared by the intense heat and they cursed the name of God, who had control over these plagues, but they refused to repent and glorify him.” Rev 16:8-9

Narrative Summary (Rev 16:8-9)

Following the devastation of land and water, the fourth angel pours out his bowl of wrath on the sun. As a result, the heat of the sun intensifies until it scorches the people with fire. Yet rather than repent and glorify God, the people stubbornly reject him and curse his name.

Spiritual Significance: Blazing Anger

The effects of the pouring out of a ‘bowl of wrath’ go beyond the new awareness and wake-up calls to action symbolized by the opening of the seals and the sounding of the trumpets. The pouring out of the bowls symbolises the emerging of some negative unconscious desires causing us to experience great inner anguish, (here burning anger or frustration) – which previously we might have misinterpreted as caused by some other person or situation.

The sun is a symbol of the love of God which shines upon everyone. Yet it is a paradoxical fact of experience that in certain states of mind we can misinterpret and angrily react to the loving and caring approaches of others. We feel as though they are attacking and working against us. We may in effect find ourselves ‘cursing’ them even though they are actually offering us love and concern which is from God.

Personal Application

This image may be an indication to you that now is an appropriate time to allow yourself to recall and re-experience a time when you have felt attacked or got-at by others, when perhaps they were genuinely trying to help you.

Explore any feelings of anger you might have felt and how these made you respond. Were you in effect ‘cursing’ love by ‘biting the hand that feeds you’?
BOWL 5

Gnawing Tongues

“The fifth angel poured out his bowl on the throne of the beast, and his kingdom was plunged into darkness. Men gnawed their tongues in agony and cursed the God of heaven because of their pains and their sores, but they refused to repent of what they had done.” Rev 16:10-11

**Narrative Summary** *(Rev 16:10-11)*

After the dragon’s beast has brought much pain and suffering, the fifth angel pours out his bowl on the beast’s throne and all is darkness. The people refuse to repent, biting their tongues in anguish, whilst mistakenly cursing God for their painful sores.

**Spiritual Significance: Utter Frustration**

The effects of the pouring out of a ‘bowl of wrath’ go beyond the new awareness and wake-up calls to action symbolized by the opening of the seals and the sounding of the trumpets. The pouring out of the bowls symbolises the emerging of some negative unconscious desires causing us to experience great inner anguish, (biting the tongue in frustration) – which previously we might have misinterpreted as caused by some other person or situation.

There is a ‘beast’ that lurks unconsciously within all of us, ready to burst forth in anger and hatred towards others whenever our self-centred desires seem threatened or thwarted. This tends to happen when we are faced with the presence of the truth that it is love to God and our neighbour that matters most. This may at times stir up the ‘beast’ within us, which then causes our mind to plunge into the darkness of erroneous thinking and judgment. Meanwhile, our ‘beast’ feels a loathing for a truth that is too painful for it to acknowledge (gnawing our tongues in agony). Then our ego (the beast) seeks to blame God for our unhappiness (cursing God).

**Personal Application**

This image may indicate this to be an appropriate moment to allow yourself to recall and re-experience a time when your sense of being thwarted, or hurt by others, was actually due to thoughtless concern for yourself. Feel the pain and frustration, but then seek to identify its true origin within yourself.
BOWL 6

Demon Frogs

“The sixth angel poured out his bowl on the great river Euphrates, and its water was dried up to prepare the way for the kings from the East. Then I saw three evil spirits that looked like frogs; they came out of the mouth of the dragon... the beast and... the false prophet. They are spirits of demons performing miraculous signs, and they go out to the kings of the whole world, to gather them for the battle on the great day of God Almighty.” Rev 16:12-14

Narrative Summary (Rev 16:12-16)

The pouring out of the first five bowls has brought physical anguish and mental torment. The pouring out of the sixth bowl of wrath brings this painful sequence of events towards a climax, drying up the river Euphrates so that three frog-like spirits appear, emerging out of the mouths of the dragon, his beast and the false prophet. They gather an army to challenge the sovereignty of God’s love.

Spiritual Significance: Loathsome Reasoning

The effects of the pouring out of a ‘bowl of wrath’ go beyond the new awareness and wake-up calls to action symbolized by the opening of the seals and the sounding of the trumpets. The pouring out of the bowls symbolises the emerging of some negative unconscious desires causing us to experience great inner anguish, (foul croaking thoughts emerge) – which previously we might have misinterpreted as caused by some other person or situation. Frogs are notable for their unclean habitats (stagnant ponds) and loud croaking calls. They present a graphic image of the loud and harsh sound (to spiritual ears –like croaking) of false reasoning based merely on selfish or worldly lusts (which has defended things like ethnic cleansing and apartheid), all of which we should now be experiencing as utterly loathsome. Genuine spiritual reasoning, on the other hand, has a quiet, gentle character, which is inspiring, uplifting and inclusive.

Personal Application

This image may be an indication to you that now is an appropriate time to really listen to and feel the harshness and belligerence of your self-centred expostulating and remonstrating, as your lower self battles against the purer truths of your higher self. Can you now experience and judge it to be ‘demonic’?
BOWL 7

Collapsing City

“The seventh angel poured out his bowl into the air, and out of the temple came a loud voice from the throne, saying, ‘It is done!’ Then there came... a severe earthquake... The great city split into three parts, and the cities of the nations collapsed... From the sky huge hailstones... fell upon men. And they cursed God on account of the plague of hail, because the plague was so terrible.” Rev16:17-19, 21

Narrative Summary (Rev 16: 17-21)

The armies of the kings who oppose God are gathered at Armageddon. Then the seventh angel pours out his bowl into the air, and from God’s throne a voice declares, “It is done!” Instead of a battle however, the earth erupts in the mightiest earthquake, causing everything to collapse, even the cities of the nations.

Spiritual Significance: Mental Chaos

The effects of the pouring out of a ‘bowl of wrath’ go beyond the new awareness and wake-up calls to action symbolized by the opening of the seals and the sounding of the trumpets. The pouring out of the bowls symbolises the emerging of some negative unconscious desires causing us to experience great inner anguish, (chaos, confusion, collapse) – which previously we might have misinterpreted as caused by some other person or situation. Cities (often fortified) as collections of dwellings symbolise coherent patterns of structured thought within which our thinking tends to reside. We will all have built such ‘cities’, some of which are merely justifications of our self-centred aims, fortified by well-constructed patterns of reasoning. But when influx from the divine pours into such structures in the mind, the resulting upheaval (massive earthquake) causes the ego’s reasonings to collapse into mere speciousness. Everything now feels utterly chaotic, with our ego lashing out at God’s ‘unfair treatment’.

Personal Application

This image may be an indication that now is an appropriate time for you to experience the utter emptiness of your ego’s self-justifying arguments (collapsing cities). Notice how your ego experiences its complete powerlessness, and inevitably wants to blame God for the ‘collapse of its arguments’. All this is a self-judgment that leads you out of illusion into reality, clearing the way for you to realise that your true strength and power comes only from God.
Fountain of Life

“He who was seated on the throne said, ‘I am making everything new!’ Then he said... ‘It is done... To him who is thirsty I will give to drink without cost from the spring of the water of life.’”
Rev 21:5-6

Narrative Summary (Rev 21:5-7)

The Holy City of the Apocalypse is a purely heavenly city, formed by no human hands. It is seen by John in vision, descending out of heaven from God after all the preceding devastating experiences.

The divine Figure on the throne declares that he is now effecting a total renewal of everything, with the water of life springing up and being freely available to all who thirst for it.

Spiritual Significance: Pure Intuition

The heavenly city is a beautiful image that represents the form and structure of the divinely formed New Being as it emerges in every spiritually reawakened and reborn individual, resulting in a transformation of their spirit, state and perception of life.

With the emergence from within (‘descent from above’) of the harmoniously structured life of the love and wisdom of God, we experience a welling up of a whole new way of perceiving and experiencing our life. In each new situation truth, now intuitively perceived, takes on a new more living and dynamic form, flowing from deep within our reawakened spirit to guide each and every one of our actions and responses.

Personal Application

You may experience this image as either an uplifting promise for your ‘head’, or even perhaps, as a here and now experience for your ‘heart’. Either way you are being provided with an opportunity to contemplate the refreshing beauty and wonder of a personal life springing up directly from the divine Source within.

Think and feel now what it would mean - to be receiving the intuitive wisdom to respond lovingly and wisely in each new situation of your life. Are you not thirsting for that intuition here and now?
Let the divine promise offered you now feel like a fountain that is cleansing your whole being with refreshing joy.
HOLY CITY 2

Golden Measuring Rod

“The angel who talked with me had a measuring rod of gold to measure the city, its gates and its wall. He measured the city with the rod and found it to be... as wide and high as it is long.” Rev 21:15-16

Narrative Summary (Rev 21:15-16)

The Holy City of the Apocalypse is a purely heavenly city, formed by no human hands. It is seen by John in vision, descending out of heaven from God after all the preceding devastating experiences.

One of the seven angels who had the seven bowls of plagues now holds a measuring rod made of gold with which he proceeds to measure this heavenly city. His measurement of it reveals that the city is not only square – as long as it is wide, but also cubic – as high as it is long as it is wide – 12,000 stadia in each dimension.

Spiritual Significance: Angelic Wisdom

The heavenly city is a beautiful image that represents the form and structure of the divinely formed New Being as it emerges in every spiritually reawakened and reborn individual, resulting in a transformation of their spirit, state and perception of life.

When it is measured with a rod of gold (representing the measure of pure shining Love), the Holy City is seen to be cubic – as high as it is long as it is wide, which represents its spiritual depth and substance. This is in direct contrast to the scarlet woman’s city of Babylon for example, which was two-dimensional – all loving, good and wise on the outside only, but with nothing of spiritual depth within. It was, if you like, a mere ‘cardboard’ city representing great spiritual shallowness of character.

Personal Application

This image may be a sign for you to meditate now on the length, breadth and depth of a new consciousness that is endeavouring to emerge from deep within you.

Notice how you feel when you compare your sense of spiritual littleness, with your potential for dwelling in the vastness of divine Love and Light.

How might you now respond to the Lord’s endeavour to bless you with his measureless love?
HOLY CITY 3

Precious Stone

“The wall was made of jasper... The foundations of the city walls were decorated with every kind of precious stone.” Rev 21:18-19

Narrative Summary (Rev 21:14, 18-20)

The Holy City of the Apocalypse is a purely heavenly city, formed by no human hands. It is seen by John in vision, descending out of heaven from God after all the preceding devastating experiences.

The city’s walls have twelve foundations which are adorned with every kind of precious stone, and upon which are inscribed the names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb.

Spiritual Significance: Inner Shining

The heavenly city is a beautiful image that represents the form and structure of the divinely formed New Being as it emerges in every spiritually reawakened and reborn individual, resulting in a transformation of their spirit, state and perception of life.

The many bejewelled foundations, upon which the city’s translucent jasper walls were built, represent knowledge of the foundational truths of that New Being. The most general of these is that the emerging angelic being is an image of divinely human perfection expressing itself in and through finite human forms – infinite God and finite man dwelling together as one. In such a state each person is effectively a uniquely individual ‘apostle of the Christ Lamb’, variously sparkling with, and manifesting, the Spirit of God.

Personal Application

This image may be a prompt for you to meditate now on the foundational aspect of the New Being that is endeavouring to ‘descend from God’ into you.

Can you believe and know that the perfection of the divine is able to bypass your human limitations to emerge and express itself through you?

You can become an ‘apostle of the Lamb’ sent forth from God – a shining spirit translucent with divine life.
HOLY CITY 4

Gate of Pearl

“*The twelve gates were twelve pearls, each gate made of a single pearl.*”  Rev 21:21

**Narrative Summary (Rev 21:12-13, 21, 25)**

The Holy City of the Apocalypse is a purely heavenly city, formed by no human hands. It is seen by John in vision, descending out of heaven from God after all the preceding devastating experiences.

The City has twelve gates, three facing north, south, east and west. Each is a single pearl, and at the gates are twelve angels, whilst written on them are the names of the twelve tribes of Israel. And “*On no day will its gates ever be shut.*” John declares.

**Spiritual Significance: Entering through Stillness**

The heavenly city is a beautiful image that represents the form and structure of the divinely formed New Being as it emerges in every spiritually reawakened and reborn individual, resulting in a transformation of their spirit, state and perception of life.

Whichever spiritual direction one comes from and whichever gate is entered through, that entrance is made of a single pearl. This represents our surrendering to the peace of God. ‘*Be still and know that I am God.*’ (Psalm 46:10). This opens into the pure angelic life of God’s redeemed people – as represented by the angels and names of the tribes of Israel associated with each gate.

Now the ever-open gates express a non-defensive and welcoming approach towards what is good and true in all types of people.

**Personal Application**

You may like to sit quietly and contemplate the pure and restful image of a simple pearl stilling your mind and bringing peace to your soul. ‘*Be still and know that I am God.*’

Enter into the stillness and let the divine Spirit flow freely through you.

Notice how you now feel towards others.
Street of Gold

“The street of the city was of pure gold, like transparent glass.” Rev 21:21

Narrative Summary (Rev 21:21-22)

The Holy City of the Apocalypse is a purely heavenly city, formed by no human hands. It is seen by John in vision, descending out of heaven from God after all the preceding devastating experiences.

The street of the city is said to be of pure gold, like transparent glass. It does not lead to a temple because the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the City’s temple.

Spiritual Significance: The Way of Love

The heavenly city is a beautiful image that represents the form and structure of the divinely formed New Being as it emerges in every spiritually reawakened and reborn individual, resulting in a transformation of their spirit, state and perception of life.

Between the gates of the city and its heart or centre lies the pathway which shines with golden light. This is the way of true loving-kindness. “This is the way; walk in it.” (Isaiah 30:21). So Christ’s loving-kindness becomes our way of life.

Personal Application

This image may be an invitation to you to move beyond the entranceway of stillness and surrender to actually ‘walking’ in the Christ way - a way that leads to true wholeness.

Begin now to feel and respond to the inner motivation to travel the golden path that lies before you.

Let that ‘golden’ motivation grow stronger within you, and visualize this pure love moving and directing your way in life from this point on. You might like to affirm now, “This is the way. I will walk in it!”
HOLY CITY 6

River of Life

“Then the angel showed me the river of the water of life, as clear as crystal, flowing from the throne of God and of the Lamb down the middle of the great street of the city.” Rev 22:1

Narrative Summary (Rev 22:1)

The Holy City of the Apocalypse is a purely heavenly city, formed by no human hands. It is seen by John in vision, descending out of heaven from God after all the preceding devastating experiences.

Within the heart of this city John is shown the crystal clear river of the water of life.

Spiritual Significance: Inflowing Purity and Peace

The heavenly city is a beautiful image that represents the form and structure of the divinely formed New Being as it emerges in every spiritually reawakened and reborn individual, resulting in a transformation of their spirit, state and perception of life.

The divine Source of all life constantly pours itself out as a stream of the purest motivation, feeling and thought into our inmost being. This then issues forth as the life that is experienced within each one of us. Without it we would vanish into nothingness. But like all streams which commence in their purest form, there is a tendency for it to become less pure as it descends towards lower levels of the mind. Yet its initial purity remains eternally.

Personal Application

This image may be an invitation to you to contemplate how, despite all the impure thoughts and feelings you have that stem from your ego, the purity of the Source (God’s Throne) that lies above them, remains ever present.

Divine Purity of motivation and thought is always flowing into you from deep within. Allow yourself now to dip your toe into the water and sense the peace this brings. Despite any negative emotions, motivations or attitudes connect with the divine stream of life present in you now.

Contemplate this inflowing life from God. Let it uplift your heart, flowing from that ‘high’ place and ‘Holy City’ within, where the Divine ever dwells, and from which his Spirit continually flows down bringing inner peace.
Leaves and Fruit

“On each side of the river stood the tree of life, bearing twelve crops of fruit, yielding its fruit every month. And the leaves of the tree are for the healing of the nations.” Rev 22:2

Narrative Summary (Rev. 22:2)

The Holy City of the Apocalpyse is a purely heavenly city, formed by no human hands. It is seen by John in vision, descending out of heaven from God after all the preceding devastating experiences.

Within the heart of this city John is shown the tree of life with its leaves and fruit.

Spiritual Significance: Spiritual Healing

The heavenly city is a beautiful image that represents the form and structure of the divinely formed New Being as it emerges in every spiritually reawakened and reborn individual, resulting in a transformation of their spirit, state and perception of life.

The tree of life is the tree of love that represents the eternal Christ within us as the ‘true vine’, the source of all true spiritual nourishment. By ‘feeding on that tree’ we become as it were, living parts or branches of it as we go through the spiritual cycles of our lives.

As part of this process, our ego whose pride and sensitivity suffers many spiritual blows and hurts during our spiritual growth, needs healing. The healing leaves represent the truths that sprout directly from Love and make us whole. For example, recall the simple yet profound truth that God is Love and always loves us, because we are his children, created out of his Fatherly Love. Such truths when deeply acknowledged and received, bind up the ego’s wounds, and make us feel whole again.

Personal Application

As with everyone your ego is easily hurt and wounded. It is like a creature that, when cornered, tends to react blindly and aggressively towards its perceived attackers. Where in your life might you be needing healing? Let the ‘leaves’ of living truth soothe and heal you with their eternal balm, and the goodness of the fruit nourish your whole being (including your ego itself!). Become at peace with yourself, in the healing presence of Love within.
Throne

“There before me was a throne in heaven with someone sitting on it. And the one who sat there had the appearance of jasper and carnelian. A rainbow, resembling an emerald, encircled the throne.”
Rev 4:2-3

Narrative Summary (Rev 4:2-8)

As the heavenly scene opens up before John’s gaze, his attention is first drawn to a magnificent throne surrounded by an emerald rainbow. Seven burning lamps of fire, the seven spirits of God stand before it. Upon the throne is a mysterious seated Figure that John could only describe as being like a jewel. Around the throne are four strange living creatures and beyond them twenty-four elders each sitting on a throne, and all ceaselessly worshipping the Lord God Almighty on the throne.

Spiritual Significance: Power

The throne of God surrounded by four symbolic living creatures is intended to present a reassuring sense of underlying divine protection. Behind and above all creation stands the protective power of divine Love that wills a truly fulfilling life for all. The divine throne (the seat of God) lies at the deepest and most central part of the life of everyone, like the most precious jewel of all. It represents the power to govern through laws and order intended to protect society from the disruptive and anarchic. From this inner centre there emanates the divine yearning to share the life of love and wisdom with all, drawing everyone into a harmonious and joyful whole. Its power flows from this pure Love united to Wisdom, giving a sense of life and vitality to others, never forcing or coercing them into unwilling uniformity.

Personal Application

This image may be inviting you to reflect on how there is always deep within you a very strong centre to your life – the strength of pure Love that is united to perfect Wisdom – precious to behold. Focus on how this divine Centre is always present within you, however weak or strong you may be feeling. How might recalling this, help you cope with difficulties in your life? Let this remembrance act as a protective talisman for you as you prepare for any forthcoming traumatic experiences on your spiritual journey.
Living Creature: Lion

“The first living creature was like a lion.”
Rev 4:7

Narrative Summary (Rev 4:7-8)

This powerful animal was one of the four ‘living creatures’ seen by John surrounding the throne of judgment. These creatures had six wings and were said to be ‘covered with eyes’. They were giving glory, honour and thanks to the One seated on the throne.

Spiritual Significance: Courage

The four living creatures around the throne signify the four fundamental divine attributes that protect us from the overwhelming majesty of Divinity. These finite images enable us to perceive safely as much as we are able of the Infinite. Their wings symbolically indicate their power to both lift and protect our spirits. Their ‘eyes all around’ indicate the all-inclusiveness of the spiritual vision they provide.

Spiritually, lions represent the courage we need to face and work through difficult or threatening circumstances. Here, the lion symbolizes the divine courage we can draw on from deep within to face up to the truth about ourselves once we are ready and enabled to perceive it. To honestly acknowledge weakness and imperfection in ourselves is spiritually and paradoxically a strength – so long as we have the desire and seek courage to overcome them.

The lion’s wings represent how the divine power deep within us lifts our spirit as we engage with negativities that emerge through self-examination.

Personal Application

This image may be an encouragement for you to discover the inner strength that will enable you to face up courageously to some currently revealed negative state. Open yourself now to the protective power of the Divine deep within you that has sometimes been called the ‘Lion of Judah’ and appears in the Narnia novels as the lion ‘Aslan’. 
THRONE

Living Creature: Calf

“The second… was like a calf.” (AV) Rev 4:7

Narrative Summary (Rev 4:7-8)

This young animal was one of the four ‘living creatures’ seen by John surrounding the throne of judgment. These creatures had six wings and were said to be ‘covered with eyes’. They were giving glory, honour and thanks to the One seated on the throne.

Spiritual Significance: Loyalty

The four living creatures around the throne signify the four fundamental divine attributes that protect us from the overwhelming majesty of Divinity. These finite images enable us to perceive safely as much as we are able of the Infinite. Their wings symbolically indicate their power to both lift and protect our spirits. Their ‘eyes all around’ indicate the all-inclusiveness of the spiritual vision they provide.

The calf signifies loving to know what is true and good simply for its own sake, not to be in the right or to prove anything, but just because it is true. It is an innocent love of truth for its own sake - loyal and devoted to its guidance with a childlike simplicity of purpose.

Personal Application

This image may be suggesting the need for you to reconnect now with your childlike love of truth solely for its own sake - for being simply just that – not for how it might benefit you in some ulterior way. With this loyal devotion your spiritual state and condition will be well protected.
Living Creature: Man

“The third had a face like a man.” Rev 4:7

Narrative Summary (Rev 4:7-8)

This was one of the four ‘living creatures’ seen by John surrounding the throne of judgment. These creatures had six wings and were said to be ‘covered with eyes’. They were seen giving glory, honour and thanks to the One seated on the throne.

Spiritual Significance: Wisdom

The four living creatures around the throne signify the four fundamental divine attributes that protect us from the overwhelming majesty of Divinity. These finite images enable us to perceive safely as much as we are able of the Infinite. Their wings symbolically indicate their power to both lift and protect our spirits. Their ‘eyes all around’ indicate the all-inclusiveness of the spiritual vision they provide.

This image of a man signifies the essence of true humanity, which is the wisdom of a life lived wholly in accord with the nature and will of God. It is a life lived in a way that clearly mirrors the divinely human qualities of our Creator, in whose image we are said to have been made.

Personal Application

This image may be suggesting the need for you to realize or remember that true wisdom does not reside in great knowledge or intellect, but in the way you live your life. In this sense even the simplest of persons may be amongst the truly wisest of all. Let your approach to your spiritual development be one of openness to receive wisdom in your everyday living rather than one of attempting to master complex spiritual concepts.
THRONES

Living Creature: Eagle

“The fourth was like a flying eagle.” Rev 4:7

Narrative Summary (Rev 4:7-8)

This high flying, eagle-eyed creature was one of the four ‘living creatures’ seen by John surrounding the throne of judgment. These creatures had six wings and were said to be ‘covered with eyes’. They were seen giving glory, honour and thanks to the One seated on the throne.

Spiritual Significance: Watchful Discernment

The four living creatures around the throne signify the four fundamental divine attributes that protect us from the overwhelming majesty of Divinity. These finite images enable us to perceive safely as much as we are able of the Infinite. Their wings symbolically indicate their power to both lift and protect our spirits. Their ‘eyes all around’ indicate the all-inclusiveness of the spiritual vision they provide.

The eagle signifies the ability to rise above our natural ways of thinking and feeling about life. We can discern from a spiritually elevated perspective what is going on in our attitudes, reactions and responses to each situation in everyday life.

This divinely-connected ability helps us to discern where we may be unthinkingly heading, allowing us to progressively assess the quality of what goes on in the natural level of our hearts and minds.

Personal Application

This image may suggest a need for you to become more watchful of your everyday reactions and responses. You might now wish to make a careful overview of the whole of your life. Consider whether you are really on the right track, and seek to be more aware of misleading influences, as distinct from those that are wise.