

Hard Questions in Church History

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Revelations Received in Hiram, Ohio: John Johnson's Home as D&C 77—The Lord's Keys to Understanding John's Book of Revelation

Timeline

1831	June	Joseph begins the "New Translation" (JST) of the Bible
1832	March 1	D&C 78 - Joseph in Kirtland, receives revelation from the Lord on caring for the poor
	March 4-20	D&C 77 - Joseph in Hiram, translates through Revelation 11, with Sidney as scribe
	March 7	D&C 80 - Joseph in Hiram, calling to Stephen Burnett and Eden Smith
	March 8	Joseph travels to Kirtland to ordain counselors Sidney Rigdon & Jesse Gause to High Priesthood
	March 12	D&C 79 - Joseph receives revelation in Hiram, to Jared Carter
	March 20	Receives a revelation to cease work on the JST "for the present time," stopping at Rev 14.
	March 24/5	During the night, a violent mob breaks into Johnson's home to tar and feather Joseph and Sidney
	March 25	Joseph preaches a Sabbath sermon and baptizes three people that afternoon in Hiram
	March 29	Joseph Murdock Smith dies from measles exacerbated by exposure on March 24
	April 1	Joseph and companions leave to pick up paper in Virginia and transport it to Independence

Historical Background:

After Joseph and Sidney made a short thirty-five-mile trip to Kirtland on March 4, 1832, they returned to the work of translating the New Testament (NT) and started the Book of Revelation. They finished Revelation by March 14th. Chapter 11 is the last chapter mentioned in D&C 77—we have no questions and answers for Rev 15-22, and fewer JST changes. Four nights later, as the two men made preparations for a long trip to Missouri, they were attacked by a mob, which further weakened their already unsound physical state. Three days later, on March 29th, Joseph and Emma's adopted son Joseph died. Another three days later, both parents still in pain physically and emotionally, Joseph left for Missouri with Sidney Rigdon left, leaving Emma alone to mourn.

The Book of Revelation through Joseph's Questions and the Lord's Answers

The Book of Revelation is known as Apocalyptic literature and has fascinated scholars for centuries, each giving his or her own interpretation. It wasn't until the Restoration, though, that we received the keys to understand its message. With the help of Joseph Smith's questions and the Lord's answers, we learn that the Book of Revelation discloses vital information about the last days. It is filled with God's direction for Jesus' Second Coming and the end of the earth. The keys to understand it were given in the day it was needed. It is a book for our day.

Outline of the Book of Revelation

Vision	Scripture Reference	Number of Verses
Throne of God	1, 4-5	36
Seven Churches	2-3	51
BC ~4000-1000	6:1-11	11
AD ~1000-AD 2000	6:12-7:3	14

AD ~2000 Second Coming	8:1–19:2	201
*Millennium 20XX–30XX	20:1–6	6
Final Scenes	20:7–15	9
Celestialized Earth	21:2–22:6	33

* We do not know when the Millennium will begin or end.

It was not until the Restoration that we learned that most of the Book of Revelation is chronological. It spans the history of the earth (D&C 77:6-7). Each seal is a period of approximately one thousand biblical years of history. In addition to D&C 77, the Prophet Joseph Smith also taught about the Book of Revelation and left many keys to help understand its symbolism: D&C 77; 88; 93:18; Ether 4:15–16; the JST of Revelation, and the Prophet’s Nauvoo sermons.

Canonization of D&C 77

The information in D&C 77 was first extracted and compiled out of the Joseph Smith Translation manuscripts and published in the Church’s Nauvoo newspaper, Times and Seasons, under the title “A Key to Understanding the Revelations of St. John, in a Series of Questions and Answers.” From there, it was included (along with other revelations and writings) in the first printing of The Pearl of Great Price in 1851. Finally, it was placed chronologically in the Doctrine and Covenants, the revelation being dated as March 1832 (See Richard D. Draper and Michael D. Rhodes, The Revelation of John the Apostle, in Brigham Young University New Testament Commentary [Provo, UT: BYU Studies, 2016], 33).

Keys from D&C 77 to Help Understand the Symbolism

Rev 4:6a (NIV) “And before the throne <i>there was</i> a sea of glass like unto crystal . . .”	D&C 77:1 “Q. What is the sea of glass spoken of [in Revelation 4:6]? A: It is the earth, in its sanctified, immortal, and eternal state.”
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“What is the sea of glass?” is the first verse that Joseph asked about in D&C 77:1 (also see D&C 130:6-9). The “crystal” transparency may allow one to see into the past, present, and future, like an Urim and Thummim. The sea of glass seems to take on qualities of the Urim and Thummim. In the early Israelite tabernacle and temple, the high priest also carried two clear stones known as “Urim and Thummim” or “lights and perfections” in Hebrew (Ex 28:30; Lev 8:8; Num 27:21; Deu 33:8; 1 Sam 28:6; Ezr 2:63; Neh 7:65; JS-H 1:35).

Joseph further explained this “sea of glass” at a General Conference in Nauvoo, IL on 2 April 1843: “Angels do not reside on a planet like this earth. But they reside in the presence of God—but on a Globe like a ‘sea of glass and fire’ where all things are manifest past, present, and to come—the place where God resides is a great Urim and Thummim... This earth in its sanctified and immortal state will be a Urim and Thummim for all things below it in the scale of creation, but not above it” (Ehat and Cook, Words of Joseph Smith, 171).

The Prophet Joseph learned that the living creatures were a higher form of each animal that represented a classification (not like the book of Daniel where they are figures of things on our earth). John described animals familiar to our planet but which, in their celestialized state, can speak and sing. Other visions of the throne of God also include animals (i.e. Ezekiel’s four creatures).

<p>Rev 4:6b</p> <p>“And in the midst of the throne, and round about the throne, <i>were</i> four beasts . . .”</p>	<p>Rev 4:6b (NIV)</p> <p>“And in the center, around the throne, were four living creatures...”</p>	<p>D&C 77:2-3</p> <p>“Q. What are we to understand by the four beasts, spoken of in the same verse?” “Q. Are the four beasts limited to individual beasts, or do they represent classes or orders?”</p> <p>“A. They are figurative expressions . . . describing heaven, the paradise of God, the happiness of man, and of beasts, and of creeping things, and of the fowls of the air; that which is spiritual being in the likeness of that which is temporal...” “to represent the glory of the classes of beings in their destined order...in the enjoyment of their eternal felicity.”</p>
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On 8 April 1843, the Prophet Joseph added, “John heard the words of the beasts giving glory to God, and understood them. God who made the beasts could understand every language spoken by them” (JosephSmithPapers.org, History 1838-56, 1.1523).

In Christian artwork, these four animals are used as symbols for the NT four gospels: Matthew—man, Mark—eagle, Luke—ox, and John—lion (see Rev 4:7).

<p>Rev 4:6c, 8</p> <p>“. . . four beasts full of eyes before and behind . . . each of them six wings about <i>him</i>; and <i>they were</i> full of eyes within: and they rest not day and night, saying, Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, which was, and is, and is to come.”</p>	<p>D&C 77:4</p> <p>“Q. What are we to understand by the eyes and wings, which the beasts had?”</p> <p>A. Their eyes are a representation of light and knowledge, that is, they are full of knowledge; and their wings are a representation of power, to move, to act, etc.”</p>
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Another symbol—from the end of verse 6, and again in verse 8—is the eyes that cover the four creatures. The Lord explains that the eyes represent knowledge. They may have some degree of omniscience, having the power to see things “before and behind” (KJV).

John the Revelator also described winged creatures. In Greco-Roman traditions, a few gods had wings that would speed to their travel (Hermes, Mercury, and Cupid). When the Prophet Joseph asked what the wings meant, he was told they are the power to move and act. Christian artists misunderstand the symbolism of the wings, portraying heavenly beings incorrectly. Isaiah also describes God’s throne surrounded by angels with six wings. They also seem to represent the power to move and act. The heavenly creatures praised God as He “who was and who is and who is coming” (Rev 1:4).

<p>Rev 4:4, 10</p> <p>“I saw four and twenty elders sitting, clothed in white raiment; and they had on their heads crowns of gold.</p> <p>. . . The four and twenty elders fall down before him that sat on the throne, and worship him that liveth for ever and ever, and cast their crowns before the throne.”</p>	<p>D&C 77:5</p> <p>“Q. What are we to understand by the four and twenty elders spoken of by John?”</p> <p>A. . . They were elders who had been faithful in the work of the ministry and were dead; who belonged to the seven churches, and were then in the paradise of God.”</p>
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The Lord explained to Joseph Smith that these specific twenty-four elders were the faithful deceased members of the seven churches who are now with God (see Rev 2-3). Sometimes, numbers have

special meaning in the Bible; in the Book of Revelation, most numbers are symbolic. When a special number was doubled or squared, it multiplied the importance of the initial special number. Sometimes, the number twelve is used in scripture to represent God's order or priesthood power. In the creation, He organized the rotation of the earth around twelve moons (or months). He organized His people into twelve tribes and His leaders into twelve apostles. In the latter days, the twelfth year became the age to begin priesthood service. Twelve doubled may symbolically represent God's perfected order in heaven. The twenty-four elders wore purified white robes with gold royal crowns, referring to their roles and positions. Twelve squared represents those who are perfected or have had their calling and election made sure (Alonzo Gaskill, *The Lost Language of Symbolism*). Their white raiment, gold crowns, and proximity to God, also speak of their perfected state.

The Scroll of Destiny with Seven Seals

Rev 5:1	D&C 77:6
“And I saw in the right hand of him that sat on the throne a book written within and on the backside, sealed with seven seals.”	<p>“Q. What are we to understand by the book which John saw, which was sealed on the back with seven seals?</p> <p>A. ...It contains the revealed will, mysteries, and the works of God; the hidden things of his economy concerning this earth during the seven thousand years of its continuance, or its temporal existence.”</p>

Before we discuss the book, it is important to know who holds it. Elohim sits on the throne. Jehovah receives the book with the assignment to open it (Rev 5:7). The fact that the book is in God's right hand suggests its importance. The right hand was for clean functions and the left for unclean use.

The “book” was actually a scroll. It was customary to write on one side only but this one is written on both sides, possibly to represent that nothing was left out. Legal documents were sealed to prove authenticity. Documents were written in duplicate, with one of them closed and sealed, to be opened only by a Judge “if anyone challenged the content” (Draper and Rhodes, *BYU NTC: Revelation*, 225). The witness wrapped string around the scroll, embedding it in clay or wax to personalize the seal. Seven seals assured its safety. Symbolically, the number seven represents completeness, wholeness, or perfection.

Historically, we find other seven-sealed documents. For example, “one such type of covenant was the Roman will that also bore seven seals. Such testaments could not be administered until all the seals were broken. Only a person of authority could legally break the seals and execute the will” (Ibid., 226). Here in John's vision, Jesus is the judge who opens the seals at the appropriate times.

Rev 6:1	D&C 77:7
“And I saw when the Lamb opened one of the seals.”	<p>“Q. What are we to understand by the seven seals with which it was sealed?</p> <p>A. ...The first seal contains the things of the first thousand years, and the second also of the second thousand years, and so on until the seventh.”</p>

The Prophet Joseph learned that the scroll represents 7,000 years (D&C 77:6-7). It gives a very clear chronological view of the earth's history that is jarringly different from the interpretation we find among other Christians. Each of the seven seals stands for a millennial period in the earth's human

history since Adam and Eve (also D&C 88:108-110)—1,000 years or a dispensation. The scroll cannot be opened until all seven seals are open.

Those Who Have Been Sealed

Rev 7:1	D&C 77:8
<p>“And after these things I saw four angels standing on the four corners of the earth, holding the four winds of the earth, that the wind should not blow on the earth, nor on the sea, nor on any tree.”</p>	<p>“Q. What are we to understand by the four angels, spoken of in [Rev 7:1]? A. ...[They] are four angels sent forth from God, to whom is given power over the four parts of the earth, to save life and to destroy; these are they who have the everlasting gospel to commit to every nation, kindred, tongue, and people; having power to shut up the heavens, to seal up unto life, or to cast down to the regions of darkness.”</p>

Angels are messengers of God. When the Prophet Joseph asked the Lord to explain the role of these four angels, he learned that each had special power:

- To save or destroy life
- To preside over the Lord’s worldwide missionary work
- To shut up the heavens
- To seal humans unto life or cast them into darkness

These four angels spread the gospel as well as destruction. The verse also refers to “the four corners of the earth” which usually means a geographic fullness, or the whole earth. The prophet later taught: “there are no angels who minister to this earth but those who do belong or have belonged to it” (D&C 130:5).

Rev 7:2	D&C 77:9
<p>“I saw another angel ascending from the east having the seal of the living God, and he cried with a loud voice to the four angels to whom it was given to hurt the earth and the sea”</p>	<p>“Q. What are we to understand by the angel ascending from the east [in Rev. 7:2]? A. ...[it] is he to whom is given the seal of the living God over the twelve tribes of Israel; wherefore, he crieth unto the four angels having the everlasting gospel, saying: Hurt not the earth, neither the sea, nor the trees, till we have sealed the servants of our God in their foreheads. And, if you will receive it, this is Elias which was to come to gather together the tribes of Israel and restore all things.”</p>

Through the Lord’s answer, we learn that this angel from the east (or “from the rising of the sun,” ESV) is an “Elias.” Elsewhere in scripture, the name Elias is used for different people (i.e. Elijah in Greek), and is also as a title for “a forerunner” (i.e. John the Baptist). Here, Elias has God’s authority to direct other angels, seal God’s servants, and direct the latter-day gathering of Israel. By combining this information within Rev 10 and D&C 77:14, it can be interpreted that John the Revelator is this Elias who will “restore all things” (D&C 77:9).

The angel postpones the destruction until “the servants of our God” are sealed “in their foreheads.” The angel from the east or the rising of the sun, who is also Elias (John the Revelator), must make

sure that the righteous are sealed and protected against harm. The timing is consistent with the surge in temple building over a few decades to allow this work to happen.

Anciently, putting a mark on the forehead had several implications. In the Greco-Roman world, some marked their foreheads with the god they worshiped, as a divine protection. Slave owners branded their slaves with a mark on their foreheads, forearms, or right palms. This came from the practice of owners marking slaves for life in order to identify runaways. In the Roman Empire, Christians were tattooed for their beliefs (Draper and Rhodes, *BYU NTC Revelation*, 287).

In the context of the sixth seal, the sealing is not a visible tattoo. In Rev 14:1 we learn that the saints had the “Father’s name written on their foreheads.” The Prophet Joseph expanded on this in a sermon: “Where it says and they shall seal the servants of God in their foreheads &c it means to seal the blessing on their heads meaning the everlasting covenant thereby making their calling & election sure” (“Discourse, 13 August 1843–A, as Reported by William Clayton,” *josephsmithpapers*)

144,000 Sealed

Rev 7–Outline	D&C 77:10
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • God's people will be preserved (Rev 7:1-3) • 144,000 sealed (Rev 7:4-8) • Great Multitude in White Robes (7:9-17) 	<p>“Q. What time are the things spoken of in this chapter [Rev 7] to be accomplished?</p> <p>A. They are to be accomplished in the sixth thousand years, or the opening of the sixth seal.”</p>

If we count the sixth seal as exactly as 1,000 biblical years since Adam, then it spanned CE/AD 1,000 to 2,000. With different calendars systems and interpretation, this is not an exact date. The temple work of sealing in our dispensation began in 1842 and has accelerated exponentially.

Rev 7:4	D&C 77:11
<p>“And I heard the number of them which were sealed: <i>and there were</i> sealed an hundred and forty and four thousand of all the tribes of the children of Israel”</p>	<p>“Q. What are we to understand by sealing the one hundred and forty-four thousand, out of all the tribes of Israel – twelve thousand out of every tribe?</p> <p>A. ...Those who are sealed are high priests, ordained unto the holy order of God, to administer the everlasting gospel; for they are they who are ordained out of every nation, kindred, tongue, and people, by the angels to whom is given power over the nations of the earth, to bring as many as will come to the church of the Firstborn.”</p>

The number of sealed souls is significant symbolically. In scripture, twelve depicts God’s order or organization (i.e. twelve rotations of the moon around the sun every year, twelve tribes, apostles, and in the modern church, the young men beginning their priesthood service in their twelfth year). Any number squared has even more significance. By adding 1,000, it represents perfection (Draper, Rhodes, *BYU NT*, 292). Thus the 144,000 likely speaks of

God’s complete or whole organization or righteous saints—male and female.

In D&C 77:11, we learn that those sealed are not the number saved, but representatives, like missionaries of the church of the First Born. In Nauvoo, Joseph Smith taught a sermon on these verses:

It is not only necessary that you should be baptized for your dead, but you will have to go through all the ordinances for them, same as you have gone through to save yourselves; there will be 144,000 Saviors on Mount Zion, and with them an innumerable host, that no man can number. Oh! I beseech you to go forward, and make your calling and your election sure! (josephsmithpapers.org, "History, 1838–1856, volume F-1 [1 May 1844–8 August 1844]").

Endowed saints who live their covenants are on the right path.

The Lord's organization lists His covenant people into the traditional twelve tribes of Israel (Rev 7:5-8). Often in the Old Testament, when the twelve tribes are listed, Ruben or Simeon are missing, with Joseph receiving a "double portion" for Ephraim and Manasseh (Deut 21:17; Joseph was the "first born" of the queen wife). But in this list, Dan is missing—possibly because of an idolatrous temple set up in his land (Judg 18:30; 1 King 12:29). Also, another tradition claimed the anti-Christ came from Dan (Draper, BYU NT Revelation, 291).

The Lord's explanation in D&C 77:11 says that there are ordained high priests from "every nation" to build the kingdom or spread the gospel. In the Restoration, we also believe this group of high priests include endowed women. President M. Russell Ballard taught that "in the eternal perspective, both the procreative power and the priesthood power are shared by husband and wife" ("This Is My Work and Glory," Ensign, May 2013, 19). President Russell M. Nelson taught that women "who are endowed in the house of the Lord receive a gift of God's priesthood" (General Conference, Oct 2019). We also have scriptures that speak of women and men in the highest order of the priesthood (i.e. D&C 124:25–30; 131:1–4; for more, see my Come Follow Me on D&C 84, Oath and Covenant of the Priesthood).

When the Prophet Joseph Smith spoke on the 144,000, he "indicated that the conferral of the fullness of the priesthood was a 'sealing . . . on top of the head,' of which the phrase 'sealed on their foreheads' was symbolic." (Joseph Smith, History of the Church, 6:196).

On February 4, 1844, the Prophet noted that "the selection of the persons to form that number had already commenced." Furthermore, Joseph taught that it was through an ordinance conferring the fullness of the priesthood that these high priests could be qualified to be part of the special missionary force in the last days (D&C 77:11). Elder Bruce R. McConkie gave his opinion, too: "At his Second Coming . . . these 144,000 are Gods, as the name on their foreheads specifies; their callings and elections have been made sure; they are exalted personages; they are 'redeemed from among men' (Rev 14:4-5), they have attained perfection" (Bruce R. McConkie, A New Witness for the Articles of Faith [SLC, UT: Deseret Book, 1985], 640). If this is the case, the number include the righteous men and women who have been sealed and ordained in this sacred manner (D&C 77:11).

On October 25-26, 1831, Joseph taught "when we have a testimony that our names are sealed in the Lamb's Book of Life we have perfect love and then it is impossible for false Christs to decieve [sic] us" (josephsmithpapers.org, "Minutes, 25–26 October 1831," p. 13). Revelation 3:5; 13:8; 20:12, 15; and 21:27 all refer to the book of life. The Book of Mormon also refers to this and quotes God as

saying, “the names of the righteous shall be written in the book of life and unto them will I grant an inheritance at my right hand” (Alma 5:58). This may be those who are symbolically referred to as the perfect number: 144,000 (Rev 7:4 and 14:1).

The Seventh Seal

<p style="text-align: center;">Rev 8:2, 6, 13 emphasis added</p> <p>“I saw the seven angels which stood before God; and to them were given seven trumpets . . . seven angels which had the seven trumpets prepared themselves to sound . . . Woe, woe, woe, to the inhabitants of the earth by reason of the other voices of the trumpet of the three angels, which are yet to sound!”</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">D&C 77:12</p> <p>“Q. What are we to understand by the sounding of the trumpets, mentioned in [Rev 8]?</p> <p>A. . . . God made the world in six days, and on the seventh day he finished his work, and sanctified it, and also formed man out of the dust of the earth, even so, in the beginning of the seventh thousand years will the Lord God sanctify the earth, and complete the salvation of man, and judge all things, and shall redeem all things, except that which he hath not put into his power, when he shall have sealed all things, unto the end of all things; and the sounding of the trumpets of the seven angels are the preparing and finishing of his work, in the beginning of the seventh thousand years—the preparing of the way before the time of his coming.”</p>
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The Lord explained that the sounding of the seven trumpets (shofars—ram’s horns—or war horns) announces or signals the last preparations before God finishes His work. These trumpets also announce the beginning of God’s judgment. Each trumpet calls another calamity. In the OT, seven priests blew trumpets before the battle of Jericho, and important events (Josh 6:1-20; 1Chr 15:24).

We can see the need for our time to prepare personally and to share the gospel, as our prophet, Russell M. Nelson declared in October 2020 General Conference, “Gathering Israel . . . is the most important work in the world.”

The positioning of the angels before God speaks of their importance. They serve God under His priesthood power. The number of angels (seven) may refer to a figurative whole or perfect group of all angels in the heavenly host.

<p style="text-align: center;">Rev 9—Outline</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fifth trumpet sounds and opens pit (9:1-11) • One woe passes (9:12) • Sixth trumpet unleashes warfare (9:13-21) 	<p style="text-align: center;">D&C 77:13</p> <p>“Q. When are the things to be accomplished, which are written in [Rev 9]?</p> <p>A. . . . After the opening of the seventh seal, before the coming of Christ.”</p>
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By chapter 9, the half hour of heavenly silence must have ended as the next trumpet rallies attention (Rev 9:1). Smoke from hell became a plague of locusts worse than Moses’s plague on the Egyptians, as the locusts had a scorpion bite. A grievous war for the souls of humanity ensued. The sixth trumpet is summoned from the prayers calling on the power of God. Three more plagues hurt a portion of “mankind” (NIV). The demonic destruction was violent and lethal.

Rev 10:8-9	D&C 77:14
<p>“Go <i>and</i> take the little book which is open in the hand of the angel which standeth upon the sea and upon the earth ... And I went unto the angel, and said unto him, Give me the little book. And he said unto me, Take <i>it</i>, and eat it up; and it shall make thy belly bitter, but it shall be in thy mouth sweet as honey.”</p>	<p>Q. What are we to understand by the little book which was eaten by John, as mentioned in” Rev 10?</p> <p>A. We are to understand that it was a mission, and an ordinance, for him to gather the tribes of Israel; behold, this is Elias, who, as it is written, must come and restore all things.</p>

The one who stands on the sea and earth—metaphorically—communicates that he has authority over land and sea. This might also symbolize the breadth of his influence or message. The little scroll or “book” (KJV) included John’s mission to gather the tribes of Israel, according to D&C 77:14.

John the Revelator refers to himself in the first person. The Lord commands him to “eat it,” which is figurative for internalizing something. (Jeremiah and Ezekiel were also given a book to eat in Jer 15:16; Ezk 2:6-10, 3:1-3.) John will take the scroll (introduced in verse two), and fully accept his assignment or mission call.

The Lord revealed to Joseph Smith that John’s mission was the call of Elias, to restore all things. D&C 27:6 reads: “Elias, to whom I have committed the keys of bringing to pass the restoration of all things spoken by the mouth of all the holy prophets since the world began, concerning the last days.” The new mission call and title might be a new name for John. D&C 77: 9 and 14 describe Elias as the one responsible for the gathering of Israel.

Elias as a person appeared on the Mt of Transfiguration (Mt 17:3; D&C 138:45). However, Joseph recorded an experience in the Kirtland Temple when “Elias appeared, committed the dispensation of the gospel of Abraham, saying that in us and our seed all generations after us should be blessed” (D&C 110:12). This may be John—as the calling sounds similar—or yet another Elias. We do not know.

John’s new mission was received as sweet news but the assignment became difficult and even bitter over time. Perhaps the bitterness from the sorrow of seeing those who reject the message of God. In Rev 5, we read of the Savior receiving his mission from a large scroll, and now John receives his assignment from another scroll. In June 1831, a year prior to translating the Book of Revelation and prior to receiving section 77, the Prophet Joseph elaborated on this verse at a church conference. His scribe recorded:

The Spirit of the Lord fell upon Joseph in an unusual manner, and he prophesied that John the Revelator was then among the Ten Tribes of Israel who had been led away by Shalmaneser, king of Assyria, to prepare them for their return from their long dispersion, to again possess the land of their fathers. He prophesied many more things that I have not written” (josephsmithpapers.org, John Whitmer, History, 1831–circa 1847).

His call to return to Missouri and the mob attack end Joseph Smith’s questions on this topic.

Summary Chart of Symbols Defined in D&C and JST

Dealing with—	Symbol
144,000	“Those who are sealed are high priests, ordained unto the holy order of God ... they who are ordained out of

	every nation, kindred, tongue, and people ... to bring as many as will come to the church of the Firstborn” (D&C 77:11)
Angel (“ascending from the east”)	Elias, to “seal of the living God over the twelve tribes of Israel ... in their foreheads”
Angels (four)	Have “power over the four parts of the earth, to save life and to destroy; these are they who have the everlasting gospel” and seal heavens” (D&C 77:8)
Angels	Heavenly servants (JST, Rev 1:20; 2:1; etc.)
Beasts (four living creatures at throne)	Individual animals representing their classes, glorified in Heaven (77:2-3)
Book—	Elias’s “mission, and an ordinance, for him to gather the tribes of Israel” (D&C 77:14)
Book eaten by John	Mission call internalized
Bride or Woman	God’s church members or covenant Israel (JST Rev 12:8)
Eyes	Light and knowledge, multiple eyes represent omniscience (D&C 77:4)
Forehead	Desire, thoughts (also associated with heart)
Kings—Priests/Queens—Priestesses	Heirs of God (Revelation 1:6; D&C 84:38)
Name	Personal character, authority, or new name for the initiated
Rod of Iron	Word of God (JST Rev 2:27)
Sea of Glass	“The earth, in its sanctified, immortal, and eternal state” (D&C 77:1); omniscience nature of Heaven or celestialized Earth
Seal	1,000 years of biblical history on earth from Adam (D&C 77:6)
Sealing on forehead	Anointing the righteous with a sealing (Calling and Election?) (D&C 77:9)
Seven Seals	“The first seal contains the things of the first thousand year” (D&C 77:7)
Stars	Servants/angels of God (i.e. church leaders; JST Rev 1:20)
Sounding of the Trumpets	“The preparing of the way before the time of his coming” (D&C 77:12)
Wings	“Power to move, to act, etc.” (D&C 77:4)

Further Reading:

Richard D. Draper and Michael D. Rhodes, *The Revelation of John the Apostle*, in *Brigham Young University New Testament Commentary* (Provo, UT: BYU Studies, 2016).