

Symbols That Testify of Jesus Christ

Jesus Christ is the focus of all scripture. In presenting truths about Jesus, the prophets used a number of symbols to provide insight into His life, mission, character, and Atonement. They drew on the natural world, things in the heavens, the temple and its structures, the cosmos,

flora and fauna, the animal kingdom, civil and religious positions, building and architectural components, and many others. This chart presents a sampling of symbols that point to Jesus Christ.

Symbol	Representation	Reference(s)
Advocate	"The Lord standeth up to plead, and standeth to judge the people" (Isa. 3:13).	John 2:1
Baptism	Immersion in and emergence from the water points to Christ's death, burial, and Resurrection.	Rom. 6:1-6
Blood	The sacrificial animal's blood anticipates Christ's Atonement; it is His "blood that maketh an atonement for the soul" (Lev. 17:11).	John 6:54; Rom. 3:25; Heb. 9:14, 22; 13:12
Blood, shedding of	The shedding of blood in animal sacrifices points to Christ's Atonement.	Lev. 1-6
Blood upon the door at Passover	Christ's blood provides deliverance (spiritual and temporal).	Ex. 12
Branch	A name of the Messiah.	Isa. 11:1-5; Jer. 23:5-6; 33:15-17
Brazen serpent	The brazen serpent is a special object lesson that pertained to the lifting up of Jesus Christ on the cross.	Num. 21:6-9
Captain	The Lord is the "captain of the Lord's host" (Josh. 5:15).	Josh. 5:15; Heb. 2:10
Cities of Refuge	Christ signifies the "refuge," the "high priest," and the "avenger of blood" (Hebrew "redeemer of blood").	Num. 35:6-34; Deut. 4:42; 33:17; Ps. 46:1; 62:7; Heb. 6:18
Commander	The Lord is the "leader and commander of the people" (Isa. 55:4).	Isa. 55:4

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Cornerstone	The Messiah is the “head stone of the corner” (Ps. 118:22).	Matt. 21:42
Counselor	A title of the Messiah.	Isa. 9:6–7
Covert	The Messiah is like a “covert from the tempest” to His followers (Isa. 32:2).	Isa. 32:2
Day of Atonement	Sacrifices and symbols of the Day of Atonement uniquely signified Christ’s atoning sacrifice.	Lev. 16; Heb. 7–9
Dew	“I will be as the dew unto Israel,” said the Lord (Hosea 14:5).	Ps. 110:3; Hosea 14:4–5
Eagle	The eagle represents the Lord’s power to protect His people.	Deut. 32:10–12
Fire	The Lord is described as a “wall of fire” and “consuming fire” (Zech. 2:5).	Deut. 4:24
Fortress	The Lord has the qualities of a fortress, with the ability to protect His people.	2 Sam. 22:2–4
Fountain of water	The Lord is the “fountain of living waters.”	Jer. 2:13; 17:13
Guide	God “will be our guide even unto death.”	Ps. 48:14
High priest	The high priest of ancient Israel served as a figure of “the Apostle and High Priest of our profession, Christ Jesus” (Heb. 3:1; 4:14).	Lev. 21
Horns of the altar	The horns of the altar in the ancient temple are representative of God’s power to bring forth salvation.	Ex. 29:12; 1 Sam. 2:10; 2 Sam. 22:3; Ps. 75:10; Jer. 48:25
Husband	“I was an husband unto them, saith the Lord” (Jer. 31:32).	Isa. 54:5
Judge	Just judges in the book of Judges were a type of the Lord’s anticipated eternal judgeship.	Gen. 18:25; Isa. 11:4
King	Moses, Melchizedek, and other righteous leaders were types of the Lord, “the King of all the earth” (Ps. 47:7).	Deut. 33:4–5; Ps. 44:4; 47:6
Lamb	The lamb signified Jesus, the lamb of God.	Ex. 12:5; John 1:29

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Lawgiver	The Lord is “our lawgiver” (Isa. 33:22)	Isa. 33:22
Law of Moses	All components of the law anticipated Christ’s Atonement.	Gal. 3:24
Light	The Lord is the light of the world.	Isa. 60:19
Lion	A lion has qualities, such as strength, fearlessness, and power, that belong to Jesus Christ.	Rev. 5:5; cf. Gen. 49:8–12
Manna from heaven	Christ is the “true” and “living” bread from heaven.	Ex. 16:11–35; John 6:32–57
Mediator	Moses was the mediator of the first covenant, Christ of the second.	Gal. 3:19–20; 1 Tim. 2:5
Ordinances	Various ordinances (sacrifices, shewbread, incense, baptism, etc.) pertain to Christ’s Atonement.	Lev. 18:4; 2 Chr. 2:4; Ezek. 43:11
Passover	Aspects of the Passover anticipated the sacrifice of Jesus Christ, who is “our Passover” (1 Cor. 5:7).	Ex. 12
Plagues	The Messiah will destroy death at His Resurrection: “I will be thy plagues, O death.”	Hosea 13:14
Plant	The Messiah has the qualities of a plant.	Isa. 53:2; Ezek. 34:29
Priest	The office of and the requirements placed on ancient Levitical priests anticipated Christ’s Atonement.	Lev. 8:5–10; 9; 16; 17; 21:1, 16–23; Heb. 7:11–12, 21
Prophet	All of God’s prophets are types of Jesus, the greatest of all prophets.	Deut. 18:15–18; John 6:14; Mark 6:4
Purifier	As a goldsmith purifies gold, the Lord purifies souls.	Mal. 3:3; 1 Pet. 1:22; Heb. 9:13–14
Reverend	The Lord is to be revered, because “holy and reverend is his name.”	Ps. 111:9
Rock	The Lord is “the Rock.”	Deut. 32:4; Ps. 28:1; 62:2; 1 Cor. 10:1–4

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Root	The Messiah has the qualities of a root, which gives life to the plant as He gives life to mankind.	Isa. 53:2; Rev. 22:16
Sacrifices	Ancient sacrifices prefigured Christ's roles as offering, offerer, and priest.	Lev. 1-7
Sacrificial meal	The ancient sacrificial meal, which was eaten by the offerer and the priests in the temple, anticipates the modern sacramental meal; the former looked forward to Christ's sacrifice, and the latter recalled it.	Lev. 7:11-36
Shepherd	"The Lord is my shepherd."	Ps. 23
Shield	The Lord is a shield that protects His people.	Gen. 15:1; Ps. 28:7; Prov. 30:5
Shiloh	A title of the Messiah.	Gen. 49:10; 50:24
Star	The Messiah is the "Star out of Jacob" (Num. 24:17).	Rev. 22:16
Stem of Jesse	The Messiah, through the lines of Jesse, has the qualities of a stem.	Isa. 11:1-4
Sun	The Lord is the "Sun of righteousness" (Mal. 4:2).	Ps. 84:11
Temple	Jesus is our sanctuary and "dwelling place" (Ps. 90:1).	Isa. 8:14; Ezek. 11:16
Veil of the temple	The veil is a symbol of Christ's flesh.	Heb. 10:19-20
Vestments, sacred	Various parts of the ancient priestly sacred vestments symbolize different aspects of the Atonement.	Ex. 28:6-30
Water	Jesus is the living water that saves Israel from death.	Num. 20:7-11; Jer. 2:13; John 4:10-14
Witness	The Messiah serves as a witness of the truth.	Isa. 55:4; John 18:37; Rev. 3:14