

## **"An Allegory"**

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Are you wondering what is the meaning of this word? or do you know already that it is something taught under the image of something else? In this it is like a parable, which is "a tale to teach the truth."

When Jesus Christ taught the people who crowded around to hear His words, how often He used parables to make it easy for them to see and understand the lessons that He wanted them to learn.

Think of all the stories that Jesus told the people; see how many you can remember, and what were the lessons taught in each one. Some I am sure, you know well,—the Sower, the Ten Virgins, the Good Samaritan, the Good Shepherd. In each of these some precious lesson of truth was hidden; but hidden only that it might be seen.

You think this strange, do you? We usually hide things that we don't want to be seen. But hear what Jesus said when the disciples asked Him about His parables: "There is nothing hid save that it should be manifested." That is, there is nothing hidden, except for the purpose of making it plain.

The word "manifested" comes from manus the hand, and means literally, that can be laid hold of with the hand. We sometimes speak of a thing which is very clear and plain to our understanding, as being "easy to grasp," or to lay hold of.

Jesus taught the people the truth by the stories called parables, not to hide it from them, but so that the simplest of them, and even the little children, might be able to see and grasp it, and hold it in their minds.

But there were some among those who listened to Jesus who were not willing to be taught as little children. Indeed, they even thought that they knew more than Jesus did, because He had never been to any of their schools. And from them the parables of Jesus hid the truth, because they could not "receive the kingdom of God as a little child."

"Thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes." The parables of Jesus, which made the truth simple enough for babes to understand, hid it from those who were "wise in their own counsels," that "seeing they might see, and not perceive; and hearing they might hear, and not understand."

You love to hear the parables of Jesus from the New Testament, and to learn the lessons of truth that He has hidden there for you. But did you know that the Old Testament also is full of the parables of Jesus?

He who went on earth taught the people by parables, had from the very beginning,—the time of the fall,—been teaching them by object lessons the good news of salvation from sin through His own sacrifice; and also giving before hand to those who had “eyes to see” and “ears to hear” the history of His own life upon the earth, and His death and resurrection, and the great deliverance that by it would be wrought for all who believed in Him. Remember what we learned last week, that all the Scriptures teach of Jesus.

Of one of the most familiar Bible stories, the history of Abraham,—his home life with Sarah and Hagar, the birth of Ishmael, and after long years of waiting, the birth of Isaac, the child of promise,—of this the Apostle Paul says: “Which things are an allegory.” That is, we are not to read this only as an interesting, true story. It is this, but much more. We are to learn from it some precious lessons of Gospel truth which God has in this way made plain for us to grasp.

But this is not the only allegory in the Old Testament. This is simply to teach us how we are to look upon all these Scriptures, and the stories that they teach us. The life of Jacob, of Joseph, Moses, David,—of each of these we may say, as Paul said of the life of Abraham, “Which things are an allegory.”

So let us as we study these, look for the precious truth, the lessons of Jesus which were hidden in them for the people of old time to teach them the Gospel, and which still remain there to make it plain for us.