

How to Study the Bible

Understanding the Coded Messages in Types, Shadows, Parables and Allegories

The Bible is God's Word and as such is truth. Jesus was the "Word Made Flesh" and as such was the "illustrated Edition" of the Old Testament and New. We must remember that while Jesus came to inaugurate the New Testament, He did so while living under and fulfilling the Old Testament. The New Testament (Covenant) was not activated until after His death.

The Old Testament scriptures were written with several levels of understanding.

1. Historic
2. Directive
3. Prophetic
4. Illustrative

In a real sense God coded a message into the historic history of the world, specific individuals and of course the nation of Israel. Because of this, the rituals, festivals, and other experiences of God's chosen people are much more than historic records with little meaning to the church today. They are coded pictures to be understood in the light of New Testament revelation. The people places and things of the OT carry rich prophetic pictures and messages that help us understand our NT experience.

1. I Cor. 10:1-11

Interpreting the Old Testament – Col. 2:16-17

1. Parables – A simple story about common things to illustrate a spiritual point. GR: Para=beside + ballein=To throw
2. Types (figures) – A type is a representation by one thing of another. Adam was a type of Christ (Rom. 5:14) and so was Isaac (Heb. 11:19). The Passover was a type of Christ (1 Cor. 5:7).
3. Shadows – A shadow in the Bible was an OT person place or thing that gave a vague outline of a NT truth, but the reality of it could not be clearly seen until the NT revelation came. (Col. 2:16-17, Heb. 10:1)
4. Allegories – The representation of abstract ideas or principles by characters, figures, or events in narrative, dramatic, or pictorial form. Gal. 4:21-31
5. Figures (like types) – Heb. 9:9, I Peter 3:20-22