

WHY USE SYMBOLS?

For some reason, readers of the Bible do not expect to find symbolic language in the Scriptures, and are unprepared to appreciate its special contribution to the revelation of God to the mind of man.

What are the values of symbols?

1. Abstract concepts must always be expressed in figurative or symbolic language. How else could man talk about his real feelings toward his world, his loved ones?

2. Spiritual realities are the greatest abstract truths of all, and God himself is the greatest spiritual reality. How else could God reveal himself to man in terms which man could understand, if he did not use symbolic and figurative language?

3. Memorable and impressive truths are better remembered and appreciated by the hearer when put into figure and symbol.

4. Personifications of unseen powers and forces are best communicated in figurative forms, both for understanding and for protection from hostile readers or hearers.

5. To man, imprisoned by time, space and matter, God recognized in figurative language an effective way of communicating eternal realities to him.