

*Myths are long-forgotten truths,
respected by hoary antiquity, yet
rejected by modern scepticism.*



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She is the Wisdom of Love, not the “love of wisdom,” as the term philosophia is commonly interpreted.

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¹ *Frontispiece*: “The Fox and the Crocodile,” Aesop’s Fable #189, translated by Laura Gibbs in 2002.

The fox and the crocodile were disputing about their pedigrees [*i.e.*, contesting their nobility]. The crocodile was proudly enumerating the eminent qualities of his ancestors, and when he said that they had been the highest ranking athletic officials, the fox remarked, “My dear sir, even if you had not mentioned it, the mere condition of your skin is evidence enough that you have suffered long years of athletic sports out of doors in the sun!”

Note: The joke is based on the crocodile boasting that his ancestors had been *Gymnasiarchs*, city officials who presided over the athletic gymnasiums in ancient Greece.

Metaphor is figure of speech.

By which a characteristic of one object is assigned to another; from Greek *metaphora* (*μεταφορα*), a transfer, between two different words, yet of a similar “metaphorical” meaning. Example:

“Matter, by convenience of metaphor only, is regarded as feminine because it is receptive of the rays of the sun which fecundate it, and so produce all that grows on its surface, *i.e.*, on this, the lowest plane. On the other primordial matter [Pradhāna] should be regarded as substance, and by no means can be spoken of as having sex.”¹

Allegory is not an enigma.

It is a continued metaphor, *i.e.*, the figurative treatment of an unmentioned subject under the guise of another, resembling it in its properties and circumstances; from Greek *allēgoria* (*αλληγορια*), a figurative sentence or discourse, in which the principal subject is described by another subject.

“Allegory is at the root of the Occult law, which prescribes silence upon the knowledge of certain secret and invisible things perceptible only to the spiritual mind . . . and which cannot be expressed by . . . uttered speech.”²

Parable is a metaphorical narrative.

In which a fictitious story imparts a perennial truth for moral instruction — from Greek *parabolē* (*παραβολη*), a comparison.

Yet even a parable is a spoken symbol: a fiction or a fable, as some think; an allegorical representation, we say, of life-realities, events, and facts. And, as a moral was ever drawn from a parable, that moral being an actual truth and fact in human life, so an historical, real event was deduced . . . from certain emblems and symbols recorded in the ancient archives of the temples. The religious and esoteric history of every nation was embedded in symbols; it was never expressed in so many words. All the thoughts and emotions, all the learning and knowledge, revealed and acquired, of the early races, found their pictorial expression in allegory and parable. Why? Because the spoken word has a potency unknown to, unsuspected and disbelieved in, by the modern “sages.”³

¹ *Blavatsky Collected Writings*, (TRANSACTIONS OF THE BLAVATSKY LODGE – V) X pp. 352-53.

² *Secret Doctrine*, I, p. 55.

³ [*ibid.*, I p. 308.]

Fable is word of a two-fold signification.

From Latin *fabula*, *i.e.*, story with a lesson, literally “that which is told,” — intended to instruct or amuse:

1. Fable proper is a fictitious narrative, *e.g.*, the incidents in an epic, *i.e.*, a long narrative poem celebrating heroic deeds and events pertaining to a prehistoric culture or nation.
2. A myth, *i.e.*, a literary composition conveying a universal truth. The myth differs from parable in the sense that while the latter never transcends the bound of the probable, the former always and by necessity does.

Fable, in the restricted sense of “animal story,” comes from the popularity of Aesop’s fables, “short, comic tale making a moral point about human nature, usually through animal characters behaving in human ways.”

However, not every fable is merely poetic, or didactic; some are faded memories of long-forgotten historical facts.¹



¹ [Cf. Commentary from *Isis Unveiled*, II, 426-27; on the Noachian Deluge. Also consult “Proposition 1 - Noah is Logos, in our Secret Doctrine’s First Proposition Series. — ED. PHIL.]

Myths are long-forgotten truths, respected by hoary antiquity, yet rejected by modern scepticism.

Myth is equivalent to the word tradition, as defined by the Ancients.¹

Legends, myths, allegories, symbols, if they but belong to the Hindu, Chaldean, or Egyptian tradition, are thrown into the same heap of fiction. Hardly are they honoured with a superficial search into their possible relations to astronomy or sexual emblems. The same myths — when and because mutilated — are accepted as Sacred Scriptures, more — the Word of God! Is this impartial history? Is this justice to either the past, the present, or the future?²

All the so-called myths of the Hindu, Grecian, Chaldean, and Jewish Pantheons are found to be built on fact and truth.³

Judaism, earlier and later Gnosticism, Christianity, and even Christian Masonry, have all been erected upon identical cosmical myths, symbols, and allegories, whose full comprehension is possible only to those who have inherited the key from their inventors.⁴

Throughout the literature of ancient classics, Greek mythos was no fairy tale. It was the Latin equivalent of fable, i.e., that which was told, as having happened in prehistoric times.

From Blavatsky Collected Writings, (THE DENIALS AND THE MISTAKES OF THE NINETEENTH CENTURY) XIII, pp. 226-77.

The evidence of Herodotus, called, sarcastically no doubt, “the father of history,” since in every question upon which modern thought disagrees with him, his testimony goes for nought; the sober and earnest assurances in the philosophical narratives of Plato and Thucydides, Polybius and Plutarch, and even certain statements of Aristotle himself; all these are invariably laid aside whenever they are involved with what modern criticism is pleased to regard as a *myth*. It is some time since Strauss proclaimed that “the presence of a supernatural element or miracle in a narrative is *an infallible sign of the presence in it of a myth*,” and such is the criterion adopted tacitly by every modern critic. But what is a myth (*μῦθος*) to begin with? Are we not told distinctly by the ancient classics that *mythos* is equivalent to the word *tradition*? Was not its Latin equivalent the term *fabula*, a fable, a synonym with the Romans of that which was *told*, as having happened in prehistoric time, and not necessarily an invention? Yet with such autocrats of criticism and despotic rulers as M. Renan in France, and most of the English and German Orientalists, there may be no end of

¹ [Among western nations, Homer’ Odyssey is the pre-eminent “myth.” Students to consult and reflect:
“Taylor on the Wanderings of Ulysses,” in our Hellenic and Hellenistic Papers Series.
“Ulysses was an Atlantean hero and sage,” in our Atlantean Realities Series. — ED. PHIL.]

² [*Isis Unveiled*, II p. 431.]

³ [*ibid.*, II p. 236.]

⁴ [*ibid.*, II p. 405.]

surprises in store for us in the century to come — historical, geographical, ethnological and philological surprises — travesties in philosophy having become so common of late that we can be startled by nothing in that direction. We have already been told by one learned speculator that Homer was “simply a mythical personification of the Épopée,”¹ by another that Hippocrates, son of Asklēpios, “*could only be a chimera*,” that the Asklēpiadai — their seven hundred years of duration, notwithstanding — “might after all prove simply a *fiction*”; that the city of Troy — Dr. Schliemann notwithstanding — “existed *only* on the maps,” *etc.*, *etc.* Why should we not be invited after this to regard every hitherto historical character in days of old as a myth? Were not Alexander the Great needed by philology as a sledge-hammer to break the heads of Brāhmanical chronological pretensions, he would have become long ago simply a symbol for annexation, or a genius of Conquest, as de Mirville neatly put it.



The work of propagating divine truths in parables was left to the disciples of the high Initiates.

It was their duty to follow the keynote of the Secret Teaching without revealing its mysteries.

From *Blavatsky Collected Writings*, (THE SECRECY OF INITIATES) XIV pp. 33-47. Full text under the title “Why the Secrecy of the Initiates,” in our Buddhas and Initiates Series.

The false rendering of a number of parables and sayings of Jesus is not to be wondered at in the least. From Orpheus — the first initiated Adept of whom history catches a glimpse in the mists of the pre-Christian era — down through Pythagoras, Confucius, Buddha, Jesus, Apollonius of Tyana, to Ammonius Saccas, no Teacher or Initiate has ever committed anything to writing for public use. Each and all of them have invariably recommended silence and secrecy on certain facts and deeds; from Confucius, who refused to explain publicly and satisfactorily what he meant by his “Great Extreme,” or to give the key to the divination by “straws,” down to Jesus, who charged his disciples to tell no man that he was Christ² (*Chrēstos*), the “man of sorrows” and trials, before his supreme and last Initiation, or that he had produced a “miracle” of resurrection.³ The Apostles had to preserve silence, so that the left hand should not know what the right hand did; in plainer words, that the dangerous proficients in the Left Hand Science — the terrible enemies of the Right Hand Adepts, especially before their supreme Initiation — should not profit by the publicity so as to harm both the healer and the patient. And if the above is maintained to be simply an assumption, then what may be the meaning of these awful words? →

¹ [epic poetry]

² *Matthew* xvi, 20; KJV.

³ *Mark* v, 43; KJV.

And he said unto them,
Unto you it is given to know the mystery of the kingdom of God:
but unto them that are without, all these things are done in parables:

That seeing they may see, and not perceive;
and hearing they may hear, and not understand;
lest at any time they should be converted,
and their sins should be forgiven them.¹

Unless interpreted in the sense of the law of silence and Karma, the utter selfishness and uncharitable spirit of this remark are but too evident. These words are directly connected with the terrible dogma of predestination. Will the good and intelligent Christian cast such a slur of cruel selfishness on his Saviour?²

The work of propagating such truths in parables was left to the disciples of the high Initiates. It was their duty to follow the keynote of the Secret Teaching without revealing its mysteries. This is shown in the histories of all the great Adepts. Pythagoras divided his classes into hearers of exoteric, and esoteric lectures. The Magians received their instructions and were initiated in the far hidden caves of Bactria. When Josephus declares that Abraham taught Mathematics he meant by it “Magic,” for in the Pythagorean code Mathematics mean Esoteric Science, or Gnosis.

Professor Wilder remarks:

The Essenes of Judæa and Carmel made similar distinctions, dividing their adherents into neophytes, brethren, and the perfect . . . Ammonius obligated his disciples by oath not to divulge his higher doctrines, except to those who had been thoroughly instructed and exercised [prepared for initiation].³

One of the most powerful reasons for the necessity of strict secrecy is given by Jesus Himself, if one may credit Matthew. For there the Master is made to say plainly:

Give not that which is holy unto the dogs, neither cast ye your pearls before swine, lest they trample them under their feet, and turn again and rend you.⁴

Profoundly true and wise words. Many are those in our own age, and even among us, who have been forcibly reminded of them — often when too late.¹

¹ Mark v, 11, 12; KJV.

² Is it not evident that the words: “lest at any time they should be converted (or: “lest haply they should turn again” — as in the revised version) and their sins be forgiven them” — do not at all mean to imply that Jesus feared that through repentance any outsider, or “them that are without,” should escape damnation, as the literal dead-letter sense plainly shows — but quite a different thing? Namely, lest any of the profane should by understanding his preaching, undisguised by parable, get hold of some of the secret teachings and mysteries of Initiation — and even of Occult powers. “Be converted” is, in other words, to obtain a knowledge belonging exclusively to the Initiated; “and their sins be forgiven them,” that is, their sins would fall upon the illegal revealer, on those who had helped the unworthy to reap there where they have never laboured to sow, and had given them, thereby, the means of escaping on this earth their deserved Karma, which must thus react on the revealer, who, instead of good, did harm and failed.

³ *New Platonism and Alchemy*, 1869, pp. 7, 9; [full text in under the title “Wilder on New Platonism and Alchemy,” in our Theosophy and Theosophists Series. — ED. PHIL.]

⁴ *Matthew* vii, 6; KJV.



Aesop's "The Mouse and the Lion"²

¹ History is full of proofs of the same. Had not Anaxagoras enunciated the great truth taught in the Mysteries, viz., that the sun was surely larger than the Peloponnesus, he would not have been persecuted and nearly put to death by the fanatical mob. Had that other rabble, which was raised against Pythagoras, understood what the mysterious Sage of Crotona meant by giving out his remembrance of having been the "Son of Mercury" — God of the Secret Wisdom — he would not have been forced to fly for his life; nor would Socrates have been put to death, had he kept secret the revelations of his divine *daimōn*. He knew how little his century — save those initiated — would understand his meaning, had he given out all he knew of the moon. Thus he limited his statement to an allegory, which is now proven to have been more scientific than was hitherto believed. He maintained that the moon was inhabited and that the lunar beings lived in profound, vast and dark valleys, our satellite being airless and without any atmosphere outside such profound valleys; this, disregarding the revelation full of meaning for the few only, must be so of necessity, if there is any atmosphere on our bright Selene at all. The facts recorded in the secret annals of the Mysteries had to remain veiled under penalty of death.

² A Lion lay asleep in the forest, his great head resting on his paws. A timid little Mouse came upon him unexpectedly, and in her fright and haste to get away, ran across the Lion's nose. Roused from his nap, the Lion laid his huge paw angrily on the tiny creature to kill her.

"Spare me!" begged the poor Mouse. "Please let me go and some day I will surely repay you."

The Lion was much amused to think that a Mouse could ever help him. But he was generous and finally let the Mouse go.

Some days later, while stalking his prey in the forest, the Lion was caught in the toils of a hunter's net. Unable to free himself, he filled the forest with his angry roaring. The Mouse knew the voice and quickly found the Lion struggling in the net. Running to one of the great ropes that bound him, she gnawed it until it parted, and soon the Lion was free.

"You laughed when I said I would repay you," said the Mouse. "Now you see that even a Mouse can help a Lion."

Esoteric philosophy is the master-key to the Kingdom of Heaven.

**She is the Wisdom of Love, not the “love of wisdom,”
as the term philosophia is commonly interpreted.**

**To him who knows the Mysteries of the Elect, abundant light will
be given; but from him who is filled with selfish desires, what lit-
tle understanding he has will be taken away.**

Who hath ears to hear, let him hear.
And the disciples came, and said unto him,
Why speakest thou unto them in parables?
He answered and said unto them,
Because it is given unto you to know the mysteries of
the kingdom of heaven, but to them it is not given.
For whosoever hath, to him shall be given, and he shall have more
abundance: but whosoever hath not, from him shall be taken away even
that he hath.
Therefore speak I to them in parables: because they seeing see not;
and hearing they hear not, neither do they understand.
— *Matthew xiii, 11-13; KJV.*

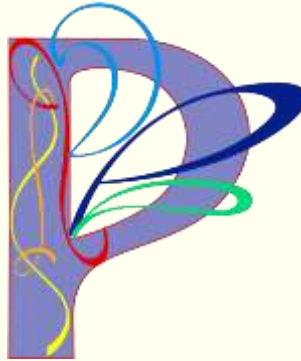
[From our Mystic Verse and Insights Series, “Blooms of Mystic Verse and Spiritual Insight.” — ED. PHIL.]

“This truth you will find symbolically or allegorically represented in all the principal mythologies and religious systems of the world. It is the old story of the ‘Fall of Man.’ As long as man remained in a state of purity — that is to say, as long as his will and imagination were one and identical with the will and the imagination of the spiritual creative power in nature — he knew the truth and was all-powerful; but when he began to think and to imagine in a way different from that universal power, he lost sight of the truth and could see only his own fancies. If man wants to see the truth again, he must give up his own way of reasoning and let Reason act in him. But you may as well ask a miser to give up the treasure, which he has collected and hoarded during a lifetime, as to ask a modern scientist or philosopher to give up his own crooked ways. I see in your heart a desire to establish a secret society; but let me warn you that if you attempt to accomplish this by appealing to those who are clever and cunning, vainglorious and proud of their own attainments, full of ambition and anxious to come into possession of occult, or magical powers for the purpose of gratifying their scientific curiosity, or to employ them for the fulfilment of some selfish desire, you will certainly fail; for it is written: →

Whosoever hath, to him shall be given and he shall have more in abundance, but whosoever hath not, from him shall be taken away even that he hath.”¹

“I know that quotation,” I answered, “but its meaning is not quite clear to me.”

“It means,” replied Theodorus,² “that to him who has the love of wisdom in his heart, abundant light will be given; but from him who is filled with selfish desires, what little understanding he has will be taken away.”³



¹ [Matthew xiii, 12; KJV.]

² [A “Great Adept and Rosicrucian” is an imaginary discourse with Dr. Hartmann.]

³ Franz Hartmann, *With the Adepts, an adventure among the Rosicrucians*, 2nd ed., London: William Rider & Son, 1910; ch. 6, “The Alchemical Laboratory.” [Full text in Mystic Verse and Insights Series. — ED. PHIL.]

Suggested reading for students.



From our Living the Life Series.

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- BLAVATSKY ON BUDDHISM
- BRAHMANISM IS THE ELDER SISTER OF BUDDHISM
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- MARRIAGE IS LICENSED VICE
- MEDICINE OF THE MIND

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- PHILOSOPHERS AND PHILOSOPHICULES
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- PLUTARCH ON HOW WE MAY SHOW OFF WITHOUT BEING ENVIED – TR. LANCASTER
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- PLUTARCH ON WHETHER VICE IS SUFFICIENT TO RENDER A MAN UNHAPPY
- PROCLUS ON THE GOOD, THE JUST, AND THE BEAUTIFUL
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- SEVEN OCCULT TAMIL PROVERBS
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- THE ENNOBLING POWER OF THORACIC EXPANSION
- THE FIRST STEP TOWARDS THE TEMPLE OF TRUTH
- THE GOD-IDEA EXPRESSED THEISTICALLY AND PHILOSOPHICALLY
- THE KINGDOM OF GOD IS WITHIN YOU BY TOLSTOY
- THE KREUTZER SONATA
- THE NELLORE YANADIS
- THE NILGIRI SANNYASIS
- THE NOBLE AIM OF EDUCATION IS TO AWAKEN THE DIVINITY WITHIN
- THE POWER TO HEAL
- THE PRAYER OF THE TRUE PHILOSOPHER IS HIS ADORATION
- THE SAYINGS OF LAO TZU - TR. GILES
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- THE STRUGGLE FOR EXISTENCE
- THEAGES ON VIRTUE

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- THEOSOPHICAL JEWELS - LIVE IN THE IDEAL
- THEOSOPHICAL JEWELS - THE RAINBOW OF HOPE
- THOU SHALT CROUCH AT MY FEET
- TRUTH DESCENDS LIKE DEW FROM HEAVEN
- WHAT SHALL WE DO FOR OUR FELLOW-MEN?

