Thursday

October 29

Drama, Symbols, Parables

The Bible has a rich variety of word pictures and metaphors. For example, the whole Old Testament sacrificial system of patriarchal altars, the Mosaic tabernacle, and the Temple in Jerusalem was a pictographic representation of Christ's atoning sacrifice on the cross and His heavenly priesthood *(Heb. 8:1-6)*.

In the prophecies of Daniel, the kingdoms and powers in the world were represented by the different parts of a great image *(Dan. 2:31-45)*, various animals and horns *(Daniel 7 and 8)*, and two kings *(Daniel 11)*. Similar representations

appear also in the book of Revelation, as in the case of the two beasts of chapter 13.

BEASTS ARE A POPULAR WAY TO REPRESENT EARTHLY KINGDOMS EVEN TODAY.

LION, EAGLE, BEAR, DRAGON

In His teachings, Jesus spoke of Himself, for instance, as the Bread of Life *(John 6:35, 41-58)*, the Light of the world *(John 8:12, John 9:5)*, and the True Vine *(John 15:1-8)*. And through the parable of the sower *(Matt. 13:1-9, 18-23)* and several other ones *(Matt. 13:24-52, etc.)*, Jesus illustrated the nature and growth of His kingdom.

THE MOST ENDURING SYMBOL FOR CHRIST IS A LAMB (John 1:29). THIS SYMBOL IS FOUND THROUGHOUT THE BOOK OF REVELATION AND IS FIRST INTRODUCED IN REVELATION 5:6. HERE CHRIST IS

PICTURED AS A SLAIN LAMB WHICH IS A DIRECT REFERENCE TO THE CROSS. THIS FIRST MENTION IN REVELATION SUGGESTS THAT EACH OF THE 26 MENTIONS THAT FOLLOW THIS FIRST ONE ARE DIRECTING THE READER TO CALVARYS CROSS AND THE GREAT PENAL SUBSTITUTIONARY ATONEMENT AND BY GOD HIMSELF FOR THE SIN OF THE WORLD. IN THIS WAY THE SYMBOLS OF REVELATION TELL THE STORY OF THE CROSS AND GODS GREAT LOVE FOR HUMANITY

Read Ezekiel 4:1-8. Why do you think God not only spoke verbally but also ILLUSTRATED dramatized some of His messages?

A vivid dramatization VISUAL OF GODS PROPHETIC MESSAGE appears in Ezekiel 4:1-8,

where God asked the prophet to make a miniature model of Jerusalem and to lay himself down, first on his left side for 390 days, representing the house of Israel, and then on his right side for 40 days, representing the house of Judah.

Another visual experience was Hosea's divinely ordained marriage to Gomer, a prostitute, representing Israel's spiritual unfaithfulness to God *(Hos. 1:2-9)*.

IN FACT THE HEBREW MEANING OF HOSEA IS "DELIVERER." AND THE ROOT WORD IS THE SAME ONE USED TO DESCRIBE GOD AS "SAVIOR" IN VERSES LIKE ISAIAH 45:21. THEREFORE THE BOOK OF HOSEA IS ANOTHER POWERFUL ILLUSTRATION OF GODS FAITHFULNESS IN CONTRAST WITH HIS PEOPLES UNFAITHFULNESS.

WITH THIS IN MIND WE CAN READ ABOUT THE FAITHFULNESS OF GOD IN TAKING UPON HIMSELF THE

CONSEQUENCES OF OUR FAILURES AS PROPHESIED IN ISAIAH 53, LIKE ISAIAH 53:6 WHICH SAYS -"ALL WE LIKE SHEEP HAVE GONE ASTRAY, WE HAVE TURNED EVERYONE TO HIS OWN WAY AND THE LORD HATH LAID ON HIM THE INIQUITY OF US ALL" IN THIS LIGHT VERSES LIKE HOSEA 6:1-3 TAKE ON NEW MEANING. READ AND EXPOUND -

The dramatic experiences of Ezekiel and Hosea seem quite shocking today. But that was the point: they were supposed to be shocking, not just to us but also to the people back then. At a time when the warnings of the prophets were openly rejected *(see 2 Chron. 36:15-21)*, the last act of divine mercy was to dramatically alert the people to their true condition in order to lead them to genuine repentance. Such a dramatic presentation certainly should have shown them how seriously they should have taken God's warning to them.

What kind of dramatization might someone do today to warn us about, say, being Laodicean?

(See Rev. 3:14-18.)

BATHTUB BEING FILLED WITH HOT WATER FOR A NICE HOT RELAXING BATH. BUT THE HOT WATER RUNS OUT AND THE BATHWATER GETS LUKEWARM BY THE TIME ITS FULL.

IF WE RUN OUT OF HOT WATER BEFORE THE TUB IS FULL STOP RUNNING THE WATER. GIVE IT A BREAK. LET THE WATER HEATER RECHARGE. GIVE TIME TO HEAT UP AGAIN BEFORE YOU START RUNNING MORE WATER.

NO LESSON SIX

SHELLEY - personal truth is not always reliable - we need a higher standard - Bible
JOHN D - God warns us in love that we might turn from our evil and be saved.
RISE - How do you feel when your words are ignored and even ridiculed - welcome to the world of the prophets.
JL- Overt rejection and covert rejection. The latter = Laodicea