

Bible Study Methods

Lesson #009, Part 2

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Dean Bible Ministries

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Why Study the History of Interpretation?

- 1. We can see the errors of others and the consequences of those errors.**
- 2. It helps us to see the importance of having a correct interpretation.**
- 3. We can learn what influences a misunderstanding of God's Word.**
- 4. It helps us see how intelligent students of the Bible have sought mystical meanings or multiple meanings of the text.**
- 5. Gives us insight into how others have tried to solve difficulties in the past.**

Allegorical Interpretation

- 1. Usually, but not always, denies or ignores the literal meaning of the text.**
- 2. Allegorical interpretation believes the real meaning or the spiritual meaning underlies the letter or the obvious meaning of the passage.**
- 3. Allegorical interpretation often attempts to reconcile apparent contradictions between the literal meaning and moral or spiritual principles.**

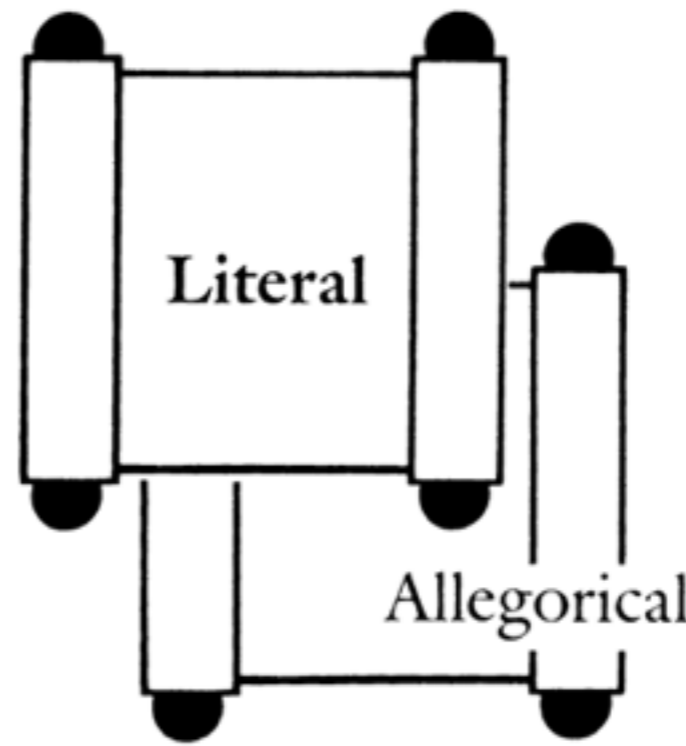
Homer & Hesiod



Greek
Philosophers

To avoid the
anthropomorphisms
and immoralities
of the Greek gods

Old Testament



Alexandrian
Jews
(Aristobulus,
Philo)

To avoid the
anthropomorphisms
of God, and to link
Judaism and Greek
philosophy

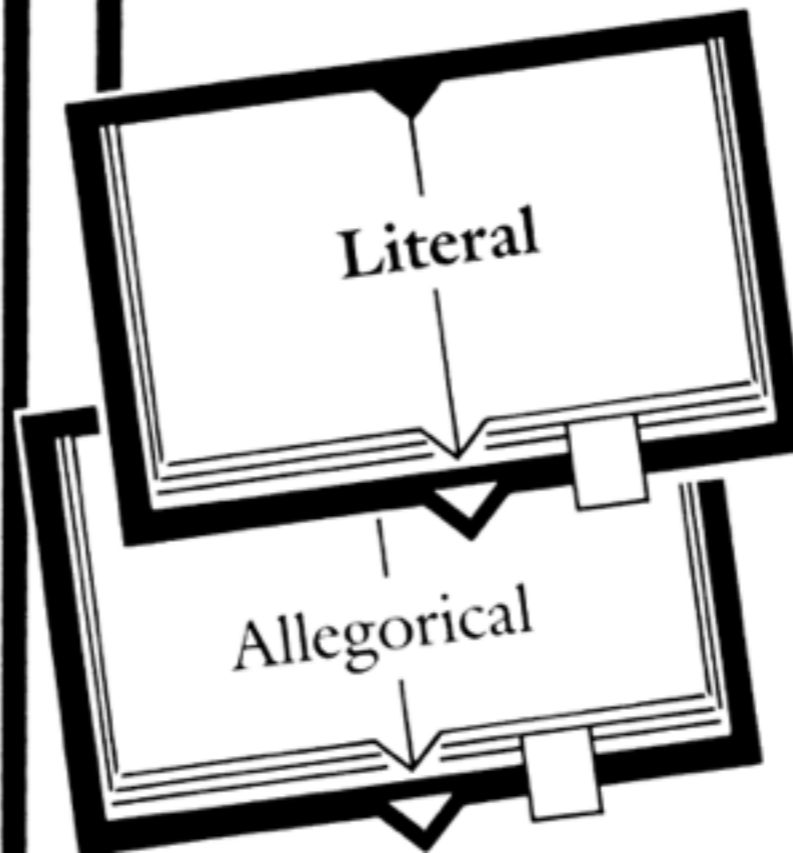
Bible



Apostolic
Fathers

To avoid the
anthropomorphisms
of God, and to
explain O.T. types

Bible



Alexandrian
Christians
(Pantaenus,
Clement,
Origen)

To avoid the difficul-
ties of Scripture, and
thus to uphold the
rationality of Chris-
tianity

“If Scripture says that Adam ‘hid himself from God,’ the expression dishonors God who sees all things—and therefore it must be allegory. If we are told that Jacob sends Joseph to look after his brethren when he had so many servants, or that Cain had a wife or built a city, or that Potiphar had a wife, or that Israel is an ‘inheritance of God’ or if Abraham be called ‘the father’ instead of grandfather of Jacob—those are ‘contradictions,’ and therefore the passages in which they occur must be allegorized.”

~F W Farrar