



1

WHAT ARE FABLES?

- *Mythos* – perhaps from the same as *myeō* (through the idea of tuition); a tale, i.e. fiction (“myth”): — fable. (Strong)
 - “A story, narrative, fable, fiction; The word is used of Gnostic errors and of Jewish and profane fables and genealogies ... [and] of fiction.” (Vine)
- Stories told with the goal of education in morality and spirituality.

2

REGARDING THE TALMUD

Talmud – compilation of rabbinical traditions and fables.
(cf. *Matthew 15:1-3*)

- “If the Bible is the cornerstone of Judaism, then the Talmud is the central pillar, soaring up from the foundations and supporting the entire spiritual and intellectual edifice. In many ways the Talmud is the most important book in Jewish culture, the backbone of creativity and of national life. No other work has had a comparable influence on the theory and practice of Jewish life, shaping spiritual content and serving as a guide to conduct.”
(Rabbi Steinsaltz, *The Essential Talmud*, page 3)

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- Stories told with the goal of education in morality and spirituality.
- Problem – “One of the most successful arts of the adversary of souls has been to mingle fable with truth; and when he cannot overthrow the truth by direct opposition, to neutralize it by mingling with it much that is false and frivolous.”
(Albert Barnes’ *Notes on the Bible*, 1 Timothy 1:4)

4

FABLES AND THE GOSPEL

- The truth often took a back seat to fables – *2 Timothy 4:4*
- Men turned from the truth to fables – *Titus 1:14*
- Fables were mistaken as a source of “godly edification” – *1 Timothy 1:4*

5

DIFFERENCE FROM FALSE DOCTRINE

- Timothy was to wage the good warfare against false teaching – *1 Timothy 1:18-20*
- This involved instructing brethren about specific false teaching – *1 Timothy 4:1-6; 1 John 4:1-6; Matthew 7:15-20*
- Regarding fables, Timothy was told to reject them – *1 Timothy 1:4; 4:7*
 - False doctrine takes a standard and twists it. Thus, the standard is used to refute the teaching.
 - A fable is fabricated from start to finish and is not taken from any standard. It is simply to be rejected.

6

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- “Cunningly devised fables” – *2 Peter 1:16*
 - The foundation of Peter’s teaching – eyewitness testimony and inspired scripture.
 - Charge – they’re telling fables! – which would invalidate anything they had to say because it is just a fabricated narrative.

7

AN UNPROFITABLE SUBSTITUTE

Where is godliness found?

- Some were seeking it in fables – *1 Timothy 1:3-4* – but it is not found there.
- Godliness is found in the “mystery of godliness” – *1 Timothy 3:16* – the gospel.

8

AN UNPROFITABLE SUBSTITUTE

Where is the power of God to salvation found?

- In the gospel – *Romans 1:16* – nothing else can save you.
- The foolishness of the message of the cross preached – *1 Corinthians 1:18-25*
 - Not faith in the wisdom of man, but faith in the power of God – *1 Corinthians 2:1-5*
 - The wisdom of God saves but it is not found in fables or with men, but in the revelation of the Spirit – *1 Corinthians 2:11-13*

9

AN UNPROFITABLE SUBSTITUTE

Do not be turned aside to fables!

(*2 Timothy 4:1-5*)

“For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine, but according to their own desires, because they have itching ears, they will heap up for themselves teachers; and they will turn their ears away from the truth, and be turned aside to fables.”

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PREACHING
FABLES



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