

*Scripture:*

The Story of Jonah (Jonah)  
Jesus' Parable of the Talents (Mt: 25)

*Interpretation:*

Last Sunday (January 24<sup>th</sup>, 2021), I heard our senior Minister in Winter Park, Florida (United Methodist Church), David Miller, say in essence, the following. (Also, on the way out the door, it was confirmed with him this past Sunday, January 31<sup>st</sup>, 2021).

He said, it makes no difference if Scripture uses parables. After all, the population then was illiterate. What better way to convey truth than with a story. This too is my belief. The *Bible* is full of metaphors. He then proceeded to read the story of *Jonah* (upon which he was preaching). For those who accepted the story literally, he prefaced his remarks saying further, God can do anything - even have someone live for three [3] days in a big fish's belly.

Parables and stories appeared in the Old Testament (*The Garden of Eden, Jonah and the Big Fish* [some called a whale], etc.) and the *New Testament*. Jesus also spoke in parables (e.g., Parable of the Talents, etc.). For its veracity, Jesus never intended readers should do so. It was merely a story to illustrate a point. More modern authors do the same (e.g., *Sound and the Fury*, by Wm. Faulkner, etc.). To illustrate their point, they frequently use fiction.

For me then, the metaphors were so fictitious, my belief was, anyone who took them literally was confused. It was destroying my Faith. Now, it makes no difference whether some take the parables literally or as a story to illustrate a point – as long as they arrive at the same point. It is far more important not to criticize another's faith. My criticism may harm one's faith (cause doubt, etc.). My intent now is, we should always look for opportunities to uplift one's faith.

*Prayer:*

Dear Lord, Father God in Heaven, help us always to uplift another's Faith and never to deprecate it - in any way. *Amen.*

-Submitted by Andy Marshall for the Thirtieth Reading of Lent.