

Fables and Parables

A **fable** is a brief story intended to teach a moral lesson. The main characters are usually animals, objects in nature (e.g. mountains, lakes, stones) or forces of nature (e.g. the sun, the wind, the rain), which are given human qualities.

The most famous fables in Western tradition are Aesop's fables from Ancient Greece. There are also many well-known fables from China, India and other Asian cultures.

A **parable** is a brief story that illustrates a moral principle through the use of metaphor. Unlike fables, the main characters of parables are human beings.

The most widely-read parables in Western tradition are the parables of Jesus in the New Testament of the Bible. There are also many parables from the Buddhist tradition and from ancient Chinese philosophers like Confucius, Mencius and Han Fei Zi.

Useful websites:

<http://sedition.com/a/355>

The Aesop for Children with pictures by Milo Winter, Rand McNally & Co

<http://tomsdomain.com/aesop/aesopmain.htm>

Aesop's fables available in different versions

<http://www.aesopfables.com/aesopsel.html>

A collection of Aesop's fables

<http://www.umass.edu/aesop/index.php>

Traditional versions and modern retellings of Aesop's fables illustrated by Fine Arts students at the University of Massachusetts, Amherst

<http://www.mainlesson.com/display.php?author=raju&book=fables&story=contents>

A collection of Indian fables selected and retold by P.V. Ramaswami Raju

<http://www.bcbsr.com/survey/jpbl.html>

The parables of Jesus Christ (bi-lingual English and Chinese)

<http://www.sinc.sunysb.edu/clubs/buddhism/story/index.html>

A collection of Buddhist parables

<http://www.chinapage.com/story/story.html>

A collection of parables from classical Chinese Literature (bi-lingual English and Chinese)