

John 16:25

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

These things have I spoken unto you in proverbs: but the time cometh, when I shall no more speak unto you in proverbs, but I shall shew you plainly of the Father.

Analysis

These things have I spoken unto you in proverbs (Ταῦτα ἐν παροιμίαις λελάληκα ὑμῖν/Tauta en paroimiais lelalēka hymin)—παροιμία (paroimia) means proverb, parable, figure of speech, enigmatic saying. Jesus's Upper Room discourse (John 13-17) contains profound truths presented symbolically: vine and branches (15:1-8), childbirth metaphor (16:21), "a little while" (16:16-19). The perfect tense λελάληκα (lelalēka, "have spoken") indicates completed action with ongoing effect—His teaching remains authoritative.

But the time cometh, when I shall no more speak unto you in proverbs (ἔρχεται ὥρα ὅτε οὐκέτι ἐν παροιμίαις λαλήσω ὑμῖν/erchetai hōra hote ouketi en paroimiais lalēsō hymin)—the present tense ᔔρχεται (erchetai, "is coming") indicates imminence. Post-resurrection appearances and especially Pentecost will bring clarity. Οὐκέτι (ouketi, "no more") promises an end to obscurity.

But I shall shew you plainly of the Father (ἀλλὰ παρρησίᾳ περὶ τοῦ Πατρὸς ἀπαγγελῶ ὑμῖν/alla parrēsia peri tou Patros apangelō hymin)—παρρησία (parrēsia) means boldness, frankness, plainness, openness. No more riddles—the Spirit will reveal the Father through Christ with clarity (John 14:9, 26; 16:13-15). The future ἀπαγγελῶ (apangelō, "I will declare") promises definite revelation.

Historical Context

Throughout His earthly ministry, Jesus taught in parables and figures that confused even His disciples (Mark 4:10-13, 34). He concealed truth from the proud while revealing it to the humble (Matthew 11:25). But after the resurrection, Jesus "opened their understanding, that they might understand the scriptures" (Luke 24:45). At Pentecost, the Spirit came to guide believers "into all truth" (John 16:13). The apostles' subsequent teaching—captured in epistles—shows remarkable clarity about Christ, the Father, salvation, and sanctification. What was enigmatic during Jesus's earthly ministry became luminous through the Spirit's illumination. Church history demonstrates progressive understanding of biblical truth as the Spirit guides each generation deeper into Christ's revelation.

Related Passages

John 15:13 — Greatest form of love

1 John 4:8 — God is love

Study Questions

1. How does the promise of plain revelation through the Spirit encourage you when Scripture seems obscure or difficult to understand?
2. What is the relationship between Jesus's parabolic teaching during His earthly ministry and the Spirit's post-Pentecost illumination?
3. In what ways do you experience the Spirit's work of showing you 'plainly of the Father' through Scripture and prayer?

Interlinear Text

Ταῦτα ἐν παροιμίαις λαλήσω ὑμῖν ἀλλὰ ἔρχεται
These things in proverbs I shall unto you but cometh
G5023 G1722 G3942 G2980 G5213 G235 G2064

ὤρα ὅτε οὐκ ἔτι ἐν παροιμίαις λαλήσω ὑμῖν
the time when no more in proverbs I shall unto you
G5610 G3753 G3756 G2089 G1722 G3942 G2980 G5213

ἀλλὰ παρόησίᾳ περὶ τοῦ πατρὸς ἀναγγελῶ ὑμῖν
but plainly of the Father I shall shew unto you
G235 G3954 G3588 G4012 G3962 G312 G5213

Additional Cross-References

John 16:12 (Parallel theme): I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now.

Mark 4:13 (Parallel theme): And he said unto them, Know ye not this parable? and how then will ye know all parables?

John 10:6 (Parallel theme): This parable spake Jesus unto them: but they understood not what things they were which he spake unto them.

Psalms 78:2 (Parallel theme): I will open my mouth in a parable: I will utter dark sayings of old:

Psalms 49:4 (Parallel theme): I will incline mine ear to a parable: I will open my dark saying upon the harp.