

# 100 Biblical Allusion Examples

1. **Allusion:** "My brother's keeper" - **Reference:** Genesis 4:9

After Cain killed Abel, God asked him where Abel was. Cain replied, "Am I my brother's keeper?" This allusion denotes responsibility for another's wellbeing.

- **Allusion:** "A land flowing with milk and honey" - **Reference:** Exodus 3:8

God's description of the promised land to the Israelites. This phrase is now used to describe a place of abundance.

- **Allusion:** "The writing on the wall" - **Reference:** Daniel 5

During Belshazzar's feast, mysterious writing appeared on the wall, signaling his kingdom's end. Today, the phrase signifies an impending doom or misfortune.

- **Allusion:** "Cast the first stone" - **Reference:** John 8:7

Jesus' response to those accusing a woman of adultery, suggesting that only a sinless person could condemn her. The allusion is often used to highlight hypocrisy.

- **Allusion:** "Wash one's hands of the matter" - **Reference:** Matthew 27:24

Pontius Pilate washed his hands to show he wasn't responsible for Jesus' execution. This expression now means to refuse responsibility.

- **Allusion:** "The salt of the earth" - **Reference:** Matthew 5:13

Jesus' reference to his followers. Today, it describes a person who is genuine, humble, and of great worth.

- **Allusion:** "A thorn in the flesh" - **Reference:** 2 Corinthians 12:7

Paul's description of his sufferings. This phrase is used today to signify a persistent annoyance or difficulty.

- **Allusion:** "To turn the other cheek" - **Reference:** Matthew 5:38-39

Jesus' teaching on non-retaliation. Now, it means to respond to aggression without hostility.

- **Allusion:** "The blind leading the blind" - **Reference:** Matthew 15:14

Used by Jesus to describe the Pharisees. Today, it describes a situation where an ignorant person is guiding another in the same situation.

- **Allusion:** "Go the extra mile" - **Reference:** Matthew 5:41

Originated from Jesus' Sermon on the Mount. Now, it means to make more effort than is required.

- **Allusion:** "An eye for an eye" - **Reference:** Exodus 21:24

This old testament principle indicated a form of retributive justice. Today, it's used to denote revenge or payback.

- **Allusion:** "Feet of clay" - **Reference:** Daniel 2:31-45

King Nebuchadnezzar's dream of a statue with feet made of iron and clay symbolized weak foundations. Now, it's used to describe a fundamental flaw or weakness in someone otherwise revered.

- **Allusion:** "Forbidden fruit" - **Reference:** Genesis 2:16-17

Refers to the fruit from the Tree of Knowledge which Adam and Eve were forbidden to eat. Today, it denotes something tempting but off-limits.

- **Allusion:** "Good Samaritan" - **Reference:** Luke 10:25-37

A parable of a Samaritan man helping a stranger in need. The term is now used for someone who selflessly helps another.

- **Allusion:** "Pearls before swine" - **Reference:** Matthew 7:6

Jesus cautioned about giving what is sacred to those who wouldn't appreciate it. It's used today to describe offering something valuable to those who don't understand its worth.

- **Allusion:** "Prodigal son" - **Reference:** Luke 15:11-32

A parable about a son who wastes his inheritance but later repents and is welcomed back by his father. It's used to describe someone who departs, squanders, and then returns in a state of remorse.

- **Allusion:** "The mark of Cain" - **Reference:** Genesis 4:15

After Cain killed Abel, God marked him to protect him from vengeance. Today, it refers to a sign of a wrongdoer.

- **Allusion:** "Burning bush" - **Reference:** Exodus 3:1-4:17

Moses encounters a bush that burns without being consumed, from which God speaks to him. This allusion represents a medium through which a significant message is delivered.

- **Allusion:** "Manna from heaven" - **Reference:** Exodus 16:1-36

Describes the food God provided for the Israelites in the desert. Today, it signifies an unexpected benefit or assistance.

- **Allusion:** "Parting of the seas" - **Reference:** Exodus 14:21-28

Moses, by God's command, parts the Red Sea to allow the Israelites to escape. It represents a miraculous escape or unexpected intervention.

- **Allusion:** "Wash one's hands of" - **Reference:** Matthew 27:24

Pontius Pilate washed his hands to show that he was not responsible for the execution of Jesus. This allusion now denotes a desire to refuse responsibility.

- **Allusion:** "Render unto Caesar" - **Reference:** Matthew 22:21

Jesus's reply when asked about paying taxes, meaning to respect the state's authority. Today, it is used to talk about the separation of church and state, or maintaining the respective responsibilities.

- **Allusion:** "Cast the first stone" - **Reference:** John 8:7

In the story, Jesus challenged those without sin to cast the first stone at a woman caught in adultery. It's used today to highlight hypocrisy or to say that no one is without fault.

- **Allusion:** "Wolves in sheep's clothing" - **Reference:** Matthew 7:15

Jesus warned against false prophets who might appear harmless but are not. This phrase is used to describe someone who appears friendly or harmless but is truly malicious.

- **Allusion:** "The salt of the earth" - **Reference:** Matthew 5:13

Jesus referred to his disciples this way, indicating that they were valued for their moral influence on the world. Now, it's used to describe someone who's very good-hearted or pure.

- **Allusion:** "A house divided" - **Reference:** Mark 3:25

Jesus used this phrase when talking about internal conflict leading to failure. It's now often cited in political or societal contexts to discuss the dangers of infighting.

- **Allusion:** "Twinkling of an eye" - **Reference:** 1 Corinthians 15:52

Refers to a very short time, in which the dead will be resurrected and the living transformed at Christ's second coming. Today, it's used to refer to a very brief moment.

- **Allusion:** "A thorn in the flesh" - **Reference:** 2 Corinthians 12:7

Paul speaks of an ailment he had, which he described this way. It's now used to describe a continuous source of annoyance or trouble.

- **Allusion:** "The apple of my eye" - **Reference:** Psalm 17:8

David asks God to keep him as the apple of His eye. This phrase is now used to describe someone cherished above all others.

- **Allusion:** "Scapegoat" - **Reference:** Leviticus 16:10

Refers to a ritual where a goat was sent into the wilderness, carrying the community's sins. Today, it's used to refer to someone who's unfairly blamed for the wrongs of others.

- **Allusion:** "Prodigal son" - **Reference:** Luke 15:11-32

This is the parable of a son who wastes his inheritance but is celebrated upon his return. It's commonly used to describe someone who departs from their usual behavior but eventually returns to it.

- **Allusion:** "The mark of Cain" - **Reference:** Genesis 4:15

After Cain killed Abel, God gave him a mark to protect him from being killed. This is now used to refer to a sign of someone's guilt.

- **Allusion:** "Armageddon" - **Reference:** Revelation 16:16

Refers to the location of the final cosmic battle of good vs. evil. Today, it's a term for catastrophic events or ultimate conflicts.

- **Allusion:** "Bread and wine" - **Reference:** Matthew 26:26-29

Represents the body and blood of Christ during the Last Supper. These elements are now universally associated with Christian communion services.

- **Allusion:** "Doubting Thomas" - **Reference:** John 20:24-29

Thomas, one of Jesus's disciples, doubted Jesus's resurrection until he saw him. Now, the term refers to someone who needs to see something to believe it.

- **Allusion:** "Eye of the needle" - **Reference:** Matthew 19:24

Jesus stated that it's easier for a camel to go through an eye of a needle than for a rich person to enter the kingdom of God. This allusion is often used to denote a very difficult task.

- **Allusion:** "Fatted calf" - **Reference:** Luke 15:23

In the Prodigal Son parable, the father orders the best calf to be killed in celebration of his son's return. It symbolizes a grand celebration or treat.

- **Allusion:** "Forbidden fruit" - **Reference:** Genesis 3:2-3

The fruit Eve was forbidden to eat. This allusion now refers to something desirable but off-limits.

- **Allusion:** "Goliath challenge" - **Reference:** 1 Samuel 17

Goliath, a giant, challenged the Israelites, and David defeated him. This is now used to describe a formidable challenge or task.

- **Allusion:** "Good Samaritan" - **Reference:** Luke 10:25-37

A parable where a Samaritan man helps an injured man, showing kindness. This term is now used to describe someone who helps others, especially strangers.

- **Allusion:** "He who lives by the sword, dies by the sword." - **Reference:** Matthew 26:52

Jesus's admonition to Peter when he struck a servant. It's now used to mean that those who use violence will eventually fall victim to it.

- **Allusion:** "Job's comforters" - **Reference:** Book of Job

Job's friends who, instead of comforting him, criticize him. The term is now used to describe someone who aggravates distress under the guise of offering aid.

- **Allusion:** "Jonah and the whale" - **Reference:** Book of Jonah

Jonah's story of being swallowed by a large fish or whale. It's commonly cited when talking about facing unavoidable consequences or situations.

- **Allusion:** "Judas kiss" - **Reference:** Luke 22:48

Judas Iscariot betrayed Jesus with a kiss. This allusion refers to treachery hidden behind a show of affection.

- **Allusion:** "King Solomon's wisdom" - **Reference:** 1 Kings 3:16-28

Solomon's clever judgment between two women claiming to be the mother of a baby. It's now used to denote great wisdom or fair judgment.

- **Allusion:** "Lamb to the slaughter" - **Reference:** Isaiah 53:7

Refers to a person who goes innocently and unconsciously into a dangerous situation.

- **Allusion:** "Man cannot live by bread alone" - **Reference:** Deuteronomy 8:3, Matthew 4:4

Suggests that people have spiritual needs as well as physical ones.

- **Allusion:** "Moses and the Ten Commandments" - **Reference:** Exodus 20:1-17

Moses receiving the commandments from God on Mount Sinai. This is often alluded to when discussing rules or foundational principles.

- **Allusion:** "Noah and the Ark" - **Reference:** Genesis 6-9



Noah's story of building an ark to save his family and animals from the flood. This allusion might refer to preparing for a disaster or salvation during dire times.

- **Allusion:** "Philistine" - **Reference:** Book of Judges and 1 Samuel

Originally, Philistines were arch-enemies of Israel. In modern times, it denotes someone indifferent or hostile to arts and culture.

- **Allusion:** "Prodigal son" - **Reference:** Luke 15:11-32

Refers to a story Jesus told about a son who wasted his inheritance, then returned home, repentant. The term now generally refers to someone who strays from the right path but eventually returns.

- **Allusion:** "Reaping the whirlwind" - **Reference:** Hosea 8:7

A warning about the consequences of one's actions, implying that the results might be more than one can handle.

- **Allusion:** "Salting the earth" - **Reference:** Judges 9:45

It denotes a deliberate action to ensure that something is completely destroyed or rendered useless.

- **Allusion:** "Samson and Delilah" - **Reference:** Judges 16

Refers to a powerful man's vulnerability through a woman's deception.

- **Allusion:** "Scapegoat" - **Reference:** Leviticus 16:8-10

A ritual where a goat was sent into the wilderness after the Jewish chief priest had symbolically laid the sins of the people upon it. Today, it's used to mean someone who is blamed or punished for the errors or sins of others.

- **Allusion:** "Seventh heaven" - **Reference:** Various religious traditions

Refers to the highest state of happiness or spiritual bliss.

- **Allusion:** "Thirty pieces of silver" - **Reference:** Matthew 26:14-15

The price for which Judas betrayed Jesus. This allusion often refers to payment received for an act of treachery.

- **Allusion:** "Tower of Babel" - **Reference:** Genesis 11:1-9

Refers to a tower built by humanity to reach the heavens, which God thwarted by introducing different languages. Today, it's used to describe any ambitious project that goes awry due to miscommunication or hubris.

- **Allusion:** "Walking on water" - **Reference:** Matthew 14:25, Mark 6:48, John 6:19

Refers to Jesus' miraculous act. It's used in contemporary terms to describe an impossible or nearly impossible task.

- **Allusion:** "Wash your hands of the matter" - **Reference:** Matthew 27:24

Refers to Pontius Pilate symbolically washing his hands to claim his innocence in the crucifixion of Jesus. Now, it means to refuse to accept responsibility for a problem or matter.

- **Allusion:** "Burning bush" - **Reference:** Exodus 3:1-4

God appears to Moses in a bush that's on fire but isn't consumed. Today, it can symbolize a guiding light or revelation.

- **Allusion:** "Daniel in the lion's den" - **Reference:** Daniel 6

Refers to an innocent person being placed in a dangerous situation but emerging unharmed due to their faith.

- **Allusion:** "Eye for an eye" - **Reference:** Exodus 21:24

Represents a law of retaliation, where the punishment corresponds in degree and kind to the injury.

- **Allusion:** "Fatted calf" - **Reference:** Luke 15:23

From the parable of the prodigal son, the father asks for the fatted calf to be killed to celebrate his son's return. It's used to describe a lavish or excessive celebration.

- **Allusion:** "Golden calf" - **Reference:** Exodus 32

Symbolizes idolatry or false gods. Refers to the idol made by the Israelites during Moses' absence.

- **Allusion:** "Good Samaritan" - **Reference:** Luke 10:25-37

Someone who selflessly helps another, especially a stranger.

- **Allusion:** "Job's patience" - **Reference:** The Book of Job

Job's story is one of maintaining faith despite extreme suffering. Refers to someone enduring hardships with patience.

- **Allusion:** "Judas' kiss" - **Reference:** Matthew 26:48-49

Symbolizes betrayal, especially by someone thought to be loyal.

- **Allusion:** "Lamb to the slaughter" - **Reference:** Isaiah 53:7, Jeremiah 11:19

Someone innocent and unaware of impending catastrophe.

- **Allusion:** "Manna from heaven" - **Reference:** Exodus 16

Refers to an unexpected benefit or assistance, especially when most needed.

- **Allusion:** "Mark of Cain" - **Reference:** Genesis 4:15

Symbolizes a sign of a wrongdoer. Refers to the mark God gave Cain after he killed Abel.

- **Allusion:** "Pearls before swine" - **Reference:** Matthew 7:6

Offering something valuable to those who can't appreciate it.

- **Allusion:** "Render unto Caesar" - **Reference:** Matthew 22:21

Indicates the idea of giving what's due where it's due.

- **Allusion:** "The root of David" - **Reference:** Revelation 22:16

Refers to Jesus Christ and his lineage from King David.

- **Allusion:** "Salt of the earth" - **Reference:** Matthew 5:13

Describes a person who is straightforward, trustworthy, and valuable in their essence.

- **Allusion:** "Serpent in the garden" - **Reference:** Genesis 3

The snake that tempted Eve; refers to a deceitful, treacherous person.

- **Allusion:** "Solomon's wisdom" - **Reference:** 1 Kings 3:16-28

Refers to immense wisdom, after King Solomon's clever decision regarding the two women claiming to be the mother of a baby.

- **Allusion:** "The writing on the wall" - **Reference:** Daniel 5

An indication that doom or misfortune is imminent.

- **Allusion:** "Turn the other cheek" - **Reference:** Matthew 5:39

Avoiding retaliation and instead choosing a path of non-violence and forgiveness.

- **Allusion:** "Voice in the wilderness" - **Reference:** Isaiah 40:3, Mark 1:3

A lone voice advocating change or a different path amidst widespread indifference or opposition.

- **Allusion:** "Wandering the desert for 40 years" - **Reference:** Exodus & Numbers

The Israelites' long journey; signifies a long and aimless journey or an ordeal.

- **Allusion:** "Wolves in sheep's clothing" - **Reference:** Matthew 7:15

Refers to individuals who appear innocent and just, but are, in reality, dangerous.

- **Allusion:** "The blind leading the blind" - **Reference:** Matthew 15:14

Leaders or guides who are as unknowledgeable or unaware as those they are leading.

- **Allusion:** "Rise from the ashes" - **Reference:** Isaiah 61:3

Phoenix-like regeneration, rebirth, and resilience.

- **Allusion:** "Eve's temptation" - **Reference:** Genesis 3

Refers to being led astray by desires or being tempted by something forbidden.

- **Allusion:** "Jezebel's defiance" - **Reference:** 1 Kings 16:31

Refers to a wicked, shameless, or audaciously immoral woman or act.

- **Allusion:** "Moses' Ten Commandments" - **Reference:** Exodus 20

Refers to a set of foundational rules or principles.

- **Allusion:** "Noah's Ark" - **Reference:** Genesis 6-9

Refers to a means of rescue from total destruction.

- **Allusion:** "Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse" - **Reference:** Revelation 6

Symbols of conquest, war, famine, and death.

- **Allusion:** "Balm in Gilead" - **Reference:** Jeremiah 8:22

Refers to a spiritual medicine or relief.

- **Allusion:** "Faith moving mountains" - **Reference:** Matthew 17:20

The power of faith to overcome challenges.

- **Allusion:** "Jacob's ladder" - **Reference:** Genesis 28:12

Refers to a connection between earth and heaven.

- **Allusion:** "Lazarus' resurrection" - **Reference:** John 11

Symbolizes a revitalization or rebirth.

- **Allusion:** "Narrow the path" - **Reference:** Matthew 7:14

The difficult route of righteousness compared to the wide path of destruction.

- **Allusion:** "Paul's conversion" - **Reference:** Acts 9

A dramatic and complete change in direction or belief.

- **Allusion:** "Philistine" - **Reference:** Book of Judges, 1 Samuel

A person indifferent or hostile to the arts and culture.

- **Allusion:** "Ruth and Naomi" - **Reference:** The Book of Ruth

Symbolizes unwavering loyalty and love.

- **Allusion:** "Seven seals" - **Reference:** Revelation 5-8

Refers to seven symbolic seals securing a book in the Book of Revelation. Its breaking leads to various apocalyptic events.

- **Allusion:** "Valley of the shadow of death" - **Reference:** Psalm 23:4

A particularly difficult or trying experience, often involving danger or despair.

- **Allusion:** "Zion" - **Reference:** Old Testament

Refers to a place of unity, love, and eternal protection.