

# Their Eyes Were Watching God

## Chapter Five

### Standard Focus: Allusions

In *Their Eyes Were Watching God*, Hurston uses several allusions in order to make her story seem more realistic and captivating. Allusion is a form of rhetoric in which a reference is made to mythology, the Bible or other well-known piece of literature, a famous or historical person or event, or something else with which the writer believes the reader is or should be familiar.

Directions: Hurston uses allusions throughout her novel. For each allusion from Chapter five, you have been given information from where the allusion comes. Compare the allusion in the text to its source, explaining how or why Hurston uses this particular allusion. An example has been done for you.

EX: "He kin be d king of Jerusalem fuh all Ah keer"

- a. **REFERENCE:** Refers to the holy Kingdom of Jerusalem, established in 1099 by the First Crusade. The king of Jerusalem held the highest power in the world and was considered the Protector of the Holy Sepulcher.
- b. **EXPLANATION:** After meeting Joe Starks, the men of Eatonville talk about him and his commanding presence. Hicks refers to the way Joe Starks just comes to the town and begins to take over. Hicks thinks Starks is just lying about building a post office.

1. "You can't welcome uh man and his wife 'thout you make comparison about Isaac and Rebecca at de well, else it don't show"

- a. **REFERENCE:** Isaac and Rebecca at the well: Genesis 24, Abraham sent his chief servant to the city of Nahor in order to search out a wife for his son, Isaac. The servant took his journey and upon arriving, he stood by the well of the city and prayed. Through an answer to his prayer, the chief servant met Isaac's future wife Rebecca at the well, who. In an act of great service offered water for Eliezer and his camels, and shelter and food with her family.

b. **EXPLANATION:**

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2. "We'll walk in de light, de beautiful light/Come where the dew drops of mercy shine bright/Shine all around us by day and by night/Jesus, the light of the world."

- a. **REFERENCE:** A popular hymn called "Jesus, the Light of the World." Written by George D. Elderkin in 1890; this is the chorus.

b. **EXPLANATION:**

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3. "The kind of promenading white that the houses of Bishop Whipple, W.B. Jackson, and the Vanderpool's wore."

- a. **REFERENCE:** Possibly the Reverend Henry Benjamin Whipple (1822-1867), the first Bishop of Minnesota. Famous for fighting for the rights of the Native Americans; Vanderpool could be an allusion to Cornelius Vanderbilt, who was awarded a medal by the U.S. for donating a ship to the Union forces.

