

Matthew Chapter 25

Verses 1-13: The parable of the 10 virgins explains the place of Israel's true converts of the Great Tribulation period in relation to the church. These "virgins" (Greek parthenos, 1:23) are the attendants at the wedding, not multiple brides. The one bride of Christ is the church, John the Baptist is the best man (John 3:29), friend of the Bridegroom, and the prepared virgins are the saved of the Great Tribulation.

The parable of the 10 virgins is given to underscore the importance of being ready for Christ's return in any event, even if He delays longer than expected. For when He does return, there will be no second chances for the unprepared.

While all share as the people of God, the church is accorded a unique relationship to the Master. The "lamps" seem to refer to their lives which are either prepared or unprepared. The "oil" refers to that which prepares them to give forth light and may properly be illustrative of the regeneration of the Holy Spirit.

The fact that they all slept "while the bridegroom tarried" implies a period of Jewish inactivity during the church age, while the bride is gathered.

The symbolism of the parable is: The groom is symbolic of Jesus. The arrival of the groom is the rapture. The 10 virgins are symbolic of the church. The wise were ready to meet him, the foolish were not. The oil is symbolic of the Holy Spirit. When a person is born again, they receive the Holy Spirit, thus will have oil in their lamp. This is a believer who understands that they can do nothing on his own but is totally dependent upon God for His righteousness and anointing and on God's word for truth, comfort and strength.

Jesus told the 5 foolish virgins that He knew them not. Many claim to know Christ but are not obedient and do not live their lives for Christ. They remain in the world living in the flesh, claiming to know Christ, but in reality, their knowledge was head knowledge only and not heart knowledge. Read (Matthew 7:21-23), for what Jesus told them.

Matthew 25:1 "Then shall the kingdom of heaven be likened unto ten virgins, which took their lamps, and went forth to meet the bridegroom."

We know that the Lord is coming back for a church that is a chaste virgin. This means they have no other Gods. So we see by this, that all these girls were part of the church, because all ten were virgins.

We know that the number ten has to do with the world. All ten of them were in the world. It appears that they had light because they "took their lamps." We also see that all ten were looking for Jesus ("went forth to meet the bridegroom").

Matthew 25:2 "And five of them were wise, and five [were] foolish."

The virgins who are wise; not in their own conceits; which is the case of a natural man and empty professors. But are such who are wise unto salvation. Who not only know the scheme of it, but are sensible of their need of it and apply to Christ for it. Who commit their souls to Him.

They trust in his righteousness for justification; in his blood for pardon; in his sacrifice for atonement; in his fullness for daily supplies; in his grace and strength to perform every duty; and expect eternal life in and from him. They know him, prize him, and value him as their Savior; rejoice in him, and give him all the glory. They hold fast without wavering.

And the five who were foolish; not in their own minds, in which they might be wise enough. Nor in the judgment of others; nor in natural knowledge; or with respect to the things of the world; nor in speculative notions of the Gospel.

Every unconverted man being a foolish man as all are who build their hopes of it on birth privileges; on a carnal descent from good men; on a religious education; on their own righteousness; or on the absolute mercy of God; and not on Christ, the one only, and sure foundation.

They are such who know not themselves; the impurity of their hearts, and nature; their impotency to that which is spiritually good; and the imperfection and insufficiency of their own righteousness. They know not Christ, and his salvation, neither the worth, nor want of him, and are altogether strangers to the power of godliness and spiritual experience.

They are also as foolish in the affair of a profession, which they take up without a work of the Spirit of God upon their souls, and without considering the cost and charge of it. And either in a little time wholly drop it, or, if they hold it, they foolishly depend upon it, or lead lives unsuitable to it.

Matthew 25:3 "They that [were] foolish took their lamps, and took no oil with them:"

Sincere Christians are the wise virgins, and hypocrites the foolish ones.

As Christians, we profess to attend upon Christ to honor him, also to be waiting for his coming. Those are the truly wise.

The foolish are so in the affairs of their souls. Many have a lamp of profession in their hands, but have not, in their hearts, sound knowledge and settled resolution, which are needed to carry them through the services and trials of the present state.

Their hearts are not stored with holy dispositions, by the new creating Spirit of God. Our light must shine before men in good works; but this is not likely to be done by them. Unless there is a fixed active love in the heart; of faith in Christ and love to God and our brethren.

Matthew 25:4 "But the wise took oil in their vessels with their lamps."

“But the wise took oil”: They were concerned for the true grace of God, being enlightened by the Spirit of God. They saw their need of the grace of God, and being directed by him where it was to be had, went to Christ for it. And having received it from him, through the power of the Holy Ghost, exercised it on him; and herein lay their wisdom: for a stock of this, in the heart.

Daily renewed by Christ, will supply the lamp of a profession well. This they had in their vessels, their oil vessels; by which are meant their hearts.

We see a division. Remember, all ten were believers in Christ. It seems the extra oil that they took was what created a separation of the two. The Holy Spirit is the oil. It seems that the wise Christians had the Holy Spirit, and the foolish did not.

We know in Acts, that the Disciples of Christ were instructed to go to the upper room and tarry until they be endued with power from on high. These same disciples, before they were baptized in the Holy Spirit, could not understand what the parables of Jesus meant. They were so weak, that one of them denied Jesus, and all but one of them ran when He was crucified.

You can easily see that even though they had walked with the Light (Jesus), they had no power until they received power on Pentecost (when they received the power of the Holy Spirit). I believe that this was the secret of the ten virgins. The other five had the Holy Spirit (oil), which gave them power.

This supply of oil then, representing that inward grace which distinguishes the wise, must denote more particularly, that "supply of the Spirit of Jesus Christ," which, as it is the source of the new spiritual life at the first, is the secret of its enduring character. Everything short of this may be possessed by "the foolish"; while it is the possession of this that makes "the wise" to be "ready" when the Bridegroom appears, and fit to "go in with Him to the marriage."

Just so in the parable of the Sower, the stony-ground hearers, "having no deepness of earth" and "no root in themselves" (Matt. 13:5; Mark 4:17), though they spring up and get even into ear, never ripen.

Matthew 25:5 "While the bridegroom tarried, they all slumbered and slept."

“The bridegroom tarried”: That is, while they waited for him. It was uncertain at what time he would come. He delayed longer than they expected.

“All slumbered and slept”: Waiting until near midnight, they fell asleep. This circumstance is not to be pressed to prove that all Christians will be asleep, or cold and careless, when the Lord Jesus shall come. "Many" may be, but many also, will be looking for his coming. This circumstance is designed simply to show more clearly the "duty of being ready" (Matthew 25:13).

Matthew 25:6 "And at midnight there was a cry made, Behold, the bridegroom cometh; go ye out to meet him."

This verse 5 doesn't speak too highly of the church. It shows a church that was asleep. All ten were asleep. I am sorry to say this is a true description of the Spirit filled, as well as the salvation purchased churches today. You can hardly even tell that some of them are churches.

They mostly are making people comfortable enough that they go to sleep (oblivious to the things going on). In the middle of this sleep of the church, the Lord comes back at "midnight". It is midnight in most churches today. There are very few salvations, healings, true deliverances, or raising the spiritually dead.

The churches as a whole, have a form of godliness, but deny the power, as we read (in 2 Timothy 3:5). There are a few exceptions, but not nearly enough. Some churches for years, preached the return of Jesus. Now they have despaired that He has not come, and they have gone to sleep.

They are saying, well if He is not coming, at least we can have a good time in the church. Now, their services are appealing to the flesh rather than building up the Spirit.

Matthew 25:7 "Then all those virgins arose, and trimmed their lamps."

"Then all these virgins arose": Not out of their graves; for the righteous and wicked will not rise together; the dead in Christ will rise first. And this first resurrection will not be till Christ is comes. This is the rapture.

1 Thess. 4:13-17 "Brothers, we do not want you to be ignorant about those who fall asleep, or to grieve like the rest of men, who have no hope." "We believe that Jesus died and rose again and so we believe that God will bring with Jesus those who have fallen asleep in him." "According to the Lord's own word, we tell you that we who are still alive, who are left till the coming of the Lord, will certainly not precede those who have fallen asleep." "For the Lord himself will come down from heaven, with a loud command, with the voice of the archangel and with the trumpet call of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first." "After that, we who are still alive and are left will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And so we will be with the Lord forever."

For the foolish virgins, it is sometimes midnight with them, and they are fallen fast asleep, but they shall be awaked, and arise; which arising here, as it respects them, signifies, that they were thoroughly awaked. That they quitted their former place and posture, were upon their feet, and ready to meet the bridegroom.

The foolish virgins also arose; which may intend some awakenings of conscience, and reformation of life, and a more diligent attendance on duties and ordinances; all which they did to make them fit for Christ, and to obtain salvation. But after all it appears, they were destitute of the oil of grace.

Matthew 25:8 "And the foolish said unto the wise, Give us of your oil; for our lamps are gone out."

“And the foolish said unto the wise, give us of your oil”: A graceless person may be able to see the grace of God in others, be convinced of it, and acknowledge it, as these foolish virgins did. They saw that the wise virgins had oil, that is, grace. This they knew by the bright burning of their lamps, by their readiness in trimming them, and that in a different way from them; by their sedate composure of mind, and confidence of soul, notwithstanding the midnight cry. And by their ardent and affectionate desire to meet the bridegroom.

A graceless person may also see a need of grace: these foolish virgins had no such sense. When they first took up their profession; they went a long time in a course of religion, without any thoughts of it. And the sense they had now was not of the need of it, in the vessels of their hearts, but in their lamps only. Nor was it from the Spirit of God, but through the surprise and terror of the midnight cry.

Had they asked advice from the wise virgins in this their distress, it would have been wisely done. Or had they desired their prayers from them; or that they would impart some spiritual instructions to them. But to ask their grace of them was exceeding foolish; when grace only comes from God.

He is the God of all grace, through Christ as mediator, in whom the fullness of it dwells, and by the Spirit, who is a Spirit of grace and of supplication; but is never to be had from men, nor from the angels in heaven.

These foolish virgins now saw, when too late, that their lamps availed them nothing; they were gone out, and had become useless and unprofitable, because they had not the oil of grace with them; or what they had was only counterfeit grace.

Or only an appearance of it; a mere form of godliness, without its power; or only gifts which are perishable, and now failed, ceased, and were vanishing away. Wherefore this is no instance of the loss of true grace, nor at all militates against the perseverance of the saints.

Here too is a sad situation describing of the falling away in the church. Their light (Jesus), had gone out of their lives. They had gotten caught up in the world and overlooked the more important thing of walking daily in their salvation.

When they saw the coming of Christ, they hurriedly wanted to get back in good standing with their Lord. They wanted to meet the bridegroom (Jesus), because of their association (membership), with the righteous. The five foolish wanted to hang on to the coat-tails of the five wise virgins, but it was too late.

Matthew 25:9 "But the wise answered, saying, [Not so]; lest there be not enough for us and you: but go ye rather to them that sell, and buy for yourselves."

“Lest there be not enough for us and you”: These had all been companions in the Christian course, and there was a time when they might have been helpful to each other; but that time is now past forever. None has a particle of grace to spare, not even to help the soul of the dearest relative!

The grace which every man receives is just enough to save his own soul; he has no merits to bequeath to the Church; no work of supererogation which can be placed to the account of another.

Psalm 49:7 "No man can redeem the life of another or give to God a ransom for him"

“Go ye ... and buy for yourselves”: The advice is the best possible. Everyone had to procure for himself the needful grace and piety.

Salvation is an individual thing. Even if we wanted to, we could not share our salvation or Holy Spirit with anyone else. We can tell them where to get it, and how to get it, but they must get it for themselves.

Matthew 25:10 "And while they went to buy, the bridegroom came; and they that were ready went in with him to the marriage: and the door was shut."

"While they went to buy, the bridegroom came": What a dismal thing it is, not to discover the emptiness of one's heart of all that is good, till it is too late to make any successful application for relief! God alone knows how many are thus deceived.

“And they that were ready”: They who were prepared, who had not only a burning lamp of an evangelical profession, but had oil in their vessels, the faith that works by love in their hearts, and their lives adorned with all the fruits of the Spirit.

“The door was shut”: Sinners on a death-bed too often meet with those deceitful merchants, who promise them salvation for a price which is of no value in the sight of God. Come unto me, says Jesus, and buy: there is no salvation but through his blood, no hope for the sinner but that which is founded upon his sacrifice and death.

The door was shut, dreadful and fatal words! No hope remains. Nothing but death can shut this door. But death may surprise us in our sins, and then despair is our only portion.

When the trumpet blows in the sky, those who have been expecting Him, and have lived their lives accordingly, will enter in with the Lord. There is just one call. If you do not make the call, the door will be shut.

What a sad thing. Many churches teach salvation, but do not teach their people that they must walk in that salvation every day. The only way that it is possible to walk in our salvation daily is through the power of the Holy Spirit of God.

Matthew 25:11 "Afterward came also the other virgins, saying, Lord, Lord, open to us."

“Afterwards came also the other virgins”: They were different from the wise, they were foolish ones; they were the unprepared ones. They were without and were now separated from the company of the wise virgins, with whom they had been so long. And what was worst of all, they were to be so forever.

These "also came" from buying oil. They came just as they went without any oil. They came to the door of the bridechamber, being desirous to be let in, and hoping to partake of the marriage feast, and join in the celebration. But alas, they came too late, they came after the bridegroom was come, after those who were ready had entered in, and after the door was shut.

Then they cried out saying, "Lord, Lord, open to us". They gave him that bare title, without having yielded their obedience, which was due unto him. They double the word, to show their importunity, earnestness, sense of danger, and confusion.

Their request to him is, that he would "open" the door unto them, and let them in. They were sensible that the door was shut, and that none but Christ could open it. But they did not at once conclude that their case was desperate, but were willing to hope the door might be opened, through their entreaties, and what they had to say for themselves; for though no pleas or arguments are here mentioned.

Yet, as elsewhere, such as these will be made by the foolish virgins. Namely, prophesying in the name of Christ, casting out devils in his name, doing many wonderful works in his name, hearing his word preached, and eating and drinking in his presence; but all in vain, and to no purpose.

Matthew 25:12 "But he answered and said, Verily I say unto you, I know you not."

"I know you not": You were not in the company of those who attended me to the marriage-feast, and are unknown to me. These virgins had only a profession of religion, but no real piety. This is saying, I do not know or acknowledge you as Christians. I do not approve of you, or delight in you, or admit that you are my friends.

The word "know" is often used in the sense of approving, loving, and acknowledging as real friends and followers (see Matthew 7:23; Psalm 1:6; 2 Timothy 2:19; 1 Thessalonians 5:12).

This is the same cry that we read about in a few lessons back, when they stood before Jesus and said, Lord, Lord, have I not cast out demons, healed the sick, (etc.). He said depart from me; I never knew you.

You see, it is very dangerous to have a form of religion without having a love relation to the Lord Jesus. He not only wants to be our Savior, but He wants to be our Lord, if we are His. Not some watered down religion of "dos and don'ts", but a true love relation with Him. He must be everything to us. We should be happy as any bride who is waiting for her Groom.

Matthew 25:13 "Watch therefore, for ye know neither the day nor the hour wherein the Son of man cometh."

"Watch therefore": To watch or to employ ourselves chiefly about the business of our salvation. Alas, how few of those who are called Christians are there who do watch, who slumber, who are asleep? How many seized with indifference? How many quite dead?

The "coming" of the Savior is certain. The precise time "when" he will come is not certain. As the virgins should all have watched and been ready, so should we. They who are Christians should be ever watchful; and they who are not should lose no time to be ready, for in such an hour as they think not the Son of man shall come.

"Watch" means to stay on your toes and don't be caught up with others whose relation with God has waned away. The Christians will be able to recognize the signs and know that His second coming is near, but no one knows the exact day or hour. We just need to live in anticipation of His coming.

Let's take one more quick look at all of this before we go on. All ten of these virgins are symbolic of people who proclaim to be Christians in this world. What is wrong? He (Jesus), is coming back for a church that is without spot or wrinkle. Where is this bride without spot or wrinkle to be found?

There is such irreverence in Church today that if Jesus was to visit, the first thing He would do, is clean house. He did that with the money changers and the dove sellers once before, because they were defaming the temple. Jesus explained to them then that the church is a House of Prayer. First of all, you cannot purchase the Spirit. No one can teach you the things of God.

The Holy things of God are an out-pouring from Him. Some minister can pray, lay hands on you, and you receive from God, the Holy Spirit. If you have to repeat what someone else has received from God, that is their gift from God, not yours. If you desire the Holy Spirit truly, He (God), will give it to you. It will be yours and yours alone.

On the day of Pentecost, each person was filled individually.

Acts 2:1-3 "And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place." "And suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting." "And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them."

There were different languages spoken that day, as we read (in Acts 2:6). "Now when this was noised abroad, the multitude came together, and were confounded, because that every man heard them speak in his own language."

You see, God knows every language in the world. Things of God do not have to be taught (just received). One more statement before we close this lesson. Search the Scriptures daily for yourself. Pray and ask the Holy Spirit to teach you. Get in a good "Bible believing" Bible study and make the study of your Bible part of your daily living.

God is easily found by those who diligently seek Him. Ask God to baptize you in the Holy Spirit and walk in the Light, every day until Jesus appears in the sky to call us to Him.

Matthew Chapter 25 Questions

1. In this parable, what is the kingdom of heaven likened to?
2. What does "virgin" indicate here?
3. What does the fact that there were "ten" indicate?
4. What do the "lamps" indicate?
5. Who is the bridegroom?
6. What kind of a church is the Lord coming for?
7. How many were wise?
8. Why were the others classified as foolish?
9. What does the "oil" symbolize?
10. Why were the disciples to wait in the upper room until they were baptized in the Holy Spirit?
11. What weaknesses did they have before they received the Holy Spirit?
12. What did these virgins do while the bridegroom tarried?
13. What time did He come?
14. Why does this not speak too highly of the church?
15. What description in 2 Timothy 3:5 describes most churches today?
16. What are churches doing today instead of building the spirit?
17. What did the virgins do as soon as they knew the bridegroom was here?
18. What did the foolish ask the wise for?
19. What did the wise tell them to do?
20. Explain salvation.
21. When the five foolish went to buy, who came?
22. Who went with Him?
23. What happened next?
24. What is the only way we can walk in our salvation every day?
25. What did the five foolish virgins cry out to Jesus?

26. Who else have we heard cry this?
27. What two things will the believer not know about His coming?
28. If Jesus were to visit our churches today in person, what would He do with most of them?
29. On the day of Pentecost, how were they filled?
30. Who did the cloven tongues of fire sit on?
31. How did every man from all these different countries hear them?
32. What are four things we should practice to be ready?