

PARABLE OF THE TEN VIRGINS

[BIBLE TEXT](#) : Matthew 25:1-13;

LESSON 224 Junior Course

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

[BIBLE TEXT in King James Version](#)

Matthew 25:1-13

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

² And five of them were wise, and five *were* foolish.

³ They that *were* foolish took their lamps, and took no oil with them:

⁴ But the wise took oil in their vessels with their lamps.

⁵ While the bridegroom tarried, they all slumbered and slept.

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

⁷ Then all those virgins arose, and trimmed their lamps.

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

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.

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.

¹¹ Afterward came also the other virgins, saying, Lord, Lord, open to us.

¹² But he answered and said, Verily I say unto you, I know you not.

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

[BIBLE REFERENCES:](#)

[NOTES:](#)

Jesus' Return

Jesus was telling about the time when He would return to earth. He promised, "If I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again" (John 14:3). He was telling about the conditions that would be in the world when He came back.- Jesus said that it would be like the days of Noah, when the flood came. Although the people had been warned, they were not ready. Jesus warned His disciples to watch and pray that they would be ready for His return. Jesus is coming again.

Our lesson starts with the word "Then," which refers to the time of which He was talking — His return to this earth. "When He comes back, it will be as it was in this parable that we are to study: some will be ready and some will be unprepared.

Uncertain Time

In the parable, Jesus is represented as the bridegroom. The people are looking for His appearing, but the exact time is not known. "Ye know not what hour your Lord doth come" (Matthew 24:42). No man knows the day, to say nothing about the hour. Jesus said, "But of that day and hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels of heaven, but my Father only" (Matthew 24:36). The uncertainty of the time of Jesus' coming should make us more watchful to be ready at all times.

Those who were waiting for the bridegroom were divided into two groups, the wise and ready, and the foolish and unprepared. Both groups were expecting the bridegroom. Both groups had lamps, and both slept before the bridegroom came.

A Light

These people might be compared to all who are following Christ. Jesus said, "I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life" (John 8:12). The Gospel of Jesus gives us light. We must obey and follow Him to have an experience of salvation. "If we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin" (1 John 1:7).

The Psalmist was speaking of the Bible when he said, "Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path" (Psalm 119:105). A lamp is intended to give light. When we have Jesus in our lives, we have that which gives us spiritual light.

Sleep

All these people slept while they were waiting. The bridegroom came during the night, at a time when people should be asleep. This sleep does not mean death, nor spiritual sleep and drowsiness. It was only natural for them to be asleep. As Jesus tarries and delays His coming, His people are expected to live in the usual manner. They have their homes and their work; but that they must always be prepared for Jesus' coming should come first in their hearts.

QUESTIONS

- 1 How do we know that Jesus is coming again?
- 2 When is *Jesus* coming?
- 3 What must one do to be prepared for *Jesus'* coming?
- 4 Why were some of the virgins foolish?
- 5 What made the others wise?
- 6 What happened when the bridegroom came?
- 7 Why did the foolish ones go to buy?
- 8 What will happen when Jesus comes, if we fail to be ready?

Occupying

In another parable, one about the pounds, we understand that the Lord has given each one his work (Mark 13:34); and He expects us to "occupy" until He comes (Luke 19:13). To occupy means to work, to prepare, to watch, and to listen for His coming. We live our lives each day as if that were the day of His coming. Our plans are not made far in the future. In speaking of the morrow we say, "If Jesus tarries." Solomon said, "I sleep, but my heart waketh" (Song of Solomon 5:2). So a Christian sleeps naturally but his heart is ever alert to the coming of Jesus.

Foolish and Wise

Some of the people expecting the bridegroom were wise and some were foolish. What made the difference? They all had lamps; but whether they were wise or foolish depended on the amount of oil they had. The wise took oil with their lamps but the foolish took lamps with little or no oil.

A Lamp

Perhaps you have seen a lamp that was used before we had electric lights. In the bottom of the lamp was a place for oil. At the top was a *glass* chimney with a wick which was soaked with oil and when lighted would burn with a bright glow if all things were kept in order. Every day the glass chimney was washed or it would soon become dark and smoky, which would hinder the light. Regularly the oil vessel was filled to keep a good supply lest it would be empty at a time when it was needed. As the wick burned away, it was trimmed so the charred part would not cause it to be a lopsided flame to blacken the chimney. Lamps needed daily care.

Shining for Jesus

Jesus told His disciples that they were the light of the world (Matthew 5:14) as well as He. As Jesus' disciples today, we have been likened to lights. We need to keep spiritual things in order just as physical things must be kept in good care for a lamp to burn.

Our lives must be kept clean each day, each hour, if we would give a clear, steady light. Any charred part or hindrance must be cut back if we would be a well-formed flame rather than one which *is* lopsided and giving off soot.

Oil

All these things could be in proper order, but without oil there would be no light. So it is in our spiritual life: we must have the Oil, the Spirit of God. When a person is saved he has a certain amount of the Spirit of God. As he prays, consecrating his life, and receives the experience of sanctification, that person has more of the Spirit of God.

There is yet a deeper spiritual experience one can receive, which gives God's Spirit in a greater measure — to be filled with the Spirit, baptized with the Holy Ghost. After Jesus ascended into Heaven, as the disciples prayed they were baptized with the Holy Ghost (Acts 1:5). They were filled with the Holy Ghost (Acts 2:4). This experience is also for us today. "For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call" (Acts 2:39). It gives us more of the Spirit of God, more of the Oil which keeps the light burning.

The Cry

In the darkness of the night, a cry was heard: "Behold, the bridegroom cometh; go ye out to meet him." The wise had extra

oil and their lamps were burning. The foolish had been careless. They did not have enough oil and their lamps were out.

The foolish knew the requirements. They knew what they lacked, and where and how to get it. It is for the individual; each one was to prepare for himself. In order to have a good measure of the Spirit of God and the other spiritual requirements, one must pray, consecrate his life, and obey God. If Jesus comes at midnight tonight, are you ready?

Too Late

While the foolish went to buy oil, the bridegroom came. There was no time to prepare at the last minute. Those who were ready went in to the marriage, and the door was shut. The wise were secure within, and the foolish were excluded.

When Christ shuts the door no one can open it (**Revelation 3:7** *And to the angel of the church in Philadelphia write; These things saith he that is holy, he that is true, he that hath the key of David, he that openeth, and no man shutteth; and shutteth, and no man openeth;*). Later the foolish tried to get in. They knocked and they called — but it was too late. How disappointed they must have been! Maybe they prayed and cried, but it did no good. They waited too long. "Seek ye the LORD while he may be found, call ye upon him while he is near" (Isaiah 55:6).

Watchfulness

We are advised to watch and to prepare. May this parable stir our hearts to make an inspection to see if we are ready, if we have Oil in our vessel with our lamp. Be sure the Oil remains there, and does not leak out. "Therefore we ought to give the more earnest heed to the things which we have heard, lest at any time we should let them slip" (Hebrews 2:1).

Garments

After one has received the deep spiritual experiences, he must keep praying and working. If we watch and do all that is necessary, we will not fear Jesus' coming, but will love His appearing. One must grow and become more like Christ, to be adorned with more spiritual beauty and goodness. These things are called Christian graces. **2 Peter 1:5-7** *And beside this, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue; and to virtue knowledge; And to knowledge temperance; and to temperance patience; and to patience godliness; And to godliness brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness charity.* tells us that these things should grow and multiply and become greater in our lives.

These spiritual graces are often likened to garments that one wears. For example, we read that "the fine linen is the righteousness of saints" (Revelation 19:8) and "strength and honour are her clothing" (Proverbs 31:25).

In **Psalm 45:13-14** *The king's daughter is all glorious within: her clothing is of wrought gold. She shall be brought unto the king in raiment of needlework: the virgins her companions that follow her shall be brought unto thee.* we read about the king's daughter who is clothed in rich apparel and "raiment of needlework." Every Christian is a child of the King of kings and is clothed in fine raiment spiritually. As each one increases in faith, in patience, in kindness, in love, there is more needlework on his spiritual garments. As he becomes more like Christ, he has finer, richer raiment spiritually. •

When Jesus comes, His garments will "smell of myrrh, and aloes, and cassia, out of the ivory palaces" (Psalm 45:8). These

are symbols of the spiritual graces which we must have, too, in order to be like Christ. Jesus shall come in glory and in majesty "because of truth and meekness and righteousness" which He loves (Psalm 45:4, 7).

If we expect to go in to the Marriage Supper with Jesus, we must have Oil in the vessels with the lamps. We must have a good measure of the Spirit of God and be clothed in garments of spiritual graces. "Blessed is he that watcheth, and keepeth his garments" (Revelation 16:15).

Let us, by praying and obeying, prepare for Jesus' soon coming. Let us, by working and watching, be found ready to meet Jesus when He comes.