

LAMPS ARE GOING OUT

(THE PARABLE OF THE TEN VIRGINS STILL SPEAKS TODAY)
Matthew 25:1-13



“Buy Oil For Yourself”

- ◆ The Wedding
- ◆ The Waiting
- ◆ The Whining
- ◆ The Watching

“Give us your oil, for our lamps are going out.” (Matthew 26:8)

Bill Kirk

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Matthew 25:1-13

“Watch, therefore, for ye know neither the day nor the hour wherin the Son of man cometh.”
(Matthew 25:13)

Introduction

Fact: Matthew 24 & 25 constitute one great discourse of Jesus to His disciples on the Mount of Olives (24:2), all dealing with Jesus’ return:

1. The beginning of the tribulation (24:4-14), The middle of the Tribulation (24:15-22)
2. The ending of the Tribulation (24:23-44)
3. The coming of Christ and the professing church (24:45-25:30)
 - ◆ Obedient and disobedient servants (24:45-51)◆ Wise and foolish witnesses (25:1-13)
 - ◆ Profitable and unprofitable servants (25:14-30)
4. The coming of Christ and the Gentile Nations (25:31-46)

Fact: The two parables of Matt. 25 are both to reveal our responsibility while the Lord is absent.

Fact: The parable of the Ten Virgins (v. 1-13) reveals to us the vigilance of our “walk”.

Fact: The parable of the Ten Talents (v.14-30) reveals to us the vigilance of our “work”.

Fact: While both parables are equally important, it goes without saying that if we are neglectful in our walk (who we are) we will suffer in our work (what we do).

Questions with Answers

1. Who do the ten virgins represent? (v.1)
2. Why were there 5 wise and 5 foolish virgins? (v.2)
3. How did the foolish let their oil run out? (v. 3)
4. How did the wise keep their oil full? (v. 4)

I. The Wedding (v.1-4)

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

Question: How is the kingdom of God like a wedding in Jesus’ day?

Answer: A simple custom that all would understand:

1. A wedding in Jesus’ day had two parts:
 - ◆ First, the bridegroom and his friends would go from his house to claim the bride from her parents.
 - ◆ Secondly the bride & groom would return to the groom’s house for the marriage.
2. It was during this return to the feast, when others (the virgins in the parable) would join the bridal company into the hall of feasting.
3. These virgins (or those who expected to meet the bridegroom) were all waiting for his coming.
4. Because marriages in the East took place in the night, these virgins (or expectant onlookers) took their lamps.

The Parable is Clear

- ◆ The Bridegroom to come – is Jesus!

- ◆ The virgins waiting – are those who profess to know Him.
- ◆ The wise virgins – are those vigilant in waiting.
- ◆ The foolish virgins – are those neglectful in waiting.

II. The Waiting (v.5-7)

“While the bridegroom tarried...” (v.5)

Fact: The church has known for 2,000 years that Jesus is coming again.

Fact: “They all slumbered and slept” (v. 5) means that they all were expecting to meet the bridegroom when He arrived.

Fact: “While the bridegroom tarried”, there was a great danger to all who waited:

- ◆ Would some who knew He was coming get drowsy, become lethargic, lose heart, become neglectful or depend on others?

Question: What can happen to someone while they wait for someone else to arrive?

Question: What are the dangers (over time) as a believer waits for the return of Jesus?

III. The Whining (v. 8, 9)

“Give us your oil, for our lamps are going out.” (v. 9)

Question: What happened when the foolish virgins began their wait for the bridegroom?

Answer: They “took no oil with them.” (v. 3) or, didn’t plan for the long haul!

Question: What happened when the bridegroom finally did arrive?

Answer: They realized too late that their lamps had run low.

Fact: Half the bridesmaids were unable to light their lamps because they had no oil.

Fact: The bridesmaids with oil were able to light their lamps and keep them burning bright.

Fact: It was the wise (those with oil) who entered into the wedding feast.

Fact: The foolish who had no oil were left destitute at the moment of their greatest need.

Fact: Those foolish anticipants discovered too late that their oil supply had run out.

- ◆ The “Request”; “Give us your oil.” (v. 8)
- ◆ The “Refusal”; “Not so, go buy for yourself.” (v. 9)

What’s The Parable Reveal?

1. Oil for burning is a symbol in Scripture of the Holy Spirit.
2. “They took no oil” (v. 3) and let it “run out” (v. 8) is evidence of carelessness and neglect.
3. “Buy for yourselves” (v. 9) is a clear imperative of individual responsibility to be filled with the spirit yourself, now, continually and emphatically. (Repeat)
4. “Give us your oil” (v. 8) is a revelation that we can look in vain from men for that grace and power which God alone can supply. (Repeat)
5. “Not so, lest there be not enough for us and you.” (v.9) means that we cannot borrow that which must be bought at the feet of Jesus. (Repeat)
6. “And while they went to buy” (v. 10) “The Bridegroom came” reveals that we cannot put off and delay examination or earnestness till they last moment.
7. Not all who are waiting and expecting to see Jesus are ready to see Jesus! (Repeat)

I Discover

Fact: The church of Jesus Christ consists of those who have the oil and whose lights are burning, and who are ready to see Jesus tonight.

Fact: The church of Jesus Christ consists of those who have no oil, and whose lights are out, and who are not ready to see Jesus tonight.

IV. The Watching (v. 10-13)

“The door was shut” (v. 10).....Sudden Revelation

“Lord, Lord, open to us.” (v. 11).....Serious Request

“I know you not.” (v. 12).....Sad Reality

“Watch therefore.” (v. 13).....Sober Reminder

Question: What does it mean to “watch”? (v. 13)

Answer: The word “watch” means to stay alert and on-guard as if something great is about to happen.

To “watch” means:

1. To remain vigilant in prayer, the Word, purity and full of the Holy Spirit.
2. To maintain an earnest effort to deny yourself and pursue God on a consistent basis.
3. To live with the mindset that Jesus may come today; I will not be surprised if He does.
4. To obtain from God myself what no one else can obtain for me.
5. To trim my wick daily so that the fullness of God’s light can shine and burn unhindered.

“For ye know neither the day nor the hour wherin the Son of man cometh.” (v. 13)

This Means:

1. The only certain way of being ready upon that day, is that we be ready upon every day!
2. That which should be the work of a lifetime cannot be huddled into a moment at the end!
3. It is better to be ready for Christ’s coming 55 years too early, than one minute too late!
4. If anyone is empty, sour, flickering, low, charred or untrimmed, they have no one to blame but themselves!

(A Joyful Sound)..... “They that were ready went in.” (v. 10)

(A Horrible Sound)..... “I know you not.” (v. 12)

(The Difference)..... “The wise took oil in their vessels.” (v. 4)

The “Power” of the Candlestick in the O.T. Tabernacle

“Bring pure olive oil beaten for the light, to cause the lamps to burn continually.” (Leviticus 24:2)

“Take oil for the light.” (Exodus 25:6)

A. The substance of the power was the oil.

1. Israel was instructed to use pure olive oil for the light.
2. Israel was instructed to never let the lamps go out. (Exodus 27:20)
3. Israel had to have a continual supply of oil to replenish the lamps.
4. Olive oil was a beautiful emblem of the presence of the Holy Spirit (Judges 9:9, Psalm 52:8, Jeremiah 11:16, Hosea 14:6).
5. The Greek word for oil is “charisma”, also translated “anointing” (I John 2:20, 27).

- ◆ As the candlestick was anointed before it could witness, so must we be anointed to be a witness for Christ (Acts 1:8)

What's the lesson of the oil?

1. It is my responsibility to receive a continual supply of Divine oil to keep burning for the Lord.
2. To the extent that the oil of the Spirit flows in me, to that extent I will see the Table of Shewbread (Jesus).
3. To the extent that I am filled with the oil of the Holy Spirit, to that extent I will bear fruit.
4. To the extent I present my bowl to the Lord, only to that extent can He fill and replenish what has been used up.

And Remember...

- ◆ You can't fill a bowl on the run or a glass that is moving!
- ◆ You must be still – take time – get quiet so that God can fill you to overflowing!

B. The Secret of the Power was the Purity

"And the tongs and the snuffdishes shall be of pure gold." (Exodus 25:38)

Fact: The priests were responsible for cleaning and replenishing the lights each morning and evening.

Fact: To preserve a pure light, two accessories were needed:

1. The Tongs

- ◆ These tweezer like utensils were used to raise the wick and trim it.
- ◆ Untrimmed lamps would smoke and smell.
- ◆ God said, "Trim the wicks" and do it inside the tabernacle (My house).

Fact: Sin spoils our light, soils our lamp and blackens the wick!

2. The Snuffdishes

- ◆ These were used to carry away the charred trimmings.
- ◆ These trimmings were carried away to never come back again.
- ◆ The high priest had the power to remove every besetting piece that hindered the lamp.

Fact: With your cooperation, God will remove every sin that continues to latch on to you.

Fact: Now is the time to remove the dross from your lampstand.

Fact: To the extent that we tend to our wicks, to that extent the oil will work and cause us to shine.

"For sin shall not have dominion over you; for ye are not under the law (which exposes our sin) but under grace (which gives us power over sin)." Romans 6:14

Amen!
Bill Kirk