

Parable of the 10 Virgins

25 Then shall the kingdom of heaven be likened unto ten virgins, which took their lamps, and went forth to meet the bridegroom. ²And five of them were wise, and five were foolish. ³They that were foolish took their lamps, and took no oil with them: ⁴But the wise took oil in their vessels with their lamps.

The number 10 can represent God's authority, divine completion, a whole.

The Kingdom of Heaven is like this; or the Kingdom is similar to the Jewish betrothal ceremony and process.

- The father makes the arrangement
- The mohar or purchase price of the bride is set by the bride's father and paid by the father of the groom.
- Newly married man usually did not find a new home for himself but occupied a nook in his father's house.
- Until late middle ages, marriage consisted of two separate times with an interval between; the betrothal and later the wedding.
- At the betrothal the woman was legally married, although she still remained in her father's house. She could not belong to another man unless she was divorced from her betrothed. Wedding meant that the betrothed woman, accompanied by a colorful procession, was brought from her father's house to the house of the groom and the legal tie was consummated.
- Traditionally, both have a separate mikvah or baptism in preparation of the ceremony. This represents spiritual cleansing. Mark 16:16. Another reason why Jesus is baptized in Matthew 3:13-17.
- Bride groom gives bride money or a valuable object such as a ring and a cup of wine is shared to seal their covenant vows.
- Although considered married, they did not live together yet.
- To annul this contract, they would need a religious divorce.
- The groom was to prepare a place for his bride, while the bride focused on her personal preparations: wedding garments, lamps, etc.
- Although the bride knew to expect her groom after about a year, she did not know the exact day or hour. He could come earlier. It was the father of the groom who gave final approval for him to return to collect his bride.
- For that reason, the bride kept her oil lamps ready at all times, just in case the groom came in the night, sounding the shofar (ram's horn) to lead the bridal procession to the home he had prepared for her.
- In the Parable of the Ten Virgins (Matthew 25:1–13), Yeshua (Jesus) likened the Kingdom of Heaven to this special period when the groom comes for his bride.



Back to the story, the virgins must have already heard the trumpet sound and are responding to the procession of the groom. He has arrived and they are on their way to meet him since they all have their lamps.

The purpose of the lamps are to light the way. Jesus call five foolish because they didn't bring any extra oil for the lamps. Five are considered wise because they brought extra oil to keep their lamps burning.

Both knew the process, both groups were responding to the call, both had a future hope with the groom, but only one group was prepared. This is concerning that you can be responding to the call and know about the groom and still not be prepared for his coming.

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.

This is sort of like the prequel. Before they went out to meet the groom, there was a delay between the betrothal and the groom actually coming back to receive his bride. While they were waiting for him, they were all sleeping. The cry is made at midnight, so they needed to be prepared in case the cry wasn't made during the day.

The brides are "called up" to meet the groom. This is a picture of the rapture, the groom doesn't come all the way into the city but comes just far enough to call the bride up to meet him.

They all trim their lamps. Trimming a lamp in the natural is to trim or clip off the portion of the wick that has been previously burned and is now black so that the light burns bright and clean. Since they all trimmed their lamps, the trimming or having a working lamp was not the problem. It was the oil.

They all arose with great expectation, but along the way, the foolish virgins had a power failure. They are asking the wise for their oil. The wise tell them that if we give you our oil, we won't have enough for ourselves to make it. The wise were extra prepared and had stored up enough oil so their lamps could stay lit. While tragic, they couldn't share this light so the foolish had to turn back to purchase more oil.

We have an individual responsibility to secure oil.

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.

While the foolish are out getting more oil, they missed the arrival point of the groom. The ones that were ready were rise and they entered the marriage chamber (part two of the process) and the door was shut. This reminds me of Noah's Ark. Later, after the door is closed, the foolish virgins arrive. They



want to enter in as well, but they are denied. The groom states the this troubling statement, "I know you not." See also Matthew 7:22.

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

So, the Kingdom Heaven is like this. There are people who will be ready, and there will be people who know what's coming and not be prepared and miss the rapture.

Let's look at this closely. What are the elements of the parable in the natural?

- Virgins – the bride of Christ, us; Israel (Isaiah 54:4-5), Hosea 2:19
- Groom – Christ (Matthew 9:15)
- Lamps – several ideas, our own light shining perhaps. Must be something common with all Christians because the wise virgins had lamps too. Our light shining in the world perhaps. Could also be the word of God which is a lamp unto our feet and a light unto my path (Psalm 119:105).
- Oil – Holy Spirit supply, living water. The supply of the Spirit of God, beyond just the initial indwelling.
- Door open/closed – Heaven
- Wise – 2 Cor 11:2, Phil 2:15-16
- Foolish – 2 Peter 2:20, JFB -- "the foolish" mean those who, with all that is common to them with real Christians, *lack the essential preparation for meeting Christ.*

Observations:

- Both the wise and foolish look the same up to a point. The issue was not having any oil or else they couldn't have started out to meet the groom.
 - Having a lamp and looking good on the outside doesn't mean you are full of the Holy Spirit.
 - You can go to church and not be known by God.
- It is hard for me to not connect John 7:37-39 and Matthew 7:21-23.

DG- No one can be a true Christian without the indwelling Holy Spirit (Rom 8:9). We must be constantly filled with the Spirit (Ephesians 5:18).

The summary of the matter:

- You can know of Christ and His coming and still not be ready.
- We must continue to be filled with the Spirit in order to let His light shine through us to impact others. Cannot do this consistently without the power source of the Holy Spirit.
- You can start out strong and run out along the way.
- Determine what type or category of believer you are (example of parable of sower and seed and the different soils).
- Get oil in your lamp and keep burning before He comes.

Behold, I am coming soon! My reward is with me, and I will give to everyone according to what he has done. ... The Spirit and the bride say, 'Come!' And let him who hears say, 'Come!' Whoever is thirsty, let him come." (Revelation 22:12, 17)