

**10-3-24 DBC Pastors' and Church Leaders' Conference**  
***Matthew 25:1-13***

***Introduction: How do we Know This is a Parable?***

1. Jesus uses a common experience the average Jew would \_\_\_\_\_ (i.e., the Jewish wedding system, along with Herodian-style 1<sup>st</sup> century lamps) to illustrate and affirm His exhortation in verse 13.
  - a. Parables, by design, take a known and understood concept and they are “cast alongside” of a truth attempting to be explained.
  - b. Parables, by design, are **NOT** to be analyzed for the sake of identification of every detail found in the parable. Rather, they are designed to communicate one general truth, possibly a couple.
2. Jesus uses the phrase “the kingdom of heaven shall be likened to...” which should remind us of Matthew 13 and the beginning of, or at least, the increase of His \_\_\_\_\_ teaching emphasis.
3. In this passage, the \_\_\_\_\_ truth being communicated is to “Watch” and “Be Ready” for the Lord’s return to the earth to establish His Kingdom.

***The Danger of Overidentifying Some Details***

1. A Partial \_\_\_\_\_ Interpretation: The partial rapture interpretation is that only those believers who are prepared (i.e., who are expecting the Lord’s call and are ready for it) will be raptured, while other believers will remain behind.
2. A Loss of \_\_\_\_\_ Interpretation: This interpretation sees the oil in the lamps as representing the Holy Spirit. Additionally, they see entrance into the feast as representing entrance into the kingdom. Because of these points, they conclude that since the foolish virgins had some oil in their lamps to start with, but did not have enough, they must have lost the Holy Spirit, and in doing so, lost their salvation.
3. \_\_\_\_\_ Christians Who Are Unsaved: Since entrance into the kingdom is described here, and since all of the virgins look the same “externally,” meaning they all have lamps and a little oil, then some are genuine believers, and some are not.

***Build-Up Context***

1. Matthew 24:27-31: Christ will send His angels to gather His elect (i.e., Jewish believers who have survived the \_\_\_\_\_) from the four winds. Who will be watching and ready for Him at that time?
  - a. The next two parables and two illustrations describe the concept of being \_\_\_\_\_ and ready for the Second Coming of Christ and exhorts the Jewish people accordingly.
    - 1) Parable of the Fig Tree (24:32-35) – At this future time in history, Israel should be able to SEE the signs of His coming, via the events of the Tribulation (i.e., the judgments, the man of sin revealed, the fulfillment of prophecy).
    - 2) Illustration of the Days of Noah (24:36-44) – The exhortation here is to not let the normal distractions of life cause someone to miss being ready for the Second Coming of Christ.
    - 3) Illustration of the Two Servants (24:45-51) – The exhortation is to be faithful to the task at hand and to not minimize the Coming of the Lord. The idea is to be about your business as you anticipate the master at any time. (Use Ice article here for clarity)
    - 4) Parable of the Ten Virgins – The exhortation here is to be ready, and to be prepared for His coming at any time.
  
2. National Israel and the Remnant – The \_\_\_\_\_ between believing and unbelieving Israel at the end of the Tribulation is revealed throughout Scripture, and so the wise and unwise virgins simply illustrate this truth again.
  - a. Zechariah 13:8-9 tells us that only 1/3 of Jews will survive the Tribulation period and enter the Millennial Kingdom.
  - b. Ezekiel 20:33-38 describes the judgment of Jews at the end of the Tribulation period, just like Matthew 24:31 alludes to the gathering of the “elect” from all over the earth.
  - c. Matthew 8:5-12 describes the faith of a Gentile centurion who would enter the kingdom, but in describing this man’s great faith, Jesus goes on to say that some “sons of the kingdom” (i.e., Jews) will NOT enter the Millennial Kingdom, but be cast into outer darkness.
  
3. The Jewish \_\_\_\_\_ System or Format - The Jewish wedding system of the first century must be understood to interpret this parable accurately. There were multiple stages in a Jewish wedding, much different than our weddings today.

- a. **(1<sup>st</sup>)**: The Arrangement – At this step, everything begins! The father of the groom makes the arrangement for marriage with the father of the bride and pays the father of the bride the bride price.
  - b. **(2<sup>nd</sup>)**: The Preparation – This step, which is also known as the betrothal period, lasts for at least a year. This time delay was used for multiple purposes: (1) The bride would be trained and prepared to take on the role of a wife, (2) Her purity was observed. By observing her at least a full nine months, the groom could make sure she was indeed a virgin, and (3) The groom would be responsible for securing and/or providing a suitable home for the couple.
  - c. **(3<sup>rd</sup>)**: The Fetching of the Bride – This step follows the year of preparation, and it is when the groom would go to the home of the bride on the wedding day to fetch her to his home. At this step, there would be a joyous bridal procession involving the groom, the bride, his groomsmen, and her bridesmaids (all virgins).
  - d. **(4<sup>th</sup>)**: The Ceremony – Once this bridal procession reached the new home of the groom and bride, the wedding ceremony was conducted there. Only a few, usually the immediate family and two witnesses, were invited to come in and observe the wedding ceremony.
  - e. **(5<sup>th</sup>)**: The Marriage Feast – Once the ceremony is complete, the marriage is consummated, then the marriage feast can begin. Whereas only a few are invited to the wedding ceremony, many others are invited to the marriage feast to celebrate the marriage. The marriage feast typically lasted up to seven days.
4. Now, we generally get excited when we see connections and parallels between the Jewish wedding system, the different stages, and the Church! The New Testament is full of allusions to this Jewish wedding system, and this is especially true as we connect the different stages to different events in \_\_\_\_\_.
- a. The Arrangement – God the Father, the Father of the Groom, made the arrangement and then paid the bride price, which was the blood of His Son. (See 1 Peter 1:18-19)
  - b. The Preparation – The Bride (i.e., the Church) is now in the process of being perfected for the Groom. (See 2 Corinthians 11:2; Ephesians 5:26-27) Additionally, the Groom is preparing a place (i.e., a home) for He and His Bride. (See John 14:2-3) This home is the New Jerusalem! (See Revelation 21:9-22:5)
  - c. The Fetching of the Bride – The fetching of the Bride of the Messiah will be accomplished by the Rapture of the Church. This is the next event on the prophetic calendar of events. (See 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18)
  - d. The Ceremony – At this step the Bride of the Messiah (i.e., the Church) and the Groom (i.e., Jesus Christ) will have their wedding ceremony in Heaven and the few who will be invited to this ceremony will be the few who will already be in Heaven. In time, this event seems to happen AFTER the tribulation is completed, just prior to Christ's Second Coming to earth (Revelation 19:6-8)

- e. The Marriage Feast – This feast will take place on earth, and it seems to kick off the Millennial Kingdom reign of Jesus Christ. Many more people will be invited to the marriage feast than were at the marriage ceremony in heaven, including the following: Tribulation saints, living Jewish and Gentile saints who survived the Tribulation.
5. Now, Matthew 25:1-13 has ***NOTHING*** to do with the Church, but use of Jewish wedding terminology has \_\_\_\_\_ many.

### ***Matthew 25:1-13 Exposition***

#### ***✦ (Verse 1)***

1. “Then the kingdom of heaven shall be likened to,” – Again, as mentioned earlier, this is a \_\_\_\_\_ way that Jesus has introduced parables throughout the book of Matthew.
2. “To ten virgins,” – Who are these ten virgins? They are the \_\_\_\_\_ of the betrothed wife.
  - This is another reason ***WHY*** we would ***NOT*** conclude that these ten virgins were somehow representative of the Church. The Church would hold the position of the Bride, ***IF*** this image was being used to describe the Church, but it is ***NOT!***
3. “Who took their lamps and went out to meet the bridegroom.” – Now, why would the bridesmaids go out to meet the bridegroom? This is describing the “\_\_\_\_\_ of the Bride” stage of a Jewish wedding.
  - The Groom would come at a time unannounced, but with timeframe generally known, to fetch his bride and the two of them, along with their wedding party comprised of groomsmen and bridesmaids would join them in the procession to the new couple’s home for the wedding ceremony.
  - The “lamps” they took with them were significant because they were Herodian-style 1<sup>st</sup> century lamps which had a small amount of oil in the lamp itself, BUT it required more oil brought along for refills with its use!
  - This “extra” oil needing to be brought along becomes a significant detail in Jesus’ parabolic teaching! It will indicate “watchfulness” and “readiness” OR the lack thereof!

#### ***✦ (Verses 2-4)***

1. “Five of them (the virgins) were wise” – The standard by which they are described as \_\_\_\_\_ is that they took “extra” oil in vessels along with their lamps.
  - These virgins illustrate the heart of the exhortation of this parabolic teaching – “be ready” and “be watchful.” (See verse 13)

2. “Five of them (the virgins) were foolish” - The standard by which they are described as \_\_\_\_\_ is that they did **NOT** take “extra” oil in vessels along with their lamps.

- As a result, they only had enough oil to begin the journey, but **NOT** complete the journey.

✚ **(Verse 5)**

1. “They all slumbered and slept” - This is an interesting statement for many reasons – Notice they ALL slumbered and slept! “Slumbering and sleeping” thus cannot be used in a \_\_\_\_\_ connotation, because they ALL did it – both the wise and the unwise virgins.

2. “The bridegroom was delayed” – “Delayed” simply means to while away time, to \_\_\_\_\_, to defer, or to tarry. To extend a state or an event beyond an expected time, or to be late.

- So, this word CAN have a negative connotation of being late, but it can also be used to describe a delay of any kind (intentional or unintentional).

✚ **(Verse 6-8)**

1. “And at midnight a cry was heard: ‘Behold, the bridegroom is coming; go out to meet him!’” – Again, it was very common to fetch one’s bride towards the \_\_\_\_\_ and have the procession back to their new home with great celebration and via the lighting of lamps and/or torches!

2. “Then all those virgins arose and trimmed their lamps.” – Notice again that \_\_\_\_\_ the virgins arose and trimmed their lamps.

3. “And the foolish said to the wise, ‘Give us some of your oil, for our lamps are going out.’” - The problem for the five foolish virgins was they only had enough oil to fit in the small lamp, and they ran out of oil rather quickly. They were \_\_\_\_\_ prepared...

✚ **(Verses 9-10)**

1. “But the wise answered, saying, ‘No, lest there should not be enough for us and you; but go rather to those who sell, and buy for yourselves.’ – The wise knew that there was NOT enough for all of them, and thus, it would cost them their own \_\_\_\_\_ in the procession, the wedding, and the wedding feast.

- This is another example of WHY one should NOT press the identification of details to strongly in parables.
  - The lack of oil to make the full procession with the bridal party simply illustrates the major truth of this parable – they were not “watchful” and they were not “ready.”
2. “And while they went to buy, the bridegroom came, and those who were ready went in with him to the wedding; and the door was shut.”
- In this case, because of the setting of this parable, this “shutting of the door” describes \_\_\_\_\_ from the wedding and the wedding feast.
  - Ultimately, this represents \_\_\_\_\_ from the kingdom of heaven.

✚ **(Verses 11-12)**

1. “Afterward the other virgins came also, saying, ‘Lord, Lord, open to us!’” – The foolish virgins finally make their way back from the \_\_\_\_\_ and to the Groom and Bride’s new home, but when they arrive the door is shut, and they are unable to get in.
- “But he answered and said, ‘Assuredly, I say to you, I do not know you.’” – What a \_\_\_\_\_ response for the foolish virgins.
- “I do not know you” (*oida*) meaning to know intuitively or instinctively. It is **NOT** that he has not come to know them, but rather has never known them! (**Perfect** indicative of *oida* is used)

✚ **(Verse 13)**

1. “Watch therefore,” – “Watch” means to arise, to arouse, to refrain from sleep. To remain \_\_\_\_\_ because of the need to continue to be alert.
- It is a present, active, imperative desiring an **immediate** and **urgent** response once they hear this message.
2. “For you know neither the day nor the hour in which the Son of Man is coming.” – Since no one knows the exact day or hour the Son of Man is \_\_\_\_\_, the exhortation is to set your affairs in order so that you can be ready.
- In terms of some, time element clues and help for the Tribulation-age Jews on earth at the time, they will have had: the rise of the Antichrist, the betrayal of the Antichrist at the Abomination of Desolation, the outright persecution by the Antichrist following the midpoint of the Tribulation, the testimony of the 144K Sealed Jewish Servants, the ministry of the Two Witnesses in Jerusalem, and the Angelic announcements regarding the everlasting gospel, the prediction of the destruction of Babylon, and the warning against taking the mark of the beast and/or worshiping the Antichrist.