



## No. 04 - The Ten Virgins - Are you ready?

### Matthew 25:1-13

This is a vital parable for us to study at this time as we reach the end of the Church age. Include the parable of the talents, also the sheep and goats in the rest of the chapter. We have had two thousand years to **"go into all the world and preach the gospel"** so Jesus is coming very soon to take out His bride, the Church of all believers, and then the end will come.

If we belong to Jesus, by asking Him into our lives. If He is Lord over every area of our lives as we allow Him to lead us into victory over our weaknesses, then we can look forward with a great sense of excitement to what is about to happen. Remember Noah, all the people round him were in the dark about the flood and drowned in it, but he received the warning and was saved by the ark along with his family. We are being warned by every disaster and sign in Nature. If we do not belong to Jesus and therefore do not **know** God the Almighty as our Father and the Holy Spirit as our Counsellor then we need to consider our future very seriously and very soon, **2 Peter 3:3-7**.

### The signs that the time is near.

1. Impostors in different religions/cults, **Matthew 24:5**. People who profess to be a reincarnation of the Christ and preach lies. In the last days the Anti-Christ will come in his own name and deceive many, **John 5:43; 2 Thessalonians 2:3-4; 2 Thessalonians 2:8-12**.
2. Wars and rumours of wars, **Matthew 24: 6-7**. We are commanded not to be alarmed. The Bible states that ethnic group will rise against ethnic group.
3. Famines and earthquakes on a large scale (**Matthew 24:7-8**), which is the beginning of the birth pains for the end. This will be nothing compared to the time of Tribulation which will take place in the earth when the Anti Christ will be in charge
4. Persecution for the gospel's sake will increase, as the church gets lighter and the world gets darker, **Matthew 24:9; 2 Timothy 3:12**.
5. False teaching in the church which will lead many into error, **Matthew 24:11; Matthew 24:24**.
6. Loose morals, degeneration of the family, with pressure for material comfort, **2 Timothy 3:1-9**.
7. Love of many for God will grow cold because of the lawlessness in the earth, **Matthew 24:10**.
8. Look at the fig tree coming to life. This is a picture of the country of Israel becoming a nation again, **Matthew 24:32**.
9. Like the days of Noah – people eating, drinking and marrying, **Matthew 24:37-39**.
10. "When you see all these things, you know that it is near, right at the door" **Matthew 24:33**.

Jesus is going to meet His body, the Church, in the air called the Rapture, and we are going to be caught up together with the dead in Christ, to meet the Lord, **1 Thessalonians 4:15-18**. "The day of the Lord will come like a thief in the night.....But you, brothers, are not in darkness so that this day should surprise you like a thief. You are all sons of the light....but let us be alert and self-controlled" **1 Thessalonians 5:1-11**. Jesus is also going to return to the earth in person and power, at the end of the Tribulation, otherwise humanity would destroy itself. This will be a time of great Judgement and blessing. Jesus Christ will judge sin and set up His eternal Kingdom, **Isaiah 13:6-13; Joel 2:28-32; Zephaniah 1:14-18**.

In the story of the bridesmaids, we are taught that every person is responsible for his or her own spiritual condition. No parable, by itself, completely describes our preparation, but each paints one part of the whole picture so we need to pick up the warning and apply it to our own lives. This is about a wedding. In Jewish culture on the wedding day the bridegroom went to the bride's house for the ceremony; then the bride and groom, along with a great parade, returned to the groom's house where a feast took place, often lasting a full week or more.

These bridesmaids were waiting for the parade, and they hoped to take part in the wedding banquet. But when the groom didn't come when they expected him, five of them let their lamps run out of oil. By the time they had purchased extra oil, it was too late to join the feast.

This is a picture of Jesus (**2 Corinthians 11:2; Ephesians 5:32**), the bridegroom, coming when people, His Bride, are not expecting Him and some people are not prepared. When Jesus returns to the earth to take His people to heaven, He will catch away those of us who are prepared for His coming and take us to heaven for the Marriage Feast of the Lamb. **Spiritual preparation cannot be bought or borrowed at**

**the last minute.** Our relationship with God must be our own. God has warned us both through His Word and by His Spirit within us that Jesus is coming back soon. **Are we ready?**

Each virgin had a lamp, which was lit, representing the fact that they are all 'professing' Christians, **Psalm 119:105; Proverbs 6:23.**

The oil is used in the Word to describe the power and the person of the Holy Spirit. "If anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ he does not belong to Christ" **Romans 8:9; Mark 4:14-20.** So we see that all these virgins had a profession **but five**

- .....did not care about being overflowing with the oil of the Holy Spirit.
- .....were half hearted and
- .....did not take care that their light might have gone out,
- .....wanted to be involved with the action but
- .....they did not care about the things God cared about.
- .....had priorities that were wrong
- .....were irresponsible, relying on others.

The bridegroom is slower in coming than they all expected, just like the Church today waiting for Jesus' return. They became weary while they waited so they slept. This shows a coldness of heart, a laziness, little real expectancy and lack of a burning love for the bridegroom. This is just like religion, where there may be plenty of activity, but no intense desire for Jesus Christ and a crucified lifestyle. **It was the oil that made the difference.** Many people like to be around "on-fire" Christians and hear all the amazing miracles God is doing for them. It is wonderful to have a Spirit-filled, faith talking, Bible believing friend when things in your life get tough. The time comes for all of us to realise that we are just living the Christian life in our own strength, or we have let His oil run low. We have to spend time with God for ourselves and receive a fresh Baptism of the Holy Spirit and fire.

Nobody wants Jesus to say to us "I don't know you" especially when we have no opportunity to change the situation. The foolish virgins were excluded from the marriage feast as the bridegroom did not know them or recognise them. Wanting to enter was not enough requirement, they needed to know Him personally by obedience to His Word and time spent sitting at His feet, **Matthew 7:21-23.**

Jesus gave a similar warning in **Luke 14:16-24** with the parable of the great banquet. Why didn't those who were invited to the great supper go? They had become so involved in the busyness of daily life. They had allowed those things to become too important to them. We need to learn to focus our attention and affection on the things of God instead of the things of the world. This is not our home and not our final destination. We need to constantly remember that we are going to be in heaven, to be looking towards our new home so we don't get entangled in this world's affairs. We can't afford to get so caught up in the world's activities that we can't hear what He is telling us to do.

### **How can I be ready?**

1. Keep on being filled continually with the Holy Spirit, **Ephesians 5:18.**
2. Live holy and godly lives, **2 Peter 3:11-15.**
3. Watch for the signs and be ready, **Mark 13:35-37.**
4. Prioritise - rearrange your life so that God is first in everything, **Matthew 22:37.**
5. Never be lacking in zeal, **Romans 12:11**
6. Fear God **Deuteronomy 10:12-13; Psalm 19:9; Matthew 10:28; Philippians 2:12-13**
7. Seek first God's Kingdom, **Matthew 6:33.**
8. Be passionate for Jesus, **Matthew 22:37.**
9. "....Fan into flame the gift of God which is in you....." **2 Timothy 1:6-7**

We can be God's lamp to the world if we walk with a pure lifestyle and allow the oil of the Holy Spirit to fill us to overflowing so that the Glory of God shines and exposes darkness in peoples' lives and shows direction to people looking for hope, **2 Corinthians 4:6.**

God's will is that in every age true believers are watching with tiptoe excitement for Jesus to come again and take them to be with Him. It may be today and we want Him to find us occupied in His service and looking for Him, **Matthew 24:42.**

Watch an amazing and challenging testimony about 'being ready' by Simon Guillebaud in Burundi  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xKVZ8zaufRY>

**NOW READ Matthew 24:36-51; 2 Thessalonians 2**

## No. 04 – The Ten Virgins – Are you ready? Challenge Questions.

1. Are you sure you are ready for the return of Jesus Christ?
2. Look at the list of '**the signs that the time is near**'. Which ones do you feel have been fulfilled, and which still need to be fulfilled?
3. What did you find most challenging about the ten virgins?
4. Is there any point from the '**How can I be ready**' list that you need to put right?

### Read Genesis 24:1-67.

5. What was Abraham's desire for his precious son? (**2 Corinthians 6:14**)
6. What instructions did Abraham give regarding where and how to make the choice?
7. Can you learn anything about guidance and prayer from this story?

### Read Genesis 25:19-28.

8. How old was Isaac when he married Rebekah? What was Isaac and Rebekah's problem? Who did they turn to for help?

9. What did God tell Rebekah about the twins?

10. What was Rebekah's sin at this time which caused her so much trouble? (**Genesis 25:28**) Do you relate to this problem

**Read Genesis 27: 1-30, and Genesis 27:41-46.**

11. What did Rebekah do to get favour for her son Jacob?

12. How desperate was she? (**Genesis 27:13**)

13. What does this tell you about Rebekah's faith? Does this remind you of Eve? (**Genesis 3:1**)

14. What was the result of Rebekah's deceit? (**Genesis 27:41-42**)

15. What did Rebekah have to do for Jacob to save his life? (**Genesis 27:43-45**)

16. Write a sentence to highlight all that you have learnt from Rebekah's life.