

THEME: THE PARABLES OF JESUS
TOPIC: THE WISE AND FOOLISH VIRGINS
TEXT: MATTHEW 25:1-13

INTRODUCTION

We have seen that several of Jesus' parables describe the consummation of the "kingdom of heaven" which takes place when Jesus returns.

- a. **"The Wheat and Tares" – Matthew 13:24-30, 36-43**
- b. **"The Dragnet" – Matthew 13:47-50**

Following His Discourse on the Mount of Olives in which He seems to address

- a. Either the destruction of Jerusalem (which occurred in 70 A.D.)
 - b. Or His coming at the end of the age (yet to occur).
- We find another parable: **"The Wise and Foolish Virgins" – Matthew 25:1-13**

Scholars often debate over whether the discourse of Matthew 24 pertains.

- a. Strictly to the destruction of Jerusalem that occurred in A.D. 70
- b. Strictly to the Second Coming of Christ.
- c. To both events, as the first is a type or shadow of the latter, such that certain terms can be used to describe both events, though figurative in one case and literal in another.

Whichever it might be, in the final analysis the parable of **"The Wise and Foolish Virgins"** has important lessons to be learned

- a. For even if Matthew 24 pertains solely to the destruction of Jerusalem...
- b. Other passages in the New Testament teach the Second Coming of the Lord, and we need to be watchful for that great event! – **2 Peter 3:10-14.**

[With that in mind, let's use this opportunity to take a closer look at this parable Jesus taught...]

I. THE PARABLE ANALYZED

A. KEY ELEMENTS IN THE PARABLE...

1. Ten virgins go out with lamps to await the arrival of the bridegroom – **Matthew 25:1-4**
 - a. Five foolish virgins take no oil
 - b. Five wise virgins take extra oil
2. The bridegroom is delayed in his coming – **Matthew 25:5**
3. The bridegroom's arrival is announced, and the virgins trim their lamps – **Matthew 25:6-7**
4. The foolish virgins find that their oil is running out – **Matthew 25:7-9**
 - a. They plead with the wise virgins to share their oil
 - b. But the wise virgins refuse, saying there is not enough
5. As the foolish virgins go to get some oil, the bridegroom comes and those prepared go in with him to the wedding, and the door is shut – **Matthew 25:10**
6. The foolish virgins then arrive, but they are not allowed in – **Matthew 25:11-12**
7. Jesus then makes the application – **Matthew 25:13**

B. THE MEANING OF THE PARABLE...

1. The main message is quite clear, as evident from:
 - a. Jesus' comments leading up to this parable in **Matthew 24:42-46**
 - b. Jesus' comment at the end of the parable itself in **Matthew 25:13**
- There is a need for constant watchfulness

- For no one knows the moment when the Lord is coming!
- 2. As worded in Hendriksen's commentary, "...the need of being prepared at all times for the coming of the Bridegroom, Jesus Christ."
- 3. This message is repeated later on in the New Testament.
 - a. By Paul, writing to the Thessalonians in **1 Thessalonians 5:1-6**
 - b. By Peter, to the Christians in Asia Minor in **2 Peter 3:10-12**
 - c. By Jesus, to the church at Sardis in **Revelation 3:2-3**

Not knowing the day or hour of His coming, we must always be ready...this is the basic message of the parable.

II. THE PARABLE APPLIED

A. CHRISTIANS ARE LIKE THE VIRGINS AWAITING THE BRIDEGROOM...

1. **Some Christians are wise**
 - a. They diligently prepare themselves for the Master's coming, heeding the call to grow in the grace and knowledge of the Lord – **2 Peter 3:18; 2 Peter 1:5-8**
 - b. Knowing what is to come, they "look" for it and live accordingly – **2 Peter 3:11-14**
 - c. For them, the coming of the Lord will be a blessing! - **2 Peter 1:10-11**
2. **Some Christians are foolish**
 - a. They know the Lord is coming, but they are not prepared
 - b. They may even be like that evil servant who says "**My master is delaying his coming**", and act accordingly - **Matthew 24:48-49**
 - c. Yet Jesus has warned what will happen to such evil servants – **Matthew 24:50-51**
 - Are we like the wise virgins, or the foolish ones?

B. ONE SHOULD NOT TRUST IN PREVIOUS ACCOMPLISHMENTS.

1. Note that the foolish virgins did have "some" oil – **Matthew 25:8**
2. So they had made some preparation, but foolishly trusted in what they had done in the past.
3. Neither should we "rest on our laurels", but have the attitude of Paul – **Phil. 3:12-15**

Q: Are you foolishly depending upon what you have done in the past?

CONCLUSION

This parable teaches that a great day is coming, a day in which those in the kingdom today will find themselves in two different groups.

- a. Those who prepared themselves and faithfully watched for His coming
- b. Those who were not prepared, to whom they will hear the Lord say: "**Assuredly, I say to you, I do not know you.**"

Dear brother or sister in Christ, if the Lord were to come today.

- a. Would He find you watching?
 - b. Would He find you prepared?
 - c. Would He even know you? – **Matthew 7:21-23**
- "Watch therefore, for you know neither the day nor the hour in which the Son of Man is coming." (Matthew 25:13)**