

THE TEN VIRGINS & THE CHURCH
BEFORE CHRIST'S SECOND COMING
BIBLE STUDY NOTES



Shortly after departing from the Temple for the last time, Jesus began to explain to His disciples the soon coming signs that would precede the then destruction of Jerusalem and the Temple by the Romans (70 AD) and of the end of the world just before His Second Coming, **Matthew 24:1-51; Mark 13:1-37; Luke 21:5-36.**

“Then”, *said Christ in a parable*, “shall the kingdom of Heaven be likened unto **ten virgins**, which took their **lamps**, and went forth to meet the **Bridegroom**.” **Matthew 25:1.**

After giving the “signs of the times”, Jesus then went on to describe **the character** of those ‘professed disciples’ who would be alive at the time just before His Second Coming.

The **virgins** here described, represent those who profess the name of Christ.

In Bible prophecy **a woman** is symbolic of a professed body of believers, whether, *pure or apostate*, whether *the Bride or the Harlot*, whether *a virgin or a whore*.

Christ has always said that there will both be **wheat** and **tares** in the Church before He returns, those who live according to His Word and walk in the light that He reveals unto them and those that profess the name of God, but they do not live as Christ lived, they simply ‘*take the Lord’s name in vain*’. **Matthew 13:24-30;36-43.**

“*I have likened the daughter of Zion to a comely and delicate woman.*” **Jeremiah 6:2**

“*...say unto Zion, Thou art my people.*” **Isaiah 51:16**

“*Turn, O backsliding children, saith the LORD; for I am married unto you: and I will take you one of a city, and two of a family, and I will bring you to Zion.*” **Jeremiah 3:14**

“*Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it.*” **Ephesians 5:25**

Speaking to the nation of Israel (*God's professed people at the time*) by the Prophet Ezekiel, God says, *"Thou hast also committed fornication with the Egyptians thy neighbours, great of flesh; and hast increased thy whoredoms, to provoke me to anger....How weak is thine heart, saith the Lord GOD, seeing thou doest all these things, the work of an imperious whorish woman"* **Ezekiel 16:26,30.** See also **Revelation 12:1,15,17; Revelation 17:1-6; 2 Corinthians 11:2**

As the complete Law of God is summarised in the **Ten Commandments**, **Exodus 20** and the complete sinful state of mankind is symbolised by the **Ten lepers**, **Luke 17:17**, likewise, the entire Church is referred to here in the parable as the **Ten Virgins**. All those who profess to be believers in the one True God, living at the end of time, are called the Ten virgins. **They profess a pure, uncorrupted faith in Jesus Christ.**

"Thy Word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path." **Psalm 119:105**

These virgins, all took their **lamps**, which is **the Word of God**. The entire Church today has the word of God in their possession, and they go forth to preach the gospel and to await the soon Coming of Christ, the **'Bridegroom'** **Matthew 9:15.**

However, Christ tells us that *"five of them were wise and five were foolish."* **Verse 2**

They both have the Word of God in their possession, which is likened unto a lamp which lights our paths and directs our steps, however, the *"foolish took their lamps and took no oil with them, but the wise took oil in their vessels with their lamps."* **Verse 3-4**

In the **Old Testament**, the oil was used to anoint kings and priests, who foreshadowed **the Great King and Priest** that was to come, **Jesus Christ**, and it was also used to fuel the candlestick in the Sanctuary, that it may give light to the Tabernacle.

In the case of the priests and the kings, **the oil typified the anointing of the Holy Spirit** upon those individuals who were to lead the Church of the Old Testament, and in the Sanctuary it caused the light to burn and this light was never to be put out, but rather, it was to be **continuously burning**.

"Then Samuel took the horn of oil and anointed him (David) in the midst of his brethren: and the Spirit of the LORD came upon David from that day forward." **1 Samuel 16:13**

"And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying, Command the children of Israel, that they bring unto thee pure oil olive beaten for the light, to cause the lamps to burn continually." **Leviticus 24:1-2**

"There is treasure to be desired and oil in the dwelling of the wise, but a foolish man spendeth it up." **Proverbs 21:20**

"The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor..." **Luke 4:18**

The Holy Spirit is the oil that keeps our fires burning for the cause of Christ that we may let our lights shine always before men, that they may see our good works and give all glory to God. As David was anointed with the oil and thus, he received the Holy Spirit, likewise, when we accept Christ into our hearts and choose to be baptised in the name of God, the Holy Spirit also descends upon us as a dove like it did when Christ was baptised in His day.

Without this oil, the words of Holy Scripture are just words, and nothing more. We cannot discern the Word of God without the presence of the Spirit, for spiritual things are spiritually discerned, **1 Corinthians 2:11-14.**

Not only this but it is the Holy Spirit that works in us and transforms us into the image of Christ. It sanctifies us and renews us; it leads us into all truth. Without the presence of the oil, we cannot truly live a Christlike life. We need the anointing of the Holy Spirit upon our lives if we are to enter into the Kingdom of Heaven. See **1 Corinthians 6:11; 1 Peter 1:2; John 16:13; John 17:17.** We must be like the wise virgins for there is *"oil in the dwelling of the wise."*

In essence, Christ is saying to His people, that in the last days before He shall return, many in the Church will not receive the true sanctifying experience of the Holy Spirit in their lives, they will merely have *'a form of godliness but deny'* its power. **2nd Timothy 3:5.** May we, by His grace not be found in this category.

"While the Bridegroom tarried, they all slumbered and slept. And at midnight there was a cry made, Behold, the bridegroom cometh; go ye out to meet him." **Verse 5-6**

The virgins eventually fell asleep because there was a delay in the return of the Bridegroom. All the virgins professed to be looking for the 2nd Coming of Christ but because Christ, *by human standards*, was taking a long time, they all fell into a deep spiritual slumber. Faith was weakened and worldly practices came into the Church. Bible study was neglected, and Christians became stagnated because of the lack of spiritual growth. As a result, when the *loud cry message* goes forth, warning the world of the *'mark of the beast crisis'* and the *imminent return of Christ*, **Revelation 13:11-18; 14:6-12; 18:1-4**, many are caught by surprised and realise then that they are not ready.

*"In the parable, all the ten virgins went out to meet the bridegroom. All had lamps and vessels for oil. **For a time, there was seen no difference between them.** So, with the church that lives just before Christ's second coming. All have a knowledge of the Scriptures. All have heard the message of Christ's near approach, and confidently expect His appearing. But, as in the parable, so it is now. **A time of waiting intervenes, faith is tried; and when the cry is heard, "Behold, the Bridegroom cometh; go ye out to meet Him," many are unready. They have no oil in their vessels with their lamps. They are destitute of the Holy Spirit.**"* Christ's Object Lessons pg. 408

*"Then **all those virgins arose and trimmed their lamps.** And the foolish said unto the wise, Give us of your oil; for **our lamps are gone out.**"* **Verse 7-8**

The cry that Christ is soon to come will sound throughout all the world, *"to every nation and kindred and tongue and people"*, *"as a witness unto all nations"* before the end comes, **Matthew 24:14; Revelation 14:6.** The proclamation of the moral fall of Babylon, **Revelation 14:8**, the identity of the beast (*also called the Harlot*) and her associates, and the warning not to receive her mark, **Revelation 14:9-11; 17:1-6; 18:1-4**, will cause the entire Church to wake up and *"trim their lamps"*, that is, search the Scriptures and seek to understand the prophecies.

But like a lamp that cannot burn without oil and therefore gives no light, so, the foolish virgins, who have not been sanctified and transformed by the indwelling of the Holy Spirit, cannot shine the light of Christ in this dark period that is to come upon all who dwell upon the face of the earth. They have not yielded themselves to the Holy Spirit's working. They have not fallen upon the Rock, Christ Jesus, and permitted their old nature to be broken up.

*"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.**" Verse 9*

Seeing that they are not ready and that they have been **deceived** by their apostate ministers who preached only what they wanted to hear and not what they needed to hear, **2 Timothy 4:3-4**, the foolish virgins run to those who they now know to be preaching the truth, hoping that they can help them; they are now trying to find the oil in a time when oil is scarce. **Amos 8:11-12**.
But the answer to them is "go ye rather to them that sell and buy for yourselves."

Each individual must possess their own oil. They must each have a personal experience with Christ for themselves that they may each receive the presence of the Holy Spirit in them, for without the oil, our lamps will go out.

Without the sanctifying experience of the Holy Spirit in us, we will not be able to stand, for we are told by the Prophet Daniel, that it "shall be a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation even to that same time" before Christ comes again, **Daniel 12:1**. Christ confirms this by saying "then shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be. And except those days should be shortened, there should no flesh be saved: but for the elect's (wise virgin's) sake those days shall be shortened. **Matthew 24:21-22**. It is this time of trouble that Christ refers to as "midnight", **Matthew 25:6**.

*"...in spiritual things no man can make up another's deficiency. The grace of God has been freely offered to every soul. The message of the gospel has been heralded, "Let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely." **Revelation 22:17**. **But character is not transferable. No man can believe for another. No man can receive the Spirit for another. No man can impart to another the character which is the fruit of the Spirit's working.** "Though Noah, Daniel, and Job were in it [the land], as I live, saith the Lord God, they shall deliver neither son nor daughter; **they shall but deliver their own souls** by their righteousness." **Ezekiel 14:20**." Christ's Object Lessons pg. 411.*

*"The coming of the bridegroom was at midnight—the darkest hour. So, the coming of Christ will take place in the darkest period of this earth's history. The days of Noah and Lot pictured the condition of the world just before the coming of the Son of man. The Scriptures pointing forward to this time declare that Satan will work with all power and "with all deceivableness of unrighteousness." **2 Thessalonians 2:9-10**. His working is plainly revealed by the rapidly increasing darkness, the multitudinous errors, heresies, and delusions of these last days. Not only is Satan leading the world captive, but his deceptions are leavening the professed churches of our Lord Jesus Christ. The great apostasy will develop into darkness deep as midnight, impenetrable as sackcloth of hair. **To God's people it will be a night of trial, a night of weeping, a night of persecution for the truth's sake. But out of that night of darkness God's light will shine.**" Christ's Object Lessons pg. 414*

*"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." Verse 10*

After the time of tarry and delay, the Bridegroom finally arrives. He takes His people, *the wise virgins*, into the marriage with Him and **the door of probation is now shut forever**. Those that will be unholy shall remain so, those that are righteous shall so remain. **Revelation 22:11**.

These wise virgins had oil in their vessels, they daily surrendered all to Christ and allowed Him to work in their hearts, transforming them into His image; *"Behold, all things are made new"*. The oil caused their lamps to burn, and they went forth, shining their lights and leading others along the path that leads to life.

They were watching and preparing for the Coming of the Bridegroom. They were studying the Scriptures and the prophecies as a result they were able to discern that the time was near, that the time of judgment was coming to an end, and a definite reformation was needed in their lives. They were afflicting their souls, and confessing every known sin, striving by the grace of God to gain the victory over sin.

As a result, they received the seal of God in their foreheads and shall be protected in the day of God's wrath. **Revelation 7:1-3; 6:17**. They have gotten *"the victory over the beast, and over his image, and over his mark, and over the number of his name, Revelation 15:2*. They have been clothed in the wedding garment and thus have a right to the marriage supper of the Lamb, **Matthew 22:1-14; Revelation 19:7-8**. *"Blessed are they which are called unto the marriage supper of the Lamb", Revelation 19:9*.

This marriage here does not refer to the 2nd Coming, but rather to the time when Christ finishes His work of intercession, ceasing to be the High Priest. The judgment has ended, the gospel has gone to all nations, tribes and people and has accomplished its work. All have chosen a side, *life or death, Christ or satan, all the Saints have been made up*. Therefore, Christ presents Himself to the Father, to receive the Kingdom, so that He can now pour out the plagues of His judgment upon all the wicked, **Revelation 16**, *(like it was in the days Moses and the children of Israel)*, then He leaves the courts of Heaven with all the angels to gather His people. First, the dead in Christ, and those of us who are alive and remain, *the wise virgins* as it were, **Matthew 25:31; 2 Thessalonians 4:16-17**.

*"I beheld till the thrones were cast down (set in place), and the **Ancient of days (the Father)** did sit, whose garment was white as snow, and the hair of his head like the pure wool: his throne was like the fiery flame, and his wheels as burning fire. A fiery stream issued and came forth from before him: thousand thousands ministered unto him, and **ten thousand times ten thousand stood before him (multitudes of angels)**: the judgment was set, and the books were opened...I saw in the night visions, and behold, one like the **Son of man (Jesus)** came with the clouds of heaven and **came to the Ancient of days (Christ comes to the Father not to the earth)**, and they brought him near before Him. And **there was given Him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom (Christ receives the Kingdom from the Father, all the saints are made up, He is no longer High Priest, but King [Revelation 19:11-16])** that all people, nations, and languages, should serve him: His dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and His kingdom that which shall not be destroyed." **Daniel 7:9-10,13-14***

*"Let us be glad and rejoice and give honour to Him: for **the marriage of the Lamb is come, and His wife hath made herself ready**. And to her was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white: for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints. And he saith unto me, Write, **Blessed are they which are called unto the marriage supper of the Lamb.**" **Revelation 19:7-9***

*"The ten virgins are watching in the evening of this earth's history. All claim to be Christians. All have a call, a name, a lamp, and all profess to be doing God's service. All apparently wait for Christ's appearing. **But five are unready. Five will be found surprised, dismayed, outside the banquet hall.**"*
 Christ's Object Lessons, pg. 412

"Afterward came also the other virgins, saying, Lord, Lord, open to us. But He answered and said, Verily I say unto you, I know you not." Verse 11-12

Here is shown clearly that **not all who profess to be Christians are known by Christ**. Those who know the truth yet persist in sin and reject the will of the Father, are no children of God. They are simply living a lie; they have but a mere "form of godliness" but have not experienced the true sanctifying power of the Holy Spirit.

Notice the words of Christ:

"Not everyone that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven. Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity."
Matthew 7: 21-23

Christ's words could not be any clearer. No amount of prophesying, no amount of casting out of evil spirits and no amount of miracle working, makes one a child of God, but obedience. Obedience is better than sacrifice! To hearken better than the fat of lambs.

The foolish virgins knew the truth, after all, they are virgins. They professed a knowledge of the Word, but they did not live according to it. When light was brought before them, they, like the unfaithful servant said "my Lord delayeth His coming", therefore, they began to "eat and drink with the drunken (the wicked)", **Matthew 24:48-49**, as a result, Christ declares, "I know you not."

*"Saddest of all words that ever fell on mortal ear are those words of doom, "I know you not." The fellowship of the Spirit, which you have slighted, could alone make you one with the joyous throng at the marriage feast. **In that scene you cannot participate**. Its light would fall on blinded eyes, its melody upon deaf ears. Its love and joy could awake no chord of gladness in the world-benumbed heart. You are shut out from heaven by your own unfitness for its companionship."* Christ's Object Lessons, pg. 413

"We cannot be ready to meet the Lord by waking when the cry is heard, "Behold, the Bridegroom!" and then gathering up our empty lamps to have them replenished. We cannot keep Christ apart from our lives here, and yet be fitted for His companionship in Heaven.

In the parable the wise virgins had oil in their vessels with their lamps. Their light burned with undimmed flame through the night of watching. It helped to swell the illumination for the bridegroom's honour. Shining out in the darkness, it helped to illuminate the way to the home of the bridegroom, to the marriage feast.

*So, the followers of Christ are to shed light into the darkness of the world. **Through the Holy Spirit, God's word is a light as it becomes a transforming power in the life of the receiver. By implanting in their hearts, the principles of His word, the Holy Spirit develops in men the attributes of God.** The light of His glory—His character—is to shine forth in His followers. Thus, they are to glorify God, to lighten the path to the Bridegroom's home, to the city of God, to the marriage supper of the Lamb."*

Christ's Object Lessons, pg. 413-414

"Therefore, be ye also ready: for in such an hour as ye think not the Son of man cometh."

Matthew 24:14