

# The Parable of the Ten Virgins Matthew 25:1-13

by R.A. Torrey

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*The parable of the ten virgins teaches the importance of being prepared for the coming of Jesus Christ, and the consequences of delaying spiritual preparation.*

**Scripture:** Matthew 25:1

**Topics:** "Vigilance", "Preparedness"

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## Description

R.A. Torrey expounds on the Parable of the Ten Virgins, emphasizing the importance of being prepared for the coming of the Bridegroom, who represents Christ. The parable illustrates the distinction between the wise and foolish virgins, highlighting that outward appearances can be deceiving and that true readiness requires spiritual preparation symbolized by the oil in their lamps. Torrey warns that procrastination in spiritual matters can lead to dire consequences, as the foolish virgins found themselves shut out of the wedding feast when they were unprepared. The sermon calls believers to remain vigilant and ready for Christ's return, as the timing is uncertain and unexpected. Ultimately, the message is a call to personal responsibility in one's faith and readiness for the coming of the Lord.

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## Transcript

### DISCOVERY OF THE FACTS

1. While the Bridegroom Tarried, 1-5 To what time in the world's history does this parable refer? Upon what oriental custom is it founded? What is the central lesson that Jesus aimed to teach (v. 13)? Whom does the bridegroom represent? (John 3:28, 29; Eph. 5:25; 2 Cor. 11:2; Matt. 9:15; Rev. 21:9.) Who is represented as the bridegroom in the Old Testament? (Is. 54:5; 62:4, 5.) Is there any significance about that? Who is the bride? (Eph. 5:25.) What thought about Christ is set forth under this figure of a bridegroom? (Eph. 5:25, 28, 30, 31.)

Is the story of this bridegroom a romantic one? Who rejoices over the marriage? (Rev. 19:6, 7.) Is the bride as faithful as the bridegroom? Whom do the virgins represent? What was the attitude of the virgins toward the bridegroom's coming? What ought to be our attitude? (Titus 2:13; 2 Tim. 4:8; 2 Peter 3:12, 13 R. V.) What do the lamps represent? (c. 5:16; Luke 12:35; 2 Tim. 3:5.) Were all these virgins saved? What lesson is there in that? Into what two classes were the virgins divided?

In what respect did the wise differ from the foolish? Could any one see the difference? Of what is oil a symbol? (Acts 10:38; 1 John 2:20, 27; Ps. 45:7.) Had the five foolish virgins no oil at all (vv. 3, 4 and v. 8,

R. V.)? What is the lesson? Does this parable teach that one can have really been born again and yet after all be shut out and Christ say unto them, "I know you not"? (1 John 2:19; John 10:28; 2 Tim. 1:12; 4:18.) Can one have had some measure of the Holy Spirit and be lost? (Heb. 6:4-6.)

What is it said in v. 5 that the bridegroom did? Of what did Jesus mean to give a hint? Why did the servant in c. 24:48 fail? Why did the virgins here fail? Why does the bridegroom tarry? Does Jesus wish us to believe that He will come soon or that He will not come soon? (Mark 13:35.) While the bridegroom tarried what did the virgins do? Was it wise for the foolish virgins to go to sleep? Was it for the others? Did they fall fast asleep at once? 2. "Behold the Bridegroom Cometh," vv. 6-13 How were they awakened?

How will the sleeping church be aroused? (John 5:28, 29; 1 Thess. 4:16.) Why does the parable represent the cry being made at midnight? (24:44.) Will it be literally in the night? (Mark 13:35.) What other call in the Bible does this "Go ye out to meet Him" suggest? (Amos 4:12.) When does God say that? What did the virgins do then? What does that symbolize? In what predicament did the foolish find themselves? Why? What lesson does that teach? Were the wise in any way to blame?

What did the foolish do in their trouble? What does that represent? Did they find any help from the wise? Why not? Can the wisdom of one make up for the folly of another? (Ro. 14:12; Ps. 49:7-9; Jer. 15:1; Ezek. 14:14-16, 20; 1 Peter 4:18.) What did the wise tell them to do? Where is the oil to be bought? (Rev. 3:17, 18.) How much does it cost? (Is. 55:1.) Where was the difficulty with their going to buy? Did they follow the advice? Did it help them any? Why not? Where is the folly in putting off the preparation too long?

Who went into the marriage feast? How can we be made ready? (Col. 1:12.) How shall we be ready? (1 John 2:28; Rev. 19:7, 8; Heb. 12:14.) Was that marriage worth going to? (Rev. 19:9.) Of how earnest preparation is the marriage feast worthy? What happened when they had entered? Why was the door shut? What other instances have we of shut doors in the Bible? (Gen. 7:16; Num. 14:28-34; Heb. 12:16, 17.) Who is the door? (John 10:7.) To whom is it now open? (John 10:9.) Will it always be open?

Can anyone get in after it is once shut? (Luke 13:25-28.) What is the next scene in the parable? Did those virgins really wish to get in? Why did not they then? What answer did they get? Whom does God know? (John 10:27; 1 Cor. 8:3; 2 Tim. 2:19.) What is Christ's practical summing up of the teaching of the parable? Watch what or for what? Does this admonition apply to Christians? Did the wise and foolish virgins appear alike outwardly? Will hypocrites ever awaken to the difference between themselves and true professors? When? CLASSIFICATION OF TEACHINGS

## 1. Jesus Christ

His divinity:

Occupies the same place in New Testament thought that God occupies in Old Testament thought, 1; compare Is. 54:5; 62:4, 5.

The Bridegroom:

His wondrous, tender love for the church, 1; compare Eph. 5:25; His intimate union with the church, 1; compare Eph. 5:28-32.

He tarries:

Does not come as soon as expected, 5, but He is surely coming: At midnight, 6; suddenly, 6; unexpectedly, 6; while even those who went out to meet Him nodded and slept, 6; takes those who are ready at His coming with Him into the marriage supper, 10; shuts the door on those not ready, 10; will not open to the most urgent cry of those who come too late, 12.

## 2. The Wise Virgins

Took their lamps, 1; went forth to meet the bridegroom, 1; took oil in their vessels with their lamps, 4; nodded and slept while the bridegroom tarried, 5; suddenly awakened by the midnight cry, 6; called forth to meet the bridegroom, 6; arose and trimmed their lamps, 7; had only oil enough for themselves, 9; advised the foolish to go to them that sold to buy for themselves, 9; were ready, 10; went in with the bridegroom to the marriage, 10; were shut in, 10.

## 3. The Foolish Virgins

Took their lamps, 1; went forth to meet the bridegroom, 1; took no oil in their vessels with their lamps, 3; nodded and slept while the bridegroom tarried, 5; suddenly awakened by the midnight cry, 6; called forth to meet the bridegroom, 6; arose and trimmed their lamps, 7; expected to enter with the bridegroom unto the feast, 7; found their lamps were going out, 8 R. V.; asked the wise to supply them with needed oil, 8; unable to get oil from the wise virgins, 9; went to buy for themselves after the coming of the bridegroom was announced, 10; bridegroom came while they were getting oil, 10; were shut out, 10.

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