



CAPITOL COMMISSION

The King's Perfect Prediction: The Unprepared's Fate

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Matthew 25:1-13 *"Then the kingdom of heaven shall be like ten virgins, who, having taken their lamps, went out to a meeting of the bridegroom. 2) But five of them were foolish and five were prudent. 3) For the foolish ones in taking their lamps, did not take oil with them. 4) But the prudent ones took oil in their vessels with their lamps. 5) And while the bridegroom delayed, they all slumbered and slept; 6) But in the middle of the night there was a cry: 'Behold, the Bridegroom! Ye come out into His meeting!' 7) Then all those virgins got up and trimmed their lamps. 8) But the foolish ones said to the prudent, 'Give us from your oil because our lamps are being extinguished!' 9) But the prudent answered saying, 'Lest it will not possibly suffice for us and for you; ye go rather to the ones selling and buy for yourselves. 10) But while they were going away to buy, the bridegroom came and those ready entered in with him into the wedding feast, and the door was shut. 11) But later the remaining virgins came saying, 'Lord, Lord, open to us!' 12) But he, answering, said, 'Amen I say to you, I know you not!' 13) Therefore, ye watch because ye know not the day nor the hour."*

"THEY THAT WERE FOOLISH TOOK THEIR LAMPS OF AN OUTWARD PROFESSION. THEY WOULD GO TO CHURCH, SAY OVER SEVERAL MANUALS OF PRAYERS, COME PERHAPS INTO A FIELD TO HEAR A SERMON, GIVE AT A COLLECTION AND RECEIVE THE SACRAMENT CONSTANTLY . . . BUT THEN HERE LAY THE MISTAKE; THEY HAD NO OIL IN THEIR LAMPS, NO PRINCIPLE OF GRACE, NO LIVING FAITH IN THEIR HEARTS."

GEORGE WHITEFIELD

Why does Jesus use the number ten? Is Christ hinting that half of those professing His name will actually be unbelievers when He returns? How does prudence compare to wisdom? Is there an emphasis on night in Christ's descriptions of His return? Did the foolish virgins ever find any oil? What does their demand, "Lord, Lord, open to us!" assume? Why does the bridegroom not even claim to know the foolish virgins?

FOCUS ON FUTURE BIBLE STUDIES:

- APRIL 20-22: MATTHEW 25:14-30 THE KING'S PERFECT PREDICTION: HIS VERDICT ON TALENTS
- APRIL 27-29: MATTHEW 25:31-46 THE KING'S PERFECT PREDICTION: JUDGING THE NATIONS

Jesus had already warned of the danger of an empty profession on numerous occasions. He first spoke of His leaders who were so religious in Matthew 5:20, "For I tell you that unless your righteousness exceeds that of the scribes and the Pharisees, you shall not possibly enter the kingdom of heaven." He continued later in the same sermon, "Thus, you will recognize them by their fruits. Not everyone who says to Me, 'Lord, Lord,' shall enter the kingdom of heaven; but he who does the will of My Father who is in heaven. Many will say to Me in that day, 'Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in Your name, and in Your name cast out demons, and do many mighty works in Your name?' And then will I declare to them, I never knew you; depart from me, you workers of lawlessness" (Mt. 7:20-23). Christ had spoken of the seed sown on stony ground where it immediately sprang up, but withered in trials (Mt. 13:5-6, 20-21). Then He taught concerning the thorny ground where it was choked by the cares of this world and the deceitfulness of riches (Mt. 13:7, 22). But most similar in meaning to this parable is that of the wheat and the tares where both looked exactly alike until the end (Mt. 13:24-30, 37-43). However the closest analogy to the arrogance of these foolish virgins is that of the man who would not wear the wedding garment provided at the wedding feast (Mt. 22:11-14). All of these were among the righteous and appeared to be righteous until the end when they were proven to have stubbornly done their own will rather than submitting to the will of the Father.

"THEY HAD A FORM OF GODLINESS BUT HAD NO SPIRITUAL LIFE OR POWER BECAUSE THEY DID NOT BELONG TO GOD (CF. 2 TIM. 3:5)." JOHN MACARTHUR

BIBLE STUDIES

THURSDAY @ 6:30AM – INTERCESSORY PRAYER – GAB 3RD FLOOR WEST CONFERENCE ROOM
THURSDAY @ 7:00AM – BIBLE STUDY – GAB 3RD FLOOR WEST CONFERENCE ROOM
THURSDAY @ 12:00NOON – BIBLE STUDY – WYTESTONE PLAZA AT 8TH & MAIN 2ND FLOOR CONFERENCE ROOM

Virginia

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I. AN ARROGANT ASSUMPTION MT. 25:1-4

Jesus Christ likens His kingdom future kingdom and coming to the preparedness of certain bridesmaids for the bridal procession led by the exultant bridegroom under the cover of darkness. In the final phase of their elaborate wedding customs, the bridegroom would finally lead his bride in a formal procession to his own home, prepared during the betrothal period, and rejoice together at the wedding feast with the wedding party, and then enjoy consummation of their marriage. Everyone knew that the bridegroom could come at any time during the night. The only responsibility of the bridesmaids in the bridal procession was to be clothed properly and have their lamp burning whenever the bridegroom arrived for that final joyous parade in the night as they escorted the married couple to their new home. The foolish bridesmaids had arrogantly assumed that they knew the timing of his coming and that it would be early in the night, so they considered some additional oil in a separate vessel to be unnecessary. As long as his will conformed to theirs, all would be fine.

"NIGHT IS PUT FOR IGNORANCE. A MAN MAKES AS IT WERE CALCULATIONS WITH HIMSELF; 'LO, SO MANY YEARS HAVE PASSED SINCE ADAM, AND THE SIX THOUSAND YEARS ARE BEING COMPLETED, AND THEN IMMEDIATELY ACCORDING TO THE COMPUTATION OF CERTAIN EXPOSITORS, THE DAY OF JUDGMENT WILL COME.'" ST. AUGUSTINE (354-430 A.D.)

II. A DISTINGUISHING DELAY MT. 25:5-9

All the virgins must have assumed that they were adequately prepared because, "*while the bridegroom delayed, they all slumbered and slept.*" The same verb for "*delayed*" is found in 24:48, but the evil slave has the opposite expectation than the virgins and thinks it will be later. Little did the foolish bridesmaids know that they were squandering their only opportunity to be prepared for the coming of the bridegroom. The longer

they slept, the less they were prepared because the oil continued to burn out of their lamps and they had none to replace it. Also, the later the night, the less chance they would be able to find some oil. But their blissful unconcern is suddenly interrupted with a shout. "*In the middle of the night there was a cry: 'Behold, the Bridegroom! Ye come out into His meeting!'*" Immediately the girls burst into action, and as they were all trimming the wicks of their lamps, half of them realized their foolishness in neglecting to bring additional oil. So they placed their dependence and trust in the prudent and asked for their oil. Jesus gives, in their answer, the strongest negation available in the Greek language, "*Lest it will not possibly suffice for us and for you; ye go rather to the one's selling and buy for yourselves.*" They are now desperate for oil and risk missing everything!

"WHEN THE CALL TO THE JUDGMENT SEAT OF GOD COMES TO AN UNBELIEVER, WHETHER AT DEATH OR AT THE LORD'S COMING, THE INTERCESSION OF ALL THE SAINTS IN HEAVEN AND ON EARTH COULD DO HIM ABSOLUTELY NO GOOD. AFTER THAT TIME THERE IS NO SECOND CHANCE, NO PARGATORY, NO HOPE."

JOHN MACARTHUR

III. AN ETERNAL EXCLUSION MT. 25:10-13

Even as they ran away to get oil elsewhere, "*the bridegroom came and the ready entered in with him to the wedding feast, and the door was shut.*" They found no oil or they would have said so. Finally they address him with the title of authority they should have embraced all along and say, "*Lord, Lord*" but only to give him their command "*open to us!*" Nothing has changed; they acknowledge his authority in order that he do their will. "*They profess that they know God, but in works they deny Him*" (Tit. 1:16). Such hypocrites do not belong in His presence. "*Amen I say to you, I know you not!*" Watching includes not only receiving Jesus Christ as Savior, but also expectant, obedient submission to Him as Lord.

Questions to Ponder:

- 1) Whose will are you accomplishing today, yours or God's?
- 2) Is your relationship with God characterized by an empty profession from long ago, or your living obedience to Him today?
- 3) How are you using these opportunities to prepare for Jesus' coming while He is delaying?