



PROPER 27 ARTICLE NO. 2005.916
Gospel Mt 25:1-13

The Parable of the Lamps

Matthew chapter 25 verses 1 through 13



Then shall the kingdom of heaven be likened unto ten virgins, which took their lamps, and went forth to meet the bridegroom. And five of them were wise, and five were foolish. They that were foolish took their lamps, and took no oil with them: But the wise took oil in their vessels with their lamps.

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. 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. 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. 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. 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. Watch therefore, for ye know neither the day nor the hour wherein the Son of man cometh.

Much of this tract is commentary - don't take it as Gospel. It is here to encourage meditation and study. Use your gift of discernment, to find the truth.

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Matthew chapter 25 verses 1 through 13

Then - At the time of the Parousia.

The ten virgins - these were probably the saints (men) who had been chaste their entire lives (cf. Re 14:4) for the sake of the Gospel, and are 'betrothed' to Christ.

took their lamps and went forth - the lamps are the hearts of the saints which have the light of Christ inside them, (the understanding of the way), and are were to shine this light unto the world. They have been on a journey of Faith (the way) and this spiritual journey is to prepare them for the marriage chamber (cf. Proper 23). The oil represents the source of their light - the grace they had acquired as a result of the good use to which they had put God's gifts to them (good works they had done). And the vessel is the body that holds the additional oil (the graces that had gained).

The anticipated return of Christ (bridegroom) was delayed. They all became drowsy and fell asleep. At night when the rest of the world was asleep, the saints - who were expecting a call, heard the warning shout that He was coming (read the Epistle 1 Th 4:13-18) and they arose (either from sleep or from death), and they *trimmed their lamp* (So that Christ could see them in the dark - but meaning that He would see that were expecting Him, were ready for Him, that they still had oil, after all this time of waiting - showing that His grace had been multiplied while He was gone (the additional oil).

Additional Comments

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The unprepared saints - *the foolish* (cf. thou wicked and slothful servant of Proper 28) who had no oil left (no additional graces) wanted to take credit for some of the work that the others had done, but the others refused, saying that they had barely enough to justify themselves (get their wedding garments - see proper 23). And the wise saints sarcastically told the foolish: *Not so; ... go ye rather to them that sell, and buy for yourselves.*, but of course only the foolish would try this, for grace cannot be obtained from anyone but God, and when the foolish returned and tried to enter the wedding feast, it was too late. The door was barred against anyone without a light.
(light meaning understanding)

Watch therefore (be vigilant, persevere, hold on to the end, lose not your faith, do good works), *for ye know neither the day nor the hour wherein the Son of man cometh.*

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This is another of Matthew's parables that talk about the unanticipated delay of Christ's return, and how the saints must hold fast to the faith, and continue to do the things that Christ has asked of them. This parable is a warning about what happens if you become unfaithful and do not persevere in understanding of the scriptures, and doing good works.

We are much more aware of the delay than the saints of AD 70, yet it is this very knowledge that causes us to procrastinate in our studies. We always are too busy to do the work that Christ has asked us to do. We never seem to be able to get time to go to Sunday school, proper studies, nor to read the gospels or the writings of the Church Fathers. And when was the last time you had a long and deep discussion with your friends about the Gospel?

We think that we have all the time in the world to get ready, and that one day we can retire and 'catch up'. But we may be like the foolish virgins and be found wanting when the day comes.

This parable says that you will not get into heaven if you are unprepared. Here 50% of the **saints** who had dedicated their life to Christ, initially, but did nothing to build on their faith, had no other grace from Christ than the those received at Baptism. They were like the servant (cf. proper 28) who had one talent and buried it in the earth - Christ cast him out into utter darkness.

Remember Matthew's favorite saying? For many are called but few are chosen (cf. proper 23).

You may think that all who have accepted Christ and been baptized will be saved, regardless of what is done between now and the Parousia, but these parables say otherwise. Christ can make an exception for you? See what happened to the gate crasher at the final marriage (Proper 23)..

You know what to do - do it!

The Views expressed here are strictly those of the author and probably disagree with what you have previously thought. Read other commentaries - meditate on the original KJV.