

Sunday July 5<sup>th</sup> 2015  
Matthew Chapters 24-25  
Part Four

1). Mt 25:1 ¶ *"Then the kingdom of heaven shall be likened to ten virgins who took their lamps and went out to meet the bridegroom. 2 "Now five of them were wise, and five were foolish.*

a). As we begin this parable in Matthew Chapter 25 we should note that the word, 'Then' is a translation of a correlative adverb in the Greek – which means it is a word that directly connects this parable with the parables that have come before it – this parable then deals with the same time, the same conditions, the same circumstances and the same individuals that are seen in the previous parables – Therefore the 5 wise and the 5 foolish virgins correspond exactly to the one taken and the one left, to the one whose house is preserved and the one whose house is broken up and to the faithful and wise servant and the evil servant and the timeframe and the context throughout have to do with this present dispensation and with the Christian's present race of the faith with a view to a position of rulership in the Millennial Kingdom which is to follow.

b). And so, if we can take the liberty, we could say it this way, 'Then all the parables that have come before this one, that have to do with rulership from the heavens over the earth during the Millennial Kingdom, shall be likened to ten virgins.....'

c). The parable of the 10 virgins then provides more detail to all that which we have seen thus far, introducing here the prospective marriage relationship that awaits the faithful. And this marriage relationship is something that must be brought into the picture which has been given to us through the previous parables because of that which is clearly stated in Genesis – Ge 1:27 *So God created man in His own image; in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them. 28 Then God blessed them, and God said to them, "Be fruitful and multiply; fill the earth and subdue it; have dominion*

Rulership in the Millennial Kingdom, as we know, must take place within a marriage relationship - Christ and His Bride - and those who will make up the Bride will be His faithful household servants, those who have watched,

prepared and prayed; those pictured through the one taken alongside as an intimate companion and the faithful and wise servant providing 'meat' in due season.

d). As our next parable begins then we see that there are 10 virgins, 10 being the number of ordinal completion indicating that this is all of the virgins and therefore all Christians, and we see that they all, the wise and the foolish, have lamps which contain oil and they all take their lamps as they go out to meet the Bridegroom.

e). Now the first thing to note here is that going out to meet the Bridegroom is not a reference to the resurrection/rapture of the Church, but rather to the period of time leading up to that event. In this sense each and every one of us is in the process of going out to meet the Bridegroom, a meeting to take place in a day yet future at His Judgment Seat.

f). And we see that in relation to going out to meet the Bridegroom, with regard to the activity which is to take place during this present dispensation so as to be ready for that meeting, 5 of the virgins are wise and 5 are foolish.

g). And as with the words, 'taken' and 'left', 'wise' and 'foolish' are set as complete opposites, with the word foolish being a translation of the Greek word 'moros' from which we get our English word 'moron' – I think the picture should be pretty clear.

2). Mt 25:3 *"Those who were foolish took their lamps and took no oil with them, 4 "but the wise took oil in their vessels with their lamps. 5 "But while the bridegroom was delayed, they all slumbered and slept. 6 "And at midnight a cry was heard: 'Behold, the bridegroom is coming; go out to meet him!'"*

a). Now, the first thing we will want to note from these verses is that both the wise and the foolish have lamps and that they all have oil in their lamps; the difference that exists between them is in the wise having an extra supply of oil in their vessels which the foolish do not.

b). Symbolically, oil in scripture is used as a picture of the Holy Spirit and with this picture in place it is a simple thing to understand what these verses are teaching – Both the wise and the foolish have oil in their lamp; a reference to all Christians being indwelt by the Holy Spirit at the time of their eternal salvation, but not all Christians are continually filled with the Spirit beyond that point – not all Christians have the extra supply of oil in their vessels.

c). Having the extra supply of oil is the same as being continually filled with the Spirit, something we are admonished to do in - Eph 5:17 *Therefore do*

*not be unwise, but understand what the will of the Lord is. 18 And do not be drunk with wine, in which is dissipation; but be filled [Lit. 'be continually filled'] with the Spirit, 19 speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord, 20 giving thanks always for all things to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ,*

d). And the means by which we are to be continually filled with the Spirit is given to us in the Book of Colossians, the companion Book to Ephesians – Col 3:16 *Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom, teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord.*

The 'word of Christ', is the word concerning the Christ, or to say it another way, the Word of the Kingdom – We are then to be continually filled with the Spirit through continually receiving the Word of the Kingdom, something which can only come about through our correct engagement with the scriptures after the fashion in which the Lord has instructed us.

e). Keep in mind, in connection with this, that which we see in – 2Ti 3:16 *All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, [Lit. 'is God breathed', 'is the Spirit of God'] and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, 17 that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work.*

Ro 10:17 *So then [the] faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.*

Jas 1:21 *Therefore lay aside all filthiness and overflow of wickedness, and receive with meekness the implanted word, which is able to save your souls.*

f). So then, those who are wise will continually and consistently hear, study, read, pray over and act upon the scriptures thereby allowing the Holy Spirit to guide them into all truth concerning Christ and His coming Kingdom, which means that they are continually watching and continually preparing. The foolish however, will not do this, focusing instead on other things that divert them from these tasks, causing them to be more concerned with their present than with the future meeting with the Bridegroom.

g). Now v5 often causes a great deal of confusion - *"But while the bridegroom was delayed, they all slumbered and slept.* Firstly, the Bridegroom being delayed does not say what the words seem to suggest – Christ's return for His Church is not delayed and will be exactly and precisely on time. The word translated 'delayed' speaks rather of the period of time during which the

Bridegroom is absent, which would of course be the 2000 years of this dispensation.

h). And we must approach the idea of 'they all slumbered and slept' after a similar fashion. Quite simply that contained in the idea of slumbering and sleeping during the time of preparation for the Bridegroom's return, if taken literally, would constitute unfaithfulness and clearly from the context in which this verse appears the wise virgins are seen to be faithful throughout – it is only the foolish who are seen as unfaithful. So, how should we understand this? Firstly, let's remember what we saw with regards to the one taken and the one left – Mt 24:40 *"Then two men will be in the field: one will be taken and the other left. 41 "Two women will be grinding at the mill: one will be taken and the other left.*

All Christians are seen in these verses within a common experience, their everyday activity, working in the field and grinding at the mill, and within that every day, common experience some are shown to have been faithful and some unfaithful, and it is this idea of an experience common to all Christians that explains for us the phrase, 'slumbered and slept' – this is not as a reference to sleeping, we all need our 8 hours, but a reference to that pictured through the time when slumbering and sleeping takes place – at night, when it is dark – 1Th 5:4 *But you, brethren, are not in darkness, so that this Day should overtake you as a thief. 5 You are all sons of light and sons of the day. We are not of the night nor of darkness. 6 ¶ Therefore let us not sleep, as others do, but let us watch and be sober. 7 For those who sleep, sleep at night, and those who get drunk are drunk at night. 8 But let us who are of the day be sober, putting on the breastplate of faith and love, and as a helmet the hope of salvation.*

i). We all, both the faithful and the unfaithful, live in a time of 'spiritual darkness', a time ruled over by Satan and his angels - Eph 6:12 *For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against **the rulers of the darkness of this age**, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places.*

j). And this darkness in its present form has existed ever since the Light of the World left following His resurrection, something that the scriptures draw attention to in the account of the last supper prior to the Lord's betrayal in - Joh 13:30 *Having received the piece of bread, he [Judas] then went out immediately. And it was night.*

k). So then, we should understand that during the time that the Bridegroom is absent it is a time of spiritual darkness, governed by the heavenly powers associated with that darkness and living through this time of

darkness is the common experience of both the faithful and the unfaithful Christian – with this in mind we begin to understand the importance of the lamp that each of us has been given in order to give light in the midst of that darkness – Ps 119:105 ¶¶ NUN. *Your word is a lamp to my feet And a light to my path.*

Pr 6:23 *For the commandment is a lamp, And the law a light; Reproofs of instruction are the way of life,*

It is the Word of God alone then that can provide the required light for us to navigate our way through this time of present darkness and to take this back to where we were in Ephesians and Colossians, it is only the word concerning the Christ, the Word of the Kingdom, with which we are to be continually filled, that provides the extra supply of oil that can provide that light.

1). Without this light it is impossible to see where we are going and impossible to find our way around every obstacle that our enemy will place in front of us.

3). We will keep all this in mind as we now come to Matthew 25:6 *"And at midnight a cry was heard: 'Behold, the bridegroom is coming; go out to meet him!'*

a). Once again we are hindered by a poor translation – what we have here is not a cry that is given at ‘midnight’, but rather a cry concerning ‘midnight’.

b). Midnight in scripture is used to picture judgement, as can be seen from its first use in - Ex 12:29 ¶¶ *And it came to pass at **midnight** that the LORD struck all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, from the firstborn of Pharaoh who sat on his throne to the firstborn of the captive who was in the dungeon, and all the firstborn of livestock.*

Something we can see again from its use in the Book of Ruth - Ru 3:8 *Now it happened at **midnight** that the man was startled, and turned himself; and there, a woman was lying at his feet.*

c). This is a cry then that is both an exhortation and a warning, calling upon all Christians to make the necessary preparations for their meeting with the Bridegroom on His threshing floor at midnight. In this sense this cry has been given throughout the entire course of this present dispensation and is being sounded again in this place even today.

d). And given the verb tense used in the Greek language for the phrase translated, ‘go out to meet him’, we must understand that this tells us to

continually go out to meet Him, to be continually preparing, to continually be getting ready – all of the time, consistently, without ceasing. This is not to be taken casually.

e). Not taken casually, especially as we consider that in this parable both the wise and the foolish hear this cry, they all hear the news concerning the Judgment Seat of Christ and His Kingdom which will follow – and this is not something that is true for all those throughout Christendom within the Laodicean period of the Church as we find it today. Most Christians today are just not being told about these things and therefore have absolutely no idea that they need to be preparing or any clue as to what those preparations should look like.

f). So, what does this mean? It means that what we see in this parable is really only applicable to groups such as this, those who are consistently hearing the Word of the Kingdom – it also means that there could only be wise and foolish virgins sitting in this room right now. Being here and hearing this is of incredible importance, but of more importance still is what we choose to do afterwards, because that will determine whether we are wise or a moron – Pr 11:30 ¶ *The fruit of the righteous is a tree of life, And he who wins souls is wise.*

g). The question to be answered then is, ‘Do we want to be taken or do we want to be left?’ And perhaps more importantly still, ‘What are we going to do about it?’

4). Mt 25:7 *"Then all those virgins arose and trimmed their lamps. 8 "And the foolish said to the wise, 'Give us some of your oil, for our lamps are going out.' 9 "But the wise answered, saying, 'No, lest there should not be enough for us and you; but go rather to those who sell, and buy for yourselves.' 10 "And while they went to buy, the bridegroom came, and those who were ready went in with him to the wedding; and the door was shut.*

a). As we read these verses let's please keep in mind that we are looking at a parable and what we see here is not to be taken literally – unfaithful Christians won't be coming to us asking for some of our oil – what we are looking at here has to do with being prepared or unprepared for the Bridegroom's coming.

b). The foolish virgins' lamps are going out, that which they received through the indwelling of the Holy Spirit at the point of their eternal salvation is insufficient of itself to allow them to navigate through the darkness of this age – if they do not see the way they should go because they are enveloped in

darkness they will be heading in a completely wrong direction with disaster awaiting them.

c). And this is essentially what we are seeing in these verses – the wise are prepared whereas the foolish are unprepared and when the Bridegroom came, now picturing the resurrection/rapture, only those who were prepared, who were ready, the wise, went in with Him to the wedding.

d). And once those who were prepared had entered ‘the door was shut’ Re 3:7 ¶ *"And to the angel of the church in Philadelphia write, 'These things says He who is holy, He who is true, 'He who has the key of David, He who opens and no one shuts, and shuts and no one opens'":*

e). In one sense the door to the Kingdom of the Heavens is now open in readiness for those who will enter in, but the day is soon coming when that door will be shut and once it is shut no one will be able to open it – the very thing that we see with regards to the foolish virgins - Mt 25:11 *"Afterward the other virgins came also, saying, 'Lord, Lord, open to us!' 12 "But he answered and said, 'Assuredly, I say to you, I do not know you.'*

f). Now, the Lord being omniscient means that He knows perfectly well who these ‘other virgins’ are, but He does not know them with respect to faithfulness and a position with Him in His Kingdom - Mt 7:22 *"Many will say to Me in that day, 'Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Your name, cast out demons in Your name, and done many wonders in Your name?' 23 "And then I will declare to them, 'I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness!' 24 "Therefore whoever hears these sayings of Mine, and does them, I will liken him to a wise man who built his house on the rock: 25 "and the rain descended, the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house; and it did not fall, for it was founded on the rock. 26 "But everyone who hears these sayings of Mine, and does not do them, will be like a foolish man who built his house on the sand: 27 "and the rain descended, the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house; and it fell. And great was its fall."*

5). Then as we come to the end of this parable we find once again a familiar admonition - Mt 25:13 *"Watch therefore, for you know neither the day nor the hour in which the Son of Man is coming.*

a). And just so that we might appreciate again the importance of this let’s go to the Judgment Seat of Christ - Re 3:1 ¶ *"And to the angel of the church in Sardis write, 'These things says He who has the seven Spirits of God and the seven stars: "I know your works, that you have a name that you are alive, but you are dead.2 "Be watchful, and strengthen the things which remain, that are*

*ready to die, for I have not found your works perfect before God. 3 "Remember therefore how you have received and heard; hold fast and repent. Therefore if you will not watch, I will come upon you as a thief, and you will not know what hour I will come upon you.*

Nothing good is ever said of the arrival of a thief, we will remember from an earlier study of a previous parable how in that parable the house is broken up following the thief's arrival – and the consequence for watching or not watching is equally unambiguous - Re 3:5 *"He who overcomes shall be clothed in white garments, and I will not blot out his name from the Book of Life; but I will confess his name before My Father and before His angels.*

6). Mt 25:14 ¶ *"For the kingdom of heaven is like a man traveling to a far country, who called his own servants and delivered his goods to them.*

a). Two things that we need to note as we begin this next parable – firstly the words underlined here have been added by the translators and are not present in the original manuscripts and secondly that this is a parable that is to be seen alongside the previous parables.

b). Without going into the details of the Greek language at the beginning of v14, suffice it to say that a more accurate translation of what is found here would be, 'For it [the previous parable] is just as a man travelling to a far country.....'

c). The 'man' in this parable is the 'bridegroom' from the previous parable and 'the master of the household' from earlier and the time period covered in this parable is the same as that covered in the parable of the 10 virgins and the other parables – it is the time when the 'man' is absent, and it deals once again with what is to be done by 'his own servants' during the time of his absence in anticipation of his return.

d). Here we see that the 'Man' calls all His own servants and delivers His goods to them in order that they should carry out His business during the time of His absence.

e). If we connect this back to the parable of the 10 virgins we will realize that it can only be those who are continually making the proper preparations, who are continually watching and continually making themselves ready, who are continually being filled with the Spirit who can be in any position to carry out the Lord's business until he returns.

f). And within the parable of the Talents we are shown 3 individuals, who are representative of all Christians - Mt 25:15 *"And to one he gave five*

*talents, to another two, and to another one, to each according to his own ability; and immediately he went on a journey.*

And what we will want to note here is that it is not the amount that the Lord gives to each servant that determines the outcome for them but rather what they then do with what they are given.

g). Mt 25:16 *"Then he who had received the five talents went and traded with them, and made another five talents. 17 "And likewise he who had received two gained two more also. 18 "But he who had received one went and dug in the ground, and hid his lord's money.*

We see then that the first 2 servants make a profit of 100% on that which they are given and as we would think about this it will inevitably lead us to the parables in Matthew Chapter 13, remembering that the context for these parables is clearly stated in - Mt 13:19 *"When anyone hears the word of the kingdom,*

*With this in mind we then find this - Mt 13:23 "But he who received seed on the good ground is he who hears the word and understands it, who indeed bears fruit and produces: some a hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty."*

h). Trading with the talents and producing fruit are just 2 ways of saying the same thing – that which the Lord has given us, His Word, must be heard, believed and acted upon thereby producing a harvest in our lives, just as we see here with Abraham in – Jas 2:23 *And the Scripture was fulfilled which says, "Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness." And he was called the friend of God.*

i). And in conjunction with this verse from James we will remember the Lord's command given to us in - Mt 6:33 *"But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you.*

j). We will pick this up again next time – if the Lord is willing.