



Kingdom Preparation

Matthew 25:1-13

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How to Prepare

Begin preparing by reading the full passage a few times. Then answer the questions for yourself. Then think about how your Small Group might answer them. Try re-wording the questions to fit you and your Small Group. Don't feel tied down to the discussion guide, just be sure to discuss the main point of the text in your conversations.

Resources-

<https://www.gotquestions.org/marriage-customs.html>

<https://www.gotquestions.org/Jewish-wedding-traditions.html>

<https://biblehub.com/commentaries/barnes/matthew/25.htm>

Discussion Guide Outline:

Matthew 25:1-13

1. The Preparation for the Wedding Celebration. Vv. 1-5
2. The Urgency of the Bridegroom's Arrival. Vv. 6-9
3. The Plight of the Unprepared. Vv. 10-13

Matthew 25:1-13

Parable of Ten Virgins

1 "Then the kingdom of heaven will be comparable to ten virgins, who took their lamps and went out to meet the bridegroom.

2 Five of them were foolish, and five were prudent.

3 For when the foolish took their lamps, they took no oil with them,

4 but the prudent took oil in flasks along with their lamps.

5 Now while the bridegroom was delaying, they all got drowsy and began to sleep.

6 But at midnight there was a shout, 'Behold, the bridegroom! Come out to meet him.'

7 Then all those virgins rose and trimmed their lamps.

8 The foolish said to the prudent, 'Give us some of your oil, for our lamps are going out.'

9 But the prudent answered, 'No, there will not be enough for us and you too; go instead to the dealers and buy some for yourselves.'

10 And while they were going away to make the purchase, the bridegroom came, and those who were ready went in with him to the wedding feast; and the door was shut.

11 Later the other virgins also came, saying, 'Lord, lord, open up for us.'

12 But he answered, 'Truly I say to you, I do not know you.'

13 Be on the alert then, for you do not know the day nor the hour.

Discussion Questions

Ask a volunteer to read Matthew 25:1-13.

INTRODUCTION AND MAIN IDEA

1. What event in your life required the most preparation? How much time or talent did it require? How much sleep did you lose in anticipation of the event?

UNDERSTANDING AND APPLICATION

These questions should help your Small Group dig deeper into the text and then apply it to your lives today.

I. The Preparation for the Wedding Celebration. Vv. 1-5

2. Why is JESUS using the imagery of a wedding in relation to the KING returning? (Rev. 19:7-9)

"The Mishnah Kiddushin (the section of the Talmud dealing with "dedication" or betrothal) specifies that a bride is acquired by a groom in one of three ways; one involves the groom leaving his father's home and traveling to the bride's home to "purchase" her for a price. The groom gives a token or a dowry, and its value must be known to the bride. In all cases, the wife can only be acquired with her consent. The marriage contract, or ketubah, is then established, and from that moment on the bride is sanctified, or set apart, exclusively for her bridegroom. It is customary for the groom and bride to drink from a cup of wine over which a betrothal benediction has been said." (gotquestions.org: parallels Jewish wedding traditions/relationship w/Christ)

3. What are the differences and commonalities of the bridesmaids? What is JESUS saying about the Church? (Prov. 1:7, 28:23, 26) How can we be prepared and prevent getting "drowsy"? (Rev. 3:3, 16:15, 1 Peter 4:7-10, Luke 12:35-36)

4. What do the "torches" have to do with preparedness for the coming KING? (Matt. 5:15-16)

II. The Urgency of the Bridegroom's Arrival. Vv. 6-9

5. Why is the BRIDEGROOM going to come seemingly unexpected? (2 Peter 3:10-13)

6. How does the uncertainty of the Second Advent affect our preparedness? What does (oil in flasks) preparing for CHRIST's return mean? (Prov. 4:23)

7. What did the unwise five presume about the wise five? What does that tell us about the invitation of the BRIDEGROOM? What is the sin of presumption? (Ps. 19:12-13; Num. 15:30-31; James 4:13-17)

III. The Plight of the Unprepared. Vv. 10-13

8. What truly is the greatest event we face between now and eternity? How do we prepare for it? (John 3:16)

9. If "believing" is all that is required for entrance into GOD's presence then why didn't the five foolish get to "go in"? (Matt. 7:13-14)

10. What is the difference between "believing" and "worshiping in spirit and truth"? (John 4:23-24)

Commentary (from ESV Study Bible)

Matt. 25:1 the kingdom of heaven will be like. See notes on 3:2; 13:24. ten virgins. Bridesmaids. bridegroom. As God referred to himself as the “husband” of Israel in the OT (e.g., Isa. 54:4–6), so Jesus pictures himself here as a bridegroom (cf. Matt. 9:14–15). It was the Jewish marriage custom (cf. 1:18) for the groom and his friends to leave his home and proceed to the home of the bride, where the marriage ceremony was conducted, often at night. After this, the entire wedding party returned to the groom’s home for a celebratory banquet.

Matt. 25:3–4 lamps. Large dome-shaped torches, fueled by rags soaked in oil and used for walking outside. oil. With extra containers of oil, the torches could last for several hours.

Matt. 25:9–10 not be enough for us and for you. Torches required regular refilling. those who were ready. It was the responsibility of each person to be prepared individually to go with the bridegroom to the wedding banquet.

Matt. 25:11–12 I do not know you. The OT speaks of God “knowing” his chosen people (Jer. 1:5; Hos. 13:5; Amos 3:2). The same theme continues in the NT, where it describes a saving relationship with God through Jesus Christ (cf. Gal. 4:8–9; 2 Tim. 2:19).

Matt. 25:13 Watch therefore. The point of the parable is that disciples must “watch correctly” in order to be properly prepared and ready to accompany the Son of Man when he returns. you know neither the day nor the hour. See note on 24:42.