

Introduction:

- We began chapter 24 with two questions posed by the disciples: When will this happen? Regarding destruction of Jerusalem. And What will be the sign of your return (parousia)? Jesus gives signs leading up to destruction of Jerusalem. But regarding the second question he gives no sign. What he does give them is this: three short sayings which communicate the following.
 - The time of the parousia is unknown vs. 26
 - Therefore it will catch many people unaware. vs. 37-41
 - Therefore disciples of Christ must always live prepared. 42-44
- After the three short sayings driving home the three points just given, Jesus now launches into three lengthy parables to make the same point!
- The summary of 24:36-44 is summed up and the stage is set for the next sections. *"You also must be ready all the time, for the Son of Man will come when least expected."* (Matthew 24:44, NLT) Jesus now in the following verses begins to lay out how the disciple is to live prepared.
- Last week: The Sensible Servant, The Sensible Steward, The Sinister Servant.
- You must be ready is the message.

I. Overview Of the Parable of the 10 Bridesmaids

- This chapter begins with the second of three parables about being ready. The setting is one of a more social flavor.
- There are two parties to this story. A bridegroom and 10 young girls.
- Again, as in the prior parable and also Jesus dialogue with the disciples, DELAY is a major part of the parable. We do not know why? That is not important. What is important is the delay and how it affects readiness.
- The story ends with the eschatological door being closed and part of the girls shut out.
- The Bridegrooms words, "I don't know you!" Reverberates MT 7:21-23
- "But the point is simply that readiness, whatever form it takes, is not something that can be achieved by a last-minute adjustment. It depends on long-term provision, and if that has been made, the wise disciple can sleep secure in the knowledge that everything is ready." France, R. T. (2007). Matthew (p. 947). Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publication Co.
- Verse 13 and 24:42 appear to almost be repeats of one another. *"So you, too, must keep watch! For you do not know the day or hour of my return."* (Matthew 25:13, NLT) Sleeping is not the issue of the parable but being ready is the resounding theme.

II. The Kingdom of Heaven Is Like

- An interesting start. *"Then Kingdom of Heaven will be like..."* Unlike the past references that Jesus used this one is in the future tense. Prior it was aorist tense (meaning that action had taken place with continuing results. The future tense speaks not of how things are now but how they will be at the coming of the Son of God.
 - You cannot be ready now and get ready.
 - Or you could be ready now and not ready later.

3. The point again is that this is a future event and that what you do now determines the outcome of the story.
- B. An interesting 'Then'
1. Because Matthew uses the word, "Then" to start this parable it is clear he is referring back to the day and hour which Jesus says, no one knows when that is.
 2. "This, then, is a parable about how the kingdom of heaven will be (i.e. how God's purpose will be worked out) when the *parousia* takes place." France, R. T. (2007). Matthew (p. 948). Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publication Co.
- C. The Virgins
1. Five are foolish. Gr. is moros from which we get the word moron. "What is meant is a weakness of understanding or judgment, sometimes through stupidity, sometimes through confusion, but always demanding censure." TWBNT
 2. Five are wise. Gr phonemes - "The compounds reflect the intellectual focus, *phronéō* usually means "to think" or "to plan," TWBNT In short, they were smart enough to plan ahead. Jesus is telling his disciples, "You would be smart to heed my words plan ahead and act wisely...don't be morons."
 3. A torch without oil is like a flashlight without batteries!
- D. The Pivot Point
1. vs. 5 the Bridegroom is delay! At the time of Matthews writing I am sure that many were wondering when Jesus would return...because of the delay. Delay often leads to complacency.
 2. The surprise - it is late into the night when the SHOUT! occurs the Bridegroom is coming.

III. The Comparison 7-13

- A. The announcement of the arrival of the Bridegroom: vs. 7
1. Catches everyone by surprise.
 2. Catches the attention of everyone - ready or not.
 3. Everyone gets up in response to the announcement to get ready to meet Him.
 - a) The sensible/wise girls get up soak their torch and light it.
 - b) The 'morons' do the same but they discover they have not enough oil to keep their torches going.
 - c) The morons ask wise girls for oil but are denied. Spiritual preparedness is not something you can do for others. You have to be prepared for yourself!
- B. The Feast
1. The Feast had to bring to their remembrance 8:11-12; 22:1-13. The point being, only those who are ready will enjoy the feast.
 2. All who are there enter in and the door is closed. Not typical of culture but typical of the parables Jesus tells. It is the story of insiders and outsiders, saved and lost. The closed door is symbolic of the final division of the last judgment.

3. The morons cry out "Lord open the door."
 4. To which He replies, "Believe me, I do not know you." I am reminded of "What fellowship have light and darkness?"
- C. The end of the matter;
1. *""So you, too, must keep watch! For you do not know the day or hour of my return." (Matthew 25:13, NLT)*

Conclusion:

1. Guys, the day and hour does not matter. What matters is that you are living ready for His return.