

Matthew 25 Commentary

PREVIOUS

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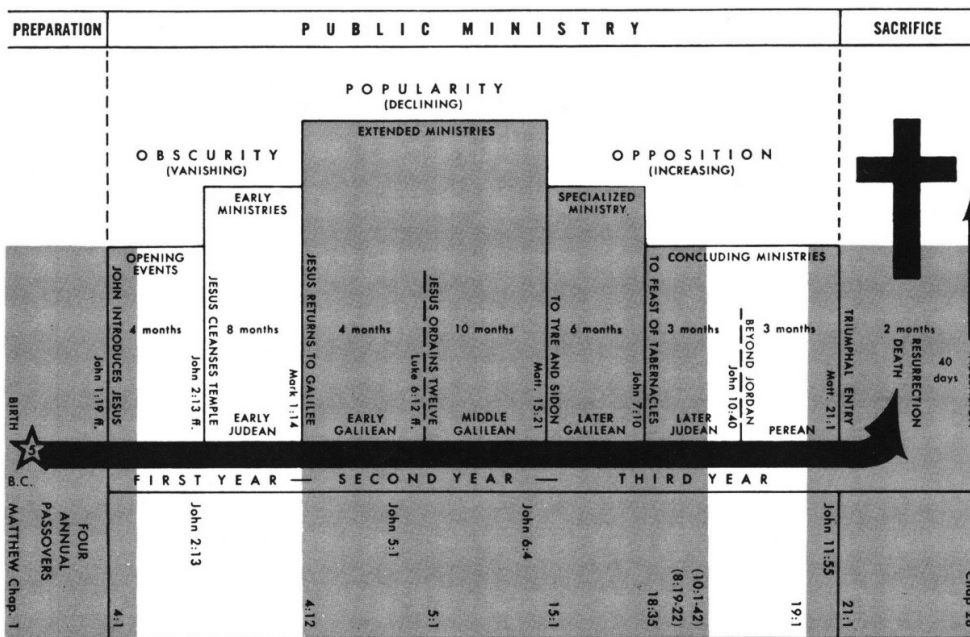
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MATTHEW CONTAINS 15 PARABLES 20 MIRACLES KEY VERSES: 1:1 "The book of the generation of Jesus Christ, the son of David, the son of Abraham." 2:2 "Where is he that is born King of the Jews? for we have seen his star in the east, and are come to worship him."

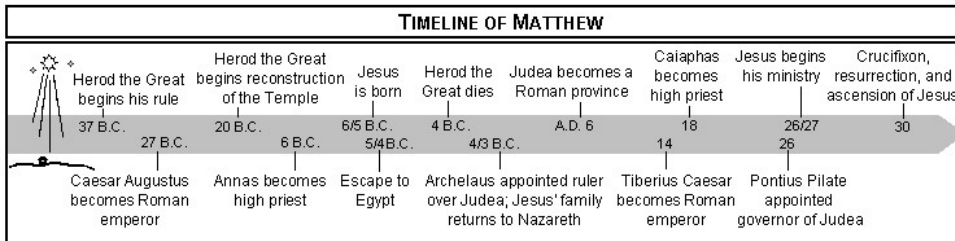


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 Charts from Jensen's Survey of the NT - used by permission
 Another Chart from Swindoll

THE LIFE OF JESUS AS COVERED BY MATTHEW (shaded area)



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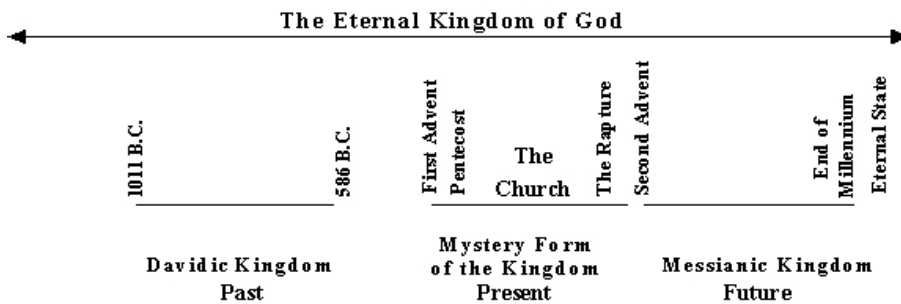
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PLEASE NOTE - THIS PAGE IS INCOMPLETE AND IS UNDER CONSTRUCTION - JULY, 2024 EXPECTED TO BE COMPLETED IN 2024

Matthew 25:1 "Then the kingdom of heaven will be comparable to ten virgins, who took their lamps and went out to meet the bridegroom."

- **the kingdom:** Mt 3:2 13:24,31,38,44,45,47 20:1 22:2 Da 2:44
- **ten:** Ps 45:14 Song 1:3 5:8,16 6:1,8,9 1Co 11:2 Rev 14:4
- **which:** Mt 5:16 Lu 12:35,36 Php 2:15,16
- **went:** 2Ti 4:8 Titus 2:13 2Pe 1:13-15 3:12,13
- **the bridegroom:** Mt 9:15 22:2 Ps 45:9-11 Isa 54:5 62:4,5 Mk 2:19,20 Lu 5:34,35 Jn 3:29 2Co 11:2 Eph 5:25-33 Rev 19:7 21:2,9

KINGDOMS OF GOD



KINGDOM OF GOD PAST, PRESENT, FUTURE
FROM BIBLE.ORG

Grant Osborne: This is the next in the set of parables that center on **readiness** for the Lord's return. All have the same basic themes—ignorance of the time of the coming, importance of vigilance, being prepared for the sudden return, and accountability. (See [Matthew - Page 912 - Google Books](#) scroll up/down for more text)

Donald Hagner - This parable makes yet once again, and in a most sobering way, the point that preparedness for the unexpected time of the coming of the Son of Man is of the utmost importance. That is, how one lives in the lengthening interim period between the first and second appearances of the Messiah must be consistent with one's claim to be a disciple. What matters is that one not be embarrassed by an "inopportune" coming of the Son of Man. The difference between the foolish and the wise is that the latter do all within their power to be ready for the parousia. They will join the Son of Man in the eschatological reward of the messianic banquet while the foolish will find themselves excluded and without recourse. The bottom line of the eschatological discourse is the importance of preparedness, which looms larger and larger toward the end of the discourse. ([Word Biblical Commentary](#))

David Turner: This parable stresses, for the last time in the discourse, that the time of Jesus's coming (Mt 24:3) is unknowable. This point has been stated (Mt 24:36) and then illustrated both historically from Noah's time (Mt 24:37–42) and parabolically from a burglary (Mt 24:43) and from good and wicked slaves (Mt 24:45–51). The present parable illustrates the point from another familiar scene, a wedding. Five foolish virgins do not prepare for nightfall by bringing extra oil for their lamps, because they expect the bridegroom to arrive immediately. But five others wisely prepare for a delay. The foolish virgins miss the bridegroom and are banned from the wedding feast, but the wise virgins share in the joy of the wedding (cf. Mt 9:15). . . Comparing Mt 25:5 to Mt 24:48 links the lesson of this parable to that of the evil slave. In both cases there is delay in the return of Jesus. But the two reactions to this delay are opposites, and these opposite reactions teach a crucial lesson. The evil slave is irresponsible because he overestimates the delay of the master's return. He is unpleasantly surprised by the master's seemingly early arrival. On the other hand, the foolish virgins are careless and underestimate the delay in the groom's arrival. The evil slave's lackadaisical approach to the master's return is similar to the generation of Noah and the homeowner, neither of whom expected an imminent event (Mt 24:36–44). But the foolish virgins took readiness to the extreme and did not plan for any delay. From these opposite errors, the church learns that it cannot know the time of Jesus's coming. It can assume neither an immediate nor an eventual return. Christians must constantly expect Jesus while they persevere in obedience and mission (cf. Mt 10:22; Mt 13:20–21; Mt 24:13). The duties of constant readiness and future preparedness must be held in dynamic tension if the church is to be faithful to the teaching of its master (cf. Luke 12:35–40; Meier 1980b: 294–95). Those who do not exhibit constant alertness jeopardize not only their present opportunities for effective service to Jesus but also their eternal destiny. (Quoted by Paul Apple - [Parable of the Ten Bridesmaids](#))

D. A. Carson: In a real sense, it is the bridegroom's delay that distinguishes the wise from the foolish virgins. Any interpretation that ignores this central element in the story is bound to go astray (cf. G. Bornkamm, *Geschichte*, 49–50). The context similarly shows that the overriding theme is preparedness for the coming of the Son of Man. Even when this involves certain forms of behavior (Mt 24:45–51; 25:14–30), that behavior is called forth by the unexpectedness of the master's return. From this perspective, Mt 25:1–13 fit well into this sequence of parables and agree with what we know Jesus taught. There is no good reason for doubting their authenticity or retreating to one of several reconstructed cores.

- The first parable (Mt 24:42–44) warns of the unexpectedness of Messiah's coming.
- The second (Mt 24:45–51) shows that more than passive watchfulness is required: there must be behavior acceptable to the master, the discharge of allotted responsibilities.
- This third parable (Mt 25:1–13) stresses the need for preparedness in the face of an unexpectedly long delay. (See [Matthew - Google Books](#) - scroll up/down for more text)

Then (tote) - Marks progression in Jesus' Olivet Discourse, presenting the second parable that has end-times implications. Jesus will illustrate the vital need for every person to prepare for His return, for the time is coming when preparing will be as they say "too little, too late!"

Parunak - We usually picture the virgins as leaving the bridal house and falling asleep on the road somewhere. But they are not called to "go out" until Mt 25:6, when he is seen approaching. This verse is better understood as a summary, or even a title (Luz), of the rest of the parable. "*Let me tell you about ten virgins who went to meet the bridegroom*"

The kingdom (basileia) of heaven (ouranos) will be comparable to ten virgins, who took their lamps (lampas) and went out to meet the bridegroom - Note that the **Kingdom of Heaven** is synonymous with the Kingdom of God ([note](#) - see also comments on Lk 17:21)

Went out to meet - This represents the betrothal, then the marriage. The bridegroom accompanied by his friends went to fetch the bride from her father's house and brought her back in procession to his own house where the marriage feast was held.

The kingdom is not like virgins, but their story illustrates an aspect of it

Kingdom of Heaven - 32x/31v - Matt. 3:2; Matt. 4:17; Matt. 5:3; Matt. 5:10; Matt. 5:19; Matt. 5:20; Matt. 7:21; Matt. 8:11; Matt. 10:7; Matt. 11:11; Matt. 11:12; Matt. 13:11; Matt. 13:24; Matt. 13:31; Matt. 13:33; Matt. 13:44; Matt. 13:45; Matt. 13:47; Matt. 13:52; Matt. 16:19; Matt. 18:1; Matt. 18:3; Matt. 18:4; Matt. 18:23; Matt. 19:14; Matt. 19:23; Matt. 20:1; Matt. 22:2; Matt. 23:13; Matt. 25:1; Matt. 25:14

Matthew Henry's Concise - Mt 25:1-13. The circumstances of the parable of the ten virgins were taken from the marriage customs among the Jews, and explain the great day of Christ's coming. See the nature of Christianity. As Christians we profess to attend upon Christ, to honour him, also to be waiting for his coming. Sincere Christians are the wise virgins, and hypocrites the foolish ones. Those are the truly wise or foolish that are so in the affairs of their souls. Many have a lamp of profession in their hands, but have not, in their hearts, sound knowledge and settled resolution, which are needed to carry them through the services and trials of the present state. Their hearts are not stored with holy dispositions, by the new-creating Spirit of God. Our light must shine before men in good works; but this is not likely to be long done, unless there is a fixed, active principle in the heart, of faith in Christ, and love to God and our brethren. They all slumbered and slept. The delay represents the space between the real or apparent conversion of these professors, and the coming of Christ, to take them away by death, or to judge the world. But though Christ tarry past our time, he will not tarry past the due time. The wise virgins kept their lamps burning, but they did not keep themselves awake. Too many real Christians grow remiss, and one degree of carelessness makes way for another. Those that allow themselves to slumber, will scarcely keep from sleeping; therefore dread the beginning of spiritual decays. A startling summons was given. Go ye forth to meet Him, is a call to those prepared. The notice of Christ's approach, and the call to meet him, will awaken. Even those best prepared for death have work to do to get actually ready, 2 Peter 3:14. It will be a day of search and inquiry; and it concerns us to think how we shall then be found. Some wanted oil to supply their lamps when going out. Those that take up short of true grace, will certainly find the want of it one time or other. An outward profession may light a man along this world, but the damps of the valley of the shadow of death will put out such a light. Those who care not to live the life, yet would die the death of the righteous. But those that would be saved, must have grace of their own; and those that have most grace, have none to spare. The best need more from Christ. And while the poor alarmed soul addresses itself, upon a sick-bed, to repentance and prayer, in awful confusion, death comes, judgment comes, the work is undone, and the poor sinner is undone for ever. This comes of having oil to buy when we should burn it, grace to get when we should use it. Those, and those only, shall go to heaven hereafter, that are made ready for heaven here. The suddenness of death and of Christ's coming to us then, will not hinder our happiness, if we have been prepared. The door was shut. Many will seek admission into heaven when it is too late. The vain confidence of hypocrites will carry them far in expectations of happiness. The unexpected summons of death may alarm the Christian; but, proceeding without delay to trim his lamp, his graces often shine more bright; while the mere professor's conduct shows that his lamp is going out. Watch therefore, attend to the business of your souls. Be in the fear of the Lord all the day long.

Lamps (2985) lampas from **lampo** = to shine) is not the usual very small household type lamp ([luchnos/lychnos](#) in Mt 5:15) but more like a torch as in Jn 18:3 when they came to arrest our Lord "with lanterns and **torches** (lampas) and weapons." **Friberg** adds "(1) as a resinous burning brand of pine-covered or pitch-covered dry twigs torch (Jn 18.3); (2) as an oil-fed light lamp (Mt 25.1)"

Theocratic Kingdom—The phrases “**Kingdom of Heaven,**” “**Kingdom of God,**” “**Kingdom of Christ,**” etc., denote the same **Kingdom**

It has already been shown (Props. 20–23, etc.) how the Jews understood and employed these phrases, and how the first preachers adopted them.

Obs. 1. Now attention is called to the fact that they are used as synonymous in the New Testament. What Matthew pronounces “the Kingdom of heaven,” is said by Mark, Luke, and John to be “the Kingdom of God,” as e.g. comp. Matthew 5:3, with Luke 6:20, and Matthew 13:11 with Mark 4:11. So also “the Kingdom of God” is designated Christ’s Kingdom, as e.g. comp. Matthew 16:28 with Luke 9:27, Mark 9:1, etc.

So also “the Father’s Kingdom” and Christ’s are represented as identical. Comp. e.g. Matthew 13:41–43 with Ephesians 5:5, and Matthew 26:29 with II Peter 1:11, etc., and Prop. 83. In reference to the usage of those phrases, comp. Props. 22 and 23, and the note by Dr. Craven in Lange’s Com. Revelation, p. 93.

Obs. 2. These phrases thus interchangeably employed to denote the one Kingdom (Prop. 35) were understood to mean the Davidic Kingdom restored, as e.g. Acts 1:6, Matthew 20:21, Acts 15:16, Luke 1:32, etc. (comp. Props. 19–23).

This has been so frankly admitted by our opponents (as e.g. Dr. Campbell, Knapp, Neander, etc.) that more need not be added, leaving our argument to bring in the additional proof. On every side do we find this testimony, given, too, without any thought of its bearing on the subject. Thus e.g. Farrar (Life of Christ, vol. 1, p. 22) informs us that “waiting for the Consolation of Israel” is equivalent to Mark 15:43, “waiting for the Kingdom of God,” and that among the Jews a prayer for the coming of the Messiah was, “may I see the Consolation of Israel.” The Messiah and the Kingdom were united. We merely suggest that in addition to the meanings and derivation usually given to the phrase used by Matthew, “the Kingdom of heaven” (viz.: that the God of heaven gives it to the Christ, that through it the Father’s will is manifested, that heavenly principles, etc., are exhibited, etc.), may there not, in the employment of the plural form, “heavenlies,” be an allusion to the peculiar form of government (Theocratical) under chosen heavenly rulers (comp. Prop. 154). Dr. Meyer (Com. on Matthew 3:2) says: “It is called the Messianic Kingdom, not because the words ‘of the heavens’ express God, but because this Kingdom is conceived as descending from heaven and entering the world, Galatians 4:26.” This idea may (comp. Revelation 19:11–16 and 21:2, etc.) indeed be included, but it does not exclude the old Jewish notion derived from Daniel, or the one just stated. It may include them all, making it the more expressive.

Obs. 3. In addition to the abundant testimony already adduced, that they were regarded as denoting the same Kingdom, and that the restored Theocracy, as existing under David, we add a few more. Nast (Com. on Matthew 11:1–6), allowing the Church-Kingdom theory as correct, frankly says: “Though John the Baptist, Zecharias, and those other Israelites who waited for ‘the Consolation of Israel,’ expected the Messiah to establish a spiritual Kingdom, a reign of righteousness, they connected, nevertheless, with it, the idea of a visible, terrestrial Kingdom, that he would literally sit on David’s throne, and extend His reign from the river to the ends of the earth.” Doddridge (Com. Matthew 3:2), cordially adopting the Church-Kingdom idea as intended by the phrase, says: “It is plain that the Jews understood it of a temporal monarchy, which God would erect; the Beat of which, they supposed, would be Jerusalem, which would become, instead of Rome, the capital of the world. And the expected Sovereign of this Kingdom they learned from Daniel to call ‘the Son of Man’” (Were the Jews mistaken? Comp. Props. 19–23 and 31–35). Fairbairn (Herm. Manual, p. 41–43) tells us that the phrase, “points back to those prophecies of the Old Testament, in which promise was made of a King and Kingdom, that should unite heaven and earth in another way than could be done by a merely human administration,” etc., which we cordially receive as true, remarking, however, that the plain Theocratical meaning contained in the grammatical sense (which he carefully avoids), as held by the Jews, by the disciples and apostles, introduces just such a union of heaven and earth (as e.g. God in Jesus condescending to reign as earthly Ruler, etc.) as he advocates. Our entire argument thus far conclusively proves that all these phrases do not denote separate things (as e.g. intimated by Lange, Com. Matthew, p. 73), or are given (so Fleck, quoted by Lange) “in order to distinguish the Christian Kingdom of God more fully from the Jewish Theocracy,” but the restored Theocracy, as covenanted and predicted under the Messiah. They were applied to a definite, well-known Kingdom, viz.: the Theocratic-Davidic.

But able writers, wedded to the spiritual Church-Kingdom theory, can see nothing in the phrase but another and differing Kingdom, viz.: the Church regarded as militant and triumphant. Thus, to illustrate how confidently they appeal to its simplicity in their teaching, we refer to Gregory (Four Gospels, p. 146), who, speaking of “the Kingdom of heaven,” and that Matthew by its use intended to correct false Jewish views (when [Acts 1:6](#), he still held them), confidently asserts: “The phrase clearly expresses the idea that it is a Kingdom distinct from all these kingdoms of this world after which the Jew had fashioned his idea of the Messiah’s dominion. Its origin is in the heavens, where God dwells; its throne, the seat of the King, is there; its highest present and prospective glories are there. This simple phrase taught that the Kingdom of the Messiah was to be a spiritual and heavenly Kingdom, unlike the old Theocracy with its temple and throne in Jerusalem; unlike the magnificent empire patterned after Rome, which the worldly Jew was dreaming of; wholly unlike the temporal empire of the Papacy long after established.” Here is a tissue of assumptions: (1) It ignores the fact that it was a Jewish phrase, adopted without explanation by Matthew, and that it could not possibly convey the idea

assumed, being definitely used to designate the restored Davidic Kingdom and its extent, etc., as given by Daniel; (2) it engrafts upon it a modern notion, which the Jews never entertained, being bound by the plain covenant and prophetic language which locates the Kingdom, not in heaven but on the earth; (3) he assumes that the phrase is so clearly full of his doctrine that it ought to have taught the Jew such a view, when the facts are just the reverse, viz.: that its usage fortified them and the disciples (including Matthew) in believing that it unmistakably taught the restoration of the downfallen Theocracy, which was—as we have shown—a Kingdom of God and of heaven; (4) its simplicity of teaching established and confirmed the almost universal Pre-Millenarianism of the early Church and its connected doctrine of the Kingdom—a position just directly opposite to that which Gregory finds in the “simple phrase,” and which Shedd (His. of Doc, p. 291) calls a peculiarity of the Jewish-Christian.”

QUESTION - [What is the meaning of the Parable of the Ten Virgins? WATCH VIDEO](#)

ANSWER - As we take a good look at the Parable of the Ten Virgins (Matthew 25:1–13), we must acknowledge up front that there has been much debate as to the meaning of these words of our Savior. At least one aspect of this parable can be known with absolute certainty. The [bridegroom](#) is Jesus Christ, and this parable describes His return. In the Old Testament (Isaiah 54:4–6; 62:4–5; Hosea 2:19), God pictures Himself as the “husband” of Israel, and in the New Testament (John 3:27–30; Matthew 9:15; Mark 2:19–20), Christ is pictured as the bridegroom of the Church. The Church is described in Scripture as the bride of Christ (Ephesians 5:25–32).

The historical setting can also be known with a fair amount of certainty. In describing a first-century Jewish wedding, D.A. Carson in the Expositor’s Bible Commentary describes the setting this way:

“Normally the bridegroom with some close friends left his home to go to the bride’s home, where there were various ceremonies, followed by a procession through the streets – after nightfall – to his home. The ten virgins may be bridesmaids who have been assisting the bride; and they expect to meet the groom as he comes from the bride’s house...Everyone in the procession was expected to carry his or her own torch. Those without a torch would be assumed to be party crashers or even brigands. The festivities, which might last several days, would formally get under way at the groom’s house.”

The torch was either a lamp with a small oil tank and wick or a stick with a rag soaked in oil on the end of it which would require occasional re-soaking to maintain the flame.

Of interpretive significance is which return of Christ is this? Is it His return for the rapture of the Church, or is it His return to set up the Millennial Kingdom at the end of the Tribulation? Dispensational scholars divide over this issue, and no attempt will be made to answer that question here. Regardless of which return it is, the lessons to be learned are relevant to both.

The overall and easily seen thrust of the parable is that Christ will return at an unknown hour and that His people must be ready. Being ready means preparing for whatever contingency arises in our lives and keeping our eyes fixed on Jesus at all times while we eagerly await His coming. As seen in the fact that all the virgins were sleeping when the call came indicates that it doesn’t matter what we are doing when Christ returns. We may be working, eating, sleeping, or pursuing leisure activities. Whatever it is, we must be doing it in such a way that we don’t have to “make things right” (get more oil) when He comes. This would apply to either the coming of Christ for His Church or for the Tribulation saints as they await His second coming.

Being ready for Christ’s return ultimately involves one major thing which manifests itself in several areas of our lives. If we would be ready for Christ’s return, we must be born again through saving faith in Jesus Christ...His death, burial and literal resurrection from the dead (John 3:16; 14:6; Romans 10:9 and 10; 1 Corinthians 15:1-4; Ephesians 2:1-10). Saving faith in Jesus Christ will manifest itself in every aspect of our lives. The fruit of the Spirit (Galatians 5:22) will begin to show. A desire for greater holiness and less sin will be apparent. And a consistent looking for His coming will mark our lives. One of the best passages articulating what saving grace and faith look like in a believer’s life is Titus 2:11-14, “For the grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men. It teaches us to say ‘No’ to ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright and godly lives in this present age, while we wait for the blessed hope — the glorious appearing of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ, who gave himself for us to redeem us from all wickedness and to purify for himself a people that are his very own, eager to do what is good.”

The five virgins who have the extra oil represent the truly born again who are looking with eagerness to the coming of Christ. They have saving faith and have determined that, whatever occurs, be it lengthy time or adverse circumstances, when Jesus returns, they will be looking with eagerness. The five virgins without the oil represent false believers who enjoy the benefits of the Christian community without true love for Christ. They are more concerned about the party than about longing to see the bridegroom. Their hope is that their association with true believers (“give us some of your oil” of verse 8) will bring them into the kingdom at the end. This, of course, is never the case. One person’s faith in Jesus cannot save another. The “Lord, lord” and “I do not know you” of verses 11 and 12 fit very well with Jesus’ condemnation of the false believers of Matthew 7:21-23, “Not everyone who says to Me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ will enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father who is in heaven will enter. Many will say to Me

on that day, 'Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in Your name, and in Your name cast out demons, and in Your name perform many miracles?' And then I will declare to them, 'I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness.'"

May we not be found "going away to make the purchase" (v. 10) when Christ returns. Take the time now to fill your lamp with oil and take extra along. Keep waiting and watching with joy and anticipation.

Related Resources:

- [How many parables are in the Bible?](#)

Matthew 25:2 "Five of them were foolish, and five were prudent."

- Mt 7:24-27 13:19-23,38-43,47,48 22:10,11 Jer 24:2 1Co 10:1-5 1Jn 2:19 Jude 1:5

Related Passages:

Matthew 7:24-27 "Therefore everyone who hears these words of Mine and acts on them, may be compared to a **wise** ([phronimos](#)) man who built his house on the rock. 25 "And the rain fell, and the floods came, and the winds blew and slammed against that house; and yet it did not fall, for it had been founded on the rock. 26 "Everyone who hears these words of Mine and does not act on them, will be like a foolish man who built his house on the sand. 27 "The rain fell, and the floods came, and the winds blew and slammed against that house; and it fell—and great was its fall."

TWO DIAMETRICALLY DISTINCT GROUPS

Five of them were foolish ([moros](#)), and **five were prudent** ([phronimos](#)) - **Foolish** is the direct opposite of **prudent**. **Foolish** is [moros](#) which gives us the English word "moron" describing a person as dull, inattentive, unthinking.

Van Parunak points out that "Outwardly, **all the virgins look the same**. They all have torches; they all come to the bridal house; they all claim to look forward to the coming of the bridegroom. But in fact, five of them have only the form of godliness, and not the true power (**2 Tim 3:5**). They are like the religious leaders whom the Lord has so vigorously condemned (**ch. 15; ch. 23**), appearing to be the Lord's people, but actually **defective**. They think that the preparation of others in the company will suffice for them. And in the end they are cast out.

Foolish ([3474](#)) [moros](#) conveys the root meaning of one who is mentally dull, sluggish in understanding, foolish, morally worthless, useless, silly or stupid (English = "moron"). Absurd (ridiculously unreasonable, unsound, or incongruous) Compare the derivative **moria** = Folly, foolishness, absurdity (1Cor. 1:18, 21, 23; 2:14; 3:19).

There are a number of synonyms including blockhead, bonehead, dimwit, dork, numbskull, and the list goes on and on. Jesus seems to characterize calling someone a **fool** as a more serious reproach than a **'good for nothing'**.

MacArthur - Mōros (foolish) has the root meaning of being mentally dull, silly, or stupid, and is the word from which we get "moron."

Webster on **fool, foolish** - lacking in sense, judgment, or discretion. Foolish implies the character of being or seeming unable to use judgment, discretion, or good sense. Unwise; imprudent; acting without judgment or discretion in particular things.

Vine - Moros primarily denotes "dull, sluggish" (from a root muh---, "to be silly"); hence, "stupid, foolish;" it is used (a) of persons, Matthew 5:22 , "Thou fool;" here the word means morally worthless, a scoundrel, a more serious reproach than "Raca;" the latter scorns a man's mind and calls him stupid; moros scorns his heart and character; hence the Lord's more severe condemnation; in Matthew 7:26 , "a foolish man;" Matthew 23:17,19 , "fools;" Matthew 25:2,3,8 , "foolish;" in 1 Corinthians 3:18 , "a fool;" the Apostle Paul uses it of himself and his fellow-workers, in 1 Corinthians 4:10 , "fools" (i.e., in the eyes of opponents); (b) of things, 2 Timothy 2:23 , "foolish and ignorant questionings;" so Titus 3:9; in 1 Corinthians 1:25 , "the foolishness of God," not moria, "foolishness" as a personal quality (see C, No. 1), but adjectivally, that which is considered by the ignorant as

a "foolish" policy or mode of dealing, lit., "the foolish (thing);" so in ver. 1 Corinthians 1:27 , "the foolish (things) of the world." ([Vine's Expository Dictionary of Old Testament and New Testament Words](#))

William Barclay - Moros also means fool, but the man who is **moros** is the man who is a moral fool. He is the man who is playing the fool... To call a man **moros** was not to criticise his mental ability; it was to cast aspersions on his moral character; it was to take his name and reputation from him, and to brand him as a loose-living and immoral person. ([Matthew 5 - William Barclay's Daily Study Bible](#))

Prudent (wise, shrewd) ([5429](#)) **phronimos** from **phronéo** = think, have a mindset related to phren = diaphragm, regarded by ancients as seat of mental and spiritual activity, came to mean mind or understanding) is an adjective which describes one who is thoughtful, sagacious or discreet. It describes the quality of one's thinking which is the result of insight and stands in opposition to moros which means foolish. The idea is that there is understanding combined with wisdom and insight. Phronimos implies a cautious, sensible, prudent character and in Mt 10:16 refers to one as "shrewd" as a serpent. One who is shrewd has clever discerning awareness, acute perception and sharp powers of judgment. Phronimos also includes the ideas of one who is prudent, sensible and practically wise in relationships with others. There is a type of phronimos that is desirable (eg, here in Mt 7:24, 10:16, et al) and a type that is not desirable (Ro 11:26, 12:16) this latter describing the person who relies on their own innate wisdom.

Phronimos - 14x/14v - more shrewd(1), prudent(5), sensible(2), shrewd(1), wise(4), wise men(1). Matt. 7:24; Matt. 10:16; Matt. 24:45; Matt. 25:2; Matt. 25:4; Matt. 25:8; Matt. 25:9; Lk. 12:42; Lk. 16:8; Rom. 11:25; Rom. 12:16; 1 Co. 4:10; 1 Co. 10:15; 2 Co. 11:19

Matthew 25:3 "For when the foolish took their lamps, they took no oil with them,

- **foolish:** Mt 23:25,26 Isa 48:1,2 58:2 Eze 33:3 2Ti 3:5 Heb 12:15 Rev 3:1,15,16

For when the foolish took their lamps, they took no oil with themAs the parable unfolds the description of foolish or prudent is based on whether one had extra oil for their lamps, in preparation for a lengthy delay in return of the bridegroom.

Matthew 25:4 but the prudent took oil in flasks along with their lamps.

- oil: Ps 45:7 Zec 4:2,3 Jn 1:15,16 3:34 Ro 8:9 2Co 1:22 Ga 5:22,23 1Jn 2:20,27 Jude 1:19

but the prudent took oil in flasks along with their lamps

Matthew 25:5 "Now while the bridegroom was delaying, they all got drowsy and began to sleep.

- the: Mt 25:19 24:48 Hab 2:3 Lu 12:45 20:9 Heb 10:36,37 2Pe 3:4-9 Rev 2:25
- they: Mt 26:40,43 Song 3:1 5:2 Jon 1:5,6 Mk 14:37,38 Lu 18:8 Ro 13:11 Eph 5:14 1Th 5:6-8 1Pe 5:8

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

Matthew 25:6 "But at midnight there was a shout, 'Behold, the bridegroom! Come out to meet him.'

- at: Mt 24:44 Mk 13:33-37 Lu 12:20,38-40,46 1Th 5:1-3 Rev 16:15
- a cry: Mt 24:31 Jn 5:28,29 1Th 4:16 2Pe 3:10
- Behold: Mt 25:31 Ps 50:3-6 96:13 98:9 2Th 1:7-10 Jude 1:14,15
- go: Mt 25:1 Isa 25:9 Am 4:12 Mal 3:1,2 Rev 19:7-9

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

Matthew 25:7 "Then all those virgins rose and trimmed their lamps.

- Lu 12:35 2Pe 3:14 Rev 2:4,5 3:2,19,20

Then all those virgins rose and trimmed their lamps

Matthew 25:8 “The foolish said to the prudent, ‘Give us some of your oil, for our lamps are going out.’

- Give: Mt 3:9 Lu 16:24 Ac 8:24 Rev 3:9
- for: Mt 13:20,21 Job 8:13,14 18:5 21:17 Pr 4:18,19 13:9 20:20 Lu 8:18 Lu 12:35
- gone out: or, going out, Heb 4:1

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

Matthew 25:9 “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.’

- lest: Ps 49:7-9 Jer 15:1 Eze 14:14-16,20
- but: Isa 55:1-3,6,7 Ac 8:22 Rev 3:17,18

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

Matthew 25:10 “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.

- the bridegroom: Mt 25:6 Rev 1:7 22:12,20
- they: Mt 25:20-23 Am 8:12,13 Lu 12:36,37 Col 1:12 2Ti 4:8 1Pe 1:13
- and the: Ge 7:16 Nu 14:28-34 Ps 95:11 Lu 13:25 Heb 3:18,19 Rev 22:11

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

Matthew 25:11 “Later the other virgins also came, saying, ‘Lord, lord, open up for us.’

- saying: Mt 7:21-23 Heb 12:16,17

Later the other virgins also came, saying, ‘Lord, lord, open up for us

Matthew 25:12 “But he answered, ‘Truly I say to you, I do not know you.’

- I know: Ps 1:6 5:5 Hab 1:13 Lu 13:26-30 Jn 9:31 10:27 1Co 8:3 Ga 4:9 2Ti 2:19

But he answered, ‘Truly I say to you, I do not know you

Matthew 25:13 “Be on the alert then, for you do not know the day nor the hour.

- Mt 24:42-44 Mk 13:33-37 Lu 21:36 Ac 20:31 1Co 16:13 1Th 5:6 2Ti 4:5 1Pe 4:7 5:8 Rev 16:15

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

Matthew 25:14 “For it is just like a man about to go on a journey, who called his own slaves and entrusted his possessions to them.

- as: Mt 21:33 Mk 13:34 Lu 19:12,13 20:9
- and delivered: Lu 16:1-12 Ro 12:6-8 1Co 3:5 4:1,2 12:4,7-29 Eph 4:11 1Pe 4:9-11

For it is just like a man about to go on a journey, who called his own slaves and entrusted his possessions to them

Matthew Henry's Concise - Mt 25:14-30. Christ keeps no servants to be idle: they have received their all from him, and have nothing they can call their own but sin. Our receiving from Christ is in order to our working for him. The manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man to profit withal. The day of account comes at last. We must all be reckoned with as to what good we have got to our own souls, and have done to others, by the advantages we have enjoyed. It is not meant that the improving of natural powers can entitle a man to Divine grace. It is the real Christian's liberty and privilege to be employed as his Redeemer's servant, in promoting his glory, and the good of his people: the love of Christ constrains him to live no longer to himself, but to Him that died for him, and rose again. Those who think it impossible to please God, and in vain to serve him, will do nothing to purpose in religion. They complain that He requires of them more than they are capable of, and punishes them for what they cannot help. Whatever they may pretend, the fact is, they dislike the character and work of the Lord. The slothful servant is sentenced to be deprived of his talent. This may be applied to the blessings of this life; but rather to the means of grace. Those who know not the day of their visitation, shall have the things that belong to their peace hid from their eyes. His doom is, to be cast into outer darkness. It is a usual way of expressing the miseries of the damned in hell. Here, as in what was said to the faithful servants, our Saviour goes out of the parable into the thing intended by it, and this serves as a key to the whole. Let us not envy sinners, or covet any of their perishing possessions.

QUESTION - [What is the meaning of the Parable of the Talents?](#)

ANSWER - Matthew, in chapters 24-25, records the Lord's heart of compassion and love mingled with unwavering holiness. This section of Scripture, including the Parable of the Talents, constitutes final warnings, prophecies, and encouragements to His people Israel prior to His departure. He, who is their Lord, is leaving for an undisclosed period of time. He is delegating to them the responsibility, as stewards, to care for His kingdom. The Parable of the Talents, Matthew 25:14-30, impresses on them the weight of that responsibility and the serious consequences of neglecting to understand and apply His instructions. There is also a message to all mankind.

If the talents are talents of gold, the value of what the master entrusted to the stewards would be immensely high, in the millions of dollars. Since the Lord uses only the term "talents" we must make some assumptions, but it seems reasonable to assume that the owner of the talents, the man traveling into a far country, was a wealthy man. He is entrusting his wealth to three men who become stewards of his money. One receives five talents. Another receives two talents. A third steward receives one talent. Each is given a significant amount of money. These are stewards entrusted with the care of the money. The stewards must know the personality and character of their Lord. He expects them to know Him well enough to apply the spirit as well as the letter of His instructions. Those that do are richly rewarded. The others receive severe judgment. The amount given is based on each steward's ability. The first two understand the spirit and letter of instructions and the character of their Lord. They both use the resources by "trading" to gain a profit. Each of them makes a 100 percent profit. Fear and mistrust of his Lord motivate the third steward. He buries the money in the earth and returns the original amount. The profitable stewards are praised, given increased responsibilities and invited to enter into the joy of their Lord. The untrusting steward is scolded, rejected, and punished.

The application of this parable must be understood within the context of the message of Matthew 24-25. It is first a message to the people of Israel that will live in the last days before the Lord returns. The statement, in Matthew 24:13, "But he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved," is a key statement. This is the believing remnant that will receive the promise of the kingdom. In Matthew 24:32-34, the Lord states, "Now learn a parable of the fig tree; When his branch is yet tender, and putteth forth leaves, ye know that summer is nigh: So likewise ye, when ye shall see all these things, know that it is near, even at the doors. Verily I say unto you, This generation shall not pass, till all these things be fulfilled." These will be alive when He returns and will have understood and believed their Lord. The application to the people of Israel is graphic and relevant. Those that believe Him will be rewarded in His kingdom. The basis of the reward will be their stewardship of His resources entrusted to them. Those who fear and do not believe will be rejected and judged.

There is also a universal application to all mankind. From the time of the creation of mankind, each individual has been entrusted with resources of time and material wealth. Everything we have comes from God and belongs to Him. We are responsible for using

those resources so that they increase in value. As Christians, we have additionally the most valuable resource of all – the Word of God. If we believe and understand Him, and apply His Word as good stewards, we are a blessing to others and the value of what we do multiplies. We are accountable to the Lord for the use of His resources.

Related Resources:

- [What is the meaning of the Parable of the Ten Minas?](#)

Matthew 25:15 “To one he gave five talents, to another, two, and to another, one, each according to his own ability; and he went on his journey.

- talents: Mt 18:24 Lu 12:48 19:13,14

To one he gave five talents (~6000 denarii), to another, two, and to another, one, each according to his own ability; and he went on his journey

Matthew 25:16 “Immediately the one who had received the five talents went and traded with them, and gained five more talents.

- went: 2Sa 7:1-3 1Ch 13:1-3 22:1-26:32 28:2-21 29:1-17 2Ch 1:9,10 2Ch 15:8-15 17:3-9 19:4-10 31:20,21 33:15,16 34:1-35:27 Ne 5:14-19 Isa 23:18 49:23 60:5-16 Ac 13:36 Ro 15:18,19 1Co 9:16-23 15:10 1Ti 6:17,18 2Ti 2:6 4:5-8 Phm 1:6,7 3Jn 1:5-8

Immediately the one who had received the five talents went and traded with them, and gained five more talents

Matthew 25:17 “In the same manner the one who had received the two talents gained two more.

- he also: Ge 18:19 2Sa 19:32 1Ki 18:3,4 2Ki 4:8-10 Job 29:11-17 31:16-22 Pr 3:9,10 Ec 11:1-6 Mk 14:3-8 Ac 9:36-39 10:2 11:29,30 2Co 8:12 9:11-14 Ga 6:9,10 Eph 5:16 Col 4:17 1Ti 5:10 2Ti 1:16-18 Heb 6:10,11 1Pe 4:10

In the same manner the one who had received the two talents gained two more

Matthew 25:18 “But he who received the one talent went away, and dug a hole in the ground and hid his master’s money.

- and hid: Pr 18:9 26:13-16 Hag 1:2-4 Mal 1:10 Lu 19:20 Heb 6:12 2Pe 1:8

But he who received the one talent went away, and dug a hole in the ground and hid his master’s money

Matthew 25:19 “Now after a long time the master of those slaves *came and *settled accounts with them.

- a long: Mt 25:5 24:48
- reckoneth: Mt 18:23,24 Lu 16:1,2,19-31 Ro 14:7-12 1Co 3:12-15 2Co 5:10 Jas 3:1

Now after a long time the master of those slaves *came and *settled accounts with them

Matthew 25:20 “The one who had received the five talents came up and brought five more talents, saying, ‘Master, you entrusted five talents to me. See, I have gained five more talents.’

- behold: Lu 19:16,17 Ac 20:24 1Co 15:10 Col 1:29 2Ti 4:1-8 Jas 2:18

The one who had received the five talents came up and brought five more talents, saying, 'Master, you entrusted five talents to me. See, I have gained five more talents

Matthew 25:21 "His master said to him, 'Well done, good and faithful slave. You were faithful with a few things, I will put you in charge of many things; enter into the joy of your master.'

- Well: 2Ch 31:20,21 Lu 16:10 Ro 2:29 1Co 4:5 2Co 5:9 10:18 1Pe 1:7
- I will: Mt 25:34-40,46 10:40-42 24:47 Lu 12:44 22:28-30 Rev 2:10,26-28 3:21 Rev 21:7
- enter: Mt 25:23 Ps 16:10,11 Jn 12:26 14:3 17:24 Php 1:23 2Ti 2:12 Heb 12:2 1Pe 1:8 Rev 7:17

His master said to him, 'Well done, good and faithful slave. You were faithful with a few things, I will put you in charge of many things; enter into the joy of your master

QUESTION - [What do I need to do to hear, "Well done, good and faithful servant" when I arrive in heaven?](#) (ED: BETTER = "WHY WOULD I WANT TO HEAR...?")

ANSWER - In Jesus' [parable of the talents](#), the Lord tells of two faithful servants who used what they had been given to increase the master's wealth. When the master returned from a long absence, he rewarded his two faithful servants and said to each of them, "Well done, good and faithful servant! You have been faithful with a few things; I will put you in charge of many things. Come and share your master's happiness!" (Matthew 25:21, 23). Every Christian longs to hear those words from Jesus' lips someday in heaven.

We are saved by grace through faith (Ephesians 2:8-9), but we are saved "to do good works" (Ephesians 2:10). Jesus spoke of laying up treasures in heaven (Matthew 6:20), and His parable of the talents hints at various rewards for those who faithfully serve Him in this world.

To hear those words, "Well done, good and faithful servant," from Jesus, first make sure you are saved. The unbelieving will never hear those words, for "without faith it is impossible to please God" (Hebrews 11:6). And recognize that Jesus is not only your Savior; He is also your Lord (see Luke 6:46). "Serve the LORD with gladness!" (Psalm 100:2, ESV).

Here are some ideas on ways you can [serve the Lord](#):

1. Share the [gospel](#). The Lord Jesus desires us to make disciples, teaching others of the nature and character of God and sharing the meaning of His death and resurrection (Matthew 28:18-20). (ED: SEE [Praying for People from Every Tribe, Tongue, People and Nation](#) IF YOU DO THIS DAILY, YOU WILL STORE UP FOR YOURSELF AN INCREDIBLE ETERNAL TREASURE!)
2. Help the disadvantaged. In the story of [the rich man and Lazarus](#) in Luke 16:19-31, the rich man is condemned because he doesn't help Lazarus and because he trusts in his wealth too much. Don't put self-gratification before the needs of others. 1 John 3:17 says, "If anyone has material possessions and sees a brother or sister in need but has no pity on them, how can the love of God be in that person?"
3. Forgive others of their offenses. This isn't the same as reconciliation or trust, but it means you renounce vengeance. The Lord Jesus modeled forgiveness: "When they hurled their insults at him, he did not retaliate; when he suffered, he made no threats. Instead, he entrusted himself to [the Father] who judges justly" (1 Peter 2:23).
4. View your position of authority as an opportunity to help the people under you, and view your position of subservience as an opportunity to submit to your authority, just as Jesus submitted to the Father's authority. Either way, you can be Christlike, because Jesus was both master and servant to different people. "Carry each other's burdens, and in this way you will fulfill the law of Christ" (Galatians 6:2).
5. Seek to know the character of God better through [church fellowship](#), listening to sermons, studying the Bible, praying, and chronicling how He seems to have been involved in your life.
6. Recognize that every advantageous position you're in is because of God, the Source of every blessing: "Every good and perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of the heavenly lights" (James 1:17).
7. Be willing to be unpopular, displaying rare courage like [the Good Samaritan](#) in Jesus' parable (Luke 10:30-

37). Do what the Bible says is right, always. "We must obey God rather than men" (Acts 5:29, ESV).

8. In introspective moral judgment (evaluating your own character), look at the character of Jesus as a measure rather than rationalize your questionable actions and attitudes. Show [humility](#).

It all comes down to this: love God more than anything, and love others sincerely (Mark 12:30–31). At the judgment seat of Christ, those who are faithful to the Lord who saved them will hear those words, "Well done, good and faithful servant." No true servant of the Lord could ask for more.

Related Resources:

- [What is the judgment seat of Christ?](#)
- [How can we store up treasures in heaven?](#) (SEE ALSO COMMENTARY ON 2Cor 5:10)
- [What happens at the final judgment?](#)
- [What is the verse about casting our crowns before the feet of Jesus?](#)
- [What are the five heavenly crowns that believers can receive in Heaven?](#)

Matthew 25:22 "Also the one who had received the two talents came up and said, 'Master, you entrusted two talents to me. See, I have gained two more talents.'

- I have: Lu 19:18,19 Ro 12:6-8 2Co 8:1-3,7,8,12

Also the one who had received the two talents came up and said, 'Master, you entrusted two talents to me. See, I have gained two more talents

Matthew 25:23 "His master said to him, 'Well done, good and faithful slave. You were faithful with a few things, I will put you in charge of many things; enter into the joy of your master.'

- Well: Mt 25:21 Mk 12:41-44 14:8,9

His master said to him, 'Well done, good and faithful slave. You were faithful with a few things, I will put you in charge of many things; enter into the joy of your master.

Matthew 25:24 "And the one also who had received the one talent came up and said, 'Master, I knew you to be a hard man, reaping where you did not sow and gathering where you scattered no seed.

- he which: Our Lord placed the example of negligence in him to whom the least was committed, probably to "intimate" says Doddridge, "that we are accountable for the smallest advantage with which we are entrusted; but it cannot imply that they who have received much will ordinarily pass their account best; for it is too plain, in fact, that most of those whose dignity, wealth, and genius give them the greatest opportunities of service, seem to forget that they have any Master in heaven to serve, or any future reckoning to expect; and many render themselves much more criminal than this wicked and slothful servant who hid his talents in the earth."
- Lord: Mt 7:21 Lu 6:46
- I knew: Mt 20:12 Job 21:14,15 Isa 58:3 Jer 2:31 44:16-18 Eze 18:25-29 Mal 1:12,13 3:14,15 Lu 15:29 19:20-22 Ro 8:7 9:20

And the one also who had received the one talent came up and said, 'Master, I knew you to be a hard man, reaping where you did not sow and gathering where you scattered no seed

Matthew 25:25 'And I was afraid, and went away and hid your talent in the ground. See, you have what is yours.'

- 2Sa 6:9,10 Pr 26:13 Isa 57:11 Ro 8:15 2Ti 1:6,7 Rev 21:8

And I was afraid, and went away and hid your talent in the ground. See, you have what is yours

Matthew 25:26 “But his master answered and said to him, ‘You wicked, lazy slave, you knew that I reap where I did not sow and gather where I scattered no seed.

- Thou: Mt 18:32 Job 15:5,6

But his master answered and said to him, ‘You wicked, lazy slave, you knew that I reap where I did not sow and gather where I scattered no seed

Matthew 25:27 ‘Then you ought to have put my money in the bank, and on my arrival I would have received my money back with interest.

- oughtest: Lu 19:22,23 Ro 3:19 Jude 1:15
- with: De 23:19,20

Then you ought to have put my money in the bank, and on my arrival I would have received my money back with interest-
Paraphrased "If you really feared me you should have done a minimum to get what I asked for."

Matthew 25:28 ‘Therefore take away the talent from him, and give it to the one who has the ten talents.’

- Lu 10:42 19:24

Therefore take away the talent from him, and give it to the one who has the ten talents

Matthew 25:29 “For to everyone who has, more shall be given, and he will have an abundance; but from the one who does not have, even what he does have shall be taken away.

- unto: Mt 13:12 Mk 4:25 Lu 8:18 16:9-12 19:25,26 Jn 15:2
- shall be taken: Mt 21:41 La 2:6 Ho 2:9 Lu 10:42 12:19-21 16:1-3,20-25 Jn 11:48 Rev 2:5

For to everyone who has, more shall be given and he will have an abundance- Faithfulness is greatly rewarded (Mt 13:12; Mk 4:25; Lk 8:18, 19:26).

but from the one who does not have, even what he does have shall be taken away

NET NOTE - The one who has nothing has even what he seems to have taken from him, ending up with no reward at all (see also Luke 8:18). The exact force of this is left ambiguous, but there is no comfort here for those who are pictured by the third slave as being totally unmoved by the master. Though not an outright enemy, there is no relationship to the master either.

Matthew 25:30 “Throw out the worthless slave into the outer darkness; in that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

- cast: Mt 3:10 5:13 Jer 15:1,2 Eze 15:2-5 Lu 14:34,35 Jn 15:6 Titus 3:14 Heb 6:7,8 Rev 3:15,16
- outer: Mt 8:12 13:42,50 22:13 24:51 Lu 13:28 2Pe 2:17 Jude 1:13 Rev 21:8

Throw out the worthless slave into the outer darkness; in that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth

Matthew 25:31 “But when the Son of Man comes in His glory, and all the angels with Him, then He will sit on His glorious throne.

-
- the Son: Mt 25:6 16:27 19:28 26:64 Da 7:13,14 Zec 14:5 Mk 8:38 14:62 Lu 9:26 Lu 22:69 Jn 1:51 5:27-29 Ac 1:11 1Th 4:16 2Th 1:7,8 Heb 1:8 Jude 1:14 Rev 1:7
 - then: Ps 9:7 Rev 3:21 20:11

But when the Son of Man comes in His glory, and all the angels with Him, then He will sit on His glorious throne

Matthew Henry's Concise - Mt 25:31-46. This is a description of the last judgment. It is as an explanation of the former parables. There is a judgment to come, in which every man shall be sentenced to a state of everlasting happiness, or misery. Christ shall come, not only in the glory of his Father, but in his own glory, as Mediator. The wicked and godly here dwell together, in the same cities, churches, families, and are not always to be known the one from the other; such are the weaknesses of saints, such the hypocrisies of sinners; and death takes both: but in that day they will be parted for ever. Jesus Christ is the great Shepherd; he will shortly distinguish between those that are his, and those that are not. All other distinctions will be done away; but the great one between saints and sinners, holy and unholy, will remain for ever. The happiness the saints shall possess is very great. It is a kingdom; the most valuable possession on earth; yet this is but a faint resemblance of the blessed state of the saints in heaven. It is a kingdom prepared. The Father provided it for them in the greatness of his wisdom and power; the Son purchased it for them; and the blessed Spirit, in preparing them for the kingdom, is preparing it for them. It is prepared for them: it is in all points adapted to the new nature of a sanctified soul. It is prepared from the foundation of the world. This happiness was for the saints, and they for it, from all eternity. They shall come and inherit it. What we inherit is not got by ourselves. It is God that makes heirs of heaven. We are not to suppose that acts of bounty will entitle to eternal happiness. Good works done for God's sake, through Jesus Christ, are here noticed as marking the character of believers made holy by the Spirit of Christ, and as the effects of grace bestowed on those who do them. The wicked in this world were often called to come to Christ for life and rest, but they turned from his calls; and justly are those bid to depart from Christ, that would not come to him. Condemned sinners will in vain offer excuses. The punishment of the wicked will be an everlasting punishment; their state cannot be altered. Thus life and death, good and evil, the blessing and the curse, are set before us, that we may choose our way, and as our way so shall our end be.

QUESTION - [What is the meaning of the Parable of the Sheep and Goats?](#)

ANSWER - The Parable of the Sheep and Goats is part of the [Olivet Discourse](#). It is found in [Matthew 25:31-46](#). A parable is a short, simple story of comparison. Jesus used parables to teach spiritual truths by means of earthly situations.

Jesus begins the parable by saying it concerns His return in glory to set up His kingdom ([Matthew 25:31](#)). Therefore, the setting of this event is at the beginning of the [millennium](#), after the tribulation. All those on earth at that time will be brought before the Lord, and He will separate them "as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats. He will put the sheep on his right and the goats on his left" (verses 32–33). The sheep are those who were saved during the tribulation; the goats are the unsaved who survived the tribulation.

The sheep on Jesus' right hand are blessed by God the Father and given an inheritance. The reason is stated: "For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you invited me in, I needed clothes and you clothed me, I was sick and you looked after me, I was in prison and you came to visit me" (verses 35-36). The righteous will not understand: when did they see Jesus in such a pitiful condition and help Him? "The King will reply, 'I tell you the truth, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers of mine, you did for me'" (verses 39-40).

The goats on Jesus' left hand are cursed with eternal hell-fire, "prepared for the devil and his angels" (verse 41). The reason is given: they had opportunity to minister to the Lord, but they did nothing (verses 42-43). The damned ask, "Lord, when did we see you hungry or thirsty or a stranger or needing clothes or sick or in prison, and did not help you?" (verse 44). Jesus replies, "I tell you the truth, whatever you did not do for one of the least of these, you did not do for me" (verse 45).

Jesus then ends the discourse with a contrast: "They will go away to eternal punishment, but the righteous to eternal life" (Mt 25:46).

In the Parable of the Sheep and the Goats, we are looking at man redeemed and saved, and man condemned and lost. A casual reading seems to suggest that salvation is the result of good works. The "sheep" acted charitably, giving food, drink, and clothing to the needy. The "goats" showed no charity. This seems to result in salvation for the sheep and damnation for the goats.

However, Scripture does not contradict itself, and the Bible clearly and repeatedly teaches that salvation is by faith through the grace of God and not by our good works (see John 1:12; Acts 15:11; Romans 3:22-24; Romans 4:4-8; Romans 7:24-25; Romans 8:12; Galatians 3:6-9; and Ephesians 2:8-10). In fact, Jesus Himself makes it clear in the parable that the salvation of the "sheep" is not based on their works—their inheritance was theirs "since the creation of the world" (Matthew 25:34), long before they could ever do any good works!

The good works mentioned in the parable are not the *cause* of salvation but the *effect* of salvation. As Christians we become like Christ (see Romans 8:29; 2 Corinthians 3:18; and Colossians 2:6-7). Galatians 5:22 tells us that the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, gentleness, faithfulness, and self-control. Good works in a Christian's life are the direct overflow of these traits, and are only acceptable to God because of the relationship that exists between servant and Master, the saved and their Savior, the sheep and their Shepherd (see Ephesians 2:10).

The core message of the Parable of the Sheep and Goats is that God's people will love others. Good works will result from our relationship to the Shepherd. Followers of Christ will treat others with kindness, serving them as if they were serving Christ Himself. The unregenerate live in the opposite manner. While "goats" can indeed perform acts of kindness and charity, their hearts are not right with God, and their actions are not for the right purpose – to honor and worship God.

Related Resources:

- [What does the Bible say about giving to the poor?](#)

Matthew 25:32 "All the nations will be gathered before Him; and He will separate them from one another, as the shepherd separates the sheep from the goats;

- before: Ps 96:13 98:9 Ac 17:30,31 Ro 2:12,16 14:10-12 2Co 5:10 Rev 20:12-15
- he shall separate: Mt 3:12 13:42,43,49 Ps 1:5 50:3-5 Eze 20:38 34:17-22 Mal 3:18 1Co 4:5
- as: Ps 78:52 Jn 10:14,27

All the nations will be gathered before Him; and He will separate them from one another, as the shepherd separates the sheep from the goats

Matthew 25:33 and He will put the sheep on His right, and the goats on the left.

- the sheep: Ps 79:13 95:7 100:3 Jn 10:26-28 21:15-17
- his: Ge 48:13,14,17-19 Ps 45:9 110:1 Mk 16:19 Ac 2:34,35 Eph 1:20 Heb 1:3

and He will put the sheep on His right, and the goats on the left

Matthew 25:34 "Then the King will say to those on His right, 'Come, you who are blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.

- the King: Mt 21:5 22:11-13 27:37 Ps 2:6 24:7-10 Isa 9:7 32:1,2 33:22 Jer 23:5,6 Eze 37:24,25 Da 9:25 Zep 3:15 Zec 9:9,10 Lu 1:31-33 Lu 19:38 Jn 1:49 12:13 19:15,19-22 Rev 19:16
- Come: Mt 25:21,23,41 5:3-12 Ge 12:2,3 De 11:23-28 Ps 115:13-15 Lu 11:28 Ac 3:26 Ga 3:13,14 Eph 1:3 1Th 2:12 1Pe 1:3
- inherit: Lu 12:32 Ro 8:17 1Co 6:9 Ga 5:21 Eph 5:5 2Ti 2:12 4:8 Jas 2:5 1Pe 1:4,5,9 3:9 Rev 5:10 21:7
- prepared: Mt 20:23 Mk 10:40 Jn 14:2,3 1Co 2:9 Heb 11:16
- from: Ac 15:18 Eph 1:4-6 1Pe 1:19,20 Rev 13:8

Then the King will say to those on His right, 'Come, you who are blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world

Matthew 25:35 For I was hungry, and you gave Me something to eat; I was thirsty, and you gave Me something to drink; I was a stranger, and you invited Me in;

- I was an: Mt 25:40 10:40-42 26:11 De 15:7-11 Job 29:13-16 31:16-21 Ps 112:5-10 Pr 3:9,10 11:24,25 14:21,31 19:17 22:9 Ec 11:1,2 Isa 58:7-11 Eze 18:7,16 Da 4:27 Mic 6:8 Mk 14:7 Lu 11:41 14:12-14 Jn 13:29 Ac 4:32 9:36-39 10:31 11:29 2Co 8:1-4,7-9 9:7-14 Eph 4:28 1Ti 6:17-19 Phm 1:7 Heb 6:10 13:16 Jas 1:27 1Pe 4:9,10 1Jn 3:16-19

- thirsty: Mt 25:42 Pr 25:21 Ro 12:20
- I was a: Mt 25:43 Ge 18:2-8 19:1-3 Ac 16:15 Ro 12:13 16:23 1Ti 5:10 Heb 13:1-3 1Pe 4:9 3Jn 1:5-8

For I was hungry, and you gave Me something to eat; I was thirsty, and you gave Me something to drink; I was a stranger, and you invited Me in

Matthew 25:36 naked, and you clothed Me; I was sick, and you visited Me; I was in prison, and you came to Me.'

- Naked: Job 31:19,20 Lu 3:11 Jas 2:14-16
- was sick: Mt 25:43 Eze 34:4 Ac 20:35 28:8,9 Jas 1:27 5:14,15
- I was in: Php 4:10-14 2Ti 1:16-18 Heb 10:34 13:3

naked, and you clothed Me; I was sick, and you visited Me; I was in prison, and you came to Me

Matthew 25:37 "Then the righteous will answer Him, 'Lord, when did we see You hungry, and feed You, or thirsty, and give You something to drink?"

- when: Mt 6:3 1Ch 29:14 Pr 15:33 Isa 64:6 1Co 15:10 1Pe 5:5,6

Then the righteous will answer Him, 'Lord, when did we see You hungry, and feed You, or thirsty, and give You something to drink

Matthew 25:38 'And when did we see You a stranger, and invite You in, or naked, and clothe You?

And when did we see You a stranger, and invite You in, or naked, and clothe You

Matthew 25:39 'When did we see You sick, or in prison, and come to You?'

When did we see You sick, or in prison, and come to You

Matthew 25:40 "The King will answer and say to them, 'Truly I say to you, to the extent that you did it to one of these brothers of Mine, even the least of them, you did it to Me.'

- the King: Mt 25:34 Pr 25:6,7
- Inasmuch: Mt 10:42 2Sa 9:1,7 Pr 14:31 19:17 Mk 9:41 Jn 19:26,27 21:15-17 1Co 16:21,22 2Co 4:5 5:14,15 8:7-9 Ga 5:6,13,22 1Th 4:9,10 1Pe 1:22 1Jn 3:14-19 4:7-12,20,21 5:1,2
- the least: Mt 12:49,50 18:5,6,10 28:10 Mk 3:34,35 Jn 20:17 Heb 2:11-15 6:10
- ye have done it unto me: Ac 9:4,5 Eph 5:30

The King will answer and say to them, 'Truly I say to you, to the extent that you did it to one of these brothers of Mine, even the least of them, you did it to Me

QUESTION - [Who are the "least of these" in the Bible?](#)

ANSWER - The "least of these" is a phrase that originates from Matthew 25:31-46, where Jesus speaks of those in need. Verses 35-40 read,

"Then the King will say to those on his right, 'Come, you who are blessed by my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. For I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and

you gave me drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, I was naked and you clothed me, I was sick and you visited me, I was in prison and you came to me.' Then the righteous will answer him, saying, 'Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you drink? And when did we see you a stranger and welcome you, or naked and clothe you? And when did we see you sick or in prison and visit you?' And the King will answer them, 'Truly, I say to you, as you did it to one of the **least of these** my brothers, you did it to me.'"

The "least of these" refers to those in a variety of needy situations. They include the hungry, thirsty, impoverished, sick, and imprisoned. In this context, Jesus is speaking to those on His right, that is, the righteous. The needy are called Christ's "brothers"; thus, the reference is to the righteous helping fellow disciples. Jesus said that those who cared for such individuals were not merely serving other people. They were serving Him.

In the same passage, the opposite is also noted. The narrative concludes with Jesus condemning those who saw believers in need and yet did not help. He says,

"For I was hungry and you gave me no food, I was thirsty and you gave me no drink, I was a stranger and you did not welcome me, naked and you did not clothe me, sick and in prison and you did not visit me.' Then they also will answer, saying, 'Lord, when did we see you hungry or thirsty or a stranger or naked or sick or in prison, and did not minister to you?' Then he will answer them, saying, 'Truly, I say to you, as you did not do it to one of the least of these, you did not do it to me.'"

Jesus connected service to the needy with eternal rewards and punishments. Though salvation is by faith alone apart from good deeds (Ephesians 2:8–9), the redeemed will be "eager to do what is good" (Titus 2:14), including extending charity to fellow believers in difficult situations. Those whose lives are marked by apathy toward the needy show they have not been transformed by the grace of Jesus Christ.

God has always shown a special concern for the poor and needy (Psalm 35:10). It should come as no surprise that He expects His followers to do the same, especially toward those of the family of God (Galatians 6:10). What is surprising about the "least of these" is that our service is ultimately not to the poor, but to Christ Himself.

Matthew 25:41 "Then He will also say to those on His left, 'Depart from Me, accursed ones, into the eternal fire which has been prepared for the devil and his angels;

- them: Mt 25:33
- Depart: Mt 7:23 Ps 6:8 119:115 139:19 Lu 13:27
- ye cursed: De 27:15-26 28:16-68 Ps 119:21 Jer 17:5 Ga 3:10-13 Heb 6:8
- everlasting: Mt 25:46 3:12 13:40,42,50 Mk 9:43-48 2Th 1:9 Rev 14:10,11 20:10-15
- prepared: Jn 8:44 Ro 9:22,23 2Pe 2:4 1Jn 3:10 Jude 1:6 Rev 12:7-9

Then He will also say to those on His left, 'Depart from Me, accursed ones, into the eternal fire which has been prepared for the devil and his angels

Gotquestions on [What is a sin of omission?](#) - The goats, those who are sent away by Christ, are those who saw others hungry and thirsty, but did not provide food and water. They are those who saw others in need of clothing, who were sick or in jail but did nothing to clothe or comfort them. These are all examples of sins of omission. There was no sin committed against these needy people—they were not intentionally starved or deprived of their clothing. But the sin of omission was committed when those who could have provided for them chose not to.

QUESTION - [Who will go to hell? WATCH VIDEO](#)

ANSWER - [Hell](#) has become a controversial subject in recent years, even among Christians. However, the controversy is entirely man-made. The rejection of the reality of hell stems from a human inability to reconcile the love of God with eternal punishment or from an outright rejection of God's Word. Even some professing Christians have come to unbiblical conclusions. Some have tried to redefine hell, create an intermediate state not found in Scripture, or deny hell altogether. In doing so, they are ignoring Jesus' warning in Revelation 22:19, "If anyone takes words away from this scroll of prophecy, God will take away from that person any share in the tree of life and in the Holy City, which are described in this scroll."

Hell is mentioned 167 times in the Bible, sometimes called Gehenna, Hades, the pit, the Abyss, or everlasting punishment (Proverbs 7:27; Luke 8:31; 10:15; 2 Thessalonians 1:9). Jesus spoke of heaven and hell as real places (Matthew 13:41–42; 23:33; Mark 9:43–

47; Luke 12:5). The story Jesus told about the rich man and Lazarus was an actual event that demonstrated the reality of the two eternal destinations (Luke 16:19–31). Heaven is the dwelling place of God (2 Chronicles 30:27) where Jesus has gone to “prepare a place” for those who love Him (John 14:2). Hell was created for “the devil and his angels” (Matthew 25:41). But because every human being is a sinner, every person past the age of accountability has already been condemned to hell (Romans 3:10; 5:12; John 3:18). We all deserve hell as the just punishment for our rebellion against God (Romans 6:23).

Jesus was clear that “no one can see the kingdom of God unless they are born again” (John 3:3). He was also clear that hell is an eternal punishment for those who do not obey Him (Matthew 25:46). Second Thessalonians 1:8–9 says that in the end God “will punish those who do not know God and do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus. They will be punished with everlasting destruction and shut out from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of his might.” John the Baptist said about Jesus, “His winnowing fork is in his hand, and he will clear his threshing floor, gathering his wheat into the barn and burning up the chaff with unquenchable fire” (Matthew 3:12).

John 3:18 explains in the simplest terms who will go to heaven and who will go to hell: “Whoever believes in him is not condemned, but whoever does not believe stands condemned already because they have not believed in the name of God’s one and only Son.” So, those who go to hell are specifically those who do not believe in Jesus’ name. To “believe” goes beyond a mental recognition of the truth. To believe in Christ for salvation requires a transfer of allegiance. We stop worshiping ourselves, we forsake our sin, and we begin to worship God with our heart, soul, mind, and strength (Matthew 22:36–37; Mark 12:30).

God desires that every person spend eternity with Him (Matthew 18:14; 2 Peter 3:9), but He honors our decision to accept or reject Him (John 4:14). Anyone who so desires can go to heaven (John 1:12). Jesus already paid the price for our salvation, but we must accept that gift and transfer ownership of our lives to Him (Luke 9:23). Heaven is perfect, and God cannot take anyone there who insists on holding on to his or her sin. We must allow Him to cleanse us of our sin and make us righteous in His sight (2 Corinthians 5:21). John 1:10–12 shows us the problem and the solution: “He was in the world, and though the world was made through him, the world did not recognize him. He came to that which was his own, but his own did not receive him. Yet to all who did receive him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God.”

We can choose to trust in Jesus’ payment for our sin, or we can choose to pay for our sins ourselves—but we must remember that the payment for our sin is eternity in hell. C. S. Lewis said it this way: “There are only two kinds of people in the end: those who say to God, ‘Thy will be done,’ and those to whom God says in the end, ‘Thy will be done.’”

Related Resources:

- Eternal Punishment
- [Who will go to heaven?](#)
- [How can I not go to hell?](#)
- [How is eternity in hell a fair punishment for sin?](#)
- [What does it mean that hell is eternal separation from God?](#)
- [Where is hell? What is the location of hell?](#)
- [Is hell literally a place of fire and brimstone?](#)
- [Is hell real? Is hell eternal?](#)
- [What does it mean that hell is referred to as a lake of fire?](#)
- [What was Jesus’ teaching on hell?](#)
- [Why does God send people to hell?](#)
- [What happens at the final judgment?](#)
- [What is the great white throne judgment?](#)
- [Who will occupy the Millennial Kingdom?](#)

Matthew 25:42 for I was hungry, and you gave Me nothing to eat; I was thirsty, and you gave Me nothing to drink;

- Mt 25:35 10:37,38 12:30 Am 6:6 Jn 5:23 8:42-44 14:21 1Co 16:22 2Th 1:8 Jas 2:15-24 1Jn 3:14-17 4:20

for I was hungry, and you gave Me nothing to eat; I was thirsty, and you gave Me nothing to drink

Matthew 25:43 I was a stranger, and you did not invite Me in; naked, and you did not clothe Me; sick, and in prison, and you did not visit Me.’

I was a stranger, and you did not invite Me in; naked, and you did not clothe Me; sick, and in prison, and you did not visit Me.'

Matthew 25:44 "Then they themselves also will answer, 'Lord, when did we see You hungry, or thirsty, or a stranger, or naked, or sick, or in prison, and did not take care of You?'

- when: Mt 25:24-27 7:22 1Sa 15:13-15,20,21 Jer 2:23,35 Mal 1:6 2:17 3:13 Lu 10:29

Then they themselves also will answer, 'Lord, when did we see You hungry, or thirsty, or a stranger, or naked, or sick, or in prison, and did not take care of You

Matthew 25:45 "Then He will answer them, 'Truly I say to you, to the extent that you did not do it to one of the least of these, you did not do it to Me.'

- Inasmuch: Mt 25:40 Ge 12:3 Nu 24:9 Ps 105:15 Pr 14:31 17:5 21:13 Zec 2:8 Jn 15:18,19 Ac 9:5 1Jn 3:12-20 5:1-3

Then He will answer them, 'Truly I say to you, to the extent that you did not do it to one of the least of these, you did not do it to Me

Matthew 25:46 "These will go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous into eternal life."

- everlasting: Mt 25:41 Da 12:2 Mk 9:44,46,48,49 Lu 16:26 Jn 5:29 2Th 1:9 Rev 14:10,11 20:10,15 21:8
- the righteous: Mt 13:43 Ps 16:10,11 Jn 3:15,16,36 10:27,28 Ro 2:7-16 5:21 6:23 1Jn 2:25 5:11,12 Jude 1:21

These will go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous into eternal life