

The Oil of Intimacy: Encountering the Bridegroom God (Mt. 25)

I. THE CONTEXT FOR JESUS' TWO END-TIME LEADERSHIP PARABLES IN MT. 25

- A. In Mt. 25:1-30, Jesus taught two parables focused on how a leader must live in the End-Times. The first parable on the wise and foolish virgins spoke of leaders connecting with the Spirit as they cultivate intimacy with Jesus as the Bridegroom God (Mt. 25:1-13). The second parable was on being diligent in our ministry assignment, especially when it is small and hard (Mt. 25:14-30).
- B. In Mt. 24, Jesus' teaching on the End-Times provided the context for His two leadership parables in Mt. 25:1-30. Jesus made it clear that the Rapture would be at the end of the Tribulation.
- 29 Immediately after the Tribulation of those days the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light...30 Then all the tribes of the earth will mourn, and they will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds...31 He will send His angels with...and they will gather together (Rapture) His elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other. (Mt. 24:29-31)***
- C. In Mt. 24:37-41, Jesus prophesied of the great death toll that will occur in the generation in which He returns (Rev. 6:8; 9:15). Those "taken" in Noah's day were "taken in death."
- 37 As the days of Noah were, so also will the coming of the Son of Man be. 38 For as in the days before the flood, they were eating and drinking...until the day that Noah entered the ark, 39 and did not know until the flood came and took them all away, so also will the coming of the Son of Man be. 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. (Mt. 24:37-41)***
- D. The disciples asked, "Where will these be taken?" They will be "taken in death" as indicated by them being in the place where the birds of prey (vultures or eagles) gather over their dead bodies.
- 36 Two men will be in the field: one will be taken and the other left. 37 They answered and said to Him, "Where, Lord?" So He said to them, "Wherever the body (dead body NIV) is, there the eagles (vultures NAS/NIV) will be gathered." (Lk. 17:36-37)***
- E. At the Armageddon Campaign, birds will eat the flesh of wicked men of war (Ezek. 39:17-20).
- 17 An angel...saying to the birds..., "Gather together...18 that you may eat...the flesh of mighty men..." 21 The rest were killed...the birds were filled with their flesh. (Rev. 19:17-21)***
- F. Jesus prophesied of the great death toll that will occur in the End-Times (Rev. 6:8; 9:15).
- 8 Power was given to them over 1/4 of the earth, to kill with sword, with hunger... (Rev. 6:8)***
- G. Jesus' pastoral advice in light of the great death toll in the End-Times was *to watch* or to develop a heart connection with the Spirit (Mk. 13:32-37). This seems impractical to some, however, if we do this then we will receive instruction, strength and courage to face everything else.
- 42 Watch therefore, for you do not know what hour your Lord is coming. 43 But know this, that if the master of the house had known what hour the thief would come, he would have watched and not allowed his house (place of inheritance) to be broken into. (Mt. 24:42-43)***

- H. To watch is to establish a lifestyle of encountering Jesus. This is foundational in hindering Satan from stealing our inheritance (Jn. 10:10). Our primary inheritance is our heart connection with Jesus. Satan steals this aspect of one's inheritance as the way to take their ministry inheritance.

¹⁰ ***The thief (Satan) does not come except to steal, and to kill, and to destroy. (Jn. 10:10)***

- I. In Mt. 24:45-51, Jesus spoke of leaders as those who rule and feed His people. He categorized them into faithful and wise leaders in contrast to evil ones. Immediately after this, Jesus spoke more specifically of what is involved in being wise (Mt. 25:1-13) and faithful (Mt. 25:14-30).

⁴⁵ ***Who then is a faithful and wise servant, whom his master made ruler over his household, to give them food in due season? 46 Blessed is that servant whom his master, when he comes, will find so doing...48 But if that evil servant says in his heart, "My master is delaying his coming," 49 and begins to beat his fellow servants...50 the master...will come on a day when he is not looking...51 There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth. (Mt. 24:45-51)***

II. THE LEADERSHIP OF THE KINGDOM AT THE END-OF-THE-AGE

¹ ***Then the Kingdom of heaven shall be likened to ten virgins who took their lamps and went out to meet the Bridegroom. 2 Five of them were wise, and five were foolish. 3 Those who were foolish took their lamps and took no oil with them, 4 but the wise took oil...with their lamps. (Mt. 25:1-4)***

- A. ***Then*** the Kingdom shall function like virgins meeting the Bridegroom. We must ask, "When is then?" The word 'then' points us back to the previous end-of-the-age theme as seen in Mt. 24.

- B. All born again believers are as virgins before God because of Jesus' righteousness (2 Cor. 5:17).

² ***I betrothed you to one husband...I present you as a chaste virgin to Christ. (2 Cor. 11:2)***

- C. Each of these virgins had a lamp which spoke of a ministry that brought God's light to others (Mt. 5:15-16; Rev. 1:20; 2:5; 11:3-6; Zech. 4:2; Is. 62:1; John 5:35).

¹⁶ ***Let your light so shine before men, that they may see...and glorify your Father. (Mt. 5:16)***

- D. These are ministries who went out to meet or who encountered Jesus as the Bridegroom God. The 'oil of intimacy' speaks of our personal reality with the Spirit which tenderizes our heart to feel more of God's love by increasing our revelation of Jesus, zeal for righteousness and spiritual identity (revelation of who we are as sons of God before the Father and the bride before the Son).

- E. The foolish took their lamps, but took no oil (pursued ministry as their priority over getting oil). The wise took oil in their vessels with their lamps (pursued oil as their priority before ministry).

- F. At the dark midnight hour of history, the Spirit will raise up forerunners who cry out that Jesus is coming as a Bridegroom God and that we must go out to meet Him (make the necessary effort to encounter Him). They all slept which speaks of living in context to the natural processes of life.

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!' (Mt. 25:5-6)***

III. MINISTRIES RECOGNIZING THEIR LACK OF OIL AND DIMINISHING MINISTRY

- A. The foolish recognized their mistake in neglecting oil. Spiritual preparedness is not transferable. Therefore, the wise said "No" and refused ministry opportunities.
- ⁸ *The foolish said to the wise, "Give us some of your oil, for our lamps are going out."* ⁹ *The wise answered, "No, lest there should not be enough for us and you; but go rather to those who sell, and buy for yourselves."* (Mt. 25:8-9)
- B. We engage in the God ordained process of acquiring oil as Jesus later counsels us to buy gold.
- ¹⁸ *I counsel you to buy from Me gold refined in the fire, that you may be rich; and white garments, that you may be clothed...* (Rev. 3:18)
- C. Many ministry lamps will "go out" because they are not able to feed the heart of God's people. Many will miss out on future opportunities to be used in their fullest way.
- D. The foolish virgins said, 'Lord, open to us!' or give us the opportunity of usefulness as the others. The Lord did not know or recognize them as those who engaged with Him as the Bridegroom. This is not a reference to their salvation as when Jesus said, "I never knew you!" (Mt. 7:23). Jesus did not refer to them as evil (Mt. 24:48); wicked and lazy (Mt. 25:26) or cursed (Mt. 25:41).
- E. Only those who were "ready" by being close to the Bridegroom went in to celebrate. Jesus wants us to be a "voice not an echo" that speaks for the reality of encountering Him as our Bridegroom.
- ¹⁰ *While they went to buy, the Bridegroom came (seasons of revival), and those who were ready went in with Him to the wedding; and the door was shut.* ¹¹ *Afterward the other virgins came, saying, 'Lord, open to us!'* ¹² *He answered, "...I do not know you."* (Mt. 25:10-12)
- F. The ancient Jewish custom of that day involved celebrating a wedding over the course of several nights (ideally 7 nights, for a wealthy family). Each night of celebration had different purposes. Those who were closest to the couple to be married were invited on the first night and subsequently each of the following nights.
- G. As the Jewish wedding celebration continued over several days with each evening highlighting something different, so also God is releasing different "waves of the Spirit" that are building up to the fullness of the End-Time revival which culminates with the Second Coming. This is the grand finale referred to as the Wedding Supper of the Lamb (Rev. 19:7-9).
- H. The essential point in this parable is that the foolish virgins would needlessly miss out on the first night of the wedding celebration. The principle is that many ministries will also needlessly miss out on "*part of the End-Time revival wedding celebratory activities.*"

- I. Jesus' advice in light of the great business of the End-Time revival was **to watch** or to develop a heart connection with the Spirit and Jesus as the Bridegroom God is seen in Mt. 25:1, 6, 10, 13.
¹³ ***Watch therefore, for you know neither the day nor hour in which the Son of Man is coming. (Mt. 25:13)***
 1. In Mt. 24:45-51, the Lord came **sooner** than expected (24:50), however, in Mt. 25:1-13, He came **later** than expected.
 2. ***God's delay is longer than some expect*** causing them to lose their watchfulness due to three giants that are common to all: mundaneness, pressure and temptations.
 3. ***God's delay is more challenging than some expect*** therefore, we have urgency to acquire 'oil' knowing it is difficult to stay prepared.

IV. SUMMARY OF THE LESSONS IN THIS PARABLE

- A. First, sincere ministries can still be spiritually superficial (v. 2-4).
- B. Second, we can lose ground that we previously gained in our heart and/or ministry (v. 8). ***What we gain in God today (heart reality and ministry impact) is often lost tomorrow.*** Over the years, one may develop a larger ministry profile (they are more popular) yet their heart reality and true ministry impact is decidedly less than it was ten years previously. In this parable, all ten virgin ministries started off with oil and a shining ministry that brought light to others. Foolish ministries did not take time to sustain the 'oil of intimacy' in their hearts that they had for a season (verse 1).
- C. Third, there are some things that we "can't borrow" (v. 8-9). God's ordained 'kingdom order' is that ***no one can acquire the 'oil of intimacy' for another. Spiritual preparedness is not transferable.*** This 'kingdom order' is based on Jesus' zeal for our love.
- D. Fourth, that "we can be too late" and thus, miss significant opportunities in God that we cannot regain (v. 10). The 'shut doors' are opportunities in various seasons of the Holy Spirit's End-Time purpose. This is not the shutting of the door of salvation, but of our full involvement in the End-Times revival.
- E. We must be watchful in order to be ready and equipped to fully participate in each 'night' of the End-Times revival (wedding celebration). God is now preparing leaders for the future waves of the Spirit. He insists that only prepared vessels with spiritual reality lead each wave. In other words, a lifestyle of pursuing ever-increasing ministry opportunities while neglecting intimacy leads to missing the fullness of anointed opportunities (doors of ministry shut).