

# Parable of the Ten Virgins

Discuss briefly the preparation we do for school, for a meal, for family home evening, and so on. Tell the family that in this lesson they are going to learn how they can prepare spiritually for a wonderful event that will happen in the future.

Jesus often taught with parables, using familiar objects and situations to teach a hidden spiritual truth. He used parables so that only those who were willing to study the parable would understand the truth (see Matthew 13:10–17). This parable likens the second coming of Jesus Christ, which is when the Savior will return to earth to rule during the Millennium, to a wedding.

The parable of the ten virgins is based on ancient Jewish wedding customs. The bridegroom and his friends escorted the bride from her home to the home of the bridegroom. Along the way friends of the bride waited to join them. When they arrived at the bridegroom's home, they all went inside for the wedding. These weddings usually took place in the evenings, so those waiting for the bride and bridegroom carried lamps.

Read Matthew 25:1–13 (see the Joseph Smith Translation in Matthew 25:1, footnote *a*) and Doctrine and Covenants 45:56–57, 63:53–54

- Ten virgins = Church members
  - Oil = Spiritual preparation
  - Bridegroom = Jesus Christ
  - Marriage = Second coming of Jesus
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- • Whom do the ten virgins represent? (Matthew 25:1.) Whom does the bridegroom represent? (Jesus Christ.)
  - • How do we know that all ten virgins believed in Jesus Christ? (Matthew 25:6–7. They “went out to meet” the bridegroom and waited for him.) How can we show that we believe in Jesus?
  - • Why were five of the virgins referred to as foolish? (Matthew 25:3.) Why were five referred to as wise? (Matthew 25:4.)
  - • What happened when the bridegroom came? (Matthew 25:6–8.) Why do you think the five foolish virgins were so unprepared? How do you think we can be prepared when Jesus comes again?
  - • Why do you think the five wise virgins did not share their oil? (Matthew 25:9.) Why couldn't they have given some of their oil to the others? Explain that the shape of Jewish lamps, outside lips rounded inward, made it almost impossible for someone to pour oil from one lamp to another (see the illustration at the end of the lesson). In the parable, the oil in the wise virgins' lamps represents their righteous living and obedience. We each fill our own lamp, which represents our own life, with our

obedience and righteousness. Heavenly Father's blessings to us for our righteous actions cannot be given to the disobedient.

- What happened to the five who were not prepared? (Matthew 25:10–12.) What happened to the five who were prepared? Why is it important for us to prepare now for the Second Coming? How can we fill our lamps with oil?

Have the family read Matthew 24:36 and Matthew 25:13. Explain that just as the ten virgins did not know the exact hour when the bridegroom would come, we do not know exactly when Jesus will come again.

- What will it be like when Jesus Christ returns? (D&C 45:56–57; 63:53–54.) What blessings are in store for those who are spiritually prepared? (D&C 38:30.)
  - Write things that you can do to fill your spiritual lamps on the drops of oil and put them in your lamp. Ideas: bearing testimony, learning the gospel, serving others, paying tithing, living to be worthy of the companionship of the Holy Ghost, praying, fulfilling Church callings, attendance at sacrament meetings. Fasting, family prayer, home teaching, control of bodily appetites, preaching the gospel, studying the scriptures—each act of dedication and obedience is a drop added to our store. Deeds of kindness, payment of offerings and tithes, chaste thoughts and actions, marriage in the covenant for eternity—these, too, contribute importantly to the oil with which we can at midnight refuel our exhausted lamps” (Spencer W Kimball *Faith Precedes the Miracle*, p. 256).



