

## “THE MESSIAH IS COMING!” (Part 3)

### > **Observe the differences between the Rapture and Second Coming:**

- (1) At the Rapture, believers meet the Lord in the air (1 Thessalonians 4:17). At the Second Coming, believers return with the Lord to the earth (Revelation 19:14).
- (2) The Second Coming occurs after the great and terrible Tribulation (Revelation chapters 6-19). The Rapture occurs before the Tribulation (1 Thessalonians 5:9; Revelation 3:10).
- (3) The Rapture is the removal of believers from the earth as an act of deliverance (1 Thessalonians 4:13-17; 5:9). The Second Coming includes the removal of unbelievers as an act of judgment (Matt 24:40-41).
- (4) The Rapture will be “secret” and instant (1 Corinthians 15:50-54). The Second Coming will be visible to all (Revelation 1:7; Matthew 24:29-30).
- (5) The Second Coming of Christ will not occur until after certain other end-times events take place (2 Thessalonians 2:4; Matthew 24:15-30; Revelation chapters 6-18). The Rapture is imminent; it could take place at any moment (Titus 2:13; 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18; 1 Corinthians 15:50-54).

> **Perspective:** In the “**Olivet Discourse**” (**Matthew chapters 24 & 25**), we receive the context of the prophetic scenario regarding the world, Israel, and the church. Let’s quickly review and look ahead: **(1) Mt. 24:4-14** – Global deception, wars, famines, disease, natural catastrophes, persecution, lawlessness, will increase and be more severe as we approach the rapture of the church, and the gospel will have been preached to all the nations; **(2) Mt. 24:15-35** – Unveils God’s dealing with Israel after the rapture of the church, here we discover the *Seventieth Week of Daniel* (Daniel 9:24-27), the *abomination of desolation in the holy place* (at the rebuilt temple in Jerusalem (Rev. 11:1-2), and the *great tribulation* (seven years in length, ref. Rev. ch. 6—19), then the *2<sup>nd</sup> return of Christ*, these events will be soon take place after Israel becomes a nation (Israel became a nation May 14, 1948—“*parable of the fig tree*”); **(3) Mt. 24:36-51** - Jesus explains the moral condition the earth (*like the days of Noah*, global perspective) as we approach the rapture of the church. Jesus teaches His church to watch and be ready for the rapture, to be separate from the world; **(4) Mt. 25:1-13** – Jesus teaches that there will be a true church (bride) and false church (bride) at the time of the rapture; **(5) Mt. 25:14-30** – Jesus teaches on the rewards of the true bride and the judgment of the false; **(6) Mt. 25:31-46** – Here we see the *2<sup>nd</sup> coming of Christ*, to set up His “Millennial Kingdom,” the separating of the sheep and the goats (those allowed on earth to come into that 1000 year reign on earth and those rejected headed to everlasting punishment).

### > **MATTHEW Chapter 25:1-13 – “The Parable of Ten Virgins”**

#### **I) The Wedding Preparation (v1)**

- Take note, Jesus says, “*the kingdom of heaven is likened*” – This places us on church ground, the term *kingdom of heaven* is used 32 times in the New Testament and each verse is in reference to the church. The term *is likened* means *a similar comparison to*. (i.e. - Matt. 16:13-20; Ch. 18)

> The *ten virgins* represent the true and false church spoken of in the last days, the true Church of *Philadelphia* (Rev. 3:7-14) and the apostate church of *Laodicea* (Rev. 3:14-22). The *lamp* is symbolic of God in the life of the believer. In the Old Testament we are told the priest were to keep the lamp burning continually in the Temple, **Ex 27:20** “*And you shall command the children of Israel that they bring you pure oil of pressed olives for the light, to cause the lamp to burn continually.*” David declared in song in **2 Sam 22:29** - *For You are my lamp, O LORD; The LORD shall enlighten my darkness.* In **Ps 119:105** - *Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path.* **The Son of God, our Lord Jesus Christ said in Matt 5:14-16** - *“You are the light of the world. A city that is set on a hill cannot be hidden. Nor do they light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on a lampstand, and it gives light to all who are in the house. Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven.”* We know the **bridegroom** is JESUS! John the Baptist called Jesus the “bridegroom” (John 3:29). Jesus referred to Himself as the “bridegroom” (Matt 9:15). Jesus’ bride, of course, is the church—those who are spiritually united with Him by faith.

> **Let’s understand MARRIAGE from the Hebrew culture:** **First, the Selection of Bride** – Perhaps in imitation of the Father of the universe, who provided Adam with a wife, fathers from the beginning considered it their duty and prerogative to secure wives for their sons (Gen 24:3-4; 38:6; etc.). In the absence of the father the responsibility of selection was passed to the mother (21:21). In some cases the proposal was made by the

father of the girl (Ex 2:21). Occasionally the whole business of selecting the wife was committed to a friend. **Second**, we have **The Betrothal** - The selection of the bride was followed by the espousal, which was not altogether like our "engagement" but was a formal proceeding, undertaken by a friend or legal representative on the part of the bridegroom and by the parents on the part of the bride. It was confirmed by oaths and accompanied with presents to the bride. These presents were described by different terms, that to the bride by "a dowry" (Heb. *mohar*) and that to the relatives by "a present" (Heb. *mattan*). **Third**, the **Marriage Ceremony** - Usually the marriage took place at the home of the bride's parents and was celebrated by a feast to which friends and neighbors were invited and which lasted seven days (Gen 29:22,27). The essence of the ceremony consisted in the removal of the bride from her father's house to that of the bridegroom or his father. There seems, indeed, to be a literal truth in the Heb. expression "to take" a wife (Gen 21:21; 24:3,38; 26:34), for the ceremony appears to have mainly consisted in the taking. After putting on festive dress, placing a "garland" on his head (Isa 61:10; "crown," Song 3:11, marg., "wreath"), the bridegroom set forth from his house, attended by his groomsmen (cf. Judg 14:11; Matt 9:15), preceded by a band of musicians or singers (Gen 31:27; Jer 7:34; 16:9), and accompanied by persons bearing lamps (Matt 25:7; cf. Jer 25:10; Rev 18:23). Having reached the house of the bride, who with her companions anxiously expected his arrival (Matt 25:1,6), he conducted the whole party back to his own or his father's house, with every demonstration of gladness (Ps 45:15). Once at the groom's house, the couple was ushered into a bridal chamber. The marriage was consummated through sexual union as the guests waited outside. Once that fact was announced, the wedding festivities continued, with guests dropping by for the wedding feast.<sup>1</sup>

> **Notice there's ten virgins mentioned** – The number "Ten" represents *perfected universality*. The "thousand" years (Revelation 20:2) is ten raised to the third power, i.e. the world (10) pervaded by the divine (3). The Ten Commandments contain the whole cycle of God's moral requirements. The tithe represented the whole property as belonging to God (Genesis 14:20). Genesis has the formula ten times, "these are the generations" (Genesis 2:4; 5:1; 6:9; 10:1; 11:10,27; 25:12,19; 36:1; 37:2). The Ten Commandments of the Decalogue logically follow; God's fingers wrote it. Our fingers are ten (Exodus 31:18; Psalms 8:1). The ten plagues were the entire round of judgments from God's hand. The tabernacle, temple, and New Jerusalem have ten as the prevailing figure in measurements. In the New Testament the ten lepers, ten talents, ten cities in reward for ten pounds gained, ten virgins. Antichrist too has his ten, comprising the whole cycle of the world power: ten nations opposed to Abraham's seed (Genesis 15:19); ten toes on Nebuchadnezzar's image to be stricken by the stone (Daniel 2:41); ten horns on the fourth beast (Daniel 7:7,20,24; Revelation 12:3; 13:1; 17:3,7,12, "ten kings"); ten days of Smyrna's tribulation, the complete term of the world power's persecution of the church (Revelation 2:10). In combination with 7,10 appears in the 70 nations (Genesis 10), the 70 who went down to Egypt (Genesis 46:27), the 70 palms at Elim, the 70 elders of Israel (Exodus 24:1; Numbers 11:16), the 70 disciples, the 70 years' captivity (Jeremiah 25:11). Daniel's 70 sevens, weeks (Daniel 9:24). Seventy-fold (Genesis 4:24; Matthew 18:22). As 3 ½ is related to 7, so 5 is related to 10; 5 is the penal number (Exodus 22:1; Leviticus 5:16; Numbers 18:16); the fifth kingdom punishes with destruction the four world kingdoms (Daniel 2). (From Fausset's Bible Dictionary.)

## II) The Wedding Reception (v2-10)

(v2-4) The parable revealed (remember a parable is an earthly story with a heavenly meaning) – **Five virgins (virgins in Greek is parthenos - by implication, an unmarried daughter)**, are **wise**, meaning **intelligent, prudent, mindful of one's business**. Five were **foolish** in Greek, **moros – dull, sluggish, to be silly or stupid**. We also know according to Biblical numerology that **five** is the number of **grace**. **Five—wise** according to **Eph 2:8-9 - For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, not of works, lest anyone should boast**; whereas, the **five—foolish** had a presumption of grace lacking true saving faith. **Oil** in scripture is **symbolic of the Holy Spirit**. The foolish had lamps, but not enough oil. The wise had lamps and an extra flask of oil; they were full of oil, full of the Holy Spirit. **An example of the Spirit filled believer** is found in **Ephesians 5:8-21, is this our life? We notice the life of Spirit filled believers: (1) Walk as children of the light (5:8); (2) Walk wisely in these evil times (5:15-16); (3) Walk according to the will of God (5:17); (4) Walk in worship—thanksgiving—service to one another! (5:18-21).**

(v5-6) **"at midnight"** – Time is finished for the church, it's time for the **marriage of the lamb** (Rev 19:7-9 - *Let us be glad and rejoice and give Him glory, for the marriage of the Lamb has come, and His wife has made herself ready." And to her it was granted to be arrayed in fine linen, clean and bright, for the fine linen is the righteous acts of the saints. Then he said to me, "Write: 'Blessed are those who are called to the marriage*

<sup>1</sup> (From The New Unger's Bible Dictionary & Nelson's Illustrated Bible Dictionary)

*supper of the Lamb!'"*), and it's time for judgment in this world (the Great Tribulation (Mt. 24:21-22). It was at midnight that the Lord struck down all the firstborn in the land of Egypt (Ex 11:4; 12:29). At this moment a ***cry was heard*** turn to **1 Thess. 4:13-18** (this is the "rapture" of the church), along with 1 Corinthians 15:51-58; John 14:1-3.

**(v7-10) Pay close attention to the foolish virgins their lights went out and they had no oil.** They were told by the wise to go to the world and buy oil, for this is where the foolish virgins have always gotten their oil, this is worldly religion, it almost gets you to heaven, but falls short and sends you to hell. Let's turn to Revelation 3:7-22 and contrast the faithful bride and the unfaithful church.

### **III) The Wedding Revelation (v11-13)**

**(v11-12) This passage sounds similar to Matt 7:21-23** - *"Not everyone who says to Me, 'Lord, Lord,' shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father in heaven. Many will say to Me in that day, 'Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Your name, cast out demons in Your name, and done many wonders in Your name?' And then I will declare to them, 'I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness!'"*

**(v13) Jesus tells us to watch and be ready once again; this is the fourth time He's taught us about His imminent return!** (Matthew Ch. 24:36-42 (like the *days of Noah*); verses 43-44 (the *house owner and the thief*); verses 45-51 (the *wise and faithful servant*); Ch. 25:1-13 (the *parable of the ten virgins*)).