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The Parable of the Ten Virgins

A study by Gavin Finley MD
- endtimepilgrim.org

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(Then save it to your tablet).



CLICK on the image here to go to the video.

Here is an [Mp3 audio](#) of the Parable of the Ten Virgins produced by Calvary Chapel in Downey, California. It was recorded for a ladies retreat and showcased the haunting drama of the parable. For their retreat they asked for my permission to use my photo of the wise virgin filling her failing lamp at midnight. After the retreat they sent me a CD of the narration given at the ladies retreat and giving me permission to share it on the website. I blended in some images to make [THE VIDEO](#) on the left.

**Parable of the
Ten Virgins Unveiled**
by Jim Sayles.

Matthew 25

25:1 "Then the kingdom of heaven shall be likened to ten virgins who took their lamps and went out to meet the bridegroom.

25:2 Now five of them were wise, and five were foolish.

25:3 Those who were foolish took their lamps and took no oil with them,

25:4 but the wise took oil in their vessels with their lamps.

25:5 But while the bridegroom was delayed, they all slumbered and slept.

25:6 And at midnight a cry was heard:
'Behold, the bridegroom is coming; go out to meet him!'

25:7 Then all those virgins arose and trimmed their lamps.

25:8 And the foolish said to the wise,
'Give us some of your oil, for our lamps are going out.'

25:9 But the wise answered, saying,
'No, lest there should not be enough for us and you;
but go rather to those who sell, and buy for yourselves.'

25:10 And while they went to buy, the bridegroom came,

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And those who were ready went in with him to the wedding;
and the door was shut.

25:11 Afterward the other virgins came also, saying,
'Lord, Lord, open to us!'

25:12 But he answered and said,
'Assuredly, I say to you, **I do not know you.**'

25:13 Watch therefore,
for you know neither the day nor the hour in which the Son of Man is coming.

THE PARABLE OF THE TEN VIRGINS.

The parable of the ten virgins in Matthew 25 is one of the most enigmatic and intriguing in all of scripture. It seems to be a story of great drama and romance. In it we also see a warning, and some information for the saints of great prophetic significance, It is also a wooing, and a calling into a devotion in God. The Spirit of God is speaking to us in the storyline. We find ourselves being drawn beyond our comfort zone. Deep calls out unto deep - [Ps.42:7](#)

The facts of the story are straightforward. Five of the virgins were wise and five were foolish. Just who are these 5 wise and 5 foolish virgins? If they are all believers then why the division? Are there two different groups of people within the beloved Congregation of God? And if so, what is it that distinguishes them from each other?

THE SYMBOL OF THE LAMP IN SCRIPTURE.

As we look deeper into the story and survey the poetic imagery we observe that all of the ten virgins carried lamps. The **lamp** is often pictured in scripture and in our literature as a symbol of the spirit of a person.



PROVERBS 20:27 NKJV

The spirit of a man is the **lamp of the Lord**,
Searching all the inner depths of his heart."

PROVERBS 20:27 KJV

"The spirit of a man is the **candle of the Lord**,
Searching all the inward parts of the belly."

("Inward parts of the belly" relates to our deepest feelings.
It is a reference to the origin of our true thoughts and motivations.)

So the lamp, or candle, of the Lord is the spirit of man.
There is a flame present and visible to others, - if he is alive and awake.
The spirit of man at any given time is showcasing a spiritual presence.
That spiritual presence varies from person to person and from time to time.

The spirit being expressed in a person may be of God,
Or we may have accepted "strange fire" from the enemy of our souls.
There is a 'mystery of iniquity' operating in the midst of great deception. ([2Thes.2:7](#))
And there is a 'mystery of godliness'. ([1Tim.3:16](#))

Our ultimate and eternal happiness is not something that comes from human determination or human striving.
We were designed and created to function in union and in harmony with God.
And the candle of our spirit was originally designed to be lit and fueled by the Holy Spirit.
As children in Sunday School we learned the song,

"Jesus bids us shine with a pure clear light,
Like a little candle, burning in the night.
In this world of darkness, so we must shine.
You in your small corner, and I in mine. "

So the lamp, or candle, is the spirit of man.
The Westminster Catechism asks this question.
What is the chief end or purpose of man?
The answer is, "**to know God and to enjoy Him forever.**"

Man was created to live and walk in God. He was created and saved not just for a mansion in heaven but to showcase the works and fruits of His Holy Spirit here on earth. The indwelling Holy Spirit of YHVH-God manifests the Christian graces. They are, in fact, the fruit of the Holy Spirit. Our Apostle Paul lays them out for us in [Gal.5:22&23](#). These aspects of Godly character are evidence of the indwelling Christ. And they are increasingly evident in a human being as he grows in God.

The nine fruits of the Holy Spirit are,

love, joy, peace,
patience, kindness, goodness,
faithfulness, gentleness and self-control.

THE QUESTION OF THE OIL.

Discussions of the parable of the ten virgins usually addresses the question of the **oil**.

What does the oil represent?

In scripture the meaning of the oil is not a difficult matter to elucidate. A quick word study through the Bible will suffice. The oil quite quite typically represents the anointing of the Holy Spirit. The scriptures tell of the oil of gladness and the oil of anointing of God's Presence. The Old Testament scriptures showcase the oil of anointing for priests and kings. Throughout the Bible we also see the oil for the lamps which brings the Light of God's illumination. Poetically the Word and Light of God is there as "a lamp unto our feet" to help guide us along the pathway when the hours of darkness come.

If the oil is a picture of the Holy Spirit then what does that extra jar of oil represent? As we see in the parable, an extra cruse of oil was carried by each of the five wise virgins. Apparently this extra oil supply was the essential difference between the five wise and five foolish virgins. As the party began in the early hours of the evening the difference between the wise and the foolish virgins was not noticeable. All of them slumbered. All of them were approaching burnout as the night wore on. But as the midnight hour came the presence or absence of that extra oil became a critical issue. The wise virgins carried an extra supply beyond and outside of the oil they had in their lamps. They traveled with this extra supply of oil. That extra oil was with them on their person. When the wise virgins ran out of oil or approached "burnout" they could pause and recharge their lamp. They had this extra resource outside themselves but upon their person. The foolish virgins did not.

This matter of the extra oil is exceedingly important. Here we see a reserve supply of oil that went along with the wise virgins as a matter of course. This extra resource was quite separate from the oil that was in their lamps. The oil the wise carried in their lamps was no greater in supply than the oil in the lamps of the foolish. All ten of them saw their lamps beginning to burn out as the midnight hour approached. So this extra oil supply was **not** a superabundance overflowing from within the lamps of the wise. The wise virgins certainly had extra oil with them. But that extra was not in their lamps. The extra oil came from another companion vessel that they carried with them.

This is a very important point. In the symbolism we see that the extra oil was **not** to be found within the spirit being of the wise virgins. Their glory and their esteem was not in themselves. The extra oil of Light and gladness came from an external source. It was a supply and a Providence that was **outside and beyond** their own souls. It was a personal resource to be sure. And it was a resource they obviously had access to. But this extra energy supply was separate from the oil they had within the lamp of their own spirit. This was the critical difference between those who were wise and those who were foolish. What is God trying to tell us here?

Surely the extra cruse of oil is a picture of our Paraclete. The Comforter/Strengthener, our Eternal Supply. He is always with us on our pilgrimage, even the fullness of the Holy Spirit. He is our Strengthener, our Illumination, and our Guide. This is not of ourselves. It is the gift of God.

THE EXTRA JAR OF OIL. OUR SPIRITUAL PREPARATION IN GOD.

This matter of the oil and extra provision beyond ourselves is a hugely important issue. The question of the extra oil is still wondered about and discussed in devotional circles. Many Christians admit that this haunting parable of the ten virgins most assuredly involves them. Deep down in their hearts they also know that God is in some way giving them a warning. It is a call to an important spiritual preparation in God. Is God calling His people to prepare themselves for a coming journey through the darkness? Biblical Christians know that there certainly is a great darkness up ahead. This will come in the end-time "final witness" at the end of this age. So in this parable is our God giving us a 'heads up'?

We are told "**A word to the wise is sufficient**".

There is still time for us to respond and to act on this information.

So shall we take the message to heart?

Shall we make it a priority in our busy world to draw aside and to make this spiritual preparation?

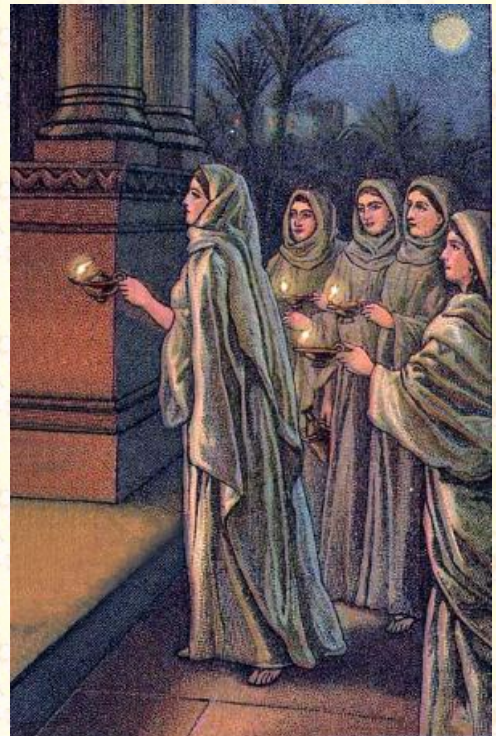
If this parable is a prophecy, (and it probably is), then the answer is all too apparent.

Some of us will take the warning to heart.

We shall seek the face of God and make the needful preparation.

And some of us will not.

RUNNING LOW ON OIL.



AND THE TROUBLING ISSUE OF "BURNOUT".

We also see that all of the virgins were in the same predicament.

As the midnight hour approached they had all come to a moment of crisis.

Both the wise and the foolish were running low on oil.

All of them were approaching "burnout".

The fact that the virgins came to a time when their lamps were sputtering and burning low is not the main issue at all. This happened to **all ten** of the virgins, including the five wise virgins. Burnout happens to all of us from time to time as we come to low points and times of crisis in our lives. There is nothing wrong with this at all. It is a common human experience. We cannot pump up our ego or our "self esteem" and expect to avoid this. But our response to the high calling in God amid the challenges of life is what seems to be the issue.

So let us ask ourselves this question. Do we fear God? Do we seek His face when our world enters into a crisis? Have we come to know God more intimately in our dark passages through life? Have we taken time to address the spiritual issues as we walk with God through this life?

It is our spiritual attentiveness that appears to be the critical issue in this parable. We see it alluded to in Proverbs chapter 1. Here we see the woman of wisdom crying out in the streets. But few are listening. The foolish are going their own way no matter what. Only the wise stop to listen and respond to the God who is calling them.

So what was the difference then? Those who were wise had looked around them and seen that the darkness was coming. They then made important preparations for the coming night. They were not trusting and depending on the oil that was in the lamps of their own personal spirit. They knew that their own lamp would fail them somewhere down the line. So they had made their priority to obtain a spiritual supply of oil outside of themselves. They had that extra jar of oil. It was the 'midnight oil'. With that extra supply of oil the the wise virgins were prepared. They were ready for the great drama that would unfold at the midnight hour. When the hour of burnout came they were not left destitute in the darkness. They were prepared to recharge their lamps with a fresh supply of oil. The wise virgins then arose from their beds of ease and were ready to go out.

For the foolish virgins it was a different story. They had not prepared for the midnight hour. They were in a state of high anxiety and dismayed because their lamps were fading and approaching burnout. They had heard the midnight cry but they were unable to go on. But the lamps of the wise virgins had been recharged and were burning brightly. They were all set. They were ready to go out to meet the Bridegroom.

THE EXTRA JAR OF OIL AND ETERNAL, ABUNDANT, NEVER-ENDING SUPPLY. THE LESSON FROM THE HANUKKAH OIL.

Let us take a closer look at the the extra jar of oil. What is this all about? This is an interesting question. We can piece together the answer as we meditate in the Holy Scriptures and listen to what the Holy Spirit is showing us. It seems that the Holy Spirit is our true and faithful outside supply. He is the ultimate Source of the oil of anointing for salvation and empowerment of the saints. Apparently carnal Christian believers can operate in their own strength in good times and be indistinguishable from committed sold-out Spirit filled believers. But when the saints come into times of darkness some are swallowed up in the darkness and others arise and shine to go on to glory.

The Hanukkah story is another wonderful demonstration of this abundant external supply in God. Here after the desecration and the desolation of the temple by Antiochus Epiphanes we see a time of deep darkness for the Jewish



Art by Spencer Williams.
[Click on the image to go to his gallery.](#)

nation. But in the midst of that darkness they found a supply of oil for the menorah in the temple. The oil they had prepared did not appear to be all that much. It was just enough oil to keep the flame for one day. But in the midst of this crisis God intervened. Miraculously He supplied enough oil to keep the light shining for eight days.

The oil is a picture of God's Eternal Spirit. The oil that did not fail is a representation of the wonderful unending provision God's Eternal Light. It is a picture of the ever faithful Presence of the Holy Spirit. It is a demonstration of the Spirit of God forever at work in and through His covenant people.

In that Hanukkah oil we see God-YHVH as our Eternal Providence. He is our never-ending supply. He is there with us in our dark times, filling our lamps with His supply as our spirits begin to fail us. He supplies the oil throughout all the 7 days of the week. Then He takes us on beyond into the 8th day and into the beginning of a new week. In Him we have El Shaddai, a Eternal Supply that never ends. He is the One who fills the lamps of our human spirits. His provision is without end. In Him we shall never come to a place where our spirits burn out. And despite our trials and tribulations He gives us a song in the night. We shall never be cast away into outer darkness. Even when faced by physical death in the day of tribulation and adversity not one hair of our heads will be lost. Abiding in the Vine we shall never die. Our Savior is the God of this Providence. And He will provide the oil of His Spirit for His saints, come what may. He is there with us to cheer us on even as darkness falls and we face the coming night. This endurance in God is guaranteed by the infilling of the Holy Spirit. As we abide in Him we find ourselves being drawn ever closer into His Presence. Let us seek the infilling of His Holy Spirit with all diligence. Because our inspiration and our empowerment is not to be found in ourselves. Our Providence from God. It is divine, and a bountiful supply. And that precious and critical outside supply is only to be found in Him.

After Jesus finished His priestly work on earth at His first coming he spoke with those who loved Him. He gave them a promise. Our Savior promised that when He left the scene He would not leave us desolate and alone. He would send His Holy Spirit to be our Comforter/(Empowerer) and Guide. This happened, fifty days after His resurrection, on the [Day of Pentecost](#). On that day the Holy Spirit of the God of Israel overflowed into the heathen gentile nations. The birthday of Israel, the day God brought the law to the nation of Israel at Mount Sinai was the birthday of the nation of Israel. Pentecost now also became the birthday of the Church.

Jesus also specifically promised that the Holy Spirit would be there to light our way. He would be there and to guide us into the pathways of Truth in the times to come. He said,

**"When he, the Spirit of Truth is come He will guide you into all truth.
For He shall not speak of Himself;
But whatsoever He shall hear, that shall He speak:
And he will show you things to come". - [John 16:13](#)**



The Old Testament Hebrew poetry brings us the very same message. There is no difference qualitatively between the workings of the Holy Spirit in the Old Testament times and His New Testament workings we see today.

**"Thy Word is a lamp unto my feet,
And a light unto my path". - [Ps.119:105](#)**



FIVE ARE WISE. FIVE ARE FOOLISH.

There is no doubt that this parable of the ten virgins makes us sit up and take notice. All of them as a group prepare to go out and meet the Bridegroom. God is using this poetic wedding imagery to help us focus on a crucial relationship. The covenant people of God have determined to consecrate themselves to YHVH/God, the Holy One of Israel. He is the One who is [coming again](#) from out of the heavenly places. He will be coming as '[The Breaker](#)'. ([Micah 2:12-13](#)) He Himself will be returning to this cosmos to judge and to save.

Our God is the Holy One of Israel. His name is "Emmanuel", which means "God with us". And He is coming down Jacob's ladder into the cosmos to be with His people So the end time drama is not just divine judgment upon the wicked. It is also a deliverance and the grand climax of the [divine romance](#) between God and [His single Elect](#) people.

The parable of the ten virgins is a romance and an adventure. The arrival of the Bridegroom is expected. His Spirit has been provided ahead of time ensuring Eternal Light and joy to the bridal party. And at the midnight hour in the midst of deep darkness the saints will go out to meet the Bridegroom.

The five wise virgins are at the center of a mystery, even the mystery of Godliness. They seem to be just like all the others. But at the midnight hour they suddenly become the focus of the story. The wise are clearly different from the others. Only then does it become obvious that these five had taken the time to prepare. In the imagery they made spiritual preparation ahead of an anticipated time of darkness and trial and testing. Their bridal garments are also prepared. They are clothed in fine linen, even the righteousness of the saints. ([Rev.19:8](#)) And they have found the oil for the lamps against the coming night. All of them are excited and expectant at the beginning of the evening. But the wise

ones **know** that a long night of deep darkness awaits them. They also know that a great drama and a magnificent romance is up ahead.

For the wise this is not just an intellectual or theological matter. Nor has their preparation in the Spirit of God come from mere emotional hype. What we are seeing here is evidence of an abiding love that burns continually within the heart of those who are wise. Their devotion is to God and their worship is in Spirit and in Truth.

The wise virgins know that the time of deep darkness is up ahead. They know for a fact that this coming crisis is bound to happen. They also know who they are in God and what they are called to do in all this. They have the character of a true bride attending to blood covenant issues with love and devotion. They are prepared to be faithful witnesses on behalf of the Bridegroom, even in a time of [great darkness](#). So the wise virgins have made it their business to prepare themselves spiritually.

They **have** the oil of anointing.
And they carry it with them.

As we can see, the wise virgins in the bridal party are not passive. They are not indifferent purchased concubines who are in it for themselves and who do not have a vital interest in [blood covenant](#) proceedings at the end of the age. They are the bridal company. They are enlightened, inspired, and joyful in the [blood covenant](#) connection they have with the approaching Bridegroom. There is rejoicing in the group and a spirit of praise and of good cheer.

So the wise are different from the foolish in this. They are well aware of what is coming. They are not in a state of denial about their role in the coming drama. Nor have they played games with their mind to dodge the truth. They know that they must face the coming night. And so they are not passive in the covenant. They have made deliberate preparations for this night of passage. And so they are good to go.

This is a parable of great awe. Ten virgins had **intended** to go out and meet the Bridegroom. Alas, only five of them will. This is the high drama which unfolds in the storyline. It is probably the most haunting parable Jesus ever taught.

As darkness falls on this night of wonders all ten of the virgins have their lamps with them. Their lights are burning brightly in the early hours of darkness. But they are in for a long night. At the stroke of midnight things will become very different, and very difficult. They will be called upon to go out beyond their present dwelling, beyond their present place of comfort. A long passage through a dark night awaits them. It will be a journey of wonder. The passage will take them well beyond the present structures they have come to rely on.

The wise ones know all about this. They have made their spiritual preparations in anticipation of this eventuality. Their extra jar of oil is with them. It is their Eternal Supply. And they know this.

The parable showcases five wise virgins. What made them wise? We are told that the fear of God is the beginning of wisdom. Did the wise virgins fear God? Apparently so. A word of wisdom came their way and they responded positively in the mystery of Godliness. Wisdom was crying out in the streets and at the gates. And they paid attention. (Prov.1) They heard the salvation story. They repented of their self centered ways and consecrated themselves to the One who was calling them, wooing them to Himself. But that was just the beginning. They set their faces towards the Coming Messiah and made Him their Eternal Supply. They dressed themselves in the garments of praise and of righteousness. And the oil of gladness in the anointing of Christ/Messiah became their portion and their transport to the highway of holiness and on to the gates of splendor.

The five wise virgins had taken the time to prepare themselves. These then went out into an epic night of wonder on a journey . A night of high drama will lead them out on a great adventure to meet the returning Bridegroom and so enter into their magnificent destiny. Then, with glorified spiritual bodies, they will be joined with Him. Their spiritual consummation will come at the [Marriage Supper of the Lamb](#).

Who then is this party of ten virgins? And where is the Bride in this story? There seems to be a puzzling omission here in this parable. The bride herself is not mentioned. Or is she? The parable focuses on a bridal party, here termed virgins or bridesmaids. Bridesmaids typically are closely associated with the bride. But isn't a bridesmaid one who is preparing for her future role as a bride? Is she not readying herself for her own wedding? The parable is a picture of the divine romance is it not? If that is so, then might the issue of **bridal preparation** be the main theme in this parable of the 10 virgins?

All through the Old Testament we saw the covenant people of God represented as a party of people in a betrothal relationship with YHVH-God. This relationship called for [blood covenant](#) faithfulness. This is precisely the witness "unto death" we see called for in a wedding betrothal. We see this level of commitment in the lives of the saints of Old Testament and New Testament times. In modern times it was seen in the lives of the Anabaptists, millions of whom died for the faith. It was this level of total commitment that Corrie Ten Boom demonstrated in her life. She warned the church that this high level of commitment would be called for in times to come. Her message to us is recorded in [this letter](#) she wrote back in 1974.

The theme of spiritual faithfulness was voiced repeatedly by the prophets. The epic and prophetic story of Hosea and [Gomer](#) is a case in point. We also see this same message in the Song of Songs. In the Hebrew wedding and in our Communion service we see the cup of the covenant offered to the prospective Bride by the Bridegroom. The cup, (and all that this means), is received, but only by those who are fully committed. And so the Bride-to-be is betrothed. At that moment she becomes fully committed to the Bridegroom. The Book of Revelation gives us a glimpse into the divine romance in the Apocalypse. It is seen in the message given to the [Church of Laodicea](#). ([Rev.3:14-22](#))

Our God is a God of grace. He always called out His people at a heart level. Devotion to God never was just a matter of

law or of religious legalism. It always was and always will be a devotional matter. This is the essence of the divine romance in God. Our apostle Paul exhorts us in this very same devotion.

**"For I am jealous over you with godly jealousy:
for I have espoused you to one Husband,
that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ". -2Cor.11:2**

THE TEN VIRGINS IN THE APOCALYPSE.

It seems we have been offered a magnificent destiny.
Who then would want to [dodge](#) this high calling?
The divine romance is upon God's people.
And our God is wooing us to Himself.

Here in this parable of ten virgins we see a wedding party. They are preparing themselves for their passage into the glory. They gather together in anticipation of an arriving bridegroom. But something happens. At midnight the drama unfolds. All of the ten virgins are seen to be slumbering. Their lamps are all flickering and burning low. All of them are experiencing a degree of "burnout". Five of the 10 virgins have an external supply of oil. The others do not. The five who have the extra jar of oil are prepared. They are ready to go out to meet the Bridegroom.

Are there prophetic elements to this story? Are there some thematic overtones here of [the 70th week of Daniel?](#) ([Dan.9:24-27](#)), Is this a glimpse into the deep darkness that will come at the midway point of those final seven years of this age? A time will certainly come when of great darkness will cover this earth. The midpoint of the final seven years will bring the 'abomination of desolation' and the Antichrist will attempt to institute his 666 economic system. Jesus told four of His inquiring disciples that this will truly be the deepest crisis of faith the saints have ever known. Is this the midnight hour we see in this parable of the ten virgins? Is this the time of deep darkness that will usher in the final [three and a half years](#) of the Great Tribulation?

The **midnight cry** will be a cry of alarm. The bridal party have come to their moment of crisis. They must leave the house. Is the house a symbol of the covering provided by our present structured temporal and spiritual life. We are comfortable here in our present western church-state system. The western church has been a place of protection for the saints in recent times. But going back all the way to the [Council of Niceae](#) it has been a place of compromise. Has the present Household of God changed the entrenched church-state equation we see in the west? Or has the church we know given herself to [narcissism](#), self indulgence and comforts of the flesh?

In the middle of the night this will all change. Something of great importance has happened. They hear the midnight cry. The Bridegroom is coming towards them in the night.

The night is dark as the ten virgins awaken and stir themselves. Their lamps are flickering and burning low. The ten virgins know that they must leave the house to go out to meet the Bridegroom. The wise virgins have the oil. They are trimming and recharging their lamps. And now they are ready to leave.

Right here in the parable we are actually being given a picture of something very inspiring and wonderful. It is something we do not expect to see. Right in the midst of that deep darkness we see the saints rise and shine. Their lights are burning brightly in the midnight darkness. It is a moment of great wonder and awe. What are we seeing here?

It is a scene of romance and high adventure. It is in fact another picture of the great [End Time Revival](#). All the Old Testament prophets saw this. The prophet Isaiah told of the time when God's covenant people would hear the call, -

1 "Arise, shine; For your light has come!" - Isa.60

Again we see the glorious company of light-bearers. They were first seen by our father Abraham four millennia ago. He saw the lights of a starry host against the black vault in the heavens. A myriad company of stars was shining forth in numbers that could not be counted. (Gen.15) They were [the Elect](#), the glorious Congregation of the redeemed. (Rev.7)

THE DEVOTIONAL APPLICATION OF THE PARABLE

And so we see the wise virgins step out into the night. The saints are on the final leg of their epic journey. Their lamps are burning brightly as they go out to meet the Bridegroom. A dark and dangerous passage awaits them. They pass on through the night as a wedding party, each one carries their own personal lamp to light the way in the darkness. All of them are actively engaged in the covenant proceedings here. They are not passive. This is their destiny, and they know it. And as they move out their safe passage is totally dependent on their lamplight and the oil supply that has been provided them. This is the high drama of the end time. This is the divine romance. And it leads us right into the Apocalypse. The five wise virgins are on a passage. As we see them they are en route into the dangers and the glories that will be seen at the consummation of the age.

It is God's Spirit which brings the Life and the Light into our lives. Without Him, (and yes the Spirit of God is a Person and not an "it"), our lives would be in darkness. Our lamps are ready be fueled with an external yet personal supply of oil. This is how the spirit of the wise is maintained. The extra jar of oil is the key. The lives of the pilgrim saints down through time give abundant testimony to this. The Light of God shines from their lamps without wavering. These are the people who arise and shine, even in valley of the shadow of death. They are prepared to go out, - even in the midnight hour, - and to go beyond.

**"The spirit of man is the candle/lamp of the Lord,
searching all the inward parts". - [Prov.20:27](#)**



How would we describe the lamp of our spirit?
Do we merely maintain our spirit in the strength of our own self life?
And what about this awful possibility of "burnout".
How do we deal with that?

What if we do come to a time of great darkness? What if we face impending burnout? What then? Who will bring forth the Light for our flagging spirit? And Who will supply the oil for our lamp as the end time darkness falls? And when that future history unfolds that will see a '[great falling away](#)' from the faith what will happen to our faith then? What, or Who will be our supply? Is there a Source of oil beyond our own limited human resources? Has the vessel storing our extra supply of oil been filled?

There is a Savior-God who brings us salvation.
But have we answered Him as he calls us beyond ourselves?
Where is the One we in Christendom once referred to as Providence?
Do we know Him? [Do we know Him personally?](#)

These are critical questions. All of us have a certain natural reserve within lamps of our own human spirit. Some have more than others. God put that human energy within each of us. As human beings we have a certain supply of spiritual energy. We were made in God's likeness. ([Gen.1:26](#)) But in our present fallen state as human beings we are cut off from God by sin. We are not naturally in fellowship with God. And as our flesh and our soul life begins to fade in strength own human spirit begins to flicker as well. When we reach the point of burnout we fade away. That is the end of us.....

Unless, of course,
we are in communion with the God of Life!
Because **He** is the One who is our Eternal Source and Supply.

So what happens to us when the world turns black against us? What happens as the awful hour of midnight approaches? Who do we turn to when our 'dim and flaring lamps' begin to flicker. We need that oil of anointing, that oil of illumination. We need the unction, the brightness of spirit, and the cheer to go on. Will we have the oil when we need it in times to come? Do we have an outside supply even when our own spirits are laid low? Do we have that extra jar of oil to refill our failing lamps? Do we have the oil supply of oil, even the Holy Spirit to [revive us](#), in the midst of Great Tribulation? Will our lamps return filled, even in the midnight darkness?

At some point in the future we shall hear the midnight cry. The shout of the friend of the Bridegroom will be heard. ([Mat.25:6](#)) The message will be the same as when John baptized by the Jordan 2,000 years ago. It will be

"REPENT! FOR THE KINGDOM OF GOD IS AT HAND!"

At that time the virgin company of God will awaken. They will begin to stir. For the wise, for those who have the oil [Revival](#) will come. For the others there will be burnout and a Great Falling Away. Even a great [Apostasy](#).

For the wise it will be a time of new stirrings and great wonder. The swaddling coverings of our comfortable churchy bed of ease will fall away. They will no longer matter. They will have become a thing of the past. The saints will be stirring even as a butterfly about to emerge from a cocoon. They will awaken from their dreamy state. There will be forces pressing in on them. There will be a sense of urgency, even a [time of travail](#). That **dark night of the soul** will have finally come. It will be a time to break away. It will be a time to "Arise and shine!" God will be calling His covenant people. And they will be on to new things.

The path that lies before us is a strait and narrow passage. ([Mat.7:14](#))
It is the highway of holiness. ([Isa.35:8](#))

The passes are fearful places, guarded by dragons of fear. The powers of this world, those in heaven and on earth, will be trying to hold us back.

But for the saints there can be no other pathway. This is the only Way.
Our God will be leading us onward.
The time that Isaiah saw will have finally arrived.

ISAIAH 60

**"1 Arise, shine; For your light has come!
And the glory of the Lord is risen upon you.**
2 For behold, the darkness shall cover the earth,
And deep darkness the people;
But the Lord will arise over you,
And His glory will be seen upon you.
3 The Gentiles shall come to your light,
And kings to the brightness of your rising.
4 "Lift up your eyes all around, and see:
They all gather together, they come to you;
Your sons shall come from afar,
And your daughters shall be nursed at your side.

5 Then you shall see and become radiant,
And your heart shall swell with joy;
([Isa.60:1-5](#))

The One and only pathway into the glory lies out there in our future. It is a strait and narrow way. This will become even clearer when [the trumpets sound the alarm](#). Our Lord Jesus Christ will become our everything. In the Valley of Achor, ([Valley of Tribulation](#)), we shall come to know Him not as "Lord" but as "Ishi", as our Beloved. ([Hos.2:15-16](#))

The Bridegroom is returning. Of this we can be sure. He will be calling us even in a time of great future darkness. We shall know the time has come. For we shall hear the midnight cry,

**"Behold the bridegroom cometh;
Go ye out to meet Him!"** - [Mat.25:6](#)

The bridal party stirs and awakens.
And then the moment of awful realization.
And a prayer is heard in the night.
Lord help us! Our lamps are going out!

And then the awful question.

Do we have the oil?

ETERNAL BEINGS. ENTERING THE REALMS OF ETERNITY.

We serve a God who created and formed us in His image. We are spirit beings destined to live forever, - somewhere. God has a right to each one of us. We are eternal beings. We were made for fellowship with Him. The lamps of our human spirit were not meant to burn out. They were designed to run on forever, being fueled by the downloaded oil of God's **eternal Holy Spirit**. That's the way that it is. There is no other Source!

We were made from dust, from the elements of the periodic chemical chart. God breathed His Life into us at the creation. But bones and dust is not the end for those who are the called, the chosen, and the faithful. Other great wonders are still up ahead. The same Breath of God that breathed upon the waters at creation will restore the whole House of Israel. All 12 tribes will be found and restored. They will be brought safely into the glory, along with their companions. All Israel will be revived from death. The prophet Ezekiel saw them rise up from their graves with a rattling sound in [the Valley of Dry Bones](#).

We serve and are ministered to by the God of Life. We were created and designed to run on the oil of His Holy Spirit. He is the One who will lift us up out of this dark enclosure of flesh. He is the One who is drawing us out to the eternal realms to be with Him. The Holy Bible is the Owner's manual for human beings. And our supply of life-giving oil comes by the infilling of God's Holy Spirit. Only He can supply this. Are we interested? And if so, then where is this supply of oil to be found?

THE GETHSEMANE OIL SUPPLY

The five wise virgins found the oil. They purchased it from those who sold it. And where did the oil come from? Here our journey of discovery leads us to a most unlikely place. But it is an important and necessary waypoint on the Kings Highway. The oil is pressed at a place called Gethsemane.

Right across from the eastern gate is the Mount of Olives. This is the grand entrance into the Holy City. It is the entrance Messiah took at His first coming. And so it will be at His second coming when His feet touch the Mount of Olives and the whole mountain cleaves in two. Down near the foot of the mount and right across from the Temple is the Garden of Gethsemane. This is the place. Gethsemane means "oil press". It is right here that the oil is pressed out.

This is an awesome place. It is a place of crushing. It is not a place for the popular crowds. This was the place where our Lord Jesus Christ was handed the cup. There He knelt down and prayed, sweating as it were drops of blood. It was here that He endured the agony of surrender to the powers of darkness. In this dark night of the soul, He faced the prospect of the cross and began to experience for the first time that personal agony that comes from being cut off from the Father. But He did this for us, and took upon Himself the sins of the whole world.

The word "Christ" or "Messiah" means "the Anointed One". This was where Christ Jesus showed His true character and true anointing. He gave Himself for others. He took the cup. He received it in total commitment to the Way of the cross. It was there at Gethsemane on the night of His betrayal that Jesus committed Himself to the will of the Father.

His agony of soul is something we need never face. He was cut off from the Father so that we might be saved. He had to do this to take upon Himself the sins of the world. That is what He did for us. It was there, at that place of the oil press where the victory of Christ, our Anointed One, was won. Right there, at Gethsemane, is where it happened. There, at that place of the oil press, Jesus defeated the powers of darkness. And so it should come as no surprise that **this** is where the oil of anointing for kings and priests, the oil for the lamps, and the oil of gladness can be found.

GETHSEMANE OIL. AT THE OIL PRESS, THE PLACE OF CRUSHING.

Gethsemane was (and is) an awesome spiritual place. It is the place of "the oil press" and the place where the oil is found. For our Savior it was the place where He faced the full implications of the cup that was offered before Him. The place is

truly forbidding. And yet this is the appointed place for all those who are the burden bearers of God. Gethsemane is a waypoint and an experience in God for all those who truly seek Him and follow Him in the deepest way. It is here that the true servants of God run up against the forces of darkness. The oil of anointing is there. And wonder of wonders, they come into a personal experience in God that they had never thought possible. They discover the truth of what Zerubbabel was told.

**Not by might. Nor by strength,
But by my SPIRIT saith the Lord!"**

The five wise virgins knew this place. And they did not avoid it. They went there quite deliberately. And that is where they found the oil. They purchased it with the surrender of their own self life to God. They received it out of a realization of their own personal emptiness before Him. And, of course, they were witnesses to the Bridegroom. They belonged to Him. So the oil that He supplied was right there. It was waiting for them. And it was in an overflowing abundant supply!

This is exceedingly important for us to understand.

If we are in Christ then our enemy has been totally and utterly defeated.

He was defeated right there in the Garden of Gethsemane.

The indwelling Christ is at work within us. From glory to glory He is changing us from the inside out. In union with Him we are supplied in His great anointing. His Holy Spirit fills us to overflowing. Jesus/Yeshua is our Messiah, Christ, or "Anointed One". In the Garden and at the cross He took all our burdens. He took all our pain and sorrow. And He was victorious! Now He causes us to rejoice in our sufferings. They will soon be over. And so even in the midst of great darkness He fills us with the oil of gladness.

The Apostle Paul rejoiced in this victory.

He said,

**"O grave, where is thy victory?
O death, where is they sting?!" (1Cor.15:55)**

THE MIDNIGHT DRAMA. AND AN EPIC MOMENT IN THE DIVINE ROMANCE.

The virgins get up as they hear the midnight cry. Their lamps are flickering and about to go out. The 5 wise virgins bring out their vessels filled with extra oil. They then proceed to fill their lamps. The Bridegroom is approaching in the night.

Isn't this parable a story of incredible excitement and romance? There are a host of other poetic themes in scripture which overlap this story. Remember the Shulamite's two dreams in the Song of Songs? She too heard a call to open the door to her beloved? In one of her disturbing dreams she is comfortable in her own bed of ease. She is too comfortable, in fact, to bother getting up to answer when the knock comes. Her Betrothed is knocking at the door. Finally she goes to open the door to Him but He is gone. She goes out into the streets desperately looking for him. ([Song of Songs 5:2-8](#))

In the letter to the angel of the Church at Laodicea in Rev. 3 we see [the Laodicean church](#) pictured in a similar way. Again the poetic imagery reveals to us 'the Beloved outside the door'. This time too the Beloved is knocking. Is God knocking at the door of our hearts?

The ten virgins, even the five wise virgins, all slumbered. Why? We see many instances of slumbering in scripture. Remember the disciples asleep in the Garden of Gethsemane on the night of Jesus' betrayal?

THE MIDNIGHT DRAMA UNFOLDS AS MANY OTHERS HAVE DONE BEFORE. AND THE WISE GO FORTH INTO THE NIGHT WITH THEIR LAMPS BURNING BRIGHTLY.

Like the disciples, all the bridesmaids are dozing as their lamps burn low. It had been a night of romance and expectancy. But even the 5 wise virgins are slumbering as the night wears on. For some, the coming crisis will lead on to a [pathway of glory](#). For others it will be an awful moment of discovery and loss. Pray God that never happens to anyone reading these words.

The wise will enter into the divine romance. The virgins with the new oil in their lamps will be off on a grand adventure. It will be a night passage into a realm of glory they have never experienced before. For the wise who had prepared themselves they are at the threshold of a dream. This romance has superseded all other romances. At midnight the virgins awaken. They have heard the shout of the friend of the Bridegroom. They fill their failing lamps and their lamps light the way before them as they head out into the darkness. The hour has come!

The midnight hour is both an agonizing and an ecstatic threshold in time. Its pure drama is seen repeatedly throughout scripture and even spills over into profane literature. Here are just a few of these moments as we see them in scripture. At midnight the death angel passes over Egypt. It brings death upon the firstborn of Egypt and the covering blood on the doorposts brings deliverance to God's people. The family of Israel eats the bitter herbs and the unleavened bread of haste. They are girded and they eat the unleavened bread of haste standing up. They ready themselves to leave on an epic journey. This will come to be known as 'the Exodus'.

It is at midnight that Samson awakens from his slumbers. He find himself in Delilah's bonds of seduction and betrayal. He shakes himself and calls on the anointing of God. Then in a mighty pull he wrenches the Philistine gates of Gaza from their supports and proceeds to lug them up the hill towards Hebron. - [Judges 16:3](#)

In a romantic redemptive picture we see Boaz, a type of our Kinsman Redeemer. It is at midnight that He discovers the

maiden Ruth lying at his feet. It is the time of harvest. As He slept on the threshing floor she had nestled herself there. She is seeking his covering. And she is appealing to the covenant of Israel for redemption. - [Ruth 3:8](#)

In the midnight hours Jesus is betrayed and sent up before Caiaphas. Here in the night watches He faces His awful night of trials.

It is at midnight that Paul and Silas are praising God in prison. No low oil situation here. Deliverance comes as an earthquake breaks open the prison doors. The shackles of the prisoners fall off. The jailer, now under a death sentence comes to Paul and Silas asking, "[What must I do to be saved?](#)". - [Acts 16:25&26](#)

Are these midnight dramas also in the same pattern as another great midpoint spiritual drama? In the middle of the [70th week](#) the Antichrist is possessed and arises as the Beast. He is no more Mr. Nice guy. He stops the temple sacrifices, (which by this time will have resumed). The Antichrist then sets up the abomination of desolation. The cry of alarm goes up at that time and the saints in Jerusalem flee from the city. This is the crisis of history and it involves all of the covenant people of God. They signed on with this false messiah. And now, not surprisingly, they have been betrayed!

The Church and Israel are both in extreme peril. And yet God is still at work in redemption and deliverance. The [end time drama](#) will be a time of deep darkness for mankind. What is going to happen?

It seems that some lamps will burn low and go out. This world will be plunged into thick darkness. But is that all there is to the story? Will the saints arise and shine?

Apparently so.

The prophet Isaiah saw the lights shining brightly. (Isa. 60)

All these wonders are yet to be revealed,

At the midnight hour.

As we return to our story we see that the ten virgins are stirring from their slumbers. The midnight drama is beginning to unfold. The shout of the bridegroom's friend has been heard off in the distance. The bridegroom is coming! The ten virgins are up. Their lamps are burning low and about to go out. But the wise virgins are prepared for this. Excitedly they pour oil from their vessels to fill their lamps. Their lamps are shining brightly as they open the door and step out into the night.

But for the five foolish virgins the story is different. In the light of their dim and flaring lamps the awful realization comes to them. They have no oil to refill their failing lamps. They must remain behind to find the oil. But the hour is late; too late in fact. This is an awful situation. They have heard the midnight cry. They know that He is near. Yet they are unable to go out to meet Him.

This haunting parable of the ten virgins is packed with a very powerful message. It carries a profound and unforgettable warning for us all. Even today the oil of the Holy Spirit is available. The time for the procuring of oil is **now**.

Let us draw near to our God in devotion to Him.

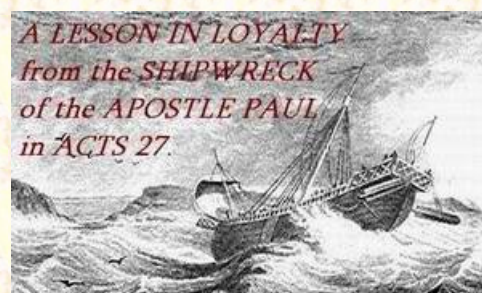
Let us trim our lamps for the coming night.

And let us seek the oil,
and the fullness of His Holy Spirit now.

Grace and shalom to all who love His appearing.

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