

Hard Sayings Of Jesus

Lesson 10

a. What is the difference between the faith of a person who is ready for Jesus' second coming and that of a person who is not?

I. This Week's Hard Saying

Matthew 25:1-13. Afterward came also the other virgins, saying, Lord, Lord, open to us. 12 But he answered and said, Verily I say unto you, I know you not. KJV

II. Why This Is Hard

- a. This is a hard saying because like other parables we have seen, there is a certainty of approaching judgment and there are many who arrive at judgment without the proper **preparation** for it.
- b. Additionally, this is hard because the inference drawn is that many have an **expectation** of acceptance by Christ who will come up short on the day of His visitation.

III. The Debate

- a. There has been much **debate** as to the meaning of the words of Jesus in the parable of the Ten Virgins. Matthew 25:1-13.
- b. Debate abounds as to whether or not this parable refers to the Jews of Jesus' day, or those on earth at the time of the **Great Tribulation**.
- c. Others see it as referring to backslidden Christians versus Spirit filled Christians and some make it out as a reference to tares among the wheat. While still others see the emphasis on judgment after **death**.
- d. Our understanding of the detail within parables should be **limited** because not everything is necessarily significant. Some details may be included merely to keep the storyline in tact.
- e. **Medieval** biblical exegesis often treated Jesus' parables as detailed allegories, with symbolic linkage found for every element in the brief narratives.
- f. Modern critics regard these interpretations as inappropriate and untenable under closer **scrutiny**.

IV. The Interpretation

- a. At least one aspect of this parable can be known with absolute **certainty**. The bridegroom is Jesus Christ and this parable most likely describes His return.
- b. Both the Old Testament and the New Testament represent the Messiah as a **bridegroom**. Isa 54:5-6 For thy Maker is thine husband; the Lord of hosts is his name; and thy Redeemer the Holy One of Israel; The God of the whole earth shall he be called. 6 For the Lord hath called thee as a woman forsaken and grieved in spirit, and a wife of youth, when thou wast refused, saith thy God. Hos 2:19-20 And I will betroth thee unto me for ever; yea, I will betroth thee unto me in righteousness, and in judgment, and in lovingkindness, and in mercies. 20 I will even betroth thee unto me in faithfulness: and thou shalt know the Lord. John 3:28-29 Ye yourselves bear me witness, that I said, I am not the Christ, but that I am sent before him. 29 He that hath the bride is the bridegroom: but the friend of the bridegroom, which standeth and heareth him, rejoiceth greatly because of the bridegroom's voice: this my joy therefore is fulfilled. Matt 9:15 And Jesus said unto them, Can the children of the bridechamber mourn, as long as the bridegroom is with them? but the days will come, when the bridegroom shall be taken from them, and then shall they fast.
- c. Both God's people Israel as well as the Church are spiritually **united** in the body of Christ and are described in Scripture as the bride for the Messiah. Eph 2:12-16 That at that time ye were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world: 13 But now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ. 14 For he is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us; 15 Having abolished in his flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances; for to make in himself of twain one new man, so making peace; 16 And that he might reconcile both unto God in one body by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby: Eph 5:30-32 For we are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones. 31 For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall be joined unto his wife, and they two shall be one flesh. 32 This is a great mystery: but I speak concerning Christ and the church.
- d. The historical setting of this parable describes a first-century Jewish **wedding**.
 - i. 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 after nightfall – to his home.
 - ii. 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
 - iii. **Everyone** in the procession was expected to carry his or her own torch. Those without a torch would be assumed to be party crashers.

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- iv. 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.
- e. This Bridegroom arrival fits any of the interpretive models whether applied to Jews or Christians, the rapture or even one's death. The thrust of the lessons learned are **relevant to all**.
- f. 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.
- g. Being ready for Christ's return ultimately involves **one major thing**: One must be born again through saving faith in Jesus Christ...His death for our sins and literal resurrection from the dead John 3:16; 1 Cor 15:1-4;
- h. This supply of oil then, representing that inward grace which sets the wise apart from the foolish, must denote the supply of the "**Spirit of Jesus Christ**," Rom 8:9 "If any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of His" 1 John 2:27 "But the anointing which ye have received of Him abideth in you, and ye need not that any man teach you: but as the same anointing teacheth you all things, and is truth, and is no lie, and even as it hath taught you, ye shall abide in Him"
- i. They are **READY** who have repented of their sins; whose belief in Christ is reflected in their holy life; and who wait for his coming and the end of this age. Acts 3:19; 2 Peter 3:11-12 11 Therefore, since all these things will be dissolved, what manner of persons ought you to be in holy conduct and godliness, 12 looking for and hastening the coming of the day of God. NKJV 2 Tim 4:5-8 But you be watchful in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist, fulfill your ministry. For I am already being poured out as a drink offering, and the time of my departure is at hand. 7 I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. 8 Finally, there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will give to me on that Day, and not to me only but also to all who have loved His appearing.
- j. The word Foolish describing five of the virgins is defined as "One who sees not what is proper or **necessary**. These did not see that it was necessary to have oil (Spirit of Christ) in their vessels

V. The Implications For Us

- a. For those who are ready, the **fruit of the Spirit** will begin to show. A desire for greater holiness and less sin will be apparent. Galatians 5:22
- b. They will be marked by an **inner** godliness and outwardly live as though He could come at any time. Titus 2:11-14, "For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation to all men, instructing us to deny ungodliness and worldly desires and to live sensibly, righteously and godly in the present age, looking for the blessed hope and the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior, Christ Jesus, who gave Himself for us to redeem us from every lawless deed, and to purify for Himself a people for His own possession, zealous for good deeds."
- c. The grace of salvation which one receives is **just enough** to save ones' own soul; one has no merits to bequeath to the others; no work of supererogation which can be placed to the account of another. Phil 2:12-13 Therefore, my dear friends, as you have always obeyed — not only in my presence, but now much more in my absence — continue to work out your salvation with fear and trembling, NIVPsalm 49:7-9 "None can by any means redeem his brother, nor give to God a ransom for him, that he should still live forever and not see corruption. For the redemption of their soul is precious, and it ceaseth forever".
- d. The lamps of **hypocrites** and false teachers often go out in this life; their profession withers, the zeal of it is lost; their hopes fail, and the comfort of their false profession is gone. 1 John 2:19 They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would no doubt have continued with us: but they went out, that they might be made manifest that they were not all of us. 2 Peter 2:17-22 These are wells without water, clouds that are carried with a tempest; to whom the mist of darkness is reserved for ever. 18 For when they speak great swelling words of vanity, they allure through the lusts of the flesh, through much wantonness, those that were clean escaped from them who live in error. 19 While they promise them liberty, they themselves are the servants of corruption: for of whom a man is overcome, of the same is he brought in bondage. 20 For if after they have escaped the pollutions of the world through the knowledge of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, they are again entangled therein, and overcome, the latter end is worse with them than the beginning. 21 For it had been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than, after they have known it, to turn from the holy commandment delivered unto them. 22 But it is happened unto them according to the true proverb, The dog is turned to his own vomit again; and the sow that was washed to her wallowing in the mire. KJV
- e. When Christ comes, whether at the moment of our death or at His second coming, we must go forth to meet him... **ready or not**.

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Application

- Do you think you have done sufficient preparations for the second coming of Jesus?

"When Rabbi Jochanan ben Zachai was sick, his disciples came to visit him; and when he saw them he began to weep. They say to him, Rabbi! the light of Israel, the right hand pillar, the strong hammer, wherefore dost thou weep?

He answered them, If they were carrying me before a king of flesh and blood, who is here today, and tomorrow in the grave; who, if he were angry with me, his anger would not last forever; if he put me in prison, his prison would not be everlasting; if he condemned me to death, that death would not be eternal; whom I could soothe with words or bribe with riches; yet even in these circumstances I should weep.

But now I am going before the King of kings, the holy and the blessed God, who liveth and endureth forever and forever; who, if he be angry with me, his anger will last forever; if he put me in prison, his bondage will be everlasting; if he condemn me to death, that death will be eternal; whom I cannot soothe with words nor bribe with riches.

When, further, there are before me two ways, the one: to hell and the other to paradise, and I know not in which they are carrying me, shall I not weep?" TALMUD Beracoth, fol. 28.

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- Others see it as referring to backslidden Christians versus Spirit filled Christians and some make it out as a reference to tares among the wheat. While still others see the emphasis on judgment after _____.
- Our understanding of the detail within parables should be _____ because not everything is necessarily significant. Some details may be included merely to keep the storyline in tact.
- _____ biblical exegesis often treated Jesus' parables as detailed allegories, with symbolic linkage found for every element in the brief narratives.
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- The historical setting of this parable describes a first-century Jewish _____
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- This Bridegroom arrival fits any of the interpretive models whether applied to Jews or Christians, the rapture or even one's death. The thrust of the lessons learned are _____
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- Being ready for Christ's return ultimately involves _____: One must be born again through saving faith in Jesus Christ...His death for our sins and literal resurrection from the dead John 3:16; 1 Cor 15:1-4;
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- e. When Christ comes, whether at the moment of our death or at His second coming, we must go forth to meet him... _____

VI. Application

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