

# The Parable of the 10 Virgins



**Revised &  
Expanded**

# Parable of the 10 Virgins

## Study Outline

<u>Context of Matthew 24 &amp; 25</u> .....	<b>3</b>
<u>The 10 Virgins</u> .....	<b>15</b>
<u>Different Translations</u> .....	<b>15</b>
<u>One Bride</u> .....	<b>19</b>
<u>Sleeping instead of watching</u> .....	<b>20</b>
<u>Multiple Appearances</u> .....	<b>31</b>
<u>Marriage Supper</u> .....	<b>46</b>
<u>Call to Action</u> .....	<b>52</b>



# Parable of the 10 Virgins

## Context of Matthew 24 & 25

We need to preface this study by setting up the context of Matthew 25, where we read about the parable of the Ten Virgins. First, Mathews 24 & 25 were originally one message, but in the 1500s, the chapter and verse distinctions were added by Bible translators, separating one message into two chapters. Also, we should remember that when Jesus spoke to his disciples, they would have seen everything from a purely Jewish perspective; they knew nothing about the church or the rapture because those were hidden mysteries for at least another decade [*Ephesians 5:32*]. Believe it or not, Jesus was not a Christian; he never went to church on Sunday, and he never read the New Testament. Jesus was Jewish, and all of his disciples were Jewish. Jesus said salvation is of the Jews [*John 4:12*]; when he sent the twelve out, he told them not to go to the Gentiles or Samaritans [*Matthew 10:5*]. The apostle Paul, a Jew, wrote to the Roman believers that salvation is to the Jews first, then the Gentiles [*Romans 1:16; 2:9-10*].

When some people read Matthew 24 and 25, they fail to see Israel or recognize that the passage is speaking about the time of the great tribulation and the second coming of Christ. Some only see the church in the end times. When Christ comes in the clouds for the church, returns to the earth to make war, and judges the nations, all these are different acts in the same play. That distinction is essential to understand the parable of the ten virgins. The viewpoint that sees only the church stems from **replacement theology**, a false teaching that says the church has replaced Israel as God's covenant people. Nothing could be further from the truth. God will never break his covenant with Israel; as long as the sun, moon, and stars are in the sky, Israel will be God's people forever. Thank God; if he is faithful to Israel, he will also be loyal to the redeemed Gentiles.

**Psalms 89:34-36** *My covenant I will not break, nor alter the word that has gone out of My lips. Once I have sworn by My holiness; I will not lie to David: His seed shall endure forever, and his throne as the sun before Me; It shall be established forever like the moon, even like the faithful witness in the sky.*

**Jeremiah 31:33-37** *"This is the covenant I will make with the house of Israel after that time," declares the LORD. ... This is what the LORD says, he who appoints the sun to shine by day, who decrees the moon and stars to shine by night, who stirs up the sea so that its waves roar the LORD Almighty is his name: "Only if these decrees vanish from my sight," declares the LORD, "will the descendants of Israel ever cease to be a nation before me."*

As we begin our narrative of the parable of the Ten Virgins, we need to provide a little background and context of the who, what, when, where, and why to understand Jesus' message. At the end of his earthly ministry, the Jewish religious establishment rejected Jesus. They persecuted and blasphemed him and sought to have him killed. After Jesus had his triumphal entry into Jerusalem on what we call Palm Sunday, in fulfillment of prophecies by Daniel and Zechariah proclaimed 483 years in advance to the exact day, Jesus wept over Jerusalem. Jesus wept, knowing that the same generation that rejected him would experience the destruction and desolation of the temple, and the nation of Israel would be scattered. Then Jesus prophesied that the future inhabitants of Jerusalem would not see him again until they would say, "Blessed is he comes in the name of the LORD."

**Mathew 23:36** *"Assuredly, I say to you, all these things will come upon this generation. 37 "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the one who kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to her! How often I wanted to gather your children together, as a*

***hen gathers her chicks under her wings, but you were not willing! 38 "See! Your house is left to you desolate; 39 "for I say to you, you shall see Me no more till you say, 'Blessed is He who comes in the name of the LORD!'"***

Then, while Jesus and his disciples were in Jerusalem, they admired the temple building. That's when Jesus gave a prophecy that the temple would get destroyed and not even one stone would remain on top of another. Later, Jesus and his disciples walked over to the Mount of Olives, and when they got the chance, the disciples asked Jesus about the timing of the temple destruction, what would be the sign of his (second) coming, and the end of the age. Jesus responded with a lengthy prophecy and teaching, and since they were on the Mount of Olives, the message became known to Bible teachers as the Olivet discourse. The same message was duplicated by Mark 13 and Luke 17 & 21, in harmony with the other gospel accounts.

***Matthew 24:3 Now as He sat on the Mount of Olives, the disciples came to Him privately, saying, "Tell us, when will these things be? And what will be the sign of Your coming, and of the end of the age?"***

We will focus on the context of the Olivet discourse because the parable of the Ten Virgins in Matthew 25 is part of that prophetic message. If we want to understand the parable, we have to read it in context, so we will review Matthew 24 and 25 to get the context. Then, we will examine the interpretation of the Ten Virgins and how it relates to us.

All prophecy regarding the second coming and the end of the age, including Matthew 24 & 25, is centered on how the nations relate to Israel. Even the global dictator, the Antichrist, begins his reign with a covenant with Israel and is destroyed in a battle over Jerusalem by the Jewish Messiah, Christ. In Matthew 24 & 25, Jesus warned a specific generation of Jews living in Jerusalem during a specified time. Absolute verification of that

specific generation happens when there is a nation of Israel, a seven-year covenant with the Antichrist, a temple in Jerusalem, and when the Antichrist desecrates that temple. Let's start at the beginning of the prophecy and look at some of the references to Israel.

**Matthew 24:33** *"So you also, when you see all these things, know that it is near at the doors! 34 Assuredly, I say to you, this generation will by no means pass away till all these things take place."*

There will be global hatred of the Jews in all the nations; the word nations in Greek is ethnos, meaning ethnicity or race, which Biblically speaking is synonymous with the Gentiles, nations, pagans, or different non-Jewish people. So, who is more hated and has more bad news coverage in the world than the tiny state of Israel? Significantly, after October 7, 2023, the level of hatred, rage, and antisemitism against Israel has escalated across the world. The nation of Israel has nine million Jews; they are surrounded by billions of enemies, Muslims, Marxists, Nazis, and Leftists, who want a genocide of every Jew on earth, not just in Israel.

**Matthew 24:9-15** *"Then they will deliver you up to tribulation and kill you, and you will be hated by all nations for My name's sake ..."*

This next part of the prophecy speaks about when the Antichrist commits the abomination of desolation, which takes place in the middle of the great tribulation. in a rebuilt Jewish temple in Jerusalem. Jesus warns those living in Jerusalem and Judea to run for their lives when that happens. Judea refers to the tribe of Judah's ancestral land on the west bank of the Jordan River, called "the west bank" by the Gentiles today. Jesus warns that when the Jews see all the armies of the Antichrist surrounding Jerusalem, they should run without delay to the mountains that surround the outskirts of Jerusalem and Judea.



**Matthew 24:15-16** "Therefore when you see **the 'abomination of desolation,' spoken of by Daniel the prophet, standing in the holy place"** (whoever reads, let him understand), "then let **those who are in Judea flee to the mountains.**

**Luke 21:20** "But **when you see Jerusalem surrounded by armies, then know that its desolation is near. 21 "Then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains,** let those who are in the midst of her depart, and let not those who are in the country enter her.

The construction of the houses in Israel has patio areas on their rooftops, with views overlooking the area. Jesus warns the Jews with such a view from their rooftops if they see disaster coming after the Antichrist desecrates the temple to run for their lives. They should run with such urgency that they do not even go inside their house to get anything; they should get out of Jerusalem as quickly as possible. Jesus emphasized the urgency to get out quickly by giving a reminder of Lot's wife. When God judged Sodom with fire and brimstone falling from heaven, Lot's wife stopped and turned and looked back to Sodom and then turned into a pillar of salt. The warning is don't stop, don't look back, just run to the hills that surround Jerusalem and pray that their escape is not on the Sabbath. Under the law of Moses, the Sabbath is a day of rest, and there is no public transportation, trains, buses, elevators, etc., on the Sabbath day, so that day they will be running by foot. Also, note that the most significant attacks by Muslims against Israel have come on the Jewish feast days and sabbaths.

**Matthew 24:17** "Let him who is on the housetop not go down to take anything out of his house. 18 "And let him who is in the field not go back to get his clothes. 19 "But woe to those who are pregnant and to those who are nursing babies in those days! 20 "And pray that your flight may not be in winter or on the Sabbath. 21 "For then there will be

**great tribulation, such as has not been since the beginning of the world until this time, no, nor ever shall be.**

**Luke 17:31 "In that day, he who is on the housetop, and his goods are in the house, let him not come down to take them away. And likewise the one who is in the field, let him not turn back. 32 "Remember Lot's wife.**

Those Jews who fail to heed the warnings and evacuate from Jerusalem before the siege begins will get trampled by the Gentiles. Israel will suffer a great slaughter, with many killed, raped, and hostages taken captive back to enemy territory. (similar to October 7, 2023, but far, far worse)

**Luke 21:24 "And they will fall by the edge of the sword, and be led away captive into all nations. And Jerusalem will be trampled by Gentiles until the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled.**

**Zechariah 14:1 Behold, the day of the LORD is coming, and your spoil will be divided in your midst. 2 For I will gather all the nations to battle against Jerusalem; The city shall be taken, the houses rifled, And the women ravished (raped). Half of the city shall go into captivity, But the remnant of the people shall not be cut off from the city.**

In the depths of suffering and despair and on the verge of total annihilation, Israel will cry out to God. Then the inhabitants of Jerusalem will see the Son of Man, Jesus whom they have pierced, coming in the clouds, and Israel will repent and be saved, believing in Jesus as their Messiah. Then Jesus will go to war with the nations who attacked Israel.



**Matthew 24:30** *"Then the sign of the Son of Man will appear in heaven, and then all the tribes of the earth will mourn, and they will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven with power and great glory.*

**Revelation 1:7** *Behold, He is coming with clouds, and every eye will see Him, even they who pierced Him. And all the tribes of the earth will mourn because of Him. Even so, Amen.*

**Zechariah 12:9** *"It shall be in that day that I will seek to destroy all the nations that come against Jerusalem. 10 "And I will pour on the house of David and on the inhabitants of Jerusalem the Spirit of grace and supplication; then they will look on Me whom they pierced. Yes, they will mourn for Him as one mourns for his only son, and grieve for Him as one grieves for a firstborn.*

**Zechariah 14:3** *Then the LORD will go forth and fight against those nations, As He fights in the day of battle.*

**Revelation 19:11** *Now I saw heaven opened, and behold, a white horse. And He who sat on him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness He judges and makes war. 12 His eyes were like a flame of fire, and on His head were many crowns. He had a name written that no one knew except Himself. 13 He was clothed with a robe dipped in blood, and His name is called The Word of God. 14 And the armies in heaven, clothed in fine linen, white and clean, followed Him on white horses. 15 Now out of His mouth goes a sharp sword, that with it He should strike the nations. And He Himself will rule them with a rod of iron. He Himself treads the winepress of the fierceness and*

wrath of Almighty God. 16 And He has on His robe and on His thigh a name written: **KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS.**

After Jesus gives a scenario of the end-of-the-age events and his second coming, he launches into several teachings and parables to illustrate what happens after his return and how he will judge the world in various scenarios. Each parable is a warning to live in the light of the judgment that could happen at any moment in our lives or upon his return, whichever comes first. We have briefly outlined the following parables and the remainder of the verses in Matthew 25; we provided the references if you would like to read them in their entirety.

**Matthew 24:32-36** Parable of **the fig tree**, the generation that sees "all these things" happening will not pass away until everything gets fulfilled.

**Matthew 24:37-39** Like the **days of Noah**, business was as usual until the day Noah entered the ark, and then the flood swept them away. That's how it will be at the coming of the Son of Man, Christ.

**Matthew 24:40-42** Two people will be together in one location, and one gets taken while the other is left behind.

**Matthew 24:43-44** Watch, Jesus is coming unexpectedly **like a thief**, so if the master, the homeowner, knew when the thief was coming, he would watch and not allow the thief to break into the house.

**Matthew 24:45-51** Blessings on the **faithful servants**; they will receive authority to rule over the Lord's house. But he pronounces judgment over **evil servants** who fight and get drunk. Christ will come unexpectedly and cut them in two and assign them their portion with the hypocrites with weeping and gnashing of teeth.

**(Precedes the parable of the Ten Virgins)**

**Matthew 25:1-13** Parable of the **Ten Virgins**, we will come back to this.

**(Follows parable of the Ten Virgins)**

**Matthew 25:14-30** Parable of **the Talents**. A man (Jesus) goes on a long journey and gives talents (abilities, assignments, responsibilities) to three people. He gave one servant ten talents, another five, and the last servant received one talent. When their Lord returned, he settled accounts with his servants based on what they did with their talents. The servants with the ten and five talents doubled their master's investment, and they received a double reward because they were good and faithful. The servant with one talent was wicked and lazy and buried his talent. The last servant with one talent was unprofitable and lazy and was judged and cast into outer darkness, where there was weeping and gnashing of teeth.

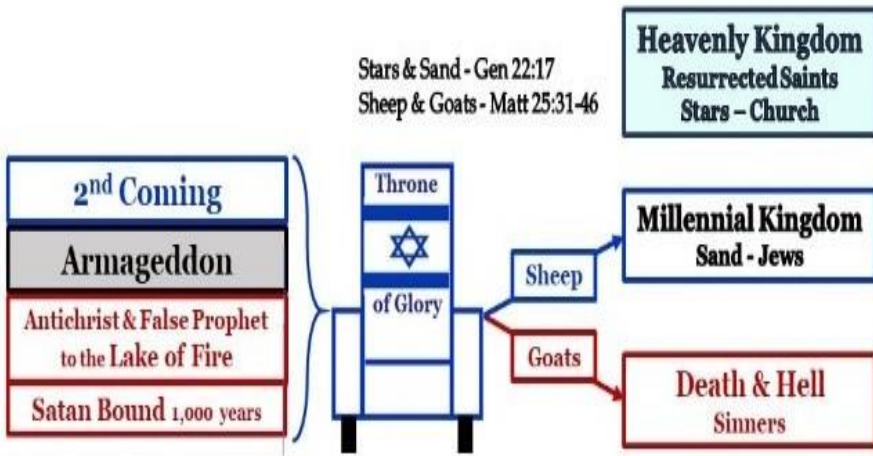
**Matthew 25:31-46** The parable of the **Sheep and goats** reflects how Christ will judge the world at his second coming. He will sit on the throne of his glory. This is the glory of Israel, the promised king of glory who would sit on David's throne and rule the nations with a rod of iron. This Messianic kingdom will be a paradise on earth. But before the thousand-year reign of the Messiah begins, he will set the kingdom in order, starting with judging the world and removing all evil.

Christ will sit on the Throne of Glory and divide the sheep from the goats, those who survive the tribulation and Armageddon and come out alive. There is one standard at this judgment: How did you treat my brethren? Who are Christ's brethren? First, the Jews, then Gentile believers who helped the Jews and others during the tribulation. This judgment is a time-specific event, but the principle of helping others is universal for all ages, like the parable of the good Samaritan [*Luke 10:30-37*].

The sheep get rewarded by gaining entrance into the earthly kingdom of the Messiah, Christ. They will live in a world that is

blessed and abounds with fruitfulness and beauty, the animals will be tame and harmless, the people will live long, healthy lives, and there will be no more war because the government will be on the shoulders of Jesus the Prince of peace [Isaiah 9:6-7].

But the goats, on the other hand, will be judged unworthy of the kingdom because they added to the suffering of the Jews and Gentile believers, or they refused to intervene and ignored what was happening without helping the ones in need. They get sent away to everlasting punishment.



So wedged in the middle of all the tribulation and judgment message given by Jesus is the parable of the Ten Virgins. The context is obvious: the time frame of the Ten Virgins is from the beginning of the tribulation until the second coming when Jesus speaks directly to a generation who will be alive at the time of his return. Everyone benefits from the message, as we do with the entire Bible. But this message is specific to a particular generation, the one that sees the rise of the Antichrist and when he commits the abomination of desolations.

The church is taken in the rapture before the tribulation starts, so it is not directly mentioned anywhere in Matthew 24 and 25. Many people bring up two exceptions to that statement; the first is the verse that says two people will be in one bed, one person

gets taken, and the other is left behind. They claim that is a reference to the rapture. But in the context of the tribulation, the person who gets taken gets killed, and that person's body is left for the vultures to eat. That was a detail that Luke mentioned but Matthew left out.

**Luke 17:34** *I tell you, on that night two people will be in one bed; **one will be taken and the other left.** 35 Two women will be grinding grain together; **one will be taken and the other left.**" 36 "Two men will be in the field: the **one will be taken and the other left.**" 37 **"Where, Lord?" they asked. He replied, "Where there is a dead body, there the vultures will gather."***

The other verse attributed to the church is to pray to be accounted worthy to escape, which is a universal truth for all times. Yes, the church should pray to be raptured before the tribulation to be worthy to escape what is coming. But if the church's prayers get answered, the church will not be in the tribulation; therefore, that may be why the church is not in the tribulation verses.

**Luke 21:36** **"Watch therefore, and pray always that you may be counted worthy to escape all these things that will come to pass, and to stand before the Son of Man."**

Also, Jesus will make multiple appearances when he returns. First, he comes in the clouds for his **church at the rapture**. Then Jesus comes at the end of the tribulation to save **Israel at the second coming**, and then he destroys the armies surrounding Jerusalem [Revelation 19:11-21]. His feet will stand on the Mount of Olives [Zechariah 14:3-6]. Then he will enter the eastern gate to Jerusalem [Psalm 24:7-10; Ezekiel 43:1-4], and later judge the nations in the Valley of Decision [Joel 3:14], aka the Valley of Jehosaphat near Jerusalem.

<b>The Rapture / Church</b>	<b>Second Coming / Israel</b>
Believers disappear	Christ appears
Unseen – like a thief	Every eye sees Him
Rapture, over in a moment,	Christ wars & judges nations
Meet the Lord in air	Rules on earth 1,000 years
Christ comes for his Bride	Christ returns with His Bride
Ushers in the tribulation	Ushers in the Millennium
Imminent – no warnings	Preceded by many signs
Message of comfort	Message of judgment
Program for the church	Program for Israel & nations
New Testament only	From Genesis to Revelation
Believers are judged	Nations & Israel are judged
Leaves creation unchanged	Creation is changed
Nations are unaffected	The nations are judged
Israel's covenants unfulfilled	All Israel's covenants fulfilled
No effect on sin in the world	Sin is judged, destroyed
Before the day of wrath	Christ executes God's wrath
Is for believers only	Affects everyone on earth

Okay, we have established that the context of the parable of the Ten Virgins takes place during the tribulation until the second coming of Christ. So, let's keep that in mind while we examine the parable of the Ten Virgins.



## The 10 Virgins

We begin chapter 25 with the parable of the ten virgins, a familiar passage that many people read as the rapture. However, as we have just established, the actual narrative happens during the tribulation. Let's ignore that for now and consider what the parable is saying.

If this story is about the rapture and the bride of Christ, it could read as follows: Jesus went to retrieve ten virgins who were supposed to marry Him. The first five virgins were the Pentecostals, Baptists, Evangelicals, Charismatics, and Calvary Chapelites, and they were wise. Then, there were five foolish virgins, and they had an ecumenical coalition with the Catholics, Anglicans, Presbyterians, Methodists, Lutherans, and so forth. You get the idea.

The notion that there are ten brides of Christ is ridiculous on its face. Nowhere in history have ten women married one man at the same time in the same wedding ceremony! The storyline of the ten virgins being one bride does not make sense in symbolism, typology, or common sense. The text does not refer to them as brides but as virgins, and those two groups are not the same.

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

## Different Translations

The King James Version (KJV) is a good translation but not accurate in some verses. Some of the earliest manuscripts were in Latin, Syriac, and Persic (Aramaic). All those early manuscripts preceded the KJV and contradicted it in Matthew 25:1. Older translations end verse one differently than the KJV, which excludes three words, "and the bride," which gives a totally different meaning.

*"Then the kingdom of heaven shall be likened unto ten virgins, which took their lamps, and went forth to meet **the bridegroom and the bride.**"*

Those additional three words make the rapture narrative an unacceptable interpretation of the parable. It eliminates the ten virgins from being the bride and instead makes them bridesmaids. So, let's look at the versions that included the added phrase "and the bride" and then compare them with the other translations.

**Latin Vulgate** (This is the version that gave us the word rapture) tunc simile erit regnum caelorum decem virginibus quae accipientes lampadas suas exierunt obviam **sponso et sponsae (husband and wife)**

**Wycliffe's Bible** (John Wycliffe translated from the Latin Vulgate). Then the kingdom of heavens shall be like to ten virgins, which took their lamps, and went out to meet the **husband and the wife;**

**Douay-Rheims** (This was also taken from Latin Vulgate) Then shall the kingdom of heaven be like to ten virgins, who taking their lamps went out to meet the **bridegroom and the bride.**

### **International Standard Version**

Foot note: 25:1 Other mss. read **the groom and the bride**

### **Contemporary English Version**

Foot note: 25.1 to meet the groom: Some manuscripts add **"and the bride"**

Let's look at the definition of the word "virgin" in the original Greek to see who these girls were.

*Strong's 3933 **virgins** = parthenos, par-then'-os; **a maiden;** by implication, **an unmarried daughter: virgin.***

The original word for virgin is an unmarried daughter. People married young back then and assumed that if a girl was a virgin, she was unmarried. The bridesmaids were young girls who were often relatives or close friends of the bride. **And once a girl was engaged to be married in that culture, she was considered married. That implies that these virgins were not engaged to be married to the bridegroom and were young unmarried bridesmaids, not the bride.**

This premise was a factor in Jesus' birth with Joseph and Mary, who were engaged to be married. Their engagement was a pledge or marriage covenant and a binding legal contract. An engaged couple was considered husband and wife. So, when Joseph discovered that Mary was pregnant and he never had sexual relations with her, Joseph contemplated divorcing Mary. But God intervened by sending an angel who admonished Joseph in a dream that what Mary conceived was from the Holy Spirit. So, Joseph refrained from divorcing Mary **BEFORE** they were married.

***Matthew 1:18-24** This is how the birth of Jesus Christ came about: His mother **Mary was pledged to be married to Joseph**, but before they came together, she was found to be with child through the Holy Spirit. Because **Joseph her husband was a righteous man and did not want to expose her to public disgrace, he had in mind to divorce her quietly.** But after he had considered this, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, "**Joseph son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary home as your wife, because what is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit.** She will give birth to a son, and you are to **give him the name Jesus**, because he will save his people from their sins." All this took place to fulfill what the Lord had said through the prophet: **"The virgin will be with child** and will give birth to a son, and they will call him Immanuel" which means, "God with us." **When Joseph woke up, he did what the angel of the Lord had commanded him and***

**took Mary home as his wife.**

These ten virgins were not engaged or pledged to be married to anyone, not the bridegroom (Jesus) or anyone else; otherwise, they would not call them virgins. These young ladies were going to be guests at a wedding reception or feast; they could have been relatives or friends of the bride, aka bridesmaids. Also, note that **the ten virgins are never in any translation of the Bible called the bride.** Let's read some translations that refer to the virgins as bridesmaids.

### **Bible in Basic English**

Then the kingdom of heaven will be like **ten virgins, the friends of the bride,** who took their **lights,** and went out with the purpose of **meeting the husband.**

### **God's Word Translation**

"When the end comes, the kingdom of heaven will be like ten **bridesmaids.** They took their oil lamps and went to meet the groom.

### **Weymouth New Testament**

Then will the Kingdom of the Heavens be found to be like ten **bridesmaids** who took their **torches** and went out to meet the bridegroom.

### **Common English Bible**

"At that time the kingdom of heaven will be like ten **young bridesmaids** who took their lamps and went out to meet the groom.

### **New Living Translation**

"Then the Kingdom of Heaven will be like ten **bridesmaids** who took their lamps and went to meet the bridegroom.

### **New Century Version**

"At that time the kingdom of heaven will be like ten **bridesmaids** who took their lamps and went to wait for the bridegroom.

### **New International Reader Version**

"Here is what the kingdom of heaven will be like at that time. Ten **bridesmaids** took their lamps and went out to meet the groom.

### **Good News Translation**

"At that time the Kingdom of heaven will be like this. Once there were ten **young women** who took their oil lamps and went out to meet the bridegroom.

### **The Scriptures (ISR 1998)**

"Then the reign of the heavens shall be compared to ten **maidens** who took their lamps and went out to meet the bridegroom.

### **Revised Standard Version**

"Then the kingdom of heaven shall be compared to ten **maidens** who took their lamps and went to meet the bridegroom.

### **New Revised Standard Version**

"Then the kingdom of heaven will be like this. Ten **bridesmaids** took their lamps and went to meet the bridegroom.

### **Complete Jewish Bible**

"The Kingdom of Heaven at that time will be like ten **bridesmaids** who took their lamps and went out to meet the groom.

### **One Bride**

The parable doesn't make sense for ten virgins to be one bride. For example, have you ever heard of one man marrying ten young women simultaneously? How many women would get married if they had to share their wedding day and the bridegroom with nine other women? What bride carries an oil lamp (or torch) instead of a floral bouquet? The bride of Christ is one, not ten, as shown directly and in typology by the scriptures.

**Ephesians 4:3-4** ... endeavoring to keep the **unity of the Spirit** in the bond of peace. There is **one body** and **one Spirit**, just as you were called in **one hope** of your calling; **one Lord, one faith, one baptism; one God** and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all.

**1 Corinthians 9:24** Do you not know that those who run in a race all run, **but one receives the prize**? Run in such a way that you may obtain it.

If we look at virgins as symbolisms or types, Solomon had 1,000 women in his harem, and he had **virgins without a number**, but there was only **one bride**. Many people will attend the marriage supper of the lamb, queens, concubines, the patriarchs and virgins, Old Testament saints and martyrs, but there will be only **one bride**.

**Song 6:8** There are sixty queens and eighty concubines, and virgins without number. **My dove, my perfect one, is the only one, the only one of her mother, the favorite of the one who bore her.** The daughters saw her and called her blessed, the queens and the concubines, and they praised her.

**Psalms 45:13-15** **The royal daughter** is all glorious within the palace; Her clothing is woven with gold. **She shall be brought to the King** in robes of many colors; **The virgins, her companions who follow her, shall be brought to You.** With gladness and rejoicing they shall be brought; **They shall enter the King's palace. [for the marriage feast].**

## **Sleeping instead of watching**

These virgins were not the bride; they were guests waiting for the bridegroom to return from the wedding to lead a procession of guests to the wedding feast, but they fell asleep.





Should any believer be found in a spiritual coma, sleeping and slumbering away in the darkness? No! The wedding guests should be vigilant and watch for the bridegroom's return.

Also, the wedding guests would have to travel through the darkness to get to the wedding feast and needed lamps to light their way. Sleeping with no oil and the lights out is precisely the opposite of what we are supposed to do in the end times. The scriptures repeatedly tell us to stay awake, watch, and keep our lamps burning. The main emphasis is to be ready to open the door immediately when the knock comes. A sleeping watchman is worthless and gets judged for failing to stay alert and warn others of what's coming. [Ezekiel 33:1-9, Isaiah 56:10].



**Matthew 25:1** "Then the kingdom of heaven shall be likened to **ten virgins who took their lamps and went out to meet the bridegroom. 2 "Now 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 in their vessels with their lamps. 5 "But while the bridegroom was delayed, they all slumbered and slept.**

**Luke 12:35** "Let your waist be girded and your lamps burning; **36 "and you yourselves be like men who wait for their master, when he will return from the wedding, that when he comes and knocks, they may open to him immediately.**

**Matthew 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.**

**1 Thessalonians 5:4-7** But **you, brethren, are not in darkness, so that this Day should overtake you as a thief. You are all sons of light and sons of the day. We are not of the night nor of darkness. Therefore, let us not sleep, as others do, but let us watch and be sober. For those who sleep, sleep at night, and those who get drunk are drunk at night.**

**Romans 13:11-14** And do this, knowing the time, **that now it is high time to awake out of sleep; for now our salvation is nearer than when we first believed. The night is far spent, the day is at hand. Therefore, let us cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armor of light. Let us walk properly, as in the day,** not in revelry and drunkenness, not in lewdness and lust, not in strife and envy. But put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh, to fulfill its lusts.

Finally, the bridegroom came at midnight, and the young women were called to go out and meet him. So, they woke up to light their lamps.

**Matthew 25:6** "And **at midnight a cry was heard: 'Behold, the bridegroom is coming; go out to meet him!'** 7 "Then all those virgins arose and trimmed their lamps 8 "And the foolish said to the wise, 'Give us some of your oil, for our lamps are going out.' 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.'

After the virgins woke up and were getting ready to go out to meet the bridegroom, they had a conversation; the foolish came with empty lamps and asked the other girls to borrow some oil for their lamps. Here's a question. Since the rapture happens in a moment, in the twinkle of an eye [1 Corinthians 15:52], when did

these ten virgins have time for this discussion? Did these ten young women have a conversation about a shopping trip in a moment, in the twinkle of an eye, while ascending through the clouds to meet Jesus in the air? No, these girls missed the rapture and were flat-footed on the ground and out of oil.

The Greek word for rapture is *harpazo*, which means to seize by force. Contrast the rapture with these girls; in the rapture, Jesus comes and snatches the church from the earth by force and takes her to heaven. But these ten virgins are all trying to chase down the bridegroom before he gets away. Five of these young women ran to catch up to the wedding procession, and the other five ran to the store. Also, in this parable, the bridegroom comes at midnight. Who gets married at midnight? Nothing in the parable of the Ten Virgins points to the church's rapture. If it is not about the rapture, what is it about? What is the wedding feast, and who are the guests?

Jesus references a wedding feast but is silent about the union between the bridegroom and the bride, which is the union between Christ and the church. That's because the salvation of the Gentiles was a mystery for about ten years after the resurrection. Some years later, Paul wrote about the mystery of the church, the body, and the bride of Christ. Since the Jews broke the first covenant and rejected their Messiah, Jesus instituted a new covenant and offered salvation to whosoever would believe, giving himself for the church, his bride [*Ephesians 5:23-33*].

That is the basis for the following parable: A great king (God the Father) made a marriage for his son (Jesus) and paid for a grand wedding feast. But the guests (the Jews) rejected the invitation, so the king gave a universal invitation to whosoever would come (Jew and Gentile). Also, notice that the invitation is not to become the bride but to attend as guests at the wedding feast that follows the wedding.

**Matthew 22:1** And Jesus answered and spoke to them again by parables and said: 2 "The kingdom of heaven is like a certain **king who arranged a marriage for his son,** 3 **"and sent out his servants to call those who were invited to the wedding; and they were not willing to come.** 4 "Again, he sent out other servants, saying, "Tell those who are invited, **"See, I have prepared my dinner; my oxen and fattened cattle are killed, and all things are ready. Come to the wedding."**

The wedding had already happened, but the guests invited to the feast after the wedding refused to come. The king had furnished the banquet hall with food, but the hall was empty. Therefore, there was an urgency to fill the banquet hall with guests.

**Matthew 22:8** "Then he said to his servants, **"The wedding is ready, but those who were invited were not worthy.** 9 **"Therefore go into the highways, and as many as you find, invite to the wedding.'** 10 **"So those servants went out into the highways and gathered together all whom they found, both bad and good. ...**

The invitation went out, and many answered the call, filling the banquet hall. Each guest was provided with special wedding garments identifying them with the wedding party. But when the king entered the feast, one person stood out of the crowd.

**Matthew 22:10** ... **And the wedding hall was filled with guests.** 11 **"But when the king came in to see the guests, he saw a man there who did not have on a wedding garment.** 12 **"So he said to him, 'Friend, how did you come in here without a wedding garment?'**

We'll break away from this parable for a moment to explain the importance of the wedding garments; then, we'll resume where we left off. We all need the appropriate spiritual garments to gain entrance to the feast. Spiritual garments reflect our spiritual condition. For example, if we were talking about spiritual warfare, we would say to put on all the armor of God. That armor is not physical but attitudes, prayers, and actions we take to fight spiritual battles that impact the physical world.

Regarding the spiritual wedding garments, we'll start with the bride. How long does a bride think about her wedding dress? Is it from the moment she gets engaged to be married? She may shop and look at dozens of dresses before choosing the right one. She may lose weight to fit in her dress or have it altered. The dress and the veil are carefully selected to make the bride as beautiful as possible because the dress is the focal point of the wedding and all the pictures. Can you imagine a wedding chapel full of people, as the bride and her father come to the sanctuary's entrance to go down the aisle, between the crowds of adoring people, when suddenly, the bride realizes that SHE FORGOT HER WEDDING DRESS!!!



***Jeremiah 2:2*** "Go and proclaim in the hearing of Jerusalem: ***"I remember the devotion of your youth, how as a bride you loved me and followed me through the desert, through a land not sown. ... 32 Can a virgin forget her ornaments, Or a bride her attire (wedding dress)? Yet My people have forgotten Me days without number.***

Spiritually speaking, the way you live and your relationship with God determine your spiritual garments. As we just read, when we are born again and are in first love with Jesus, it is easy and natural to maintain our wedding garments and keep them fresh, bright, clean, and white without any spots, wrinkles, or stains.

**Ephesians 5:25** *Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself for her, 26 that He might sanctify and cleanse her with the washing of water by the word, 27 that He might present her to Himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but that she should be holy and without blemish. ... 32 This is a great mystery, but I speak concerning Christ and the church.*

**Revelation 19:6** *And I heard, as it were, the voice of a great multitude, as the sound of many waters and as the sound of mighty thunderings, saying, "Alleluia! For the Lord God Omnipotent reigns! 7 "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." 8 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. 9 Then he said to me, "Write: 'Blessed are those who are called to the marriage supper of the Lamb!'" And he said to me, "These are the true sayings of God."*

It's one thing to start with clean garments, and it's another thing to keep your garments clean. We begin in the Spirit, but if we get in the flesh [Galatians 5:19-21], we soil our spiritual garments. Jude tells us to hate the garment spotted by the flesh. Satan, the accuser of the brethren, will stand against us and accuse, attack, and condemn us before God when our garments are filthy.

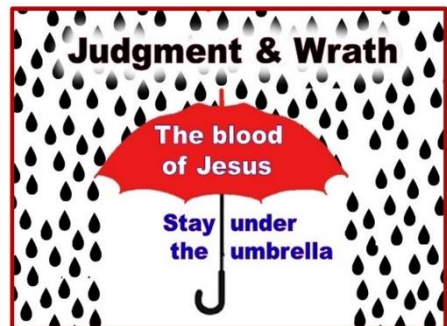
**Jude 1:22** *And of some have compassion, making a difference: 23 And others **save with fear, pulling them out of the fire; hating even the garment spotted by the flesh.***

**Zechariah 3:1** *Then he showed me **Joshua the high priest standing before the Angel of the LORD, and Satan standing at his right hand to oppose***



**him. 2 And the LORD said to Satan, "The LORD rebuke you, Satan! The LORD who has chosen Jerusalem rebuke you! Is this not a brand plucked from the fire?" 3 Now Joshua was clothed with filthy garments, and was standing before the Angel. 4 Then He answered and spoke to those who stood before Him, saying, "Take away the filthy garments from him." And to him He said, "See, I have removed your iniquity from you, and I will clothe you with rich robes."**

Jesus warned the church in Sardis that they were either spiritually dead or dying. Spiritual death is separation from God [Ephesians 2:1-5; Isaiah 59:2]. How could a "Christian" be spiritually dead in a church that belongs to Jesus? Some would say they were dead because they were never born again. But they couldn't die or be dying if they had not been alive in the first place. After we become born again and experience a new life with God, if we forsake God and go back to living in sin, we risk separation from God and spiritual death.



That whole scenario is a dangerous game to play, rolling the dice with your soul. God offers blanket forgiveness; He is faithful and will never forsake us; no one can take us out of his hand [John 10:28-29; Romans 8:35-39], but we can choose to leave his hand, his house and His love, and we can forsake Him. We have the free will to choose to serve God or sin. Your master is who you serve, either sin leading to death or obedience to righteousness. [Romans 6:16].

Jesus said he would come upon the Sardis Christians unexpectedly like a thief. So, they should be watching, have a vibrant relationship with Jesus, and get caught serving God when Jesus comes. Those faithful believers in Sardis who had

not defiled their garments and those who repented and overcame their backsliding ways, Jesus said they would walk with Him in white garments.

**Revelation 3:1** And to the angel of **the church in Sardis** write, "These things says He who has the seven Spirits of God and the seven stars: "I know your works, that **you have a name that you are alive, but you are dead.** 2 **"Be watchful, and strengthen the things which remain, that are ready to die,** for I have not found your works perfect before God. Remember therefore how thou hast received and heard, and hold fast, and repent. **If therefore thou shalt not watch, I will come on thee as a thief, and thou shalt not know what hour I will come upon thee.** **"You have a few names even in Sardis who have not defiled their garments; and they shall walk with Me in white, for they are worthy.** 5 **"He who overcomes shall be clothed in white garments,** and I will not blot out his name from the Book of Life; but I will confess his name before My Father and before His angels.

Jesus told the Laodicean church that because they were lukewarm and backslidden, they were poor, blind, and naked. Jesus advised them to buy from him gold refined in the fire and white garments to cover the shame of their nakedness.

**Revelation 3:15** (Laodicean church)"I know your works, that you are neither cold nor hot. I could wish you were cold or hot. 16 "So then, because you are lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will vomit you out of My mouth. 17 "Because you say, 'I am rich, have become wealthy, and have need of nothing' and do not know that **you are wretched, miserable, poor, blind, and naked** 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, that the shame of your nakedness may not be**

**revealed**; and anoint your eyes with eye salve, that you may see. 19 "As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten. Therefore, be zealous and repent.

Peter tells us that after our faith gets tested, it is like gold that got melted and refined to remove the slag, dross, and imperfections. So, when we ask Jesus for gold and garments, we indirectly ask for fiery trials to burn off the evil slag, dross, and imperfections of our character and unbelief. The refined gold of tested faith is made into threads and woven into the spiritual garments of our proven character.

**1 Peter 1:6** *In this you greatly rejoice, though now for a little while, if need be, **you have been grieved by various trials, 7 that the genuineness of your faith, being much more precious than gold that perishes, though it is tested by fire, may be found to praise, honor, and glory at the revelation of Jesus Christ,***

**Psalms 45:13** ***The royal daughter (the bride) is all glorious within the palace; Her clothing is woven with gold. 14 She shall be brought to the King in robes of many colors; The virgins, her companions who follow her (bridesmaids), shall be brought to You.***

Okay, now let's go back to our wedding parable from Matthew 22. Let's say that one of the unrepentant, lukewarm, backslidden members from the Laodicea church shows up to the great wedding feast. So, when the king walks into the feast, one person stands out from the crowd. The king sees a naked Laodicean bum with his fingers in the wedding cake! What will the king do? That wedding crasher will get cast out of the feast, way, way out from the feast, into the outer darkness, with weeping and grinding regret. Talk about separation from God!

**Matthew 22:10** ... **And the wedding hall was filled with guests. 11 "But when the king came in**

**to see the guests, he saw a man there who did not have on a wedding garment. 12 "So he said to him, 'Friend, how did you come in here without a wedding garment?' And he was speechless. 13 "Then the king said to the servants, 'Bind him hand and foot, take him away, and cast him into outer darkness; there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.'**

Jesus told the Laodiceans to buy gold (tested faith) and white garments from him. Salvation is free, but it's not cheap. The Bible says to buy the truth and sell it, not [Proverbs 23:23]. There is a price to pay to get the truth, keep the truth, and speak the truth of God's word. If we proclaim Christ to the world and refuse to bow to anyone or anything but God Almighty, there will be a price to pay [2 Timothy 3:12]. During the tribulation, just standing for the testimony of Jesus is a death sentence, and that is the price tag to buy a wedding garment to go to the marriage supper of the Lamb for the bridesmaids or wise virgins in the tribulation.

**Revelation 2:10** *Fear none of those things which thou shalt suffer: behold, the devil shall cast some of you into prison, that ye may be tried; and ye shall have tribulation ten days: be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life.*

**Revelation 3:18** *"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, that the shame of your nakedness may not be revealed; and anoint your eyes with eye salve, that you may see.*

A great multitude of martyrs will receive their white robes after they have been faithful unto death for the testimony of Jesus. These are the bridesmaids who, for whatever reason, missed the rapture and paid the highest price for it.

**Revelation 7:9** *After these things I looked, and behold, a great multitude which no one could number, of all nations, tribes, peoples, and tongues, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, with palm branches in their hands, ... 13 Then one of the elders answered, saying to me, "Who are these arrayed in white robes, and where did they come from?" 14 And I said to him, "Sir, you know." So, he said to me, "These are the ones who come out of the great tribulation, and washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.*

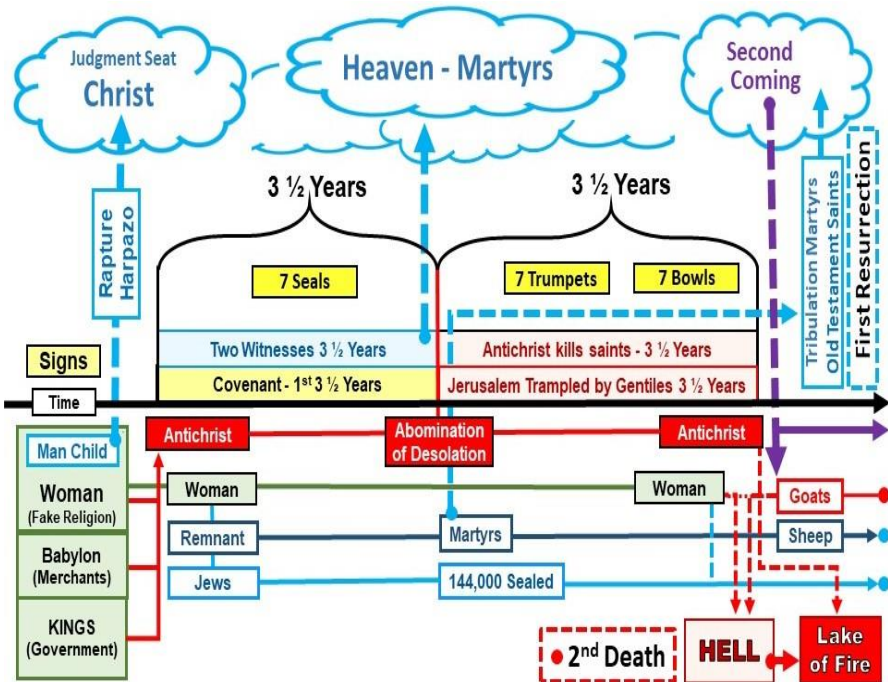
## **Multiple Appearances**

During the second coming, Christ makes multiple appearances for different reasons. He comes in the clouds for the church, then appears to the Jews in Jerusalem, makes war, and destroys the Antichrist and the armies of the nations; his feet stand on the Mount of Olives. Then Christ, the king of glory, enters the Eastern gate of Jerusalem, and at the Valley of Jehosaphat, he will sit on His Throne of Glory and judge the nations.

The following parable reflects the fact that Jesus makes multiple appearances. You'll notice several things about this parable; the first is that the **master is returning from the wedding**. The union between Christ and the church has happened, the wedding ceremony is over, and the bridegroom returns to bring the guests to the marriage feast. He does not address himself as the bridegroom to the wedding guests, but they recognize him as their master. He also mentions that he could return at two different watches of the night, the **second watch** and the **third watch**. That implies that there was a **first watch**. The first watch was the rapture, which had already passed, which is why he didn't mention a first watch. The second and third watches will include the resurrections of the two witnesses, tribulation martyrs, and the Old Testament saints. Jesus says he will have them sit down to eat, which implies they will attend the marriage supper of the lamb. as guests. All three watches include everybody in the first

resurrection.

**Luke 12:35** "Let your waist be girded and your lamps burning; 36 " that when he comes and you yourselves be like men who wait for their master, when he will **return** from the wedding, and knocks, they may open to him immediately. 37 "Blessed are those servants whom the master, when he comes, will find watching. Assuredly, I say to you that he will gird himself and have them sit down to eat, and will come and serve them. 38 "And if he should come in the **second watch**, or come in **the third watch**, and find them so, blessed are those servants. 39 "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 to be broken into. 40 "Therefore you also be ready, for the Son of Man is coming at an hour you do not expect."



In the context of Jesus' prophecy of the end times events, midnight would symbolize the middle of the seven-year tribulation. That's when the antichrist has the authority to kill the saints for the last 3 ½ years of the tribulation [Revelation 13:5-7]. We're not saying Jesus returns in the middle of the tribulation. However, the resurrection of the two witnesses happens in the middle of the tribulation, followed by a genocide against the tribulation martyrs. By the end of the tribulation, at the second coming of Christ, Jesus will resurrect all the dead saints in the first resurrection, followed by the marriage supper of the Lamb [Revelation 19:9], which is the wedding banquet that the bridesmaids will attend. For those with the testimony of Jesus in the tribulation, there are two paths: either survive the tribulation and enter alive into the Millennial kingdom of Christ, which will be a small remnant. Or, die as a martyr and go to the marriage supper of the Lamb, Jesus. At the second coming of Christ, the bridegroom, Jesus, will resurrect the martyrs and Old Testament saints and lead them in a procession to the wedding feast.

**Revelation 20:4** *And I saw thrones, and they sat on them, and judgment was committed to them. **Then I saw the souls of those who had been beheaded for their witness to Jesus and for the word of God, who had not worshiped the beast or his image, and had not received his mark on their foreheads or on their hands. And they lived and reigned with Christ for a thousand years.*** <sup>5</sup> *But the rest of the dead did not live again until the thousand years were finished. **This is the first resurrection. 6 Blessed and holy is he who has part in the first resurrection. Over such the second death has no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with Him a thousand years.***

Now that we have identified the timeframe and guests of the marriage supper of the Lamb, let's go back and look at the virgins. The five wise virgins had oil, and the five foolish had no



oil, representing the anointing of the Holy Spirit. The wise virgins are not the brides, but they have enough oil in their lamps to be bridesmaids or guests at the wedding feast. The wedding feast is only for the resurrected saints, and the virgins will join the feast only after dying for their faith in Jesus and getting their wedding garments.

The foolish were void of the Spirit, without grace. They attempted to buy oil in the middle of the night but were too late. The dispensation of grace ends when the church gets raptured, and there are no guarantees for last-minute conversions in the great tribulation. After the middle of the tribulation, you cannot buy or sell without the mark of the beast. At that time, if you seek to save your life by taking the mark of the beast (antichrist), you will lose your soul, but if you lose your life as a martyr for Jesus, you will save your soul.

**Matthew 25:8-9** *And the foolish said to the wise, 'Give us some of your oil, for our lamps are going out.'* "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.'

**Luke 17:32** "Remember Lot's wife. 33 **"Whoever seeks to save his life will lose it, and whoever loses his life will preserve it.**

**Revelation 13:15-18** He was granted power to give breath to the image of the beast, that the image of the beast should both speak **and cause as many as would not worship the image of the beast to be killed.** He causes all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and slave, to receive a mark on their right hand or on their foreheads, **and that no one may buy or sell except one who has the mark or the name of the beast.**

Then, the wise virgins go with Christ and enter the feast, and the door slams shut. Later, when the five foolish arrive at the

feast, they knock at the door, and Jesus answers but says that he never knew them. Would Jesus ever get engaged to marry someone he didn't know? They were strangers and wedding crashers, and Jesus slammed the door shut with the final words that will echo in their souls throughout eternity: "I don't know you."

**Matthew 25:10** *"And while they went to buy, the bridegroom came, and those who were ready went in with him to the wedding; and the door was shut. 11 "Afterward the other virgins came also, saying, 'Lord, Lord, open to us!' 12 "But he answered and said, 'Assuredly, I say to you, I do not know you.' 13 "Watch therefore, for you know neither the day nor the hour in which the Son of Man is coming.*

**John 17:3** *"And this is eternal life, that they may know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom You have sent.*

Let's take a closer look at the foolish virgins, and please allow us to embellish this story for the sake of illustration. First, they are virgins, which implies they are morally pure and sexually chaste. They belonged to a congregation of believers; we'll call them the church of the Virgins, and the whole church lived holy lives. They probably said the sinner's prayer to make Jesus their personal Lord and Savior; they called him Lord. This church taught about the end times, and they were preparing for Christ's return. Each was equipped with a lamp to light their way and make them a light to the world [John 8:12, 9:4-5; Matthew 5:14-16; Psalm 119:105].

But after some time, half the church of the virgins became lukewarm, negligent, and apathetic; they stopped getting filled, their oil ran low, and their lights grew very dim. And when Jesus returned, the virgins who had gone dark fully expected Jesus to open the door and receive them with open arms. They must have been shocked when Jesus said he didn't know them. They

cried out to Jesus, Lord, Lord, open the door! They claimed that Jesus was their Lord; what happened? They were moral, decent church girls who had been on fire for Jesus and had been full of oil in the distant past, but over time, they became lukewarm, complacent, and backslidden until the oil ran dry, and the flame went out, and the darkness consumed them.

**Matthew 7:21** *"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. 22 "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?' 23 "And then I will declare to them, 'I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness (iniquity, sin)!"*

We must pay attention to the verses we just read. Jesus said there would be MANY, like the five virgins, who would say, Lord, Lord, only to hear Jesus reply by saying he never knew them. Those verses display the scariest scenario in the Bible; that premise should produce fear, reverence, respect, and awe of the Almighty God in our hearts. Dismissing or watering down that warning is, at a minimum, a grave disservice and, at worst, a damnable heresy. Ignoring that warning and living a hypocritical life can put your eternal soul in jeopardy

**Philippians 2:12** *Therefore, my beloved, as you have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, **work out your own salvation with fear and trembling;***

**Hebrew 12:21** *And so terrifying was the sight that Moses said, "I am exceedingly afraid and trembling.") 22 But you have come to Mount Zion and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, to an innumerable company of angels ... 28 Therefore, since we are receiving a kingdom which cannot be*

shaken, **let us have grace, by which we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear. 29 For our God is a consuming fire.**

The hypocritical preachers and teachers described by Jesus had powerful ministries, prophesied, cast out demons, did many wonders in Jesus' name, and accomplished more than most born-again believers. They no doubt were expecting a grand reward for their ministry. So, why did Jesus disown them? Here is Jesus' simple answer. They practiced lawlessness, iniquity, or blatant intentional sin. They were hypocrites, preaching, prophesying, casting out demons, and doing miracles in Jesus' name while operating a lawless ministry doing their own thing in the name of God, while enjoying the pleasures of sin for a season [Hebrews 11:24-25].

**Hebrews 10:26 For if we sin willfully after we have received the knowledge of the truth, there no longer remains a sacrifice for sins, 27 but a certain fearful expectation of judgment, and fiery indignation which will devour the adversaries.** 28 Anyone who has rejected Moses' law dies without mercy on the testimony of two or three witnesses. 29 **Of how much worse punishment, do you suppose, will he be thought worthy who has trampled the Son of God underfoot, counted the blood of the covenant by which he was sanctified a common thing, and insulted the Spirit of grace? 30 For we know Him who said, "Vengeance is Mine, I will repay," says the Lord. And again, "The LORD will judge His people."**

**Hebrews 10:37 "For yet a little while, And He who is coming will come and will not tarry. 38 Now the just shall live by faith; But if anyone draws back, my soul has no pleasure in him." 39 But we are not of those who draw back to perdition (destruction, damnation), but of those who believe**

**to the saving of the soul.**

**2 Timothy 2:19** Nevertheless the solid foundation of God stands, having this seal: **"The Lord knows those who are His," and, "Let everyone who names the name of Christ depart from iniquity."**

We cannot live in blatant intentional sin and rebellion against God and have confidence that we are ready to meet Jesus whenever he comes for us [1 Timothy 3:9; Luke 18:8]. It may be semantics; we may be saying similar things differently, seeing the same parable, and coming away with different viewpoints. But, the once-saved, always-saved people would say that the five foolish virgins and hypocritical preachers had never been born again. Their teaching says that once born-again, salvation is guaranteed and irrevocable. So, if someone is born-again and backslides, they were never born-again. But if someone is born-again and they are living in blatant intentional sin, they are still saved because they can never lose salvation. Do you see the contradiction?

We don't want to tackle that doctrinal argument here; that's another book; people have debated this issue for over 500 years. But here is where that teaching creates problems with the five foolish virgins. The once-saved, always-saved teaching can never accept that the five foolish virgins had ever been born again because that would admit that foolish virgins had lost their salvation.

The people who say once saved always saved also say that all Christians are going up in the rapture. If all Christians get raptured, where do all the tribulation martyrs with the testimony of Jesus come from? So, to justify the once-saved, always-saved position, they say there will be zero "Christians" at the beginning of the tribulation; all Christians will be gone after the rapture. So, how do they explain the multitudes of martyrs with the testimony of Jesus? Their theory is that from the beginning of the tribulation, the world will experience the most spectacular revival of all time, and innumerable

multitudes will be born again. And all these brand-spanking new baby Christians will get saved just in time to get killed as martyrs in around 3 1/2 to seven years.

We might point out that dying as a martyr, rejecting the mark of the beast, and subjecting your family and loved ones to becoming homeless, with no access to money, transportation, medical treatment, starvation, beatings, imprisonment, and death will not be a romantic walk on the beach at sunset. If someone has difficulty living for Christ during the good times now, how will they die for Christ then?

The biggest problem with their premise is that nowhere in the scriptures do we have evidence to support a great revival during God's wrath and judgment in the great tribulation. They cite the two witnesses [Revelation 11:3-13], 144,000 Jews [Revelation 7:4-8], and an Angel proclaiming the gospel [Revelation 14:6], but nowhere does it say that anyone gets born again from those sources. But, at the end of the great tribulation, there will be the most miraculous revival of all times, but it will be with the nation of Israel; all the Israelis, the entire nation, who survived the tribulation, will be saved [Romans 11:26]. But the Gentile nations will refuse to repent and will curse God.

**Revelation 9:20** *But the rest of mankind, who were not killed by these plagues, did not repent of the works of their hands, that they should not worship demons, and idols of gold, silver, brass, stone, and wood, which can neither see nor hear nor walk. 21 And they did not repent of their murders or their sorceries or their sexual immorality or their thefts.*

**Revelation 16:9** *And men were scorched with great heat, and they blasphemed the name of God who has power over these plagues; and they did not repent and give Him glory. 10 Then the fifth angel poured out his bowl on the throne of the beast, and his kingdom became full of*

**darkness; and they gnawed their tongues because of the pain. 11 They blasphemed the God of heaven because of their pains and their sores, and did not repent of their deeds.**

There is one example of a remnant of people who have the testimony of Jesus after the catching up, rapture (harpazo), but there is no evidence of them getting converted anytime during the tribulation; it appears that these “Christians” already had established testimonies.

**Revelation 12:17** *And the dragon was enraged with the woman, and he went to make war with the rest of her offspring, who keep the commandments of God and have the testimony of Jesus Christ.*

There is no evidence of any revival with souls getting saved in the tribulation except with the nation of Israel, and they will survive the tribulation and live during the Millennium; they don't die as martyrs. Here's our opinion. Once the tribulation starts, the sleepers, like the five wise virgins, backsliders, hypocrites, lukewarm, slumbering “Christians,” will wake up and trim their lamps. The people who still have some oil, some conviction of the Holy Spirit, will take a stand and die for Christ. It is possible that some people who had heard the gospel and never responded before the tribulation will wake up, turn to Christ, and find enough conviction to die as martyrs.

Another parable deals with the philosophy of irrevocable salvation and may demonstrate how the five wise virgins could be the tribulation martyrs. That is the parable of the prodigal son, who represents a born-again child of God the Father. This son was living with his Father and had a heavenly inheritance. But he was restless and wanted to experience the world, so he left the Father's house, took his inheritance, wasted it on the passing pleasures of sin for a season, and ended up living in the pig pen of sin, starving, muddy, broke, and lost.



**Luke 15:11** Then He said: "A certain man had **two sons. 12 "And the younger of them said to his father, 'Father, give me the portion of goods that falls to me.'**(his inheritance) ... 13 "And not many days after, the younger son gathered all together, **journeyed to a far country, and there wasted his possessions with prodigal living. 14 "But when he had spent all,** there arose a severe famine in that land, and he began to be in want. 15 "Then he went and joined himself to a citizen of that country, **and he sent him into his fields (pig pen) to feed swine. ... 17 "But when he came to himself (repentance),** he said, 'How many of my father's hired servants have bread enough and to spare, and I perish with hunger!

Backsliders are like the prodigal son. They lost their way and ended up in a pig pen. If they stay in the pig pen and die in their sin, they not only lose their inheritance, but they can lose their souls. But if they return to the Father's house, God will run to meet them and take them back into his arms with a big hug and a celebration. The reconciled son gets the best robe and a ring, so he has his wedding garment to wear when the bridegroom comes to take the guests to the wedding feast.

**Luke 15:18** **'I will arise and go to my father, and will say to him, "Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you, 19 "and I am no longer worthy to be called your son. Make me like one of your hired servants."' 20 "And he arose and came to his father. But when he was still a great way off, his father saw him and had compassion, and ran and fell on his neck and kissed him. 21 "And the son said to him, 'Father, I have sinned against heaven and in your sight, and am no longer worthy to be called your son.'** 22 **"But the father said to his servants, 'Bring out the best robe and put it on him, and put a ring on his hand and sandals on his feet.**

While celebrating the return of the prodigal, the Father said that his son was dead; he was not physically dead but spiritually separated from the Father, dead in sin. The Father did not join the lost son in the pig pen and would not allow sin in his house but watched and waited for His son to come home. When the son realized his folly, he repented and left the mud of the pig pen of sin, and he returned to the Father. The Father was there waiting for him and ran to meet him. The Father forgave his wayward son and received him back with a big bear hug, a change of clothes, and a celebratory feast.

***Luke 15:23 'And bring the fatted calf here and kill it, and let us eat and be merry; 24 'for this my son was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found.' And they began to be merry. .... (The older son speaking) 30 ... as soon as this son of yours came, who has devoured your livelihood with harlots, you killed the fatted calf for him.' ... It was right that we should make merry and be glad, for your brother was dead and is alive again, and was lost and is found.'"***

The once-saved, always-saved people would say that the prodigal son was not a child of God the Father and had never been born again while he was in the pig pen. We say the prodigal son was a child of God who backslid and fell into sin, but the conviction of the Holy Spirit pulled him out of the pig pen and brought him to repentance and restoration with God the Father. The lost inheritance (time, calling for ministry, and opportunities for acts of faith and service) got wasted due to his folly [*1 Corinthians 3:11-15*]. However, he could reclaim his remaining time to serve the Father and lay up more treasures in heaven [*Matthew 6:19-20*]. Semantics? A person's free will and choices determine their lifestyle and consequences, whether to be a faithful, obedient child of God or choose a life of disobedience, rebellion, and sin. There are consequences for prodigals, the lost sons and daughters, especially if they stay in the pig pen. It would be better to have never been a born-again child of God than to return to wallowing in the pig pen as a

backslider or a hypocrite after having experienced a relationship with Christ.

**2 Peter 2:20** *For if, after they have escaped the pollutions of the world through the knowledge of the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, they are again entangled in them and overcome, the latter end is worse for them than the beginning. 21 For it would have been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than having known it, to turn from the holy commandment delivered to them. 22 But it has happened to them according to the true proverb: "A dog returns to his own vomit," and, "a sow, having washed, to her wallowing in the mire."*

When Jesus returns, it is not as a suffering servant or a sacrificial lamb but as the King of kings, Lord of Lords, master, and judge of all the earth. The believers will be judged for rewards, the unbelievers for punishment, and each person's judgment will be determined by what they know and have done. When Jesus returns, the Bride of Christ, tribulation martyrs, and Old Testament saints, all considered blessed and holy, will stand before the judgment seat of Christ to give an account of their lives before they receive their eternal inheritance.

**2 Corinthians 5:9** *Therefore we make it our aim, whether present or absent, to be well pleasing to Him. 10 For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that each one may receive the things done in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad. 11 Knowing, therefore, the terror of the Lord, we persuade men;* but we are well known to God, and I also trust are well known in your consciences.

**1 Corinthians 3:11** *For no other foundation can anyone lay than that which is laid, which is Jesus*

*Christ. 12 Now if anyone builds on this foundation with gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, straw, 13 each one's work will become clear; for the Day will declare it, because it will be revealed by fire; and the fire will test each one's work, of what sort it is. 14 If anyone's work which he has built on it endures, he will receive a reward. 15 If anyone's work is burned, he will suffer loss; but he himself will be saved, yet so as through fire.*

But the unbelievers will be judged and punished on the last day at the Great White Throne Judgment [Revelation 20:11-15]. The worst punishment will be for the backsliders and hypocrites, who knew God's will but intentionally rebelled and disobeyed. That is why Jesus gave so many strong warnings about his return that we should be vigilant, watch, and pray to be worthy [Luke 12:36].

**Luke 12:46** *The master of that servant will come on a day when he does not expect him and at an hour, he is not aware of. He will cut him to pieces and assign him a place with the unbelievers. 47 "That servant who knows his master's will and does not get ready or does not do what his master wants will be beaten with many blows. 48 But the one who does not know and does things deserving punishment will be beaten with few blows. From everyone who has been given much, much will be demanded; and from the one who has been entrusted with much, much more will be asked.*

Foolish virgins choose to roll the dice on God's mercy and unconditional salvation. They can let their lights grow dim or see how muddy and how much fun they can have in the pig pen and still claim to be a child of God. As a result, they risk losing everything, and for what? What will it be, temporary pleasure and disobedience, OR eternal life with joy unspeakable and full

of glory in the presence of God? That is the decision for all the prodigal sons and daughters, hypocrites, and foolish virgins.

**Matthew 25:11** "Afterward the other virgins came also, saying, 'Lord, Lord, open to us!' 12 "But he answered and said, 'Assuredly, I say to you, I do not know you.' 13 "Watch therefore, for you know neither the day nor the hour in which the Son of Man is coming.

**Matthew 24:50** The master of that servant will come on a day when he does not expect him and at an hour he is not aware of. 51 He will cut him to pieces and assign him a place with the hypocrites, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

**Matthew 23:15** "Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you travel land and sea to win one proselyte, and when he is won, you make him twice as much a son of hell as yourselves.

Let's return to the five wise virgins, the bridesmaids. They were in a spiritual slumber when the rapture happened. But they woke up in the middle of the tribulation. At midnight, they had the testimony of Jesus and enough oil of the Holy Spirit to refuse the mark of the Beast and die as martyrs. Then Jesus came and resurrected them and took them to the marriage supper of the Lamb.

**Revelation 7:9** After these things I looked, and behold, a great multitude which no one could number, of all nations, tribes, peoples, and tongues, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, with palm branches in their hands, 10 and crying out with a loud voice, "Salvation belongs to our God who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb!" ... 13 Then one of the elders answered, saying to me, "Who are these arrayed in

**white robes, and where did they come from?" 14 And I said to him, "Sir, you know." So, he said to me, "These are the ones who come out of the great tribulation, and washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.**

**Revelation 20:4** And I saw thrones, and they sat on them, and judgment was committed to them. **Then I saw the souls of those who had been beheaded for their witness to Jesus and for the word of God, who had not worshiped the beast or his image, and had not received his mark on their foreheads or on their hands. And they lived and reigned with Christ for a thousand years.**

The thing to take away from the parables is that we want to be on fire for God now, be vigilant, sober, watching, and praying with all our heart, soul, mind, and strength, to be the bride of Christ and go up with Jesus when he comes. Otherwise, if we miss the rapture, the only options are to stand for Jesus or bow to the Antichrist. How we live our lives now, our decisions and actions could have consequences that last for an eternity. The real moral of this story is not primarily about the wedding or a sleepover for wedding guests. The most important message is the warning about salvation, staying vigilant, and watching for Jesus' return, whether it is for you at your death or for you at the rapture.

## **Marriage Supper**

When Jesus told parables about the wedding feast, he referred to the kingdom of God or heaven. To the Old Testament Jews, the kingdom referred to the millennial kingdom, in which Jesus would sit on the throne of David and reign from Jerusalem. But for the church, that speaks of the heavenly Jerusalem that comes down from God out of heaven. Somehow,



the resurrected saints and the Israelis living on earth coexist simultaneously during the millennium, while Christ reigns over everything from Jerusalem on earth and the New Jerusalem in heaven. Some people think the resurrected saints will be visible to the citizens of the earthly kingdom. But we believe they will be like angels serving God in all the ways we see angels serving God in the Bible [Revelation 22:3, 8-9].

Returning to our parables, the King James Version (KJV) translated Matthew 24:10 differently than virtually all the other translations. When the KJV says they that were ready went to the marriage, the other translations say they went to the wedding banquet or marriage feast, so going to eat at a feast is different from going to get married. Bridesmaids can "go" to a wedding without getting married or, in this case, go to a banquet or reception that follows the wedding ceremony.

*Matthew 25:10* And while they went to buy, the bridegroom came; and they that were ready went in with him to the **marriage**; and the door was shut. KJV

*Matthew 25:10* "And while they went to buy, the bridegroom came, and those who were ready went in with him to the **wedding**; and the door was shut. NKJV

**The following verses say where the virgins were going:**

- New International Version:..... **wedding banquet**
- English Standard Version:..... **marriage feast**
- Christian Standard Bible:..... **wedding banquet**
- New American Standard 2020:..... **wedding feast**
- New American Standard 1995:..... **wedding feast**
- Legacy Standard Bible:..... **wedding feast**
- New English Translation:..... **wedding banquet**
- Revised Standard Version:..... **marriage feast**
- American Standard Version:..... **marriage feast**
- Youngs Literal Translation:..... **marriage-feasts**
- Darby Translation:..... **wedding feast**
- Hebrew Names Version:..... **marriage feast**
- New Living Translation:..... **marriage feast**



In the Biblical customs, the wedding vows were part of the engagement to be married, hence the need for a divorce to terminate a wedding engagement, like Joseph and Mary [Matthew 1:18-20]. The marriage was consummated in private, followed by a public celebration, like Jacob with Leah, and a week later with Rachael [Genesis 29:25-30]. So, all the wedding feast parables speak of the public celebration after the consummation. In other words, the church's rapture is the consummation of the union between Jesus and his bride, which lasts until the end of the tribulation. During the tribulation, the multitudes of innumerable guests will receive their wedding garments and fill the banquet hall for the wedding celebration. Those who will attend the wedding feast are all those who partake in the first resurrection, which is only for the saints considered blessed and holy. But no sinners will be there because they are neither holy nor blessed. There is no second resurrection for the lost; sinners go from physical death to the second death in the Lake of Fire.

**Matthew 24:29** *"Immediately after the tribulation of those days the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light; the stars will fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens will be shaken. 30 **"Then the sign of the Son of Man will appear in heaven, and then all the tribes of the earth will mourn, and they will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven with power and great glory. 31 "And He will send His angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they will gather together His elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other.***

**Matthew 13:41** ***"The Son of Man will send out His angels, and they will gather out of His kingdom all things that offend, and those who practice lawlessness, 42 "and will cast them into the furnace of fire. There will be wailing and gnashing of teeth. 43 "Then the righteous will shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of***

**their Father.** *He who has ears to hear, let him hear!*

**Revelation 20:4-6** *And I saw thrones, and they sat on them, and judgment was committed to them. Then **I saw the souls of those who had been beheaded for their witness to Jesus and for the word of God, who had not worshiped the beast or his image, and had not received his mark on their foreheads or on their hands. And they lived and reigned with Christ for a thousand years.** But the rest of the dead did not live again until the **thousand years** were finished. **This is the first resurrection. Blessed and holy is he who has part in the first resurrection. Over such the second death has no power,** but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with Him a **thousand years.***

**Revelation 20:14** ***Then Death and Hades were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. 15 And anyone not found written in the Book of Life was cast into the lake of fire.***

Christ will resurrect the Old Testament saints and the tribulation martyrs and return with the church and all the saints behind him at His second coming. Christ destroys the Antichrist and the armies of the nations and judges the world. Then Christ will establish His reign on the earth for one thousand years; this is called the Millennial kingdom, which is also the beginning of the wedding feast. Christ and all the saints behind him at his second coming are the procession to the wedding banquet. Those in attendance will be the tribulation martyrs, such as the bridesmaids, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, with all the Old Testament saints and Jewish and Gentile believers as the guests. The rewards will get assigned, and the disciples will sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel; some people will be over ten cities, some over five. The unbelievers, hypocrites, and backsliders will be judged and removed from the kingdom and the earth.

**Matthew 19:27-29** Then **Peter** answered and said to Him, "See, we have left all and followed You. Therefore, what shall we have?" So, Jesus said to them, "Assuredly **I say to you, that in the regeneration [Millennium], when the Son of Man sits on the throne of His glory [Matthew 25:31-46], you who have followed Me will also sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel.** "And everyone who has left houses or brothers or sisters or father or mother or wife or children or lands, for My name's sake, **shall receive a hundredfold, and inherit eternal life.**

**Matthew 8:11-12** [regarding a Roman Centurian] When Jesus heard it, He marveled, and said to those who followed, "Assuredly, I say to you, **I have not found such great faith, not even in Israel!" And I say to you that many will come from east and west, and sit down with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven. "But the sons of the kingdom will be cast out into outer darkness. There will be weeping and gnashing of teeth."**

**Luke 19:15** "And so it was that **when he returned, having received the kingdom,** he then commanded these servants, to whom he had given the money, to be called to him, that he might know how much every man had gained by trading. 16 "Then came the first, saying, 'Master, your mina has earned ten minas.' 17 "And he said to him, **'Well done, good servant; because you were faithful in a very little, have authority over ten cities.'** 18 "And the second came, saying, 'Master, your mina has earned five minas.' 19 "Likewise he said to him, 'You also be over five cities.'

**Luke 13:23-29** Then one said to Him, **"Lord, are there few who are saved?"** And He said to them,

*"Strive to enter through the narrow gate, for many, I say to you, will seek to enter and will not be able. "When once the Master of the house has risen up and shut the door, and you begin to stand outside and knock at the door, saying, 'Lord, Lord, open for us,' and He will answer and say to you, 'I do not know you, where you are from,' "then you will begin to say, 'We ate and drank in Your presence, and You taught in our streets.' "But He will say, 'I tell you I do not know you, where you are from. Depart from Me, all you workers of iniquity.' "There will be weeping and gnashing of teeth, when you see Abraham and Isaac and Jacob and all the prophets in the kingdom of God, and yourselves thrust out. "They will come from the east and the west, from the north and the south, and sit down in the kingdom of God.*

One thing we do know about the marriage supper of the Lamb is that it will be the greatest blessing ever. It will be a time of unspeakable joy and full of glory in the presence of God. The best news for the church is the privilege of being raptured and the incomparable eternal honor of being the bride at the wedding feast, being part of the heavenly Jerusalem, and being in communion with Christ forever.

**Revelation 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 supper of the Lamb!'" And he said to me, "These are the true sayings of God."*

**Revelation 21:2** *Then I, John, saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven*

***from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.***

## **Call to Action**

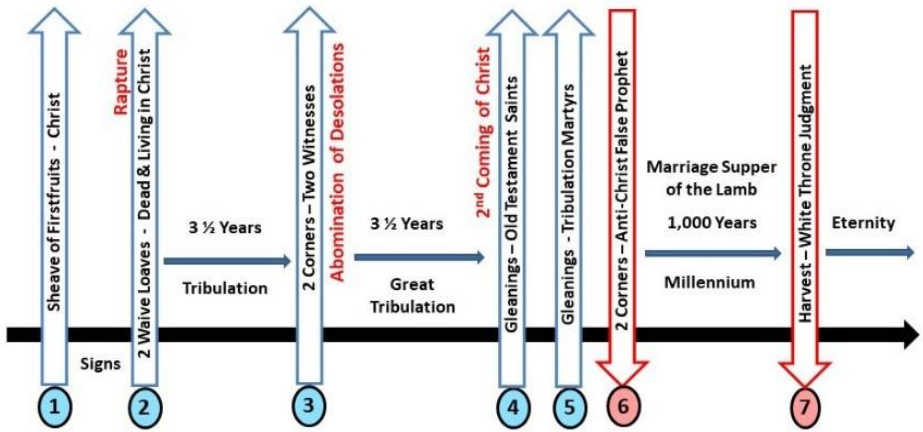
We are in the end times; our world is changing quickly to line up with Bible prophecy. Jesus said the signs of his return would be like birth pangs, growing globally in intensity and frequency. We see those signs happening quickly in real-time with wars, food shortages, pandemics, shutdowns, and natural disasters, all leading to the Antichrist and a global fascist government.

There will be global persecution of Christians and Jews, and it's not a question of if, but when. There will also be a great falling away from Christ, and we can see it happening already. So-called churches are already becoming sexually immoral, politically woke, and in bed with the government. As more churches go apostate or get shut down, true believers may have to find or create small groups for fellowship. While we have time and freedom, we should study the scriptures, share the gospel, and watch for Jesus to return. For free resources and study materials, visit our website at **[Ears2Hear.online](#)**.



**Ears2Hear.online**  
Free Audio & E-books, Bibles, etc.  
**Email: [Ears@Ears2Hear.online](mailto:Ears@Ears2Hear.online)**  
**Books on Kindle & Amazon:**  
<https://www.amazon.com/author/markengland>

## Order of Resurrections – Laws of the Harvest



Order of Resurrections (1 Corinthians 15:23) / Laws of the Harvest (Leviticus 23)

- = 1<sup>st</sup> Resurrection - Judgment Seat of Christ - All Saints - (2 Corinthians 5:10)
- = 2<sup>nd</sup> Death - Great White Throne - All Sinners (Revelation 20:5)

