

04 – MISUNDERSTANDING JESUS

- ✓ Throughout this series, I've stressed the importance of being mindful of the context. Nowhere will that be more important than in Chapter 25.
- ✓ If you want to "rightly divide the Word" in Chapter 25, you'll need to remember that these chapters are written in chronological order. So far, we've discussed ...

v. 4-8 – Signs that the Tribulation is about to begin.

v. 9-14 – The 1st Half of the Tribulation.

v. 15-26 – The 2nd Half of the Tribulation.

v. 27-30 – The Second Coming.

- ✓ The last section (24:31 – 25:46), reveals what happens on earth after the Second Coming. As we've seen, the believing and unbelieving survivors have very different outcomes.
- ✓ The unbelievers are thrown into hell (Mt. 13:40-42), and the believers remain on earth to enter the Millennium (Mt. 13:43). That theme continues right through to the end of Ch. 25.

Chapter 25

- ✓ Notice how Chapter 25 begins. What's the first word? "**THEN**".
- ✓ Remember the words "then" and "when" are "position markers". They let us know that we're not jumping back and forth. We're moving steadily & chronologically thru the Tribulation. So, really, we could read 25:1 this way: "**AFTER** the Second Coming ... **THEN** ..."

Matthew 25:1 – **Then** (after the 2nd Coming) shall the kingdom of Heaven be likened unto ten virgins ..."

- ✓ Here's *another* passage that we've taken out of context.

The Ten Virgins

- ✓ The Traditional Pentecostal View: The Ten Virgins are the Bride (the Church – you and I) – and Jesus commands us to stay full of the Holy Ghost, and ready for the Rapture.
- ✓ Haven't we preached it that way? But there are *several* problems with that interpretation. First, it doesn't fit the context. (Jesus hasn't been talking about the Rapture! He's been talking about the Tribulation Survivors.) But context isn't the *only* problem ...
- ✓ We find a shortened version of "the 10 Virgins" in Luke 12. (It points out two glaring problems with that interpretation.)

Luke 12:35 – **"Be dressed and ready and keep your lamps burning."**

- ✓ That sounds similar so far ... (Keep reading. I promise you, Luke's account will forever change how you look at this parable.)

Luke 12:35-36 – **"Be dressed and ready and keep your lamps burning. And you, yourselves, like unto men that wait for their lord, when he will return from the wedding."**

- ✓ Did you see it? Two problems! Not only are the ten virgins men, but they're waiting for the groom to return from the wedding.
- ✓ Think About It: If the groom is "returning" from the wedding, that means the wedding is over and the groom is already married. (So much for the 10 virgins being the Bride!)
- ✓ Clearly, we've misunderstood this parable. (Let's see if we can find the right interpretation.)
- ✓ It will help us, if we understand the details of a Jewish wedding.

Steps in a Jewish Wedding

- a. The Betrothal – (It's like getting "engaged", only more binding.)
- ✓ In this phase, the groom visits the girl's dad, and they barter back and forth for her price. (The groom has to pay for the girl's release.) Once they agree on a price, the groom goes home to prepare a place for her. The bride-to-be continues to live with her father.



- b. On the Morning of the Wedding, the Groom's Friends Arrive to Decorate the Groom's House. While they're decorating ...



- c. The Groom Rides to the Bride's Father's House



- ✓ (That's where the wedding takes place.) He waits, while the bride gets ready.

- d. The Wedding Itself is Simple

- ✓ The father presents his daughter to the groom. The moment they join hands, they're married. Then, she has a final visit with her family, before she leaves. (That may last several hours).

- e. By Late Evening, the Couple leaves for the Groom's House.



- ✓ When the groom's friends were finished decorating the house, they went outside to wait for the newlyweds. (The next people to cross the threshold had to be the bride and groom.) By late evening, the groom's friends have probably been waiting outside for several hrs.
- ✓ As time passes, they start expecting the couple to arrive. So, they set people at intervals along the way. When the first person in line sees the groom's chariot, they call out, "The bridegroom is coming!" (You see that phrase in the parable.) Let me ask you a question: When the call goes out, where is the bride? She's with the groom in the chariot.



- ✓ Now you can understand what Luke said ...

*Luke 12:35-36 – "Be dressed and ready and keep your lamps burning. And you, yourselves, like **men** that wait for their lord, when he will **return** from the wedding."*

- f. When the Chariot Shows Up at the House, They All Go in to the Feast.



The Analogy

- (i) The Church was **Betrothed** to Jesus at the Cross - (2 Cor. 11:2)
- (ii) Jesus Has Gone to Prepare a Place for Us – (John 14:2)
- (iii) At the Rapture, We'll Be Taken to Our **Father's House**, Where We'll Be **Made Ready** at the Judgment Seat of Christ.

(iv) Just Before the Trib. Ends, the **Wedding Takes Place in Heaven.**

Rev. 19:7 – “Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honour to him: for the marriage of the Lamb **is come**, and his **wife** has made herself ready.”

- ✓ The word “come” is aorist (past) tense in the Greek. It would be better translated, “the marriage of the Lamb **has just taken place**. Notice the Bride is now called the “Wife”. (In the next verses ...)

(v) We **Mount White Horses** and Ride Back to the Earth. We Arrive Just as the Period of Darkness Comes to an End.

- ✓ On earth we'll find “wise and foolish virgins” – (believing & unbelieving Trib. survivors). It says the foolish had no “oil”. We learned in the parable of the Good Samaritan that **oil is a type of the Holy Spirit in the new birth**. (Wine is a type of the Baptism of the Spirit.) **The foolish virgins had no “oil”**; they weren't born again. That's why the groom says, “I don't know you”. In Matt. 7:23, that phrase is followed with the words “depart from Me”.
- ✓ In the parable, the foolish virgins were refused entrance, while the wise entered the **marriage feast**. (The Wedding takes place in Heaven, but the Marriage Feast takes place on earth, during the Millennium).

The Next Misunderstanding – “This Generation Shall Not Pass”

Matt. 24:32-34 – How We've Preached It: “The fig tree is Israel. According to Jesus, the generation that was alive to see the fig tree blossom (become a nation) ... **THAT** will be the final generation”.

- ✓ Then we did the math! “A generation in the Bible is 40 years. That means Jesus **has** to come by 1988.” The problem is ... He didn't! So, we recalculated (and moved the goal post). “Well, maybe a generation is 70 years!” (That brought it to 2018).

*“In the same way, when you see **ALL** these things, know that he is ... right at the doors. I tell you the truth: **THIS** generation shall not pass.”*