

virgins...He had just referred to His own coming, and now He told about ten young ladies who went forth to meet the bridegroom who was coming.

1. In Matthew 25:2-4, we see a distinction between the ten virgins. What were they? _____

The application is obvious. No more striking story could be told to illustrate the need for being constantly ready for the coming of Christ. Jesus used a familiar figure, and one that comes close to people's hearts — that of a wedding. These young ladies were variously prepared for the arrival of the bridegroom. The wisdom of the first group was revealed when they were able to go out and meet the bridegroom with their lamps burning. The foolishness of the other five virgins became evident when they attempted to light their lamps and only then realized they should have made advance preparation. While the bridegroom *tarried* — literally, "spent time" — all the virgins *slumbered* and *slept* (v5). When the bridegroom arrived the five whose lamps were burning refused the request of the foolish and went into the wedding. This wedding Supper of the Lamb takes place, in heaven, soon after the Rapture of the Church. Since oil is recognized as a symbol of the Holy Spirit, it suggests that we must **stay** filled with the Spirit to be properly prepared and ready for Our Lord's return.

day of the Lord, the personal visible appearance of the Son of man Himself, coming in the clouds of power and glory as Jerusalem is surrounded by all the nations of the world. This is Christ's second advent.

Matthew 24:32-35

This is where Jesus tells the disciples a parable.

5. Name the parable. (Matthew 24:32)_____

6. Who do you think the fig tree represents?_____

The example of the fig tree reminded Jesus' followers to stay alert and observant, just as the fig tree indicated the seasons by its foliage, so God's people could recognize the nearness of Christ's return by the fulfillment of these signs.

Jesus' use of the phrase "this generation shall not pass" (v34) has caused some discussion among scholars about the length of time in a "generation." In the Old Testament, Scripture uses this term to indicate time periods of about 40 years (illustrated by the reigns of Saul, David and Solomon), 100 years (See Genesis 15:13-14) and 70-80 years (a natural lifetime; Psalm 90:10). The New Testament most often uses this term to refer to a group of people living at one particular time. The understanding of this passage is that the generation alive to witness the rebirth of Israel (1948 or 1967) will still be alive when Jesus returns to establish His kingdom. Jesus also affirms that His words are more certain than the existence of the

universe.

Matthew 24:36 Jesus declared that only the Father knew when Christ would return. Jesus voluntarily limited His supernatural knowledge while incarnated or living in His human body during His earthly ministry. Yet Jesus, the Holy Spirit and the Father are three person's of the one God. Therefore, after Jesus' ascent to heaven, He possesses the knowledge of the time of His return.

Matthew 24:37-51 The balance of this prophetic discourse describes the conditions in the last days and Jesus' instructions to His followers. Jesus warns that, just as in Noah's day, widespread violence, corruption and evil will characterize life on earth. As humanity rejected God's prophetic warnings from Noah, our generation has dismissed the warnings associated with Christ's return. Jesus warned that His judgment would separate the wicked from the repentant, without warning, like the unexpected appearance of a thief. Jesus challenged His followers to stay alert and faithful to the Master. Those who forget the Lord's coming will be cast into hell.

(*Note - The generation that is alive when Israel becomes a nation will be alive at the Rapture of the Church and Second Coming of Christ, and will see all these signs take place.—During the Great Tribulation period, God will be dealing with the Jews. This is the time of Jacob's Trouble [Jeremiah 30:7]).

7. (a) Can we know the exact day or hour of His

coming? (Matthew 24:36)_____

(b) Why?_____

8. What did Jesus say would never pass away?

(Matthew 24:35) _____

Ultimately the human race is divided into two groups — those who watch for Christ's coming and those who do not. As illustration, we have two in the field, one taken the other left (v40). The same will be true of two women grinding at the mill (v41) — a little hand mill turned by two women , can still be seen in Palestine. Some scholars say this reference is to the Second Coming of Christ, and other's say it is to the Rapture of the Church. Those who say it is the Second Coming are those who do not believe in the Rapture of the Church before that Great Tribulation.

9. Since we don't know the time of Christ's coming, what are we supposed to do? (Matthew 24:42) _____

Watch is literally, "stay wide awake."

10. In verses 43-51 there are two parables. Name them.

(1) _____

(2) _____

THE PARABLE OF THE TEN VIRGINS (Matthew 25:1-13)

Jesus continued His description of the end time.
Then shall the kingdom of heaven be likened unto ten