

Parable of the Ten Virgins

Lesson
25

Purpose To encourage each child to become spiritually prepared for the second coming of Jesus Christ.

Preparation

1. Prayerfully study Matthew 25:1–13 (see the Joseph Smith Translation in Matthew 25:1, footnote a) and Doctrine and Covenants 45:56–57, 63:53–54. Then study the lesson and decide how you want to teach the children the scripture account. (See “Preparing Your Lessons,” p. vi, and “Teaching from the Scriptures,” p. vii.)
2. Select the discussion questions and enrichment activities that will involve the children and best help them achieve the purpose of the lesson.
3. Materials needed:
 - a. A Bible or a New Testament for each child
 - b. The following wordstrips:
 - Ten virgins = Church members
 - Oil = Spiritual preparation
 - Bridegroom = Jesus Christ
 - Marriage = Second coming of Jesus
 - c. Picture 7-25, The Second Coming (Gospel Art Picture Kit 238; 62562)

Suggested

Lesson

Development

Invite a child to give the opening prayer.

Attention Activity

Ask the children to pretend that the class is going on a trip.

- What do we need to do to prepare for the trip?
- What should we take with us?

Say, “We are going on a trip and we will take _____,” naming one item. Have a child say the same sentence, including what you said, and add another item. Continue around the room, having each child name all the previous items and add one more. Give each child one or more turns, depending on the size of your class. Give help naming the items when necessary.

Point out that preparation is an important part of many things in our lives.

- What are some things we might prepare for besides going on a trip?

Discuss briefly the preparation we do for school, for a meal, for family home evening, and so on. Tell the children that in this lesson they are going to learn how they can prepare spiritually for a wonderful event that will happen in the future.

Scripture Account Teach the children the parable of the ten virgins (Matthew 25:1–13). (For suggested ways to teach the scripture account, see “Teaching from the Scriptures,” p. vii.) Tell the children that Jesus often taught with parables, using familiar objects and situations to teach a hidden spiritual truth. He used parables so that only those who were willing to study the parable would understand the truth (see Matthew 13:10–17). Help the children understand that this parable likens the second coming of Jesus Christ, which is when the Savior will return to earth to rule during the Millennium, to a wedding.

Explain that the parable of the ten virgins is based on ancient Jewish wedding customs. The bridegroom and his friends escorted the bride from her home to the home of the bridegroom. Along the way friends of the bride waited to join them. When they arrived at the bridegroom’s home, they all went inside for the wedding. These weddings usually took place in the evenings, so those waiting for the bride and bridegroom carried lamps.

Discussion and Application Questions

Study the following questions and the scripture references as you prepare your lesson. Use the questions you feel will best help the children understand the scriptures and apply the principles in their lives. Reading the references with the children in class will help them gain insights into the scriptures. Display the wordstrips and picture at appropriate times.

- Whom do the ten virgins represent? (Matthew 25:1.) Whom does the bridegroom represent? (Jesus Christ.)
- How do we know that all ten virgins believed in Jesus Christ? (Matthew 25:6–7. They “went out to meet” the bridegroom and waited for him.) How can we show that we believe in Jesus?
- Why were five of the virgins referred to as foolish? (Matthew 25:3.) Why were five referred to as wise? (Matthew 25:4.)
- What happened when the bridegroom came? (Matthew 25:6–8.) Why do you think the five foolish virgins were so unprepared? How do you think we can be prepared when Jesus comes again?
- Why do you think the five wise virgins did not share their oil? (Matthew 25:9.) Why couldn’t they have given some of their oil to the others? Explain that the shape of Jewish lamps, outside lips rounded inward, made it almost impossible for someone to pour oil from one lamp to another (see the illustration at the end of the lesson). In the parable, the oil in the wise virgins’ lamps represents their righteous living and obedience. We each fill our own lamp, which represents our own life, with our obedience and righteousness. Heavenly Father’s blessings to us for our righteous actions cannot be given to the disobedient.
- What happened to the five who were not prepared? (Matthew 25:10–12.) What happened to the five who were prepared? Why is it important for us to prepare now for the Second Coming? How can we fill our lamps with oil?

Read this quotation from Elder Bruce R. McConkie: “As individuals, we prepare to meet our God by keeping his commandments and living his laws. . . . The gospel in its everlasting fulness, restored as it has been in these last days, is here to prepare a people for the second coming of the Son of Man” (*The Millennial Messiah*, p. 572).

Have the children read Matthew 24:36 and 25:13. Explain that just as the ten virgins did not know the exact hour when the bridegroom would come, we do not know exactly when Jesus will come again.

- What will it be like when Jesus Christ returns? (D&C 45:56–57; 63:53–54.) What blessings are in store for those who are spiritually prepared? (D&C 38:30.)

You could use enrichment activity 2 as a review and application of this lesson.

Enrichment Activities

You may use one or more of the following activities any time during the lesson or as a review, summary, or challenge.

1. Discuss briefly the following information to familiarize the children with the second coming of Jesus Christ:

When Jesus left his Apostles in Jerusalem, angels told them he would come a second time. (Acts 1:9–11.)

Only Heavenly Father knows when the Second Coming will be. (Matthew 24:36.)

Jesus will come in power and glory and reign on the earth for a thousand years. (D&C 29:11.)

We need to prepare ourselves for Christ's second coming. (D&C 33:17–18.)

The righteous who are ready for Jesus' second coming will be with him on that great day and will dwell in the presence of Heavenly Father and Jesus forever. (D&C 76:62–63.)

2. Give each child a copy of the lamp at the end of the lesson, or draw a lamp on the chalkboard. Have the children write things on their lamps, or name things that you can write on the chalkboard, that will fill their spiritual lamps with oil (some ideas could be bearing testimony, learning the gospel, serving others, paying tithing, living to be worthy of the companionship of the Holy Ghost, praying, fulfilling Church callings, and so on). Help them realize that these are things they each have to get or do themselves in order to have oil in their lamps, as the five wise virgins did.

Compare what the children wrote on their lamps with President Spencer W. Kimball's ideas: "In our lives the oil of preparedness is accumulated drop by drop in righteous living. Attendance at sacrament meetings adds oil to our lamps, drop by drop over the years. Fasting, family prayer, home teaching, control of bodily appetites, preaching the gospel, studying the scriptures—each act of dedication and obedience is a drop added to our store. Deeds of kindness, payment of offerings and tithes, chaste thoughts and actions, marriage in the covenant for eternity—these, too, contribute importantly to the oil with which we can at midnight refuel our exhausted lamps" (*Faith Precedes the Miracle*, p. 256).

Discuss ways to add oil to our lamps that the children have not already mentioned, and let the children add some to their lists if desired. Help them understand that these are things that cannot be put off until the Savior comes.

3. Read the following quotation by President Spencer W. Kimball: “The ten virgins belonged to the kingdom and had every right to the blessings—except that five were not valiant and were not ready when the great day came. They were unprepared through not living all the commandments. They were bitterly disappointed at being shut out from the marriage—as likewise their modern counterparts [members today who are not prepared] will be” (*The Miracle of Forgiveness*, p. 8).
4. Sing or read the words to “When He Comes Again” (*Children’s Songbook*, p. 82). After singing the song, ask the children to imagine what it would be like to have Jesus say to them, “You’ve served me well. Come into my arms to stay.”

Conclusion

Testimony

Bear testimony of the importance of preparing for the second coming of Jesus Christ by living righteously. Share with the children how important it is to you to be worthy so you can participate in that great event.

Suggested Home Reading

Suggest to the children that they study Matthew 25:1–13 at home as a review of this lesson.

Invite a child to give the closing prayer.

