

1. Matthew 25:1-13:

<u>Detail</u>	<u>Symbol or Meaning</u>
1. Kingdom of Heaven	- Fullness of Redemption – the consummation of God and creation.
2. Bridegroom	- God/Messiah
3. Bride?	- Israel – but the bride in the parable is absent.
4. Bridesmaids/Virgins	- the religious leaders are the attendants of Israel.
5. Why Ten?	- likely the Ten Commandments – which is the Marriage contract
6. Lamp	- according to Rabbinic thought, the Torah (Bible) was the lamp – (Exodus Rabbah 36).
7. Oil	- Oil represents humanity fulfilling God's commands. Those who have not fulfilled God's commands cannot "borrow oil" from those who have.
8. Wedding	- 1 st -century Jewish wedding has two parts – engagement followed by the wedding ceremony one year apart.
9. Drowsy/Slept	- humanity is asleep and must be aroused! According to Rabbinic lore, Moses had to awaken the Israelites at Sinai to meet their bridegroom (Pirkei D'Rabbi Eliezer 41)
10. Midnight	- Midnight is a time of God's action (Exodus 12:29; Acts 16:25)

2. Exodus:

- Understood to be a wedding (Engagement followed by Wedding) between God and Israel.
- To "consummate the marriage" (Exodus 40) – Israel must be obedient to the covenant.

3. Four Expressions of Redemption – Exodus 6:6-7:

- Expressions have an increasing intimacy as God brings us closer to Him.

I will bring (אצ') you out	- to be moved or "brought out" of a location
I will deliver (rescue) (לצו) you	- to rescue, but it doesn't imply an ongoing relationship
I will redeem (לאל) you	- restoring to the rightful place of a household (father's house).
I will take (נקל) you as my own	- to "take" as in a marriage

4. **Lamp** – the lamp is symbolic of the Torah (Psalm 119:105).

5. **Oil** – the oil is symbolic of faithful obedience to the Torah (Prov. 20:27)

- The Bible alone does not shine light into the world; it is only when embraced by humanity and put into action – like the oil in the lamp – that God's light radiates into the world.
 - What good is the command to "love your neighbor" (Lev. 19:18) if you don't do it?
 - What good is the command to "help your enemy" (Ex. 23:4-5) if you don't do it?

“But those who study the Torah give forth light wherever they may be. It is like one standing in the dark with a lamp in his hand; when he sees a stone, he does not stumble, neither does he fall over a gutter...as it says, “Your word is a lamp to my feet, and a light to my path” (Ps. 119:105)...What is the lamp of God? The Torah, as it says, “For the commandment is a lamp, and the teaching is light” (Prov. 6:23). Why is the commandment ‘a lamp’? Because if one performs a commandment it is as if he had kindled a light before God and as if he had revived his own soul,- also called a light, for it says, “The spirit of man is the lamp of the LORD” (Prov. 20:27).

Exodus Rabbah 36

- **Matt. 25:8** – oil, as obedience, can't be shared with those who did not obey.

6. "Drowsy/Slept" – what is the significance of the bridesmaids becoming drowsy and falling asleep?

Rabbi Chanina said...And Moses went forth and came to the camp of the Israelites, and he **aroused the Israelites from their sleep**, saying to them: **Arise from your sleep**, for behold, the **bridegroom** has already come and wishes to lead the bride and to enter the bridal chamber, to give the Torah to you...And the Holy One, blessed be He, also went forth to meet them; like a **bridegroom who goes forth to meet the bride**, so the Holy One, blessed be He, went forth to meet them to give them the Torah.”

Pirkei D'Rabbi Eliezer 41

- Israel/Humanity is asleep and must be roused awake! The bridegroom (Christ) has arrived!

7. **1st-Century Jewish Wedding** – a wedding, as a picture of redemption, happens in two stages.

- Engagement – unlike our engagement period, where the couple is not officially married, in Israel, the couple is formally married at the moment of engagement, but the marriage is not consummated.
- 1-year period – preparing a place – in the Father's house – for the bride and groom to reside.
- Wedding – the bridegroom comes to get his bride, a second celebration, and consummation.

8. What is the **timeline of Exodus** before the groom resides with his bride? Ex. 40:17

- One year

9. Who are the Bridesmaids?

- The religious leaders who have the Torah (the lamp) but are not following it!
- You are a Priest, but you take advantage of the poor and enrich yourself!