

Today's passage from the New Testament of the Bible, is known as the Parable of the ten bridesmaid.

But why does Jesus speak of ten?

Symbolism of Completeness: The number ten often symbolizes completeness or fullness in the Bible. Having ten bridesmaids may have been a way to symbolize the completeness or fullness of the bridal party for the wedding.

Ceremonial Significance: **Weddings** in ancient times were significant and joyous occasions, and having a larger bridal party was a way to emphasize the importance and grandeur of the event.

Community Participation: **Weddings** were communal events in many ancient societies, and having a large bridal party allowed more members of the community to be involved and participate in the celebration.

Logistics and Traditions: Cultural and regional traditions often dictated the customs surrounding weddings. The number of bridesmaids may have been influenced by local customs and expectations.

So, the presence of ten bridesmaids in the parable serves to set the stage for the story and may be reflective of the cultural practices and traditions of the time, emphasizing the significance of the wedding event and the need for preparedness and watchfulness.

The meaning of today's Gospel is often interpreted as a lesson about being spiritually prepared and watchful for the return of Jesus or the end times.

It encourages believers to be vigilant and ready for the coming of the Lord, not knowing when it will happen. It emphasizes the importance of being prepared and having a relationship with God that endures, as the five foolish young women failed to do.

But how do we as Christians continue to prepare for the coming of the Lord? It has been so long!

I think preparing for the coming of the Lord, especially when it seems like a long time coming, is a fundamental aspect of Christian faith.

Perhaps we are called to maintain a strong and unwavering faith that would allow us to continue to believe in His promises, including His return.

We are told to regularly examine our lives, confess our sins, and seek forgiveness, and to understand that repentance is seen as a key element of preparation in Christian theology.

But that we need to be patient and this key we need to understand that God's timing is not the same as human timing.

Remember that the concept of time in divine matters is different from human perception. Christians have been waiting for the return of the Lord for centuries, but faith in His eventual return remains a cornerstone of the Christian belief. Preparing for His coming is an ongoing, lifelong journey of faith and devotion.

The story of Job, found in the Old Testament, is about a man who faces immense suffering and hardship. Job is a righteous and devoted believer in God, but he loses his wealth, health, and family in a series of trials and tribulations.

Despite his profound suffering, Job remains patient and maintains his faith in God, refusing to curse God for his misfortunes.

The tale of Job serves as a powerful example of patience, endurance, and unwavering faith in the face of adversity. It illustrates the idea that even in the most challenging circumstances, a devoted believer can remain steadfast and faithful, ultimately finding restoration and blessings from God.

Jesus did not return in Job' s lifetime☹and He may not return in ours☹

But as a matter of faith, we need to continue to prepare for the potential return by living a life in accordance with our beliefs.

It's important to stay spiritually connected and engaged in our faith community for guidance and support; remembering that the timing of such events is uncertain.

So let us focus on our personal journey and how we can positively impact the world today.

Let Us Pray

Lord, we are a waiting people who eagerly anticipate your return. Sit with us now as we practice patience. Bring peace to our restlessness, transform doubt to trust, and help us hear from you in this in between time. Amen.