

# Matthew 25:3

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

They that were foolish took their lamps, and took no oil with them:

## Analysis

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**They that were foolish took their lamps, and took no oil with them** (αἱ μωραὶ λαβοῦσαι τὰς λαμπάδας αὐτῶν οὐκ ἔλαβον μεθ' ἐαυτῶν ἔλατον, hai mōrai labousai tas lampadas autōn ouk elabon meth' heautōn elaion). The foolish virgins possessed lamps (λαμπάδας, lampadas—torches or oil lamps used in wedding processions) but lacked additional **oil** (ἔλατον, elaion).

Oil consistently symbolizes the Holy Spirit in Scripture (1 Samuel 16:13, Zechariah 4:1-6, Acts 10:38). The lamps represent visible profession of faith; the oil represents the indwelling Spirit that sustains genuine spiritual life. The foolish had external religion without internal reality—outward form without regenerating grace. Their folly was not ignorance but negligence: they knew to bring lamps but failed to secure adequate oil, suggesting presumption or spiritual carelessness.

## Historical Context

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First-century Jewish weddings involved a nighttime procession where bridesmaids carried torches to light the bride's way to the groom's house. Wedding festivities could last seven days. The groom's arrival time was often delayed and uncertain, requiring participants to be prepared for waiting.

## Related Passages

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**1 John 4:8** — God is love

## Study Questions

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1. Do you possess the 'oil' of the Spirit, or merely the 'lamp' of religious profession?
2. What areas of your Christian life reflect presumptive spiritual negligence rather than Spirit-sustained reality?
3. How can you discern whether your faith is self-generated religious activity or Spirit-empowered divine life?

## Interlinear Text

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αἵτινες	μωραὶ	ἔλαβον	τὰς	λαμπάδας	ἔαυτῶν,	οὐκ
<b>They</b>	<b>that were foolish</b>	<b>and took</b>	G3588	<b>lamps</b>	<b>them</b>	<b>no</b>
G3748	G3474	G2983		G2985	G1438	G3756
ἔλαβον	μεθ'	ἔαυτῶν,	ἔλαιον			
<b>and took</b>	<b>with</b>	<b>them</b>	<b>oil</b>			
G2983	G3326	G1438	G1637			

## Additional Cross-References

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**2 Timothy 3:5** (Parallel theme): Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: from such turn away.

**Isaiah 58:2** (Parallel theme): Yet they seek me daily, and delight to know my ways, as a nation that did righteousness, and forsook not the ordinance of their God: they ask of me the ordinances of justice; they take delight in approaching to God.

**Revelation 3:1** (Parallel theme): And unto the angel of the church in Sardis write; These things saith he that hath the seven Spirits of God, and the seven stars; I know thy works, that thou hast a name that thou livest, and art dead.