

# IMPROVED UNIFORM INTERNATIONAL SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSON

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## LESSON FOR FEBRUARY 20

### THE WISE AND FOOLISH VIRGINS.

LESSON TEXT—Matt. 25:1-13  
GOLDEN TEXT—Watch therefore, for ye know neither the day nor the hour wherein the Son of man cometh.—Matt. 25:13  
REFERENCE MATERIAL—Matt. 24:27-31; Eph. 6:10-18; 1 Tim. 4:1-7  
PRIMARY TOPIC—Being Ready  
JUNIOR TOPIC—Being Ready  
INTERMEDIATE AND SENIOR TOPIC—Prepared for Emergencies  
YOUNG PEOPLE AND ADULT TOPIC—Christian Watchfulness

This lesson is a part of the well known Olivet discourse, giving a prophetic view of the course of time from its utterance, just before the crucifixion to the second advent of Christ. The order of events in that time are roughly speaking, as follows:

1. The moral condition of the world during Christ's absence (24:1-14). This is the period covered by the parable of chapter 13.
2. The appearance of the Antichrist (24:15-26).
3. The great advent (24:27-31), in which there will be mighty convulsions of nature, the mourning of the earth's tribes, and the gathering of the elect.
4. Warnings to God's people in view of the great advent (24:32-51), the time of advent unknown and unexpected.
5. Instructions to saints in view of the unexpectedness of His coming (25:1-36).
6. The judgment of the nations (25:31-46).

The present lesson is one of the two parables designed for the instruction of the saints in view of the coming of the Christ. It has a continuous application in the present time (I Thess. 4:16-18; Titus 2:11-13).

#### I. The Foolish Virgins Took Lamps But No Oil With Them. (v. 3)

Lamps signify Christian profession (Matt. 5:16), and oil, the Holy Spirit (Zech. 4). Having the lamps and no oil shows that they were professors of religion without possessing its reality. As soon as a man is regenerated the Holy Spirit takes up His abode with him. The proof that one is a child of God is that he has the Holy Spirit dwelling within him. "If any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of His." (Rom. 8:9). The foolish virgins may have been of good moral character, but they were unregenerated.

#### 2. The wise virgins possessed both lamps and oil. (v. 4)

They made a profession and backed it with a real life of righteousness. These are the true believers. Both the wise and the foolish virgins slumbered and slept. Their eyes had grown heavy and they fell under the spell of sleep (v. 5). This shows that as the Christian age lengthened the real and professing church would cease looking for the coming of the Lord. It is unspeakably sad that so many even of God's saints, wise virgins, should give up the expectancy of the return of the Lord.

#### 3. The coming bridegroom (v. 6-12)

In the midst of the night when all were asleep the cry was made, "Behold the bridegroom cometh, go ye out to meet him." How sad it is that the church has lost her hope, is not waking and watching for the return of her Lord!

#### 4. Activity of the virgins (v. 7)

They all arose and trimmed their lamps. There will be great activity when the Lord comes, on the part of both the real Christians and those who only make a profession. The professing Christians will then realize that they lack that which is essential to entrance to the marriage feast.

#### 5. The foolish request the wise to share their oil (v. 8, 9)

The revelation of Christ will make manifest the genuineness of our religion and expose the folly of mere profession. When the Lord comes it will be too late to mend one's ways.

#### 6. The wise enter to the marriage (v. 10)

While the foolish were seeking to amend their ways trying to buy oil, the bridegroom came and those who were ready were admitted to the marriage.

#### 7. The pitiful position of the foolish (v. 11)

They begged the Lord to open the door that they might enter to the marriage feast. No one can open that door but the Lord.

#### 8. The awful judgment (v. 12)

The Lord declares "I know you not." Those who put off the personal contact with Jesus until that day shall be shut out from the presence of Christ.

#### 9. The Solemn Obligation (v. 13)

"Watch, for ye know not the day nor the hour wherein the Son of man cometh."

#### No One Absolute.

God has made no one absolute. The rich depend on the poor, as well as the poor on the rich. The world is but a magnificent building, all the stones are gradually cemented together. No one subsists by himself alone.—Feltman.

#### Must Deal With Sin.

We may forget or ignore Him, or keep our minds from dwelling on the thought of Him; we cannot be entering into peace with Him while sin is kept unguilt with, cherished in our hearts.

# LATEST GOSSIP ABOUT CABINET

NO PLACE HAS BEEN ABSOLUTELY PROMISED TO ANY MAN, SAYS AN AUTHORITY.

## SUTHERLAND'S CHANCES GOOD

Utah's Former Senator May Have Interior Portfolio and Later Seat on Supreme Bench—"Unknown" for Secretary of Labor.

By EDWARD B. CLARK.

Washington.—One has to go through a maze more difficult to penetrate than that whose hidden path led to Roosevelt's bowler when he tries to thread the intricacies of the policies governing cabinet appointments.

"On the eve of his inauguration President-elect Harding can give out a list of the names of his chosen cabinet officials which does not contain the name of any man thus far mentioned for place, and feel assured that no man who has been mentioned can complain that he has been deceived by promises of preferment."

This is the verbatim statement made to me by a man who more certainly than all others, except one, has every reason to believe that he is to be a member of the official family of the next President of the United States.

Meantime, cabinet gossip keeps up its racing pace here. New lists have been put into the public prints within a few days, but there is no assurance that the new lists may not become old and discarded lists within the span of 48 hours. It is interesting, however, to note the various directions taken by the running feet of gossip.

#### Sutherland May Be Named.

I am told that Mr. Harding is having more difficulty in selecting a man for the post of secretary of the interior than for any other place. It is said also that he is likely finally to offer the interior department to George Sutherland of Utah, a lawyer of high standing, a former United States senator and the present president of the American Bar association.

It is also said today that if some obliging justice of the Supreme court will step down from the bench not long after Mr. Sutherland's appointment to his cabinet position, the place made vacant will be filled by the promotion of Mr. Sutherland. Rumor and something more substantial than rumor are insistent that Mr. Harding's desire is eventually to put Mr. Sutherland on the highest bench in the land.

Something that I believe is not altogether gossip, and in fact comes pretty near being the truth, is that a man whose name has not yet been mentioned in the newspapers for cabinet preferment is to be given the place of chief of labor. I do not know who this man is. His name is held in confidence by those who know it, but it is said with assurance by men who seem to know what they are talking about that Mr. Harding has in mind a man whose name will come as a surprise, but a name nevertheless which, the knowing ones say, will be grateful to labor and to the business and commercial interests of the country.

One of Mr. Harding's close political, and, as one might say, working friends, tells me that as between three men the President-elect does not know whom to choose for the secretaryship of the treasury. Of course these three men are Dawes and Reynolds of Chicago and Mellon of Pittsburgh. The friend of the President-elect did say this much definitely: "Today Mr. Mellon has the edge on Mr. Dawes and Mr. Reynolds, but nevertheless there is seemingly little to choose as between the chances of Chicago and Pittsburgh."

#### What They Say About Daugherty.

While Harry M. Daugherty is one of the names which can be erased at a late hour from Mr. Harding's slate without subjecting the eraser to the charge of bad faith, it still is taken for granted by all the "high ones" in Washington that this Ohio gentleman is certain to become the next attorney general of the United States. It may not be uninteresting to set down one of the views of some of Mr. Harding's friends concerning this probable appointment.

Every one of the President-elect's close advisers admits that because of personal relations, friendship and indebtedness for loyal service, Mr. Harding is in duty bound to give Mr. Daugherty what he wants, but nevertheless the intention to make Mr. Daugherty attorney general has aroused some criticism. What Mr. Harding's friends wanted him to do was to appoint somebody else as attorney general, presumably George Sutherland of Utah, and to make Mr. Daugherty solicitor general. If this suggestion had been followed, or should be followed, Mr. Sutherland, so Mr. Harding's friends argue, could have been put on the Supreme bench after the lapse of a few months, and then Mr. Daugherty could have been promoted from the office of solicitor general to that of attorney general.

#### Many Changes March 4.

The changes that are coming in Washington on March 4 will be unnumbered and many, and they will vary with various scenes of activity.

In the two houses of congress there will be almost revolutionary changes.

The Republicans in the upper house will have a majority of sixteen or thereabouts, and this means of course that many new faces will appear below the galleries and that many of the old faces once more will be made familiar to the friends at home. In the lower house the changes will be much more marked, for there will be enough new Republican members to more than triple the present representative party majority while a corresponding number of Democrats will be among those missing.

Now it might seem that such a change as this would mean little or nothing so far as house and senate arrangements are concerned, but in truth it means a good deal. For the first time in a long while it will be necessary for the overflow of Republican senators to take seats on the Democratic side. A change in the rules of the seating in the house has so disarranged things that, while all the Republicans who can will sit on the Republican side of the chamber, the rest of them will find seats where they can among the Democrats. There will be no sharp line of demarcation between the Republicans and the Democrats so far as those who sit on the Democratic side of the house are concerned.

#### Sit Where They Please.

Some time ago the house passed a rule that members could sit where they wanted to, so long as Republicans kept to their side of the house and the Democrats to their side. In the old days each member had a seat which he was supposed to occupy at all times. Now, with the exception of men who are in charge of bills which are up for passage or rejection, members sit where they want to.

The influx of Republicans will force many of them over on the Democratic side of the house. It is possible, of course, that one or two rows of desks will be set aside for them, but if not and they sit where they choose no stranger looking at that side of the chamber can tell the Democrats from the Republicans until they open their mouths to speak on some party issue.

As soon as congress comes together the Washington correspondents who are entitled to admission to the press galleries will hold a meeting for the election of a new "standing committee of correspondents." The present committee is composed of Gus J. Kargar of the Cincinnati Times-Star, chairman; Charles S. Albert of the New York World, Arthur S. Henning of the Chicago Tribune and H. C. Stevens of the Minneapolis Journal and the Seattle Times, secretary.

It is expected that when the new administration begins several newspapers in the United States not already represented by correspondents in Washington will send representatives here who will apply for admission to the press gallery.

#### Extra Session May Be Lengthy.

Republican leaders in congress are predicting that if general tariff legislation is undertaken at the extraordinary session which probably will begin in April, the bill fixing the new customs schedules will have passed both houses and have been signed by the next President by the last day of July.

The leaders propose and the followers dispose. Every time that there has been general tariff legislation before congress the dates have been set in advance for its passage and its approval by the President. Every time the predictions have gone wrong by anywhere from four to eight weeks. It is possible that the leaders promise early action in order to induce their followers to cut off debate. In the house debate can be stopped by a rule, but in the senate the talk goes on and on and on.

It is curious what faith members of congress and, perhaps the public generally, have in the predictions of dominant party leaders in house and senate. The predictions fail to come through time after time, but such apparently is the simple faith of the many that they continue to give credence to the prophecies of the leaders, session in and session out.

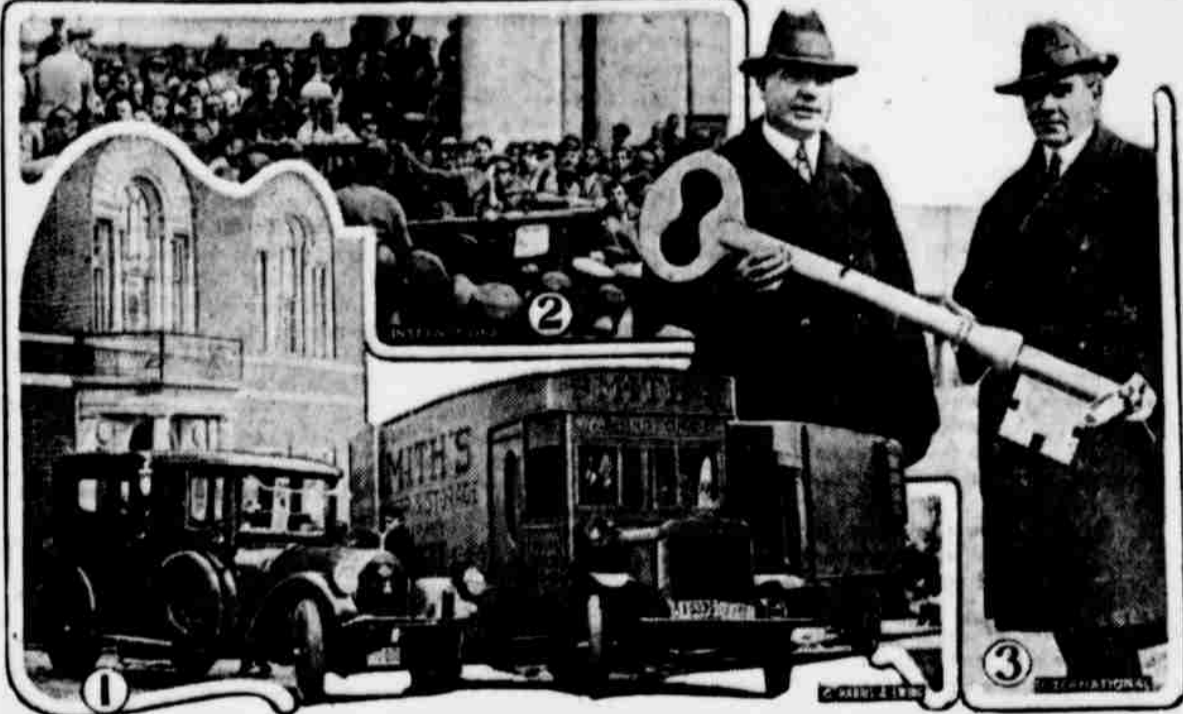
#### People Want Free Seeds.

Congress has just had its usual discussion on the yearly appropriation for the distribution of free plants and free garden and flower seeds to the constituents of the members. The announced program of economy and retrenchment held on its pages no mention of seeds and plants. It was intended that this year the distribution should be foregone and that the money usually expended should be saved. It was the prediction of leaders that this proposed economy, as it was called, would be sanctioned, but none of the followers of the leaders believed that it would be sanctioned for one moment.

The house has just voted an amendment to the agricultural appropriation bill to provide for an expenditure of \$300,000 for the free distribution of seeds. This is an increase of \$130,000 over the estimate of cost which was made by the Department of Agriculture. The house, however, knows that home gardening was stimulated by the war, and seemingly the members think that the money will accomplish more good now than ever it has in the past.

Free seeds are popular. The room of every member of congress looks like a seed store for about two months of each year. Great sacks of seeds in small packages are brought into the rooms of the members and senators, and their clerks are busy for a long time addressing and mailing the packages to constituents.

Of course the greatest demand for the seeds comes from the districts outside the great cities, but it is surprising how many city dwellers write to their congressmen each year asking for seeds.



1—Trucks unloading some of President Wilson's furniture at his new home in Washington. 2—Conference of soviet troops in Petrograd. 3—M. C. Brush, president of the American International Shipbuilding corporation, turning over to Frederick Morris of the shipping board the great key to the Hog Island shipyard.

# NEWS REVIEW OF CURRENT EVENTS

## Railway Labor Board Refuses to Abrogate the National Working Agreement.

## IS WITHOUT JURISDICTION

Senate Committees Report Against Naval Holiday and Suspension of Immigration—Germans Are Preparing Their Counter-Proposals on Reparations.

By EDWARD V. PICKARD.

This year's first big labor fight, that between the railways and the rail workers, really opened last week when the national railroad labor board took up the appeal of the rail executives for immediate abrogation of the national working agreements. The hearing drew to Chicago the heavy guns of both the executives and the railway brotherhoods. The board decided against the railways, which, however, have not abandoned the fight.

As was foreseen, President Wilson declined to intervene, though asked to by both sides, stating he would not take any action "which would interfere with the orderly procedure of the interstate commerce commission or the railway labor board."

Frank P. Walsh, counsel for the rail unions, and B. M. Jewell, head of their department of the American Federation of Labor, are leading the fight of the brotherhoods. Their first action was to question the jurisdiction of the labor board in this matter, on the ground that a question involving the financial ability of the roads to pay is within the province of the interstate commerce commission, the labor board being limited by law to questions of wages and working conditions. This point the board decided was well taken.

Chairman Bartow said the board for several months had been considering the national working agreement, clause by clause, to determine whether any parts were unreasonable, and he urged that it be "not further interrupted by the introduction of unwarranted demands by either party."

The second part of the general argument of Mr. Walsh—as that the move by the railroad executives is part of a "Wall street conspiracy" to kill the power of the unions, establish the open shop, crush collective bargaining and reduce wages.

"Twelve New York banks," said Mr. Walsh, "through interlocking directorates, control 92 class 1 roads, which have 80 per cent of the class 1 mileage and 76 per cent of the total railroad mileage of the United States. In the hearings of the Lockwood committee in New York the testimony revealed a movement on the part of certain interests to crush unions and establish the 'open shop.' It is directed first at the two basic industries of building construction and transportation."

A great many persons not directly concerned in the present controversy believe with Mr. Walsh that there is a concerted movement to establish the open shop, and, likewise, a great many persons are in sympathy with such a movement. These persons see the impending conflict as a fight not between labor and capital, but between tyrannical labor unions and industry. Most of them have suffered and are suffering from the intolerance of both organized labor and organized capital, and they are very tired of it.

What railroad men said was one of the most far-reaching decisions made by the labor board was handed down last week, the ruling being that it was the duty of the Boston and Maine railroad to confer with the committees of the American Federation of Labor over the grievances of its workers. Employees said the decision upheld the right of independent organizations of railway workers to present their grievances to road officials. In the Boston and Maine case it was said a conference was refused because those

with the grievances were not a party to the national agreement.

Inspired by the conviction that the United States should have a navy as strong as that of any other nation, the senate naval affairs committee reported against the Borah resolution for a six months' naval construction holiday. The report, presented by Senator Poindexter, said the committee was as anxious as possible to bring about a reduction of armaments, but that no disarmament would be of value unless it were general and, in the case of the great maritime powers, universal. "Unhappily this is not the case at the present time," continued the report, "and we must deal with conditions as they exist. For one nation to leave itself exposed to attack while another is preparing all the engines of war would be not only folly, but the greatest danger to the peace of the world that could be imagined."

A temporary suspension of building, it was pointed out, would cost the government immense sums through deterioration of material and dislocation of contracts; would throw large numbers of workmen out of employment, and, by rendering it difficult or impossible to reassemble these forces should work on vessels be resumed, would give an immense advantage to powers that had not interrupted the construction of their fleets.

The committee upheld the contention of the navy board that the capital ship is not obsolete. It recommended that twelve destroyers and six submarines, authorized in 1916 but not yet contracted for, be eliminated from the building program. These 18 ships were expected to cost the government about \$55,000,000. The committee suggested the use of this amount for the construction of two airplane carriers of the most modern type and of the most advantageous size.

Another senate committee—that on immigration—also took important action when it rejected, by a vote of 5 to 4, the bill passed by the house providing for the suspension of immigration for one year. Senators Johnson, Washington, Harris, Georgia; Harrison, Mississippi, and King, Utah, voted for the bill, and Colt, Rhode Island, chairman; Dillingham, Vermont; Sterling, South Dakota; Keyes, New Hampshire, and Phelan, California, against it.

Next day the committee began consideration of the Dillingham substitute for the house bill, and the indications were that it would be acted on favorably. This measure provides that the number of aliens of any nationality entering as immigrants in any one year shall be limited to 5 per cent of the total number of persons of such nationality already in the country, as determined by the latest census. The legislation would not apply to immigrants from the American continents and adjacent islands, nor to the Asiatic "barred zone," from which immigrants already are excluded, nor to Japan, immigration from which is regulated by agreement. Some of the radical restrictionists will make a fight to have the percentage cut down, perhaps as low as 2 per cent. In Washington it was said there was no likelihood that the bill would get through congress before March 4.

Frequent charges that thousands of sick or disabled ex-service men are being inadequately cared for by the government had their effect on congress. The senate adopted an amendment to the sundry civil bill appropriating \$12,500,000 for five new buildings and \$6,100,000 for the enlargement and improvement of existing hospitals. The house, by unanimous vote, passed a bill carrying an appropriation for \$13,000,000 for additional hospitals and enlarged facilities. Under this bill five new hospitals are to be located—one in the central Atlantic states, one in the region of the Great Lakes, one in the central southwestern states, one in the Rocky mountain states and one in southern California. In addition, the secretary of war is instructed to take over at once and equip for hospital use Fort Mackenzie, Wyoming, and Fort Walla Walla, Washington.

Foreign Minister Simons has notified the allies that the German gov-

ernment will send qualified delegates to the reparations conference in London March 1, "provided negotiations are based on proposals which the German government reserves to itself the right to lay before the conference." This acceptance being satisfactory, Doctor Simons called into consultation a large number of experts in finance, industry and economics, and they proceeded to frame the counter-proposals which Germany will submit.

Premier Briand has obtained from the French chamber of deputies the support he required before going to the London conference. The chamber voted 395 to 83 to approve the reparations terms framed by the supreme council, and then gave a vote of confidence in Briand, 387 to 125. The opposition was led by members of the former Clemenceau cabinet. The premier closed the debate with the statement: "The fate of Germany lies in her own hands. Should she, after May 1, 1921, refuse to fulfill her pledges the French government can be relied upon to take all measures to make her."

The Hansa league, the great economic association of Germany, says many of its members urge a boycott of French and English goods in favor of goods from America, and adds that the directors of the league may adopt the suggestion if Great Britain continues to support France in the reparations claims.

Of the two great military operations in the Near East that are believed to be impending, one, that of the soviet Russians against Poland and Roumania, has not yet been started. The other, the conflict between the Greeks and the Turkish nationalists, may already be under way. The news from Asia Minor that comes through Paris is carefully censored, and advices by other routes are conflicting at this writing. There is no doubt, however, that the Greeks have been concentrating large forces for this light, and that Kemal Pasha also has gathered together most of his troops for what he hopes to make a decisive operation. Greece relies on financial assistance from the allies for this warfare, and without it she will have great difficulty, for her expenses are now vastly greater than her revenues. Chronic trouble-makers and trouble-seekers are trying to find in the Greek operations in Asia Minor a cause for serious conflict between France and Great Britain; but there is no reason to believe that their hopes will be realized.

Walter Lyman Brown, director of American relief work in Europe, has been making a tour of all the countries in his jurisdiction, and is skeptical concerning the expected Russian offensive this spring. He thinks the Bolshevik government would scarcely dare to undertake an attack on Poland that would lose to its cause the support of the workers of western Europe. He says Hungary and Latvia are sure the attack is coming, Poland is nervous, and Czechoslovakia and Estonia believe the Russians will refrain.

The loyalists of South Africa, headed by General Smuts, won a great victory in the recent elections, and as a result the provinces of the Cape of Good Hope, Transvaal, Natal and Orange Free State will continue as one of the self-governing dominions of the British empire instead of setting up an independent republic. The opposition was led by General Hertzog, who asserted the right of South Africa to secede from the empire despite the act of union.

In India a more liberal self-government was put into effect last week when Prince Arthur of Connaught arrived at Delhi as personal representative of the emperor, King George, and issued a proclamation announcing the surrender of much government power to the native princes.

R. C. Roper of Nebraska makes the interesting announcement that William J. Bryan and his brother, Charles, whom Mr. Roper represents, are planning to reorganize the Democratic party so that the Cox-White and McAdoo-Woolley factions shall be eliminated and the control put in the hands of the "middle class Democrats." The program, said Mr. Roper, will be made public on March 18, W. J. Bryan's birthday.