Jonathan Edwards and The Bible

Summer Course 2016
Discourse on Matthew 25:1-12

- Edwards’ Main Commentaries

- Henry
  - “The professors of Christianity shall then be likened to these ten virgins, and shall be thus distinguished”
  - “The Bridegroom is our Lord Jesus Christ; he is so represented in the 45th Psalm, Solomon’s Song, and often in the New Testament.”
  - “The virgins are the professors of religion, members of the church”
  - “Sincere Christians are the wise virgins, and hypocrites the foolish ones”
  - “True religion is true wisdom; sin is folly, but especially the sin of hypocrisy, for those are the greatest fools”
Discourse on Matthew 25:1-12

- Edwards’ Main Commentaries

- Henry
  - Much “agreement” between the Wise and Foolish Virgins
  - Difference: “They have no principle within…”
  - Reference to
    - John Tillotson (1630-1694), Anglican bishop (study of biblical and patristic Catholic writers)
    - Johann Wild (Ferus) (1497 - 8 September 1554) was a German Franciscan scriptural commentator and preacher
    - Jean Calvin (1509-64), Reformed Protestant
Discourse on Matthew 25:1-12

- Edwards’ Main Commentaries
  - Poole (SSS) - brief
    - Philological and etymological commentary
    - Refers to rabbinic tradition (Kimchi) for the understanding of parables.
  - “Poole” (Annotations)
    - Foolish virgins: “Hypocrites and formal professors”
    - Focus on Foolish Virgins, application: warning
Discourse on Matthew 25:1-12

- Edwards’ Main Commentaries

- Doddridge
  - Practical commentary, “Let us apply our hearts to the obvious instruction....”
Discourse on Matthew 25:1-12

- Sermon Tradition *Parable of the Wise and Foolish Virgins*
  - Thomas Shepard *The Parable of the Ten Virgins* (1659)
  - Thomas Manton, sermons series on Matt. 25:1-13 in collected works (London, 1678-1701)
  - Benjamin Colman *Practical Discourses upon the Parable of the Ten Virgins* (London, 1707)
THE
PARABLE
OF THE
Ten Virgins
OPENED & APPLIED:
Being the Substance of divers
SERMONS
Wherein the Difference between the Sincere Christian and
the most Refined Hypocrite, the Nature and Characteristics of Swag-
ning and of Common Grace, the Dangers and Disasters incident to
most Flouting Churches or Christians, and other Spiritual
TRUTHS of great importance are clearly
discovered, and practically improved.

BY
THOMAS SHEPARD
late Worthy and Faithful Pastor of the Church of Christ at

Now Published from the Authors own Notes, at the desire of
many, for the common benefit of the Sacred people,
By Jonathan Stedman,Minister at Cambridge,
By John Shepard, Son to the Reverend Author, in New-England,
now Minister at Charlestown.


Printed by J. Meyer for John Routledge, at the Sign of the Fountain in Golder's
Lane near Row in Cheap-side. 1665.
Discourse on Matthew 25:1-12

- Thomas Shepard (1605-1649)
  - England (b. 1605) - Thew England (1635-1649)
  - 2nd generation Thew England preacher ("pastor evangelicus")
- Antinomian Controversy (ca. 1636-1640)
  - The Sincere Convert (London, 1641)
  - The Sound Believer (London, 1645)
  - The Parable of the Ten Virgins Opened & Applied (London, 1660)
Discourse on Matthew 25:1-12

- Context of *The Parable of the Ten Virgins Opened & Applied*: Antinomian Controversy

- ἀντί, ”against, instead” + νόμος, ”law”
- Anne Hutchinson (ca. 1591-1643) and others
  - Obedience to the law (for obtaining assurance of faith) is abandoned
    - justification and assurance is only based on Christ and not dependent on the obedience of God’s commandments
  - Immediate revelations of the Holy Spirit
**Discourse on Matthew 25:1-12**

- *The Parable of the Ten Virgins Opened & Applied* (Shepard)
  - Posthumous Publication (1660) of sermon series 1636-40
  - *Part I* Preparation of the visible church for the coming of Christ (22 chap.)
  - *Part II* Coming of Christ to his church, as Bridegroom (19 chap.)
  - Structure of each sermon (chapter): (Text) Doctrine, Reason, and Use
Discourse on Matthew 25:1-12

- *The Parable of the Ten Virgins Opened & Applied* (Shepard)
  - Part I: Concerns difference between saints and “evangelical hypocrites”
  - Part II: Concerns the coming of Christ and the characters of saving and common grace.
Discourse on Matthew 25:1-12

- *The Parable of the Ten Virgins Opened & Applied* (Shepard)
- *Thomas Shepard* (1605-1649)  
  *Jonathan Edwards* (1703-1758)
- Cambridge University  
  Yale College
- Founding member Harvard Coll. Tutor, Commencement speaker
- Antinomian Controversy  
  The Awakenings
- Saints and Hypocrites  
  True and False religion
- Work of the Holy Spirit  
  Work of the Holy Spirit (renewal)

69 of the 132 citations in *Religious Affections* originate from *The Parable of the Ten Virgins Opened & Applied*
Discourse on Matthew 25:1-12

I. The Sermons Parable of the Wise and Foolish Virgins (Edwards)

- Preached in the winter 1737-38
- Thirteen-unit sermon series on Matt. 25:1-12
- First of three extended sermon series between Connecticut revival (1735) and Great Awakening (ca. 1740)
- Purpose: theological-pastoral inquiry
Discourse on Matthew 25:1-12

• The Sermons *Parable of the Wise and Foolish Virgins*: Structure

- sermon 1 (units 1-3, Thov. 1737) introduction
- sermon 2 (unit 4, Dec. 1737)
- sermon 3 (unit 5, Jan. 1738)
- sermons 4-7 (units 6-9, 1737/38) true & false Chr. agree
- sermon 8 (units 10-11, Feb. 1738)
- sermons 9-12 (units 12-19, undated) saints & hypocr. differ

Parallel structure with *Religious Affections*
Discourse on Matthew 25:1-12

• The Sermons series on the Parable of the Wise and Foolish Virgins is much concerned with “religious affections”

“[F]alse Christians as well as true may make profession of experience of a work of conversion, and may indeed have many religious affections. They may have great religious affection of sorrow, and may have great affections of gratitude, and may be much affected in reading and hearing of the great things that Christ did and suffered, and may be affected in hearing the gospel preached, and may love to hear the word preached.” [Sermon no. 6]

Parallel content with Religious Affections
Discourse on Matthew 25:1-12

• Sermons series on the Parable of the Wise and Foolish Virgins of 1737-38 is foundational for the Treatise on Religious Affection of 1746.

• Theological issue: Arminianism & Antinomianism

• Pastoral concern: The visible church of Christ is made up of true and false Christians
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