

BFF323 Fill My Cup

Scott Moore: Welcome to the "Building Faith Families" podcast with Steve Demme. I'm your host, Scott Moore. Thanks for joining us today.

Steve: On the last podcast we were talking about the menorah. I read two passages, the first one was Luke 12:35-36, "Stay dressed for action and keep your lamps burning, and be like men who are waiting for their master to come home from the wedding feast so that they may open the door to him at once when he comes and knocks."

We know now that when we read the word "lamps," it is connected to the lampstand and reminds us of the individual lamps upon the lampstand. They each have light generated from a flame. To have a flame you need oil in the lamp.

The second passage is the parable of the 10 virgins in Matthew 25. I think we can assume that since they were virgins, they were believers.

"Then the kingdom of heaven will be like ten virgins who took their lamps and went to meet the bridegroom, five of them were foolish and five were wise." (I looked up that word "wise," and it's "phronimos," which means practically wise or sensible. It's not just they had brains, but they were sensible.)

"For when the foolish took their lamps, they took no oil with them, but the wise took flasks of oil with their lamps." Now, the word "flasks" is not in the Greek. I double checked this. However they did take oil in case their lamps would run out. The first five didn't.

"As the bridegroom was delayed, they all became drowsy and slept. At midnight there was a cry, 'Here is the bridegroom, come out to meet him.' Then all those virgins rose and trimmed their lamps.

"The foolish said to the wise, 'Give us some of your oil for our lamps are going out.' The wise answered, saying, 'Since there will not be enough for us and for you, go rather to the dealers and buy for yourselves.' While they were going to buy, the bridegroom came. Those who were ready went in with him to the marriage feast, and the door was shut.

"Afterward, the other virgins came also, saying, 'Lord, Lord open to us.' He answered, 'Truly, I say to you, I do not know you. Watch therefore, for you know neither the day nor the hour.'

If I were listening to this parable, I would say, "How do I keep my flasks filled with oil? How do I prepare for that hour that's coming upon us on the Earth, so that I'm not a foolish virgin, but a practically wise and sensible virgin that's made preparation and has their lamps filled and trimmed?"

Let's pray: Father, help us to have thoughts about this today. Not just thoughts, but give us insight from Your word of ways that we can be wise virgins. That is it. That's my prayer. Help us to know how to be wise virgins who have flasks of oil. So that when that day and call comes, we will be ready in Jesus' name. Amen.

A quick review. Leviticus 24:1–4, "Jehovah spoke to Moses, saying, 'Command the people of Israel, to bring you pure oil from beaten olives for the lamp for the light may be kept burning regularly. Outside the veil of the testimony, in the tent of meeting, Aaron shall arrange it from evening to morning before Jehovah regularly. It shall be a statute forever throughout your generations. He shall arrange the lamps on the lampstand of pure gold before Jehovah regularly.'"

As we study the golden lampstands I want to remember that these are connected to the lampstands in Revelation, the seven churches. This is not just an "Old Testament thought." This is a subject that is eternal. God gave the pans for the tabernacle to Moses. Moses passed down this information to Bezalel and Oholiab, who produced these beautiful golden menorahs.

These lampstands have a message for us today, and they point to Christ. Christ is The lampstand, and The church is called the Body of Christ. I like to think that we are the branches. I'm thinking of the words in John 15:4, "Abide in me and I in you as the branch cannot bear fruit by itself unless it abides in the vine. Neither can you unless you abide in me."

John 15 has taken on a whole new meaning to me because those branches are connected to the lampstand, and they are filled with oil. We know that the Spirit of God is the oil represented by the olive oil.

That the Spirit is the oil is not a new thought. David in 1 Samuel 16:13, "Samuel took the horn of oil and anointed him in the midst of his brothers; and the Spirit of Jehovah came mightily upon David from that day forward."

Of John the Baptist, Jesus said in John 5:31–35 "If I alone testify about Myself, My testimony is not true. There is another who testifies of Me, and I know that the testimony which He gives about Me is true. You have sent to John, and he has testified to the truth. But the testimony which I receive is not from man, but I say these things so that you may be saved. He was the lamp (SG3088 Luchnos, Lychnos) that was burning (SG2545 Kaio, Kaimenos) and was shining (SG5316 Phainon) and you were willing to rejoice for a while in his light."

John the Baptist is called the lamp, and he was burning, and he was shining for he was filled with the Spirit.

Jesus, Himself is in fulfillment of Isaiah 61, "The Spirit of the Lord Jehovah is upon Me, because Jehovah has anointed Me to bring good news to the afflicted. He has sent Me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty..." and it goes on.

The point is, that the Spirit of God is the one that enabled Jesus to be the light of the world, to proclaim good news, to bind up the brokenhearted, proclaim liberty to the captives, and on and on. It's the Spirit of God Who is the oil in our lamps.

In the last days, spoken of in Revelation 11 and Zechariah 4, there are two olive trees and the right and left of the lampstand. They're called the anointed ones. They stand

by the Lord of the whole earth, and they are on both sides of the church the lampstand.

Revelation 11, "I will grant authority to My two witnesses, and they will prophesy for 1,260 days, clothed in sackcloth. These are the two olive trees and the two lampstands that stand before the Lord of the whole earth."

In all these scenarios, we have oil, we have lampstands, we have men that have been anointed by God.

Now, I dug a little deeper and discovered Psalm 52:7-8 which says, "Lo, this is the man that made not God his strength, but trusted in the abundance of his riches, and strengthened himself in his wickedness." This is David speaking about an ungodly man.

I don't want to go into the whole history, but here's the powerful part. "But as for me," this is David speaking, "I am like a green olive tree in the house of God. I trust in the loving kindness of God forever and ever." I looked up that word. What does it mean to be a green olive tree? I found out that the word implies more than green.

Here are four synonyms that will help flesh out the picture a little bit. Luxuriant, fresh, thriving, flourishing. David was a flourishing olive tree. David's cup was full.

Scott: That wasn't just green olives versus black olives?

Steve: I looked it up because I thought, "I'm not sure green olives tree sounds that wonderful," but when I looked at what it means, it can be translated differently with different words. Several translations call it a "thriving olive tree." A couple say flourishing.

That's a different picture. This is tree where the sap is flowing and this tree is producing lots of good fruit, and this is a man who's tapped into the vine. This is a man, David, who it says he is in the house of God. He's trusting in the loving kindness of God. Here's another verse that bears on that same thought.

Psalm 92:10-14. "You've exalted my horn like that of the wild ox. You have poured over me fresh oil. My eyes have seen the downfall of my enemies. My ears have heard the doom of my evil assailants. The righteous flourish like the palm tree and grow like a cedar in Lebanon. They are planted in the house of Jehovah. They flourish in the courts of our God. They still bear fruit in old age. They are ever full of sap and green."

I love that verse. Number one, because I'm in my old age. I get the senior citizen discounts now. Yet these people here, because they were full of sap and green, which we now know means luxuriant, flourishing, thriving, they were still bearing fruit. They were planted in God's house. They were in His presence. They were in His courts.

That is very encouraging to me, that these people found a way to have their cups full. That's what I'd like to title this podcast. Fill my cup. Fill my flask, if I was Hebrew, my flask of oil. Keep me ever flourishing, ever luxuriant, ever bearing fruit, ever thriving because I'm in God's presence, in His courts, and am full of His Spirit.

Then I thought, "How else can we fill our cups?" I thought many times of this Scripture in Galatians 6: 7-8, "Do not be deceived. God is not mocked. For whatever one sows, that will he also reap. For the one who sows to his own flesh will from the flesh reap corruption, but the one who sows to the Spirit will from the Spirit reap eternal life."

What does it mean to sow to the Spirit? I'll let you chew on that one for a second.

What is the difference between sowing to the Spirit and sowing to the flesh?

Scott: I get to answer that?

Steve: Or you can just say pass. I don't know.

Scott: Certainly. I mean, sowing to the Spirit would be spending time with the Spirit, and God's word, and in prayer, trying to do what Jesus commanded us to do.

Steve: That's what I think. In fact, if I had a workshop, and there were a live audience right now, I would say, "What encourages you in your relationship with God? What fills your spiritual flask? What is it? What activities can you engage in that will help you to sow to the Spirit?" Then, of course, the counter side is, "What activities do you currently do that just feed your flesh?"

I could give you lots of answers, but I know that reading God's word, which is spirit food, spending time in His presence, praying, connecting with other believers are all very encouraging to me.

I just was at a conference up in New Hampshire recently and hadn't seen some of those folks in decades. It was a special time of reviving and reconnecting with older relationships, very encouraging. I think it's not really clear how we fill our flasks. There's a mystery involved, but it's something that we have to pursue. I want to say that we can pursue it, and we can do it.

As I was praying about this, what came to mind was a man that I've heard speak on marriage, wonderful man. His name is Ken Nair, who has written a book which I think should be titled "Living with your Wife in an Understanding Way."

The backstory is that he was in a crisis in his own marriage. What gave him the courage to pursue his marriage and to work through his blind spots was he said, "If God commands me to live with my wife in an understanding way, then I can do it. If God tells me to do it, it's possible to do it." It is found in 1 Peter 3-7.

One of the things we can do is we can ask. We don't have to be tricky about this. We can just say, "Father, show us how to keep our flasks filled with the oil of Your Spirit." Probably the greatest chapter on asking is Luke 11. This is worth reading.

"Jesus was praying in a certain place. And when He finished, one of His disciples said to Him, 'Lord, teach us to pray as John taught his disciples.' And He said to them, 'When you pray, say, Father, hallowed be Your name. Your kingdom come. Give us each day our daily bread, and forgive us our sins for we, ourselves, forgive everyone who is indebted to us. And lead us not into temptation.'

"And He said to them, 'Which of you has a friend? Well, go to him at midnight and say to him, 'Friend lend me three loaves for a friend of mine has arrived on a journey and

I have nothing to set before him.' And he will answer what from within, 'Do not bother me. The door is now shut, and my children are with me in bed. I cannot get up and give you anything.'

"I tell you, though he will not get up and give him anything because he is his friend, yet because of his impudence he will rise and give him whatever he needs. And I tell you, ask, and it will be given to you. Seek, and you will find. Knock, and it will be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives, and the one who seeks finds, and to the one who knocks it will be opened."

It's a great exhortation. It blesses me just to read it. In the context of what we're talking about, notice the last paragraph, "What father among you, if his son asks for a fish, will instead of a fish give him a serpent, or if he asks for an egg, will give him a scorpion?"

"If you then, who are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will the heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him?" That's an incredible promise. He will give the Holy Spirit to them who ask Him, and He won't give him just a little tablespoon. It says in John 3:34, "He gives the Spirit without measure."

There's another thought, and it comes from two passages. One, in John 7:37-39. "On the last day, the great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried out, saying, 'If anyone is thirsty, let him come to Me and drink. He who believes in Me, as the Scripture said, from his innermost being will flow rivers of living water.' This he spoke of the Spirit, whom those who believed in him were to receive. For the Spirit was not yet given because Jesus was not yet glorified."

The Spirit is available to those who are thirsty and believe in Jesus, so there's a thirsty component to this, too. In Isaiah 44:1-3, "Now listen, Oh Jacob, my servant and Israel whom I have chosen. Thus says Jehovah, who made you, and formed you from the womb, who will help you. Do not fear, Oh Jacob, My servant, and you, Jeshurun, whom I have chosen. For I will pour water on the thirsty land and streams on the dry ground. I will pour out My Spirit on your offspring and My blessing on your descendants."

If we're thirsty, and if we're hungry and thirsting for righteousness, if we have something in us that will not be satisfied until we get it from God, that's a good thing. Let's go to God and ask Him. I know I'm on fragile ice right here because you have people that are probably squirming listening right now. "I thought I got the whole Spirit when I was saved."

Of course, we can't become a Christian without the Spirit. It's the Spirit who convicts us of sin. It's the Spirit who helps us to say Jesus is Lord. There's a whole bunch in the Bible about asking for the Spirit.

Galatians 3:2, "This is the only thing I want to find out from you. Did you receive the Spirit by the works of the law or by hearing with faith?" It's a rhetorical question. You receive the Spirit by faith. Galatia's 3:14, "In order that in Christ Jesus the blessing of

Abraham might come to the Gentiles so that we would receive the promise of the Spirit through faith."

It's always by faith. We receive Jesus by faith. We receive the Spirit by faith. Done. It's very freeing to know that I don't have to wait for certain manifestations of the Spirit. If I get them, great. If I don't, it doesn't bother me a whit because I'm receiving the Spirit by faith. I'm asking in faith, I'm receiving by faith.

We have a final benediction to wrap up this podcast. I think it's important because right now we're recording in May right after Easter. This is the season when the disciples were in the upper room, tarrying at Jesus' command, waiting for the power of the Spirit to come upon them. The Pentecost season.

When Jesus came He revealed the Father and said, "If you've seen Me, you've seen the Father. If you've seen the Father, you've seen Me. We are one." Jesus came in the flesh. He was God in the flesh, and he revealed the Father. Everything changed when Jesus came to this earth. Everything is much more clear. It's like things came into focus. Where they had seen God in the Old Testament, you might say they saw Him as trees walking, now they saw Him clearly because Jesus was here.

The Spirit was also revealed in a new way. Jesus spoke a ton about the Holy Spirit in the Gospel of John prior to His crucifixion. Beginning in John 13, He poured so much truth into those disciples. John 14, 15, 16, 17, are some of the most incredible teachings on the Holy Spirit, because He was preparing them for new life in the Spirit. He had to leave, and the Spirit would come upon them in a new way.

Once he was glorified, the Spirit who was with them would now be in them, ushering in a whole different dimension. That leads me to this final benediction, which incorporates all of these three thoughts. "The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the fellowship or communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all." (2 Corinthians 13:14)

Not just a few disciples, not just a few special people, not just people that were called out for a special manifestation, but Paul is pronouncing this benediction on all of us. It's the last verse in 2 Corinthians. He said, "I want you to get more grace of Jesus. I want you to understand God's love in a whole new way.

And I want you to experience the communion of the Holy Spirit." I want each of you to get this. Not just your leaders, I want you to get it. I want each of you to have this gift. Amen.

Scott: Amen.

Steve: I was so encouraged pulling this together because you can see God's heart in sending the Spirit. I've often thought that the Book of Acts should be changed to the Acts of the Holy Spirit through the Apostles.

Scott: A couple of notes of encouragement, if you didn't already grasp it from the passages you shared. God loves to give abundantly. If you read the scriptures and you

ask, "What is God like?" You can only...In terms of His willingness to give good gifts to His children, you can only come away saying, He is abundantly generous.

If you look at the wine of the wedding, there was a lot of wine left over. If you look at the feeding of the 5,000 or the feeding of the 4,000, it's like, there's a lot of food left over. He doesn't give a little bit, He gives you a lot. That verse says, He'll give the Holy Spirit to those who ask Him.

I want to be on this train, man. I think we're in the end of the age or we're getting real close. I think He's going to be pouring out His Spirit a lot. If that makes you uncomfortable because we had enough of the Holy Spirit already, blah, blah, blah, search the scriptures and see what it says.

You'll be blessed by that. Whatever side of that debate you come down on, you're still going to be blessed by it, and it's going to be awesome to be here.

Steve: There is one significant command that I didn't even mention. Ephesians 5:18, Be filled with the Spirit. I had a godly professor in seminary who said he found himself talking about other people's experiences with the Holy Spirit and he felt like the Holy Spirit convicted him and said, "How about you?"

He set aside one night, and with his concordance he looked up every verse about the Holy Spirit. He was a transformed man. He felt that he should look the verses up and educate himself because, like you say, they're in there. They're potent, powerful, and plentiful. I thank you for that word.

He gives more abundantly than we can ask or think. He gives his Spirit without measure. Wonderful promise.

Let's close in prayer: Father, thank you for sending Your Spirit. The promise of the Father, which is referred to many places in the New Testament. You have sent us the promise of the Father. I pray that You will communicate this truth to all these earnest, thirsty hearts that are listening to this podcast.

Give us more of the Holy Spirit. Give us the Spirit without measure. Fill us afresh, fill our flasks, and teach us how to keep them topped off, so to speak, so that we don't find ourselves when things get rough looking for others for help. Help us, each individually, to make our connection with God so real that we are filled to overflowing with God's good Spirit. In Jesus' name. Amen.

Scott: Amen. That's our show for this week, folks. Thanks for joining us for the Building Faith Families podcast with Steve Demme. If you have a question for the show, email Steve at spdemme@gmail.com. If you have a question for me, you can reach me at scott@unsocialisedmedia.com. Thanks for joining us. Have a great week.