

For the Love of an Imperative Verb

Matthew 25:1-13

The Twenty-fourth Sunday after Pentecost, Year A

¹Then the kingdom of heaven will be like this. Ten bridesmaids took their lamps and went to meet the bridegroom. ²Five of them were foolish, and five were wise. ³When the foolish took their lamps, they took no oil with them; ⁴but the wise took flasks of oil with their lamps. ⁵As the bridegroom was delayed, all of them became drowsy and slept. ⁶But at midnight there was a shout, ‘**Look** [ἰδοὺ, **idou̓**]! Here is the bridegroom! **Come out** [ἐξέρχεσθε, **exérchesthe**] to meet him!’ ⁷Then all those bridesmaids got up and trimmed their lamps. ⁸The foolish said to the wise, ‘**Give** [δότε, **dóte**] us some of your oil, for our lamps are going out.’ ⁹But the wise replied, ‘No! there will not be enough for you and for us; you had better **go** [πορεύεσθε, **poreúesthe**] to the dealers and **buy** [ἀγοράσατε, **agorásate**] some for yourselves.’ ¹⁰And while they went to buy it, the bridegroom came, and those who were ready went with him into the wedding banquet; and the door was shut. ¹¹Later the other bridesmaids came also, saying, ‘Lord, lord, **open** [ἄνοιξον, **ánoixon**] to us.’ ¹²But he replied, ‘Truly I tell you, I do not know you.’ ¹³**Keep awake** [γρηγορεῖτε, **grēgoreíte**], therefore, for you know neither the day nor the hour.”
[NRSV89]

25:6

ἰδοὺ, **idou̓**; *vb*: 2nd aor mid **imperative** 2nd pers sg from ὁράω:

translations: **look** [NRSV89, NJB, NRSVue], also **behold** [NAB, NGEINT, NKJV; Filson],

here [ESV], **here’s** [NIV11], **he aqui** [IAdNT]

Filson: “. . . The bridegroom’s sudden coming startles them . . .” [pp. 263f.]

ἐξέρχεσθε, **exérchesthe**; *vb*: pres mid / pass **imperative** 2nd pers pl from ἐξέρχομαι:

translations: **come out** [NRSV89, ESV, NAB, NIV11, NRSVue; translated as vs. 7 in Albright & Mann], also **go out** [NGEINT, NJB, NKJV; Filson], **salid** [IAdNT]

25:8

δότε, **dóte**; *vb*: 2nd aor act **imperative** 2nd pers pl from δίδωμι:

translations: **give** [NRSV89, ESV, NAB, NGEINT, NIV11, NJB, NKJV, NRSVue; Albright & Mann, Filson], also **dad** [IAdNT]

25:9

πορεύεσθε, **poreúesthe**; *vb*: pres mid / pass **imperative** 2nd pers pl from πορεύω:

translations: **go** [NRSV89, ESV, NAB, NGEINT, NIV11, NJB, NKJV, NRSVue, Albright & Mann, Filson], also **id** [IAdNT]

ἀγοράσατε, **agorásate**; *vb: aor act imperative 2nd pers pl* from ἀγοράζω:
translations: **buy** [NRSV89, ESV, NAB, NGEINT, NIV11, NJB, NKJV, NRSVue, Albright & Mann, Filson], also **comprad** [IAdNT]

25:11

ἄνοιξον, **ánoixon**; *vb: aor act imperative 2nd pers sg* from ἀνοίγω:
translations: **open** [NRSV89, ESV, NAB, NGEINT, NIV11, NJB, NKJV, NRSVue, Filson],
open up [Albright & Mann], also **abre** [IAdNT]

25:13

γρηγορεῖτε, **grēgoreîte**; *vb: pres act imperative 2nd pers pl* from γρηγορέω:
translations: **keep awake** [NRSV89, NRSVue], **stay awake** [NAB, NJB], also **be on the alert** [NGEINT], **be on . . . guard** [Albright & Mann], **keep watch** [NIV11], **watch** [ESV, NKJV, Filson], **velad** [IAdNT]

Crossett: The better translation is something that calls for “alertness,” rather than not sleeping. Even the wise bridesmaids slept.

Filson: “Vs. 13 . . . fits only if “watch” is understood to mean: prepare and be ready even if the coming of the Lord is delayed.” [p. 264.]

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