

# The Parable of the Leaven



**Matthew 13:33; Luke 13:20-21**

○ **Review Lessons Taught:**

- **In Matthew 13:10, Jesus began using parables to teach about the kingdom of heaven. His disciples noticed the change in His method of teaching, and asked Him the question, “Why do You speak to them in parables?”**
- **According to Mark 4:34, “Jesus did not say anything to them without using a parable and when He was alone with His disciples He would explain what He meant.”**
- **Purpose: to assist us in growing in our understanding by exploring these divine truths found in Christ’s teaching. To teach us what they mean and how they relate to our present and future life in Christ Jesus.**
- **Goal: to allow the Holy Spirit speak to our hearts and draw us closer to Jesus Christ.**

**1. What is a parable?**

- **It is a simple yet powerful story that Jesus used to illustrate a great truth. Jesus used parables to help His followers understand spiritual truth.**
- **The word “parable” is taken from the Greek word that literally means to cast or throw alongside.**
- **A parable is thrown in to illustrate something abstract.**
- **Parables were stories that were “cast or thrown” alongside a truth in order to illustrate a divine truth.**

**2. Jesus began by using the Parable of the Sower to teach about the kingdom of God. (Matthew 13:3-9, 18-23)**

- **Jesus uses this parable to describe a farmer or sower who went out and scattered seed that fell on various kinds of soils (hard, stony, thorns, good ground).**
- **Jesus uses three symbols in this parable: The Sower (farmer), the Seed, and the Soil. (vs. 3-9)**
  - a. The Sower (farmer) represents Jesus Christ.**
  - b. The Seed represents the Word of God or the Word of the kingdom. (vs. 3-8)**

c. The Soil (the ground) represents the hearts of the individual hearer or the spiritual state of those in the world. (vs. 19-23)

**3. The Parable of the Wheat and The Weeds (Matthew 13:24-30)**

- A man sows good seed. The Man is Jesus Christ. (vs. 37)
- The good seed. The children of the kingdom of God. These are the righteous men and women of God. These are true believers of Jesus Christ. (vs. 24, 38)
- a. They are sown by the Son of Man – Jesus Christ.
- b. They are sown in His field. The “field” represents the world. The owner of the “field” (the world) – is Jesus Christ. (John 1:1-3, Colossians 1:15-20, Hebrews 1:2, Psalm 24:1-2)
- c. Jesus Christ sows or scatters His righteous seed (the believer) into His field (the world). The believer is Christ representative and ambassadors in the world.

**4. The Parable of the Mustard Seed. (Matthew 13:31-32) There are Four Things that Jesus describe in the Parable of the Mustard Seed. (vs. 31-32)**

- A. Jesus Christ is describing the growth and greatness of His Kingdom. (Haggai 2:6-9, Hebrews 12:25-29, 1 Peter 4:14-17)
- B. Jesus Christ is describing the growth of Christianity and the effectiveness of His Church (the body of Christ) reaching the unbelievers or unsaved in the entire world. (Matthew 16:18, Acts 1:15, 2:38-47)
- C. Jesus Christ is describing the growth and effectiveness of every true believer. (Matthew 13:31-32)
- D. Jesus Christ uses this parable to give encouragement to every true believer. (vs. 32)

## The Parable of the Leaven

### Matthew 13:33; Luke 13:20-21

- Jesus says, the Kingdom of God is like yeast that a woman took and mixed in a large amount of flour until it worked all through the dough. (vs. 33)
- What is leaven or yeast?
- It is an agent used to produce fermentation in dough.
- Throughout ancient Israel, leaven was a piece of fermented dough that was kept from a previous batch that was placed in the new dough to cause it to rise.
- In Leviticus 2:11, the use of leaven was prohibited in food offerings dedicated unto the Lord by fire.
- But, it was required by God for the peace offering (Leviticus 7:13) and (Leviticus 23:17), during the Feast of the Weeks (Pentecost), they were required to bring from their dwelling two wave loaves baked with leaven, as the first-fruits to the Lord.
- a. In the Bible “leaven (yeast)” is used as a metaphor that symbolizes an influencing agent that has the ability to permeate the whole lump (dough).
- b. In the Bible Jesus used “leaven (yeast)” as a metaphor to symbolize both a positive and a negative influence.
  1. Jesus used “leaven (yeast)” as a positive influence to describe what the Kingdom of heaven is like. (Matthew 13:33, Luke 13:20-21)
  2. It symbolizes the growth and power of God’s Kingdom and its ability to affect the entire world through the gospel of Jesus Christ.
  3. Jesus used “leaven (yeast)” as a negative influence to describe the false teaching, wickedness, corruption, and hypocrisy, that was in the heart of the Pharisees and Sadducees. (Matthew 16:6, 11-12)
- (vs. 4) – “Jesus calls them a wicked and adulterous generation.
- (vs. 6) – “Jesus warns the disciples, “Take heed and beware of the “leaven (yeast)” of the Pharisees and the Sadducees.”

4. Apostle Paul used “leaven (yeast)” as a negative influence describing the sinful practice of a believer and the destructive results it can have on their life, the church and their witness. (1 Corinthians 5:6-8)

1. Apostle Paul was talking to them about “getting rid” of the old leaven of sin and corruption that had infiltrated this church.

- Paul reminds them, “Christ, our Passover was sacrificed for us.” (vs. 7)

a. Paul tells these believers at Corinth, that Jesus Christ is the fulfillment of the Passover lamb.

b. Paul uses the experiences of Israel to illustrate his point. (Exodus 12:1-28)

c. Paul tells them, “let us keep the feast, not with old leaven, nor with the leaven of malice and wickedness, but with unleavened bread of sincerity and truth.” (vs. 8)

- Paul was telling them to leave behind that old life of sin and wickedness. Jesus Christ has set you free. (John 8:36, 2 Corinthians 5:17, Galatians 3:1, 5:1)

- Paul was teaching them that the Blood of Jesus Christ purchased our salvation and gave us a right to eternal life. (Hebrews 9:12, 14, 22, Ephesians 1:7, Isaiah 53:5, Revelation 1:5, Romans 6:23)

A. The Kingdom of God is like “leaven (yeast)” that is mixed in meal (the world), until the whole (world) is changed. Note: The leaven (yeast) is taken and mixed into the meal (the world). (Matthew 13:33, Luke 13:20-21)

1. This parable describes the inward growth and the spiritual transformation that takes place in the life of every true believer through the life changing power of the gospel and the presence and power of the Holy Spirit.

2. The gospel of the Kingdom must be mixed, worked, taken or placed into the world (sinners, the lost, those in spiritual darkness). God requires every true believer to take part in this process. (John 3:16-17, 2 Corinthians 5:18-21, Romans 5:10-12, 17-21)

- a. The purpose of the Kingdom is to work like “leaven (yeast),” that is to change the whole man (spirit, soul, and body) of the individual believer and the society or world around them.
- b. When a person hears, believes and receives the gospel of the Kingdom (the good news of Jesus), it has the ability to penetrate the life of that person regardless of their sins and transgressions. (2 Corinthians 5:17, Ephesians 2:1)

B. The Leaven (yeast) has a changing, transforming, fulfilling and satisfying power. This is a good description of Jesus Christ and the power of the gospel. (Romans 1:16)

○ There are Five Things we must examine about the Parable of the Leaven (Yeast). (Romans 1:16-17, 2 Corinthians 4:7)

1. The “leaven (yeast)” - when Jesus Christ and His glorious message are mixed (worked) in the hearts of the whole world, it will result in the lives of people being spiritually transformed. (John 6:32-33, 48-51, 58)
2. Leaven (Yeast) makes bread soft and removes the hardness from it. (Ezekiel 36:26-27)
  - The leaven (yeast) of the gospel has the ability to do the very same thing. It penetrates and softens the heart of mankind, making them more open and receptive to the Lord Jesus Christ.
  - The gospel of Jesus Christ has the power to transform the life of every person that hears it, believes it, receives it and trusts in it.
3. Leaven (Yeast)) makes the bread porous and moist, no longer dry. The leaven (yeast) of the gospel does the same.
  - It penetrates the dryness or stale life and heart of mankind. It gives mankind true quality of life and purpose.
  - The life of man becomes fruitful and productive through the presence and power of the Holy Spirit. (Galatians 5:22-23, John 15:8-11)
4. Leaven (Yeast) makes the bread satisfying and enjoyable. (Psalm 34:8)

- The gospel of Jesus Christ, His Word and the power of the Holy Spirit will do the same in the life of man that has been beaten, bruised and battered by life's situations. (Matthew 11:28-30, Psalm 16:11, John 16:33, 1 Peter 5:7, 1:8-9)

5. Leaven (Yeast) makes bread nourishing and beneficial.

- The gospel of Jesus Christ will do the very same thing for the life of man who feels inadequate, insignificant, and no real sense of purpose.

C. How does the Leaven (Yeast) relate to God's Kingdom and work in the life of Believers?

- There are Three Things we must remember about the Parable of the Leaven: 1. The Purpose. 2. The Process. 3. The Power. (Matthew 16:18, 11:12, Luke 10:19, Acts 1:8)

1. The Purpose of the leaven (yeast) once it enters the dough; it cannot be stopped, or removed. It will continue to work until the dough rises.

- The same is true when a person hears, believes and receives the gospel of Jesus Christ in their heart and life.
- There is nothing that Satan or even my enemies can do to stop what Jesus Christ started in my life through His gift of salvation. (Philippians 1:6, John 10:10)
- There is nothing anybody can say or do to snatch (pluck) me out of His hand. (John 10:27-30)
- The Holy Spirit is working in and through my life and empowering me to fulfill God's Kingdom purpose. (2 Timothy 1:12, 2 Thessalonians 3:3, Jude 1:24-25)

2. The Process of the Leaven (yeast) works gradually and consistently. (Luke 13:20, Titus 3:5, Philippians 2:13, Ephesians 2:10)

- The Holy Spirit affects every aspect of our entire being. (2 Corinthians 4:7, 2 Corinthians 3:17-18)
- There is a process of the Holy Spirit working in the life of every true believer.

- We've heard this many times to describe this process: 1. I am saved. 2. I am being saved. 3. I shall be saved.
- Every believer is encouraged to consistently feed off the Word of God. (Matthew 4:4, 1 Peter 2:2-3, 2 Timothy 2:15, 3:16, Joshua 1:8, Psalms 1:1-3, 119:11, 105)
- Every believer will need the required spiritual food from the Word of God to maintain proper nourishment and to ensure proper growth.
- 3. The Power of Leaven (yeast) when mixed or worked in is powerful. (Acts 1:8)
  - It is the power of the Holy Spirit that is actively working in the life of every true believer.
  - The believer has the advantage and edge in life because of the presence and power of the Holy Spirit. (John 16:7, 13-14, 14:16-17, 26-27)
  - The believer is empowered to do great things for the Kingdom of God. (John 14:10-12, 1 John 4:4, Acts 1:8)
- The Holy Spirit is the power to testify or bear witness. The Holy Spirit bears witness to Six glorious truths. (Romans 8:16-17).
  1. The Holy Spirit testifies (bears witness) that we are the children of God. (Romans 8:16-17)
  2. The Holy Spirit testifies (bears witness) that we are joint-heirs or co-heirs with Christ. (vs. 17)
  3. The Holy Spirit is the deposit (down-payment) or the guarantee that assures and secures us of the promise of our eternal salvation. (2Corinthians 1:22, 5:5)
  4. The Holy Spirit seals the believer (child of God), until the day of redemption. (Ephesians 1:13, 4:30)
  5. The Holy Spirit testifies or bears witness that we are heirs of God. (Titus 3:7)
  6. The Holy Spirit testifies or bears witness that we are heirs of the promises made to Abraham. (Romans 4:13, Ephesians 3:6, Galatians 3:29, 2 Peter 3:10-13, Acts 26:7-18)