

Puzzling Parables

The Yeast in the Meal

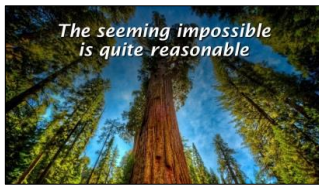
Part 9 – November 13, 2016

Welcome to where we're learning to correctly handle the Word of Truth.



The Apostle Paul warned us: ***“the Lord ... shall descend ... with a shout ... and with the trump”*** (1 Thes 4:16 KJV)

That’s an example of handling the scriptures incorrectly.



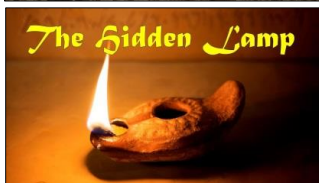
Last week we talked about the seemingly impossible suddenly seeming quite reasonable. Wow. What a difference a week can make. I’m speaking, *of course*, about the new carpet.



On the shore of Capernaum, Jesus is stacking com’parable on parable to offer those with a heart to hear, insight into His Kingdom.



He sows the Word into hearts that receive it, retain it, and persevere till they’re mature.



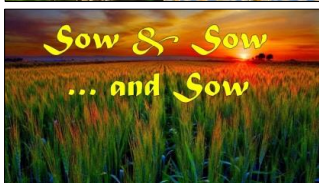
We must consider carefully what we hear, and beware of the weeds among the wheat, as we spread the Word of our tiny-seed King who comes humbly, but grows into the great Tree of Life.

Again he asked, “What shall I compare the kingdom of God to? It is like yeast that a woman took and mixed into a large amount of flour until it worked all through the dough.” – Luke 13:20-21; (Mat 13:33) NIV



What’s the connection to the yeast?

This is the wheat on the way to becoming bread.



So, **is the yeast a good thing or a bad thing?** Depends who you ask. Some commentaries say it’s God’s Spirit working in His body. Others say pretty much the opposite. Trouble is, the word for “**Again**”, can also mean, “**on the other hand**”. So, **it really hangs on how you consider carefully what Jesus says.** And ... *who* you think that *mixing woman* is.



Now, thanks to these parables of Jesus ...

We have the prophetic word made **more sure**, to which **you do well to pay attention** as to a **lamp shining in a dark place** ... But **know this first of all, [this is the first rule]** that **no prophecy of Scripture is a matter of one’s own interpretation** ... – 2 Peter 1:19-20 NAS



Jesus' words can't be understood in isolation, and should never be a matter of guesswork. That goes against the *first rule*. The Bible is its own best commentary. Use cross-references in the margins; or, www.BlueLetterBible.com, or www.OpenBible.info (and go to "Cross References" under "Labs").

Scripture *must* interpret Scripture. *Know why?*

For the **testimony** [*martyria: testifying; witness; report*] of Jesus is the **spirit of prophecy** [as found in *His Bible, our OT*]. – Revelation 19:10b NIV

[*You see*] In the past God spoke ... **through the prophets** [to prepare His people for the Messiah] ... but in these last days he has spoken to us **by his Son** ... [to declare himself as the Messiah] – Hebrews 1:1-2a NIV

However, there's that hidden lamp; *and, Jesus also said ...*

... I praise you, Father ... because you have **hidden these things** from the **wise** [*Sophos: experts; authorities; professionals*] and **learned**, [*synetos: scholarly; intellectual*] and **revealed them to little children**. [*inēpios: infant; the untaught; the unskilled*] – Matthew 11:25 NIV

Those who hear His stories, and seek to find the symbols. You don't have to be a Bible scholar; but, for Heaven's sake, if we don't even own a piece of it, how can we claim it's *ours*?

The **mocker** [*luwts: arrogant talker (the intellectual expert)*] seeks wisdom and finds none, [because his pride won't allow him to become like an untaught child] but **knowledge comes easily to the discerning**. [*biyn: one who considers, perceives, and discerns (thanks to childlike humility)*] – Proverbs 14:6 NIV

So, are you more arrogant talker or childlike seeker?

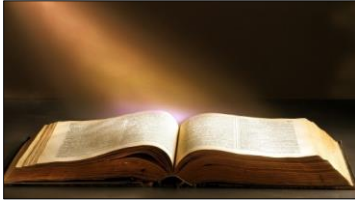
If you don't have a heart to search God's Word, is it possible you have no desire to find God's Truth? We love to think that we're in charge and in the know, but **much of what we seek and find will challenge our control**.

Or, does it seem too overwhelming? **And so, without ever giving it your all, you just give in and trust in someone else's faith**. That was the problem in Capernaum. They saw His miracles and asked the Pharisees if He fulfilled Messiah scripture; but, **the experts crushed their spirit and said He was Satanic**. (Mat 12:24)

The tongue that brings healing is a **tree of life**, [*that's Jesus*] but a deceitful tongue crushes the spirit. – Proverbs 15:4-6 NIV

Deliver me, O my God, from the hand of the wicked, from the grasp of evil and **cruel men**. [*chamets: leavened; soured*] – Psalm 71:4 NIV

Jesus is dealing with a basket of sourdough deplorables, who are crushing His wheat and attempting to press in the yeast.



Jesus' followers are at the mercy of those who know His Word more thoroughly.

Which isn't as bad as it sounds; they just didn't think to ask a very necessary follow up question: **What's your Scripture?**



Until *you* have a handle on the Word of Truth, don't take *anything* as Gospel without scriptural *proof*.

Yeast is used throughout Scripture to represent wickedness. Jesus even tells us how He defines the *yeast* of the religious elite: hypocrisy and false teaching. (Mat 16:12; Luke 12:1)



Yeast is connected to Passover, the week-long celebration when Jesus was crucified. It's also called **the Feast of Unleavened Bread**, (Ex 12:17) which is connected to the Exodus/Escape from Egypt.

For seven days no yeast is to be found in your houses. And whoever eats anything with yeast in it must be cut off from the community of Israel ... – Exodus 12:19a NIV

God told Moses to prepare his people to leave in the morning. No time for dough to rise. **Those who added yeast didn't trust God. Not only was yeast banned from homes, but their entire nation!**

... nothing with yeast in it is to be seen among you, nor shall any yeast be seen anywhere within your borders. – Exodus 13:7 NIV

This parable isn't about getting the yeast *into us* – the Kingdom of God is a process of removing the yeast that has *infected* us.

Your boasting is not **good**. [*kalos: useful; helpful; comforting; confirming*] Don't you know that a little **yeast** [*false teaching and hypocrisy (Mat 16:12; Luke 12:1)*] works through the whole batch of dough? **Get rid of the old yeast** that **you may be a new batch without yeast** — as you really are. For Christ, **our Passover lamb**, has been sacrificed. Therefore let us keep the **Festival**, [*lit. feast (of the unleavened Bread of Life)*] not with the **old yeast**, the yeast of **malice** and **wickedness**, but with **bread without yeast**, the bread of **sincerity** [*eilikrineia: authenticity; transparency; genuineness*] and **truth**. [*alētheia: honesty, candor, and frankness*] – 1 Corinthians 5:6-8 NIV

How well are you cooperating with the Holy Spirit to remove the yeast infection of hypocrisy and insincerity from your faith, so that you can be authentic, transparent, and candid?

Again he asked, "What shall I compare the kingdom of God to? It is like yeast that a woman took and mixed into a **large amount** [*treis saton: three measures*] of **flour** [*i.e. crushed wheat*] until it worked all through the dough." – Luke 13:20-21; (Mat 13:33) NIV

Now, **fellowship with God is found in His Word.**

And, in Jesus' day, **it was divided into three measures: the Law of Moses** (Torah/Teaching), **the Prophets** (Nevi'im), **and the Writings** (Ketuvim) **which begins with the Psalms.** (Luke 24:44-45)

[That's why, when Jesus appeared after He rose] He said to them, "This is what I told you while I was still with you: Everything must be fulfilled that is written about me in the **Law of Moses**, the **Prophets** and the **Psalms**." – Luke 24:44-45 NIV

These three divisions are likely why the Fellowship Offering, a.k.a. Peace Offering, consisted of three unleavened wheat cakes, and one loaf with yeast. Guess which one represents *us*!

And, **that woman who took and mixed yeast into three measures, sounds like the seductress in Proverbs**, (7:1-27) who seduces those who lack judgment, and woos them away from Wisdom, with promises of *her own Fellowship Offerings*.



When God's people fled Egypt ...

... the people **took** their dough **before the yeast was added**, and carried it on their shoulders in kneading troughs **wrapped in clothing**. – Exodus 12:34 NIV

Movable kneading troughs resembled funeral stretchers, whereas, *unmovable* kneading troughs were hewn out in rock, and were abandoned and forsaken by God's chosen people when they fled. And, during the *Feast of Unleavened Bread*, when Jesus' died ...

Joseph [of Arimathea] ... **took Him** [the Bread of Life] down, **wrapped Him** in the linen cloth and [carrying Him to the garden] laid Him in a tomb which had been **hewn out in the rock** ... – Mark 15:46 NAS

And, when Peter later saw the strips of clothing lying in the tomb, he went away, wondering what had happened. (Luke 24:12) But, we know what happened: **The Unleavened Bread had risen!**

Do you consider carefully how you listen?

How much of your faith is based on scripture you're pretty sure is in there somewhere?

We're not given permission to make up our faith; that's yeast.

And, it violates the first rule.