

**WHY EAT LEAVENING THE REST OF THE YEAR?**  
**FAIRVIEW TEXAS CHURCH OF GOD**  
**April 7, 2007**

What have the past Days of Unleavened Bread meant to you?

Christ warned us, in Matthew 16, Mark 8 and Luke 12, to beware of the leaven of the Pharisees, which He defined to be hypocrisy.

**Matthew 16:**

- 5 Now when His disciples had come to the other side, they had forgotten to take bread.
- 6 Then Jesus said to them, "Take heed and beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and the Sadducees."
- 7 And they reasoned among themselves, saying, "It is because we have taken no bread."
- 8 But Jesus, being aware of it, said to them, "O you of little faith, why do you reason among yourselves because you have brought no bread?"
- 9 "Do you not yet understand, or remember the five loaves of the five thousand and how many baskets you took up?"
- 10 "Nor the seven loaves of the four thousand and how many large baskets you took up?"
- 11 "How is it you do not understand that I did not speak to you concerning bread? --but to beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and Sadducees."
- 12 Then they understood that He did not tell them to beware of the leaven of bread, but of the doctrine of the Pharisees and Sadducees.

**Mark 8:**

- 10 ¶ immediately got into the boat with His disciples, and came to the region of Dalmanutha.
- 11 Then the Pharisees came out and began to dispute with Him, seeking from Him a sign from heaven, testing Him.
- 12 But He sighed deeply in His spirit, and said, "Why does this generation seek a sign? Assuredly, I say to you, no sign shall be given to this generation."
- 13 And He left them, and getting into the boat again, departed to the other side.
- 14 Now the disciples had forgotten to take bread, and they did not have more than one loaf with them in the boat.
- 15 Then He charged them, saying, "Take heed, beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and the leaven of Herod."
- 16 And they reasoned among themselves, saying, "It is because we have no bread."
- 17 But Jesus, being aware of it, said to them, "Why do you reason because you have no bread? Do you not yet perceive nor understand? Is your heart still hardened?"
- 18 "Having eyes, do you not see? And having ears, do you not hear? And do you not remember?"

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- 19 "When I broke the five loaves for the five thousand, how many baskets full of fragments did you take up?" They said to Him, "Twelve."
- 20 "Also, when I broke the seven for the four thousand, how many large baskets full of fragments did you take up?" And they said, "Seven."
- 21 So He said to them, "How is it you do not understand?"

**Luke 12:**

- 1 ¶ In the meantime, when an innumerable multitude of people had gathered together, so that they trampled one another, He began to say to His disciples first of all, "Beware of the leaven of the Pharisees, which is hypocrisy."

Therefore, we are being reminded, during these days, to be of a single mind – focused on God. To be a hypocrite is to be “two faced”. A parable tells us that the wheat and the tares are to grow together, that is to say we are to live side by side peaceably with all people. At the same time we need to be true to our faith at all times. We cannot say one thing and mean another. We cannot follow man and God. The difference cannot always be seen outwardly, but God looks on the heart – and He knows our intent.

The Bible often gives us several meanings to consider for each symbol, holy day or prophecy.

1. Leviticus 23 tells us that we must eat unleavened bread each day during this time,
  - a. **Leviticus 23:**
    - i. 4 ¶ These are the feasts of the LORD, holy convocations which you shall proclaim at their appointed times.
    - ii. 5 'On the fourteenth day of the first month at twilight is the LORD'S Passover.
    - iii. 6 'And on the fifteenth day of the same month is the Feast of Unleavened Bread to the LORD; seven days you must eat unleavened bread.
    - iv. 7 'On the first day you shall have a holy convocation; you shall do no customary work on it.
    - v. 8 'But you shall offer an offering made by fire to the LORD for seven days. The seventh day shall be a holy convocation; you shall do no customary work on it.'"
2. and John 6 tells us that unleavened bread is symbolic of Christ
  - a. **John 6**
    - i. 28 ¶ Then they said to Him, "What shall we do, that we may work the works of God?"
    - ii. 29 Jesus answered and said to them, "This is the work of God, that you believe in Him whom He sent."
    - iii. 30 Therefore they said to Him, "What sign will You perform then, that we may see it and believe You? What work will You do?"

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- iv. 31 "Our fathers ate the manna in the desert; as it is written, 'He gave them bread from heaven to eat.'"
  - v. 32 Then Jesus said to them, "Most assuredly, I say to you, Moses did not give you the bread from heaven, but My Father gives you the true bread from heaven.
  - vi. 33 "For the bread of God is He who comes down from heaven and gives life to the world."
  - vii. 34 Then they said to Him, "Lord, give us this bread always."
  - viii. 35 And Jesus said to them, "I am the bread of life. He who comes to Me shall never hunger, and he who believes in Me shall never thirst.
  - ix. 36 "But I said to you that you have seen Me and yet do not believe.
  - x. 37 "All that the Father gives Me will come to Me, and the one who comes to Me I will by no means cast out.
  - xi. 38 "For I have come down from heaven, not to do My own will, but the will of Him who sent Me.
  - xii. 39 "This is the will of the Father who sent Me, that of all He has given Me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up at the last day.
  - xiii. 40 "And this is the will of Him who sent Me, that everyone who sees the Son and believes in Him may have everlasting life; and I will raise him up at the last day."
  - xiv. 41 The Jews then complained about Him, because He said, "I am the bread which came down from heaven."
  - xv. 42 And they said, "Is not this Jesus, the son of Joseph, whose father and mother we know? How is it then that He says, 'I have come down from heaven'?"
  - xvi. 43 Jesus therefore answered and said to them, "Do not murmur among yourselves.
  - xvii. 44 "No one can come to Me unless the Father who sent Me draws him; and I will raise him up at the last day.
  - xviii. 45 "It is written in the prophets, 'And they shall all be taught by God.' Therefore everyone who has heard and learned from the Father comes to Me.
  - xix. 46 "Not that anyone has seen the Father, except He who is from God; He has seen the Father.
  - xx. 47 "Most assuredly, I say to you, he who believes in Me has everlasting life.
  - xxi. 48 "I am the bread of life.
3. Exodus 13 tells us that the Feast of Unleavened Bread is "because of what the Lord did for me when I came up out of Egypt." We know that Egypt is used to signify sin, and Christ died for our sins.

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**a. Exodus 13**

- i. 6 "Seven days you shall eat unleavened bread, and on the seventh day there shall be a feast to the LORD.
  - ii. 7 "Unleavened bread shall be eaten seven days. And no leavened bread shall be seen among you, nor shall leaven be seen among you in all your quarters.
  - iii. 8 "And you shall tell your son in that day, saying, 'This is done because of what the LORD did for me when I came up from Egypt.'
4. By extension, we believe the symbolism of leavening during these past days to be of sin. In a couple of days, this year's Days of Unleavened Bread will come to an end. Does that mean we can then put sin back into our lives?

If these symbols are true during this time of the year, why don't we only eat unleavened bread all year?

There are at least 3 passages of scripture where leaven is used in a positive sense – something to put into our lives, rather than to take out.

**1. Leviticus 7**

- a. 11 ¶ 'This is the law of the sacrifice of peace offerings which he shall offer to the LORD:
- b. 12 'If he offers it for a thanksgiving, then he shall offer, with the sacrifice of thanksgiving, unleavened cakes mixed with oil, unleavened wafers anointed with oil, or cakes of blended flour mixed with oil.
- c. 13 'Besides the cakes, as his offering he shall offer leavened bread with the sacrifice of thanksgiving of his peace offering.

**2. Leviticus 23**

- a. 15 ¶ 'And you shall count for yourselves from the day after the Sabbath, from the day that you brought the sheaf of the wave offering: seven Sabbaths shall be completed.
- b. 16 'Count fifty days to the day after the seventh Sabbath; then you shall offer a new grain offering to the LORD.
- c. 17 'You shall bring from your dwellings two wave loaves of two-tenths of an ephah. They shall be of fine flour; they shall be baked with leaven. They are the firstfruits to the LORD.

**3. Luke 13**

- a. 18 ¶ Then He said, "What is the kingdom of God like? And to what shall I compare it?
- b. 19 "It is like a mustard seed, which a man took and put in his garden; and it grew and became a large tree, and the birds of the air nested in its branches."
- c. 20 And again He said, "To what shall I liken the kingdom of God?

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- d. 21 "It is like leaven, which a woman took and hid in three measures of meal till it was all leavened."
- e. 22 And He went through the cities and villages, teaching, and journeying toward Jerusalem.

Why does the Bible use the same symbolic item, leaven, to represent good and bad?

To understand symbolism used in the Bible, we must understand it is always consistent in its message. When we see apparent inconsistencies, we are challenged to search for what we are missing.

The point of the use of leaven as a symbol is simple. It has nothing to do with leaven – it has everything to do with how it works.

The most common leavening product is yeast. In fact, many of the words translated as leaven in the Bible could also be translated as yeast.

Yeast is a fungus. Fungi obtain food by direct absorption of nutrients. As with bacteria, they are responsible for the decay and decomposition of all organic matter. They are found wherever other forms of life exist. Mold and plant rust are among the other familiar types of fungi. They work slowly – like cancer in human bodies. A little yeast works slowly to spread itself throughout the infected organism.

The Bible has other examples of things that start out small and grow to enormous proportions – the mustard seed is one - salt is another - another is light.

God's light is already huge:

**Revelation 21**

- 22 But I saw no temple in it, for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are its temple.
- 23 The city had no need of the sun or of the moon to shine in it, for the glory of God illuminated it. The Lamb is its light.

**Psalm 36**

- 7 How precious is Your lovingkindness, O God! Therefore the children of men put their trust under the shadow of Your wings.
- 8 They are abundantly satisfied with the fullness of Your house, And You give them drink from the river of Your pleasures.
- 9 For with You is the fountain of life; In Your light we see light.

**Psalm 43**

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- 1 ¶ Vindicate me, O God, And plead my cause against an ungodly nation; Oh, deliver me from the deceitful and unjust man!
- 2 For You are the God of my strength; Why do You cast me off? Why do I go mourning because of the oppression of the enemy?
- 3 Oh, send out Your light and Your truth! Let them lead me; Let them bring me to Your holy hill And to Your tabernacle.

**John 1**

- 1 ¶ In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.
- 2 He was in the beginning with God.
- 3 All things were made through Him, and without Him nothing was made that was made.
- 4 In Him was life, and the life was the light of men.
- 5 ¶ And the light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not comprehend it.
- 6 There was a man sent from God, whose name was John.
- 7 This man came for a witness, to bear witness of the Light, that all through him might believe.
- 8 He was not that Light, but was sent to bear witness of that Light.
- 9 That was the true Light which gives light to every man coming into the world.

What does God's light and Christ being a light for us have to do with leaven?

**Matthew 5**

- 13 ¶ "You are the salt of the earth; but if the salt loses its flavor, how shall it be seasoned? It is then good for nothing but to be thrown out and trampled underfoot by men.
- 14 "You are the light of the world. A city that is set on a hill cannot be hidden.
- 15 "Nor do they light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on a lampstand, and it gives light to all who are in the house.
- 16 "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven.

**Luke 11**

- 33 "No one, when he has lit a lamp, puts it in a secret place or under a basket, but on a lampstand, that those who come in may see the light.
- 34 "The lamp of the body is the eye. Therefore, when your eye is good, your whole body also is full of light. But when your eye is bad, your body also is full of darkness.

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- 35 "Therefore take heed that the light which is in you is not darkness.
- 36 "If then your whole body is full of light, having no part dark, the whole body will be full of light, as when the bright shining of a lamp gives you light."

**Ephesians 5**

- 8 For you were once darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Walk as children of light
- 9 (for the fruit of the Spirit is in all goodness, righteousness, and truth),
- 10 finding out what is acceptable to the Lord.
- 11 And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather expose them.
- 12 For it is shameful even to speak of those things which are done by them in secret.
- 13 But all things that are exposed are made manifest by the light, for whatever makes manifest is light.
- 14 Therefore He says: "Awake, you who sleep, Arise from the dead, And Christ will give you light."
- 15 See then that you walk circumspectly, not as fools but as wise,
- 16 redeeming the time, because the days are evil.
- 17 Therefore do not be unwise, but understand what the will of the Lord is.
- 18 And do not be drunk with wine, in which is dissipation; but be filled with the Spirit,
- 19 speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord,
- 20 giving thanks always for all things to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ,

**Isaiah 42**

- 6 "I, the LORD, have called You in righteousness, And will hold Your hand; I will keep You and give You as a covenant to the people, As a light to the Gentiles,

**Isaiah 58**

- 8 ¶ Then your light shall break forth like the morning, Your healing shall spring forth speedily, And your righteousness shall go before you; The glory of the LORD shall be your rear guard.
- 9 Then you shall call, and the LORD will answer; You shall cry, and He will say, 'Here I am.' "If you take away the yoke from your midst, The pointing of the finger, and speaking wickedness,
- 10 If you extend your soul to the hungry And satisfy the afflicted soul, Then your light shall dawn in the darkness, And your darkness shall be as the noonday.

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- 11 The LORD will guide you continually, And satisfy your soul in drought, And strengthen your bones; You shall be like a watered garden, And like a spring of water, whose waters do not fail.
- 12 Those from among you Shall build the old waste places; You shall raise up the foundations of many generations; And you shall be called the Repairer of the Breach, The Restorer of Streets to Dwell In.
- 13 ¶ "If you turn away your foot from the Sabbath, From doing your pleasure on My holy day, And call the Sabbath a delight, The holy day of the LORD honorable, And shall honor Him, not doing your own ways, Nor finding your own pleasure, Nor speaking your own words,
- 14 Then you shall delight yourself in the LORD; And I will cause you to ride on the high hills of the earth, And feed you with the heritage of Jacob your father. The mouth of the LORD has spoken."

**Isaiah 60**

- 1 ¶ Arise, shine; For your light has come! And the glory of the LORD is risen upon you.
- 2 For behold, the darkness shall cover the earth, And deep darkness the people; But the LORD will arise over you, And His glory will be seen upon you.
- 3 The Gentiles shall come to your light, And kings to the brightness of your rising.
- 4 "Lift up your eyes all around, and see: They all gather together, they come to you; Your sons shall come from afar, And your daughters shall be nursed at your side.
- 5 Then you shall see and become radiant, And your heart shall swell with joy; Because the abundance of the sea shall be turned to you, The wealth of the Gentiles shall come to you.
- Isa 60:18 Violence shall no longer be heard in your land, Neither wasting nor destruction within your borders; But you shall call your walls Salvation, And your gates Praise.
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- 19 "The sun shall no longer be your light by day, Nor for brightness shall the moon give light to you; But the LORD will be to you an everlasting light, And your God your glory.
- 20 Your sun shall no longer go down, Nor shall your moon withdraw itself; For the LORD will be your everlasting light, And the days of your mourning shall be ended.
- 21 Also your people shall all be righteous; They shall inherit the land forever, The branch of My planting, The work of My hands, That I may be glorified.
- 22 A little one shall become a thousand, And a small one a strong nation. I, the LORD, will hasten it in its time."

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Today's news includes stories about the incredible rudeness of people – of horrid crimes against humanity. And many cry out for the governments of the world's nations to solve the problems. These are not national problems– they are individual problems! Each individual has the power to do something to change this trend.

All of us here today believe Jesus to be the Son of God – the Messiah – the Savior of the world. But, even for those who do not believe it, there is a general, world-wide consensus that He has had a most extraordinary impact on history.

**One Solitary Life**



**He was born in an obscure village,  
The child of a peasant woman.  
He grew up in still another village,  
Where he worked in a carpenter shop  
Until he was thirty.**

**Then for three years  
He was an itinerant preacher.  
He never wrote a book.  
He never held an office.  
He never had a family or owned a house.  
He didn't go to college.  
He never visited a big city.  
He never traveled two hundred miles  
From the place where he was born.  
He did none of the things  
One usually associates with greatness.  
He had no credentials but himself.**

**He was only thirty-three  
When the tide of public opinion turned against him.**

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**His friends ran away.  
He was turned over to his enemies.  
And went through the mockery of a trial.**

**He was nailed to a cross  
Between two thieves.  
While he was dying,  
His executioners gambled for his clothing,  
The only property he had on Earth.  
When he was dead,  
He was laid in a borrowed grave  
Through the pity of a friend.**

**Twenty centuries have come and gone,  
And today he is the central figure  
Of the human race,  
And the leader of mankind's progress.**

**All the armies that ever marched,  
All the navies that ever sailed,  
All the parliament that ever sat,  
All the kings that ever reigned,  
Put together have not affected  
The life of man on Earth  
As much as that**

It is significant that God used only one man to save the world. Remember – a little leaven leavens the whole lump.

It doesn't begin with "us" - It must begin with each one of us