

Message Three

**The Enemy Satan's Leavening of the Church**

Scripture Reading: Matt. 13:33; 16:6, 11-12; Mark 8:15;  
Luke 12:1b; Rev. 2:20, 24; 17:4-6; 1 Cor. 5:7-8

**I. "The kingdom of the heavens is like leaven, which a woman took and hid in three measures of meal until the whole was leavened"—Matt. 13:33:**

- A. The church, as the practical kingdom of the heavens, with Christ, the unleavened fine flour, as its content, must be a loaf of unleavened bread—1 Cor. 5:7-8:
  1. However, the woman, signifying the Catholic Church, added leaven (signifying evil, heretical, and pagan things) into the fine flour (signifying Christ as the meal offering for the satisfaction of God and man)—cf. Lev. 2:4-5, 11.
  2. This woman is the great harlot of Revelation 17, who mixes abominations with the divine things; Jezebel, the pagan wife of Ahab, is a type of this apostate church—vv. 4-6; 1 Kings 16:31; 19:1-2; 21:23, 25-26; 2 Kings 9:7.
  3. The Catholic Church has fully leavened in a hidden way all the teachings concerning Christ; the Lord wants to recover all the leavened truths—cf. Gen. 18:6; Matt. 15:3; John 18:37-38.
  4. Such leavening is absolutely against the Scriptures, which strongly forbid putting any leaven into the meal offering—Lev. 2:4-5, 11.
- B. "Beware of the leaven of the Pharisees, which is hypocrisy"—Luke 12:1b:
  1. The teaching of the Pharisees was hypocritical—Matt. 23:13-15, 23, 25-32; cf. Rev. 17:4:
    - a. The apostate church is not built in a solid way with gold, pearls, and precious stones; she is only gilded with these treasures as ornaments for outward display and a false appearance—Rev. 17:4.
    - b. The significance of Achan's sin was his coveting a beautiful Babylonian garment in his seeking to improve himself, to make himself look better, for the sake of appearance—Josh. 7:21.

## THE GOSPEL OF MATTHEW

### Message Three (continuation)

2. The Pharisees were filled with the leaven of ambition and pride—Matt. 23:6-7; cf. 20:20-28.
- C. “Watch and beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and Sadducees” (Matt. 16:6); “then they understood that He did not say to beware of the leaven of bread, but of the teaching of the Pharisees and Sadducees” (v. 12):
  1. The teaching of the Sadducees denied the resurrection, angels, and spirits (Acts 23:8), like today’s modernism.
  2. Hence, both the teaching of the Pharisees and the teaching of the Sadducees were impure and evil and were likened to leaven, which was not to be seen among God’s people—Exo. 13:7.
- D. “Beware of...the leaven of Herod”—Mark 8:15:
  1. The leaven of Herod was his corruption and injustice in politics—cf. Rev. 17:1-2.
  2. Herod’s slaying of John the Baptist indicates Satan’s hatred, expressed by the darkness and injustice of the worldly power, toward the faithful forerunner of the Slave-Savior—Mark 6:26-27.

## **II. The enemy Satan has corrupted the church by leavening the church:**

- A. Satan leavened the initial church, typified by the two wave-loaves offered to God on the day of Pentecost (Lev. 23:15-17), as confirmed by the cases in Acts 5:1-11 and 6:1:
  1. Ananias and Sapphira, in hypocrisy, lied to the Holy Spirit—Acts 5:1-11:
    - a. They were not willing to offer everything cheerfully to God, but before man they acted as if they had offered all; they were just pretending.
    - b. Everything done in falsehood to receive glory from man is done in the principle of the harlot, not in the principle of the bride—John 5:44; 12:42-43.
    - c. It is a great matter for God’s children to be delivered from pretending before man in order to receive glory from man—Matt. 6:1-6; 15:7-8.

## CRYSTALLIZATION-STUDY OUTLINES

### Message Three (continuation)

- d. False consecration is sin, and false spirituality is also sin; true worship is in spirit and in truthfulness—John 4:24.
- 2. Acts 6:1 shows that at the beginning of the church life, trouble was caused by language differences—cf. Col. 3:10-11.
- B. Satan leavened the church in Corinth with the gross sin of fornication—1 Cor. 5:1-8.
- C. Satan leavened the church with different teachings, that is, with teachings other than the economy of God—1 Tim. 1:3-4.
- D. Satan leavened the early church with Judaism, Gnosticism, and asceticism—Col. 2:16; Acts 15:1-2; Gal. 6:15; Acts 11:2-3; Gal. 2:12-13; 1:14; Col. 2:8, 20-23.
- E. Satan leavened the church with Catholicism in the papal system, hierarchy, heresies, idolatry, and pagan practices—Rev. 2:18-29.
- F. Satan leavened the church with Protestantism in hierarchy, being living in name but dead in actuality, different teachings, traditions, modernism, worldliness, and divisions—3:1-6.
- G. Satan leavened the church with nationalism, racialism, socialism, liberalism, and politics—cf. Col. 3:10-11.
- H. Satan leavened the church with the believers' natural man, flesh and its lust, sin in their nature and sins in their deeds, and all the evil things listed in Galatians 5:19-21.

### **III. We need to enjoy Christ as our unleavened banquet, the reality of the Feast of Unleavened Bread, for the entire period of our Christian life—1 Cor. 5:7-8; Exo. 12:15-20:**

- A. This is a long feast, which we must keep not with the sin of our old nature, the old leaven, but with unleavened bread, which is the Christ of our new nature as our nourishment and enjoyment.
- B. If we live with Christ as our Substitute, have a new beginning of life, and deal with all exposed sin, the leaven in our lives, we will have a daily living that is worthy of being a memorial—Exo. 13:4-9.