

The Parable of the Leaven



The Church at Thyatira
and its corresponding Church Age¹
Under the Roman Catholic Church
(538 A.D. to 1514 A.D.)



Matthew 13:33 (NASB), “He spoke another parable to them, “The kingdom of heaven is like leaven, which a woman took and hid in three pecks of flour until it was all leavened.”



he fourth mystery is the parable of the leaven and is related to the church in Thyatira, which represents the condition of the church at the end of the sixth century (Matt. 13:33; cf. Rev. 2:18-29). Thyatira means **unceasing sacrifice**.

The mystery of the parable of the woman who took leaven and hid it in three measures of meal until the whole was leavened is opened by the church in Thyatira. This leaven doesn't refer to the leaven of bread but to the **doctrine** of the Pharisees and Sadducees (Matt. 16:11-12). In the New Testament we live in the spirit. The word we receive from God is the truth and we must practice it. When we don't practice the words that we hear, they end up becoming doctrine and mere teaching.

In Revelation 2:18, 20 we read, “And to the messenger of the church in Thyatira write: These things says the Son of God, He who has eyes like a flame of fire, and His feet are like shining bronze. But I have something against you, that you tolerate the woman Jezebel, she who calls herself a prophetess and teaches and leads My slaves astray to

¹ <http://dailyfood.ca/kingdom/kingdom6wed.html>

commit fornication and to eat idol sacrifices.” Jezebel represents the woman who took leaven and hid it in three measures of meal until the whole was leavened. At the time of the church in Pergamos, the politics of the Roman Empire were prevailing. Later, at the time of the church in Thyatira, the Roman religion began to prevail, chiefly through the Papal system. Everything began to be decided, not by God’s word, but by this woman, by this system that had its own teaching, its leaven, that caused mixture and confusion. The subtlety of this system is that the leaven of its own teaching is put into three measures of meal, which typify the Triune God: the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. Thyatira has the word, but it is mixed with leaven. It has a name—not the name of the Lord but of this prophetess.

According to history, the Catholic Church adopted the teaching of this woman and replaced the name of Jesus with the name of Mary. The Papal system and the traditions of the Roman church were valued more than the Lord’s word.

As a reaction against this, the Lord raised up Martin Luther. At that time only the clergy had access to the Bible. As Luther was studying the Bible, he read that **justification is by faith** and not by works. Through him this important truth was recovered, and the Bible became public. Moreover, at this same time the printing press was invented and the Bible became accessible to all the Christians.

Key Point: Treasure the word of God.

The Lesson of the Parable of the Leaven:

The Parables of the Mustard Seed and Leaven both show us the change from the pure, original faith to a corrupt and unnatural institution. The Parable of the Leaven gives us a little more detail in showing us that the change occurred because false religion (the woman) injected corrupt doctrine into the faith. Thus, we ought to expect corrupt teaching and corrupt practice in today’s church. So warned, we ought to be like the Bereans. When we hear or read something, we ought to search the scriptures to see whether these things are so.

Comment:

In Matthew 13, we see how Jesus Christ used parables to foretell certain situations that would affect God's church down through the centuries until His second coming. In the Parable of the Mustard Seed, He forecasts that the church would begin small and that evil, outside adversaries would try to subvert it from within. In the Parable of the Leaven (Matthew 13:33; Luke 13:20-21), He forewarns of internal doctrinal distortions.