

MYSTERIES OF THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN # 4

"THE LEAVEN"

I. AN ANALYSIS OF THIS PARABLE

- A. The woman here is a System of false religion. This is the symbol used to condemn the false teachers in the Church of Thyatira (Rev.2:20) and that which describes apostate Christendom in the future (Rev. 17:1-8).
- B. The leaven is evil doctrine or evil practice (Ex 12:15; Lev 2:11; 6:17; 10:12; Matt. 16:6-12; Mark 8:15; I Cor. 5:6, 3; Gal 5:9).
 1. Notice liberal interpretation views the woman as the Church, the leaven as the gospel and the meal as the world. This is not tenable for several reasons:
 - a. First of all, the "law of first mention" as well as everywhere else refers to leaven as that which is evil.
 - b. Secondly these parables are picturing opposition to the seed-sowing program. Making the woman the church or the leaven the gospel would be completely out of context here.
 - c. Thirdly we know that the gospel is not hidden in this age but rather published.
 2. There are 5 different forms of leaven mentioned in the N . T . which prove that leaven is that which corrupts through evil doctrine or practice.
 - a. First we have the leaven of the Pharisees which is hypocrisy (Lk. 12:1). They had religion but it was outward and sinful rather than inward and pure.
 - b. Secondly we have the leaven of the Sadducees (Matt. 16:6-12). These religionists denied the supernatural or the miraculous power of God.
 - c. Then there is the leaven of the Herodians (Mk. 12:13-17). This was the evil practices of the political crowd who did what gained them favor

with men rather than with God.

d. Fourthly we have the leaven of carnal practices among believers within the local church (I Cor. 5:6,7). This was to be purged out to prevent the corruption of others.

e. Finally we have the leaven of legalism (Gal.5:9). This was an attempt to mix law with grace which would corrupt the gospel message.

C. The meal in the parable refers to the doctrines concerning the person of Christ which were typified in the meal offering of the O. T. and eaten by the priests (Lev.: 2:1,2,3).

D. The three measures of meal were each a third part of an ephah which equaled one ephah and this was the amount offered as a meal offering in the O. T. by Abraham (Gen. 18:6), by Gideon (Judges 6:18,19), and by Hannah (I Sam. 1:24). Notice Ezek. 45:24; 46:5,7,11.

E. Hiding the leaven in the meal is a symbol of disobeying what the Word of God says (Lev. 2:11). The law of the offerings forbade leaven which is a type of sin, but it prescribed oil to temper or moisten every meal offering which is typical of the Holy Spirit (Ezek. 45:11). What this woman or system of false religion introduced was sinful teachings and practices concerning the doctrines of Christ.

II. WHAT WE CAN ANTICIPATE DURING THE COURSE OF THIS PRESENT AGE

A. We can expect a system of false religion to arise within Christendom which will introduce evil teachings and practices diverse from the doctrines of Christ and they will corrupt the teachings of Christendom so that it will become apostate as a whole.

B. We can expect this corruption to work like leaven or yeast permeating all of Christendom so that eventually it will be doctrinally corrupt concerning its teachings about the Lord Jesus Christ. In our present day there are those within Christendom who deny every cardinal doctrine of Christ- His virgin birth, His blood atonement, His bodily resurrection, His pre-tribulational rapture, and His pre-millennial return.

C. We can expect these evil teachings and practices to be hidden as the leaven was in the meal. Most folks don't know what organized religion today has within its ranks. The liberals and their corruptive teachings are

seldom exposed for their denials and departures and when they are, folks continue to support them.

- D. We can expect this system of false religion to become one organized and corrupt whole and then it will be judged during the tribulation period (Rev. 17:16,17).

III. SOME APPLICATIONS WE CAN MAKE FROM THIS PARABLE

- A. The first thing we should do is beware of the different forms of leaven or any evil teachings and practices concerning the things of Christ.
- B. Secondly, we should recognize where Christendom as a whole is headed and separate from this apostasy.
- C. Thirdly, we should understand that Christendom as a whole is being corrupted by evil teachings and practices from within its ranks and so we cannot support it as a whole because of the leaven in it. Those who support eccumenical efforts to unite organized Christianity are building the apostate, one world Church which the Lord will judge and may well find themselves a part of it.