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The Parables of Jesus Christ: The Cook's Leaven and the Kingdom of Heaven

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THE PARABLES OF JESUS CHRIST

PARABLE SIXTEEN: The Cook's Leaven and the Kingdom of Heaven (Mt. 13:33)

SURVEY

The Kingdom of Heaven can be likened to yeast as used by a woman in making bread. Even though she uses a large amount of flour, the yeast permeates every part of the dough.

SIGNIFICANCE

- This is the shortest of all Jesus' parables.
- It is the only one where the word leaven is used.

SPIRITUAL TRUTHS

- The key to interpreting this parable is one's understanding of the word "leaven." What does it stand for? There are two main views:
 1. It represents the gospel. This is the position of the postmillennialist. He is the one who believes the preaching of the gospel in and by itself will be able to usher in the thousand-year era of peace, at the end of which Christ will return.
 2. It represents the presence of evil. This is the position of the premillennialist. He is one who believes that in spite of gospel preaching, the world will become worse and that only the second coming of the King Himself at the beginning of the Millennium can usher in that golden era of peace. This seems to be the correct view. In fact, there are three symbols for evil in the Bible. These are:
 - a. Leprosy (Lev. 13-14; Num. 5:2)
 - b. The serpent (Gen. 3:1-2, 4, 13-14; Num. 21:8-9; Psa. 58:4; Isa. 27:1; Mt. 23:33; Rev. 12:9; 20:2)
 - c. Leaven—The *New Scofield Bible* says the following:

"Leaven, as a symbolic or typical substance, is always mentioned in the Old Testament in an evil sense. The usage of the word in the New

Testament explains its symbolic meaning. It is malice and wickedness as contrasted with sincerity and truth (1 Cor. 5:6-8). It is evil doctrine (Mt. 16:12) in its threefold form of Pharisaism, Sadduceeism, and Herodianism (Mt. 16:6; Mk. 8:15). The leaven of the Pharisees was externalism in religion (Mt. 23:14-16, 23-28); of the Sadducees, skepticism as to the supernatural and as to the Scriptures (Mt. 22:23, 29); of the Herodians, worldliness (Mt. 22:16-21; Mk. 3:6)." (Oxford University Press, New York, 1967, p. 1015.)

- Thus, this parable predicts the growth of satanic evil until the whole world is affected. It also answers the question of why Christ has not yet come.
 1. The postmillennialist says He has not returned because things are not yet good enough.
 2. The premillennialist says He has not returned because things are not yet bad enough. (See 1 Tim. 4:1-3; 2 Tim. 3:1-9; 4:1-4; 2 Pet. 3.)