

**A LITTLE LEAVEN**

**LEAVENS THE  
WHOLE LUMP**

**(GALATIANS 5:9; MATTHEW 13:33-35)**

# LEAVEN (Noun and Verb)

## A. Noun.

*zume* (ζύμη, 2219), “leaven, sour dough, in a high state of fermentation,” was used in general in making bread. It required time to fulfill the process. Hence, when food was required at short notice, unleavened cakes were used, e.g., Gen. 18:6; 19:3; Exod. 12:8. The Israelites were forbidden to use “leaven” for seven days at the time of Passover, that they might be reminded that the Lord brought them out of Egypt “in haste,” Deut. 16:3, with Exod. 12:11; the unleavened bread, insipid in taste, reminding them, too, of their afflictions, and of the need of self-judgment, is called “the bread of affliction.” “Leaven” was forbidden in all offerings to the Lord by fire, Lev. 2:11; 6:17. Being bred of corruption and spreading through the mass of that in which it is mixed, and therefore symbolizing the pervasive character of evil, “leaven” was utterly inconsistent in offerings which typified the propitiatory sacrifice of Christ.

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## ◆ “A Little Leaven” -

Metaphorically

- Typically refers to the pervasive influence of false doctrine & sin — Gal. 5:9; 1 Cor. 5:6

# Galatians 5:7–11 (NKJV)

<sup>7</sup> You ran well. Who hindered you from obeying the truth? <sup>8</sup> This persuasion does not come from Him who calls you. <sup>9</sup> A little leaven leavens the whole lump. <sup>10</sup> I have confidence in you, in the Lord, that you will have no other mind; but he who troubles you shall bear his judgment, whoever he is.

<sup>11</sup> And I, brethren, if I still preach circumcision, why do I still suffer persecution? Then the offense of the cross has ceased.

# 1 Corinthians 5:6–8 (NKJV)

<sup>6</sup> Your glorying *is* not good. Do you not know that a little leaven leavens the whole lump? <sup>7</sup> Therefore purge out the old leaven, that you may be a new lump, since you truly are unleavened. For indeed Christ, our Passover, was sacrificed for us. <sup>8</sup> Therefore let us keep the feast, not with old leaven, nor with the leaven of malice and wickedness, but with the unleavened *bread* of sincerity and truth.

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## ◆ “A Little Leaven” -

Metaphorically

- Typically refers to the pervasive influence of false doctrine & sin — Gal. 5:9; 1 Cor. 5:6
- “Leaven of the Pharisees & Sadducees, “which included their teaching & hypocrisy” - cf. Mt 16:5-12; Lk 12:1

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## “A Little Leaven” -

### **Matthew 16:5–12 (NKJV)**

<sup>5</sup> Now when His disciples had come to the other side, they had forgotten to take bread. <sup>6</sup> Then Jesus said to them, “Take heed and beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and the Sadducees.” <sup>7</sup> And they reasoned among themselves, saying, “It is because we have taken no bread.”

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## ◆ “A Little Leaven” -

### **Matthew 16:5–12 (NKJV)**

<sup>8</sup> 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? <sup>9</sup> Do you not yet understand, or remember the five loaves of the five thousand and how many baskets you took up? <sup>10</sup> Nor the seven loaves of the four thousand and how many large baskets you took up?”

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## “A Little Leaven” -

### Matthew 16:5–12 (NKJV)

<sup>11</sup> 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.” <sup>12</sup> 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.

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- ❖ If one alters the truth, even slightly, it is no longer truth — Gal. 1:6-9; 2 Cor. 11:4
- ❖ One small change to the truth leads to more and more changes to other aspects of the truth — 2 Tim 2:16-18; 3:13
- ❖ False doctrine needs to be uprooted, not just trimmed — 1 Ti. 4:6, 12-16; Tit. 1:10,11,14;

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- ◆ Sin starts small - but all sin is a BIG deal! — Mat 5:29,30; Rom 1:21-23
- ◆ Sin breeds MORE sin - becomes habitual! — Rom. 1:24-32; Eph 4:18,19
- ◆ ALL Sin affects the WHOLE person / group! — Josh. 7; 1 Cor. 5:6
- ◆ Sin Must be uprooted — 1 Sam 15:16-33; Col. 3:1-17

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## Colossians 3:5–11 (NKJV)

<sup>5</sup> Therefore put to death your members which are on the earth: fornication, uncleanness, passion, evil desire, and covetousness, which is idolatry. <sup>6</sup> Because of these things the wrath of God is coming upon the sons of disobedience, <sup>7</sup> in which you yourselves once walked when you lived in them.

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## Colossians 3:5–11 (NKJV)

<sup>8</sup> But now you yourselves are to put off all these: anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, filthy language out of your mouth. <sup>9</sup> Do not lie to one another, since you have put off the old man with his deeds, <sup>10</sup> and have put on the new *man* who is renewed in knowledge according to the image of Him who created him, ...

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## Matthew 13:33–35 (NKJV)

<sup>33</sup> Another parable He spoke to them: “The kingdom of heaven is like leaven, which a woman took and hid in three measures of meal till it was all leavened.”

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## Leaven used in a positive sense ...

- Some conclude "leaven" in the parable represents something evil ...
- Just because a term is used predominately in one sense does not mean it must always be understood in the same sense. (eisegesis) — CONTEXT
- Similar meaning to the previous parable — 31,32

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◆ “The kingdom of heaven is like leaven”

- **The Sower** (3-9), explanation (18-23).
- **The Tares** (24-30), explanation (36-43);
- **The Dragnet** (47-50).
- **The Mustard Seed** (31, 32),
- **The Leaven** (33).
- **The Hidden Treasure** (44); **The Pearl of Great Price** (45, 46).

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## ◆ “The kingdom of heaven is like leaven”

- The nature of yeast is such that once the process of leavening begins, it is impossible to stop.
- The kingdom would grow in numbers and nothing would be able to stop their advance.
- This idea fits with the nature of yeast and makes sense in the flow of these parables.

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## ◆ “The kingdom of heaven is like leaven”

- Its pervasive growth — Mt 28:19,20; Col. 1:6,23; 1 Thes. 1:8
- Spread by the influence of the word in the lives of men — Luke 17:20,21; John 3:3-5; 18:13; Revelation 11:15; Romans 10:17-18; 16:25-26
- God’s word will **fully** accomplish its purpose — Isaiah 55 :10,11

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## ◆ DON'T LOSE HEART...

- Don't measure the growth or success of the kingdom solely by visible standards — Luke 17:20-21
- The spread of the kingdom (the rule of God) is taking place wherever the "word of the kingdom" is being sown, and fruit will be borne as it falls on "good and noble hearts" — 1 Cor. 3:5-8

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## ◆ DO OUR PART ...

- Local churches must remain pure in doctrine — 2 Joh 1:9; Eph 4:4-15;
- Local churches must remain pure in practice — 1 Tim 5:16
- Local churches are to remain pure by enforcing God's requirements - 1 Cor. 5
- Shining as a light in this dark world by proclaiming and following the "word of life" — Phili 2:14-16

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## ◆ DO YOUR PART ...

- Yield the entirety of your heart to the Lord — Mark 12:29-31
- Purge your heart of all that would defile it and hinder your positive influence in the kingdom — Col. 3:1-11
- Allow the "leaven of the kingdom" to permeate your heart & life - we are to be salt and light — 2 Tim 2:15; Col. 3:12-17; 1 Pet. 1:13; Mt 5:13-16

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- **Hear** - The word of God - Luke 8:11; Rom 10:17
- **Believe** in Christ — Jn 8:24
- **Repent** — Luke 13:3,5
- **Confess** Jesus — Rom 10:9,10
- **Be baptized** in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins — Mk 16:16; Acts 2:38
- **Continue** following Jesus — becoming conformed to His image — 2 Col. 3:18

# A LITTLE LEAVEN

**LEAVENS THE  
WHAT KIND OF INFLUENCE ARE YOU  
HAVING ON THOSE AROUND YOU?  
WHOLE LUMP?**

(GALATIANS 5:9; MATTHEW 13:33-35)



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## LEAVENS THE WHOLE LUMP

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