



Get the Leaven Out

“Do not eat it with bread made with yeast, but for seven days eat unleavened bread, the bread of affliction, because you left Egypt in haste— so that all the days of your life you may remember the time of your departure from Egypt. Let no yeast be found in your possession in all your land for seven days.” (Deut. 16:2-3)

Beyond the Superficial

God often uses that which is physical (and easily understood) to teach spiritual realities. One of the most prominent object lessons in the scriptures is that of leaven (or yeast) working through a batch of dough. In Deuteronomy 16, Israel is reminded that leaven must not be used during the Passover meal, a meal that begins a seven day fast from leaven throughout all the land. Through this object lesson, God teaches us, his people, to be mindful of all pervasive influences that work under the surface and behind closed doors. *“For the Lord sees not as man sees: man looks on the outward appearance, but the Lord looks on the heart.” (1 Samuel 16:7, ESV)*

Keep the Festivals, Remove the Leaven (Deut. 16)

- **16:1.** Passover. Moses reminds the people of the important annual festival of Passover. The festival, which reenacts the night God delivered Israel from Egypt, is to take place on the fourteenth day of the first month on the Jewish calendar. This month, Abib, or Aviv is also called Nisan in post-exilic writings.
- **16:2-4.** The word “leaven” is used 22 times in the Old Testament and 17 times in the New Testament. The word “unleavened” is used 51 times in the OT and 9 times in the NT. Leaven is often used to represent sin, or a corrupting influence, which are improper for the people of God. Jesus, through his Apostle Paul, teaches the church today to be the “unleavened bread of sincerity and truth.” (1 Cor. 5:8)
- **16:8.** For seven days following Passover, Israel was to participate in the Feast of Unleavened Bread. More details about this feast, and the other annual feasts, can be found in Leviticus 23.
- **16:9-12.** The Feast of Weeks, a harvest celebration, honors God not only as deliverer, but as sustainer. (see Psalm 104:10-18)
- **16:13.** The festivals previously mentioned (Passover, Unleavened Bread, and Feast of Weeks) are celebrated in the Spring, while the Feast of Tabernacles is celebrated in Autumn. The Festival of Tabernacles is also called the Feast of Booths.
- **16:14.** God desired (and still desires) for his people to come joyfully into his presence. He also commands Israel to see to the needs of the most vulnerable including the servants, Levites (priestly tribe without land), foreigners, orphans, and widows. For God, the feast does not begin until the vulnerable receive care.
- **16:16.** The three festivals mentioned in this chapter require travel to God’s designated place.
- **16:18.** God’s heart for justice is made clear in his stated expectations for his judges. They are to accept no bribes and show no partiality. Biblical justice is not limited to the judicial system, however, but is seen in the care for all vulnerable parties, as mentioned above. (see Isaiah 1:17)



Emily, Glenn, Sharron celebrating the Passover at a Seder in 2019.

The Leaven of the Pharisees, Which is Hypocrisy

Meanwhile, when a crowd of many thousands had gathered, so that they were trampling on one another, Jesus began to speak first to his disciples, saying: **“Be on your guard against the yeast [leaven] of the Pharisees, which is hypocrisy.** There is nothing concealed that will not be disclosed, or hidden that will not be made known. What you have said in the dark will be heard in the daylight, and what you have whispered in the ear in the inner rooms will be proclaimed from the roofs. (Luke 12:1-2)

Four types of hypocrisy and why they matter:

1. _____ God is King
but _____ like you wear the crown.
“Why do you call me ‘Lord, Lord’ but do not do what I say?” (Lk. 6:46)
- This hypocrisy damages your witness to the world.
 - **Practice what you preach. _____ along the way.**

2. Correcting the sin in _____
before correcting the sin _____.
“Why do you look at the speck of sawdust in your brother’s eye and pay no attention to the plank in your own eye?” (Matt. 7:3)
- This hypocrisy leads to self-exaltation.
 - **Prove your hatred for sin by first _____ .**

3. Regularly speaking _____ but rarely showing _____.
“We have seen his glory, the glory of the one and only Son, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth.” (John 1:14b)
- This hypocrisy is an attempt to divorce the attributes of God.
 - **Never neglect love in the name of truth.**
 - **Expand your heart by caring for the widow, orphan, and foreigner.**

4. Using the veneer of _____ virtue to cover the rot of private vice. (Kevin DeYoung)
“There is nothing concealed that will not be disclosed or hidden that will not be made known. What you have said in the dark will be heard in the daylight, and what you have whispered in the ear in the inner rooms will be proclaimed from the roofs. (Luke 12:2-3)
- This hypocrisy cares more about who others *think you are* than who God *knows you to be*.
 - **Do the heart work.**
 - **Do a good deed every day this week for _____ .**



The word hypocrisy comes from the Greek ὑπόκρισις (hypokrisis), which means "play-acting."

*"The aim of our charge is love that issues from a pure heart and a good conscience and a sincere faith."
(1 Timothy 1:5, ESV)*

"For the eyes of the LORD range throughout the earth to strengthen those whose hearts are fully committed to him." (2 Chronicles 16:9)

Answers: Claiming; behaving; Repent; others; within; fighting your own; truth; love; public; God’s eyes only.