

Bread and Yeast rfm

The tempter said to Jesus, "If you are the Son of God command these stones to turn into bread." Jesus replied, "*Not on bread alone is man to live but on every utterance that comes from the mouth of God.*" (Matt 4:1-4) It is said the shape of stones in that desert look very much like loaves of bread.



Jesus' answer to the tempter indicated it was not the right time or right place for such a miracle. The spiritual power that flows from the Father, he tells us, is not to be used and abused in a prideful show.

But then there came to be a right time and place (Jn 6:1-15). It was Passover time and "five barley loaves and a couple of dried fish" were multiplied to feed five thousand and still yield twelve baskets left over. Some people say the miracle of this is that the people shared food they had hidden on their persons, a kind of sharing unheard of in those difficult days. If so, was it not that Jesus' teachings "*gave them a new spirit, taking from their bodies their stony hearts*" (Ez 36:26) and giving them hearts of flesh that cared and shared! Others say the loaves were multiplied, period, and that was the miracle. I believe that both occurred ... and that there were two miracles!

Recall that at another time the disciples were in a boat, and had forgotten to bring any bread except for one loaf (Mark 8:14-20). So when Jesus reminded them to beware of the "*yeast of the Pharisees*", they concluded it was because they had no bread. (Matt 16:6-8). When Jesus became aware of this he said, "*You of little faith, why do you conclude among yourselves that it is because you have no bread?*" Jesus became exasperated with them and called their attention the "*five loaves*" for five thousand." Jesus was telling them not to be concerned about physical bread which he could multiply if needed but rather be careful and not underestimate the effect of the Pharisees' misleading teachings for what they were "feeding" the people could spread out just as yeast multiplies.

Misleading teaching is an obvious problem in today's technological age when one understands how quickly messages can be communicated to wide audiences. Timothy (2 Tim 4:3-4) tells us: *For the time will come when people will not tolerate sound doctrine but, following their own desires and insatiable curiosity, will accumulate teachers and will stop listening to the truth and will be diverted to myths.*



Be careful and prayerful in digesting what you hear these days.

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