

What is Being Puffed Up?

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THIS BOOKLET IS NOT TO BE SOLD. The information provided is for the benefit of former members of the congregations of the Worldwide Church of God (WCG), and of current and prospective members of God's Church.

Physical leaven is used to puff up bread dough i.e., to fill it with small air bubbles to give it a bigger shape and texture. Spiritual leaven in a Christian's life also puffs him up but not in a physical way. What does it really mean for a Christian to be puffed up according to your Bible?

Preamble

Please Note: All comments in brackets [] or in parentheses () as well as highlighted text (bolded and/or in blue) are from the author of this study. Bible quotations are in maroon.

I think it is essential to clarify the question of the “Holy Spirit” before we begin this study. If we say that who or what is the “Holy Spirit” is the question that needs to be answered, we are starting from the assumption that there exists such a being as the Holy Spirit and that it is a separate and distinct being from God and the Word. The question which should be asked is who are the beings the Bible tell us are holy, whose composition is spirit and who have existed eternally? Either the Bible plainly tells us who are the separate and distinct beings that existed from all eternity who created all things (spirit beings and the material universe) or we have no way of getting an answer to our question.

The Holy Spirits of the God Family

The Bible tells us in Gen 1:1 that:

Gen 1:1 In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth.

The Hebrew word translated “God” is “Eloheem” which is the plural form of “Eloah which means “God”. The word “Eloheem” refers to “gods.” It is a uniplural noun like family, group, team, etc. In the beginning, there was therefore more than one God being in existence but how many were there?

Joh 1:1 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

Joh 1:2 The same was in the beginning with God.

Joh 1:3 All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made.

In the beginning when God created the heaven and the earth there was God and there was another being with God who was also God, the Word. How can these two beings both be God; isn't that impossible?

The word God indicates the kind of existence of these 2 beings: their nature is to be God in the same way that all human beings have the same human nature. However, having the same nature does not mean that all human beings constitute a single being; indeed, they are all separate and distinct beings with their own personalities. God and the Word have in common the same nature or, level and type of existence, but they are separate and distinct beings just like all human beings who have the same human nature are separate and distinct beings.

God the Father

We read in the Bible that God became a father when the Word became flesh (Phi 2:5-8) by being born of woman after having been conceived in the virgin Mary by the holy spirit being called God (Luke 1:35). God from that point on became God the Father and the Word, who was born as the flesh-and-blood Jesus of Nazareth became God's Son or the Son of God. He was both fully God (his father was God and fully human (his mother was the virgin Mary).

Jesus was God the Father's only begotten son at the time when He was conceived in Mary's womb but He was not to be the only one begotten of the Father. God the Father is the holy spirit being in the Godhead that calls men to salvation.

Joh 6:44 No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day.

Joh 6:65 And he said, Therefore said I unto you, that no man can come unto me, except it were given unto him of my Father.

Joh 18:9 That the saying might be fulfilled, which he spake, Of them which thou [God the Father] gavest me have I lost none.

1Pe 1:3 Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead,

God the Word and Spokesman

The Bible term for being called is to be spiritually begotten by God the Father (1Pe 1:3). When we are begotten, we become a spiritual embryo that can be born again as a glorified spirit being with eternal life. Those begotten of the holy spirit God the Father who follow their calling are then able to come to the holy spirit being called the Word and Spokesman (John 6:44; 65; 18:9) who then teaches them. The glorified Jesus-Christ as God the Father's Word and Spokesman is the holy spirit being that works in the minds of God the Father's called and chosen ones.

Joh 7:39 (But this spake he of the Spirit, which they that believe on him should receive: for the Holy Ghost was not yet given; because that Jesus was not yet glorified.)

Jesus had to first be glorified for it to be possible for Christians to have access to the holy spirit called the Word and Spokesman because the glorified Christ is the holy spirit being who works in the minds of God's saints (John 14:17) in the same way that Satan is the evil spirit that works in the minds of the children of disobedience (Eph2:2).

Joh 14:17 Even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him; for he [Christ] dwelleth with you, and shall be in you. [On the day of Pentecost, it would be in them and in all true Christians.]

Eph 2:2 Wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, [Satan] the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience:

The holy spirit God the Father calls men and those who follow their calling are then taught by the holy spirit called the Word and God the Father's Spokesman.

Joh 14:26 But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you.

The Holy Ghost

The expression “Holy Ghost” used in the Bible is in error as there are no ghosts in the Godhead but rather 2 beings that are holy (John 17:11; Isa 6:3) and spirit (John 4:24).

Joh 17:11 And now I am no more in the world, but these are in the world, and I come to thee. Holy Father, keep through thine own name those whom thou hast given me, that they may be one, as we are.

Isa 6:3 And one cried unto another, and said, **Holy, holy, holy**, is the LORD of hosts: the whole earth is full of his glory.

Joh 4:24 **God is a Spirit:** and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth.

These 2 God beings who are holy and spirit are the holy spirit beings of the God family who existed in the beginning at the creation of all things.

Joh 1:1 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

Joh 1:2 The same was in the beginning with God.

Joh 1:3 All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made.

And, the Word who was with God is before all things i.e., *nothing* existed before He created them whether made of spirit or matter.

Col 1:15 [Christ] Who is the image of the invisible God, the first-born of every creature:

Col 1:16 For by him [the Word who became Jesus-Christ] were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him:

Col 1:17 And he is before all things, and by him all things consist.

In the beginning before anything either physical or spiritual was created, there was God and the Word who existed before all things and no other being is mentioned as having existed with them. There is no bib-

lical evidence that there ever existed a third, separate and distinct personage in the Godhead called the “Holy Spirit” who dwelt in eternity with God and the Word.

God is a Family

Throughout the Bible we can find many verses which clearly indicates the existence of family relations between God and the Word and God’s called, chosen and faithful.

Mat 11:27 All things are delivered unto me of my Father: and no man knoweth the Son, but the Father; neither knoweth any man the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him.

Mat 12:50 For whosoever shall do the will of my Father which is in heaven, the same is my brother, and sister, and mother.

Joh 20:17 Jesus saith unto her, Touch me not; for I am not yet ascended to my Father: but go to my brethren, and say unto them, I ascend unto my Father, and your Father; and to my God, and your God.

God is clearly a family in which many can be ultimately born again by a resurrection from the dead to eternal, glorified spirit life in God’s Kingdom.

Rom 8:29 For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he [God’s Son] might be the firstborn among many brethren.

Col 1:18 And he [the glorified Christ] is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all things he might have the preeminence.

Christ was the first to be born again by a resurrection from the dead to be followed by many brethren.

Bible Writing Convention

The practice in the Bible has been to simply use the expression “the Holy Spirit” without indicating which God personage in the Godhead the expression represents. Over time, because of this practice, just about everybody has come to believe that the Holy Spirit is a separate and distinct God being in the Godhead but, there is no single verse or group of verses in the Bible that prove the existence of such a third being in the Godhead. The words “holy” and “spirit” are adjectives that describe the nature of

God the Father and of God the Word i.e., they are holy beings made of spirit.

Whenever we encounter the expressions the “Holy Spirit” or simply the “Holy Spirit” in the Bible we must look at the context to determine of which holy spirit being of the Godhead the Bible is talking about: the holy spirit, God the Father or the holy spirit, the Word and Spokesman.

The Word is the holy spirit being in the Godhead who carries out the instructions and wishes of the holy spirit, God. He is the faithful son who seeks to do his father’s will in all things. He is the member of the God family that did the work of creating the heaven and the earth, who ruled over ancient Israel through Moses and his human successors, He is the one who became a man who suffered and died to be God the Father’s perfect sacrifice for sin and make the salvation of mankind possible, etc. and He came to reveal the Father to those who follow the Father’s calling.

Making Things Clearer

In this study, when referring to God’s spirit who, depending on the circumstances can be the holy spirit personage called God the Father or the holy spirit personage called God the Word and Spokesman, I will not capitalize either of the adjectives “holy” and “spirit”. This is in order to not perpetuate the false impression in the minds of readers that there is a 3rd being in the Godhead called the “Holy Spirit.” Instead, I will refer to either of the holy spirits in the God family as being God’s spirit without capitalizing the word “spirit” to make it plain that we are not referring to a third God being in the God family called the “Holy Spirit” but to one of the 2 God beings in the Godhead.

God’s family is presently made up of 2 holy spirit beings to which are to be added thousands and possibly millions of other holy spirit beings when God’s plan of salvation for mankind has reached its end. The saints that endure in the faith until the end of their natural human life, will be resurrected as individual holy spirit beings in God’s Kingdom when it is established.

There are two studies which you can read regarding what is the “Holy Spirit” and decide for yourself in light of the Bible-based evidence offered if such a being exists in the Godhead. These studies are: [What is the Holy Spirit? Cliff Notes Version](#) and [Who or What is the Holy Spirit?](#)

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The Bible warns Christians to beware of a spiritual condition which it calls being “puffed up.” Yearly, during the Feast of the Unleavened, the ministry focused their preaching on the subject of leaven as a symbolic representation of sin and on the feast as being a reminder to true Christians that they have to spend their whole lives coming out of sin to the best of their abilities which is their part in the salvation process.

“Leaven” in the Bible has different meanings depending on whether we are reading about Old Testament (OT) Israel or God’s New Testament Church. The differences are due to that, as a general rule, the Old Testament is physical and material while the New Testament is spiritual. However, as any long-time student of the Bible knows, it is often necessary to constantly go back and forth from one to the other to get the full and correct understanding of the doctrines and teachings of the Bible.

Old Testament Israel amply demonstrates how it is impossible for man to know and be able to make the choice to obey God without the presence in their minds of the holy spirit God the Word and Spokesman. Unless called men are blind to the existence of God and His law and it is completely impossible for them to choose to obey Him (Rom 8:7).

Rom 8:7 Because the carnal mind [the human mind without the holy spirit God the Word in it] is enmity [hostile] against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be.

Choice is only possible when there is a known alternative. If I do not know that God exists, I cannot choose to obey Him or not.

Mankind was cut off from God when the first man, Adam and his wife followed Satan's suggestion to decide for themselves right and wrong and be like God. This is what the original sin was all about. He and his wife were expelled from the Garden of Eden and they were, them and their descendants, cut off from God. Mankind, but for those whom the holy spirit God the Father would call and choose would be cut off from God until the 2nd Coming of Christ.

Ancient Israel

Israel was a descendant of Abraham and an inheritor of the promises made to Abraham. The promises were transmitted from generation to generation onto Jacob who was also a descendant of Abraham. Jacob whom God renamed Israel would have 12 children and they would become the 12-tribe nation of Israel of which Judah is but one of the tribes constituting the nation of Israel. The Jews are only a small part of Israel, they are not all of Israel.

The OT nation of Israel was given God's annual holy days one of which is the Days of Unleavened Bread. Unleavened bread to them was a reminder (Deu 16:3) of their hasty departure from Egypt on the 15th of Nisan or Abib at twilight at the very beginning of the 15th day of the month (Num 33:3).

Deu 16:3 Thou [ancient Israel] shalt eat no leavened bread with it; seven days shalt thou eat unleavened bread therewith, even the bread of affliction; for thou camest forth out of the land of Egypt in haste: that thou mayest remember the day when thou camest forth out of the land of Egypt all the days of thy life.

Num 33:3 And they [Israel] departed from Rameses [an Egyptian city] in the first month, on the fifteenth day of the first month; on the morrow after the passover the children of Israel went out with an high hand in the sight of all the Egyptians.

They left so fast that they brought their bread dough without leaven in it since they would have no time to bake it and the dough if leavened would spoil; the baking process stops the effect of the leaven. During the night of the Passover [the 14th of Nisan] the firstborn of man and

beast throughout Egypt had died and the whole nation was in turmoil. All were grieving the death of their firstborn and were burying their dead when Israel left Egypt at twilight at the beginning of the 15th of Abib.

The days according to the Bible begin at twilight which is the time between when the sun has set and it is not yet dark and they end at the setting of the sun. They don't start at in the middle of the night, that is midnight.

Egypt was in shock and no longer wanted the Israelites to remain among them and were anxious to have them leave Egypt fearing even greater plagues might come upon them should they not leave. They gave the Israelites all they needed for them to be able to leave Egypt for as slaves they were without the means to travel.

While Egypt was overcome with grief from the death of their first-born, Israel left hastily before the Egyptians could recover their senses. This is especially true for Pharaoh who was only informed days later of Israel's departure from Egypt. Israel had already been journeying for 3 days (see Ex 13 & 14) when Pharaoh was told of Israel's departure.

Exo 14:5 And it was told the king of Egypt that the people fled: and the heart of Pharaoh and of his servants was turned against the people, and they said, Why have we done this, that we have let Israel go from serving us?

Israel left on its own without Pharaoh having officially given them the permission to leave. This is why Exo 14:5 clearly says that the people fled. They would not have had to flee if Pharaoh had finally given them permission to leave. The Israelites stayed up all night all dressed and ready to at sunrise, take advantage of the shock created by the death of Egypt's first born, spoil the Egyptians and leave (flee) in great haste before the Egyptians could recover their senses. This is why they were able to get 3 days' journey from Egypt before Pharaoh found out that they had left; he didn't know they had left Egypt until being told they were gone. Had he given them permission to leave, there would have been no need for anyone to tell him they had left.

The unleavened bread that Israel ate for seven days was a reminder of their miraculous escape from slavery in Egypt (Deu 16:3). They were the slaves of Pharaoh who was so powerful that they could never have had any hope of ever regaining their freedom. Pharaoh is a physical type of Satan the devil whose power is to deceive the whole world and whose

power of deception is so great that only God can remove man's spiritual blindness.

The holy days for ancient Israel had no spiritual meaning as like the rest of the world, it was a carnal nation and God's truth requires the in-dwelling presence of the holy spirit God the Word and Spokesman for it to be understood by man. Even with the Logos, the pre-incarnate Christ, leading them through Moses, they never knew or understood who was the being or entity that had effected their liberation from Egyptian slavery. As soon as Moses was no longer among them for 40 days, they continued their idol worshiping imagining God to be a golden calf. Many of them had left Egypt carrying their idols with them.

Eze 20:6 In the day that I lifted up mine hand unto them, to bring them forth of the land of Egypt into a land that I had espied for them, flowing with milk and honey, which is the glory of all lands:

Eze 20:7 Then said I unto them, Cast ye away every man the abominations of his eyes, and defile not yourselves with the idols of Egypt: I am the LORD your God.

Eze 20:8 But they rebelled against me, and would not hearken unto me: **they did not every man cast away the abominations of their eyes, neither did they forsake the idols of Egypt:** then I said, I will pour out my fury upon them, to accomplish my anger against them in the midst of the land of Egypt.

Basically, they remained ignorant of who was God and to this day, their physical descendants as well as the whole of mankind don't and cannot know God.

The Feast of the Unleavened or the Days of the Unleavened

With God's New Testament (NT) Church having in it the holy spirit God the Word and Spokesman (those whose abiding attitude is to obey God to the best of their abilities after their calling), God's 2nd annual holy days has a very different meaning. And, it is not referred to anywhere in the New Testament (NT) as being the Feast of Unleavened **Bread**. It is celebrated on the same date, but NT Israel is a spiritual nation which has no relationship to the OT physical nation of Israel.

This is explained at length and in detail in the following study: [The Days of the Unleavened](#)

Most flesh-born Israelites continue to be unconverted and the time of the conversion of OT Israel and physical Israelites will occur during the Millennium and the Last Great Day. They will all be called and be given the choice to follow or not their calling and those who do, will then become chosen and part of the spiritual nation of Israel.

In the New Testament, God's 2nd annual holy days is never referred to as being the Days of Unleavened Bread except when talking about the Jews' Days of Unleavened Bread. The Jews rejected Christ and Paul that was sent to them and kept on celebrating the annual feast days in the same way as ancient Israel had in addition to having added other requirements which were not initially part of their celebration. Again, I refer you to the previously mentioned study for a detailed review of the celebration in New Testament times of God's 2nd annual holy day.

For 7 days OT Israel was to eat unleavened bread and so be perfectly unleavened, physically speaking, 7 being God's number of completion or perfection symbolically speaking. But **NT Christians can never in their lives be without sin.**

1Jn 1:8 If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.

It is impossible for a truly converted Christian not to sin but it is very possible for a Christian to be perfect in his attitude of obedience to God in all things. It is something he can do and this is his part in the salvation process; not being without sin but maintaining a sincere attitude of obedience to God in all things to the best of his abilities. A Christian is then under grace, God's imputes no sin to him but rather imputes to him Christ's perfect holy righteous character which is what saves him. Please see the following study where God's "imputation" process is explained: [Salvation by Imputation](#)

Now going back to the focal point of this study. Christians are to be an unleavened lump as Paul says in the following Scriptures but if leaven represents sin, it becomes impossible for a Christian to be an unleavened lump as we have just seen.

1Co 5:7 Purge out therefore the old leaven, that ye may be a new lump, as ye are unleavened. For even Christ our passover is sacrificed for us:

But how are they to be a new, unleavened lump? By having no sin in their lives as ancient Israel had no physical leaven in their bodies after having abstained from eating leaven for 7 days? But God says true

Christians will remain sinners until their death despite their best efforts and anyone saying he has no sin is a liar and the truth is not in him (1 John 1:8).

1Co 5:8 Therefore let us keep the feast, not with old leaven, neither with the leaven of malice and wickedness; but with the unleavened *bread* of sincerity and truth. [Keep the feast as you have been taught in obedience to the instructions I have given you which were given to me by Christ and therefore God.]

Please note that in 1Co 5:8 the word “bread” is in italic which means it is not part of the original text but was added in by the translators. New Testament Christians are to keep the feast with the unleaven of sincerity and truth not with the unleavened *bread* of sincerity and truth. NT Christians do not worship God or keep His feasts through physical rituals instituted for Old Testament Israel which was a carnal-minded nation that could not know, understand or be subject to God’s spiritual truth. NT Christians are to worship God in spirit and in truth having in them the holy spirits of the Godhead.

Joh 4:23 But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship him.

Joh 4:24 God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth.

In John 4:23, God says the hour is coming and now is i.e., has come when true worshippers i.e., those called and chosen, those of God’s NT Church, His spiritual nation of Israel which started on the day of Pentecost, must worship the Father in spirit and in truth i.e., there will no longer be any need to worship God through physical rituals as ancient Israel was commanded to do.

The only possible way for ancient Israel to demonstrate its obedience to God was by observing the physical rituals and ceremonies commanded them by God through Moses. Ancient Israel was blind to the spiritual truth of God that can only be known by revelation from God and the holy spirit God the Word and Spokesman (see John 7:39 quoted below) was not yet available but in exceptional circumstances to men chosen to write the books of the Old Testament or to be God’s prophets to Israel such as Isaiah, Ezekiel, Ezra, Nehemiah, etc.

In New Testament times, true Christians worship God by studying God's Holy Bible and believing the truth as God reveals it to them i.e., by letting their minds be renewed by God's truth and living their lives accordingly as best they can. True Christians with minds regenerated by the holy spirit God the Word no longer think that the world is not such a bad place after all.

1Jn 2:15 Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him.

Following their conversion, they do not look back at the world longingly as Lot's wife did and lost her physical life. True Christians who continue to love the world out of which they have been called to be separate, will, like Lot's wife, lose their life. Only this time it will not be their physical life; it will be their eternal life.

The hour when true Christians are to worship God in spirit and in truth came when Christ was resurrected (John 7:39) and ascended back to His Father (Joh 16:7).

Joh 7:38 He that believeth on me, as the scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water.

Joh 7:39 (But this spake he of the Spirit, which they that believe on him should receive: for the Holy Ghost was not yet given; because that Jesus was not yet glorified.)

Joh 16:7 Nevertheless I tell you the truth; It is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him unto you.

From the day of Pentecost, God's Spirit would be made available to those who would be called and chosen by the holy spirit God the Word and Spokesman on up to the end of God's plan of salvation for mankind i.e., until the end of the Last Great Day and the sentencing in the Great White Throne Judgment of the wicked. During the Millennium (Joel 2:28) and the Last Great Day (John 7:37) all will be called by the holy spirit God the Father.

What was then the unleaven mentioned by Paul which true Christians are to have? What was the leaven that they were to purge out of their lives so as to be a new unleavened lump? If leaven is sin and, true Christians will always have sin in their lives, then they can't ever be a new, unleavened lump.

1Jn 1:8 If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.

Let's see what Christ tells us is represented by "leaven."

The Leaven of the Pharisees

As we have often been taught, Christ is the revelator and the Bible, which is Christ in writing, gives us the correct meaning of its symbols. God in New Testament (NT) times speaks to true Christians through His Holy Bible and not by prophets. Christ is the Word and the Bible is Christ in writing.

Heb 1:1 God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets,

Heb 1:2 **Hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son,** whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds;

The sure way for us to know what leaven represents for NT Christians is to search the Scriptures as the Bereans did (Act 17:10-11) and this we will do in this study.

And so it is that we read in the gospel of Matthew that Christ told His disciples that the leaven of the Pharisees was the sin of the Pharisees and that when He was speaking about the "leaven of the Pharisees," He was not talking about bread as they thought He was.

Mat 16:6 Then Jesus said unto them, **Take heed and beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and of the Sadducees.**

Mat 16:11 How is it that ye do not understand that I spake it not to you concerning bread, that ye should beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and of the Sadducees?

Mat 16:12 Then understood they how that he bade them not beware of the leaven of bread, but of **the doctrine of the Pharisees and of the Sadducees.**

Luk 12:1 In the mean time, when there were gathered together an innumerable multitude of people, insomuch that they trode one upon another, he began to say unto his disciples first of all, **Beware ye of the leaven of the Pharisees, which is hypocrisy.**

We know that the Pharisees and Sadducees were teaching the truth given

them by God through Moses but that they did not live their lives according-ly. They did not accept God as the absolute authority in their lives.

Mat 23:2 Saying, **The scribes and the Pharisees sit in Moses' seat:**

Mat 23:3 **All therefore whatsoever they bid you observe, that observe and do; but do not ye after their works: for they say, and do not.**

In Luke 12:1, we read that the leaven of the Pharisees was hypocrisy i.e., they knew the truth and made an outward show of following it but in their personal lives they weren't doing so.

They had an outward show of obedience to God to look good before men but their hearts were far from Him. Christ likened them to whitened sepulchers which looked really good on the outside but which inside were full of unsightly, disgusting and repulsive dead men's bones.

They knew and taught the truth but did not themselves, follow it. Why?

Paul gives us the answer in 1 Cor'ns 5; 2; 8 (see below) where he is reprimanding some members of the Corinthian churches for being puffed up, a mixed metaphor where the effect of physical leaven on bread dough is used to illustrate the effect of spiritual leaven on Christians which is to raise themselves in authority in their lives above God. Leaven puffs up dough i.e., it causes a lump of dough to increase several times its original size by the formation of air bubbles in it which results from the fermentation process caused by the yeast. Basically, the increase in size is all air and not substance; there is not more bread, it is the same amount of bread that is made to look bigger by the leaven added to the bread dough.

1Co 5:2 **And ye are puffed up, and have not rather mourned, that he that hath done this deed might be taken away from among you.**

1Co 5:8 **Therefore let us keep the feast, not with old leaven, neither with the leaven of malice and wickedness; but with the unleavened *bread* of sincerity and truth. [The word "bread" is not part of the original text.]**

Spiritual leaven causes a Christian to rise up, to become puffed up but of course not in a physical sense. The "rising up" and the "puffing up" is in terms of putting ourselves above God as the supreme authority in our

lives. We refuse to allow God to rule us; we refuse to submit to Him in all things; we still want to have our own way in certain matters; we find ourselves disagreeing with God and choosing to follow our own mind because we don't think God has it right and we do.

Being puffed up is not a specific sin, it is an abiding attitude of mind where one sets himself up as the criterion for determining right and wrong after having come to the knowledge of the truth. The determination of right and wrong then for them becomes a personal decision.

Experience in God's Church has demonstrated that having a bit of knowledge about the Scriptures caused not a few to think all of a sudden that they were great teachers of the truth. Others who had been given a bit of authority over congregations came to see themselves as having the same authority as the ordained ministry and, in the days of the apostles, local leading men took over congregations. The ultimate puffing up is of course with respect to God where converted Christians come to think of themselves as knowing better than God what is right and wrong and go back to living their lives according to their own self-devised criteria as they did before their conversion.

As Paul states, knowledge causes one to be puffed up i.e., for some, now that they have been given to understand some of the truth of God, they think they understand it all and even know it better than those who originally taught it to them when God first opened their minds to understand it.

Being "puffed up" or "being a leavened lump" means we are essentially saying to God, "I know better than you do; I will follow my own understanding of what I should do; I will not accept that your authority in this matter is higher than mine."

The specific puffing up of which Paul was speaking in 1 Cor'ns 5 was that the members of the Corinthian churches were tolerating among themselves a prospective member that was having sex with his father's wife contrarily to Paul's command that any such person should be excluded from their congregation. But the members thought they knew better than Paul and didn't put the sinning individual out of the congregation as Paul had instructed them to do in such cases. They elevated themselves over Paul in authority; they were puffed up against Paul and, in the process, God. What was the leaven puffing them up? They thought they knew better than Paul what should be done with that particular sinner and by doing so they were refusing to submit to God's Word and authority conveyed to them through Paul in this matter.

Being “puffed up” spiritually-speaking is basically a refusal to obey God by voluntarily rejecting His authority in our lives. Instead, we appoint ourselves as the supreme authority in our lives. This is usually not done for all things but only with respect to certain teachings which we find particularly objectionable as they come in sharp conflict with some of our strongly held but false beliefs that we had before our conversion.

We refuse God’s correction which all must submit to if they are to be saved. Before our conversion we did not know the truth but upon being taught it, we must submit to it no matter how difficult it is for us to abandon our former beliefs which we thought were so right. This has caused many in God’s church to stumble.

So, leaven, in the NT is a material symbol for pride against God or lack of humility before God which results in sinfulness i.e., a willful decision not to obey God in certain matters which is an unpardonable sin which leads to loss of salvation. Sinning willingly i.e., sins committed as a result of the weakness of our flesh is covered by grace but sins committed willfully i.e., in rebellion against God are not forgiven whatever they may be.

The unpardonable sin of the Pharisees, the leaven of the Pharisee, the way in which they knowingly rebelled against God, was their hypocrisy. They knew who Jesus was and opposed him at every opportunity.

Joh 3:1 There was a man of the Pharisees, named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews:

Joh 3:2 The same came to Jesus by night, and said unto him, Rabbi, **we know** that thou art a teacher come from God: for no man can do these miracles that thou doest, except God be with him.

Leaven is not a specific sin; it can be any sinful behavior of which we are justifying ourselves. Leaven spiritually speaking is willful opposition to what we know to be the truth.

What makes a Christian an unleavened lump i.e., a Christian to whom God does not impute sin, is his attitude of wanting to obey all of God’s law.

When we start exempting ourselves from certain aspects of God’s law because we don’t think it is applicable to us, because times have changed, we’re not the kind of person that can follow this particular law, I was born this way and cannot change, etc. we are no longer under

grace, our sins are no longer forgiven, we are no longer an unleavened lump and we have lost our salvation.

Someone who is an unleavened lump is not someone without sin in his life but rather, it is someone who is not in opposition to any aspects of what he knows to be the truth of God. Leaven spiritually speaking is not a specific sin or sins but rather an attitude of rebellion against the truth of God which makes us a leavened lump as our sins are then no longer forgiven. Leaven in the Old Testament was simply physical yeast used to make bread dough rise; it had no connotation to being sin in any way.

Proverbs 11:2 gives us the different outcomes of pride and of being humble (not puffed up) before God.

Pro 11:2 When pride cometh, then cometh shame: but with the lowly is wisdom.

What this verse is saying is that it is shameful for a converted Christian to oppose himself to God once He has revealed Himself to him and indeed, with those who submit to God, who humble themselves, who are lowly (don't raise themselves up "puff themselves up" above God as the supreme authority in their lives) is wisdom i.e., they have the truth of God guiding them and they prosper.

God's wisdom, truth or revelation is only with those who humble themselves to obey Him; who submit to His authority in all things even the ones they disagree with trusting God to be right.

Pro 14:3 In the mouth of the foolish [truly converted individuals who oppose themselves to one or more aspect of God's law] is a rod of pride [their pride will result in their being punished as it will lead to them breaking God's law intentionally]: but the lips of the wise [they tell God they want His rulership in their lives] shall preserve them. [keep them from experiencing the bad consequences of acting contrarily to God's law because they are trying to follow it to the best of their abilities.]

Pro 16:18 Pride goeth before destruction, and an haughty spirit before a fall.

Refusing to follow God's truth comes before destruction in the Lake of Fire; and refusing to submit to God, before ultimately losing all the truth we had been given and again becoming blind; leads to a blindness that will not be removed a second time.

Heb 6:4 For it is impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Ghost,

Heb 6:5 And have tasted the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come,

Heb 6:6 If they shall fall away, to renew them again unto repentance; seeing they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put him to an open shame.

Christ died once to be the perfect sacrifice for the sins of mankind, but He will not do so a second time for those who fall away i.e., voluntarily and in rebellion against God, go back to having themselves be the criterion of right and wrong in their lives.

The Feast of the Unleavened in NT times is the feast that teaches the Christian's part in the salvation process which is that he must self-willingly and without coercion of any kind subordinate his will to God's will in all things, even the ones he disagrees with, after he has been given to come to the knowledge of the truth at the time of his conversion. This is what makes him an "unleavened lump." Whenever he is resisting God, he is elevating himself (puffing himself up) above God's authority in his life; he is rising up against God's authority placing himself in authority over God; he refuses to humble himself before God and to accept His authority in his life. His sins are then no longer forgiven.

Spiritual leaven manifests itself in different sinful ways in a Christian's life but essentially, it always has to do with submitting or not to God's authority in all things; to allowing or not, God to be the supreme authority in our lives. Being "leavened" and being "puffed up" spiritually speaking is to refuse to submit to God's authority in our lives because we think we can better determine right from wrong than God can and because it serves our purpose of not wanting to let go of some of the sinfulness in our lives.

In Conclusion

We can see that the problem in true Christians' lives is not so much sin which of course we must seek to overcome as much as we can, as it is making sure we have removed all remnants of our past opposition to God [spiritual leaven] when we were unconverted and are maintaining an attitude of obedience to God in all things which prevents us from committing the unpardonable sin for which there is no sacrifice i.e., elevating ourselves over God by again setting ourselves up as the highest

authority in our lives as we did before our conversion. We are then no longer under grace; our sins are no longer forgiven and we have become a leavened lump.

The first man rejected God's authority over him and set out to live his life in accordance with what "he" thought was right even though God had warned him that if he took it upon himself to decide right and wrong rather than relying on Him, he would surely die. He was not to elevate his authority over that of God. Adam made himself the supreme authority in his life rather than God.

There is a way that seems right to a man but the ends thereof is death (Pr 14:12; 16:25).

This was the case for all of us before our calling. After our calling we must be vigilant to ensure God remains the supreme authority in our lives; that we do not again become puffed up against Him and in the process commit the unpardonable sin of sinning willfully against Him by once again, establishing ourselves as the supreme authority in our lives instead of God and of going back to relying on ourselves rather than God to define good and evil for us.

The Days of the Unleavened or the Feast of the Unleavened ([The Days of the Unleavened](#)) is a reminder of one of the key steps in God's master plan of salvation for mankind. It is a yearly reminder that we must maintain throughout our lives our unleavened spiritual state of mind or attitude of not opposing ourselves to God in any way; to maintain the intense and sincere desire to obey God in all things which we had at the time of our conversion so as to remain under grace, to be and remain an unleavened lump and inherit salvation. We must keep our minds free of spiritual leaven i.e., we must never allow back into our minds any remnant of our former attitude of rebellion against God when we made ourselves the highest authority in our lives and refused God's authority over us.

During the Days of the Unleavened we examine ourselves to make sure there are no areas of our lives where the spiritual leaven of placing ourselves above God as the supreme authority has crept back into our lives.

Christians must accept God as the supreme authority in all aspects of their lives so that the sins we commit despite our most sincere desire to obey God after our conversion are forgiven.

We must remain an "unleavened lump" from the day of our conversion right on up to the end of our natural lives.

