

THE 18 MINUTE RULE

Matthew 26:26

26) And as they were eating, Jesus took bread, and blessed *it*, and brake *it*, and gave *it* to the disciples, and said, Take, eat; this is my body.

The religious Jews of Judaism have their traditional teachings that are astoundingly and uniquely interesting. One such teaching that focuses on the Passover is understood by practicing Jews as the “18 Minute Rule.” The most obvious and unfortunate fact in Judaism, and even surrounding the Jew’s current national dilemma, is they have no temple for the scriptural protocol regarding Passover worship as taught in the Mosaic Law. Therefore, today, a long-held tradition dictates that they must forthrightly celebrate the Holy Day with just a simple meal until the rebuilding of their temple and the reinstating of animal sacrifices for worship.

This is the future hope of every religious Jew of Judaism. The Passover meal must be without leaven. Consequently, that includes no leaven anywhere in any dwelling, whether residential or even a business dwelling. No financial profit can be made from any

leaven ingredients or sale of leaven products during Passover. No contact with leaven on any level whatsoever, period, during the eight days comprising the Feast of Passover. Much cleaning and purging of potential leaven are required before Passover in appreciation of the spirit of carefulness. The bread they make for Passover can only be made from flour from any of the five ingredients required under the Law. Herein is the simplistic process for the making of unleavened bread as required for the Holy Day. Flour mixed with one grain, add water, bake and eat. That's it.

However, once water touches the flour, because of the potential within that one grain itself to become leaven, if it sits idle, unattended, or untouched, the Jew, when finished kneading, must make haste to bake and eat or else expeditiously return to the mundane of kneading. Again, the orthodox Jew, bound to the current Levitical standards, understands he only has 18 minutes to bake and eat the bread, whenever kneading ceases, lest the bread is considered leaven and must be burned. If he should eat the bread once it is recognized as leavened, he is to be cut off from God by the priest. For the religious Jew, the penalty is as severe as the death penalty itself could ever be.

However, once water comes in contact with the flour, as long as the bread is still continually being kneaded and constantly being worked with, you have no such timetable or time restrictions involved to bake and eat. But once you suspend the kneading process, you must bake and eat the bread within 18 minutes. Haste is made, knowing the potential of that one grain that will create leaven if left unattended. The bread will self-rise or “rise” sovereignly on its own when left alone because of that one little grain. The continual kneading process keeps that grain, and subsequently, all the flour dormant or unleavened. The expeditious process to bake and eat reflects the suddenness and urgency that the Hebrews had to exercise in departing Egypt that eventful night remembered and memorialized as, The Passover by hurriedly baking, eating, and quickly fleeing.

The theological analogies are rich in spiritual symbolism for apostolic new covenant believers. While Judaism is in opposition to the new covenant doctrines concerning God and the covenant of redemption, as they blindly hold to traditions of men, any spiritual symbolism that highlights biblical truth can be appreciated. Henceforth, the basic tenets of new covenant teaching recognize the flesh as a type of leaven. Conceived and shaped by iniquity from our mother’s womb, we are by definition ingrained with leaven.

Furthermore, we understand through faith Christ as our spotless sacrificial lamb. Through faith, we contend and ultimately yield unto the belief that His sinless blood is sufficient for grace to be imparted to all. However, “faith without works is dead...” Believers must, through obedience, become partakers of the unleavened bread of salvation. “Take, eat: this is my body.” We must be dutifully, and yes, even expeditiously disciplined, through a continual, daily renewal of our inner man, a continuous ingesting, and a continual daily digesting process through spiritual kneading of the unleavened spiritual manna.

Daily Cross.

Daily Bread.

Daily Death.

Daily Word.

Daily Renewal.

Daily Tongues.

Daily Washing.

From Adam in a garden, and Moses gathering manna in the wilderness, until now, God’s nature has required a daily experience in His relationship with man. The continual daily kneading of the spiritual bread necessary for spiritual life, lest any hidden leaven, deep-rooted

within the nature of man and deeply ingrained within the veil of flesh, suddenly rise in rebellion. No spiritual man that fears God will leave his flesh unattended for any length of time, knowing the natural proclivity of the flesh.

Innately within man, no matter how spiritual he may appear or how sincerely godly he truly is, there lies at minimum, or the very least, one grain of potential leaven. A little leaven of flesh, once in contact with the workings of the human spirit, cannot be under-rated nor ignored lest that little leaven leavens the whole entire lump.

We must be constantly reminded of the potential destruction and havoc the natural man is capable of causing for the inner spiritual man. For when lust is conceived, it brings forth sin. Sin, when finished, brings forth death, spiritual death. Cut off or separated, it leads to a suspension, if not even a termination, of the abundant spiritual life, found in the daily, continual kneading and nourishing of our relationship with Christ. Often, the spiritual carnage is initially cultivated from one small benign grain left unattended that became leavened. The flesh must be kept in submission by the continuous daily kneading.

This Is The Rest

Jews go through the protocol known as “resting the dough.” This temporary suspension of the kneading process, or that interval between the kneading process and eating, will eventually and ultimately take place. One cannot knead forever. The dough must rest. Again, this expected resting period, however, can only last 18 minutes. In 18 minutes, you must either return to kneading or bake and eat once you have stopped kneading the bread.

Consider this parallel:

In Isaiah 28:11, the prophet, regarding spiritual activity, prophetically proclaimed that this is the rest wherewith the weary are called to rest. This spiritual rest is revealed when we cease the vicious cycle of simply a fleshly doing so that we might graduate to the dimension of spiritually becoming. By spiritually ingesting and digesting him through the above-mentioned daily sacrifices, we eventually find the rest our new man greatly longs for.

The fulfillment of life in Christ is not discovered within man himself, his fleshly abilities, nor is the new life of this world, but it’s through our overcoming of the earthy

man, the conquest of the fleshly nature of man. By continually working out the leaven of life in every dimension of life, to present the new unleavened man of the spirit. Presenting our bodies constantly as a daily, living sacrifice, holy and acceptable unto him. Our sanctification process, or our kneading process, that supplies endless spiritual nutrients for our new man in Christ to survive.

Spiritually kneading, or the working out of our own salvation with fear and trembling. Not through some arbitrary rule list alone, that celebrates the disciplined religiosity of the flesh, by some external pretense of spiritual kneading, but a lifestyle of deep consecration cultivated in the heart, through the daily death of the old nature, and separation from the world. Spiritual bread that daily and continually feeds the spirit-man. Inner man righteousness and holiness of spirit produce godly living, spiritual power, holiness of heart and mind.

If all we are doing is the external religious kneading, or outward working of the bread, through man-made efforts, and never arriving at the rest the spiritual rest, then we will be resigned to fighting endless battles, by hopelessly contending with our flesh, without ever experiencing victory over our flesh, a religious journey of despairing futility. This leads to frustrated faith. Wars

without victory. Battles without triumphs. Battles that leave us in a continual spiritual quagmire, with no spiritual ground ever conquered or secured. Never any forward progress. Endlessly through the flesh, kneading and working to stay alive. When and where is the mandated and anticipated rest for the weary ever realized.?

Salvation, if not properly approached, then becomes works-only oriented salvation. Spiritual kneading or working is undoubtedly a must. Henceforth, it takes faith and works to avoid leaven. Faith without works is forever dead, terminated. However, kneading must lead to eating. The fruit of our works, that follows our obedience, by our continual daily godly kneading. There must be a rest. Whenever we have done all we can to stand, stand, therefore.

We need time to rest. God in creation set aside a day for rest. The Law required that both man and the ground must rest. Jesus went aside for rest. The new covenant anticipates that same spiritual rest. Rest and eat. To consume, to feed the inner man with the fruit of our kneading. The inner kneading that leads to inner rest, that produces peace and fulfillment. Then the process must restart the following day all over again.

This work must get in our hearts and not just in our hands. We gladly consume him daily. The whole process is daily. Knead, rest, and eat daily. Faith and works on a daily level. Finding daily rest for our souls. Give us this day our daily bread.

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