

“I will open my mouth in parables, I will announce what has lain hidden from the foundation of the world.”

When a story, a PARABLE for instance, has to be EXPLAINED, isn't its meaning STILL **hidden**?

I remember watching, as a very young child, the cartoon versions of AESOP'S FABLES and GUMBY. These were usually colorful stories, although we only had a black and white television, where the main point typically went over my head. At the end of the cartoon was an explanation to the story, usually about the benefits of doing good rather than evil, or how we deal morally with a particular situation to make us a better person. The stories were designed to MAKE US **THINK!** To ponder, to wonder how the story applies to **me**, and to help me to make righteous decisions.

Sometimes the obvious can be hidden in plain sight. Jesus tells the people that there are good people and bad people in the world. Well DUH, doesn't everyone already know that!? But do they, WE, know that the bad people are influenced by the evil one, the devil, because they have lost their sight of and no longer listen to a loving and forgiving God?

Any farmer or gardener **knows** that the mustard seed is really small, yet can grow into a very large bush, but how does this bush represent heaven? The bush provides shade from the scorching heat; provides safety and protection from harmful predators; provides comfort and peace to the birds within. I'll keep it simple – it's a nice place to be.

Bakers know that a little bit of yeast can go a long way when mixed with flour. It's also necessary if you want a loaf of bread rather than a large flatbread cracker like a matzah - unleavened bread. The word of God is the **leaven** for our lives. When we

listen to it, ponder over it, mix it thoroughly into our lives, heaven grows within us, and the kingdom of God expands with every new member who opens themselves to the understanding of God's word.

There are many who understand life in terms that we are born and we die, that's it. A pretty lame summation of life. In between being born and our death we **EXIST**. But exist is NOT a noun, it's a VERB, and a verb denotes ACTION, DOING, and we aren't here to EXIST for ourselves alone, but to exist, TO DO for each other. We exist NOT to bring pain and discord into the lives of others, that's the bad fruit from the evil one. We exist to share the gifts **God** has given to us: peace, love, and understanding of one another.

This happens when we listen to and respond to the word of God, allowing His love to pour over and through us, and then be shared to all around us. As a seed of wheat we can be a child of God. As a mustard seed we can grow to be a place of peace and rest. As leaven we can spread the good news to others. **WE** can be heaven on earth to others if we come to understand what God has in mind for each and every one of us.

As we heard in the first reading from Wisdom, God has "mastery over all things." Without hardly giving it a thought He could start all creation over again, eliminate all our flaws, but then, what would we be grateful for, how would we be "human"? Because we are human we sin, in word and thought, by what we do and don't do. Wisdom reminds us that "(God) gave (His) children, (us), good ground for hope that (He) would permit repentance for (our) sins." In all His almighty power He still displays His leniency and patience toward His creation. God has a plan for us. "Whoever has ears ought to hear."