Galatians 5:9, “A little leaven leaveneth the whole lump.”

In baking, leavening is the air that causes breads, cakes, and other baked goodies to rise when they go in the oven. That gas is produced in different ways, depending on what type of leavening agent you use. This, in turn, varies according to what you're baking, but the simplest way to think of it is that the leavening agent produces the gas, and the gas causes the dough or batter to rise.

There are three main types of leavening agents: biological, chemical and steam.

How Leavening Agents Cause Doughs to Rise

Dough is made of wheat flour, which contains a pair of proteins called gliadin and glutenin. When you add water and start to mix it, the gliadin and glutenin combine to form a new protein called gluten.

Gluten molecules arrange themselves into chains that can be quite long and elastic. This elasticity is why you can take a piece of bread dough and stretch it between your fingers. The more you knead it, the stretchier it gets.

Next, the gas produced by the leavening agent forms thousands of little bubbles in the dough, which causes it to inflate. Imagine thousands of little balloons being blown up with air.

Dough is stretchy, just like balloons. If it weren't, rather than blowing up a balloon, it would be like blowing into a glass of water with a straw. The bubbles would immediately burst and the gas would escape. Due to the dough's elasticity, the bubbles expand without bursting, so the gas remains trapped in the bubbles long enough for the third part of the reaction to take place.

Lastly, the heat of the oven cooks the dough, causing it to set while those little bubbles are in their inflated state. So, once the gas finally escapes, those air pockets hold their shape instead of deflating. The size of those air pockets determines the texture of your baked good. Small air pockets produce a smooth texture, like with a cake. Larger ones produce a coarser texture, like with crusty bread.

Yeast: A Biological Leavening Agent

Yeast is composed of single-celled organisms (a type of fungus) that undergo an existence far removed from anything you or I would recognize as "life," yet they perform a vital function. Yeast is responsible for the process of fermentation, without which there would be no such things as beer, wine, or bread.

How fermentation works is yeast eats sugar and they produce carbon dioxide (CO_2) gas and alcohol. The alcohol is a boon for winemakers and brewers, and the CO_2 comes in handy for bakers. CO_2 also produces the bubbles in beer.

How is Sin Like Leaven?

1. **Sin grows relentlessly. Galatians 5:9, "A little leaven leaveneth the whole lump."**
2. **Sin spreads insidiously. James 1:15, "Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin: and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death."**
3. **The sin of pride puffs us up. 1 Timothy 3:6, "Not a novice, lest being lifted up with pride he fall into the condemnation of the devil."**

1 Corinthians 5:6-8, "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."

In Bible times leaven/yeast was basically old, fermented dough that was placed in new dough to make it rise. The key is that you only needed to add a very small amount of fermented dough to make new dough rise.

If you carry this out to sin, it can be said that a little sin can wind up destroying the whole body.

How is Leaven Like Sin?

1. **As a small amount of leaven can drastically affect an entire loaf of bread, a small amount of sin can drastically affect our lives.**
2. **Just like leaven can be used to produce fermented products like alcohol which destroy cells in the body when consumed, sin can become self-destructive and produce fermented/rotten results in our character and destroy our lives.**
3. **Leaven activated in bread produces a new protein that is "quite long and elastic". A little sin can stay around in our lives for quite a long time. And like elastic, our excuses for hanging onto those sins can expand and contract into multiple reasoning's. We use these reasoning's to justify hanging onto the sin. The more you "knead" it, the more "stretchier" it gets.**
4. **Before the gas dies in the final stage of baking, it is trapped within the dough. Sin can trap us and we may feel as if we cannot overcome it.**
5. **After the gas explodes and dies there is nothing left but empty air pockets. Sin leaves nothing but emptiness behind.**
6. **If leaven is expose to too high of a temperature, then it will die before it activates within the bread. Praise the Lord that He increases the "temperature" in our lives to help us kill off the leaven of sin that has ahold of us! What would we be without His Hand of correction and punishment? He is a wonderful Father to His children, even when we go astray.**