

THE BAKER'S APPRENTICE

by Tracy Wells



CHRISTIAN PUBLISHERS

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**CHRISTIAN PUBLISHERS
EDUCATIONAL SERIES**

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Parable: The Leaven

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SYNOPSIS: It's a comedy of errors as a klutzy newbie baker tackles cinnamon rolls. She is genuinely baffled, though—how can tiny grains of yeast make a big batch of dough rise? (Bonus recipe included!)

BIBLE VERSE: Matthew 13:33

CAST OF CHARACTERS

(2 either)

BAKER (m/f)..... An experienced pastry chef and trainer. *(49 lines)*

APPRENTICE (m/f) An inept but enthusiastic wannabe baker. *(47 lines)*

DURATION: 10 minutes.

SETTING: Inside the kitchen of a bakery.

TIME: Modern day.

SET

The set is very simple, but could be as elaborate as the director chooses. Center stage is a work station/countertop.

COSTUMES

Both should wear either white chef coats and hats or casual attire and an apron. BAKER needs a watch.

PROPS

- Bowl
- wooden spoon
- measuring cups and spoons
- container of flour
- rolling pin
- shaker of cinnamon
- 2 packets of yeast
- Salt
- Milk
- Butter
- Egg
- ball of risen dough
- towel

PUBLISHER'S NOTE

Parables are earthly stories intended to reveal a heavenly meaning. They are by nature stories that people could relate to and which would inspire questions and discussion, thus providing the opportunity for revelation of the truth. We have brought these parables into present time where the listener can relate and once again ask questions, which will reveal the true meaning.

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PARABLE: He told them still another parable: "The kingdom of heaven is like yeast that a woman took and mixed into about sixty pounds of flour until it worked all through the dough" (*Matthew 13:33*).



AT START: *All ingredients for cinnamon roll dough are present at the work station, as well as a bowl, spoon, measuring cups and spoons, and a rolling pin. The only items not on the table are the flour and yeast. At start of scene, BAKER enters carrying the container of flour.*

BAKER: (*Placing container of flour on the work station.*) That should just about do it. My mother always told me that the first recipe a new baker should learn to master is the cinnamon roll. In some ways it is an easy pastry made from simple ingredients, but in other ways, its layers can be quite complex. (*Picks up shaker of cinnamon sugar.*) But once we peel back those layers, we get to enjoy the gooey, sweet, cinnamon-spiced surprise inside. (*Puts down cinnamon sugar and picks up yeast.*) And once we understand our ingredients, a whole world of recipes is ours for the baking.

APPRENTICE enters, overeager and clumsy.

APPRENTICE: (*Stops a few feet from work station and salutes.*)
Your apprentice is here, reporting for duty.

BAKER: (*Chuckling.*) No need for such formality in my kitchen.

APPRENTICE: (*Puts hand down sharply at her side.*) If you insist.

BAKER: A kitchen is a warm and inviting place, and I like to think the people inside are too. Come join me at my work station.

APPRENTICE: Yes, ma'am.

APPRENTICE begins to cross to work station and trips, nearly knocking the bowl off the table. BAKER catches it.

BAKER: Careful!

APPRENTICE: (*Upset.*) I'm so sorry. I've been told I can be a bit of a klutz.

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BAKER: *(Smiling.)* You don't say...

APPRENTICE: No, I *do* say. I'm a klutz!

BAKER: *(Chuckling.)* That's OK. Being a klutz won't prevent you from being a good baker one day. As we bakers always say, you can't make a cake without breaking a few eggs.

APPRENTICE: *(Confused.)* My brother was allergic to eggs, so my mom always made his birthday cake with applesauce instead. *(Looking at BAKER.)* So you *can* make a cake without breaking a few eggs. My mom did!

BAKER: *(Shaking her head.)* It's just a saying. It means that we all make mistakes sometimes.

APPRENTICE: But—

BAKER: *(Interrupting.)* Why don't we get started with this cinnamon roll recipe? The bakery will be open in a few hours, and we'll have a few dozen people lined up for my famous cinnamon rolls.

APPRENTICE: I love cinnamon rolls! I can't wait to make them.

BAKER: Let's get started with the dough. *(Sets bowl in front of APPRENTICE.)* I'll get the salt and sugar. Why don't you grab the flour? *(Crosses to sugar and salt and picks them up, crossing back to bowl.)*

APPRENTICE: *(Picking up flour.)* This flour?

BAKER: Yep. That's it.

APPRENTICE: *(Crosses to bowl and puts flour down. Puts her hand inside.)* Wow! Flour is really soft.

BAKER: Let's get a little more flour in our bowl and a little less on your hands.

APPRENTICE: *(Starts scratching her chin thoughtfully, getting flour on it.)* Yeah. That makes sense.

BAKER: *(Pointing at APPRENTICE'S chin.)* You have a little flour on your face.

APPRENTICE: Where? *(Slapping flour covered right hand on right cheek.)* Here?

BAKER: No! Not there.

APPRENTICE: *(Slapping flour covered left hand on left cheek.)* Here?

BAKER: *(Shaking her head.)* You know what? It's fine. Let's get back to our recipe. *(Pours the sugar and salt into the bowl.)* I'm adding the sugar and salt. It's time for you to add in the flour.

APPRENTICE: I can do that! (*Pours flour into the bowl.*)

BAKER: Good. Now we need to add the eggs and butter.

APPRENTICE: Is this the part where we crack a few eggs?

BAKER: (*Warily.*) I guess so.

APPRENTICE: (*Grabs egg. Stumbles around as if she might drop the egg.*) Wow, this is a slippery little guy!

BAKER: (*Grabbing egg from APPRENTICE.*) Just to be on the safe side, I'll take care of the egg cracking for today. You can add the butter.

APPRENTICE: If you say so. (*Picks up the butter.*) This is slippery too.

BAKER: Just put it in the bowl!

APPRENTICE: Yes, ma'am! (*Trips as she crosses to the bowl. Just barely makes it to the bowl without losing the butter. Straightening up.*) Now what?

BAKER: Now we just need the yeast.

APPRENTICE: What is yeast?

BAKER: (*Smiling.*) It's a baker's magic ingredient. You'll see. I'll go get it. (*Exits.*)

APPRENTICE: (*Rubs her hands together in excitement.*) I love magic! I wonder what the yeast is going to do. (*Looks down into bowl.*) Will it turn the dough bright colors? Will it make the dough disappear? (*Looks up, alarmed.*) I hope not! The baker said there will be dozens of people waiting for these cinnamon rolls! We can't disappoint them.

BAKER enters carrying yeast packets.

BAKER: Here we go.

APPRENTICE: (*Excitedly.*) I can't wait to see what it does!

BAKER: (*Opens packet and pours yeast into dough.*) Here, why don't you do the honors? (*Flours countertop and takes dough out of bowl.*)

APPRENTICE: (*Looking down into dough.*) The yeast is so...tiny.

BAKER: It sure is.

APPRENTICE: And you didn't put very much in.

BAKER: We don't need very much yeast. I put in the perfect amount.

APPRENTICE: (*Kneading dough.*) So when is the yeast going to do its magic?

BAKER: All in good time. (*Puts dough back into bowl.*) I think that about does it.

APPRENTICE: (*Looks into bowl.*) Does what? I don't see anything. It just looks like a blob of dough!

BAKER: (*Picks up towel.*) You have to wait to see the magic. It will take about thirty minutes.

APPRENTICE: (*Whining.*) Thirty minutes! But I can't wait that long.

BAKER: Well, you're just going to have to. (*Puts towel over the bowl.*) Now it's time to make the filling. Come with me and I'll show you how it's done.

BAKER begins to exit with APPRENTICE following.

APPRENTICE: (*Stopping suddenly.*) How many cinnamon rolls did you say we were making?

BAKER: I'd say about four dozen.

APPRENTICE: (*Shocked.*) Four dozen? Why, that's twenty-nine cinnamon rolls.

BAKER: (*Chuckling.*) It's more like forty-eight cinnamon rolls.

APPRENTICE: Forty-eight? (*Rushes back over to bowl and removes towel, panicked.*) There's not enough dough in here to make forty-eight cinnamon rolls!

BAKER: (*Smiling.*) Not yet. But there will be.

APPRENTICE: But how?

BAKER: I told you—it's magic. (*Begins to exit.*)

APPRENTICE: But—

BAKER: (*Turns back and interrupts.*) Just trust me.

APPRENTICE: If you say so.

BAKER exits. APPRENTICE begins to follow, but trips and falls with a crash.

BAKER: (*From offstage.*) What was that?

APPRENTICE: (*Calling out to BAKER.*) Oh, nothing. I just had a little slip and fall. I'm all right.

BAKER: *(From offstage.)* Hurry up. I need your help with this cinnamon roll filling.

APPRENTICE: *(Calling out to BAKER.)* I'll be right there! *(Stands.)* But I just have to check on this magic yeast first. *(Crosses to bowl, lifts towel and looks inside.)* Nothing is happening! It looks exactly the same as before. *(Puts towel down and looks up.)* The baker did say it would take thirty minutes. I guess I'm just going to have to be patient. *(Starts to exit, then stops suddenly.)* I guess it doesn't hurt to have a little peek. *(Rushes back to bowl and trips, knocking measuring cups loudly to the ground.)*

BAKER: *(From offstage.)* What was that?

APPRENTICE: *(Calling out to BAKER.)* Nothing. I just knocked the measuring cups down.

BAKER: *(From offstage.)* Can you bring the cinnamon with you? It's right there on the work station.

APPRENTICE: *(Calling out to BAKER.)* Yes, ma'am. *(Looking at bowl.)* But first a quick peek at the dough. *(Lifts towel.)* Still no magic! *(Scrutinizing dough.)* Maybe it's a little bigger. *(Puts towel down.)* I'd better get back there and help the baker with the filling before I get fired. *(Looking around work station.)* Now if I were cinnamon, where would I be? *(Holds up salt.)* Is this the cinnamon? *(Tastes it.)* Nope. Too salty. *(Holds up sugar.)* Is this cinnamon? *(Tastes it.)* Nope. Too sweet. *(Holds up cinnamon.)* This *has* to be the cinnamon. Let me just take a sniff. *(Takes a long smell, then suddenly puts down cinnamon and turns away from work station. She starts a long, drawn out, humorous sneeze. Looking out at audience.)* That's some sneezy cinnamon. *(Picks up cinnamon and begins to exit, but turns back to look at bowl.)* One last look at that magic yeast can't hurt. *(Rushes back to bowl. Trips and spills cinnamon as she does so. The spilled cinnamon causes her to start a sneezing fit.)* Achoo! Achoo! Achoo!

BAKER enters and sees APPRENTICE.

BAKER: Are you all right?

APPRENTICE: Yes. *(Sneezes.)* Achoo! *(Sneezes.)* Achoo! I just spilled the cinnamon.

BAKER: You were sneaking a peek at the dough again, weren't you?

APPRENTICE: *(Sheepishly.)* Maybe.

BAKER: *(Looks at her watch.)* Well, it's been almost thirty minutes. The magic is just about complete.

APPRENTICE: *(Grabbing her arm, begging.)* Can you *please* just tell me what the magic is? The suspense is *killing* me.

BAKER: Sure. Come with me.

BAKER crosses to workstation. APPRENTICE follows. BAKER picks up yeast and pours some in her hand.

BAKER: For any bread product to be made, you need to have a leavening.

APPRENTICE: *(Looks around frantically.)* Oh, no! We didn't use any leavening. We only used flour, salt, sugar, and yeast!

BAKER: *(Laughs.)* Yeast *is* our leavening. *(Pours some of the yeast in APPRENTICE'S hand.)* Leavening is what the dough needs to begin to rise.

APPRENTICE: How can something so small make dough rise?

BAKER: Yeast is a tiny living organism that gets its energy from sugar.

APPRENTICE: We put sugar in the dough!

BAKER: That's right. When the yeast and the sugar combine, carbon dioxide and ethanol gases are formed. Those gases move throughout the bread dough, causing it to rise and expand. *(Pulls towel off of bowl of risen dough.)* And increase in size.

APPRENTICE: Wow! The dough has really grown. It *is* just like magic.

BAKER: That's right. The word leaven comes from the Latin word "levare," which means "to lift up, to make light, or to rise."

APPRENTICE: *(Looking at the yeast in her hands.)* So these tiny little guys do their magic from deep within the dough?

BAKER: They sure do! We can't see them working their magic, but they are. And if you are patient and let them do their job, the results are—well, definitely worth the wait.

APPRENTICE: Speaking of waiting, shouldn't we get started on the cinnamon rolls? Our customers are going to start lining up in no time.

BAKER: That's right. And luckily for you, I already got started on the filling. Let's bring this dough and the cinnamon so we can put the rolls together.

APPRENTICE: I've got it!

APPRENTICE tries to pick up dough and cinnamon and appears as though she's going to drop it. BAKER rushes over and grabs the bowl.

BAKER: Why don't I carry the dough?

APPRENTICE: That's probably a good idea. I am a klutz, you know.

BAKER: *(Smiling.)* You don't say.

BAKER exits followed by APPRENTICE, who carries cinnamon. She smells it, sneezes, and trips.

THE END

CINNAMON ROLL RECIPE

DOUGH

- 3 1/2 to 4 cups all-purpose flour
- 1/3 cup granulated sugar
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 2 packages regular or fast-acting dry yeast (4 1/2 teaspoons)
- 1 cup milk
- 1/4 cup butter or margarine (1/2 stick), room temperature
- 1 large egg

FILLING

- 1/2 cup granulated sugar
- 2 teaspoons ground cinnamon
- 1/4 cup butter or margarine (1/2 stick), room temperature
- 1/4 cup finely chopped nuts, if desired

GLAZE

- 1 cup powdered sugar
- 1 tablespoon butter or margarine, room temperature
- 1/2 teaspoon vanilla
- 1 to 2 tablespoons milk

1) In a large bowl, stir 2 cups of the flour, 1/3 cup granulated sugar, the salt and yeast with a wooden spoon until well mixed. In a 1-quart saucepan, heat the milk over medium heat until very warm and an instant-read thermometer reads 120°F to 130°F. Add the warm milk, 1/4 cup butter and egg to the flour mixture. Beat with an electric mixer on low speed 1 minute, stopping frequently to scrape batter from side and bottom of bowl with a rubber spatula, until flour mixture is moistened. Beat on medium speed 1 minute, stopping frequently to scrape bowl. With a wooden spoon, stir in enough of the remaining flour, about 1/2 cup at a time, until dough is soft, leaves side of bowl and is easy to handle (dough may be slightly sticky).

- 2) Sprinkle flour lightly on a countertop or large cutting board. Place dough on floured surface. Knead by folding dough toward you, then with the heels of your hands, pushing dough away from you with a short rocking motion. Move dough a quarter turn and repeat. Continue kneading about 5 minutes, sprinkling surface with more flour if dough starts to stick, until dough is smooth and springy. Spray a large bowl with the cooking spray. Place dough in bowl, turning dough to grease all sides. Cover bowl loosely with plastic wrap; let rise in a warm place about 1 hour 30 minutes or until dough has doubled in size. Dough is ready if an indentation remains when you press your fingertips about 1/2 inch into the dough.

- 3) In a small bowl, mix 1/2 cup sugar and the cinnamon; set aside. Spray the bottom and sides of a 13x9-inch pan with the cooking spray. Sprinkle flour lightly on a countertop or large cutting board. Gently push your fist into the dough to deflate it. Pull the dough away from the side of the bowl, and place it on the floured surface.

- 4) Using your hands or a rolling pin, flatten dough into a 15x10-inch rectangle. Spread 1/4 cup butter over dough to within 1/2 inch of edges. Sprinkle with sugar-cinnamon mixture, raisins and nuts. Beginning at a 15-inch side, roll dough up tightly. Pinch edge of dough into the roll to seal edge. Stretch and shape roll until even and 15 inches long. Using a sharp serrated knife or length of dental floss, cut roll into 15 (1-inch) slices. Place slices slightly apart in the pan. Cover pan loosely with plastic wrap; let rise in a warm place about 30 minutes or until dough has doubled in size. Remove plastic wrap.

- 5) Move the oven rack to the middle position of the oven. Heat the oven to 350°. Bake 30-35 minutes or until golden brown. Immediately remove rolls from pan; place right side up on a cooling rack. Cool 5 minutes.

- 6) In a small bowl, stir glaze ingredients until smooth, adding enough milk so glaze is thin enough to drizzle. Over the warm rolls, drizzle glaze from the tip of a tableware teaspoon, moving the spoon back and forth to make thin lines of glaze. Serve warm.



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