

Bethlehem: "The House of Bread"  
Wednesday, December 16 & 23, 2020

- \* You hear me say often to not "take for granted" what the scriptures say and how it is said!
- \* I want to share with you one such example!

Ruth 1:1-6 (NLT)

1 In the days when the judges ruled in Israel, a severe famine came upon the land. So a man from Bethlehem in Judah left his home and went to live in the country of Moab, taking his wife and two sons with him. 2 The man's name was Elimelech, and his wife was Naomi. Their two sons were Mahlon and Kilion. They were Ephrathites from Bethlehem in the land of Judah. And when they reached Moab, they settled there. 3 Then Elimelech died, and Naomi was left with her two sons. 4 The two sons married Moabite women. One married a woman named Orpah, and the other a woman named Ruth. But about ten years later, 5 both Mahlon and Kilion died. This left Naomi alone, without her two sons or her husband. 6 Then Naomi heard in Moab that the Lord had blessed his people in Judah by giving them good crops again. So Naomi and her daughters-in-law got ready to leave Moab to return to her homeland.

- \* The name Bethlehem means "House of Bread!"
- \* So, we might say, Bethlehem didn't live up to it's name!
- \* Many have walked away from our churches? Is it because there there is "no bread in the house?"
- \* We are suppose to have the presence of The Bread of Life!

- I. In the Old Testament Tabernacle there was what was called the Table of Show Bread.

Numbers 4:7 (NLT)

7 “Next they must spread a blue cloth over the table where the Bread of the Presence is displayed, and on the cloth they will place the bowls, ladles, jars, pitchers, and the special bread.

- A. There were 12 loaves of bread that represented the twelve tribes of Israel.
  1. They were called the “Bread of the Presence” because they were always on the table, baked fresh each day, in the literal presence of God in the Tabernacle!
  2. Notice what Jesus said in:

John 6:35, 51(NLT)

35 Jesus replied, “I am the bread of life. Whoever comes to me will never be hungry again. Whoever believes in me will never be thirsty.

51 I am the living bread that came down from heaven. Anyone who eats this bread will live forever; and this bread, which I will offer so the world may live, is my flesh.”

- B. When we gather, do we have the literal Bread of Heaven in our midst, or do we merely offer a recipe.
  1. Do we just offer a good lesson, which is a recipe, or do we have the presence of Jesus to offer those who are hungry?
  2. Are you content in your personal life to merely know the recipe or do you want The Bread of Life?
  3. Too many people are content with knowing “how to

cook” but never really having anything “on the table!”

Ephesians 3:10-12 (NLT)

10 God’s purpose in all this was to use the church to display his wisdom in its rich variety to all the unseen rulers and authorities in the heavenly places. 11 This was his eternal plan, which he carried out through Christ Jesus our Lord. 12 Because of Christ and our faith in him, we can now come boldly and confidently into God’s presence.

4. It is abundantly passed time for The Church of Jesus Christ to be filled with The Bread of Life!!!

II. When there is NO BREAD in the house...people are forced to look elsewhere!

A. The Lord uses so many analogies concerning His life and our response to and place in His life!

Ezekiel 47:1-2 (NLT)

1 In my vision, the man brought me back to the entrance of the Temple. There I saw a stream flowing east from beneath the door of the Temple and passing to the right of the altar on its south side. 2 The man brought me outside the wall through the north gateway and led me around to the eastern entrance. There I could see the water flowing out through the south side of the east gateway.

Revelation 22:1-2 (NLT)

1 Then the angel showed me a river with the water of life, clear as crystal, flowing from the throne of God and of the Lamb. 2 It flowed down the center of the main street. On each side of the river grew a tree of life, bearing twelve crops of fruit, with a fresh crop each month. The leaves were used for medicine to heal the nations.

1. Do we, as The Body of Christ, offer life and healing to those in need of The Lord?

2. Or do we give them a list of what they can and can't do and tell them God will accept them if they do them?
3. I greatly fear that our MESSAGE OF THE GOSPEL is hindered because we do not express the healing presence of the God we say we worship!
4. OR...THERE IS NO BREAD IN THE HOUSE!

B. Remember the story of Ruth:

Ruth 1:1-6 (NLT)

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1. Moab was a cruel place!
2. It will "steal your husband, kill your kids and destroy your family!"
3. All they did was go and look for bread!
4. All they did was "try to make it in life!"

### C. This is the story of ALL OF OUR LIVES!

Matthew 15:22-28 (NLT)

22 A Gentile woman who lived there came to him, pleading, "Have mercy on me, O Lord, Son of David! For my daughter is possessed by a demon that torments her severely." 23 But Jesus gave her no reply, not even a word. Then his disciples urged him to send her away. "Tell her to go away," they said. "She is bothering us with all her begging." 24 Then Jesus said to the woman, "I was sent only to help God's lost sheep—the people of Israel." 25 But she came and worshiped him, pleading again, "Lord, help me!" 26 Jesus responded, "It isn't right to take food from the children and throw it to the dogs." 27 She replied, "That's true, Lord, but even dogs are allowed to eat the scraps that fall beneath their masters' table." 28 "Dear woman," Jesus said to her, "your faith is great. Your request is granted." And her daughter was instantly healed.

1. "She is bothering us with all her begging."
2. That is an analogy for all of us!
3. We are all just beggars...telling each other where the bread is!

\*\*\* May we all make sure there is bread in our house! \*\*\*

\*\*\* May Magnolia always have bread,  
the bread of His presence.\*\*\*