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Sermon – House of Bread – Advent week 3

Scripture – Genesis 35:19, Micah 5, John 6:32-35

Main Message – Bethlehem is a symbol of hope and that the Lord will provide for us all we need.

Bethlehem is mentioned throughout the Bible. It is mentioned as early as Genesis as a place where Rachel died while in childbirth. Her son Benjamin was the youngest of 12 that made up the tribes of Israel. The first King of Israel was Saul, of the tribe of Benjamin, as well as Queen Esther and the Apostle Paul. Bethlehem was where Naomi returned with Ruth from the land of Moab. Ruth is in the genealogy of Jesus Christ. Bethlehem as a location and a message would make a nice historical Bible Study for those who may be interested.

Bethlehem which is around 6 miles from Jerusalem has played an important role and of course since we are in the season of Advent, we must also consider the scripture written by Micah in chapter 5. These prophetic verses speak to Jesus in much more than just his birth, but the larger vision of God's plans.

Read Micah 5 (NLT)

Bethlehem is a symbol as place of hope. Jesus was born there, fulfilling prophecy that the opportunity for salvation would come to the nations. Bethlehem translated means House of Bread. Jesus is the Bread of Life.

Read John 6:32-35

Hope is a vital quality of the human spirit. The first advent, spoken of by the prophets and indeed the entire prophetic vision described in the Bible, give us hope. The return of the Lord continues to give us hope as God's plan comes to its conclusion. It is always about Jesus Christ. As long as we do not focus our HOPE on OUR desires, but focus it upon GOD'S Glory that is indescribable, our HOPE will create a wellspring of life: enthusiasm, boldness, patience, mercy, and love; by the way which are the all qualities of our Savior- we will never despair. Despair only creeps in when we have no Hope for the future. Well, let me ask you something. Do you think God despairs of the future? No, he doesn't. He has written it. IF you ever get caught up feeling despair, then realize this. You aren't focused on the big picture of God's Glory. Why would anyone, with eternal life ahead of them despair for more than a passing instant when we have that ahead?

The messiah's coming was hope for the people of Israel when they were on a good path. They suffered mightily when they forgot the source of their hope. So it is with us a nation **and** as an individual. I do not say, don't despair, because we are human and that comes with flaws. Recognize that and when you find yourself not getting everything you need, realize that the LORD GOD still has it all under control for those who love him and keep his commandments. Those aren't my words; they are HIS as told throughout Holy Scriptures.

Romans 12:9-12 explains it well so let's read that now. Like everything, God give you a choice, so choose wisely. Partake of the House of Bread.