

Matt Henry
Luke 2:1-20
25 Dec 2018

“Dave’s Savior Bread”

God’s grace and peace to you this Christmas morning!

Well, friends, by this point, what more is there to bring out and set before you? You know the Christmas story, in fact, the details are almost too well known. Instead of just accepting the story, I want us to question the storyline a bit and in particular, the location of Christmas—Bethlehem. Why there? Right from the get-go, we see that God chose a small, humble, overlooked town to bring about something so great. The Messiah doesn’t come from Jerusalem. It’d be like the Messiah coming from Emmett! This was a surprise, even though the location of Bethlehem was pinpointed by the prophet Micah 700 years before it happened. “But you Bethlehem Ephrathah, who are too little to be among the clans of Judah, from you shall come forth for me one who is to be rule in Israel, whose origin is from of old, from ancient days” (Micah 5:2). The significance of Bethlehem as location tells us God is in the salvation business—and we’ll see why in fuller detail this morning. Location may help to bring the whole Bible together and see some things that we didn’t know were connected but actually are.

But first, how many of you know who Dave Dahl is? Well, if you don’t, you probably know his product—Dave’s Killer Bread. It’s this rather expensive,

organic, non-GMO bread that has 21 whole grains. That's a lot of whole grains—it looks like it's been rolled in bird seed! And yet it's delicious. Dave Dahl has since sold the company, but what made this bread famous is his story of transformation. Dave Dahl served a total of fifteen years in prison in Oregon for a whole slew of charges, including doing drugs, burglary, armed robbery, assault. He hasn't exactly stayed perfectly clean, but nonetheless, he did turn his life around. Here is what it says on the bag, *"Fifteen years in prison. That's a tough way to find yourself. Dave Dahl realized he was in the wrong game and knew he had more to offer. His brother, Glenn, saw a change in him and gave Dave a second chance by welcoming him back to the family bakery. Dave set out to make a loaf like no other—the most nutritious, organic, whole grain bread—and the result is what he called "killer" bread. Dave's Killer Bread is built on the belief that everyone is capable of greatness. What began as one man's journey has turned into so much more. Today, one-third of our employees has a criminal background, and we have witnessed first-hand how stable employment sparks personal transformation."* That's pretty powerful, isn't it? With one-third of the employees as ex-criminals, how do you figure out who took someone's lunch from the staff fridge? But all this from a loaf of bread. There's a story behind the bread.

Last night, Pastor Tom took to Christmas with the theme of light. Tonight, the angle I'm taking, as you might have guessed, is bread. So just for something different beyond the expected Christmas story, let me inform the story of Luke 2 with a couple sentences from John 6. And as I read it, I want you to tell me the story behind the bread.

Who gave it?

What kind is it?

Where did it come from?

What does it do?

Jesus said, "My Father gives you the true bread from heaven. For the bread of God is he who comes down from heaven and gives life to the world" (John 6:33b-34).

The Father gave it.

It's not any bread, it's true bread.

It came from heaven.

It gives life to the world.

When the people ask, "Sir give us this bread always." Jesus comes right out and declares, "I am the bread of life" (John 6:35).

Notice something subtle about the answers you just gave me: this bread of life is not made. Even in the creed, we say Jesus is begotten, not made, very God of very God, yet He is born of the Virgin Mary. The bread of life comes down from heaven. The bread of life is given and received.

So why did Jesus come to Bethlehem of all the places on earth? Friends, I think it was because Bethlehem was so named. This is what's so significant. In Hebrew, "beth" means "house" and "lehem" means "bread", so literally, **Bethlehem means "house of bread"**. Which is pretty appropriate when you factor in what Jesus says in John 6, "I am the living bread that came down from heaven" (John 6:51). This means, when Joseph, Mary and Jesus entered into Bethlehem, **only at that moment when Jesus inhabited Bethlehem by being born and became its citizen did the city of Bethlehem live up to its name.**

Bob and Marcy Rue gave me this gift just last night. But when I saw how it was right along the same lines as my message, I thought I would incorporate it. It's a loaf of bread, that's wrapped up cloth, and the way it is fashioned here is to remind us that Jesus is the gift as the Bread of Life.

"As we ponder that wondrous, silent night so long ago, it seems no more coincidence that his royal birth took place in none other than that "Little Town of Bethlehem" for the very meaning of the word Bethlehem is "house of bread"....As

you break and eat of this bread with your family may you reflect not only on His birth, but His life, His death and resurrection, as the greatest gift ever given.” So Bob and Marcy already knew this, and maybe you did too. But just consider what else ties into this.

Joseph and Mary go to Bethlehem, why? Because of the census. They are of the house of David. And I mean that, not just Joseph, but also Mary. They both have lineage of the house of David. You may know that there are two genealogies of Jesus. One is in Matthew and one is Luke. Matthew records the legal line through Joseph. But Luke records the biological line through Mary. Jesus is fully of the house of David. That’s very important because He’s going to sit on David’s throne. He has full claim, not a half-claim. He is the full son of David, not a half-son or something like that. Jesus is a full loaf of bread, not a half loaf.

Jesus is the son of David. Do you remember what David did when he was hungry and running from Saul? He ate the bread of the presence that only priests were to eat. So Bethlehem is the City of David. Maybe he was exercising some authority there since that’s where David grew up, Breadville was his hometown.

Knowing that Jesus came from the house of bread, may shed greater light on Jesus’ temptation. As if the devil were saying, “OK, if this is who you are, if this is where you come from, then do what you are. But that’s not how Jesus works.

The bread isn't made. The bread is given in sacrifice and received in thankfulness. The way Jesus chose to give bread was to give Himself. "Take and eat, this is my body." What is bread meant for? On the most fundamental level, bread is broken, bread is shared, bread gives life. This is Christ's body—broken for us, shared by us, so that we may have life.

For all of these reasons, we have a new way of relating to Jesus—He is Dave's Savior Bread. It has changed our lives for as we partake it, it has brought personal transformation. Like the bag said, what started as one man's journey in the bread business has turned into so much more. We all have a background, and while it may not be criminal in man's laws, although it may be...we all have a background when it comes to God's laws. We're all convicts in that regard. But as we know Christ took the punishment upon Himself so we are pardoned. The bread of Himself is given for the forgiveness of sins. That indeed is a great gift to receive this Christmas.

In Jesus' name, Amen.