

The King's House. The Bread of the Presence

*The Present Truth* – October 17, 1901

E. J. Waggoner

THE BREAD OF THE PRESENCE

Besides the golden candlestick that we learned of last week, there was in the holy place of the tabernacle, the table of show bread. This was a golden table on which twelve loaves of bread were kept always before the Lord. The bread was changed each week on the Sabbath day, so that it was kept always fresh.

If you remember our talks about the Manna, you know who is the true Bread of life. It is Jesus. Bethlehem, the town where He was born, means "the house of bread." The Father's house, which the tabernacle represented, is the house of bread; for Christ the Son is Himself the Living Bread on which all may feed.

When Joseph was made Lord over all the land of Egypt, to gather up a great store of grain to feed the people in time of famine, Pharaoh called him by a name which means, "Prince of the life of the world," or, "Saviour of the world." This was because he was the keeper of all the bread, and everyone had to come to him for it. And Jesus is the "Saviour of the world." This was because He was the keeper of all the bread, and everyone had to come to Him for it. And Jesus is the Saviour of the world because He is "the Bread that cometh down from heaven, that man may eat thereof and not die."

Bread is of no use unless it is eaten; and before it is eaten it must be broken. At the last supper that Jesus ate with His disciples, He took bread and broke it and gave it to them, saying, "This is My body, which is broken for you." The Bread of life which was broken on the cruel cross, that we might feed upon Him and have life through His death.

If Jesus had not died for us, we could have had no life at all. And He is the One from whom our daily bread comes. His life is in it, and it is this that makes the bread food for us; for the power of Jesus which made the grain grow, changes it into the flesh and blood of which our bodies are made.

So in every meal that we take to sustain our life, we are eating “the bread of the presence,” and feeding on the broken body of Christ, whose life-giving presence is in it. Our daily bread is a token of the presence of Christ; and it is to remind us that He died to give us life.

When we feed by faith upon Jesus, the Bread of life, we become like Him,—sharers of His own nature; “for we are members of His body.” His Word says of all who do this that “we have being many are one bread and one body, for we are all partakers of that one Bread.”

Do you understand the meaning of this—that if we partake of that Bread, we shall ourselves, by His life in us, become bread to feed others and give them life? It means that our lives will, like His, be given up for the service of others. If the Bread of the presence is in our hearts, as it should be in every house of God, then wherever we go we shall carry Jesus with us, to make us a blessing, to feed and give life and help to others.

This was the meaning of the twelve separate cakes of bread. It was all “one bread,” representing Jesus the true Bread, yet it was in twelve cakes, one for each tribe, to show the children of Israel that they were meant by the Lord to be the bearers of that bread of life to the world.

The bread was always in the presence of the Lord, always before His face, always offered to Him. This shows us the Spirit of Jesus, ever present with the Father ready to do His will.

We are told what was the language of His heart when He gave His body to be broken, that God might feed the world with living bread, “Lo, I come to do Thy will, O God.” And this will be the language of all who eat of that living Bread, for they will become like Him.

We are told to “present our bodies, a living sacrifice.” This means that we are to be ever in the presence of the Lord, ready for His service, ready for sacrifice, ready to suffer, if thereby others may be fed and blessed and saved. If we are thus ever ready before His face, when there is need of the service that we can do, we shall say, “Here am I; send me.”

But can even little children carry the living Bread, and help to feed the world starving multitudes? Yes; if Jesus is in your heart, it cannot be otherwise, though you may never know of the hungry souls whom He is feeding through you.

Think of the lad who carried the few loaves, and how many people were fed with them when Jesus blessed and greatly multiplied them. And He is the same to-day; He can still multiply the bread. So let us present our bodies, our little influence, our one small talent, whatever He has given us. Let us lay before Him saying with Jesus, "Lo, I come to do Thy will, O God." He will accept the offering, and in His hands it may by His blessing give life to a multitude.

Remember that the bread had to be changed so that it was kept fresh. So if we would be ever ready to feed others with the Bread of life we must have constantly a fresh supply of that ourselves. "The inward man, Christ Jesus," must be "renewed day by day." And the Sabbath especially is the day when we may receive a fresh supply of life and blessing that shall make as a blessing to others through the week.