

The House of Benjamin

Isaiah 9:6-7 “For to us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government will be on his shoulders. And he will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and peace there will be no end. He will reign on David’s throne and over his kingdom, establishing and upholding it with justice and righteousness from that time on and forever. The zeal of the LORD, Almighty will accomplish this.”

Background info:

This is a house of refuge—a good Jewish family—the family will be very hospitable to the visiting family. In Old Testament times hospitality was an important duty. When a guest arrived he was treated as if he were the master of the house, even though his host may never have met him before. The Jews of Palestine were essentially a rural people. They lived in small villages of 200-300 inhabitants. They tended their fields and their flocks and seldom ventured more than a day’s journey from home. In the home the women’s most important task was baking the daily bread. Each house had two milling stones which were used to grind barley for the bread. Leaven was day old dough mixed with freshly ground barley, kneaded, formed into flat cakes and baked in the household oven. Many chores were performed on the roofs of the flat houses. The daily routine included spinning, weaving, mending, washing and making curds from goat’s milk. Only two meals per day were prepared, breakfast and an evening meal.

JUST OUTSIDE THE HOUSE OF BENJAMIN

(A member of the House of Benjamin will be shaking a rug or tending the fire, etc. and that person happens to hear that the family was turned away from the Inn)

MEMBER OF THE HOUSE OF BENJAMIN: Did I hear that there is no room for you in the Inn? Oh, it’s such a cold night, I wish we could offer you a place to stay, but we are full here in the House of Benjamin, too. But you could at least come inside and warm yourself. (If there is time and the previous family is already out you could take them in; if more time is needed you could explain the Mezuzah box right outside the door of the House of Benjamin. The Mezuzah is a little box that was placed on the door post of every Jewish home. It contained a scroll that was inscribed with the Shema. The Shema is the first great law of the Hebrews, and it taught them how to think about God. “The Lord our God, the Lord is one. Love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength.” Deut. 6:4-5) This lesson had to be learned by all Jewish boys before they could go to school. The Mezuzah containing the Shema was touched each time someone went in or out of the house to remind them of the great law.)

INSIDE THE HOUSE OF BENJAMIN:

Interact with the family. There are different conversation tracts that you can use depending on the time and group that is visiting. The husbands are shepherds on the hillside. In the home will be children playing or working or resting. Stay true and authentic to the scriptures.

Shalom! Shalom... Welcome to the House of Benjamin. Touch the Mezuzah box as you enter. It reminds us of God’s great love for us and that we should serve Him with our heart, soul, and mind. Come in and have a seat on our bales of straw. Warm yourselves by our fire. You are safe in our home. Have you seen our husbands? They are shepherds on the hill. Are they heading home? What else have you seen on your journey to Bethlehem? Angels....Are you sure that you have seen angels? Have you been traveling TOO long? What did the angels proclaim? They proclaimed the Messiah’s birth! Where? Where will the newborn king be born? When? In our lowly city of Bethlehem? Should our King be born in a wealthy city like Jerusalem? Another sister says, “Sister remember what it says in Scripture. Micah 5:2 “But you, Bethlehem Ephrathah, though you are small among the clans of Judah, out of you will come for me one who will be ruler over Israel, whose origins are from old, from ancient times.” We need a Messiah; to rescue us from the wrath of the Romans. Our lamb stew is ready. My sister makes the best lamb stew in all of Bethlehem. Do you have your bowls (mugs)? The children are grinding barley (wheat) for our bread. The soldiers will hit the side of the tent with their sword to let you know that the guide must move on. You will help the guide draw the conversation to a close warning them to stick together, hold fast to their children, and do not mention any news of a newborn savior to the soldiers. SHALOM!