

Grace Anatomy – Hospitality Without Formality

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MAIN VERSES

[Genesis 18](#) · [Galatians 2:20](#) · [Matthew 28](#) · [Matthew 25](#) · [Luke 9](#) · [John 1](#) · [Luke 13](#) · [Luke 14](#) · [Luke 17](#) · [Luke 19](#) · [Ezekiel 16](#) · [Exodus 22](#) · [Luke 7](#) · [Hebrews 13:2](#) · [Revelation 3:20](#) · [Luke 10](#)

3,000 years ago, it would have been a shameful thing to scream at someone if they were going slow in their camel, right? Think about it. You're high-telling across the desert in your camel, and you come up beside someone, and they're going slow, and you have to steer around them. You wouldn't sit there and yell at them and scream at them because it would look poorly on your character. That's not the way you wanted to present yourself. It was not honorable. It was actually shameful.

And so I have these mentalities when I'm studying this stuff and day-to-day usage, everything I do, I start to realize, "Wow, this is an honor-shame scenario." When you have to address a co-worker about something they're doing wrong, no one likes to be corrected. And so a lot of us, at least me, I go up and I say, "Hey, guys, have you ever thought about trying this workflow that's completely different than the one you're doing that's wrong?" It's a non-shameful approach to correct someone. Exactly what we did 3,000 years ago.

The Honor-Shame Principle

We're good? Good? Awesome. One thing I love, one of the verses that we're reading is [Galatians 2:20](#), For I have been crucified with Christ, I have been crucified with the anointed one, the Messiah. This is a collectivistic verse, in a sense. What are you talking about, Matt? Well, were you crucified with Messiah? No. I don't have holes in my hands or anything. But because He was crucified. We join him and we follow him. And it's a collective unification of followers that he represented. It wasn't just about him, in other words, when he was crucified.

In fact, none of his ministry was about him. It was about us. It was about the entire kingdom. And that's something that he tells us, especially in [Matthew 28](#) when he says, When the Great

Commission is given, go and teach all nations. What? Go and teach them what? Go and teach them about the kingdom that I have taught you about. It was always a collective effort to go out and do those things.

A Collective Unification

And so that brings us to hospitality. Now, you guys know about a man by the name of Abraham, right? You ever read the story of Abraham? In the desert, went up to Haran, his father died, then Yahweh spoke to him, so on and so forth. Walk around the land and I'll give it to you and I'll give you kids and so on and so forth.

In Jewish tradition, Abraham was known as the most hospitable man ever to live. Now, when we think of hospitality, what do we think about? Anybody? Taking care of people. In the West, typically, it's an industry, right? Hospitality, hotels, restaurants, and so on and so forth.

What would it take for you to be known as the most hospitable person ever to live? Now, there's a lot of tradition that surrounds Abraham within Judaism. One thing they say is that his house was planted and it had doorways on all four sides. Depending on your commentary, some say it was just an open tent. Others say it had doorways on all four sides. And it had welcome signs on all four sides. That way, no matter where you were coming from in the desert, you would always see a welcome sign at Abraham's house or his tent. Now, whether that's true or not, I don't know, but I like to think so. I think that's pretty cool.

Hospitality in the Desert

You see, hospitality in the Near East, specifically outside cities, in the desert, if you didn't provide hospitality to someone, you could kill them. So imagine walking through the desert, and you've got a rough draft map, and you kind of know where you're going, but your entire trip is really long. You're gonna have to make stops along the way to get water. You're gonna have to make stops to get your camels rest, eat food, get shelter, and so on. You're gonna have to make stops, and you pray that these checkpoints along your destination are going to be able to provide you with the things you need to survive.

There wasn't no QT at every corner that you could just ride into and buy your big slurpee cup. You were dependent on people, right? And so when you rolled up to someone's tent in the middle of the desert and you're out of supplies, you hope that they will be hospitable and they will allow you to stay there, shelter, give you some water from their well, right? Give you food. Does that make sense?

Can you imagine if someone came up to you, I'm out of water, I'm out of food, and I still have 100 miles to go? Can you imagine if you turned your back on them, sealed your well up? No, keep moving. What type of characteristics does that say about you? Definitely not an honorable thing to do, right? It's honorable to give them everything they need. That way you're looked at as a just and a righteous person.

We see that term used a lot in Scripture: justice and righteousness. In the Code of Hammurabi, the Babylonian law codes from 3,700 years ago, and in some of the Egyptian codes, whenever a new king was established or enthroned, the things that made him a good king were announced, and these things were typically justice and mercy, and the good deeds that he did for his kingdom. And these are lumped into the terms justice and righteousness. You would know a king was just and righteous if he allowed justice, if he allowed debts to be erased to the poor, right? Or maybe someone was struggling or the homeless were struggling, so he built shelters for the homeless or he gave food to the homeless or he made supply lines to help the poor or help the widows in the community. He would be known as a just and a righteous king. Someone who turned their back on those who were poor or those who were needy or the strangers in the land were known as unrighteous people.

Justice, Righteousness, and the Kingdom

You know, when Yeshua's talking about the sheep and the goats, right? In Matthew, he's speaking about when he returns, right? All the kingdoms of the world will be divided. Okay? Everybody will be divided—one to the right and one to the left. And the ones on the right will be like the sheep, if you will. And the ones on the left will be like the goats. And it's interesting because he looks at the ones on the right and he says, Hey, inherit eternal life. Go into the kingdom. You know? Welcome to heaven, if you will. He says, Because when I was hungry, you fed me. When I was thirsty, you gave me drink. When I was naked, you clothed me. When I needed a place to stay, you gave me shelter. When I was in prison, you came to visit me.

And of course we know the story, and I know this is review—we just spoke about this a month or two ago—but everyone who was chosen to be on the right of Yeshua spoke up and said, Master, when did we ever see you hungry? When did we ever see you thirsty or in prison? And he says, If you have done this to the least of these, you did it to me. The people that you did that to, who I am. And you carried out the justice and the righteousness of my kingdom, of the things that I hold in high priority in my kingdom as the pillars.

And then he looks over to the left at everyone else and basically says, Into eternal damnation for you. Because when I was hungry, you did not feed me. When I was thirsty, you did not give me drinks, and so forth. You did not take care of me when I needed you to take care of me. And of course they're freaking out—Master, when did we see you hungry or naked? We definitely would have given you clothing. We definitely would have given you food. He says, I was everywhere around you and you did nothing. I was in the lives of those who were poor. I was in the lives of those who were struggling. I was with the homeless. I was with those who were hungry. I was with those who were in prison, and you did not do a thing. To hellfire, go on.

It's a scary verse. Amazing. He never mentions Sabbath, never mentions the feast days, never mentions any of the other precepts in God's law, except for these, because these are the foundation. This is the love of God: that you would take care of those that cannot take care of themselves. And so this is what establishes justice and righteousness, and being a just person, a righteous person, would make you honorable. And therefore, if you were in the desert and you had a well, you would be known by all the travelers of your justice and righteousness and your hospitality, right?

Abraham's Welcome

So I want to read over the story of Abraham real quick because this is a really cool story. And you can join me—I believe it's [Genesis 18](#). Yeah, [Genesis 18](#). And Abraham's sitting in his tent, right? He's minding his own business. And the Lord appeared to Abraham near the great trees of Mamre while he was sitting at the entrance of his tent in the heat of the day. And Abraham looked up and saw three men standing nearby.

Okay, so Abraham's sitting at his tent, right? Almost waiting for people. Just waiting. Who can I help next? And he looks up and he sees three men traveling. And when he saw them, he got up and he hurried from the entrance of his tent to meet them and bowed low to the ground. These are strangers, okay? This is a great illustration of protocol. Strangers. He got up. He ran to them, joyful, ecstatic to see them, and bowed to the ground, okay? My Lord, he said, if it pleases you, stop here for a while. Rest in the shade of this tree while water is brought to wash your feet. And since you've honored your servant with this visit, let me prepare some food to refresh you before you continue on your journey.

Right? Because they're continuing on. And then what do the messengers say? They say, all right, do as you have said. And so this is great protocol because the protocol that surrounds hospitality, at least in the Near East, is something you offered. It could never be demanded of

you. If someone had to ask you for something, right? It means that you're not doing your job. You run to them first. Please stay at my house. Stay at my tree. Let me get some water. I'll wash your feet. That's a spiritual thing that Jesus did, right? Yeshua did. It's hospitality. Strangers walking, dirty feet, wash your feet off. It's a sign of hospitality. We're going to see several other examples of scripture where this is done as well. I'm going to bring water for you, my guests. I will wash your feet. I'll give you food and water.

And so then they accept the hospitality. So Abraham ran back into his tent and said to Sarah, "Hurry, get three large measures of your best flour, knead it into dough and bake some bread." So I'm sure Sarah was thrilled at this point. Abraham busts in the house—"Sarah, get cooking! We have guests." What's interesting is he said he would prepare for them some food, but he goes above and beyond because bread would have been all that he had to give them. That's all he offered, really. It's like, "Listen, guys, I'm going to give you a little bit of food and some water, and then you can continue on." But he busts in the house and says, "Sarah, make a bunch of bread!" Okay? Now, this was unleavened bread because she needed to make it right then and there, didn't have time to set.

The Generous Host

And when the food was ready, this is where Abraham goes above and beyond. Abraham could have just given them bread, he could have just given them some wine, he could have just given them water, but he runs out to his herd, his cattle, and he selects a tender calf. Okay?

I'm doing an experiment, a social experiment. I want you guys to pretend that you're Abraham and Sarah. Has a stranger ever come to your house before? Knocked on the door? Usually trying to sell a Kirby vacuum cleaner or something, right? Did you meet up at the end of your driveway before he even got to your door and rang the doorbell? Maybe we offered him some water. If it was hot outside, are you going to go out back and kill the cow to feed him? Got Betsy in the back, hold on. Don't even know your name yet. Ladies, your husband runs in the house. He's traveling down the road, "Make some bread, woman. Are you crazy?"

This was Abraham. He was ecstatic to have these visitors. And so he goes out and he prepares the calf and Sarah's making the bread. And when the food was ready, Abraham took some of the yogurt, curds and milk, and the roasted meat, and he served it to the men as they ate. And Abraham waited on them in the shade of the trees.

The Impossible Promise

And then something special happens. These men, they're angels, if you didn't realize that—this whole story. Three angels. They hadn't revealed themselves, their divine nature to Abraham yet. Which we see a pattern through scripture. So they look up to Abraham and they say, "Hey Abraham, where's your wife?" They got the cow, they got the bread, got the feet washed. They accepted the invitation of hospitality and now they're checking with Abraham. "Hey Abraham, where's your wife Sarah?" "She's inside the tent," Abraham responded. Then one of them said, "I'm going to return to you about this time next year, and your wife Sarah will have a son."

Now remember, Sarah was barren. They were very old, very old in age. But that was the promise that God made to Abraham, right? That was the promise: "You'll have a son and all these blessings that I promised you will go down the lineage, right?"

And so Sarah was actually listening to the conversation from inside the tent. And Abraham and Sarah were both very old by this time, and Sarah was long past the age of having children. She's barren. So she laughed silently to herself and said, "How could a worn out woman like me enjoy such pleasure, especially when my master, my husband, is also so old?" Look at these knuckleheads. They must be trying to sell something. What are they talking about?

And of course, we know the continuation of the story. One of the men gets up and says, "Hey Sarah, why are you laughing?" "I wasn't laughing." And they go back and forth. But I wanted to start out with that story because that pretty much highlights every aspect of hospitable protocol there was, at least in the scriptural narrative.

Learning About Hospitality in Israel

Now, we're going to go further into learning, but I want to tell you guys a story. When I went to Israel, Israel is a very blended culture. And what I mean by that is they have a mix between Eastern culture because they're like smack in the middle of the Middle East, and they have a huge mix of Western culture, essentially from Europe. The European Jewish population moved to Israel, and so you have this blending of customs and blending of cultures that come together. Different ways are viewed differently, and different immigrants do things differently than people who are native born in that area.

And so it's very interesting because when I went in 2007, I was with another guy, a pastor at that time, and we were driving around in the Old City. Now, the Old City is pretty cool. Very difficult to find a parking spot inside the Old City. Typically, you have to park miles away, walk, walk, walk, and then you're in. Very small area, lots of shops. So we're driving around and a store owner, an Arab store owner, saw us, ran over to our car. "Hey, hey, hey!" You know, of

course, Westerners, we lock the doors, you know? "What's this guy want?" Crack the window. "Hey, are you looking for a parking spot?" "Yeah, we're looking for a parking spot." So he looks at us and says, "Please, I'll show you my parking spot. Please, come to my store. I want to welcome you into my store." Very hospitable, yeah? Parking spot? Yes, it's my own personal parking spot. I give it to you. Very happy, smiling. So he hops in the car with us and we drive around the corner, and sure enough, there's a parking spot right in the middle. "Come, please come into my store."

The Carpet Seller's Protocol

So we walk into this guy's store, and it's amazing how many times someone will try to sell you a carpet in Israel. Now, I'm looking for cool stuff, not carpets. This man had an upstairs full of carpets that he was showing us. How am I supposed to get this home safely? Regardless, we walk into this man's shop. Big smile, right? Protocol, right? "Please, what do you want? I have tea, I have coffee, would you like beer? You know, water." And he starts pulling out water bottles, sealed water bottles, little ones, opening them up, putting them on the counter, pouring us glasses. We can't even tell him no at this point. All right, so we have water. Some appetizers, dates. And he's taking us around his shop. Upstairs, downstairs, and he's showing us his kiddush cup. "Look, it's a kiddush cup. It's handmade. Looks like it's pressed, but whatever. Handmade kiddush cup." "Oh, how much for this?" "Don't worry about the price." I knew something was up at that point. "Don't worry about the price." And then he got down these cool little... I don't know why Westerners, we must all drink shots, right? Hebrew shot glasses. There you go, shot glasses. That's pretty cool. Yeah, sure. So he's going around, he's pulling stuff out of the wall. "Yeah, look at this, look at this." And he's getting this nice pack together. And another guy, his associate, I think his son, told me to come upstairs with him. Walk upstairs, just carpets everywhere. "Really good deal." And the carpet, look, Aladdin-looking thing. I don't need a carpet. So I go back downstairs, and we have this pile of merchandise set up. No price tags on it. And he's happy and go lucky and everything's fine. You know, he's very hospitable.

And we're like, "Okay, how much would you give me for all of this?" Of course, the guy I'm with is like, "You'd be offended if I told you how much I would give you." "How much does it cost?" So we go back and forth just trying to get a price on this stuff. Very hospitable, right? Smiling. He comes back, "\$800." It's about \$30 worth of merchandise off eJudaica.com or whatnot. I mean, it's the same stuff. \$30. So the guy I'm with has a trip. "Listen, I'll give you \$50." I had no idea what was going on.

See, this guy was following proper rules—hospitable protocol. He was exploiting it for his customers. But see, the idea is if you offer something to somebody and they're your guest, then you have a protocol too. And your protocol is to be thankful, is to not ask for anything, and to show respect, okay? Give gratitude. That's part of the protocol. We didn't know this at the time. We were being sold a bunch of stuff. We were expected to buy something at that point. I mean, of course, he gave us a parking spot, he gave us a bottle of water we didn't ask for, gave us some food we didn't ask for, said he was giving us a really good deal. At that point, we're like, well, we're not going to be able to buy anything, so we try to head out, and he steps in front of the door. He's not happy with us at this point because we have insulted his hospitality.

Go back and forth—he's fined \$200 for everything. I'll give you \$50. At this point, Westerners in Israel, we're kind of scared. We've got to get out of here. So we scoot by him and we're walking down the road. And then we begin hearing shouting behind us down the Cobble Street Road in Jerusalem. This man is chasing us, yelling at us. "\$50! Fine! Fine!" The guy I'm with, he has kind of an attitude at this point. He turns around and says, "You know what? I'm out of your shop. I'm done. I'm not even interested in that stuff anymore. Right?"

Then the man lays it in. "I gave you my personal parking spot!" He's right. He gave us a personal parking spot. And so the guy I was with had like 20 or 30 shekels—five or six bucks. Ended up pulling that out and giving it to the guy. And nobody was happy.

But studying this topic, I look back and I realize, number one, we should never have accepted his hospitality. You have a choice. You can accept it or reject it, right? Rejecting it sometimes is a shameful thing if you do it the wrong way. But we accepted it. Yeah, free stuff. Americans, right? And we were locked into a custom that was thousands of years old and we had no idea how to participate in it. Ended up insulting the man, insulting his shop, insulting his son, insulting everything. Because we did not understand that we needed to buy something. Does this make sense? You with me? Still fun? Alright.

Seven Biblical Codes of Hospitality

So, from a broader study of hospitality in the Old Testament and the Ancient Near East, a scholar by the name of Victor Matthews—very smart guy—derived seven codes of conduct that together seek to maintain the honor of persons, their households, communities through the protection of strangers. In other words, we're about to get a little academic. Okay? Everybody okay? This is going to be boring for about two or three minutes. Okay? But it's necessary. Okay?

I'll give you a little tidbit. How many of you guys know that the only people that Yeshua revealed himself to in an intimate manner were people who gave him hospitality? Okay, we'll drop back in now. We're going to go into the boring stuff for just a minute.

So this guy is a scholar of the Old Testament, and he's developed seven pillars of hospitality. These are the seven codes of conduct, if you will, that throughout the biblical narrative, most hospitable interactions deal with. Okay, you with me? You ready?

One. There is a sphere of hospitality that comprises a zone of obligation for both the individual and the village or town within which they have the responsibility to offer hospitality to strangers. The size of this zone is, of course, smaller for individuals than in the urban centers. In other words, there is an invisible wall around your house. If somebody enters into that, through that force field, your hospitality antennas should go off. Ding, ding! Now you are obligated to at least offer them some type of good gesture—goodwill, protection, food, water—something like that. Okay, in cities they have the same thing. There was actually a place inside the cities called the Rehob—I believe it's how you say it in Hebrew—it's the town square. Strangers and travelers would go to the town square, and this would be the place where, if no one had approached them yet because they entered into the city, people would approach them and say, "Hey, you don't have a place to stay tonight? Come to my house. You don't have a place to eat tonight? Come to my house. You need something to drink?" You do that in the city square. The same thing happens even today in modern Israel. If you look Jewish, you've got a kippah and you're standing at the Kotel and people can tell you're a tourist, you might get asked over to someone's house for a Shabbat meal. It's protocol. Invisible sphere.

Two, the stranger must be transformed from being a potential threat to becoming an ally by the offer of hospitality. In other words, when you offer them a gift, they have to become your ally. They have to become your friend at that point. You have to make sure that you're both on the same page as becoming friends. Your enemy will not accept your hospitality in an honor-shame culture. It just doesn't happen.

Number three: the invitation of hospitality can only be offered by the male head of household or a male citizen of the town or village. This is what Victor Matthews says. We have some places in scripture where the women were the head of the household—the male husband was away—so the wives took over hospitality. What's the name, Yael? Different story. Typically, the head of the house or the citizen of the town were the only ones that could offer hospitality. In other words, let's say you rent a room from somebody. You don't own the house. You pay them \$100 a week for a bedroom and you use the toilet. You see someone outside, a stranger. Can you invite them into that house? No. Because you're not the head of the household. You have no rights as a

citizen of the household. You yourself are a stranger staying there. You don't control the gate. You don't control who comes in because you don't have the authority to, right? If you did that, you might make your landlords angry because they now view the stranger in the house—the guy our guest invited in—as someone who overstepped authority in the household. You see?

So we're good on three? Moving along.

Four: The invitation may include a time span statement for the period of hospitality, but this can then be extended, if agreeable to both parties, on the renewed invitation of the host. [Judges 19](#). Anybody read that? I announced it on Facebook. Guys, I'm going to teach on [Judges 19](#). Did anybody actually go back and read [Judges 19](#)? [Judges 19](#). You see, the Bible was a family-friendly book at one point in time. It was a great sit-around-the-table, read-this-thing-with-your-kids kind of book. It's great. Love, compassion, hospitality. And then someone wrote [Judges 19](#) and that just made the entire book not family-friendly. This is the most disturbing chapter in the Bible. We're going to talk a little bit about it, but not in detail. Anyway, the Levite who went to go get his lesser wife—or his concubine, if you will—in the Hebrew it actually says "wife concubine," so it's kind of in between. It's a weird phrase. So he went to his father-in-law's house, and his father-in-law kept renewing the invitation of hospitality to him for up to five days, I think. And finally he declined it on the fourth or fifth day. So that's a clear example of that.

The stranger has the right of refusal, but this could be considered an affront to the honor of the host and could be a cause for immediate hostilities or conflict. If the president... That's a bad example. If the president invites you to the White House, it's quite the honor to get that invitation, yeah? I'd be honored, yes! I would say yes, of course. I mean, I took a tour in the White House in the '90s. I've never sat down and had dinner with the president. What if I refuse the invitation? Who am I to do that? I mean, I'm affronting the honor of the president of the White House as a whole. You see? Make sense?

Six. This one gets a little lengthy. Once the invitation is accepted, the roles of the host and the guest are determined by the rules of custom. In other words, things change as soon as you accept this invitation. Your role changes and you transform into a completely different protocol.

A. A guest must not ask for anything. You're submitting to their hospitality.

B. The host provides the best he has to offer despite what may be modestly offered in the initial offer of hospitality. So Abraham offered them food, some bread. He would have fulfilled that, but he went above and beyond. He had a calf, curds, milk.

C. The guest is expected to reciprocate immediately with news, predictions of good fortune, or expressions of gratitude for what he has been given in praise of the host's generosity and honor. In other words, if you accept an invitation to someone's house, you cannot go in there and start talking about how ugly their house is or how ugly their kids are. You've got to tell them that your house is beautiful. You ever invite someone over to your house and the first thing your guests say? "Your house is beautiful." That's protocol. That's what you're supposed to do, right? You praise them and say good things to them.

D. The host must not ask personal questions of the guest—these matters can only be volunteered by the guest.

Protection of the Guest

Number seven: the guest remains under the protection of the host until he or she has left the zone of obligation of the host. We spoke about this at Passover, talking about the threshold covenant. Once you step over the threshold, the host is obligated to protect you. That's why Samson, when he was in Gaza, right? Samson was in the Gaza Strip. You guys heard that? When he was visiting down there, he was hanging out with a girl. Leave it at that. In the Gaza, in the city. And some of the Philistines, I believe, knew he was in the city and were like, "Well, we're going to kill this guy. We got to kill him, right?" So what did they do? They snuck in his house and they killed him that night, right? No. They said, "We got to wait for him to leave the town gate." That's the zone. The gate is the zone. And so they're waiting for him outside the gate. They're going to get him. Samson wakes up.

Threshold Covenant

What's he do? Gets dressed. He walks over to the gate, the threshold of the city, puts his arms around it, and lifts it up and stacks it on his neck and walks out with it. And he carries the gate across Israel. The guys couldn't touch him because he just took the threshold, the zone of the city, and carried it with him. He was still inside the safety of the city, and they had to protect him. They couldn't hurt him. That's hilarious when you realize these things, right? Threshold covenant.

This leads us to another story. These are salt and pepper shakers of Lot and his wife. Can you guess which one is salt? They sell these on Amazon. Totally legitimate. Alright, you guys ready to have some fun, put some context on some stories? This was a fun one for me. I always looked at the stories a little boring until I started realizing the context.

Lot in Sodom

Lot was Abraham's nephew. And they got in a little disagreement out in the field, and so Lot went off, and now he's living in Sodom. Sodom is a Canaanite city, okay? Who lives in Canaanite cities? Canaanites, okay? Right? Lot's from Syria initially. Lot is not a Canaanite, but he's allowed to live there, okay? You with me?

And so we know the story of what happens with Sodom and Gomorrah, right? God blesses them, God gives them streets of gold, diamonds in the road. The angels were there and they were going to go to Sodom and Gomorrah because God had heard some things about Sodom and Gomorrah, and the angels were going to go in there and check the place out. And they ended up going in and finding that everybody was righteous, and so the city is still, until this day, staying there, and they're awesome. You can go visit them, right? Is that what happens? That's not what happened.

So the angels are speaking with Abraham, and they're like: yeah, we got to go to the cities and we're going to destroy them. Wipe them all out. And so Abraham starts negotiating with him. No, my nephew's in there. You can't wipe out my nephew. He's a good guy. He's a righteous guy. And they go back and forth: if we can find 50 people, 30, 20, whatnot. After the negotiations, the angel said: listen, if we can find 10 righteous people, 10 in the whole city, we won't destroy it. Okay? Good deal. Surely you can find ten folks who are righteous. Right? Who have hearts of mercy and graciousness. Hearts to love one another. Hearts of kindness. I mean, surely.

The Angels at the Gateway

So the two angels arrived in Sodom in the evening. And Lot was sitting at the gateway of the city. Just like his uncle. Sitting at the gateway of the tent. Right? Right?

So Lot's sitting there, and when he saw them, he got up to go meet them and he bowed down before them. So Lot's following protocol of hospitality to these two angels. Okay?

"My lords," he said, "please turn aside to your servant's house. You can wash your feet and spend the night and then go on your way early in the morning." Come on guys, come to my house. We'll play Xbox, we're gonna have a good time. Please, I'm inviting you into my house. Please come with me. Okay?

He's not a citizen. Lot can't do that. Right? Inside the gate, Lot was something that we call, scripture calls a sojourner, a stranger within the gates. You hear Torah talk about be kind to the strangers that sojourn with you. That was Lot in Sodom. Okay, but we'll just keep reading.

They refused. We will spend the night in the square. That square there in Hebrew is Rehob. That's the town square. That's where they were most likely going, to see if anyone in the city was going to offer them a place to stay. I mean, certainly that's where you go to see if kindness was and love was, right? If you're going to see people of justice and righteousness, you'd go to the town square, and everybody in the town would see you, and they would invite you into their homes, and you could: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10. All right, bye guys. Fulfilled our commitment, right?

Still with me?

But he insisted so strongly that the angels did end up going with him and entered into his home. Okay?

I wonder why he was so adamant. Don't go to the square, guys. Don't do it. You need to come to my house right now.

He prepared a meal for them, baking bread without yeast, and they ate. The rabbis say that because it was unleavened bread, it was obviously during the Feast of Unleavened Bread. It was Passover. Or he was just trying to make bread quickly, and it was unleavened. We don't know.

All the Men Came

Before they had gone to bed, all of the men of every part of the city of Sodom, both young and old, surrounded the house. How many of the men? All. Interesting. So the entire city is involved with what's fixing to happen. Little boys, big guys, all of the men in the city. What was the charge? How many righteous? If they found how many? So how many stayed at their homes? Zero. So scripture makes a point to say all of the men came. Not one stayed at their house.

All of the men in the city came and surrounded the house, and they called to Lot: where are these men that came to you tonight? Bring them out to us so we can know them.

The Meaning of "Know"

Now this is when things get really interesting. We make the assumption that they're wanting to do something bad to these angels, right? Something bad. Okay.

It's interesting because there was one commentary I was reading that said this word to know—yadah—can mean several different things. In a covenantal contract, it means to see someone in covenant with you. You know that they're in covenant with you. My wife. I know my wife. It's not necessarily sexual. It's I know that she's in covenant with me. Right?

Outside of that, it's kind of general knowledge. We want to know who these guys are. And so one guy was saying that the Canaanites came, and they used this word, yadah, and Lot misunderstood it. He took it as something really bad, and they were really just trying to see who these guys were. It's just a fun commentary. Go back and study it yourself.

Why were the men upset? Because Lot had let strangers into these houses, into the city. Standing at the gate: come on guys, come on in, quick, don't go to the square, come on, get in my house. Where are these men that came to you tonight? Who are these guys in the city?

Lot broke protocol in the city he was in. He wasn't supposed to do that. It's amazing because I wonder if the angels wanted to go to the square and see what would happen. But why did the men want to know them?

You guys understand what I'm saying when I say know them? Why did all the men want to know them? I mean, were they all like that? Seems a little far-fetched, in my opinion. Everybody?

Protocol and Punishment

So in the Middle Assyrian Code, we're going to read it. Male rape was a form of punishment for breaking protocol and certain laws. We always view it in our society as a big deal because we always view it as a type of lust or something like that. In the Near East, in many kingdoms, it was punishment.

Middle Assyrian Code, specifically paragraph 20 if you want to google it, deals with the physical act, not just a rumor. If a man, an Assyrian man, lay with his neighbor, another citizen—rape—when they have prosecuted him and convicted him, they shall lie with him and then turn him into a eunuch. An Assyrian punishment. Nothing lustful about it.

It makes you think: were the men really upset that these strangers snuck into their city? Were they that cold-hearted? We need to go deal with these guys right now. Send these men out so we can know them, so we can correct what you've done, letting them into our city. They should have come to the square. They should have followed protocol with entering a city, but they didn't, and now we're gonna punish them. That's one opinion. I'm not being dogmatic about it, but that's how I started reading these stories after understanding the context through various commentaries.

Lot's Obligation to His Guests

And so we see this carried out. So Lot went outside to meet them, and he shut the door behind him and said, "Know my brothers."

So Lot, what's he call them? My fellow citizens, my brothers, hey guys, what's going on? All of us sodomites here, yeah, hey, my brother.

Don't do this wicked thing, this cold-hearted thing to them. Look, I have two daughters who have never known a man. Let me bring them out to you and you can do what you like with them.

Notice that they wanted to—yadah—know the men, and Lot brings out daughters that have never known a man, right? Men don't want the daughters. Daughters didn't do anything wrong. It was a lustful thing. Homosexuality in the Near East was not a lifestyle. It was a commodity, if you will. It was an option that was restricted in Torah.

He's obligated to protect the guests. But don't do anything to these men, for they have come under the protection of my roof. They're in my house. I have to protect them according to protocol. That's what I've done.

The Men's Opposition

So what's next is fascinating. The men reply: get out of my way, Lot. They turn to Lot and say: this fellow came here as a foreigner, Lot, and now he wants to play the judge in our city?

The Wickedness of Sodom

This escalated pretty quick. We always read this thinking, oh, these guys are just sick and lustful. No, these are mad people. If you tried to seek hospitality in their city, you would be punished in a most wicked manner. Makes it worse, I think, right?

Then they look at Lot. "We'll treat you worse than they did. If you don't get out of our way right now..." They kept bringing pressure on Lot and moved to break down the door. But the men inside reached out, pulled Lot back into the house, and shut the door. Then they struck the men who were at the door—both young and old—with blindness so that they could not find the door.

Now that's how I read the story. The two men then said to Lot, "Do you have anyone else here—your sons, your daughters, wife, kids—anyone else in the city that belongs to you? Get them out of here because we are going to destroy this place. The outcry to the Lord against its people is so great that he has sent us to destroy it."

This is how I read the story. You guys may read it differently. You go study. Lots of commentaries out there. But have you ever seen that type of commentary before at that point of view? That's interesting. Very interesting.

Both young and old—boys, this wasn't a lustful act. This was an act of judgment, in my opinion.

A Sacred Cow About Sodom

Here's a sacred cow. Many of you guys already know this. In church, I was taught that Sodom and Gomorrah were destroyed because of homosexuality, of course. Right? But why was it really destroyed? Ezekiel tells us.

"As surely as I live, declares the sovereign Lord, your sister Sodom and her daughters never did what you and your daughters have done. Now this was the sin of your sister Sodom. She and her daughters were arrogant, overfed, and unconcerned. They did not help the poor and the needy."

Was that it? That was it. Yeah. They tried to do wicked things with guys. No. They weren't hospitable. Wiped off the face of the map. Fire and brimstone from heaven—because they had no concern with those who needed help. They had no concern with the poor, the needy. They were gluttons and lazy and they could not even afford to offer two strangers food and water until they traveled off in the morning. Matt's opinion. Anybody ever seen that before? I'm sure you've studied Ezekiel, right?

The Meaning of Hospitality

Hospitality. Big deal. So the Oxford English Dictionary defines hospitality. I love this definition. "The act or practice of being hospitable. The reception and entertainment of guests, visitors, or strangers. Goodwill towards them, supplies towards them, things that they need." Okay?

The Greek word *phylaxenia*—the Greek word for hospitality—literally means the love of strangers. I found that fascinating. Because we see God talk about strangers and foreigners a lot in Scripture, especially in Exodus, right? "Do not mistreat or oppress a foreigner, a stranger, for you were strangers in Egypt. You were never Egyptian citizens. You were travelers, you were outsiders who were allowed to stay there. Don't mistreat foreigners, strangers. Do not oppress a foreigner, a stranger. You yourself know how it feels to be a stranger because you were foreigners or strangers in Egypt."

And that's what the Greek word hospitality means: the love of strangers.

The Pattern of Divine Visitation

So we see a pattern with Abraham, and now we're going to have fun because we're going to go into another sphere, into the New Testament. We have a pattern, right? A host—Abraham, Lot. I'm not saying Lot sinned, I'm saying the commentary broke a little bit of protocol.

So we have a host, right? A willing host, and we have a guest, and in this case it was a divine guest. Divine guest. We have an invitation of hospitality: "Please come to my house. I'll give you some food, some water, I'll wash your feet, and then you can go in the next morning." Time limit, the whole thing, right?

You have the messengers accepting the invitation of hospitality. This is a protocol. And then you have something special. You have the revelation of the divine nature of these guests. Or you have gratitude, right? And joy back to you. In other words, the host always got some type of gift or benefit from his hospitality. Okay? You guys with me?

Yeshua: The Divine Visitor

You guys realize that Yeshua was a divine visitor? You guys realize that? Of course, he's the Messiah! But think about this: When he came, nobody knew that! Carpenter's boy walking around. Who does God think he is? Mashiach. Son of God, the king of Israel, the king of the world, the king of the universe. Now he's outside the scope of what people think. He's just a very clever rabbi walking around here. Right?

How do we know that he was a divine visitor? Because [Luke 9](#): "And they were all amazed at the greatness of God. The greatness of God. While everyone was marveling at all that Yeshua did, he said to his disciples, so on and so forth." Everything that he did, he brought honor back to God. Divine revelation. It's how he traveled. It's what he did.

[John 1](#): "And the word became flesh and dwelt among us." You guys know this. Yeshua was a divine visitor.

Luke's Gospel: The Gospel of Hospitality

We're fixing to see a few patterns that are very cool, that are going to line up with what we were discussing. You see, Luke is a very special gospel. John is the spiritual gospel. He's very metaphorical, very spiritual, very cool in the way he describes different scenarios and things. And Matthew's pretty detailed with what he does. Mark has his aspect. And Luke—I've always seen Luke as just kind of unremarkable.

One thing that Luke does throughout the entire context of Yeshua is he highlights all of the pillars of hospitality. Every single thing that Yeshua did. Did Yeshua have a house? At one point, perhaps, I suppose, right? But during his ministry, did he have a house? Which meant he was a traveler, right? Constantly traveling. Waiting for people to invite him in.

The Mission and the Pattern

Remember when he first charged his disciples to go out? Sent them out twice. And the first time he sent them out, he said, "Don't take nothing with you. No water, no food, no clothing, no bed, no guns, nothing."

And of course, down in the south, we really like it when he discharges his disciples the second time. He tells them to all go buy a sword. And if you don't have a sword, you need to get a sword. So down in the south, we get really excited about that one. Yeah, the second coming, we're going to need our swords and our guns.

We never really focus on the first time he sent them out because if you actually read it, we'll read it here in a few minutes. Remember what he says. He says, "Hey, go into the cities. And when people let you into their homes, hospitality, right? Share the good news with them, be kind to them, so on and so forth. And if they reject the message that you have, then knock the dust off your feet."

But the whole idea was that they were going to be travelers and they were going to be relying on the code of hospitality throughout all of Judea and Israel, right? I know, I know.

Receiving the Divine Guest

So scattered throughout Luke's narrative, we see Yeshua being met with proper hospitality and protocol by those who accept him and his message. Most often, they were sinners, right? Tax collectors, bottom of the barrel folk, if you will.

Hospitality is therefore established as one of the primary responses to God's visitation. In other words, Luke sets a precedence, he sets a standard that when God's presence approaches the people, then the standard protocol is to be hospitable to God. That makes sense, Matt, of course, I'm going to invite a man, so on and so forth. Yeah, but seriously. Yeah. Whenever God's presence comes near, you invite them in, you feed them, wash their feet, so on and so forth.

Levi the Tax Collector

After this, Yeshua saw a tax collector by the name of Levi, right? That's my boy. Tax collectors were pretty popular folks in the first century, if you guys didn't realize that. They'd come around and they'd get all your money and take your money and maybe push you around a little bit if you didn't give it to them, and you'd love them to death because they were awesome people, right?

Can you imagine if I said something like this? "Yeshua came for IRS agents to accept them into his kingdom." That wouldn't really make you feel good, would it? Maybe it's just me. Maybe it's just me.

Tax collectors were considered sinners. They were considered traitors to their own people. Why? Because they're taking from their people and they're giving it to a foreign power. Traitors. So they were treated as such.

And so Yeshua's coming and he sees a tax collector by the name of Levi sitting at the tax booth, and Yeshua says, "Hey, follow me." And Levi got up, left everything, and followed him. Love that. Just like Abraham with God. Love that.

And Levi held a great banquet for Yeshua at his house. And a large crowd of tax collectors and others were eating with them. But the Pharisees and the teachers of the Torah who belonged to their sect complained to his disciples, "Why do you eat and drink with tax collectors and sinners?"

In other words, why do you accept the hospitality of sinners? Right? Can you imagine how this looked? Here's this up-and-coming rabbi. He's gaining traction. He has a little bit of a following. He has his ministry going for him. And then a tax collector and a whole bunch of other tax collectors throw him a block party. And he's attending.

Who is this guy? He shouldn't be attending these parties. Why did he accept their hospitality? Because once you accept hospitality, you're locked in. You're locked into something. You're locked into a relationship.

How can Yeshua accept the hospitality of sinners? And Yeshua answered them, "It is not the healthy who need a doctor, but the sick. I did not call the righteous, but sinners to repentance."

I love that because the Pharisees were viewing this as a type of hospitable act. Maybe Yeshua's getting something or he's just taking advantage of these tax collectors.

Hospitality as Repentance

But Yeshua's seeing hospitality as a sign of repentance from Levi. That's what he's viewing it as. Rabbi, you are so gracious to even notice me. Please come to my house. I will feed you. I will hold a banquet. We will invite everybody, all of my friends. How honored am I to have you at my home. We notice that Yeshua is known for traveling a lot, right? And Yeshua traveled through the towns and villages teaching and he made his way to Jerusalem. [Luke 13](#), in any case, I must keep going today and tomorrow and the next day for surely no prophet can die outside Jerusalem. [Luke 14](#), large crowds were traveling with Yeshua and turning them, he said, so on and so forth. [Luke 17](#), now this way to Jerusalem. Yeshua traveled along the border between Samaria and Galilee. [Luke 19](#), after Yeshua had said this, he went on ahead traveling to Jerusalem. Always had a destination. Something about that city, if you ever get a chance to visit it. Always traveling.

The Road to Emmaus

You guys ever heard this story? Road to Emmaus? So this takes place, of course, after the resurrection. Ho shebang. And there are these two guys traveling. Road to Emmaus, right? And Yeshua comes up behind them and they don't recognize him. He comes up and they're talking about what had happened in Jerusalem. Oh, crucifixion, everything. Some women came and they said that the tomb was rolled away. And Yeshua was talking to him and he's like, hey guys, what you talking about? They didn't recognize him. Right? Now that same day, two of them were going from village to the village called Emmaus, about seven miles from Jerusalem, and they were talking with each other about everything that had happened. And they talked and discussed these things with each other. Yeshua himself came up and walked along with them, but they were kept from recognizing him.

I love this because this illustrates the point. They did not see the divine character they were speaking with. Abraham didn't know these guys were angels when they first came. Right? It wasn't until after hospitality was offered. When Lot invited the two strangers into his house, that's when the angel said, hey, who all do you have in the city? We're going to get them out. Back to hospitality, right? It's all a cycle. It's all a cycle. It's interesting because God is willing to participate in the cycle and Yeshua is willing to participate in the cycle, but we have to be the ones to offer hospitality to God in the first place, right?

And so they didn't recognize Yeshua. He's walking up beside them. And he asked them, "What are you discussing together in this walk? What's happening guys? What's the news?" And they stood still, their faces downcast. One of them, named Cleopas, asked him, "Are you the only one visiting Jerusalem who does not know these things that have happened in these days?" "What

things?" he said. "About Yeshua of Nazareth," they replied. "He was a prophet, powerful in word and deed before God and all the people. The chief priests. Can you imagine if you were chuckling at this point? Yeah, go on. You were hoping what? It was the third day. In addition, some of our women amazed us. They went to the tomb early this morning but didn't find his body. They came and told us that they had not. They had seen a vision of angels who said he was alive. Then some of our companions went to the tomb and found it as the women said, but they did not see Yeshua.

And so Yeshua says back to them, "How foolish you are and how slow to believe all that the prophets have spoken. Did not the Messiah have to suffer these things and then enter into glory?" And beginning with Moses and all the prophets, he explained to them what was said in all the scriptures concerning himself. Still has not revealed himself to them yet, right? No hospitality's taken place. They gotta offer hospitality then for him to reveal himself if we're going by the same pattern, right? Love that.

Can you imagine Yeshua walking beside you and you're talking about, yeah, he's been crucified and his body's gone and everyone's saying they saw angels. But we were really hoping like he'd still be there. We went and looked at ourselves. He's not there. Where is this guy? And this guy you don't recognize is like, listen, we're going to start in [Genesis 1:1](#). We're going to walk through this and the rest of the miles we got to Emmaus. How about that? This is why you hadn't seen him yet. God, send the glory. This is what happened. He was third day raising up. This is everything that's going to happen. And so, they're probably thinking, wow, this guy knows his stuff about Messiah.

The Breaking of Bread

As they approached the village to which they were going, Yeshua continued on as if he were going further. So they're breaking off. You ever walk with someone on a hiking trail or something, and you're walking together, and then it comes to where your paths meet, and then it's just like, all right, we'll see you later. That awkward moment of now we're going to separate. Yeshua's still going to keep traveling. But they urged him strongly, stay with us, for it is nearly evening. The day is almost over. So he went in to stay with them. In other words, they had entered into the zone of hospitality near their house. Don't travel tonight. What are you doing? It's almost evening. Come into our house, please, sir. Please, master, my lord. Come into our house so that we can serve you. Spend the night and then you can go on in the morning. Hospitality was offered.

When he was at the table with them, he took bread, gave thanks, broke it, and began to give it to them. And then their eyes were opened and they recognized him. What a really cool pattern. And then he disappeared from their sight. That would have been frustrating. Offered him hospitality, walked with him all day, didn't recognize him. Now you recognize him. Poof. Hospitality has to start from you in order for God to reveal himself in your life. That's the point of all of this. Sorry guys, I could have summed that up in the first five minutes. I apologize. Took you guys down this rabbit trail.

In every scenario, you have to be the one to offer the hospitality. You have to be the one to open your door and invite him in to your house or if you want to get spiritual, to your life. Only after that does he truly reveal himself in the manner that he can. Okay, oh, it gets better.

Zacchaeus—Love This Guy

Zacchaeus, love this guy. Zacchaeus was a wee little man, a wee little man was he, climbed up in a tree because he wanted to see something. So Yeshua entered into Jericho and was traveling through. Traveling once again—here we go, same pattern. A man was there by the name of Zacchaeus, and he was a chief tax collector. Bottom barrel, right? Chief meant he was a rich, rich guy. He was a rich traitor in the eyes of all of the religious authorities in the kingdom. He was profiting off the oppression on Israel from Rome. I might be mad at him too. Looking back, it's always 2020, right? They should have given him a break. No, I would have been mad too. Who are you? He wanted to see who Yeshua was. Don't you just want to see who he is? Want to do anything? What do I have to do? But being short... He could not because of the crowd. Rich guy, nice suit. So he ran ahead and climbed a sycamore fig tree to see him since Yeshua was coming that way.

When Yeshua reached the spot, he looked up and said, Zacchaeus, come down immediately. I want to stay at your house, man. Interesting. A little bit of breaking protocol there. A guest typically doesn't request hospitality. Zacchaeus, come down from there. He knew what he wanted. I'm going to stay with you, buddy. Zacchaeus scrambled down. Here we go again. But Zacchaeus stood up and said to the Lord, "Look, Lord, here and now I give half of my possessions to the poor, and if I have cheated anyone out of anything, I will pay back four times the amount." And Yeshua said to them, "Today salvation has come to this house, because this man too is a son of Abraham. For the Son of Man came to seek and to save that which was lost."

Salvation Through Hospitality

Yeshua said to him, "Today salvation has come to this house." How did it start? I gotta stay at this house today. Zacchaeus, I wanna stay at your house. Zacchaeus could have said no. If he had said no, salvation wouldn't come to the house. Yes, master. Please come stay with me. This parallel indicates a connection between salvation and hospitality towards Yeshua. This gets me excited and scared at the same time. Because we all know if we claim to be followers of Yeshua, then we're saved, or we're going to heaven, or whatever the goal is at the end of the tunnel. We got that. But we have so many scriptures that divide the sheep and the goats. Everybody believed in a king, but there is a division. What is the division? The division is the willingness to offer hospitality to all that Yeshua says represents him. Or the opposite.

Hmm. Truly, you are a son of Abraham. No one sees you as that because you're a tax collector. I see you. You're in covenant. You're in covenant. Salvation's come to you, too. Because he allowed me to stay at your house. That's it. Click the button. This is what I was talking about earlier.

When Yeshua had called the twelve together—Luke, staying in the same gospel—he gave them power and authority to drive out all the demons and to cure all the diseases. And he sent them out to preach the kingdom of God and to heal the sick. And he told them, take nothing for the journey. No staff, no bag, no food, no water, no extra tunic, nothing. No extra underpants, nothing. Just go.

Threshold Covenant

Go. Whatever house you enter, stay there until you leave that town. And if people do not welcome you, shake the dust off of your feet when you leave their town as a testimony against them.

Remember, we were speaking about threshold covenant. And you always step over the threshold into a home—you're accepting the hospitality of that house, whatever they offer. But if you stomp on the threshold, it's a huge insult. Basically what you're saying is, "Curse me, this house." It's equivalent to the bird, if you will, knocking the dust off at the gate of the city because they did not provide you with hospitality—they did not welcome you.

Remember when Yeshua and his disciples were on the way? They came to a village and Mary and Martha. Remember Martha invited Yeshua in? That was a big deal. She was sitting there doing dishes and preparing the meal, and Mary was over here just talking to Yeshua, and Martha starts complaining to Yeshua, "Have her help! I'm trying to be as hospitable as I can!"

Main Characters of Scripture

Again, the main key characters of all Scripture, the close followers of Yeshua, are easily recognizable if you see which ones offer hospitality.

Someone asked Yeshua, "Luke, have you guys ever seen this concept before—this type of pattern with hospitality?" I sure had. This is new to me. So if someone asks you, "Sure, hey, what do I have to do to get in heaven, essentially? I want eternal life. I want to live forever. What do I got to do?" So of course, you know, love your neighbor as yourself, right? Love God, love people. Those are the pillars—kindness, so on and so forth.

And they get in a discussion, and then Yeshua begins telling a story: "A man was going down to Jerusalem from Jericho, just north of Jerusalem, not very far, right? When he was attacked by robbers, and they stripped him of his clothes, they beat him, and went away, leaving him half dead."

A Priest, a Levite, and a Samaritan

And a priest—pretty righteous guy, you know. I mean, this wasn't just a Levite. This was a son of Aaron, a priest. His job is to manage the temple, minister to Israel, and specifically in Numbers it states the job of the priest is to bear the iniquity of all of Israel. It's his job to take on the burden of Israel with joy, because that's his job. He's the son of Aaron, right?

So a priest came along and saw this guy half dead in the street. He was going down the same road and passed by on the other side. Probably thought he was dead, didn't want to get unclean, so he passed to the other side, right?

So too a Levite came, okay? The Levite could have been unclean. That would be okay. He wasn't a direct priest. He managed the temple. So the Levite passed him by. It wouldn't help this man. And when he came to the place and saw him, he passed by on the other side.

But a Samaritan, as he traveled, came where the man was, and when he saw him, he took pity on him. Samaritans, guys, there's a little bit of debate about who the Samaritans were, but let's just say this. They were a mixture of some of the tribes in Israel and foreigners, half-breeds, if you will. And they kept Torah a lot differently than the Pharisees did. They saw it completely differently. They still exist in Israel today. They do things differently. Sacrifice on another mountain in Israel, so on and so forth.

In the first century, Samaritans were looked at as the black sheep of the family. Wish they didn't exist. Worse than an infidel, if you will. The Samaritan comes and takes pity on this guy. He

went to him, bandaged his wounds, poured on oil and wine, and then he put the man on his own donkey, brought him to an inn, and took care of him. The next day he took out two denarii and gave them to the innkeeper. He told the innkeeper, "Look after him, and when I return I will reimburse you for any extra expense you have made."

Who Is the Neighbor?

Which of these three—the priest, the Levite, or the Samaritan—which of these three do you think was a neighbor to the man who fell into the hands of robbers? And the expert of the Torah replied, "The one who had mercy on him."

See, this teacher of the law was asking Yeshua after Yeshua said, you know, the biggest commandment you need to do is love your neighbor as yourself. And he responds back, "Well, who's my neighbor? You know, just Jews? Is an Assyrian my neighbor? Really? Is a Roman my neighbor?"

Yeshua paints this picture. Who was a neighbor to this man that fell? A priest? A Levite? Or a Samaritan that helped him? The one who's willing to love is your neighbor. Then what's he say? The master says, "Go and do likewise." This is your charge. When you see someone who needs something, you need to be willing to give it.

This is hard for Westerners. This is hard for us, right? We see someone with a flat tire on the side of the road, "Oh, maybe I don't have to stop. Is there someone else helping them? Oh, maybe they're okay. Oh, they got a cell phone. They'll be fine." Nobody moved an inch when I just did that. Everyone's been in that situation, right? Just me? I admit it's scary to help people in Western culture.

Hospitality and Protocol

And it was a completely different protocol back then. You didn't go out searching strange areas to provide hospitality. It was within your city, within your town. There was protocol set up and desert travelers and so on and so forth. It wasn't simply inviting someone in that was a complete foreigner. You had an idea of where they came from. There was a protocol that took place to make sure they were safe, turn them into an ally and not a threat, extinguish that, so on and so forth.

But it's interesting because we can still keep the majority of these protocols of hospitality as we walk today. And if we're kind to others, let's just put it that way, if we love other people, then

we're doing what Yeshua said to do. We're being like him.

The Emissary of Messiah

How many of you guys know that the goal as an ambassador is to fully represent the king so that when you stand and when you speak for the king as an emissary, people view you as if you are the king? They've got to treat you with respect like the king because if they treat you poorly, then it's an affront on the king because you're his messenger. You're supposed to fully resemble him in everything that you say and do. When people look at you as an emissary of Messiah, they should see Messiah. Hospitality is a huge role in that. This story. This story. You guys ready for one more story? The big one.

The Sinful Woman at the Pharisee's House

When one of the Pharisees invited Yeshua to have dinner with him, hospitality, come on in, right? He went to the Pharisee's house and reclined at the table, and a woman in that town who lived a sinful life learned that Yeshua was eating at the Pharisee's house, so she came there with an alabaster jar of perfume, very expensive perfume. And as she stood behind him, at his feet weeping, she began to wet his feet with her tears. Then she wiped them with her hair, kissed them, and poured perfume on them. Extreme hospitable act.

When the Pharisee who had invited Yeshua saw this, he said to him, "If this man were a prophet, he would know who was touching him and what kind of woman she is, that she is a sinner."

Now we've become immune, kind of, I guess, accustomed to that word sinner. "Sinner, everyone's a sinner because we sin, we're sinners." No, she's a sinner, right? Sinner. If this guy knew who this woman was, he wouldn't be letting her touch his feet. Wouldn't let her touch him, crying, getting near him.

Yeshua turned to him and said, "Hey Simon, I have something to tell you."

"Tell me, teacher."

Can you imagine the guy's thinking this in his heart? "Oh, tell me, teacher. What do you have to tell me, master?"

Simon replied, "I suppose the one with the bigger debt that was forgiven, you know, the guy who owed the king 500 denarii, I suppose he would love the king more because of the forgiveness."

"You have judged correctly," Yeshua said.

Her Sins Are Forgiven

Do you realize when we read these things, this is Messiah, this is the Son of God, this is the King of Israel, this is the guy who took our shame, gave us his honor so that we can approach God blameless? Do you realize that we're going to be resurrected? We're not going to stick around in Sheol and get thrown into the lake of fire. We will be resurrected because of these words of the man that spoke them. This is not just a book.

I get excited when I read little stories about this because there may not be a whole lot of explosions and action and karate chops and stuff that gets our attention, but this is the Son of God who's saying this, the King of Israel, our King, according to [Romans 10](#). And so I'm excited when he's telling these parables. He's like, "Listen, Simon, which one is going to love his master more, the guy with the bigger debt? You judged correctly."

Then he turned towards the woman and said unto Simon, "Do you see this woman? I came into your house. You did not give me any water for my feet, but she wet my feet with her tears and wiped them with her hair. You did not give me a kiss, but this woman, from the time I entered, has not stopped kissing my feet. You did not put oil on my head, but she has poured perfume, expensive oil, on my feet. Therefore, I tell you, her many sins have been forgiven, and her great love has shown. The great love that she's going to love her master, right? Her great love has shown. But whoever has been forgiven little loves little.

Were you guys forgiven a little or a lot?

I was forgiven a lot, guys. I was forgiven a lot. Hair. I wish I had long hair so I could do that. No towel, no problem. No water, no problem. No oil, I got perfume.

Who offered him hospitality? The Pharisee invited him into his house. That was it. The woman invited him into her life. You see the difference?

But this one, the writer of Hebrews, goes back to the story of Abraham, the story of Lot, and the story of Yeshua: "Do not neglect to show hospitality to strangers, and therefore some have entertained angels unaware."

See, we always view this in the context of angels being everywhere, right? And we need to make sure we're hospitable to them. That's fine, but it's grounded in the story of Abraham and Lot.

Looking Back at Abraham and Lot

What if Abraham had not been hospitable to the angels? You remember the gratitude that the angels gave back to Abraham? "Hey, where's your wife? In the tent? Making some more bread. We're going to come back a year from now. You're going to have a son." They could not have declared that if Abraham did not offer them hospitality.

Lot and his family would not have known to get out of the city unless he had offered the invitation of hospitality to the messengers.

Zacchaeus—there were known tax collectors, the sinners, the ones who owe the greatest debt. According to Luke, the pattern seems to conclude they have to be willing to offer an invitation of hospitality to Yeshua.

Is that something that you have done or are prepared to do?

"Matt, what does that mean? You're asking him into my heart?" Well, kind of. That's a great way of putting it, but that's not really—that's a very emotional way of putting it. No, it's with your actions, because that's what he said. That's when he separated the sheep from the goats. Those who do the things that I will do are the ones who are with me.

Walking Like Messiah

We have to walk like Messiah. We have to walk like a messenger of Messiah.

Declaring that he is our king is like step one. Inviting him into our lives, that's step one. Open that door. "Master, I will give you everything. Please join me. Allow me to serve you." That's where it starts. And from that point on, we begin to walk like him. That's at least our challenge, right?

I'm going to take this verse completely out of context. [Revelation 3:20](#), right? "Here I am, I stand at the door and I knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in and I will eat with that person and they with me."

We've all heard that verse. Let's see Shui-tah-mi, right? And typically in church, that verse is taught to be for non-believers, where you open the door to your heart and you ask Yeshua into your heart.

The Letter to Laodicea

Remember from the lukewarm teaching we did a month or two ago, chapter 3 is dealing with the letter to Laodicea. Yeshua's walking to the top, talking to the Laodiceans, the lukewarm folks. This verse is actually for believers, the ones who should have been waiting at the gate, waiting for him. Was he not him? He should have made it at the door.

The messengers didn't make it at the door of Abraham's tent. He ran out to meet them. Lot, sitting at the gates waiting for the messengers. Zacchaeus—trick! This is written to believers. Non-believers too. Non-believers too. But this is written to people who know his name. This is written to people who should be watching and waiting for him.

"I knock at the door. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in and I will eat with that person and they with me." Are you sure to eat with that person? I want to show him hospitality. I want him to know that I want to see him. This is the sum of it.

Opening Your Life to the Kingdom

If you're willing to be in the kingdom—and I say willing because it's not something that you just jump into. It's a decision that changes the rest of your life. If you're willing to be a part of the kingdom, to be a follower of Yeshua, to be a follower of the king who's anointed by God, then you do have to open your life up and you have to offer it. You have to offer it to Yeshua for him to come in and to operate within. That's the whole point.

If there's someone here today who has never made that step, guys, after we sing Shema, I'd love to pray with you. That's what we're here for. We've got a prayer team. That's what we do.

Maybe you've known his name. Maybe you've asked him into your heart before, but have you treated him like a Pharisee would have to come in? Have you forgotten to give out the water? Have you forgotten to give out the towel? Have you forgotten to give out the things to complete the code of hospitality?

The Full Revelation

If you have been refraining some aspects of your life to hand over to Yeshua—the spirit that should be dwelling in you—then the full revelation is never going to come into your life.

My interpretation of what we read in Luke—Yeshua walking down the street—takes it a step further. You've done it for the least of these, you've done it for me. How do we treat each other? How do we treat people in need?

See, the folks on the left didn't treat the people who needed something, right? They didn't give them anything because they didn't see Yeshua there. They didn't know what Yeshua looked like. People on the right knew what to look for. Who can they offer hospitality to? The poor, the hungry, the naked, the homeless, those in prison.

Because as long as they have a tent like Abraham that's always open on four sides, they're never going to miss the Messiah. Messiah is always going to have an invitation in their heart. They're always going to be willing to give all of their life, everything, to serve others and directly serve Messiah.

Watch or listen: foundedintruth.com/bible-teachings/grace-anatomy-hospitality-without-formality/

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