

BIBLICAL HOSPITALITY IN LIGHT
OF HISTORICAL RESEARCH

by

Richard M. Wise

Submitted in partial fulfillment of requirements
for the degree of Master of Divinity in
Grace Theological Seminary
May 1985

Title: BIBLICAL HOSPITALITY IN LIGHT OF HISTORICAL
RESEARCH
Author: Richard M. Wise
Degree: Master of Divinity
Adviser: Dr. Gary Meadors

In most of the ancient world, hospitality was an integral part of the social-religious structure. Though often the social and religious aspects became indistinguishable, hospitality was usually considered a moral duty. The obligation to protect the traveler included the essentials for life: food, clothing and shelter.

Hospitality in the OT was offered to that individual who in his present circumstance was in need of a host. The service was distinguished from charity in that hospitality was generally limited both in time and resource. It was a social and religious obligation in counter distinction to charity which was considered, at least in some degree, to be a voluntary service of extended duration. The ultimate motive for hospitality emerged from the second commandment, "love your neighbor as yourself" (Lev 19:18).

For the Rabbis, hospitality was one of many meritorious works within their legalistic structure. Though they often extolled the virtue, they limited its practice almost entirely to Orthodox Judaism.

Hospitality in Greek and Roman societies was motivated by religious and humanitarian reasons. The stranger traveled not only under the protection of social and cultural laws but under the protection of the gods themselves. Once hospitality was offered, the relationship became binding on future generations.

Within the NT, hospitality was not viewed as a cultural obligation as much as it was an expression of Christian love. The practice is well illustrated in the Gospels and Acts. But in the Epistles, it becomes an imperative especially within the church (Rom 12:13; Heb 13:1-2; I Pet 4:9). The pastor (I Tim 3:2; Titus 1:8) and the widow (I Tim 5:10) must have been known for hospitality before they could be chosen for office. The actual nature of the practice was assumed to be based upon the OT examples.

The Patristics took the practice seriously and established hospitals and poor houses near every prominent church. The bishops were responsible for the oversight of these institutions.

The conclusions reached are that hospitality is still an imperative for all Christians. It is a demonstration of Christian love. It promotes unity and church growth; it contributes to the process of discipleship; and it is one of the most effective atmospheres in which to present the gospel.

Accepted by the Faculty of Grace Theological Seminary
in partial fulfillment of requirements for the degree
Master of Divinity

Harry T. Meadors
Adviser

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ACCEPTANCE PAGE	iii
TABLE OF CONTENTS	iv
LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS	vii
Chapter	
I. INTRODUCTION	1
II. HOSPITALITY IN THE ANCIENT WORLD	5
Egyptian Hospitality	5
Babylonian Hospitality	7
Arabian Hospitality	9
Summary	12
III. HOSPITALITY IN THE OT CANON	13
An Examination of the Term "Stranger"	13
גֵּר	14
גֵּר (גֵּרִי)	16
גֵּרִי	16
תִּשְׁבָּ	17
Examples of Hospitality in the OT	18
Genesis 18	19
Genesis 19	20
Joshua 2	21
Judges 19	22
II Kings 4	23
Job 31:32	24

Isaiah 58:7	25
Evaluation of the OT Pattern of Hospitality .	26
IV. HOSPITALITY IN THE RABBINICS AND APOCRYPHA . . .	29
The Rabbincs	30
The Apocrypha	32
Summary	34
V. GREEK AND ROMAN HOSPITALITY	36
The Language of Hospitality	37
The Relationship of Hospitality	38
The Motives For Hospitality	41
VI. HOSPITALITY IN THE NEW TESTAMENT	43
A Lexical Study of Hospitality in the	
New Testament	43
ξένος	44
ξενία	44
ξενίζω	45
ξενοδοχέω	45
φιλοξενία	46
φιλόξενος	48
Words of Invitation or Reception	49
Words of Lodging	50
Words of Eating or Dining	50
Examples of Hospitality in the Gospels	50
Matthew 25:31-46	51
Luke 14:12-14	54

A Survey of Hospitality in the Gospels	
and Acts	55
Hospitality in the Epistles	57
Romans 12:13	58
Hebrews 13:2	62
I Peter 4:9	66
I Timothy 3:2 and Titus 1:8	69
I Timothy 5:10	71
Hospitality and the Gospel Message	72
Summary	73
VII. HOSPITALITY IN THE PATRISTICS AND IN NT	
APOCRYPHA	74
VIII. CONCLUSION	79
APPENDIX	89
BIBLIOGRAPHY OF WORKS CITED	92

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

The Talmud and Other Rabbinic Works

<u>Abot. R. Nat.</u>	<u>Abot deRabbi Nathan</u>
<u>b.</u>	<u>Babylonian Talmud</u>
<u>Ber.</u>	<u>Berakot</u>
<u>Pesah.</u>	<u>Pesahim</u>
<u>Qidd.</u>	<u>Qiddushin</u>
<u>Sanh.</u>	<u>Sanhedrin</u>
<u>Shabb.</u>	<u>Shabbat</u>
<u>Shebu.</u>	<u>Shebuot</u>

Journals

<u>Bib Sac</u>	<u>Bibliotheca Sacra</u>
<u>CBQ</u>	<u>Catholic Biblical Quarterly</u>
<u>HUCA</u>	<u>Hebrew Union College Annual</u>
<u>JBL</u>	<u>Journal of Biblical Literature</u>
<u>JBT</u>	<u>Journal of Bible and Theology</u>
<u>JEH</u>	<u>Journal of Ecclesiastical History</u>
<u>JNES</u>	<u>Journal of Near Eastern Studies</u>
<u>NTS</u>	<u>New Testament Studies</u>
<u>ZAW</u>	<u>Zeitschrift für alttestamentliche Wissenschaft</u>

Classical Works

<u>Hom. Od.</u>	Homer, <u>Odyssey</u>
-----------------	-----------------------

Hom. Il.

Homer, Iliad

Reference Works

BAGD

Walter Bauer, William Arndt, Wilbur Gingrich and Frederick Danker, A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature

BDB

Francis Brown, S. R. Driver, C. A. Briggs Hebrew and English Lexicon of the Old Testament

EncIs

Encyclopedia of Islam

Enc Jud

Encyclopaedia Judaica

Enc Rel Ethics

Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics

H & R

Edwin Hatch and Henry Redpath, Concordance to the Septuagint and Other Greek Versions of the Old Testament

ISBE

International Standard Bible Encyclopedia

KHAT

Gerhard Lisowsky, Konkordanz zum Hebräischen Alten Testament

MG

W. F. Moulton and A. S. Geden, A Concordance to the Greek Testament

NICNT

New International Commentary on the New Testament

NIDNT

Colin Brown, ed., New International Dictionary of New Testament Theology

TDNT

G. Kittel and G. Friedrich, eds., Theological Dictionary of the New Testament

TDOT

Theological Dicitonary of the Old Testament

TWOT

Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

In modern society, hospitality has a variety of meanings. In English it is defined as "the act or practice of being hospitable; the reception and entertainment of guests, visitors, or strangers, with liberality and good will."¹ Many have limited hospitality to the entertainment of friends or relatives. Still others have found only a limited use for the term in their vocabulary. To others, hospitality is but an attitude of selfless generosity.

To the ancient world, hospitality was a social obligation and usually a religious obligation. Many related hospitality to the visitation of the gods. A person's character was often evaluated from the perspective of hospitality. Men attained favor with the gods by their demonstration of hospitality.² Just as important, hospitality

¹Oxford English Dictionary, s.v. "Hospitality," 5:406.

²In the Semitic culture, "to harm a guest, or to refuse him hospitality, is an offence against honour, which covers the perpetrator with indelible shame," as noted by William Robertson Smith, Lectures on the Religion of the Semites, 3rd ed. by Stanley A. Cook (n.p.: KTAV Publishing House, Inc., 1969), p. 76. Homer divides individuals into two groups. "Tell me of the people and of their well built cities, both of those who are cruel and wild and unjust, and of those who love strangers and fear the gods in their thoughts." Hom. Od. viii. 572-76. R. H. Stein has a brief summary of these two aspects in ISBE, s.v. "Entertain," 2:105.

was a necessity of life; all travelers depended upon hospitality for safety and comfort. The lodges or inns, though somewhat common, were reserved for the laborer or slave. Those of wealth or nobility depended almost exclusively on the generosity of a host.¹

It will be the object of this discussion to trace the development of hospitality not only in its biblical format but also in its development outside the biblical context. A brief survey will be made of the Near Eastern cultures as well as Greek and Roman cultures as they relate to hospitality. The OT canon will then be evaluated. Though the word "hospitality" does not occur in the OT text, the concept is often present. The Apocrypha and Rabbinics will also be investigated as they relate to the subject. However, a substantial portion of the study will be within the confines of the NT, including cultural and grammatical research. Finally, the Patristics will be examined for their contribution.

The research should produce a working model of hospitality. While there are many presuppositions about the extent of hospitality, this discussion hopes to draw realistic perimeters to biblical hospitality. Since the NT clearly commands the practice of this virtue without delineating its scope, it may be assumed that hospitality was

¹Oxford Classical Dictionary, 2nd ed., s.v. "Inns, Restaurants," by E. Badian, p. 547.

well-defined in the NT period. If this proposal is correct, historical research is essential to establishing the significance of NT hospitality.

The importance of hospitality in the NT centers around five passages. However, the many examples of the practice, especially in the Gospels and Acts, are essential to their interpretation. I Timothy 3:2 and Titus 1:8 state the elder's responsibility. Hebrews 13:2, Romans 12:13, and I Peter 4:9 describe the obligation of all Christians.

Several difficulties should be addressed. First, is hospitality applicable in its broadest terms for contemporary Christianity, or is its function actually limited by the modern cultural transformation? If it is a duty, to what degree is it to function as a Christian virtue? Second, what, if any, contribution can biblical hospitality make to the church, in its own community, and the world without?

Some Christians in contemporary Christianity have unconsciously or deliberately removed themselves from the burden of hospitality. They have become aloof from society, and regrettably, from fellow Christians. Hospitality in the church too often has become an imitation smile offering a clammy hand with cold sandwiches and stale coffee to an aching heart crushed by loneliness and grief. The church has parroted the world about them in this regard. For society today seems to be a collection of TV addicts, locked

in family dens, traveling about in locked cars to arrive at offices with closed doors, to return to garage doors which open and close automatically. Seldom are individuals required to emerge from their cocoon. Is it any wonder that the neighbor knows little of the Christian and even less of his Savior? Does the biblical model of hospitality have an answer to this dilemma? These are the problems and issues that will be dealt with in the discussion which follows.

CHAPTER II

HOSPITALITY IN THE ANCIENT WORLD

Before hospitality is examined in its biblical context, other Ancient Near Eastern cultures should be evaluated with reference to their particular customs of hospitality. For hospitality was not just a Jewish practice, it was an integral part of many ancient societies. This chapter will briefly highlight the customs of hospitality as it was implied or practiced in three different cultures. The first two, Egyptian and Babylonian, make only a moderate contribution. The third, Arabian, however is quite significant.

Egyptian Hospitality

In the Egyptian Book of the Dead, a man is accepted by the gods of the underworld on the basis of hospitality. Not only was his hospitality directed to the living but also to the gods and to the dead. A supply of food and drink was usually offered to the corpse through the grave or tomb. This is one way a man could be assured of acceptance in the next life.

I have given bread to the hungry man, and water to the thirsty man, and apparel to the naked man, and a boat to the shipwrecked mariner. I have made holy offerings to the gods, and sepulchral meals to the khus. Be ye then my deliverers. Be ye then my protectors, and

make ye not accusation against me in the presence of the great god.¹

The Tell el-Amarna letters give a number of examples of hospitality. These letters between Egypt and her neighbors give insight into the international affairs of the period during the second millennium BC. Often hostages and ambassadors were exchanged upon the ratification of a formal treaty. To ensure cordial relations, the host nation was obligated to provide for these representatives as they would for the pharaoh if he came in person.²

Hospitality to individuals is also found in Egyptian documents. During the twelfth dynasty (2000 BC), Sanehat, an Egyptian noble who was a fugitive was protected by the hospitality of a nomad and later that of a Syrian prince. He was given a position of rule and daily provisions in Syria where he became known for his own kindness to the downcast and to the traveler. "The messenger who came from the court or went thither stayed with me. I gave hospitality to everyone, and I gave water to the thirsty;

¹E. A. Wallis Budge, The Book of the Dead (London: The Open Court Publishing Co., 1901), p. 372-73. Also see Job 31:16-32 for some striking parallels to this defense. For Job also defends his character before God by appealing to his hospitable deeds. He gave food, clothing and shelter to the poor, the widow, the orphan and the stranger.

²Enc Rel Ethics, s.v. "Hospitality, Semitic," by William Cruickshank, p. 816.

I set on his journey the traveler who had been hindered from passing by."¹

Babylonian Hospitality

Hospitality, according to the myth of Adapa, was practiced by the gods themselves. The myth describes the creation of Adapa and Ea. He was given wisdom but not eternal life. On one occasion he was called before Anu because he had broken the wings of the south wind. Ea forbade Adapa to eat or drink anything offered by Anu. This was ill-advised since the food and water would have given him immortality. He was carried back to earth where he died. The interesting point is that Anu offered Adapa "food of life," "water of life," garments, and oil for anointing.²

A Babylonian didactic poem contributes to the religious importance of hospitality. "Give food to eat, give date wine to drink; the one begging for alms honor, clothe: over this his god rejoices, this is pleasing unto the god

¹Adolf Erman, Life in Ancient Egypt, trans. H. M. Tirard (reprinted ed., New York: Dover Publications, Inc., 1971), p. 371. W. Cruickshank gives two additional examples of Egyptian hospitality or the lack of it. Mohar was met by inhospitable forces throughout his travels in Palestine. Anamon, a mariner, was well received by Prince Badiel who gave him bread, wine and beef. Cruickshank, "Hospitality," p. 81.

²Robert William Rogers Cuneiform Parallels to the Old Testament (New York: Eaton & Mains, 1912), p. 67-76. This section contains both commentary and text.

Shamash, he rewards it with good."¹

Though Hammurabi, the king and law giver, did not mention hospitality specifically, his prologue implies the practice. "Hammurabi was appointed to establish justice in the earth, to destroy the base and the wicked, and to hold back the strong from oppressing the feeble: to shine like the sun-god upon the black-headed men."² In his epilogue, he calls himself the protecting king. The act of protection was often associated with the custom of hospitality. Protection was understood to be the narrow term, while hospitality was understood to be the broader term. The close tie between hospitality and protection will be more fully addressed under Arabian hospitality.³

One final example of Babylonian hospitality has been preserved in the Amarna letters. Burra-buriash, king of Babylon, wrote a letter to the king of Egypt explaining his neglect in properly receiving the Egyptian ambassador at his own table. Poor health had restricted the king from serving food to eat and wine to drink.⁴

¹James Pritchard, Ancient Near Eastern Texts (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1969), p. 426.

²Chilperic Edwards, ed., The Hammurabi Code: and the Sinaitic Legislation, 3rd revised ed. (London: Watts & Co., 1921), p. 11.

³EncIs, s.v. "Dakhīl," by J. Lecerf, 2:100.

⁴Enc Rel Ethics, s.v. "Hospitality," by William Cruickshank, p. 816.

Arabian Hospitality

There are several Arabic terms which relate to hospitality. The first, dakhīl, has a basic meaning of interior, inward or intimate. Derived from this meaning are the terms "guest" and "stranger." The guest and stranger are protected by

. . . common law which guarantees protection, in traditional ways, to whoever requests it. Although the concept has at all times existed, it has never been incorporated into Islamic law, which has no technical term corresponding to it. In its practical application, the institution combines elements of the complex system of ties of hospitality to which general opinion seems to assimilate the rights of the dakhīl and of a very old law of refuge in private households which is attested all over the Semitic world.¹

The term dayf has the basic meaning to incline towards, to halt, on a visit from which the terms guest or host were derived.² The word djiwār means protection or neighborhood. In the noun form, it stands for the one protected. Often this individual was given asylum in a temple. The word has correspondence to the Hebrew which meant one converted to Judaism. It was a term of "socio-religious significance, owing its survival to the importance of the institution in nomadic customary law."³

Idjāra was used when granting protection to a stranger. If protection was given, it was announced publicly

¹EncIs, s.v. "Dakhīl," by J. Lecerf, 2:100.

²EncIs, s.v. "Dayf," by J. Lecerf, 2:189.

³EncIs, s.v. "Djiwār," by J. Lecerf, 2:558.

and therefore was denounced publicly. "It was a point of honour to protect the djār as effectively as one protected one's own kin, and shortcomings in this could be made a serious taunt."¹ Seldom was a request for protection denied, and if accepted by one member of a clan, all members were also responsible for the guest.

Protection could be granted on the basis of several acts: touching a tent-pole, walking into the yard of the tent, touching the children, or even the contact of two camel-saddles. Once protection was granted, food was provided which bound the host to protection of the guest until the food had been discharged from the body, usually three days. "When men become Muslims, they become God's djīrān under His dhimma, 'protection.'"²

"The definition of hospitality in the Qurān appears to be 'feeding on a hungry day (i.e. a day of famine) an orphan who is also a kinsman, or a poor man who is in need' (XC. 14)."³ Other sayings that Islamic theologians have attributed to Mohammed include:

Hospitality is a right. . . . Any area or village wherein a Muslim is allowed to pass a night hungry

¹EncIs, s.v. "Idjāra," by W. Montgomery Watt, 3:1018.

²Ibid.

³Enc Rel Ethics, s.v. "Hospitality, Arabian," by D. S. Margoliouth, p. 798. This is Margoliouth's analysis of Quran XC. 12-16.

is out of the pale of Islam; Hospitality is three days: all above that is charity.¹

One theologian exaggerated the importance of hospitality in the following manner:

An account will be demanded on the Day of Judgment of all expenditure except of that on the entertainment of guests: God will be ashamed to demand any account thereof.²

One last note should be made concerning the relationship of the widow, orphan and poor in Islam and the Ancient Near East in general. The Qurān teaches that kindness to the widow, orphan and poor is a duty on the basis that God hates oppression.³ The religious-social ethic can be understood as both vertical and horizontal. The vertical protection comes from God, the horizontal from man, traditionally the king.

Charles Fensham traced the subject of the widow, orphan and poor throughout the Ancient Near East and found that it has some striking parallels to that of the OT canon. For example, Daniel, the king in the epic of Aqhat, is pictured under a mighty tree "judging the cause of the widow, adjudicating the case of the fatherless."⁴ Fensham

¹Ibid.

²Ibid. Margoliouth sites Qūt al-Qulūb, 1310, ii, 182, after Hasan al-Basri +110 A. H. as his source.

³Alfred Guillaume, Islam (Baltimore: Penguin Books Inc., 1954), p. 64.

⁴F. Charles Fensham, "Widow, Orphan, and the Poor in Ancient Near Eastern Legal and Wisdom Literature," JNES 21:2 (April, 1962):134.

concludes his article by saying:

In the Israelite community this policy was extended through the encouragement of the high ethical religion of Yahweh to become a definite part of their religion, later to be inherited by Christians and Muslims.¹

Summary

Hospitality in the Ancient World might be characterized as the duty to protect. The stranger or the traveler found asylum from a hostile environment by the kindness of his host. The poor, widow, and orphan received food, clothing, and shelter under the protection of gracious benefactors. Hospitality included everything that one might need as a guest, but at least the three essentials to life: food, clothing, and shelter. However, it was always temporary, as a religious and social duty, but as an individual virtue, it could be extended. Charity was the extension of hospitality and demonstrated love beyond duty. Thus hospitality was a religious and social duty while charity emanated from a voluntary humanitarian response.

¹Ibid., p. 139.

CHAPTER III

HOSPITALITY IN THE OT CANON

The word "hospitality" does not appear in the OT canon. However, there are numerous narratives and didactic sections which clearly intimate the practice. The law sections pertaining to the stranger will be of special interest for their contribution to Old and New Testament passages. Abraham's reception of the three messengers is marked by an entire chapter (Gen 18). Lot showed commendable qualities by also sheltering the angelic guests (Gen 19). Rahab received notoriety in Jewish tradition and the NT for her hospitality (Josh 2). The rape of the Levite's concubine is a tragic example of the breach of hospitality (Judg 19). The Shunammite woman received a son because of her care for Elisha (II Kgs 4). Finally, Job defends himself in God's courtroom on the basis of hospitality and charity (Job 31). These are not all the examples, but they are sufficient to illustrate the extent of the practice in the OT. Other passages will be used to illustrate particular features.

An Examination of the Term "Stranger"

While there is no single word that is translated "hospitality," the word "stranger" deserves our attention.

The danger of dealing singularly with the word "stranger" is that one may place a limitation on hospitality. However, care for the stranger is certainly one aspect of hospitality in the OT. The word "stranger," גֵּר, appears with the words "widow" and "orphan" nearly twenty times in the OT.¹ The regulations protecting these individuals are to insure the equality of every person under Israel's economy. It is natural to treat those of the same class as equals but a precept must be instituted for those of questionable standing.

Four different words are used in the OT text for stranger. Each word has its own emphasis. Each term will be examined especially as it relates to hospitality.

גֵּר

The Hebrew word "גֵּר" is used over 89 times.² It has the most consistent meaning, usually referring to a resident who has accepted the customs and religious practices of his host nation. The NASB sometimes translates it by "alien" but the NIV is more consistent in this regard.

The word almost always appears in a positive context. He had the right to fair treatment and Israel is

¹KHAT, p. 331-2, Deut 10:18; 14:29; 16:11; 24:17, 19, 20, 21; 26:12, 13; 27:19; Ps 94:6; 146:9; Jer 7:6; 22:3; Ezek 22:7; Zech 7:10; Mal 3:5; Widow and orphan appear together in Exod 22:22; Job 22:9; 31:16, 17; Ps 65:5; Isa 1:17, 23; 9:17. Also see this list in TDOT, s.v. "גֵּר," by D. Kellermann, 2:449.

²KHAT, p. 331-32.

later condemned for their abuse of the alien (Ezek 22:7, 29; Mal 3:5).¹ The LXX consistently translates גֵּר as προσήλυτος which means "one who has come over, a convert, or a Gentile won to Judaism."² In many ways he was to be treated as a brother. An animal which was found dead could be sold to a גֵּר (stranger) but it might be given to a גֵּר (alien) (Deut 14:21). Most of the גֵּר had been a part of Israel for generations. They had a right to the tithe of the third year as did the Levite, the widow and orphan (Deut 14:29; 26:12, 13).

Beyond the social status of the גֵּר, he was loved by God (Deut 10:18). Because God loved these people, Israel was also commanded to love them (Lev 19:34; Deut 10:19). Israel had experienced the life of a stranger in Egypt and therefore knew the needs and feelings of those in a foreign land (Deut 23:9). Since God provided food and clothing for the stranger, Israel was to give in kind (Deut 10:18). Israel was also reminded that she was still a גֵּר in God's land. As guests in God's land, they were obligated to obey his laws regarding a fellow גֵּר.³

¹BDB, p. 158.

²BAGD, p. 715. H&R, 3:1216.

³TDOT, s.v. "גֵּר," by D. Kellerman, 2:449.

רִי (רִיִּי)

The word "רִי" is used some 70 times; 36 times as stranger, 10 times as a non-Levite or layman, several times as "another" in the sense of one outside the family. It is also used of an immoral woman or false god. Unlike רִא, it almost always has a negative context.¹ This group did not have the same privileges as did the רִא in written code.

The zār does not share ancestral traditions; . . . He is the godless man, the enemy of the faithful, the rich oppressor of the poor (Ps 54:5 [3]), but also the patently unqualified compatriot. But when the word zār is used for such a neighbor, the emphasis is on distance. He is an 'outsider,' for example, with regard to inward feelings, the whole complex world of heart and mind (Prov 14:10).²

נִכְנִי

In modern Hebrew, this term means a Gentile. It appears over 40 times in the OT.³ A נִכְנִי was one who held to his own customs and beliefs. Guttman says of this individual, "What is characteristic of נִכְנִי therefore, is the fact that he maintains the connection with his native country or with the country which he has left."⁴ The LXX most often translates it with the word ἀλλότριος which

¹KHAT, p. 453-4.

²TDOT, s.v. "רִי/רִי," by Snijders, 3:57-8.

³TWOT, s.v. "נִכְנִי," by Marvin R. Wilson, 2:580.

⁴Michael Guttman, "The Term 'Foreigner' (נִכְנִי) Historically Considered," HUCA 3 (1926):1.

means "one who is unknown or belonging to another."¹

גֵּרִי

This word is found only fourteen times in the text.² It is translated by *παροικος*, "one who lives in a place that is not his home."³ It is also translated by *μισθωτός*, "a hired man."⁴ The latter is the most common use of the term. In I Chronicles 29:15, Israel is spoken of as God's tenants. Abraham was also called a tenant of the land he did not possess. As a hired hand, one could not eat the Passover and the children could be sold as slaves (Lev 25:45). However, he did have access to the cities of refuge (Num 35:15).

There are a number of observations which should be noted in this study. First, the *גֵּרִי* was the only one of the four which was treated in every way like a native born Israelite. He had forsaken his social-religious ties and had become a proselyte to Judaism. This individual is loved by God because of his special relationship to his people. Second, the *גֵּרִי* had no specific laws of protection or provision since they were normally antagonistic toward Israel.

Closely related to *גֵּרִי* is the *גֵּרִי נֶכְרִי* though usually portrayed in a positive context. He was a Gentile but not

¹BAGD, p. 40.

²KHAT, p. 1515.

³BAGD, p. 629.

⁴Ibid, p. 523.

opposed to Judaism. This individual was no doubt a member of the merchants who either traveled alone or more likely with a caravan. Therefore, he could not eat the Passover unless he became a permanent resident, thus a גֵּר (Exod 12:43). Guttman suggests that the גֵּר was protected by an unwritten law. "There undoubtedly existed pre-Mosaic traditions regarding hospitality and caravan trade, and it is more than probable that these traditions were still in effect in latter times."¹ This seems to be a valid assertion.

Fourth, the words "temporary resident" seem to best describe the זָרָא. He could not eat the Passover (Exod 12:45), but he had access to the cities of refuge (Num 35:15). However, if he went bankrupt, he was to be sustained as a גֵּר or native born Israelite (Lev 25:35). The word translated "sustain" in the NASB is the hiphil form of the verb נָתַן. This form of the verb is used 34 times in Nehemiah for repairing Jerusalem. In this context, it means to strengthen, aid or support.² This regulation would certainly include hospitality: food, clothing and shelter.

Examples of Hospitality in the OT

The purpose of this discussion will be to draw perimeters to the practice of hospitality. If a definition

¹Guttman, "The Term 'Foreigner,'" p. 9.

²TWOT, s.v. "נָתַן," by C. P. Weber, 1:276.

for hospitality is to be achieved from this material, the observation of its actual practice is essential. Therefore, a full exegesis of each passage will not be necessary, but key features related to hospitality will be pointed out.

Genesis 18

Abraham was sitting at the entrance of his tent when he saw three men at a distance. He ran to meet them and invited them to stop and relax. While the guests refreshed themselves, Abraham prepared bread cakes, a choice calf, curds, and milk. Sarah did not show herself to the guests but did help in the preparations. Abraham did not eat the meal himself but cared for the needs of his guests. Having finished the meal, the travelers were accompanied on their way by Abraham.

This example of hospitality was considered a classic by the Rabbis, the NT (Heb 13:1-2), the Qurān, and the early church.¹ The Rabbis commended Abraham for going out to meet his guests. According to their tradition, he also built large mansions on the highways with supplies of food and drink. Whatever one desired was available in Abraham's tent.² Though the Rabbis have exaggerated Abraham's virtue, it does show the honor given to a host.

¹See b., Shebu., 35b and b., Abot. R. Nat. 21a; Qurān, xi, 72-3; and I Clem. x, 7.

²b., Abot. R. Nat. 21a.

One final point should be addressed. One should not assume that Abraham's action was prompted by the divine presence, for that is doubtful. Stigers suggests that יָיָא of verse 3 may be better taken as a statement of respect and courtesy.¹ When Abraham recognized his guests as heaven sent is unknown. Thus Abraham's hospitality to the three messengers may have been little more than what was customary for him. This is compounded by the fact that he brought more than he offered (Gen 18:5, 6-8).

Genesis 19

Lot was sitting at the city gate when he observed two angels approaching. He bowed before them and offered them water for their feet and shelter for the night. At first they pretended to spend the night in the square but then accepted his offer. "He prepared a meal for them, baking bread without yeast" (Gen 19:3 NIV).

The most important feature of this narrative is Lot's address to his neighbors, "But don't do anything to these men, for they have come under the protection of my roof" (Gen 18:8 NIV). The term protection, or shadow as in the KJV, is the Hebrew word שָׁד. "To be under the shadow

¹Harold G. Stigers, A Commentary on Genesis (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1976), p. 169. See the same argumentation by Gerhard Von Rad, Genesis, trans. by John H. Marks (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1961), p. 201 and H. C. Leupold, Exposition of Genesis, Vol. 1 (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1942), p. 536 and Josephus, Antiquities of the Jews, I.11.2. Josephus wrote "and thinking them to be strangers."

of one's roof connotes that the head of the house provides protection for his guest."¹ Nations often protected one another (Isa 30:2; Ezek 17:23), but God removed his protection from the Canaanites (Num 14:9). Keil writes, "Lot was willing to sacrifice to the sanctity of hospitality his duty as a father, which ought to have been still more sacred."² Lot's reaction to the sacredness of the guest was later mirrored by the old man of Gibeah who also offered his virgin daughter to save his guest from humility and death (Judg 19).

Joshua 2

Rahab, though a prostitute, did not forsake the two spies in her home but lied to protect them from the king of her own city. Because she hid the spies, she delivered her entire family from extinction (Josh 6:25). Why Rahab first received the spies into her home the writer does not disclose. It is possible that she recognized them as Hebrews from the outset. If she did, her motive for giving them protection stemmed from her fear of the Lord. His power had been displayed in the deliverance of Israel from all her enemies (Josh 2:10-14). It is also possible that she

¹TWOT, s.v. "7x," by J. E. Hartley, 2:767.

²C. F. Keil and F. Delitzsch, The Pentateuch, Vol. 2, trans. James Martin, Biblical Commentary on the Old Testament (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1949), p. 233. The Qurān xi, 80 quotes Lot as saying, "so show piety towards Allah, and do not humiliate me in the matter of entertaining guests."

protected the spies from the king of Jericho at least in part because of her respect and obligation for the guest. This is well illustrated by Lot and the old man of Gibeah.

It is noteworthy that Hebrews 11:31 and James 2:25 both emphasize the reception of the spies (δέχομαι Heb 11:31; ὑποδέχομαι James 2:25).¹ Hebrews says she "received them in peace." James says that she "received them and sent them out another way." Whatever her motives might have been, she is commended in the OT and NT for her hospitality which manifested itself in reception and protection.

Judges 19

The narrative of the Levite and his concubine parallels in many respects the account of Genesis 19. In both cases the stranger encountered hospitality and hostility. The hostility that befell the Levite and his concubine is further heightened by the writer's words in verses 11-12. The servant suggested that they find lodging in Jerusalem, then a Jebusite city. "His master replied, No. We won't go into an alien city, whose people are not Israelites" (Judg 19:12 NIV). However, having arrived at Gibeah, they were humiliated in the city square, for no one would offer them lodging. It is interesting that the traveler had all his own provisions, even for the animals, yet found no host

¹Note the use of δέχομαι used in this sense in Luke 9:53; 10:8, 10; 16:4, 9. For the use of ὑποδέχομαι see Luke 10:38; 19:6; Acts 17:7.

until the old man of Ephraim came and offered his generous hospitality. He fed their animals, gave water for their feet, and placed a meal before them. When men of the city came to request sexual favors of the Levite, the old man offered his virgin daughter in his guest's place. Here again, as in Genesis 19, the guest is honored above one's own family. Niditch writes, "The old man's house is a small haven of community in the midst of a hostile non-community."¹

II Kings 4

The kindness of the Shunammite woman adds several dimensions to the understanding of hospitality. Elisha evidently had an itinerant ministry similar to the prophet Samuel. On one of his visits to Shunem, he was urged by a wealthy woman to eat with her family. This soon became so frequent that the woman requested her husband to build the prophet a guest room with a bed, a table, a chair, and a lamp. As Elisha contemplated her thoughtfulness, he told his servant to speak to the woman, "Tell her, you have gone to all this trouble for us. Now what can be done for you?" (II Kgs 4:13 NIV). The woman received a son as a direct result of her hospitality. Later that same son was restored

¹Susan Niditch, "The 'Sodomite' Theme in Judges 19-20: Family, Community, and Social Disintegration," CBO 44:3 (July, 1982):367. Also see Roland deVaux's statement on this point in Ancient Israel, Vol. 1 (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1961), p. 10.

to life by the prophet. Still later, Elisha advised her to move to avert famine. When she returned, the prophet was instrumental in restoring her land and seven years back rent (II Kgs 8:1f).

Several points of interest should be noted. First, the woman of this family initiated the reception of the guest. The writer makes the husband appear almost passive, while the wife takes the lead in practice and attitude. Second, the Lord honored the woman economically and physically because of her hospitality. Third, the woman expected nothing in return for her kindness, even when offered (II Kgs 4:13). She gave hospitality from the sincerity of her heart. "Did I ask you for a son, my lord?" (II Kgs 4:28) NIV). Fourth, the woman's offer of hospitality was perpetual, not to just a stranger, but to one she had grown to love.¹

Job 31:32

In this chapter, Job defends himself before God by recalling his deeds of kindness. Beyond his charity to the widow, orphan, and poor, he had also housed the traveler; "for my door was always open to the traveler" (Job 31:32 NIV). Pope in The Anchor Bible commenting on this verse writes:

¹See b., Ber. 10b for the Rabbi's discussion of this passage.

The situation envisaged here is exactly that elaborated in Gen xix and Judg xix; cf. especially Gen xix 2 and Judg xix 20. To sleep in the street would have been a sure invitation to abuse by the local degenerates. Job, like Lot and the hospitable old sojourner in Gibeah, made special effort to spare the stranger this outrage by offering the protection of hospitality.¹

The Rabbis concluded from this verse that Job had four doors to his house so no traveler, regardless of his approach, would be required to walk around to the entrance. However, they criticized him for not gathering in strangers as Abraham had done.²

Isaiah 58:7

Isaiah outlines for his constituents what is an acceptable fast to the Lord, "Is it not to share your food with the hungry and to provide the poor wanderer with shelter when you see the naked, to cloth him" (NIV). In Isaiah's situation, there were many in Israel who were under severe oppression. These oppressed wandered about with little means of food, clothing, or shelter. It was for this individual who was in the greatest need of hospitality which the prophet enjoins.³

¹Marvin H. Pope, Job in The Anchor Bible (Garden City, NY: Doubleday & Company, Inc., 1965), p. 237. Also see M. B. Dick, "Job 31, The Oath of Innocence, and the Sage," ZAW 95:1 (1981):51-2.

²b., Abot. R. Nat., 21a. Abraham ran to meet his guests (Gen 18:2).

³Edward J. Young, The Book of Isaiah, Vol. 3 (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1972), p. 420.

Evaluation of the OT Pattern of Hospitality

The narrative passages in the OT give a clear description of the obligations of hospitality. First, it included a warm and generous reception by the host to all men, but especially to his own countrymen and the ַא. Second, after water had been provided for the feet, the host gave the best food and drink that he could provide. Third, arrangements were also made for the servants and animals. Fourth, with the meal completed, the guest and host engaged in conversation until preparations were made for sleep. The host was under a sacred obligation to protect his guest as long as he remained in his care. Finally, almost every example of hospitality was of a temporary nature; usually overnight. However, in the case of Elisha, this was repeated many times through the years.

Having outlined the pattern of hospitality, there are two questions that must be examined. The first involves the distinction between hospitality and charity. Among the Arabs, hospitality was for a night or could be extended for three days. Any kindness extended beyond that point was not duty but alms.¹ This accords well with the narrative patterns of the OT and with general inferences in other passages. Jeremiah and Job speak of the stranger as a traveler who stays only a night (Job 31:32 and

¹Smith, Lectures, p. 76 n2.

Jer 14:8). The book of Proverbs warns against frequenting your neighbor's house "for he will hate you" (Prov 25:17 NIV). Thus, hospitality was characterized by temporary kindness being a social or religious duty.

Charity was also a socio-religious obligation; however, it usually included all forms of social justice. Thus hospitality was often placed under the umbrella of charity. The alien was to be loved as a native born citizen (Lev 19:33). To love the alien was to give him food, clothing, and shelter (Deut 10, 18-19; Job 31:32). The stranger, poor, widow, and orphan had the right to remove grain or fruit from the fields (Lev 19:10) and to the produce from the tithe of the third year (Deut 26:12f). In Job 31 and Isaiah 58:7, hospitality is closely associated with more general acts of charity.¹ Thus hospitality was an integral part of charity in the OT aside from its status in common law.

The second question that must be addressed revolves around the identity of the traveler; who was he? The stranger seems to be the most common answer to this question. For it was the stranger, more than anyone else, who was in special need of protection. Nevertheless, there was also the need for Israelites to show hospitality to their own friends or relatives, especially at feast times where travel

¹Universal Jewish Encyclopedia, s.v. "Hospitality," by Meyer Goldberg, 5:46-67.

was a necessity. Jacob was well received by Laban when he found they were related (Gen 29:13). David was helped on his retreat from Jerusalem by a close friend, Barzillai (I Sam 25:1-38). Melchizedek brought food and drink to Abraham after his defeat of Chedorlaomer (Gen 14:18). Gideon punished the men of Succoth and Peniel for refusing him bread (Judg 8:4-17). Nehemiah fed at his table daily one hundred and fifty men from a variety of backgrounds. In his prayer he states, "Remember me with favor, O my God, for all I have done for these people" (Neh 5:15-19 NIV). Thus, hospitality was given to friend or stranger if they were in any way separated from their place of residence; that is, anyone who in their present situation needed food, shelter, and even clothing. In many OT contexts, the host received special honor from God for his services. In the community, it was often a demonstration of one's love and obedience to his God (Job 31, Isa 58:7, etc.).

CHAPTER IV

HOSPITALITY IN THE RABBINICS AND THE APOCRYPHA

The Rabbinic and Apocryphal literature in general exaggerated most standards and practices and this trend is also observed with reference to hospitality.¹

The Rabbinic literature widened the scope of the virtue of hospitality, which it called hakhnast orehim (bringing in of guests). It was considered a great mitzvah, an expression of gemilut hasadim (kindness) especially when it was extended to the poor.²

Many Rabbis placed hospitality above welcoming the presence of the Shechinah.³ Others said, "Hospitality to wayfarers is as 'great' as early attendance at the Beth Hamidrash."⁴ Some Rabbis made the study of the Torah equal with five other deeds, one of which was hospitality. Still others placed the study of the Torah above these deeds.⁵ Though their exegetical reasons for these principles are

¹A thorough search of the pseudepigrapha was not possible. However, the only words that C. A. Wahl lists with reference to hospitality are ξεπίζω (3 references) and ξένιος and ξενός (9 references). Christ. Abrah. Wahl, Clavis Librorum Veteris Testamenti Apocryphorum Philologica (Graz, Austria: Akademische Druck-u. Verlagsanstalt, 1972), p. 345.

²Enc Jud, s.v. "Hospitality," by Eli Davis, 8:1032.

³b., Shabb., 127a. ⁴Ibid.

⁵Ibid.; b., Qidd., 39b.

questionable, it gives a good picture of their attitude towards the subject.

The Rabbinics

The Babylonian Talmud was compiled between AD 200 and AD 500. It is a collection of assorted teachings from the Rabbis as far back as the Exilic Period. Their writings show a keen interest in the practice of hospitality. They often went to great lengths to expound its precepts. Rabbi Ishmael said:

Thus did my father say: What is meant by the verse, 'O praise the Lord, all ye nations.' What business have the nations of the world here? This is its meaning . . . Egypt is destined to bring a gift to the Messiah. He will think not to accept it from them, but the Holy One, blessed be He, will instruct him, 'Accept it from them: they furnished hospitality to My children in Egypt.'¹

Those who taught the law "all spoke in honor of hospitality."² R. Johanan said, "Of great (importance) is the mouthful (of food given to wayfarers), since it alienated two families from Israel."³ This was taken from Deuteronomy 23:4 where Moab and Ammon were condemned for refusing hospitality to Israel. The same Rabbi said, "It alienates those who are near, and draws near those who are distant."⁴ Those who were brought near were the Kenites because Jethro showed kindness to Moses (Judg 1:16).

¹b., Pesah., 118b.

²b., Ber., 63b.

³b., Sanh., 103b.

⁴Ibid., 103b-104a.

Abraham is praised as the most gracious host, for he not only had four doors through which visitors could enter, but he went out and brought in guests. Job also had a reputation for hospitality, for whenever the poor would meet on the road, they were either leaving Job's house fully satisfied or they were going to feast at Job's table. But he was criticized by the Rabbis in the following manner:

For all that, Job, you have not attained to one-half the standard (of hospitality) displayed by Abraham. You remained in your house waiting for guests to come to you.¹

Job was also criticized for not furnishing the best food to rich and poor alike.²

The Jewish father instructed his children in the practice of hospitality. His success or failure could be assessed by a knock at his door.

For when a man is humble and the members of his household are also humble, if a poor man comes to the door and asks, 'Is your father at home?' they will reply, 'Yes, come in.' Before he even enters the house the table is already laid for him.³

Rab. Huna made a practice of opening his door just before mealtime to invite the poor to partake of his meal. The custom in Jerusalem was to hang a flag above the door to signal that the meal was ready.⁴

Though the Rabbis had generous customs of

¹b., Aboth R. Nat., 21a. ²Ibid. ³Ibid.

⁴The Jewish Encyclopedia, s.v. "Hospitality," by Julius H. Greenstone, 6:481.

hospitality, they also had rules to protect themselves from the parasite.

Let all persons always be in your eyes as robbers, but honor each with the respect due Rabban Gamaliel. Guests who are received in a house should do whatever the host bids them do.¹

He should also compliment the host on the meal leaving some food on the plate to confirm complete satisfaction. After the meal a special blessing should be said for the host. To break these rules of etiquette was sure to bring repercussions.²

The Apocrypha

Though the Apocrypha material often varies in literary and theological quality, it certainly presents to us a cultural picture of the intertestamental period. Their teachings in many ways reflect the socio-religious conflicts of their period. The nationalistic fervor influences almost every subject including hospitality.

The book of Tobit has much to say on the subject of charity. At many points, charity and hospitality are blended into one. The most important feature of both is that they are directed to godly Jews entirely. On one occasion when the family was about to sit down to the feast of Pentecost, Tobias writes, "upon seeing the abundance of food I said to my son, 'Go and bring whatever poor man

¹b., Kalla., 54 b.

²Enc Jud, s.v. "Hospitality," by Eli Davis, 8:1032.

of our brethren you may find who is mindful of the Lord, and I will wait for you.'"¹

The life of the stranger was not always what it should have been, for Sirach describes his discomfort in graphic terms. In his judgment, it was better to be a poor man in his own house than to feast in another's home.

It is a miserable life to go from house to house, and where you are a stranger you may not open your mouth; you will play the host and provide drink without being thanked, and besides this you will hear bitter words: 'Come here stranger, prepare the table. . . . Give place, stranger, to an honored person; my brother has come to stay with me: I need my house.' This is hard to bear for a man who has feelings: scolding about lodging.²

In chapter 31, the writer gives the proper manners of the guest. "Eat like a human being. . . . Be the first to stop eating."³ The point of the entire passage is to eat and drink in moderation. This practice will bring good health and many compliments.

Egypt was ridiculed for her treatment of Israel.

For they practiced a more bitter hatred of strangers. . . . these made slaves of guests who were their benefactors. . . . After receiving them with festal celebrations, afflicted with terrible sufferings those who had already shared the same rights.⁴

Though the men of Sodom had mistreated aliens, they had not

¹Tobit 2:2

²Sirach 29:24-28.

³Sirach 31:16-17; see 31:12-31.

⁴Wisdom of Solomon 19:13-16

eaten with them before they turned against them. This clearly refers to the "bond of food" which states that "if I have eaten the smallest morsel of food with a man, I have nothing further to fear from him."¹

Summary

There is no question that the Rabbis taught and practiced hospitality. Much of this emphasis may have been due in part to the oppression of these periods under the Greeks and Romans. But much of their attitudes seem to originate in the growing trend of legalism with its stress on meritorious works. From the Apocrypha writers, an attitude of ethnocentrism emerges. Hospitality is limited to Jews and then usually only godly ones.

In contrast, hospitality in the OT was extended without any direct command. The concept of reward was seldom addressed. Rather, hospitality was a spontaneous demonstration of one's love for God, administered to those of every class. The admonitions to love the stranger and the poor seem to have been glossed by the growth of legalism. This trend became full blown in the NT era. Stählin admirably sums up the Rabbinic material.

In the Rabb. writings hospitableness is often commended as a work of mercy, and extolled in lofty terms. . . . It is one of the most meritorious works, of which one enjoys the interest in this world and the capital in

¹Smith, p. 270.

the next. . . . But it is worth noting that what was once practiced spontaneously and ἀμισθί has not to be commanded and also make acceptable with the promise of a reward. The worst limitation, however, is that the legitimate recipients of φιλοξενία are to be Jews rather than ξένοι.¹

¹TDNT, s.v. "ξένος," by G. Stählin, 5:20.

CHAPTER V

GREEK AND ROMAN HOSPITALITY

Greek and Roman hospitality are essentially parallel in their origin and development. The Greeks were not always hospitable in ancient times, for ξένος often implied enemy.¹ However, with the rise of trade and commerce between the states and with other countries, the alien began to have well-defined privileges.²

In Roman society, hostis was also defined as a stranger who was considered to be an enemy.³ Until the Imperial Period, the alien had few rights. Protection was available only by finding a host who could provide the needs of the traveler. During this early period, inns were

¹TDNT, s.v. "ξένος," by G. Stählin, 5:2-3. Note Ladislaus J. Bolchazy, Hospitality in Early Rome, Livy's Concept of its Humanizing Force (Chicago: Ares Pub., Inc., 1977) and his discussion of this concept in Greek culture. There was often a xenophobia in Greek culture as elsewhere. The stranger was believed to have magical powers.

²TDNT, s.v. "ξένος," by G. Stählin, 5:5.

³Bolchazy, p. 17-20. Of special interest is his evaluation on p. 19 "Originally, we may infer, there was no word in the Latin language to differentiate between a stranger and an enemy. Hostis expressed both concepts. Cicero's statement suggests this inference: '. . . he who would properly have been called 'a guest' (hostis) . . . for 'enemy' (hostis) meant to our ancestors what we now call 'stranger' (peregrinus)."

establishments primarily for natives. The Law of the Twelve Tables, modeled after Greek laws, did establish some rights for the stranger but were limited in their scope.¹

The origin of hospitality is rooted in "the mutual obligation of all men to help one another, for which there is divine sanction."² This is reinforced by statements from antiquity. Homer writes, "For from Zeus are all strangers and beggars, and a gift, though small, is welcome."³ It is also indicated by the development of hospitality within the vicinity of religious shrines. Temples and altars were well-known for their inns. It was here, if nowhere else, that a stranger was sure to find asylum.⁴

The Language of Hospitality

There were two dimensions to hospitality in both Greek and Roman culture. In Greek ξένος and ξενία represented the relationship between private individuals. Πρόξενον or προξενία represented the relationship between a

¹TDNT, s.v. "ξένος," by G. Stählin, 5:6-7.

²Ibid., p. 17. Bolchazy also makes the following contribution. "Cicero's love of the whole human race springs from two sources: one religious, the other philosophical: The first source is his belief in the traditional concept that Jupiter is interested in man's welfare. . . . 'But how inconsistent it would be for us to expect the immortal gods to love and cherish us, when we ourselves despise and neglect one another.' The second source is the stoic doctrine of the brotherhood of man" (p. 35).

³Hom., Od., vi. 207f.

⁴TDNT, s.v. "ξένος," by G. Stählin, 5:17.

state. The Latin hospitium and hospes were both used to designate private or public hospitality. On rare occasions, particular relationships were described by other words.¹

In both Greek and Latin, one word could be used for both guest and host (ξένος, hospes). This developed from the reciprocal nature of hospitality. The one who was host today would very likely be the guest in the near future. At times, the Greeks made a distinction between the guest and the host. In this instance, the host was represented by ξενοδοκός, the guest retained the form ξένος.²

The Relationship of Hospitality

The relationship of hospitality involved six characteristics. First, it was extra-political. It was not proper etiquette to ask the name or origin of a stranger until he had received hospitality. In Homer, more than one host reveals this practice. Nestor made this assertion, "Now verily is it seemlier to ask and inquire of the strangers who they are, since now they have had their joy of food."³ This attitude made it difficult to refuse hospitality to any, even to those who were political enemies.

Second, the relationship was reciprocal. Both the

¹Enc Rel Ethics, s.v. "Hospitality, Greek and Roman," by St. George Stock, p. 808.

²Ibid. Note this distinction in the Od., viii. 543.

³Hom., Od., iii. 69-70; also iv. 60-61.

Greeks and the Romans were reluctant to refuse hospitality, lest perchance they found themselves in need of the same service. They considered that a guest of today may be the host of tomorrow. This philosophy did much to enhance the quality of hospitality. Treat your guest as you desire to be entertained in the future.

While challenging the Phaeacians, Odysseus excluded Laodamas, his host, saying, "For he is my host and who would quarrel with one that entertains him? Foolish is that man and worthless, who challenges to a contest the host who receives him in a strange land."¹

Third, the relationship was often hereditary. By this means, states and families were locked into a bond of hospitality perpetually. Characters in Homer often used the claim of the hereditary guest-friend to win the confidence of others.²

Fourth, the relationship often involved the exchange of gifts. "Glaucus and Diomedes exchanged armor on the field of battle" when it was discovered that they were guest-friends.³ Josephus remarks how Gadalius at the city of Masphatah entertained Ismael and his men with a banquet

¹Hom., Od., viii. 208-11.

²Hom., Od., xvii. 522; i. 187; xv. 195-98.

³Hom., Il., vi. 276f.

and presents.¹

Fifth, the relationship was ratified by tokens or tickets. The ticket was divided in two halves with each party retaining his half. The origin of this practice is not certain.²

Sixth, the relationship was a "solemn engagement which had the sanction of religion."³ Zeus, in Greek religion, and Jupiter, in Roman religion, presided over this engagement.⁴ To violate this relationship would certainly anger them. Antinous was rebuffed by his comrades when he struck a beggar who was asking alms for food.

Antinous, thou didst not well to strike the wretched wanderer. Doomed man that thou art, what if haply he be some god come down from heaven! Aye, and the gods in the guise of strangers from afar put on all manner of shapes, and visit the cities, beholding the violence and the righteousness of men.⁵

Note that Paul encountered this attitude when he healed a cripple at Lystra; "the gods have come down to us in human

¹Josephus, Antiquities, x. 168; and Enc Rel Ethics, s.v. "Hospitality," by George Stock, p. 809.

²Fred H. Wight, Manners and Customs of Bible Lands (Chicago: Moody Press, 1979), p. 70. Note that σύνβολον is the Greek word and hospitalis tessera is the Latin word.

³Enc Rel Ethics, s.v. "Hospitality," by George Stock, p. 809.

⁴For the Greek concept see Hom., Il., xiii. 625. See also Bolchazy, p. 35 for the Roman idea.

⁵Hom., Od., xvii. 483f.

form!" (Acts 14:11).¹

The Motives for Hospitality

There were generally three basic motives for hospitality: religious, humanitarian, and reciprocal. The first two are difficult to place in any order of importance, since motives are highly subjective and individualized. Indeed, both aspects are usually apparent in most contexts. The question is often asked, when Odysseus approaches a strange people, "are they cruel, and wild, and unjust? or do they love strangers and fear the gods in their thoughts?"² Nausicaa of the Phaeacians expressed the religious aspect in the following manner. "It is Zeus himself, the Olympian, that gives happy fortune to men, both to the good and the evil, to each man as he will." She then promises him "thou shalt not lack clothing or aught else of those things which befall a sore-tired suppliant."³ Alcinous makes reference to the stranger saying, "Dear as a brother is the stranger."⁴

The third motive for hospitality encompasses the reciprocal and hereditary guest-friend relationship. If one did not fear the gods or have a genuine love for man,

¹Note this idea in the Olivet Discourse (Matt 25: 31-46) which will be discussed later.

²Hom., Od., vi. 119f; viii. 575f; ix. 175f.

³Hom., Od., vi. 187f. Compare Matthew 5:45 where rain and sunshine are given to both the evil and the good.

⁴Hom., Od., viii. 545f. See also Od. xiv. 389.

there was still the proverbial thought that the host of the present would be the guest of the future. This doubtlessly motivated those less inclined to generous hospitality to be more liberal in their generosity. Do unto others as you would have them do unto you was not foreign to Greek and Roman hospitality.¹

¹TDNT, s.v. "ξένος," by G. Stählin, 5:18.

CHAPTER VI

HOSPITALITY IN THE NEW TESTAMENT

There are not only ample examples of the practice of hospitality in the NT, but there are also several words used to describe its practice. The teaching of the NT clarifies several points of hospitality that were only implied in the descriptive aspects of the OT. Christ and his apostles assumed and expected the practice of hospitality. Jesus describes people of the kingdom as those who ministered to the needs of others (Matt 25). He expected his disciples to be received as they traveled about preaching the gospel (Luke 10). Paul received hospitality at the hands of many saints (Rom 16:23; Acts 18:3; Phlm 22). This study will help finalize the nature and purpose of hospitality.

A Vocabulary Study of Hospitality in the New Testament

There are a number of NT words that relate directly or indirectly to hospitality. It is paramount to this survey to achieve an understanding of these terms as implied in their general usage within the biblical text and other Greek literature. This discussion will be complemented by pertinent examples of hospitality in the next section.

Ξένος

Ξένος is found throughout the NT to denote someone or something strange or foreign. "Words from the stem ξεν- bear on the one side the concept of 'foreign', 'alien' (also 'appearing strange' or 'creating distaste') and on the other side that of 'guest.'"¹ Ξένος is used only one time to describe a host (Rom 16:23).² However, it has a significant use within compound words related to hospitality (eg. ξενοδοχέω and φιλόξενος). It was often used in the works of Homer in this regard.³ Aside from its common use as stranger, it also was used in Greek literature of the guest. Those who had a bond of friendship established between themselves or their families were called "friends" in the sense of guest-friends.⁴

Ξενία

In the NT and other Greek literature, ξενία is used exclusively in the realm of hospitality (eg. ξενίζω and φιλοξενία). Most often it can be translated hospitality or entertainment. Within other contexts, it designates the place of lodging. In Philemon 22, it has the latter meaning though entertainment is not absent. There is some debate

¹TDNT, s.v. "ξένος," by G. Stahlin, 5:1.

²BAGD, p. 548. ³Hom., Od., viii. 208; ix. 18.

⁴For guest-friends see Od. i. 187, 313; xv. 196; Il. vi. 215. For ξείνος as guest see Od. viii. 543; xv. 54; xxi. 27; xxiv. 289; Il. vi. 224.

as to its meaning in Acts 28:23, since both meanings are possible. Cadbury frankly admits the awkwardness of Paul, a prisoner, functioning as host to a group of Jews but still prefers the idea of entertainment.¹ Outside the NT, it is used almost entirely for the act of entertaining.²

Εενίζω

Εενίζω is a verb meaning to surprise or astonish as in Acts 17:20 or I Peter 4:12. In addition to the above meaning, it is widely used to describe the entertainment or reception of guests. This meaning is well attested in the NT (Acts 10:6, 18, 23, 32; 21:16; 28:7 and most notably in Heb 13:2).³ The term is best illustrated in Acts 28:7, where Paul was entertained hospitably (φιλοφρόνως) by Publius, the chief official of Malta. This case included food and shelter for several shipwrecked travelers. Hebrews 13:2 further describes entertainment by an OT character.

Ξενοδοχέω

Though ξενοδοχέω occurs only in I Timothy 5:10, it is widely used outside the NT. As a noun, it stands for the

¹Henry J. Cadbury, "Lexical Notes on Luke-Acts. III. Luke's Interest in Lodging," JBL 45 (1926):320-21.

²Josephus, Antiquities, i. 182, 197, 200; iv. 134, 236; v. 282. Hom., Il. xiii. 626; xiv. 404.

³BAGD, p. 547-8.

host in distinction from the guest.¹ In its verb form as it is used in the NT, it designates the action of the host on behalf of the guest, "to show hospitality."²

φιλοξενία

φιλοξενία is a compound from φίλος and ξενία.

φιλέω is the regular word from Homer onwards for to show affection, love, hospitality, etc. It can also be used with less precision and colour to mean: be accustomed to, be in the habit of; and then, when joined with other verbs to do something gladly, customarily, generally.³

As it has been suggested, ξενία is used exclusively in the realm of hospitality. It means entertainment or lodging. The Hebrew word חֲסִידָה translated hospitality, hospice, strange woman, or hostess is a transliteration of ξενία.⁴

The most literal rendering of the compound φιλοξενία would be loving entertainment. However compounds often develop a meaning that is a blend of the two elements. The word φιλανθρωπία, for example, means "love for mankind," "kindness" (Titus 3:4), or "hospitality" (Acts 28:2). φιλανθρωπῶς means "kindly" or "benevolently" (Acts 27:3),

¹Hom., Od., viii. 210, 543; xv. 55, 70; Il., iii. 354.

²BAGD, p. 548.

³NIDNT, s.v. "Love," by W. Günther, 2:547.

⁴TDNT, s.v. "ξένος," by G. Stählin, 5:20.

to treat someone in a benevolent way. φιλόανθρωπος is not found in the NT, but as it is used in other Greek literature it means "loving mankind" or simply "benevolent."¹ In the same manner, φιλοξενία seems to take on a technical sense in reference to the act of hospitality, but it can have the more general meaning entertainment or enjoyment. Moulton and Milligan cite the following example in support of the latter meaning. "This our letter I wrote on this papyrus that you might read it with joy, and with entertainment of long-suffering."²

Homer seems to prefer the term φιλόξενος, but Josephus used φιλοξενία at least one time.³ Josephus used it in the same type of context that he would use the more common term ξενία, though φιλοξενία may intensify a generous attitude. Melchizedek entertained Abraham (ξενία) and Rebecca and her family offered hospitality (φιλοξενία) to Abraham's servant.⁴ Clement used the word in praise of the

¹NIDNT, s.v. "Love," by C. Brown, 2:549-50. See also TDNT, s.v. "φιλοανθρωπία," by Luck, 9:107-12 and BAGD, p. 858.

²James Hope Moulton and George Milligan, The Vocabulary of the Greek Testament (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1930), p. 671.

³Karl Heinrich Rengstoft, ed., A Complete Concordance to Flavius Josephus (London: E. J. Brill, 1979), 4:302.

⁴Josephus, Antiquities, i. 182 (ξενία) and i. 250 (φιλοξενία).

Corinthians. "Who has not reported your character so magnificent in its hospitality?"¹

φιλοξενία then can be rendered in several ways. It can mean to entertain in a general way or to entertain in a gracious manner. Whenever φιλοξενία is used, it emphasizes a kindness rendered to another for the pleasure of the recipient. In the context of receiving guests, as it is used most often, φιλοξενία should be understood as a technical term for hospitality. It usually denotes the gracious and voluntary reception and entertainment of guests.

In the NT, φιλοξενία only occurs in two passages (Rom 12:13; Heb 13:2).² In both examples it relates specifically to hospitality. These passages will be dealt with separately under "Examples in the Epistles."

Φιλόξενοϛ

This term is found three times in the NT (I Tim 3:2, Titus 1:8, I Pet 4:9). It is derived from φιλόϛ (loving) and ξένοϛ (stranger, guest, or host). As has been noted, Homer often used the statement, "Are they cruel, and wild, and unjust? or do they love strangers and fear the gods in their thoughts?"³ Clement also used it of Rahab. "So the

¹I Clement i. 2. See also I Clement x. 7.; xi. 1.; xii. 1.

²BAGD, p. 860.

³Hom., Od., vi. 120; viii. 575; ix. 176; xiii. 203.

hospitable Rahab took them in. . . ."¹

In general, φιλόξενοϝ seems to emphasize a positive attitude toward the practice of hospitality, while φιλοξενία may more clearly emphasize the act of hospitality. I Peter 4:9 has φιλόξενοι εἰς ἀλλήλους. "Be hospitable to one another" (NASB). Here φιλόξενοϝ is used in the technical sense of hospitable. The etymological background (lover of strangers) would be contradictory in light of ἀλλήλους. In the Pastoral Epistles, the technical sense is particularly in mind. The overseer must have established himself as a hospitable person. The reference is to character in light of previous action. Thus the emphasis is on a mind set rather than a particular act.²

Words of Invitation or Reception

Λέχομαι and its compounds ἀναδέχομαι, ἀποδέχομαι, and ὑποδέχομαι are often used to denote the reception of guests or visitors. λαμβάνω is also used at least in John 19:27 and II John 10 in the sense to receive a guest. Ἀσπάζομαι is used of a short visit or entering a building for a visit. In Acts 10:23, εἰσκαλέομαι means to invite. καλέω itself is used several times to express an invitation. Ἐπιδημέω denotes the visitor or guest. Luke uses φωνέω for an invitation (Luke 14:12). The verb προπέμπω is used in a

¹I Clement xii. 3.

²See appendix for NT words/usage and references.

special sense to receive guests and send them on their journey fully supplied (Acts 15:3, III John 6).

Words of Lodging

Numerous words relate to the lodging of guests. *καταλύμα* is a place of lodging. *καταλύω*, the verb, can mean to find a place to stay or even refer to the guest himself. *μένω* is used in the more general sense to remain in a particular location, thus to visit or lodge. *πανδοχεῖον* is a technical term for an inn. *πανδοχεύς* refers to the caretaker of an inn.

Words of Eating or Dining

Generally two words fall into this group. *δειπνέω* means to eat or provide a meal. The noun *δειπνον* or *δειπνος* specifies the meal or banquet. *δειπνοκλήτωρ* designates the one responsible for the meal (host). *ἐσθίω* is a verb meaning to eat or dine, to participate in a meal.

Examples of Hospitality in the Gospels

In relation to hospitality, there is generally a cultural continuity between the OT and the NT. Thus hospitality has the same basic features in the NT as has been observed in the previous chapters. Christ and his apostles were often the guest of rich and poor alike. They assumed that they would be hospitably received as they traveled about.

It is not the purpose of this section to deal

specifically with all or even most of the material related to hospitality in the Gospels.¹ Two passages have been chosen to illustrate the nature and importance of the practice in the teaching of Christ (Matt 25:31-46; Luke 14:12-14). Their particular significance should become apparent in the following discussion.

Matthew 25:31-46

It is not the purpose of this discussion to define all the theological and eschatological ramifications of this pericope. Rather, it will be employed to evaluate the significance of the passage as it relates to hospitality.

At the close of the Tribulation Period, the King will return to judge the Gentiles. The basis of that judgment is the reception that the Gentiles have given to the Lord's brethren. Toussaint identifies the brethren of verse 40 as the Jewish evangelists of the tribulation.² The Gentiles are then evaluated by their acts of hospitality directed toward those who carry the gospel message. They are commended for giving food, drink, clothing, and shelter. The same motif appears in chapter 10 and the other synoptics

¹For illustrations of hospitality in the Gospels see the following: Matt 9:9-11; 10:11-14; 22:1-12; Mark 1:29-33; 2:14-17; 14:3; Luke 1:40, 56; 5:27-29; 7:36-39, 45; 9:51-56; 10:28-37, 38; 11:37; 19:5-7; 22:24-30; John 4:39-40; 12:1-3.

²Stanley D. Toussaint, Behold the King (Portland: Multnomah Press, 1980), p. 291.

where messengers are sent out.

In his analysis of the passage, Grassi calls the whole concept "the divine identification ethic, . . . a life-style that duplicates that of Jesus."¹ However it is more than a duplication of Christ's social ethic. It is actual identification with Christ himself by an enthusiastic reception of his messengers. These messengers are ambassadors for Christ, and their reception is considered that of Christ (vs. 40). These deeds were such a part of everyday life that those commended had no idea concerning the eschatological nature of their deeds.²

The words of Christ in verses 40 and 45 are significant. The causal clause "ἐφ' ὅσον ἐποιήσατε ἐνὶ τούτων" (vs 40) can be rendered "since you did it to one of these."³ It may also be translated in the sense of measure, "to the degree that" you did it to one of these . . . you did it to me.⁴ Christ taught the identical concept in Matthew 10: 40-42. "He who receives you receives Me." Toussaint

¹Joseph A. Grassi, "'I Was Hungry and You Gave Me to Eat.' (Matt. 25:35FF.) The Divine Identification Ethic in Matthew," JBT 11:3 (July 1981):84.

²William Hendriksen, The Gospel of Matthew, New Testament Commentary (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1973), p. 888-9.

³H. E. Dana and Julius R. Mantey, A Manual Grammar of the Greek New Testament (Toronto: The MacMillan Company, 1927), p. 274.

⁴BAGD, p. 289.

suggests that "those among the Gentiles that respond to the message indicate the genuineness of the response by their treatment of the messengers."¹ The belief that the gods often visited men disguised as mortals was encountered by Paul in Acts 14:11. However, here the messenger was in actuality a mortal but empowered with authority to represent the risen Christ. In this regard, to accept the messengers was inseparable from accepting the message they carried.

What then is the significance of hospitality in this passage? Hospitality can not be the means of salvation (Eph 2:8-9). But, the inner faith of the Gentile is demonstrated by the outward act of hospitality.

Genuine faith results in life, and life manifests itself in righteousness. Thus, works are the evidence of faith. It is on this basis that some shall enter the kingdom and others shall be condemned. 'You will know them by their fruits' (Matthew 7:20).²

This accords well with Paul's statement that the Christian will be rewarded for his deeds done in the body (II Cor 5:10). James says we are to show our faith by our works (James 2:18). Thus Matthew 25:40 does not teach that some will be saved by hospitality, but it does teach that hospitality is one of the fruits of true righteousness.

¹Toussaint, p. 291.

²Ibid., p. 292.

Luke 14:12-14

Jesus, having just finished an admonition to the guests of a banquet about choosing the places of least honor, now directs his attention to his host and all those who are thus inclined. "When you give a reception, invite the poor, the crippled, the lame, the blind. . . . For you will be repaid at the resurrection of the righteous" (vs. 13-14). Our Lord is not here forbidding normal relationships. But the point is well made. Hospitality given to those who can return in kind does not have the same eternal value.

Hospitality is historically, at least in part, for the needy. This is the point stressed by Christ. The needy may not always be those of meager resources, for it is also applied to those who are in need because of a temporary situation (III John 6). He does not give this instruction for the benefit of the needy only, but primarily for the host.

If he desires to receive a real blessing he must learn to invite regularly those who are needy and who are not able to recompense him for what he does for them. This is true hospitality and unselfish readiness to serve, which cannot but be a blessing to the host; and at the end of the age he will receive his recompense, when God raises and rewards the righteous.¹

This certainly is not the final or complete word on

¹Norval Geldenhuys, The Gospel of Luke, in NICNT, edited by F. F. Bruce (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1979), p. 390.

NT hospitality. However, it is an important aspect of the subject. For here once again, hospitality not only has a horizontal relationship, but it is in all respects vertical. Since hospitality is one of many deeds that will be rewarded in eternity, it must be rendered voluntarily, void of any selfish motives. However, there will be rich rewards for the generous host in this life as well. Hendriksen writes, "Even in the present life those who associate only with the people of their own set miss the thrill resulting from generous sharing, the joy beaming from the eyes of those who have been blessed."¹

A Survey of Hospitality
in the Gospels and Acts

As Christ traveled throughout Palestine, he seldom stayed in his own quarters. Instead, he ate and lodged with a variety of individuals from differing backgrounds. He was often criticized for eating with tax-gatherers and sinners (Matt 9:11; Mark 2:16; Luke 5:30). He was even called a glutton and a drunkard because of his frequency at meals (Matt 11:19). He ate with Simon the leper (Mark 14:3) and with a number of Pharisees (Luke 7:36f; 11:37). He invited himself to Zacchaeus's home (Luke 19:5-7) and stayed with the Samaritans two days upon their request (John 4:39-40).

¹William Hendriksen, The Gospel of Luke, New Testament Commentary (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1978), p. 725.

At other times, he ate with friends such as the disciples (Mark 1:29ff) or often at Bethany with Mary and Martha (Luke 10:38).

Christ not only delighted in being around people, but expected a hospitable reception wherever he traveled. He portrayed the good neighbor as one who shows compassion in the form of entertainment (Luke 10). Having sent the disciples out ahead of him, he fully expected them to be hospitably received. To those who refused hospitality, there was condemnation (Matt 10:11-14). In this sense, to receive the messengers of Christ was inseparably tied to receiving the message. It must be admitted, however, that the latter preceded the former.

There was a special invitation to the banquet table of the kingdom. "And they will come from east and west, and from north and south, and will recline at the table in the kingdom of God" (Luke 13:29; Matt 8:11; Luke 12:37; 14:15; Rev 19:9). Hendriksen considers this symbolic terminology for heavenly blessing.¹ However in Luke 22:16, Christ says, "I shall never again eat it until it is fulfilled in the kingdom of God." In verse 30, Christ gives his disciples a place at his table in the kingdom. Hultgren calls the foot washing of John 13:1-11 a "symbolic act of

¹Ibid., p. 730.

eschatological hospitality."¹ He notes that washing the feet is usually associated with an invitation to dine. In chapter 14:2, Jesus is preparing a place for the meal. Regardless of the truth of this proposal, the concept of Christ as host to believers in the future cannot be denied.

In the book of Acts, entertainment is almost always in relation to messengers of the gospel. Cadbury points out Luke's special care in mentioning by name numerous hosts. For one who had traveled with the apostle Paul, he knew the comfort that a host could provide.² Individuals like Aquila and Priscilla, Gaius, Jason, Lydia, and Philemon are not remembered for their theological expertise but for hosting those who carried the gospel message.

Hospitality in the Epistles

The reception and care of God's ministers were dominant features of hospitality in the Epistles. Those who contributed to the entertainment of these messengers were often commended by name (Rom 16:23; Col 4:15; III John 6). Many of the early churches had to presume upon the hospitality of more than one host. Of necessity this was a prolonged service which the host volunteered to do indefinitely.

¹Arland J. Hultgren, "The Johannine Footwashing (13. 1-11) As Symbol of Eschatological Hospitality." NTS 28 (1982):542.

²Cadbury, "Lexical Notes," p. 306-7.

Those who had been host to the believers were commended by the apostles to be warmly received themselves (Rom 16:1-2; I Tim 5:9). However, hospitality went beyond the reception of God's messengers, for it included the saints in particular and in general all men. This will become self-evident as descriptive passages are unfolded.

Romans 12:13

In this chapter, Paul addresses the subject of Christian living. The chapter delineates the practical implications of this in the life of the Christian. Of particular interest is the individualized gifts that are unfolded in verses 3-8. Gifts of teaching, encouraging and administering are not common to all. By contrast, the duties encouraged in verses 9-21 are of a general nature which should be a vital part of every saint.

The exhortation to "pursue hospitality" (vs. 13) is preceded by the injunctions to love one another, to honor others above one's self and to share with saints who are in need. In each case mentioned above, there is an intensity about the apostle's words. In the same manner, the command to "pursue hospitality" has a certain urgency about it.

Διῶκω has a variety of usages, yet it usually has more than a passive interest in the subject. In the NT it

is used some thirty times for religious persecution.¹ Its theological usage is most noteworthy in connection with the pursuit of Christian objectives.

The metaphorical meaning of the word shows more strongly than *zēteō*, seek, that there are certain things which the Christian must strive after, such as hospitality (Rom 12:13), mutual peace (Rom 14:19; I Pet 3:11; Heb 12:14), holiness, love (I Cor 14:1), . . . These are lasting objectives in the life of faith, which has as its goal the attaining of the resurrection from the dead.²

Paul says, "I (διώκω) press on toward the goal" (Phil 3:14). The apostle was not passively hoping to attain the goal; he was actively in pursuit of it. In the same manner the believer must pursue hospitality.

As has been delineated under the lexical study, φιλοξενία may refer to practice as opposed to φιλόξενοϛ which emphasizes the mental attitude toward the subject. Even aside from this purposed distinction, the use of the active verb διώκω clearly stresses the activity of entertaining guests. Hermas uses both φιλόξενοϛ and φιλοξενία in the same context. "φιλόξενον εἶναι (ἐν γὰρ τῇ φιλοξενίᾳ εὐρίσκεται ἀγαθοποιησίῃ ποτε) be hospitable, for in hospitality may be found the practice of good."³

¹W. F. Moulton, A. S. Geden, and H. K. Moulton, A Concordance to the Greek New Testament (Edinburg: T & T Clark, 1978), p. 222.

²NIDNT, s.v. "διώκω," by G. Edel, 2:806-7.

³Hermas, Mandate, viii. 10.

The question as to who should practice this virtue is quite elementary. Every Christian is to aggressively pursue hospitality. To determine the precise recipients is much more difficult, for the apostle gives few clues in the context. Murray suggests two significant possibilities. First, hospitality was to be given to all ministers of the gospel. Second, the injunction would apply generally to all who were without shelter. He gives this final comment.

But even where economic and social conditions are more favourable, the practice of hospitality is not irrelevant. It is in these circumstances that the force of the verb 'pursue' should be heeded.¹

Somewhat on a different note, Calvin and especially Wuest suggest that hospitality here is given to Christians under persecution who are strangers to the host.² However, there is little warrant for this etymological interpolation. Even from an etymological standpoint, it is unlikely that ξενία was ever tied to ξένος. Ξενία means gift, entertainment or lodging, but not stranger. The most frequent use

¹ John Murray, The Epistle to the Romans, in the NICNT, edited by F. F. Bruce (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1959), p. 135. Also see Lenski for a similar approach. R. C. Lenski, The Interpretation of St. Paul's Epistle to the Romans (Minneapolis: Augsburg Publishing House, 1936), p. 773.

² John Calvin, Commentaries on the Epistle of Paul the Apostle to the Romans, translator and editor Rev. John Owen (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1947), p. 467; and Kenneth Wuest, Romans in the Greek New Testament (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1955), p. 215.

outside the NT is to denote the place of lodging.¹ Second, φιλοξενία had been in use for hundreds of years before the writing of the NT. It was used by Polybius, Apollonius Rhodius and many other Greek writers.² If the etymological stance was to be adopted, it would likely form the meaning "one who loves to entertain." However, the etymological argument is questionable in light of current studies. Moises Silva quotes the following statement in support of this concern.

Etymology, however, gives a false idea of the nature of a vocabulary for it is concerned only in showing how a vocabulary has been formed. Words are not used according to their historical value.³

It seems best to understand φιλοξενία as a technical term for hospitality with no particular recipient in mind. Though it must be admitted, many contexts clearly refer to strangers. On the other hand, Paul often sought lodging with those whom he had known for years (Phlm 22; Rom 16:23). The context of Romans 12 would tend to support the view that Paul was making a general statement that would embrace Christians, particularly those of a transit nature, but

¹E. A. Sophocles, Greek Lexicon of the Roman and Byzantine Periods, Vol. 2 (New York: Frederick Ungar Publishing Co., n.d.), p. 789; and G. W. H. Lampe, Patristic Greek Lexicon (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1961), p. 931.

²Henri Estienne, Thesaurus Graecae Linguae, rev. by K. Hase, W. Dindorf, and L. Dindorf, Vol. 8 (Paris: n.p., 1831-65), p. 865.

³Moises Silva, Biblical Words and Their Meaning (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1983), p. 46. See the complete discussion of this subject on pp. 35-51.

inclusive of all men in general.¹

Hebrews 13:2

The writer of Hebrews concludes his epistle by an assortment of various practical and social exhortations. The first admonition encourages the continuation of brotherly love (vs. 1). This is followed by an exhortation to practice hospitality.² It is significant that an exhortation to love is followed by hospitality also in Romans 12:9-13 and I Peter 4:8-9. In addition, the short epistle of III John also draws a close relationship between the two. Here the hospitality of Gaius is characterized by the words "your love" (III John 6). Galatians 5:13 also demonstrates the correlation between love and service; "by love serve

¹C. E. B. Cranfield, The Epistle to the Romans, Vol. 2, in The International Critical Commentary (Edinburgh: T & T Clark Limited, 1979), p. 639 n2.

²See John Mathews, "Hospitality and the New Testament Church: An Historical and Exegetical Study" (Th.D. dissertation, Princeton Theological Seminary, 1965; Ann Arbor, MI: University Microfilms Inc., 65-11, 727, 1966), p. 238. He shows the link between faith and hospitality in James 2:17. He then notes the following concerning love: "It is with love, however, that hospitality is especially associated, as is indeed indicated by the fact that ξενία is compounded with φίλος in order to describe the act of hospitality. Thus Westcott refers to 'the marked correspondence between φιλαδελφία and φιλοξενία' in Hebrews 13.2, where the latter appears as the first instance of the former. Similarly, the author of I Peter brings ἀγάπη for fellow Christians (I Pet 4.8) into immediate juxtaposition with the practice of hospitality to one another (4.9), and in the mind of Paul hospitality (Rom 12.13) appears as a concrete manifestation of ἀγάπη and φιλαδελφία (Rom 12.9-10). This close linking of hospitality with love is by no means uniquely Christian."

one another." The same relationship is expressed in the next chapter. "Bear one another's burdens, and thus fulfill the law of Christ" (Gal 6:2). It is understood in the context that the "law of Christ" is love. Finally, John writes, "Let us not love with word or with tongue, but in deed and truth" (I John 3:18 NASB).

It is abundantly clear from these writers and the general tenor of the NT that love is the motivating and controlling factor for service which is rendered to members of Christ's body.

True hospitality springs from the limitless fountain of divine love manifested to us while we were still estranged sinners (Rom 5:8), and it must likewise be spontaneous, unforced, and free from reluctance. Christians, as Peter urges, should reach out in love to each other and should 'practice hospitality ungrudgingly' (I Peter 4:8, 9).¹

Having reaffirmed the priority of brotherly love, the writer of Hebrews also warns his readers against the, potential or actual, neglect of hospitality. ~~M~~ plus the present imperative can mean to terminate an action in progress, if the context warrants such an interpretation. There is ample material to suggest that these Christians might have been lax in some of their duties to one another (3:13-4:2; 10:24-27; 12:1-2). However, it may be best to assume that the author is simply reminding his readers of

¹Philip Edgcumbe Hughes, A Commentary on the Epistle to the Hebrews (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1977), p. 563.

the importance of hospitality, knowing the enormous burden that the practice often entailed (Heb 6:10).

The verb ἐπιλανθάνομαι can be translated to forget, to neglect, or to go unnoticed.¹ It is used to assure the saints that God does not forget their service to one another (Heb 6:10), and that not even a sparrow goes unnoticed by the heavenly Father (Luke 12:6). The idea of neglect may best fit the context since it is hard to imagine that so important a virtue as hospitality could be forgotten.

To reinforce the exhortation to practice hospitality the writer adds, "For by this some have entertained angels without knowing it" (NASB).

The thought of the statement can hardly be that by entertaining strangers we, too, may have the good fortune of sometimes receiving angels into our homes. The Old Testament incidents are too exceptional to admit of such a generalization. It is sufficient to say that, as some were unexpectedly blessed by receiving strangers, so we too, may be thus blessed.²

The word hospitality is again φιλοξενία as in Romans 12:13. Most of the modern translations understand hospitality here to be directed primarily to strangers, which may be a valid point. However, in Romans 12:13, the same word is translated "hospitality" leaving the reader to decide to whom it should be offered.³ Why this difference in

¹BAGD, p. 295.

²R. C. H. Lenski, The Interpretation of the Epistle to the Hebrews and the Epistle of James (Minneapolis: Augsburg Publishing House, 1966), p. 469.

³Note KJV, NASB and NIV.

translation? The answer may lie in the introduction of the OT example into Hebrews 13. But, while the OT example certainly illustrates one aspect of hospitality, it should not be used to restrict its character. Lenski writes, "Not only the brethren whom we know personally in our own city but also brethren that are strangers to us are to receive our fraternal friendliness."¹

The injunction seems to emphasize the practice of hospitality rather than the recipient. For by the continual practice of hospitality, some have entertained angels. Though the writer does not promise that angels will somewhere be entertained, the import of the passage seems to leave the reader with the strong impression that hospitality will not go unnoticed. Thus the recipient is not in focus here, but rather the benefits likely to be realized by the one who makes hospitality a continual practice. What benefits might arise from the practice is nowhere disclosed. Nevertheless, they have been made amply aware that "God is not unjust so as to forget your work and the love which you have shown toward His name, in having ministered and in still ministering to the saints" (Heb 6:10 NASB). This reminder would certainly include hospitality.

What then is the contribution of Hebrews 13:1-2? First, it once again points to the all important source of hospitality, that is, love as it comes through the ministry

¹Lenski, Hebrews, p. 469.

of the Spirit. Second, hospitality is a Christian obligation that must not be ignored. This harmonizes well with Paul's words "pursue hospitality" (Rom 12:13). Finally, the addition of the OT example seems to imply that those who obey this exhortation can expect to receive some measure of remuneration, though its exact nature is not revealed. On this point Kent writes:

To encourage such hospitality, reference is made to the fact that by courteous welcoming of visitors some have entertained angels unawares. . . . He has mentioned this feature to show how God is pleased when this sort of love is displayed.¹

I Peter 4:9

In the first six verses of the chapter, Peter admonishes his readers to endure the suffering that is a result of righteous living. He notes that God will soon judge the living and the dead. The paragraph that begins with verse seven addresses the positive side of the Christian's responsibility. Since the end of all things is near, let us give ourselves to prayer and brotherly love.

Closely related to brotherly love is the practice of hospitality. This relationship has been observed also in the two previous passages (Rom 12:13; Heb 13:1-2). Peter writes "φιλόξενοι εἰς ἀλλήλους ἄνευ γογγυσμοῦ; be hospitable to one another without complaint" (NASB). As Leighton

¹Homer A. Kent, Jr., The Epistle to the Hebrews (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1972), p. 278.

suggests, "We lose much actions, in themselves good, both of piety and charity, through disregard of our hearts in them."¹ There was often the temptation to neglect hospitality because of its economic considerations and general inconvenience to the host and the family. Yet for the believer, hospitality should be done voluntarily from the heart with no consideration to expense or inconvenience.²

The word γογγυσμός is used only in John 7:12 for the grumbling of the multitudes concerning Christ, in Acts 6:1 of the complaint of the Hellenistic Jews, in Philippians 2:14 of grumbling in the context of service, and here in I Peter 4:9.³ Hiebert makes the following observation:

'Without complaint' (ἄνευ γογγυσμοῦ) is a frank recognition that the practice of hospitality could become costly, burdensome, and irritating. The Greek term denotes a muttering or low speaking as a sign of displeasure. It depicts a spirit the opposite of cheerfulness. Such a spirit negates the value of the hospitality rendered and destroys the recipient's enjoyment of it. It is a ministry to be shouldered cheerfully if it is to be worthwhile. The addition simply emphasizes the true character of Christian hospitality and does not imply that Peter's readers were chronic grumblers.⁴

¹Robert Leighton, Commentary on I Peter (reprint ed., Grand Rapids: Kregel Publications, 1972), p. 428.

²John H. Elliott, A Home For the Homeless (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1981), p. 146. Proverbs 23:6-8 warns against eating with a stingy man. "For he is always thinking about the cost. Eat and drink, he says, but his heart is not with you."

³BAGD, p. 164.

⁴D. Edmond Hiebert, "Living in the Light of Christ's Return: An Exposition of I Peter 4:7-11," Bib Sac 139:555 (July-September 1982):249.

Emphasis is placed on hospitality within the community by the reciprocal pronoun ἀλλήλους which gives the NT slant to hospitality. It is to be offered first to those who are in the family. Paul displays this same principle in Galatians 6:10. The reciprocal pronoun certainly is inclusive of all Christians but may also imply hospitality within a local church, though it can not be limited to this sphere.¹ The epistle of I Peter was addressed to many churches (I Pet 1:1). However, it is well established that a city church often required more than one host for regular meetings. This was a labor of love in the highest degree, for this aspect of hospitality was perpetual (Rom 16:5, 23).

I Peter 4:9 reinforces several features of NT hospitality. First, hospitality is once again recognized as a demonstration of genuine love. Second, it is a ministry which demands more than a passive involvement, for it can often be extremely burdensome. Third, hospitality should be offered primarily to those of like precious faith but not to the exclusion of those outside. It is a practice within the local church but inclusive of all Christians.

¹Hiebert, "Living in the Light of Christ's Return," p. 249. See also John Mathews, p. 299. "Schlatter's comments show that he regards the hospitality of the early church as a unifying factor, not only for the Christian communities scattered throughout the Graeco-Roman world, but also for the community of believers within a single locality. So too in his exegesis of I Peter 4:9, Selwyn argues that the presence of εἰς ἀλλήλους as the object of the φιλοξενία enjoined by the author suggests that the commandment has reference to the daily social intercourse of Christians within one city."

By this means, it certainly contributed to unity within the entire body of Christ. Fourth, it must not be overlooked that hospitality is nowhere portrayed as a gift of a few choice saints. All members of the body are obligated by divine imperative to practice hospitality (Rom 12:13; Heb 13:1-2; I Pet 4:9).

I Timothy 3:2 and Titus 1:8

Hospitality is clearly a duty of all Christians regardless of their economic or social status. "Hence, if hospitality was a requirement of every Christian according to his ability and opportunity to furnish it, it was all the more a requirement for the overseer,"¹ Both I Timothy 3:2 and Titus 1:8 use the term φιλόξενοf which "was used of a guest-friend, also of a host, one who entertains hospitably."² The pastor renders hospitality to his flock, to traveling Christians or even to strangers whom it is in his ability to shelter.

Lenski limits its use entirely to traveling Christians, though there is little warrant contextually for

¹William Hendriksen, Thessalonians, Timothy and Titus, in the New Testament Commentary (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1979), p. 123.

²Kenneth S. Wuest, The Pastoral Epistles in the Greek New Testament (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1952), p. 55.

this view.¹ It would seem natural that a servant of the gospel would protect those within the same circumstances: missionaries and fellow ministers. In this way he would also be setting the proper example for his church. However, it is often overlooked that the word φιλόξενοϛ is a technical term for a variety of services under the auspices of hospitality. Consider the concern for entertainment of the poor in the whole corpus of Scripture and certainly in the NT (Luke 14:12-14; Gal 2:10; James 2:15-16; I John 3:16-18). Thus for an elder to be truly hospitable, it would require more than entertaining travelers. Abraham entered the hall of fame for hospitality which only involved a meal. Lot provided food and shelter and he received commendations. Φιλόξενοϛ clearly implies all these concepts with equal concern for messengers of the gospel.

As Edwin Hatch wrote many years ago:

The practice of hospitality was enjoined as the common virtue of all Christians: in the New Testament itself stress is laid upon it by St. Paul, St. Peter, and St. John. But it was a special virtue of the ἐπίσκοποϛ. It was for him not so much a merit as a duty. Traveling brethren, no less than the poor of his own community, were entitled to a share in his distribution of the church funds.²

Thomas Bacon wrote, "Bare, naked and unhangd walls,

¹R. C. H. Lenski, The Interpretation of Paul's Epistles to the Colossians, to the Thessalonians, to Timothy, to Titus and to Philemon (Minneapolis: Augsburg Publishing House, 1937), p. 583.

²Edwin Hatch, The Organization of the Early Christian Churches (London: Longmans, Green and Co., 1892), p. 44-45.

bring not such and so great deformity to a spiritual pastor's house, as the lack of hospitality doth."¹ There are many other equally important characteristics which a pastor must possess. A deficiency in any area disqualifies a man from this position. Hospitality should carry equal weight with the other requirements of a minister of God.

I Timothy 5:10

Not only was hospitality required of believers and elders, but it was also required of those widows who were put on the church roll. These women were above the age of sixty and characterized by noble deeds. Hospitality was one of these important ministries. *Εενοδοχέω* means to "entertain, or receive as a guest." The noun form expresses the "act of hospitality" or often simply the "host."² Kent writes:

The lodging of guests is largely the responsibility of the woman in the home. It is she who usually expresses the geniality and simple kindness which are the true indications of hospitality.³

What function the widow might have had in the early church is not pertinent to this discussion. Yet the importance placed upon hospitality is significant. Without the

¹Felicity Heal, "The Archbishops of Canterbury and the Practice of Hospitality," *JEH* 33:4 (October 1982):548.

²Lampe, *Lexicon*, p. 931.

³Homer A. Kent, Jr., *The Pastoral Epistles* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1958), p. 173.

record of generosity to guests, the widow was outside the context of I Timothy 5:10.

Hospitality and the Gospel Message

One of the most frequent features of hospitality in the NT is its connection with the transmission of the gospel. Many of the names listed in the NT were hosts of Christ or his disciples. It is no coincidence that all four Gospels mention the women who ministered to the Lord while he traveled about Galilee (Matt 27:55-56; Mark 15:40-41; Luke 8:1-3; 23:24; John 19:25-27). In Acts and the Epistles, reference is often made of the host (Acts 16:14, 40; 18:2, 7; 28:7; Rom 16:23, Phlm 22, III John 5,6).

Riddle makes an important observation when he writes:

It is of primary importance that in the beginning it was people, not documents, who spread the good news about Jesus. It was the spoken word--the human voice--which carried their messages.¹

It may be added that messengers are still essential to the transmission of the gospel. When Christians become hosts to the gospel messengers, they become "fellow workers with the truth" (III John 8, NASB).

Christ and his disciples assumed that they would be received by those who had profitted by the gospel. Stählin is correct when he says, "whenever the hospitality of Christians is mentioned in the NT, the reference is primarily to

¹Donald Wayne Riddle, "Early Christian Hospitality: A Factor in the Gospel Transmission," JBL 57 (1938):145.

that extended to apostles and missionaries."¹ The record of Paul's missionary enterprise is replete with examples of hospitality which is highly commended. Neither should it be neglected that Christ will judge the Gentiles on the basis of hospitality, not that hospitality in itself makes one righteous before God, but it does give ample evidence of Christ's righteousness within the individual. Thus hospitality has and will continue to play an important role in the mission of the church.

Summary

Hospitality was central to NT Christianity. It was an expression of Christian love to the needy of the world and to saints in particular. For pastors, widows and all believers, it was encouraged by apostolic exhortation. Three passages relate to Christians in general (Rom 12:13; Heb 13:1-2; I Pet 4:9); two references (I Tim 3:2; Titus 1:8) make it a duty of the pastor, and one passage (I Tim 5:10) makes it essential for widows. Statistically, a very important aspect of hospitality was its relationship to the early transmission of the gospel. The fact that much of the NT traces the growth of the early church accounts for much of this. Thus the point should not be pressed unduly. Rather, hospitality was offered to all individuals regardless of their station.

¹TDNT, s.v. "ξένος," by Stählin, 5:23.

CHAPTER VII

HOSPITALITY IN THE PATRISTICS AND THE NT APOCRYPHA

The purpose of this study is to determine what the early believers understood and taught about hospitality. It is of interest that the first hospitals were located within the churches. They were first for the care of the traveler, but eventually became centers for all types of ailments.¹

Augustine in his thirty-eighth epistle wrote, "In receiving unknown guests we are want to say that it is better to put up with a bad one than unknowingly to shut out a good one, through our very desire not to receive a bad one."² In his first letter to the Corinthians, Clement extols the church for their hospitality. He praised hospitality in this way; "Through faith and hospitality, he (Abraham) had a son given to him in his old age" (I Clem 5:12). "By faith and hospitality was Rahab the harlot

¹Enc Rel Ethics, s.v. "Hospitality, Christian," by G. Bonet-Maury, 6:804.

²Ludwig Schopp, "Saint Augustine Letters," trans. Sister Wilfred Parsons, in vol. 1 of The Fathers of the Church, ed. Roy Joseph Deferrari, 86 vols (Washington, D. C.: Catholic University of America Press, 1951), p. 170.

saved" (I Clem 6:5).

Jerome in his Epistle 53 and Chrysostom in his second sermon on Genesis extol hospitality particularly in bishops. Origin on Roman 12:13 also praises the practice. Many of the early church councils entrusted the task of hospitality to the bishops. Hospitality became so closely related to charity that the two were scarcely distinguishable. The bishop provided food, clothing and shelter on a large scale to the traveler, poor and diseased. Many monasteries had their hospices for travelers and those who had no support. St. Benedict is the most notable, but there were others before this.¹

The Council of Chalcedon in AD 451 spoke concerning the bishops responsibilities of hospitality in canon 8. "Let the clergy of the poor-houses, monasteries, and martyries, continue under the authority of the bishops in every city, according to the tradition of the holy Fathers."² This concept was a part of church tradition until the close of the Middle Ages, but even then, it continued to be practiced in many quarters. Heal criticizes the decline in hospitality among the Archbishops of Canterbury who in their past had been renowned for hospitality. He writes:

¹Enc Rel Ethics, s.v. "Hospitality, Christian," by G. Bonet-Maury, 6:805.

²J. Stevenson, ed., Creeds, Councils and Controversies (London: S.P.C.K., n.d.), p. 327.

All expressed concern about the decay of the customary hospitality of the higher clergy, best summed-up in Cecil's gloomy estimate that the bishops whom he had helped to appoint had 'no credit either for godliness or hospitality.'¹

Lucian of Samosata (AD 125-190) was a Greek rhetorician and satirist. One of his best known works was Of The Death of Peregrinus, a satire on the hospitableness of Christians to one another. Peregrinus who was a convert to Christianity was imprisoned for his faith. Upon hearing of his misfortune:

they rendered to him ministries of every sort. . . . And what is more, on the pretext of his imprisonment, many contributions of money came to Peregrinus at that time, and he made no little income out of it.²

The Didache gives the most complete material on hospitality as it relates to the messengers of the gospel. All messengers who preached the gospel in its traditional form had the right to hospitality overnight or as long as three days. Anyone who requested a longer period was considered a false prophet.³

If however the stranger decides to settle in the community, he should under most circumstances work for his food and shelter,

so that no man shall live among you in idleness because he is a Christian. But if he will not do so, he is making traffic of Christ; beware of such.⁴

¹Heal, "Archbishop of Canterbury," p. 548.

²Lucian, Death of Peregrinus, 11-13.

³Didache, xi. 1-3. ⁴Ibid., xii. 4-5.

The Shepherd of Hermas also has some significant statements on hospitality. In one example certain individuals might have been considered apostates from God but "they bore the name gladly and they gladly received into their houses the servants of God."¹ Another group of men more spiritual than the former were:

bishops and hospitable men who at all times receive the servants of God into their houses gladly and without hypocrisy; and the bishops ever ceaselessly sheltered the destitute and the widows by their ministration, and ever behaved with holiness.²

In the "Mandate" there appears a similar list: "to minister to widows, to look after orphans and the destitute, to redeem from distress the servants of God, to be hospitable for in hospitality may be found the practice of good."³

Summary

The development of hospices under the jurisdiction of churches and their gradual emergence into the modern concept of hospitals shows the great emphasis the early church put upon all forms of charity, but especially hospitality. There is little doubt that the early bishops were expected to excel in spiritual matters as well as the practical aspects of good deeds.

Under critical evaluation, the early church, particularly following the first and second centuries, seems to be

¹Hermas, The Shepherd. sim. x. 3.

²Ibid., sim. xxvii. 2

³Ibid., mand. viii. 10.

more zealous in the area of hospitality and charity than there is warrant for in the examples of Christ and his apostles. Yet even their exaggeration of this virtue displays their concern for the biblical exhortations to be hospitable without respect of persons. For this they can be praised.

CHAPTER VIII

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

Summary

In the Ancient World, hospitality was an integral part of the religious and social structure. Though often the social and religious aspects became indistinguishable, hospitality was usually a binding moral duty. Protection of the guest was considered an honor. Few were so uncivilized as to neglect its practice, regardless of motive. Temporary protection was given in the form of food, clothing and shelter.

OT patterns of hospitality do not vary significantly from what was normative in other Ancient Near Eastern cultures. Many narrative passages reveal the excitement of the host in receiving guests. The protection which the guest usually received was deeply settled in the cultural mores and was not to be violated at any cost. Beyond the cultural obligation, hospitality was also enjoined by revealed truth, particularly toward the widow, orphan, poor and stranger. This group was expressly loved by God and therefore was to be the object of charity or hospitality or both, depending on the situation.

In addition to what might be termed charitable hospitality, there are many OT examples of the entertainment of

friends. Many characters appear on the pages of Scripture partly because they were honorable hosts to friends. These include individuals like Barzillai, Melchizedek, Abigail and the Shunammite woman. In many cases, a sense of urgency is expressed or implied. However the host provides the service voluntarily and in excess of duty.

Hospitality in the OT can be characterized in the following manner. First, it was usually offered to those in a particular need whether physical, economical or circumstantial. Thus protection from hunger, from enemies, and from discomfort expresses its goals. Second, it was given in various degrees of interest dependent upon religious status. However, food and shelter, the necessities of life, were provided for all without respect of persons. Third, hospitality was in some sense always temporary, generally considered to be overnight. Those who stayed beyond a few days were expected to work for their shelter. Fourth, the close relationship between charity and hospitality cannot be denied. Charity however is the broader term, hospitality the narrower. Hospitality was temporary while charity was often longer in duration. Fifth, the motive for hospitality was, above all else, love. "But love your neighbor as yourself. I am the Lord" (Lev 19:18, 34; NIV).

The Rabbis often extolled the practice of hospitality. It was one of many meritorious works within their legalistic structure. However, one serious flaw was their

ethnocentrism in regard to the recipient of hospitality. No longer was the stranger in focus, but ideally only godly Jews. From a theological standpoint, their hospitality was not God-ward, but horizontal. This does not deny notable exceptions which characterize all societies.

Greek and Roman hospitality may have been the most sophisticated in the Ancient World. The stranger traveled not only under the protection of social, cultural laws, but under the protection of the gods themselves. A vocabulary all its own was adopted specifically for hospitality. A generous reception was to meet all travelers without regard to their political or religious persuasion. A guest-friend relationship once established was binding on future generations. Thus hospitality was motivated by religious and humanitarian reasons.

It is interesting how frequently Christ made allusion to the OT on various topics. Hospitality is no exception. In Luke 14, he not only quotes from Proverbs 25:6f, but he also reaffirmed the obligation to invite those of need to prepared meals.¹ Christ's teaching fits well into OT concepts, particularly the Pentateuch.

The Epistles seem to assume a knowledge of what it means to be hospitable. Mention was even made of OT examples in Hebrews 13:2. In the NT, there was an emphasis upon

¹Alfred Edersheim, The Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah (McLean, Virginia: MacDonald Publishing Company, n.d.) p. 249-51, 304.

providing for the needy and especially those who carried the gospel message. The OT for its part also had many examples of hospitality to the needy and particularly to the prophets who traveled. Those closest to Israel's economy benefited most from their hospitality. It was given to everyone, but first to the Israelite. So the concept of hospitality to one another in the NT is quite similar. In both cases, hospitality was built upon the second commandment or the "law of Christ" as it is called in the Epistles. Outwardly, hospitality changed little, but it did take on new meaning, especially within the church. It was an obligation of all saints, particularly of leaders. A large variety of services were performed under this one virtue (III John).

Malherbe sums up NT hospitality in this way:

The Christian practice of hospitality was not viewed simply as a means of overcoming a practical problem. Theological statements by different authors in the New Testament show that it was frequently viewed as the concrete expression of Christian love.¹

Romans 12:9-13, Hebrews 13:1-2 and I Peter 4:7-11 all place hospitality under the umbrella of brotherly love.

The early church placed tremendous stress on hospitality. They made little distinction between its practice and alms giving or charity. Hospitals and hospices sprang up wherever there was a strong church or monastery. For centuries, these institutions were under the care of bishops

¹Abraham J. Malherbe, Social Aspects of Early Christianity (Baton Rouge, Louisiana: State University Press, 1977), p. 67.

until they were later adopted into society.

Conclusions

The word of God is a unique book in many respects, but most notably in its revelatory nature. Because it is a revelatory document, several uniquely human characteristics are absent in its pages. It transcends time, space and culture. Both in the Old and New Testaments, divine truth, as it was revealed through the prophets and apostles, was transcultural. This is apparent in the OT (Jonah 1-4; II Kgs 5:16-19), but it certainly is clear in the NT (Rom 14-15; Acts 10; 15; Eph 2:14; Col 3:11-15). Principles from the Word are eternal, but their application may vary with the cultural setting. There is tremendous liberty within a given principle; however, the principle if given as a timeless truth cannot be discounted on any grounds, even cultural ones.

In relation to hospitality then, does the NT endorse the practice or can it be discarded in some way? In light of the Scriptural data (Rom 12:13; Heb 13:1-2; I Pet 4:9; I Tim 3:2; Titus 1:8), hospitality cannot be termed a temporary, cultural feature. This does not imply that it should be implemented in precisely the same manner in every culture. Nevertheless, it certainly obligates all Christians to the practice.

At this point the motive for hospitality must once again be addressed. It must be admitted that hospitality

was always to some degree offered on pragmatic grounds. However, the same point could be made of almost all other Christian virtues. Regardless of its benefits to the body, every virtue was to have a higher level of motivation. Love was the motivation for all Christian action (I Cor 13). So also, love was clearly connected to the practice of hospitality (Rom 12:13; Heb 13:1-2; I Pet 4:9). Thus hospitality was one of the demonstrations of love.

How then is hospitality to be implemented in the Twentieth Century Christian church? Since hospitality is a demonstration of love, it should be directed toward all men. When it is practiced in the church, it is a witness to the world of Christ's love and a ministry to the saints (John 13:35). When it is given to an unbeliever, it reveals Christ's love and creates an atmosphere in which the gospel can work.

One area in the church where this can be truly effective is in the reception of visitors. Kenneth Gible makes a pertinent application at this point.

One of the traditions among Brethren years ago (and maybe it is still true in some quarters) was that of making sure every visitor to Sunday worship was invited to someone's home that day for the noon meal. It may be this practice is not feasible anymore. (Although I wonder why not.)¹

New people move into a church community several times a year; some military or industrial areas have larger

¹ Kenneth L. Gible, "Hospitality to Strangers," Brethren Life and Thought 26 (Summer 1981):186.

numbers. Many of these people are spiritually and emotionally sensitive during these periods of adjustment. It is at these times perhaps more than any other that these individuals will be sensitive to the gospel. Why is it that the world has the Welcome Wagon? Surely the church should show itself friendly through hospitality to those who are strangers in the community.

Christ challenged one host to give an invitation "to the poor, the crippled, the lame, the blind, and you will be blessed. Although they cannot repay you, you will be repaid at the resurrection of the righteous" (Luke 14:13-14; NIV). This can be practiced to some degree by all Christians. Though a large dinner may be beyond the resources of many, every Christian can share a meal with at least one individual of this category. Holidays are an excellent time to include a stranger or a person in the community (from nursing homes or city shelters) in your family meal. One church of one hundred people could relieve one hundred cases of loneliness in any given week or month with no real effort on anyone's part.

Aldrich makes this observation about hospitality:

The big idea is that the home circle is to be an open circle, and this is a requirement for a leader. Why? Because a man having a spirit-controlled life, who manages his family well, and has a good reputation, is a living, walking miracle. He is a revelation of God's truth in the world, furthermore, when hurting, seeking,

searching souls are allowed to share the warmth and love of Christian hospitality, they are hearing the music of the gospel loud and clear.¹

In the area of church planting and missions, hospitality is a necessity. Usually the church begins in someone's home. It develops in part by the hospitable attitude of the members and their pastor. Church growth and unity also are promoted by the continued practice of hospitality.

Closely related to missions and evangelism is the ministry of discipleship. Discipleship includes both observation and instruction. A new convert does not so much live in regard to instruction as by example. (It is interesting to note how much time the disciples spent in observation as compared to the time they spent under the direct instruction of Christ.) The new convert will need to observe a Christian in real situations, particularly family life. In other words, discipleship will require a measure of hospitality if it is to be effective.

Those inside the church family should have their needs met by the combined ministries of the Word and mutual encouragement. The love that Christians have for one another is supposed to make an impression on the world (John 13:35). Hospitality plays a role in the total ministry of the church.

I Corinthians 5:9-13 addresses the subject of church

¹Joseph C. Aldrich, Life-Style Evangelism (Portland: Multnomah Press, 1981), p. 152.

discipline. Church discipline involves separation from the guilty party to the point of refusing to eat with him. If the guilty party has been neglected, especially in the area of fellowship, which includes hospitality, he certainly will not miss it during the period of discipline. Church discipline is ineffective in many churches because there is no loss realized in the process. Therefore, the consistent practice of hospitality combined with all forms of fellowship and encouragement will greatly improve the effectiveness of church discipline (Heb 3:13).

The spiritual leaders of the church must also be hospitable (I Tim 3:2; Titus 1:8). They must open up their homes to missionaries, fellow pastors, members of their own congregations and to those outside. It is in this way that they set a proper example for all believers. There are some forty services a Christian is encouraged to render to another.¹ All of these assume a close personal involvement in interpersonal relationships. If the pastor is to be a fit example, his home must be open to the needs of those under his care and the world outside.

Hospitality does not just meet a need. To our Christian brother, it demonstrates the love of Christ within us. It is the best catalyst for Christian unity that has ever been employed. To the world without, it is one of the most effective means whereby the Holy Spirit has an

¹Moulton and Geden, p. 43-44.

opportunity to work. This atmosphere of sincere Christian love has won untold millions to Christ. It is as effective today as it was 3000 years ago because humanity has not changed. Hospitality is still a biblical imperative for modern Christianity. Practice hospitality (Rom 12:13).

APPENDIX

GREEK WORDS RELATED TO HOSPITALITY IN THE NT

Words From the Stem ξεν

ξενία	hospitality, entertainment, guest room- Acts 28:23; Phlm 22*	BAGD, p. 547 MG, p. 673
ξενίζω	entertain someone Acts 10:6, 18, 23, 32; 21:16; 28:7; Heb 13:2	BAGD, p. 547 MG, p. 673
ξενοδοχέω	show hospitality I Tim 5:10*	BAGD, p. 548 MG, p. 673
ξένος	host, guest Rom 16:23	BAGD, p. 548 MG, p. 673
φιλοξενία	hospitality Rom 12:13; Heb 13:2*	BAGD, p. 860 MG, p. 991
φιλόξενος	hospitable I Pet 4:9; I Tim 3:2 Titus 1:8*	BAGD, p. 860 MG, p. 991

Words of Invitation and Reception

δέχομαι	to receive into one's home Matt 10:14, 40; Mark 6:11; Luke 9:5, 11, 53; 10:8, 10; 16:4, 9; John 4:45; Col 4:10; Heb 11:31	BAGD, p. 177 MG, p. 191-2
ἀναδέχομαι	receive guests Acts 28:7	BAGD, p. 53 MG, p. 59
ἀποδέχομαι	welcome someone Luke 8:40; 9:11; Acts 18:27; 21:17; 28:30	BAGD, p. 90 MG, p. 89

* denotes every use in the NT.

ὑποδέχομαι	welcome, entertain as a guest Luke 10:38; 19:6 Acts 17:7; James 2:25*	BAGD, p. 844 MG, p. 978
ἐπιδημέω	to visit Acts 2:10; 17:21; 18:27*	BAGD, p. 292 MG, p. 366
καλέω	invite someone, host Matt 22:3, 9; 14:7-10, 17, 24; John 2:2; Rev 19:9	BAGD, p. 399 MG, p. 518-20
εἰσκαλέομαι	invite Acts 10:23*	BAGD, p. 233 MG, p. 306
λαμβάνω	receive John 19:27; II John 10	BAGD, p. 464-5 MG, p. 578-81
προσλαμβάνω	receive Acts 28:2; Phlm 17	BAGD, p. 717 MG, p. 866
ὑπολαμβάνω	receive as guest III John 8	BAGD, p. 845 MG, p. 979
προπέμπω	escort; help on one's journey Acts 15:3; 20:38; 21:5; Rom 15:24; I Cor 16:6, 11; II Cor 1:16; Titus 3:13; III John 6	BAGD, p. 709 MG, p. 853
φιλανθρωπία	hospitality Acts 28:2	BAGD, p. 858 MG, p. 990
φιλοφρόνως	hospitably Acts 28:7*	BAGD, p. 861 MG, p. 991
φωμέω	invite Luke 14:12	BAGD, p. 870 MG, p. 997-8

Words Related to Lodging

κατάλυμα	guest room Mark 14:14; Luke 2:7; 22:11*	BAGD, p. 414 MG, p. 535
καταλύω	find lodging, rest Luke 9:12; 19:7	BAGD, p. 114 MG, p. 535-6

μένω	lodging or visiting Matt 10:11; Mark 6:10; Luke 9:4; 10:7; 19:5; John 1:39; 2:12; 4:40 10:40; 11:54; Acts 9:43; 16:15; 18:3, 20; 21:7-8	BAGD, p. 503 MG, p. 628-9
πανδοχεῖον	inn Luke 10:34	BAGD, p. 607 MG, p. 749
πανδοχεύς	innkeeper Luke 10:35	BAGD, p. 607 MG, p. 749

Words Related to Eating or Dining

δειπνέω	eat or dine Luke 17:8; 22:20; Rev 3:20	BAGD, p. 173 MG, p. 187
δεῖπνον	dinner, supper Matt 23:6; Mark 6:21; 12:39; Luke 14:12, 16, 17, 24; 20:46; John 12:2; 13:2, 4; 21:20; I Cor 11:20-21; Rev 19:9, 17*	BAGD, p. 173 MG, p. 187
ἐσθίω	to eat Matt 9:11; 24:49; Mark 2:16; 14:18; Luke 5:30; 7:36; 24:43	BAGD, p. 312-13 MG, p. 389-91

BIBLIOGRAPHY OF WORKS CITED

- Aldrich, Joseph C. Life-Style Evangelism. Portland: Multnomah Press, 1981.
- Anias, Mortimer. "Centripetal Mission or Evangelization by Hospitality." Missiology: An International Review 10:1 (January 1982):69-81.
- Bauer, Walter; Arndt, William F.; and Gingrich, F. Wilbur. A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature. 2nd edition revised and augmented by F. Wilbur Gingrich and Frederick W. Danker. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1979.
- Bell, Richard, translator. The Qurān. 2 vols. Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1937.
- Brown, Francis; Driver, S. R.; and Briggs, C. S. editors. A Hebrew and English Lexicon of the Old Testament. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1968.
- Budge, E. A. Wallis. The Book of the Dead. London: The Open Court Publishing Co., 1901.
- Cadbury, Henry J. "Lexical Notes on Luke-Acts: III. Luke's Interest in Lodging." Journal of Biblical Literature 45 (1926):305-22.
- Calvin, John. Commentaries on the Epistle of Paul the Apostle to the Romans. Translator and editor Rev. John Owen. Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1947.
- Cohen, Dr. A. The Minor Tractates of the Talmud. 2 vols. 2nd edition. London: The Soncino Press, 1965.
- Cranfield, C. E. B. A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans. Vol 2. In the International Critical Commentary. J. A. Emerton and C. E. B. Cranfield general editors. Edinburg: T & T Clark Limited, 1979.
- Cyclopedia of Biblical, Theological and Ecclesiastical Literature. S.v. "Hospitality."

- Dana, H. E. and Mantey, Julius R. A Manual Grammar of the Greek New Testament. Toronto: The MacMillan Company, 1927.
- Dick, M. B. "Job 31, the Oath of Innocence, and the Sage." Zeitschrift für alttestamentliche Wissenschaft 95:1 (1981):31-53.
- Dictionary of the Bible. S.v. "Hospitality," by W. Ewing.
- Edersheim, Alfred. The Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah. McLean, Virginia: MacDonald Publishing Company. n.d.
- Edwards, Chilperic, editor. The Hammurabi Code: and the Sinaitic Legislation. 3rd revised edition. London: Watts & Co., 1921.
- Elliger, K. and Rudolph, W., editors. Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia. Stuttgart: Deutsch Bibelstiftung, 1967-77.
- Elliott, John H. A Home for the Homeless. Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1981.
- Encyclopaedia Judaica. S.v. "Hospitality," by Eli Davis.
- Encyclopedia of Islam. S.v. "Dakhīl," by J. Lecerf.
- _____. S.v. "Dayf," by J. Lecerf.
- _____. S.v. "Djiwar," by J. Lecerf.
- _____. S.v. "Idjāra," by W. Montgomery Watt.
- Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics. S.v. "Hospitality, Arabian," by D. S. Margoliouth.
- _____. S.v. "Hospitality, Christian," by G. Bonet-Maury.
- _____. S.v. "Hospitality, Greek and Roman," by George Stock.
- _____. S.v. "Hospitality, Semitic," by William Cruickshank.
- Epstein, Dr. I., translator and editor. The Soncino Talmud. London: The Soncino Press, 1935.
- Erman, Adolf. Life in Ancient Egypt. Translated by H. M. Tirad. Reprinted edition. New York: Dover Publications, Inc., 1971.

- Estienne, Henri. Thesaurus Graecae Linguae. Revised by K. Hase, W. Dindorf, and L. Dindorf. Vol. 8. Paris: n.p., 1831-65.
- Fensham, F. Charles. "Widow, Orphan, and the Poor in Ancient Near Eastern Legal and Wisdom Literature." Journal of Near Eastern Studies 21:2 (April 1962): 129-39.
- Geldenhuis, Norval. The Gospel of Luke. In the New International Commentary on the New Testament. General editor F. F. Bruce. Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1979.
- Gibble, Kenneth L. "Hospitality to Strangers." Brethren Life and Thought 26 (Summer 1981):184-88.
- Grassi, Joseph A. "'I Was Hungry and You Gave Me to Eat.' (Matt 25:35FF.) The Divine Identification Ethic in Matthew." Journal of Bible and Theology 11:3 (July 1984):81-4.
- Guillaume, Alfred. Islam. Baltimore: Penguin Books Inc., 1954.
- Guttman, Michael. "The Term 'Foreigner' (זָרָא) Historically Considered." Hebrew Union College Annual 3 (1926): 1-20.
- Hatch, Edwin. The Organization of the Early Christian Churches. London: Longmans, Green and Co., 1892.
- Hatch, Edwin and Redpath, Henry A. Concordance to the Septuagint and the Other Greek Versions of the Old Testament. 3rd edition. 2 vols. Graz, Austria: Akademische Druck and Verlanganstalt.
- Heal, Felicity. "The Archbishop of Canterbury and the Practice of Hospitality." Journal of Ecclesiastical History 33:4 (October 1982):544-63.
- Hendriksen, William. The Gospel of Luke. In the New Testament Commentary. Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1978.
- _____. The Gospel of Matthew. In the New Testament Commentary. Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1973.
- _____. Thessalonians, Timothy and Titus. In the New Testament Commentary. Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1979.

- Hiebert, D. Edmond. "Living in the Light of Christ's Return: An Exposition of I Peter 4:7-11." Bibliotheca Sacra 139:555 (July-September 1982): 243-53.
- Homer. Iliad.
- Homer. Odyssey.
- Hughes, Philip Edgcumbe. A Commentary on the Epistle to the Hebrews. Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1977.
- Hultgren, Arland J. "The Johannine Footwashing (13. 1-11) As Symbol of Eschatological Hospitality." New Testament Studies 28 (1982):539-46.
- International Standard Bible Encyclopedia. S.v. "Entertain," by R. H. Stein.
- Jewish Encyclopedia. S.v. "Hospitality," by Julius H. Greenstone.
- Josephus. Jewish Antiquities.
- Keil, C. F. and Delitzsch, F. The Pentateuch. 2 vols. Translated by James Martin. In Biblical Commentary on the Old Testament. Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1942.
- Kent, Homer A., Jr. The Epistle to the Hebrews: A Commentary. Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1972.
- _____. The Pastoral Epistles. Chicago: Moody Press, 1958.
- Lake, Kirsopp, translator. The Apostolic Fathers. 2 vols. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1912.
- Lampe, G. W. H. editor. Patristic Greek Lexicon. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1961.
- Leighton, Robert. Commentary on First Peter. Reprint. Grand Rapids: Kregel Publications, 1972.
- Lenski, R. C. H. The Interpretation of St. Luke's Gospel. Minneapolis: Augsburg Publishing House, 1937.
- _____. The Interpretation of St. Paul's Epistles to the Colossians, to the Thessalonians, to Timothy, to Titus and to Philemon. Minneapolis: Augsburg Publishing House, 1937.

- Lenski, R. C. H. The Interpretation of St. Paul's Epistle to the Romans. Minneapolis: Augsburg Publishing House, 1936.
- _____. The Interpretation of the Epistles of St. Peter, St. John and St. Jude. Minneapolis: Augsburg Publishing House, 1966.
- _____. The Interpretation of the Epistle to the Hebrews and the Epistle of James. Minneapolis: Augsburg Publishing House, 1966.
- Leupold, H. C. Exposition of Genesis. Vol. 1. In Barnes' Notes on the Old and New Testaments. Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1942.
- Liddel, Henry G. and Scott, Robert. A Greek-English Lexicon. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1968.
- Lisowsky, Gerhard. Konkordanz zum Hebräischen Alten Testament. Stuttgart: Wurttembergische Bibelanstalt, 1958.
- Matherbe, Abraham J. Social Aspects of Early Christianity. Baton Rouge, Louisiana: State University Press, 1977.
- Mathews, John Bell. "Hospitality and the New Testament Church: An Historical and Exegetical Study." Th.D. dissertation, Princeton Theological Seminary, 1965; Ann Arbor, Michigan: University Microfilm Inc., 65-11, 727, 1966.
- Metzger, Bruce M., editor. The Apocrypha of the Old Testament. RSV. New York: Oxford University Press, 1965.
- Montefiore, C. G. Rabbinic Literature and Gospel Teachings. New York: KTAV Publishing House, Inc., 1970.
- Moulton, James Hope and Milligan, George. The Vocabulary of the Greek Testament. Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1930.
- Moulton, W. F. and Geden, A. S. A Concordance to the Greek Testament. 5th edition. Edinburg: T & T Clark, 1978.
- Murray, John. The Epistle to the Romans. In the New International Commentary on the New Testament. Edited by F. F. Bruce. Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1959.

New International Dictionary of New Testament Theology.
S.v. "διδάσκω," by G. Edel.

_____. S.v. "ξένος," by H. Bietenhard.

_____. S.v. "φιλέω," by C. Brown.

_____. S.v. "φιλέω," by W. Günther.

Niditch, Susan. "The 'Sodomite' Theme in Judges 19-20:
Family, Community, and Social Disintegration."
Catholic Biblical Quarterly 44:3 (July 1982):
365-78.

Oxford Classical Dictionary. S.v. "Inns, Restaurants,"
by E. Badian.

Oxford English Dictionary. S.v. "Hospitality."

Pope, Marvin H. Job. In vol. 15 of The Anchor Bible.
Garden City, New York: Doubleday and Company,
Inc., 1965.

Pritchard, James B. editor. Ancient Near Eastern Texts.
3rd edition. Princeton: Princeton University
Press, 1969.

Rad, Gerhard Von. Genesis. Translated by John H. Marks.
Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1961.

Rahlfs, Alfred, editor. Septuaginta. Stuttgart:
Württembergische Bibelanstalt, 1935.

Rengstorff, Karl Heinrich, editor. A Complete Concordance to
Flavius Josephus. Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1979.

Riddle, Donald Wayne. "Early Christian Hospitality: A
Factor in the Gospel Transmission." Journal of
Biblical Literature 57 (1938):141-54.

Rogers, Robert William. Cuneiform Parallels to the Old
Testament. New York: Eaton & Mains, 1912.

Ryrie, Charles Caldwell. Ryrie Study Bible: New American
Standard Bible. Chicago: Moody Press, 1976.

Schopp, Ludwig. "Saint Augustine Letters." Translated by
Sister Wilfred Parsons. In vol. 1 of The Fathers of
the Church. Edited by Roy Joseph Deferrari.
86 vols. Washington, D.C.: University of America
Press, 1951.

- Silva, Moises. Biblical Words and Their Meaning. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1983.
- Smith, William Robertson. Lectures on the Religion of the Semites. 3rd edition by Stanley A. Cook. In the Library of Biblical Studies. Edited by Harry M. Orlinsky. n.p.: KTAV Publishing House, Inc., 1969.
- Sophocles, E. A. Greek Lexicon of the Roman and Byzantine Period. 2 vols. New York: Frederick Ungar Publishing Co., n.d.
- Stevenson, J. editor. Creeds, Councils and Controversies. London: S.P.C.K., n.d.
- Stigers, Harold G. A Commentary on Genesis. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1976.
- Talmage. Apocryphal Books of the New Testament. Philadelphia: David McKay, Pub., 1890.
- Theological Dictionary of the New Testament. S.v. "ξένος," by Gustav Stählin.
- Theological Dictionary of the Old Testament. S.v. "גַּל," by D. Kellermann.
- _____. S.v. "גַּל/גַּל," by Snijders.
- Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament. S.v. "גַּל," by C. P. Weber.
- _____. S.v. "גַּל," by Marvin R. Wilson.
- _____. S.v. "גַּל," by J. E. Hartley.
- Toussaint, Stanley D. Behold the King. Portland: Multnomah Press, 1980.
- Universal Jewish Encyclopedia. S.v. "Hospitality," by Meyer Goldberg.
- Vaux, Roland de. Ancient Israel. Vol. 1. New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1961.
- Wight, Fred H. Manners and Customs of Bible Lands. Chicago: Moody Press, 1979.
- Wuest, Kenneth S. Hebrews in the Greek New Testament. Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1947.

Wuest, Kenneth S. Romans in the Greek New Testament. Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1955.

_____. The Pastoral Epistles in the Greek New Testament. Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1952.

Young, Edward J. The Book of Isaiah. 3 vols. Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1972.