



# **Bible Customs and Manners**

*Study Pack 06*

**Pastor Charles Armstrong**

## STUDY PACK 06

### Expectations of Hospitality and Feasting

1. \_\_\_\_\_: The act or practice of receiving and entertaining strangers or guests without reward or with kind and generous liberality.
2. For those wandering the desert, hospitality helped someone to survive and extended their life.
3. The ancient Israelites believed that every guest was directed to a host by \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_. Old Testament figures such as Abraham and Gideon entertaining angels unawares (**Gen. 18; Judges 6:17-22**); it was thought that God could send you guests as a test of your devotion and hospitality.
4. Another reason for hospitality was the \_\_\_\_\_ that Israel received in the wilderness. Since Israel had received protection from God in the wilderness, they were to extend protection to others.
5. God placed restrictions on the Ammonites and the Moabites because they failed to assist Israel in the wilderness. (**Deut. 23:3-4**)
6. The demands of hospitality were so great, that a man was expected to use every drop of his \_\_\_\_\_ to defend a guest. (**Genesis 19:8** – Lot attempting to bribe the men of Sodom with his daughters was due to this expectation.)
7. While anyone could receive hospitality from an individual, friends were especially welcome.
8. According to an old Roman custom, two individuals could write their names on one half of a stone, and then split the stone in two. Each man would take his half of the stone into his own possession. To present the matching half of a stone would be to guarantee aid and comfort from your friend. Some people think that this is what the ‘white stone’ in **Revelation 2:17** means.
9. While everyone was accustomed to providing hospitality or sheltering guests, \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ (such as Abraham or Lot) in rural areas were very sensitive to this need. They were expected to constantly be looking for those needing hospitality or a place to stay.
10. In more urban areas, travelers seeking shelter would wait by the city gates for an invitation into someone’s home.
11. Since one of the main purposes of hospitality was to avoid isolation, it was considered rude to leave a guest alone by himself. No guest would expect to have any measure of \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_.

12. If the hosting family lived in tents, then the traveler would sleep with his host in the first tent chamber, separate from the women and children.
13. Separation was impossible in a small, one-room house. The guest would sleep with the rest of the family inside. If the weather permitted, however, the guest could spend the night on the \_\_\_\_\_ with his host.
14. Small villages would often build a public, \_\_\_\_\_ guest \_\_\_\_\_.
15. A servant would be employed to keep this chamber ready for immediate use. When not in use, the guest chamber served as a gathering place for men and the focal point of \_\_\_\_\_.
16. Women would not enter this chamber for the sake of modesty.
17. If a guest made use of a public guest chamber, then either his \_\_\_\_\_ or a member of the host's family would spend the night with the guest.
18. Wealthier homes with a courtyard would often have a \_\_\_\_\_. This guest chamber could be as simple as a quiet place in the courtyard, a room near the door, or a specially built upper room. **(2 Kings 4:8-10 – Elisha's guest chamber.)**
19. Only single men would use the guest chambers; if a \_\_\_\_\_ was traveling together, then they would have to wait for a local family to invite them into their lodgings. **(Judges 19:15-21)**
20. \_\_\_\_\_ was a way of greeting others; it could also be used to express thanks, appreciation, or to request supplication. **(Gen. 33:3 – Jacob and Esau reuniting)**
21. Care had to be taken that bowing did not turn into an act of worship. **(Acts 10:25 – Cornelius approaching Peter)**
22. A host would say: “\_\_\_\_\_ be upon you.” to which the guest would reply: “And on you, \_\_\_\_\_.” **(Luke 10:5-6 – Jesus instructed the disciples to do this.)**

The 'inn' of Biblical days was not like a modern day hotel. Inns were often 'rest areas' or 'stopping places' for travelers. A New Testament inn was a two-story structure surrounding a central courtyard. Animals would be left in the first-floor courtyard while the guests would rest in second-floor rooms. Each guest had to provide his own bedding and provisions or buy them from others.

A hired man or servant might keep the place maintained and serve as a physician. Most respectable people avoided these inns because of the expectations of hospitality and inns had a sinful reputation. **(Luke 10:33-35 – The Good Samaritan used such a place for the wounded man.)**

If an area or city was expecting a large number of travelers for an event, then the Romans might build simple, temporary inns to house the travelers. This *might* have been the inn to which Luke refers.

23. The demands of hospitality were so broad that the guest was considered the master/lord of the house during his visit
24. The \_\_\_\_\_ was to be one of humility and amazement at the host's gracious nature.
25. Men would often greet each other with a \_\_\_\_\_, and this is still done in some places of the world today. The host and guest would place their hands on each other's shoulders/beards and then kiss each other's right and left cheek.
26. This was not done out of sensuality and more to signify \_\_\_\_\_ between the two men. (**Luke 22:48** – Judas betraying Jesus with a kiss of greeting was a blatant betrayal of the concept. **Rom. 16:16** – Paul advocates for peaceable greetings.)
27. Upon entering the house, the guest's \_\_\_\_\_ would be removed. This prevented dirt from contaminating the living space and helped maintain the purity and cleanliness of the area.
28. Because of this principle, it became expected that an individual would remove his \_\_\_\_\_ when entering a holy place lest he defile it. (**Ex. 3:5** – Moses at the burning bush.)
29. The guest's feet would then be washed, his head anointed with oil, and he would be offered a drink of water.
30. The offering of water held symbolic significance; it indicated that the guest was worthy of the host's hospitality and \_\_\_\_\_ under his roof. Rebekah offering water to the servant indirectly told the servant that he would be welcome at Rebekah's house. (**Gen. 24:14; John 4:7** – Jesus asking the woman at the well for water signified that He wished peace between them.)
31. The host providing his guest with a meal also held symbolic significance. To eat with someone was to be at peace with them.
32. \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ were often sealed with such a fellowship meal. (**Genesis 31:45–46** – Jacob and Laban finalized their peace agreement with a meal. **Joshua 9:14–15** – Joshua and the men of Gibeon finalized their peace treaty with a meal. **John 21:12** – Jesus eating with the disciples meant He was not angry at them.)
33. To ' \_\_\_\_\_ ' with someone was to be at peace with them. Since salt acted as a preservative and flavor enhancement, the use of salt seemed to symbolize freedom from corrupt motives, hypocrisy and dishonesty in the covenant.
34. **Leviticus 2:3** and **Numbers 18:19** connected salt to the sacrificial system, which were a means of bringing peace between God and man.

35. This principle was extended to apply to men, as well. Salt became a means of making peace between men. The use of salt between two parties was looked at as creating a binding, sacred alliance.
36. It was considered a grave \_\_\_\_\_ to betray, to harm, or to deceive someone who had given you hospitality.
37. This respect for the host is so strong that travelers and messengers will not accept food or drink from a host until the reason for their journey has been \_\_\_\_\_. It was wrong to accept aid and comfort from a host who might object to your mission. (**Gen. 24:33** – Abraham’s servant would not eat until he had told Laban his mission. **2 John 10-11** also involves this principle.)
38. The host was expected to compel or insist that the guest stay longer than originally expected. By insisting that the guest stay, the host was demonstrating his guest’s \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_.
39. A guest’s quick departure indicated that the homeowner was a poor host who could not meet the guest’s needs. (**Judges 19:2-4** – The father delaying the husband’s journey was normal.)
40. The customary farewell was for the guest to say, “I leave with your \_\_\_\_\_.” The host would reply, “Depart in peace.”
41. If a host wanted to truly honor his guest, then the host would escort the guest out of town or a short way on his journey. (**Gen. 18:16** – Abraham went to ‘bring his guests the way’, which honored them.)
42. Ordinary life could be monotonous and hard, so people were quick to celebrate any and all occasions.
43. When it came time to celebrate with a feast, the practice of issuing a \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_ was used: an individual would be invited to a feast twice.
44. The first invitation was issued far in advance of the actual feast; this was primarily to let the recipient know the \_\_\_\_\_ of the \_\_\_\_\_ and the desire of the guest’s presence. By default, an invitation to the head of the household included the family.
45. The one being invited to a feast or meal would initially refuse the invitation. (“I am not worthy of your invitation.”) The established custom was for the host to plead and compel the guest’s presence.
46. The idea was that the host \_\_\_\_\_ the guest’s presence so much that he would not take ‘no’ for an answer. (**Luke 7:36** – One of the Pharisees ‘desired’ Jesus eat with him... then didn’t perform the duties of host (v.44); **Acts 16:15** – Lydia ‘constrained’ Paul.)
47. Once the actual time of feasting had arrived, and all of the preparations were complete, the second invitation was sent. This invitation was intended to \_\_\_\_\_ the guests to the feast. (**Luke 14:16-24** – Why was the king so upset? His guests had already said they

would be present!)

48. This isn't to imply that feasts were exclusive events. It was extremely important to a host that his venue be filled. If a host found that his early invitees were insufficient to fill the feast, then he could beg those who happened to be nearby to come to the feast.
49. Some men would stand on the housetops and issue a blanket invitation to those within earshot. (**Luke 14:16-24** – The host compelled those nearby to replace those who rejected his initial invitation.)
50. Since the preparations for a feast would take place throughout the day, most feasting was done at night inside of brilliantly lit rooms.
51. To be ejected from a feast because of improper conduct, for not having truly been invited, or for the refusal to wear provided attire was to be removed from a place of joy and light and placed in \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_. (**Matt. 22:11-12**)
52. Once the guests had arrived for a feast, a servant would remove their sandals, pour \_\_\_\_\_ over their feet, and hand rub their feet to remove dirt and grime. The guest's feet would then be dried with a towel.
53. The guest's head would be anointed with oil (**Psalms 23:5**) and water would be provided for them to drink. (**Luke 7:44-47** – Jesus' host had breached protocol by failing to make his guest welcome.)
54. The presence of \_\_\_\_\_ was the true sign of feasting and merriment.
55. The best lamb or specially-fed calf (the fatted calf) would be butchered and placed on the menu. (**Luke 15:23; 27** – The fatted calf at the prodigal son's feast.)
56. Seating was carefully considered and assigned because the placement at the feast indicated their \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_.
57. The family and guests of honor would eat on a raised platform (if a family were wealthy enough to afford one). Important guests would eat next to their host on this platform. Less important guests would be located on the floor and further away. (**Luke 14:7-11** – Jesus instructed His disciples where to sit at a feast; they were to assume a humble station.)
58. Storytelling, poetry, and music were constant diversions and amusements during a feast.
59. \_\_\_\_\_ was sometimes present at feasts, although it was very tightly controlled. Men and women never danced together in polite, respectable society.
60. The daughter of Herodias' dance before the men of Herod's birthday tells us that she was engaging in a social taboo and probably doing a lewd dance imported from Greece. (**Matt. 14:6**)

61. During a feast or special event, the host would give an honored and valued guest the choicest bit of meat called 'the sop'. The host would either hand the \_\_\_\_\_ to the valued guest or place it directly in his open mouth.
62. By giving Judas the sop, Jesus was extending love and compassion to Judas. Jesus was quietly telling Judas that Judas was still loved and valued even with his planned betrayal. (**John 13:26-30**)
63. You cannot explain what you do not \_\_\_\_\_.
64. If you begin writing about a custom or manner and discover that you are not completely confident in your understanding of it, then \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ with your explanation.
65. Either do more \_\_\_\_\_ (checking multiple different sources) to aid your own understanding or \_\_\_\_\_ the explanation from your work.

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