

Doors and Gateways; Hospitality in Revelation

Revelation 3:20; 21:9 – 22:5

Looking back: Genesis 1 & 2; Genesis 14:17-20; Genesis 18:1-8; Exodus 20:1; Ruth 1; I Kings 17; Luke 7:36-30; Luke 10:38-42

In all of these vignettes God has a part, however subtle in the story or its results. In order get a perspective on Revelation 3:20 it might be helpful to think about the part of God in each of these events.

Components of Hospitality

1. Hospitality welcomes the outsider, the stranger, or the vulnerable traveler.
2. In every story here there is a possibility of some sort of danger or disaster
3. Beings who are hospitable make a choice to take personal risks.
4. A primary core value of a hospitable person, locale, or choice is that they are safe for the guest but also for others of the environs.
5. Nurture is involved.
6. Guests can be any sort of being.
7. There are often unexpected results or blessings.

Behold, I Stand at the Door and Knock

Pictures of Jesus in the letter to the seven churches:

1. The One who has a firm grasp of the seven stars in his right hand – who walks among the 7 lampstands
2. The First and the Last; the One who was dead and came to life
3. The One with the sharp double edged sword
4. The Son of God with eyes like a fiery flame; whose feet are polished bronze
5. The One who holds the seven spirits of God and the seven stars.
6. The Holy One the True One who holds the keys of David; who opens doors no one can shut and shuts doors no one can open.
7. The Amen; the originator of God's creation.

And yet: I am standing at the door and knocking. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come into in their home and share a meal with them; and they with me.

Here, God is the wayfarer and the traveler asking for our hospitality. Unlike Mamre, unlike Bethany, there is no guarantee of welcome.

When I read this I feel both poignancy and one final request/promise.

What I will ask us to think about is how each of the qualities, listed above, for hospitality can refer to Jesus, as petitioner and the person on the other side of the door.

Coming Home

Knowing this group, we won't have time to compare and contrast Genesis 1 and Revelation 21/22. This is the only story we've looked at where there is no danger or death. I am going to read sections from this and then I will invite us to talk about what stands out for us about how concepts of hospitality are represented here. What part is important to you?

Dear VV community,

It has been a joy and a learning for me to have facilitated this lesson. Much appreciation to Andrew, Tom and Pam for being willing to lead out and share their perspectives. Much appreciation to all of you who shared your thoughts and comments either during our discussion or after you listened later.

I wish for you all, unexpected blessings,

Catherine