

Lord, you have called us to love one another, but so often we fail to extend love and fellowship and welcome to others. Forgive us. Open our hearts to love and welcome all in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Since hospitality is key for the inbreaking of the Kingdom of God, what happens when meals and hospitality go badly?

Day 1 Read 2 Samuel 11:1-12:19

1. Up until now, most of the meals/hospitality has been done with a sense of care and kindness.
a. What was the purpose of David inviting Uriah to eat and drink with him?

b. Does David's "kindness" work?

2a. Since that plan did not work, how did David deal with Uriah?

b. Things get worse for David . . . what happens to his child?

Day 2 Read Judges 19:1-10

3a. Unlike the other tribes of Jacob, the descendants of Levi (the Levites) had no home country. How then, do you suppose they would find places to live (think of the theme of this study)?

b. The Levite had a concubine who returned home in Judah (another tribe of Jacob). How did the concubine's father welcome the Levite (what evidence do we have from the story)?

4a. Ultimately what does the Levite decide after the sixth day?

b. For his trip, what will he need to rely on from those along the way?

Day 3 Read Judges 19:11-30

5a. Why won't the Levite stop to spend the night in the city of the Jebusites? What does he assume he won't receive there?

b. He stops in Gibeah which is in the land of Benjamin (one of the tribes of Israel/Jacob). What does he assume in staying there?

6a. Initially things go well and the Levite is welcomed in, but things soon go south. What happens in the course of the night?

b. The homeowner refuses their demands. What does he do instead?

7. What does the Levite do with his concubine in the end of the story?

Day 4 Read Judges 20:1-17

8a. It would be a wrong assumption to think that this was about homosexuality. The complaint of the Levite is in verses 4-5. What is his complaint?

b. What was going to be the result of the Benjaminites lack of hospitality?

9. This is an awful story, but at its heart it is about what happens when people do not welcome those who are refugees (far from home) or traveling or in need. Though it seems like this story would never happen, sadly we do know of these kinds of horrors taking place in Ukraine, Israel in the last months and years. What does God want from us?

Day 5 Read Mark 6:14-29

10a. At Herod's wedding banquet who was present (and what kind of people were they)?

b. How did it come about that a request was made for the head of John the Baptist?

c. Why do you think Herod went through with beheading John?

11. You'll need to use some inference and imagination here. What is it, do you think, about the type of banquet Herod held that resulted in this kind of senseless violence?

Day 6

12. This was not an easy or uplifting lesson, admittedly. But in so many ways, these kinds of things continue to happen because of a failure in hospitality. Where do you see hospitality failures causing suffering in today's world?