

Job 31:32

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

The stranger did not lodge in the street: but I opened my doors to the traveller.

Analysis

The stranger did not lodge in the street: but I opened my doors to the traveller (בַּחוּץ לֹא־יָלִין גֵּר דֹּלַתִּי לְאֶרֶץ אֶפְתָּח, bachutz lo-yalin ger delatai la'orach eftach)—ger (גֵּר) means stranger or sojourner, lin (לִין) means to lodge or spend the night, delet (דֹּלַת) means door, and orach (אֶרֶץ) means traveler or wayfarer. The verb patach (פָּתַח) means to open. Job claims he practiced hospitality so thoroughly that no stranger had to sleep in the street—his doors were open to travelers.

Biblical law commanded hospitality to strangers (Leviticus 19:33-34, Deuteronomy 10:19). Jesus identified with strangers, saying that welcoming them welcomes Him (Matthew 25:35). Hebrews 13:2 commands hospitality, noting some entertained angels unknowingly. Job's practice anticipated New Testament ethics. From a Reformed perspective, Job's hospitality demonstrates covenant faithfulness—caring for the vulnerable reflects God's character (Psalm 146:9). True religion extends beyond family to include strangers. Job's open doors testified to his generous spirit and recognition that all people bear God's image.

Historical Context

Ancient Near Eastern culture valued hospitality as sacred duty. Desert travel made sheltering strangers literally life-saving. Cities often lacked public inns, making private hospitality essential. Biblical narratives emphasize hospitality's importance (Abraham in Genesis 18, Lot in Genesis 19). Job's claim that no stranger lodged in

the street demonstrated extraordinary generosity. His practice reflected covenant ethics that Israel would later formalize in Mosaic law.

Related Passages

Romans 10:9 — Confession and belief for salvation

John 3:16 — God's love and salvation

Colossians 1:16 — All things created through Christ

Psalms 19:1 — Heavens declare God's glory

Study Questions

1. How does Job's radical hospitality challenge contemporary Christian practice regarding strangers and immigrants?
2. What does opening our doors to travelers teach about viewing our possessions as God's provision for blessing others?
3. How can we practice Job's level of hospitality in our cultural context?

Interlinear Text

בַּחוּץ	לֹא	יָלַן	גֵּר	דִּלְתִּי	לְאֶרֶחַ
in the street	H3808	did not lodge	The stranger	my doors	to the traveller
H2351		H3885	H1616	H1817	H734

אֲפָתַח:

but I opened

H6605

Additional Cross-References

Hebrews 13:2 (Parallel theme): Be not forgetful to entertain strangers: for thereby some have entertained angels unawares.

Romans 12:13 (Parallel theme): Distributing to the necessity of saints; given to hospitality.

Matthew 25:35 (Parallel theme): For I was an hungred, and ye gave me meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me in:

1 Peter 4:9 (Parallel theme): Use hospitality one to another without grudging.

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