

~WASHING OF FEET (275)

- **A welcome and hospitable act that often preceded the eating of a meal in the generally warm climate of the ancient Middle East, where persons customarily wore open sandals, walked on dry soil, and traveled on foot along dusty roads.**
- **In the average home of the common people, the host provided needed vessels and water, and visitors washed their own feet.**
- **With that he brought him into his house and threw mash to the he-asses. Then they washed their **feet** and began to eat and drink. (Judges 19:21)**
- **A wealthier host usually had his slave do the **foot washing**, and this was considered a menial task. Abigail indicated her willingness to comply with David's wish that she become his wife by saying; Here is your slave girl as a maidservant to **wash the feet** of the servants of my lord.**
- **So David's servants came to Abigail at Carmel and spoke to her, saying; David himself has sent us to you to take you as his wife. (1 Samuel 25:40)**
- **Immediately she rose up and bowed with her face to the earth and said; Here is your slave girl as a maidservant to wash the feet of the servants of my lord. (1 Samuel 25:41)**
- **Then Abigail hastened and rose up and went riding on the ass with five maids of hers walking behind her, and she went accompanying the messengers of David and then became his wife. (1 Samuel 25:42)**
- **Especially was it a display of humility and affectionate regard for guests if the host or hostess personally washed the visitors feet.**
- **Not only were **feet washed** as a hosts gesture of hospitality toward his guest but they were also customarily **washed** before a person retired to bed.**
- **I have put off my robe. How can I put it back on? I have washed my feet. How can I soil them? (Song of Solomon 5:3)**

- Especially noteworthy was the requirement that Levite priests wash their feet and hands before going into the tabernacle or before officiating at the altar.
- And Yehowah spoke further to Moses, saying; (**Exodus 30:17**)
- You must make a basin of copper and its stand of copper for **washing**, and you must put it between the tent of meeting and the altar and put water into it. (**Exodus 30:18**)
- And Aaron and his sons must wash their hands and their feet at it. (**Exodus 30:19**)
- When they go into the tent of meeting they will wash with water that they may not die, or when they go near the altar to minister in order to make an offering made by fire smoke to Yehowah. (**Exodus 30:20**)
- And they must wash their hands and their feet that they may not die, and it must serve as a regulation to time indefinite for them, for him and his offspring throughout their generations. (**Exodus 30:21**)
- Then he placed the basin between the tent of meeting and the altar and put water in it for **washing**. (**Exodus 40:30**)
- And Moses and Aaron and his sons washed their hands and their feet at it. (**Exodus 40:31**)
- When they went into the tent of meeting and when they went near to the altar they would **wash**, just as Yehowah had commanded Moses. (**Exodus 40:32**)
- When Jesus Christ was on earth, a host might offer his guest water for **washing the feet**, give him a kiss, and grease his head with oil. Simon the Pharisee neglected these three expressions of hospitality while entertaining Jesus.
- Thus, when a weeping sinful woman wet Jesus **feet** with her tears, wiped them with her hair, kissed his feet, and then greased them with perfumed oil, Christ pointed out Simon's failure and then told the woman; Your sins are forgiven.

- Now a certain one of the Pharisees kept asking him to dine with him. Accordingly he entered into the house of the Pharisee and reclined at the table. (Luke 7:36)
- And, look! A woman who was known in the city to be a sinner learned that he was reclining at a meal in the house of the Pharisee, and she brought an alabaster case of perfumed oil. (Luke 7:37)
- And, taking a position behind at his feet, she wept and started to **wet his feet with her tears** and she would wipe them off with the hair of her head. Also, she tenderly kissed his feet and greased them with the perfumed oil. (Luke 7:38)
- At the sight the Pharisee that invited him said within himself; This man, if he were a prophet, would know who and what kind of woman it is that is touching him, that she is a sinner. (Luke 7:39)
- But in reply Jesus said to him; Simon, I have something to say to you. He said; Teacher, say it! (Luke 7:40)
- Two men were debtors to a certain lender, the one was in debt for five hundred denarii, but the other for fifty. (Luke 7:41)
- When they did not have anything with which to pay back, he freely forgave them both. Therefore, which of them will love him the more? (Luke 7:42)
- In answer Simon said; I suppose it is the one to whom he freely forgave the more. He said to him; You judged correctly. (Luke 7:43)
- With that he turned to the woman and said to Simon; Do you behold this woman? I entered into your house; You gave me no **water for my feet**. But this woman wet my feet with her tears and wiped them off with her hair. (Luke 7:44)
- You gave me no kiss. But this woman, from the hour that I came in, did not leave off tenderly kissing my feet. (Luke 7:45)
- You did not grease my head with oil. But this woman greased my feet with perfumed oil. (Luke 7:46)

- By virtue of this, I tell you, her sins, many though they are, are forgiven, because she loved much, but he who is forgiven little, loves little. (**Luke 7:47**)
- Then he said to her; Your sins are forgiven. (**Luke 7:48**)
- At this those reclining at the table with him started to say within themselves; Who is this man who even forgives sins? (**Luke 7:49**)
- But he said to the woman; Your faith has saved you. Go your way in peace. (**Luke 7:50**)
- Jesus Christ washed his apostles feet on the last night of his earthly life, **Nisan 14,33 C.E.**, doing so to teach them a lesson and set the pattern, rather than to establish a ceremony.
- Now, because he knew before the festival of the Passover that his hour had come for him to move out of this world to the Father, Jesus, having loved his own that were in the world, loved them to the end. (**John 13:1**)
- So, while the evening meal was going on, the Devil having already put it into the heart of Judas Iscariot, the son of Simon, to betray him. (**John 13:2**)
- He, knowing that the Father had given all things into his hands and that he came forth from God and was going to God. (**John 13:3**)
- Got up from the evening meal and laid aside his outer garments. And, taking a towel, he girded himself. (**John 13:4**)
- After that he put water into a basin and started to wash the feet of the disciples and to dry them off with the towel with which he was girded. (**John 13:5**)
- And so he came to Simon Peter. He said to him; Lord, are you **washing** my feet? (**John 13:6**)
- In answer Jesus said to him; What I am doing you do not understand at present, but you will understand after these things. (**John 13:7**)

- Peter said to him; You will certainly never **wash** my **feet**. Jesus answered him; Unless I **wash** you, you have no part with me. (**John 13:8**)
- Simon Peter said to him; Lord, not my **feet** only, but also my hands and my head. (**John 13:9**)
- Jesus said to him; He that has bathed does not need to have more than his feet washed, but is wholly clean. And you men are clean, but not all. (**John 13:10**)
- He knew, indeed, the man betraying him. This is why he said; Not all of you are clean. (**John 13:11**)
- When, now, he had washed their feet and had put his outer garments on and laid himself down at the table again, he said to them; Do you know what I have done to you? (**John 13:12**)
- You address me, Teacher, and, Lord, and you speak rightly, for I am such. (**John 13:13**)
- Therefore, if I, although Lord and Teacher, washed your feet, you also ought to **wash the feet** of one another. (**John 13:14**)
- For I set the pattern for you, that, just as I did to you, you should do also. (**John 13:15**)
- Most truly I say to you, a slave is not greater than his master, nor is one that is sent forth greater than the one that sent him. (**John 13:16**)
- That evening there had been a discussion among the apostles as to who was the greatest.
- However, there also arose a heated dispute among them over which one of them seemed to be greatest. (**Luke 22:24**)
- But he said to them; The kings of the nations lord it over them, and those having authority over them are called Benefactors. (**Luke 22:25**)
- You, though, are not to be that way. But let him that is the greatest among you become as the youngest, and the one acting as chief as the one ministering. (**Luke 22:26**)

- For which one is greater, the one reclining at the table or the one ministering? Is it not the one reclining at the table? But I am in your midst as the one ministering. (Luke 22:27)
- And the spirit then prevailing apparently led to Jesus **washing** of his disciples **feet** as a lesson in humility and willingness to serve one another in the humblest way. On that night Jesus and the apostles were merely using a room and were not someones guests.
- So, there were no servants on hand to **wash their feet**, which would undoubtedly have been the case had they been guests. None of the apostles took the initiative to perform this menial service for the others.
- However, at an appropriate time during the meal, Jesus rose, laid aside his outer garments, girded himself with a towel, put water in a basin, and **washed their feet**.
- He thus showed that in humility each one should be the servant of the others and should show love in practical ways, doing things for the comfort of others.
- Christian hostesses did so, as is evident from the apostle Paul's reference to the hospitable act of **foot washing** among other fine works performed by Christian widows.
- Let a widow be put on the list who has become not less than sixty years old, a wife of one husband. (1 Timothy 5:9)
- Having a witness borne to her for fine works, if she reared children, if she entertained strangers, if she washed the feet of holy ones, if she relieved those in tribulation, if she diligently followed every good work. (1 Timothy 5:10)
- The **Christian Greek Scriptures** do not list formal **washing of feet** as a required Christian ceremony. Nonetheless, the example Jesus Christ set by this act stands as a reminder to Christians to serve their brothers lovingly, even in small ways and by performing humble tasks in their behalf.
- I am giving you a new commandment, that you love one another, just as I have loved you, that you also love one another. (John 13:34)

- By this all will know that you are my disciples, if you have love among yourselves. ([John 13:35](#))

See Also BATHING