

# Pesach (Passover) Foot-Washing



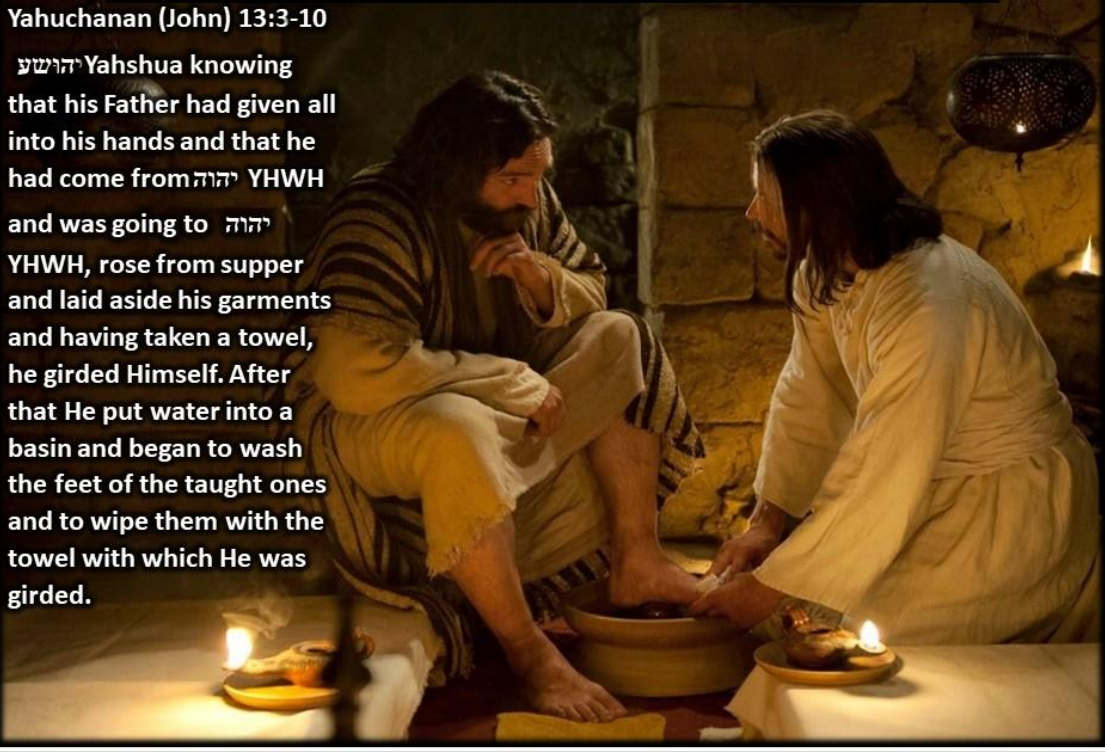
**Introduction:** A unique part of our remembrance of Pesach (Passover) is always the humbling experience of foot washing. For the most part Foot-Washing has always been seen as an exercise in reminding us of the need to develop humility in our Character and in producing greater intimacy within the body of believers. Though this is a very special experience I wish to see if we can come to an even deeper and more inspiring service-oriented purpose from Foot-Washing that we may never have thought of. It is for this purpose that I wish to expand our knowledge to enrich every aspect of this wonderful remembrance in which we remind ourselves of the great service our Adonai (Master) achieved for us on this Moed (Appointed time).

## The Journey Begins:

To see where our understanding is taking us let us first recount the reading concerned with this unique and crucial night before Yahshua suffered in the following:

Yahuchanan (John) 13:3-10

יהושע Yahshua knowing that his Father had given all into his hands and that he had come from יהוה YHWH and was going to יהוה YHWH, rose from supper and laid aside his garments and having taken a towel, he girded Himself. After that He put water into a basin and began to wash the feet of the taught ones and to wipe them with the towel with which He was girded.



And so he came to Shimon Kepha (Simon Peter) and Kepha said to him, Master do you wash my feet? Yahshua answered him, you do not know what I am doing now, but you shall know after this. Kepha said to him, by no means shall you wash my feet, ever! Yahshua answered him, if I do not wash you, you have no part with me. Shimon Kepha said to Him, Master not my feet only, but also my hands and my head!



יהושע Yahshua said to him, "he who has had a bath does not need to wash, except his feet, but is clean altogether. And you are clean, but not all of you."



Much of the understanding within most congregations concerning the washing of the feet has remained in a very superficial level which in Hebrew thought is the P'shat or simple meaning because we are always drawn to what was happening prior to this as the Talmidim (taught ones) reclined at table after the Supper even though Yahshua had indicated that he would be betrayed yet we read what concerned the Talmidim (the Disciples) more in the following which is quite baffling and found in:

**Luke 22:24 Now there was also a dispute among them, as to which of them should be considered the greatest.**

It is from this account that many have derived the meaning of Foot-Washing as being the servanthood issue of the Kingdom since we read what the Master said of himself in:

**MatithYahu (Matthew) 20:28 the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many."**

We do know that in ancient times people wore sandals & that foot washing was a courtesy given guests to which a host's servant would offer water to wash sand and dirt away & even anoint the guest's head with oil as in **Luke 7:36-48** and was also done as a sign of humility as we read in:



**Shemuel Aleph (1 Samuel) 25:41 Then Abigail arose, bowed her face to the earth, and said, "Here is your maidservant, a servant to wash the feet of the servants of my lord David."**

As an indication of the cultural traditions of foot-washing we have other verses that speak of washing feet which include **Bereshiyth (Gen) 18:4, 19:2, 24:32, 43:24, & 1 Tim 5:10.**

This understanding though very significant I do not think is even the primary point that Yahshua is making so this is the direction we are heading.

### **Former Reflections**

As we look to this incident after this Pre-Pesach (Passover) meal we need to go deeper than just the p'shat or simple rendering and understand a much deeper meaning. Remember Yahshua was aware that he was about to complete his whole purpose for coming to the Earth and was about to return to YHWH his Father and so everything that happened must have great significance. Yahshua was actually not just giving a New Commandment to his Talmidim (taught ones) to wash one another's feet but was building upon an ancient ritual carried out by the Levitical Kohanim (the Priests). Why was it that Yahshua said that if Kepha (Peter) refused then he could have no part in Yahshua?



The answer will begin to become clearer if we look to the establishment of the Priesthood under Aaron in the Mishkan (the Tabernacle) as we read in the following:

**Shemoth (Exodus) 30:17-21** Then YHWH spoke to Mosheh saying,<sup>18</sup> "you shall make a basin of bronze, with its stand also of bronze, for washing. Place it between the Tent of Meeting and the altar and put water in it. <sup>19</sup> Aaron and his sons are to wash their hands and feet with water from it whenever they go into the tent of Appointment or when they

**come near the slaughter place to minister, to burn an offering made by fire to YHWH they wash with water lest they die.**

**21 And they shall wash their hands and their feet, lest they die. This is to be a lasting ordinance for Aaron and his descendants for the generations to come."**

From this reading we see how very important it was for the Kohanim (The Priests) to purify themselves before they could minister in the Mishkan (the Tabernacle). We have recently seen in our Torah study how these purifications and offerings were the process by which YHWH had made it possible for not only the Priests but also the people to draw near to the place of his presence. Now within the words of Yahshua we see these very same principles & actions applied to the Talmidim (the Disciples) as detailed for the Kohanim (Priests) upon entering the Kadosh (Holy) place to serve. Though the significance of this washing was not understood by the taught ones (the Disciples) we must take careful note of all the details to enhance our perception as well.

### **The Two Priesthoods**

Could it be that Yahshua being the ultimate Kohen Ha Gadol (the High Priest) was initiating his Talmidim (Disciples) into their priestly service and drawing a parallel taken from the Torah. This entire process of the Kohanim (the Priests) was about cleansing & purifying which included sacrifices before they could serve in the place of the presence of YHWH. We now come to see the extreme significance that cleansing took, in both the Tanakh (Old Testament) and now even in the Brit Chadashah (the Renewed Covenant- New Testament). Therefore, this could be seen not just as a Pesach (Passover) ceremony but as an act that should heighten the desire to remove sin from the lives of believers just as the Kohanim (the Priests) needed to do so before they could begin their service in the Mishkan (the Tabernacle). Why was this physical process, a life and death situation and now that Yahshua has come, is this any less significant.

Yahshua seemed to indicate that refusal on the part of Shimon Kepha (Simon Peter) would leave him separated from Adonai (the Master). This would seem to heighten the emphasis upon Foot-washing being far more significant than simply an exercise in humility but rather that it points towards the extreme need of spiritual cleansing before one can minister for the Master. However even this diminishes its significance since Yahshua indicates that the washing was a sign of being in Echad (oneness) with him and without this his Talmidim (Disciples) would have no part in him. This was expressed at an earlier time by the Master Yahshua in another passage in a very dramatic way according to:



*The Test of a True Disciple*

**Yahuchanan (John) 6:56 He who eats My flesh and drinks My blood abides in Me, and I in him.**



This we know shocked many of his disciples but we know he was speaking in very spiritual terms and so we need to see the Foot-washing experience as highly Spiritual as well.

Since we now live in the supposed New Covenant why did Yahshua put it this way if all these ceremonial rituals are done away with, for we read:

**Yahuchanan (John) 13:11-12 "For he knew who would deliver Him up, so he said, you are not all clean. So when he had washed their feet and taken his garments and sat down again, He said to them, "do you know what I have done to you? "You call me Teacher and Adonai (Master) and you say well, for I am. Now that I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also should wash one another's feet. I HAVE SET YOU AN EXAMPLE, THAT YOU SHOULD DO AS I HAVE DONE FOR YOU.**

Notice! Yahshua gave a very direct COMMAND that we should do as he did -- and wash one another's feet! He set us a literal EXAMPLE in this regard! This was not figurative language, but a plain and direct command." Yahshua makes clear that his washing of the disciples' feet is no mere gesture of hospitality or a lesson in humility -- but an act which CLEANSSES THEM and ensures their relationship with the Messiah.

Beyond the concept of fellowship, the Talmidim (Disciples) did not perceive that Yahshua was imparting to them a priesthood though they saw him as the Messiah. After the Messiah's death on the tree and his subsequent Resurrection, the reality of his priesthood became apparent to the disciples, and their understanding of this key element matured. What we do

know is that it was always in the heart of YHWH that his people as a whole, become a nation of Kohanim (Priests) according to this reading:

**WWW.NETZARIMANTOECIE.COM**



**THE CALL OF  
YISRAEL**

**Shemoth (Exodus) 19:6**  
**And you shall be to Me**  
**a kingdom of priests**  
**and a holy nation.'**  
**These are the words**  
**which you shall speak to**  
**the children of Yisrael."**

Is this not what Yahshua was indicating through these actions that from the moment of his sacrifice & resurrection all those who would put their faith in Him could fulfil the hope of YHWH for his Kadosh (Holy) Nation who were called to be a Kingdom of Priests. We see this hope fulfilled again through the following in:

**HitGalut (the Unveiling/Revelation) 5:10 And has made us kings and priests to our Elohim;  
And we shall reign on the earth."**

This indicates something that is complete as been fulfilled through Yahshua.

In the Book of Ibrim (Hebrews) we find a comparison between the Levitical Priesthood and the superiority of the Melchizedek Priesthood to which Yahshua is now likened for we read in:



**Ibrim (Hebrews) 7:16 Who has become, not according to the Torah of fleshly commands but according to the power of an endless life. 17 for He (YHWH) does witness, "you are a Priest forever according to the order of Melkizedek."**

His human ancestry had no bearing on his priesthood, nor was it by virtue of human ancestry that the offices of both priest and king were combined in him. These things were as a result of YHWH through the oath of Elohim to him. Through the obedience of Yahshua we now have a better Kohen Ha Gadol (High Priest) & a Covenant built on better promises since we read again:

**Ibrim (Hebrews) 10:14 For by one offering He (Yahshua) has perfected for all time those who are being set-apart.**

The process therefore of being set-apart is epitomised in the washing of the feet though we read that the Spiritual application when dealing with his people the Bride of Mashiach (Messiah) are as follows:





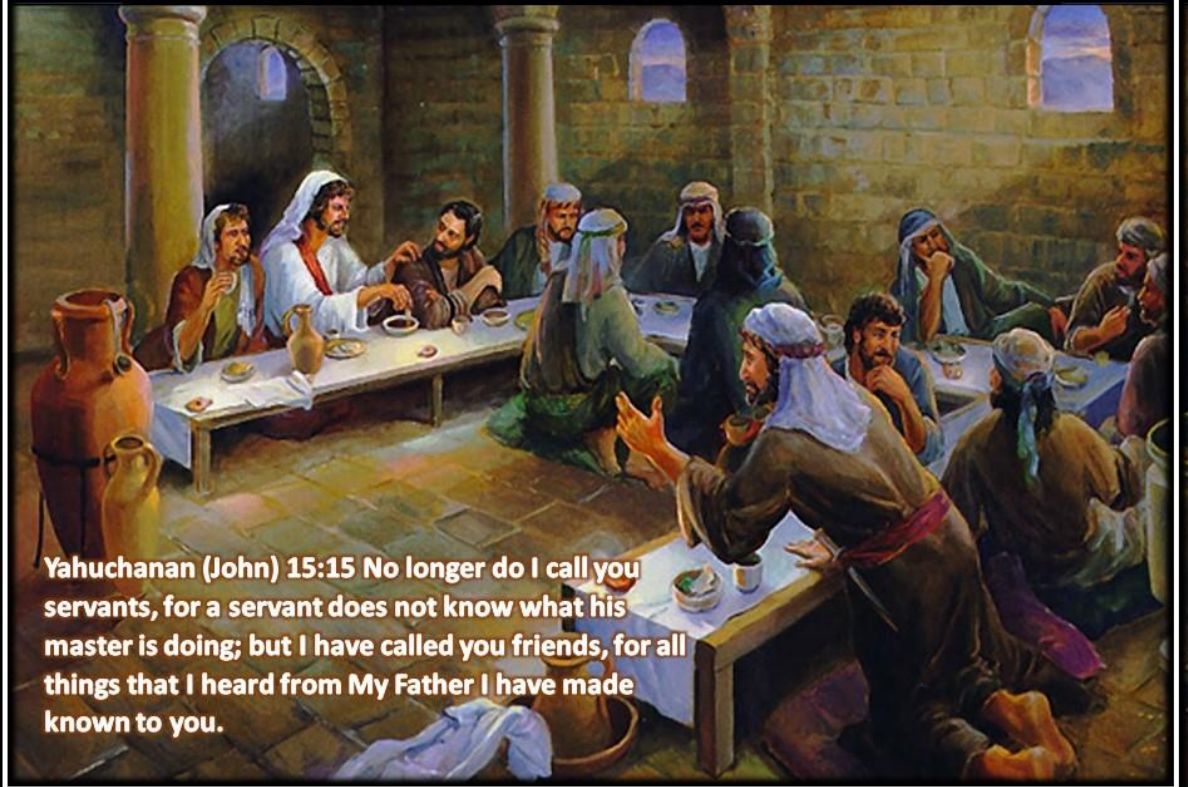
**Ephesians 5:26 that He might sanctify and cleanse her with the washing of water by the word.**

**6:17 and the sword of the RUACH (the Spirit), which is the word of Elohim;**

Those then that are being set-apart are those in whom the Word resides and who stand strong in its power to defend against the fiery darts of the enemy. But there is more implication.

**Covenant Implications:**

With a Hebraic understanding we can also see wonderful implications of Covenant revelations throughout the whole Pre-Pesach Fellowship gathering as well. Up until this particular night his Talmidim (Disciples) had only entered into a servant Covenant but this is in fact the most external of Covenants but now on this night we read Yahshua bringing them into a deeper Covenant relationship and in Hebrew thought this is called the Salt Covenant or the Friendship Covenant as we read in:



**Yahuchanan (John) 15:15 No longer do I call you servants, for a servant does not know what his master is doing; but I have called you friends, for all things that I heard from My Father I have made known to you.**

What we see on this night is the consolidation of this Covenant by the dipping of bread into the communal salt dish reflecting the deep responsibility all were entering into. This is no light matter and something we should consider. When we take the bread it is the bread of fellowship which holds dire consequences if dishonoured as we see with Yahudah (Judas).

There is however an even deeper level of Covenant often called the Sandal Covenant or the Inheritance Covenant where each individual enters as the most intimate and personal of all Covenants. We see that reflected in the Torah in the burning bush incident where Mosheh draws near & is instructed as follows in:

## *Mosheh at the Burning Bush*



**Shemoth (Exodus) 3:5 Take your sandals off your feet, for the place where you stand is holy ground."**

In this night full of the Passion of Adonai (Master) Yahshua, there is a picture of an inheritance that his Talmidim (Disciples) were receiving. They were through the foot-washing symbolically receiving the Kingdom of Elohim to which they were appointed.

One of the noticeable differences between the washings of Torah priests and Talmidim (taught ones) of whom we are, is that Yahshua did not wash their hands. Why? This could be explained as men in the Tanakh (Old Testament) having unclean hands since their sins were laid up until their release on the Day of Atonement – Yom Kippur once a year. The Messiah's atonement, however, was ONCE FOR ALL TIME! We who follow the Messiah have cleansing and are righteous in Him. Our hands are purified in Him to exercise dominion upon the earth. In contrast, however, our feet are dirty because the earth awaits redemption since we read the Aretz (the Earth) was cursed in:

**Bereshiyth (Gen) 3:17 "cursed is the ground because of you, in toil you are to eat of it all the days of your life."**

### **Personal Applications:**

It has been my desire to present to you today a message of great significance regarding the Foot-Washing far more valuable than we might have thought.

If we take this remembrance of the great sacrifice of Yahshua and see how he through this night was bringing his Talmidim (Disciples) into a most set-apart ministry and can apply that to ourselves then the foot-washing and the fellowship will take on a much higher dimension. Pesach therefore enhances and inspires us hopefully into a greater sacrificial service to our Lord & Master knowing that through this celebration we have been called to be Kings &



Priests under our eternal Kohen Ha Gadol (High Priest) to present His great sacrifice to the World, therefore we have the ministry of reconciliation to bring the World back into Covenant with YHWH .

### **The Heart of the Matter**

In considering the matter of foot-washing we need to see it as a very practical way that reveals some powerful spiritual truths.

- 1. We are reminded that we must be purified and cleansed to be in “Echad” in oneness with the Master Yahshua.**
- 2. Just like the Disciples we are called to be a Kingdom of Priests and a Kadosh (Holy) people set-apart for Him.**
- 3. We are also called to present the sacrifice of Yahshua to a World that needs his atonement to draw it near to the Eternal Elohim of all Creation.**
- 4. Finally, it is a lesson on humility as well that we might understand the great wonder of our Master who though he was the glory of Elohim humbled himself even unto the tree that we might follow his example.**

**Amein: to him be the Esteem & honour always.**