



**The DAILY JESUS NEWS #280**  
**Thursday... Day of Instruction and Arrest**  
**The Last Supper**

**Jesus Washes His Disciple's Feet**

JN 13.1-11

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- 1 It was just before they ate the Passover Meal. Since Jesus knew that the hour had come for him to leave this world and go to the Father, having loved his own who were in the world, he loved them to the very end.
- 2 The evening meal had begun, and the devil had already decisively prompted Judas, the son of Simon Iscariot, to betray Jesus.
- 3 Because Jesus knew that the Father had give all things into his hands, and that he had come from God and was returning to God; 4 he rose up from the meal, took off his outer clothing, and wrapped a towel around his waist. 5 After that, he poured water into a basin and began washing his disciples' feet, and drying them with the towel that was wrapped around him.
- 6 He came to Simon Peter, who said to him, "Lord, are you going to wash my feet?"
- 7 Jesus replied, "*You do not realize what I myself am doing now, but later you will understand.*"
- 8 "No," said Peter, "there's no way you will ever wash my feet."
- Jesus answered, "*Unless I wash you, you have no fellowship with me.*"
- 9 "Then, Lord," Simon Peter replied, "not just my feet but my hands and my head as well!"
- 10 Jesus answered, "*Those who have have washed are still clean, and need only to wash their feet; their whole body is clean. And all of you are clean, though not every one of you.*"
- 11 For he knew who was going to betray him, and that was why he said not every one was clean.

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NOTE: We use superscript identification of the source gospel in "blended texts" as follows: Matthew = <sup>MT</sup>, Mark = <sup>M</sup>, Luke = <sup>L</sup>, John = <sup>J</sup>, Acts = <sup>A</sup>. This "superscript ID" is inserted at the beginning of the quoted text, identifying that Bible book until a different superscript appears. In addition, *red italics identify the words of Jesus*. Old Testament quotations are CAPITALIZED.

CONTEXT DIGEST	
Location	An Upper Room in Jerusalem

Timeline	Early April (Month 39)
Jesus' Life Context	Stage VIII: Passion Week
	D. Thursday: Day of Instruction and Arrest
	The Last Supper
Title	Jesus Washes His Disciple's Feet

COMMENT:

Jesus had just finished breaking up an argument among his disciples about who was the greatest among them. He had commanded them for the second time not to cling to the viewpoint of their culture--that those who had authority showed it by exercising it freely over their subjects. He had commanded them to be different--to be like him--to be humble, loving, servant-leaders.

Now he would give them one more example of true greatness in service by washing their feet. This is one of the most profound, multi-meaning passages in the gospel of John, which excels at packing layer upon layer of meaning into the narrative. We should note that those various meanings are not in conflict, nor divergent--they all reveal deeper dimensions of one core meaning, like the various layers of an onion make up one entity.

It was the practice to wash the feet of guests whenever they entered one's home. This was a dirty, thankless job usually performed by the lowest-ranked slave, or member of the household. A problem developed when the entourage entered the upper room, for there was no clear host--they were all guests in someone else's house. No one was responsible to provide this needed, but humiliating service. Peter and John had spent hours preparing the Passover meal, but they no doubt thought that their service had exempted them from any more work. After all, that would not be fair.

To make a bad situation worse, the apostle's pride caused them to overlook the fact that their Lord was not given this common courtesy through their oversight. Jesus had entered the homes of Pharisees and been insulted by not having his feet washed, but then they were his enemies. It was not surprising to be treated so by them.

To be in the company of his own friends, who loved and honored him as their Teacher and Lord--yet to have his feet left unwashed by these very men--this was inappropriate behavior toward Jesus of no small measure. Yet the disciples were so wrapped up with their conceited ideas about their own greatness, and defending their superiority with arguing, that they could not see how they had demeaned their Master.

So Jesus chose to be their host. John went out of his way to spotlight two things about Jesus at the beginning of the story. First, he loved his own from the beginning to the end of his life. This foot washing was another stellar revelation of Jesus' love. This love would cause him to die for each of these men before the sun set again.

John also pointed to Jesus' consciousness of his absolute authority and fulness as God's Son. He well knew that everything that the Father possessed as God was equally his.

What did Jesus say that worldly kings did? *"The Kings of the gentiles Lord it over them."* Those with power use it to make others do their bidding. What did HE do--the Man with all the omnipotent power of God Almighty? Consciousness of that power led to loving, humble service. How awesome!

John's language in describing the way Jesus rose up from the table, laid aside his garment, and wrapped a towel around him to go to work is one of the most regal scenes of Jesus in the gospels. It sounds like Paul talking about the way Jesus laid aside his glory as God to become a bond-slave on earth. One thing is for sure. It shocked the disciples like nothing else they had seen their Lord do. Peter's reaction spoke for them all.

#### APPLICATION:

Love and authority lead to humility in service.

Jesus was not ashamed to take the lowliest job that everyone else thought was beneath their exalted self-worth. He knew who he was. He knew his resources. He knew where he came from and where he was going. Infinite power at his fingertips equipped him to wash the grungiest filth off the feet of those he loved with those omnipotent, soon to be nail-scarred hands.

*I leave the specific application up to you.*