

# Yeshua – The Servant of יהוה

## John 13:12–20

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*notes by Tim Hegg*

### *Being Disciples of Yeshua*

The scene of our text is the final Passover meal Yeshua had with His disciples. It is not clear whether Yeshua left the upper room before or after speaking the words in chapters 15–17. In 14:31 He says: “Come now, let us leave.” Yet not until three chapters later in the narrative (18:1) does John record that when Yeshua finished praying, he left with his disciples and crossed the Kidron Valley. Regardless, it is clear that chapters 13–17 comprise those special truths, often referred to as the “upper room discourse,” which Yeshua intended His disciples to understand and carry with them in view of His imminent death, resurrection, and ascension to the Father.

Thus, these words of our Lord are equally important to us as His disciples and having been granted the grand commission and duty to be witnesses of the eternal salvation He has won for us through His death, resurrection, ascension, and intercession.

*So when He had washed their feet, and taken His garments and reclined at the table again, He said to them, “Do you know what I have done to you? (13:12)*

As the passover meal was being served, Yeshua got up, took off His outer garment, wrapped a towel around His waste and proceeded to wash the feet of His disciples.

- Yeshua performed the task normally done by a house servant.
- The fact that Peter told Yeshua “You will never wash my feet!” (v. 8) indicated that he did not understand why Yeshua was performing the task of a servant.
- “Yeshua answered him, “If I do not wash you, you have no part with Me.” (v. 8)

Thus Yeshua, after washing His disciples feet, asks: “Do you know what I have done to you?” Here we see that Yeshua taught His disciples not only by word but also by actions. And what is the lesson? The following verses give us Yeshua’s explanation and His teaching is just as applicable to us as to the twelve disciples.

*13. You call Me Teacher and Lord; and you are right, for so I am.*

The order is important, for the disciples had first recognized Yeshua as their “Teacher.” It was about two years later that He asks them “Who do you say that I am?” Peter answered: “You are the Messiah, the Son of the living God,” (Matt 16:15–16).

*14-15. If I then, the Lord and the Teacher, washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet. For I gave you an example that you also should do as I did to you.*

Note the change in word-order: “If I then, the Lord and Teacher...” Yeshua is “Lord” (κύριος, *kurios*), that is, “Immanuel,” God incarnate, יהוה, thus all who profess to believe in Him and have been redeemed by His saving work, will seek to obey Him and to become more and more like Him in all of life's activities.

Yeshua, the eternal Son of God, the Creator of the universe (John 1:1–3), humbled Himself to do all of the Father's will, even becoming obedient to death on the cross to pay the redemption price for all His people.

The example He gave was to teach His disciples and us this important truth: since we who are “in Messiah” are His disciples, we too must understand that humbly serving one another is to characterize our life of faith. And one of the necessary aspects of serving each other is to regularly be together. “Bear one another's burdens, and thereby fulfill the Torah of Messiah.” (Gal 6:2)

“...you also should do as I did to you.” – To become true disciples of Yeshua we are to serve one another even as He has served us. This means that everyone in the body of Messiah must see himself or herself as a servant to others.

*16-17 Truly, truly, I say to you, a slave is not greater than his master, nor is one who is sent greater than the one who sent him. If you know these things, you are blessed if you do them.*

The point our Lord is making here is clear: regardless of the position one might hold within the body of Messiah, everyone, especially leaders, must see themselves as servants attending to the needs of others. The person who is commissioned to a given task within the local community of believers must seek to complete the given

task with the mindset of a servant. Here Yeshua's words promise a blessing upon all who serve as He served and continues to serve all who are His.

*18–19 I do not speak of all of you. I know the ones I have chosen; but it is that the Scripture may be fulfilled, 'HE WHO EATS MY BREAD HAS LIFTED UP HIS HEEL AGAINST ME.' From now on I am telling you before it comes to pass, so that when it does occur, you may believe that I am (He).*

We can certainly imagine that had Yeshua not forewarned His disciples about what was soon to take place, i.e., His betrayal at the hands of Judas and His subsequent crucifixion, they may have become so bewildered so as to become entirely confused. Rather, Yeshua warns them about the events soon to take place, not only so that they would stand strong in their faith, but also so that they would know that Yeshua Himself is the One Who orders all things after the counsel of His sovereign will, for He is one with the Father and the Spirit.

Note that in the Greek text, the final word of v. 19 in most English translations (“He”) is not actually there. The Greek is: ἵνα πιστεύσητε ὅταν γένηται ὅτι ἐγὼ εἰμι. “...in order that you may believe, when it comes to pass, that I AM.” The Greek ἐγὼ εἰμι (*egō eimi*) are the same words used by the Lxx to translate “I will be what I will be” in Ex 3:14

*God said to Moses, “I AM WHO I AM”; (Εγὼ εἰμι ὁ ὢν, אֶהְיֶה אֲנִי) and He said, “Thus you shall say to the sons of Israel, ‘I AM has sent me to you.’”*

Thus, here Yeshua clearly states that He is יהוה in the flesh. Consider this: the Almighty, the eternal, omniscient, omnipotent God, our Savior Yeshua, came as the Servant to save all who are His. As His redeemed people, we must likewise give ourselves to serving each other in truth and love, as we commit ourselves to walking in the footsteps of our Savior and Lord.

*20 – Truly, truly, I say to you, he who receives whomever I send receives Me; and he who receives Me receives Him who sent Me.”*

Here we see that the Apostles, the writers of the Apostolic

Scriptures, those commissioned by Yeshua Himself, are to be received as having the very authority of Yeshua, for their words are “inspired,” i.e., θεόπνευστος, *theopneustos*, literally, “the breath of God,” meaning that they are the very words of God breathed out, as it were, with His own voice.

Thus, in the whole of Scriptures we come to know the will of God for all who are His, and this means that we have been redeemed to serve each other in love and in the truth of the Scriptures. As we do so, we obey the command of our Lord and Savior, Yeshua, and we thus demonstrate our love and obedience to Him.

We serve each other both in helping one another to become more and more like Yeshua, through encouragement, prayer, and example. We also do so by building one another up in the truths and ways of Yeshua, and be committing ourselves not to engage in slander and gossip, that which tears down the value of a fellow believer.