

DAY 23: RACHTZAH

“So Jesus got up from the meal, took off his outer clothing, and wrapped a towel around his waist. After that, he poured water into a basin and began to wash his disciples’ feet, drying them with the towel that was wrapped around him.” -John 13:4-5

Following the second cup, we participate in what’s called the *Rachtzah*. This is a second ritual hand-washing before we eat the matzah. We can’t know for sure, but I believe that it was at this point that Jesus would have begun washing the disciples’ feet. John 13:2 says that the evening meal was already in progress, so it’s likely that at this spot Jesus washed the disciples’ feet.

Let’s go back to the *Urchatz* for just a moment and remember Exodus 30:19, “Aaron and his sons are to wash their hands and feet with water from [the basin].” The disciples have already washed their hands. Now Jesus, who is about to become the ultimate High Priest, is washing the feet of His disciples so that they will be ready for the priestly ministry that He is about to commission them with.¹⁰ Not only were they to act like priests, but they were to live out that ministry in humility.

My undergraduate college, Southeastern University, was steadfast in making sure that we understood and practiced servant-leadership. As a constant reminder, there is a fountain in the middle of the university with a statue of Jesus washing Peter’s feet. It’s a beautifully powerful image and reminder of what Jesus exemplified for us.

Power and authority are not in and of themselves corrupt or evil. In the right hands and with the right mindset, they can be used to bring justice and ensure the good of the people over whom they have power. Servant-leadership is a picture of a humble leader who has the interests and needs of others at the forefront of their governance. The second that it becomes all about them and not about others is when corruption and oppression seep in.

Preparing for the Passover Lamb means having this scene of Jesus washing feet in the forefront of our minds. If Jesus, whom we believe is fully God (and fully human), got down on his knees and washed feet, who are we to think we are above others? Jesus has power and authority over all of us. If we can’t serve other people or if we believe that serving others is below us, then we’re also saying that we believe we’re better than God Himself.

A mentor of mine always used to say, “If you’re too prideful to clean toilets, you’re too prideful to preach.”

Practice: Clean your toilet today. Yep, I just asked you to clean your toilet. As you do, remember how Jesus washed the feet of the disciples. Not everyone has the “gift of service” and yet we are still all called to serve. I encourage you to check out the practice on my [website](#) that offers practical steps to begin serving others today.