

[Ryrie's Basic Theology](#): VI. Foot-Washing

VI. FOOT-WASHING

In accord with the common custom in the East because of the effect of dusty or muddy roads on sandaled feet, the Lord at the Last Supper washed and dried the disciples' feet ([John 13:1–20](#)). This act served as an example of humility (v. [15](#)), as an exhortation to forgive one another (v. [14](#)), and as a lesson in the need for cleansing in the Christian life (v. [10](#)). As baptism symbolizes the cleansing of the forgiveness of sin, foot-washing symbolizes the cleansing needed for fellowship.

Those who focus on cleansing find ground for continuing the observance of this as an ordinance today. Those who emphasize the example or forgiveness aspects do not feel it is necessary to perform the ritual but rather to practice the spiritual truths the ritual illustrated. It is true that the exhortation to follow Christ's example in verses [14](#) and [15](#) related to forgiving one another in humility, rather than to God's forgiving our missteps in life. This, then, would argue against considering foot-washing as an ordinance.

Ryrie, Charles Caldwell. *Basic Theology: A Popular Systematic Guide to Understanding Biblical Truth*. Chicago, IL: Moody Press, 1999.

Clipped: March 19, 2022

[WPNT](#): John 13:2

[John 13:2](#)

During supper (δειπνου γινομενου [*deipnou ginomenou*]). Correct text, present middle participle of γινομαι [*ginomai*] (not γενομενου [*genomenou*], second aorist middle participle, “being ended”) genitive absolute. Verse [4](#) shows plainly that the meal was still going on. **The devil having already put** (του διαβολου ήδη βεβληκοτος [*tou diabolou ēdē beblēkotos*]). Another genitive absolute without a connective (asyndeton), perfect active participle of βαλλω [*ballō*], to cast, to put. Luke ([22:3](#)) says that Satan entered Judas when he offered to betray Jesus. Hence John's “already” (ήδη [*ēdē*]) is pertinent. John repeats his statement in verse [27](#). In [John 6:70](#) Jesus a year ago had seen that Judas was a devil. **To betray him** (ίνα παραδοι αύτον [*hina paradoi auton*]). Cf. [Acts 5:3](#). Purpose clause with ίνα [*hina*] and second aorist active subjunctive of παραδιδωμι [*paradidōmi*] (form in -οι [-oi] as in [Mark 14:10](#) rather than the usual -ω [-ōi] in [Luke 22:4](#)). Satan had an open door by now into the heart of Judas.

Robertson, A.T. *Word Pictures in the New Testament*. Nashville, TN: Broadman Press, 1933.

Tags: Jn 13:2

Clipped: March 19, 2022

[WSNT](#): Chapter 13

2. Supper being ended (δείπνου γενομένου). The most approved reading is γινομένου, the present participle, denoting *while a supper was in progress*. Hence Rev., rightly, *during supper*. The A. V. is wrong, even if the reading of the Received Text be retained; for in ver. [12](#) Jesus reclined again, and in ver. [26](#), the supper is still in progress. It should be, *supper having begun*, or *having been served*.* It is important to note the absence of the definite article: *a* supper, as distinguished from *the* feast, which also is designated by a different word.

Vincent, Marvin Richardson. *Word Studies in the New Testament*. Vol. 2. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1887.

Tags: Jn 13:2

Clipped: March 19, 2022

[John \(PNTC\)](#): 1. Jesus Washes His Disciples' Feet (13:1–17)

13:2. Judging by the time marker in v. [30](#), the meal that is about to begin is an *evening meal* (*deipnon*; cf. notes on [12:2](#)). Assuming that the opening clause means that this meal had just been served (cf. [Additional Note](#)), the stage is thereby set for Jesus to begin washing his disciples' feet. Before proceeding with the narrative, however, John ensures that his readers will grasp just how strongly this episode attests the loving character of Jesus. The disciples whose feet he was about to wash include Judas Iscariot, son of Simon (cf. [Additional Note](#)), whose treacherous plot had already been conceived.

Carson, D. A. *The Gospel according to John*. The Pillar New Testament Commentary. Leicester, England; Grand Rapids, MI: Inter-Varsity Press; W.B. Eerdmans, 1991.

Tags: Jn 13:2

Clipped: March 19, 2022

[John \(PNTC\)](#): 1. Jesus Washes His Disciples' Feet (13:1–17)

Additional note

[13:2](#). Two textual variants control discussion of this verse: (a) the manuscript evidence for the present participle *ginomenou* and for the aorist participle *genomenou* is very evenly divided. The former is often taken to mean that the meal was ‘in progress’ (hence ‘during supper’, RSV), but might mean that it ‘was being served’ (NIV); the latter is often taken to mean that supper was over (‘supper being ended’, AV), but could be interpreted to mean that supper had just been served. Verses [4](#) and [26](#) make it impossible to believe that supper was over, and for that reason many prefer the present participle. Conversely, that makes the aorist participle the harder reading (especially if it is understood as in the AV), and for that reason intrinsically more likely to have been changed by a copyist. It is therefore attractive to suppose that the aorist is original, but that it should be understood to mean that supper had just been served (an instance of what has traditionally been called the ‘ingressive aorist’).

Carson, D. A. *The Gospel according to John*. The Pillar New Testament Commentary. Leicester, England; Grand Rapids, MI: Inter-Varsity Press; W.B. Eerdmans, 1991.

Tags: Jn 13:17

Clipped: March 19, 2022

[John \(PNTC\)](#): 1. Jesus Washes His Disciples’ Feet (13:1–17)

[13:1](#). If the opening words *It was just before the Passover Feast* are taken as a heading to chs. [13–17](#), it follows that the meal the disciples are about to have with Jesus could not itself have been the Passover meal. Taking the clause that way plunges us into the chronological problems discussed above. But there is nothing in the words themselves to discourage us from taking the clause as an introduction to the footwashing only, and not to the discourses that follow the meal. Chronologically, the opening words then place the footwashing before the Passover meal about to begin (and v. [2](#), in the best texts, does not contradict this point); theologically, the clause alerts the readers to the Passover theme developed throughout the book ([2:13](#), [23](#); [6:4](#); [11:55](#); [12:1](#); cf. [18:28](#), [39](#); [19:14](#)), inviting them to see in the footwashing an anticipation of Jesus’ own climactic Passover act as the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world ([1:29](#); cf. notes on [13:6–9](#)).

Carson, D. A. *The Gospel according to John*. The Pillar New Testament Commentary. Leicester, England; Grand Rapids, MI: Inter-Varsity Press; W.B. Eerdmans, 1991.

Tags: Jn 13:1

Clipped: March 19, 2022

[NICNT Jn](#): 1. The Feet Washing (13:1–11)

[2](#) According to the best text John locates the event he is about to describe as taking place “during supper.”¹⁰

Morris, Leon. *The Gospel according to John*. The New International Commentary on the New Testament. Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1995.

Note:

γινομένου is read by **ℵ***BLW etc. and γενομένου by ^{p66} **ℵ**^c AD Θ f1 f13 etc. The former clearly means “during supper,” the latter probably “after supper” (as *KJV*; Field, however, accepts it and takes it to mean “a supper was holden”); perhaps it could mean “supper having been served.” An action like the footwashing would seem more likely after a meal than as an interruption during the course of a meal, which might explain γενομένου. The reverse alteration is more difficult to understand. That the incident took place before the end of the meal is plain from verse [26](#). For δείπνον see on [12:2](#).

Leon Morris, [The Gospel according to John](#), The New International Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1995).

Tags: Jn 13:2

Clipped: March 20, 2022

[NTTTC](#): John 13:2a

[John 13:2a](#)

WH NU

καὶ δείπνου γινομένου

“and supper happening” (= “and during supper”)

ℵ* B L W Ψ

NKJVMg RSV NRSV ESV NASB NIV TNIV NEB REB NJB NAB NLT HCSB NET

variant/TR

καὶ δειπνου γενομενου

“and supper having happened” (= “and after supper”)

[℘]⁶⁶ **ℵ**² A D Θ f^{1,13} Maj

KJV NKJV

In the beginning of this verse there is a significant textual variant, which involves a single letter in the Greek (*iota/epsilon*): γινομενου/γενομενου. Unless the variant reading is understood as an ingressive aorist (“supper having been served”), the statement contradicts the context,

which clearly indicates that the supper was in progress ([13:26](#), [30](#)). Since scribes would have wanted to make this absolutely clear, it seems likely that the more difficult γενομενου was changed to γινομενου, rather than vice versa.

Comfort, Philip W. *New Testament Text and Translation Commentary: Commentary on the Variant Readings of the Ancient New Testament Manuscripts and How They Relate to the Major English Translations*. Carol Stream, IL: Tyndale House Publishers, Inc., 2008.

Tags: Jn 13:2a

Clipped: March 20, 2022

[JFB](#): Chapter 13

2. supper being ended—rather, “being prepared,” “being served,” or, “going on”; for that it was not “ended” is plain from [Jn 13:26](#).

Jamieson, Robert, A. R. Fausset, and David Brown. *Commentary Critical and Explanatory on the Whole Bible*. Vol. 2. Oak Harbor, WA: Logos Research Systems, Inc., 1997.

Tags: Jn 13:2

Clipped: March 20, 2022

[St. John \(Vol. II\)](#): Chapter 13

Ver. **2.**—**A supper having commenced**; or, *being then in progress*⁷⁸—without doubt the meal in which our Lord terminated the Old Testament dispensation and introduced the New, and which John discriminates, therefore, from the Passover proper referred to in ver. **1.**

Spence-Jones, H. D. M., ed. *St. John*. Vol. 2. The Pulpit Commentary. London; New York: Funk & Wagnalls Company, 1909.

Note:

T.R. here reads, with A, D, Δ, 1, 33, and all the ancient versions, δείπνου γενομένου; but, on the authority of **Ⲛ** B, L, X, Origen, and Nonnus, Tischendorf (8th edit.), Meyer, Westcott and Hort, and Revised Version read γινομένου. Godet does not accept the reading, thinking that it is a correction, interded to put the washing at the beginning rather than at the end of the feast. Lücke, on the same internal grounds, justifies the translation, “during the meal,” “when the supper took place” (*geschah oder war*).

H. D. M. Spence-Jones, ed., [St. John](#), vol. 2, The Pulpit Commentary (London; New York: Funk & Wagnalls Company, 1909).

Tags: Jn 13:2

Clipped: March 20, 2022

[CB:BAV1611SNCES198A](#): Chapter 13

2 supper. The last supper recorded. See Ap. [157](#).

being ended. In view of v. [26](#), Alford's transl., "supper having been served," is preferable to A.V. and R.V. renderings. It means "supper being laid". Washing would naturally *precede* the meal. Cp. [Luke 7:44](#).

Bullinger, Ethelbert W. *The Companion Bible: Being the Authorized Version of 1611 with the Structures and Notes, Critical, Explanatory and Suggestive and with 198 Appendixes*. Vol. 1. Bellingham, WA: Faithlife, 2018.

Tags: Jn 13:2

Clipped: March 20, 2022

[PNT](#): Chapter XIII

2. Supper being ended. The Revision says, "During the Supper." It is likely that Christ arose near the beginning of the feast, washed the feet, and then sat down again to the feast. See [verse 12](#).

Johnson, Barton Warren. *The People's New Testament: With Explanatory Notes*. St. Louis, MO: Christian Publishing Company, 1891.

Tags: Jn 13:2

Clipped: March 20, 2022

[NT Lk & Jn](#): Chapter 13

2. Supper being ended—It is plain from [25–28](#) that the supper was not ended. The present phrase, as the best scholars now agree, should be rendered *the supper having arrived*, or *being in process*. It appears from Luke's account, that as they took their reclining couches at the table, a strife arose for precedency; and by this is explained the ablution of the apostles' feet by Jesus now performed; namely, as an acted reproof of their emulation, and a lesson of humility and

peace. *The devil ... into the heart of Judas*—The Evangelist intimates by this parenthesis, that while Jesus is dispensing his lessons of love, Satan is instigating Judas' plans of treason.

Whedon, D. D. *Luke–John*. Vol. II. A Popular Commentary on the New Testament. London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1874.

Tags: Jn 13:2

Clipped: March 20, 2022

[CCEPONTVV:MJ](#): Chapter 13

2. And supper being ended [γενομένου]. In this rendering our translators have followed *Luther* and *Beza*, but unfortunately, since from v. [26](#) it seems plain that the supper was not even then ended. The meaning either is, 'And supper being prepared,' or 'And supper going on.' So the same word is used, as *Alford* notices, in [Matt. 26:6](#), "While Jesus was in Bethany" [γενομένου], and in ch. [21:4](#), "when it was morning" [πρωΐας γενομένης]. [Of course, this must be the meaning if the reading γινομένου—in the present tense—be adopted, with *Tischendorf* and *Tregelles*. But the authority for it is scarcely so strong, we judge, as for the received reading, to which *Lachmann* adheres, and in which *Alford* concurs.]

Brown, David, A. R. Fausset, and Robert Jamieson. *A Commentary, Critical, Experimental, and Practical, on the Old and New Testaments: Matthew–John*. Vol. V. London; Glasgow: William Collins, Sons, & Company, Limited, n.d.

Tags: Jn 13:2

Clipped: March 20, 2022

[PHC Jn](#): Chapter 13: Explanatory and Critical Notes

Ver. **2. Supper, etc.**—The reading probably is δείπνου γινομένου, "taking place' (with **κ**, B, L, *Tischendorf*, *Greek Testament*, Ed. VIII., etc.). The meaning seems to be that they had just sat down to supper.

Scott, W. Frank. *John*. The Preacher's Complete Homiletic Commentary. New York; London; Toronto: Funk & Wagnalls Company, 1892.

Tags: Jn 13:2

Clipped: March 20, 2022

[BN Lk, Jn](#): Chapter 13

[2](#). *Supper being ended*. This translation expresses too much. The original means *while they were at supper*; and that this is the meaning is clear from the fact that we find them still eating after this. The Arabic and Persic translations give it this meaning. The Latin Vulgate renders it like the English.

Barnes, Albert. *Notes on the New Testament: Luke & John*. Edited by Robert Frew. London: Blackie & Son, 1884–1885.

Tags: Jn 13:2

Clipped: March 20, 2022

[HBCCNVIV](#): Chapter 13

Verse [2](#). *And supper being ended*] Rather, *δειπνου γενομενου*, *while supper was preparing*. To support this new translation of the words, it may be remarked that, from ver. [26](#) and [30](#), it appears that the supper was *not* then *ended*: nay, it is probable that it was not then *begun*; because the washing of feet (ver. [5](#)) was usually practised by the Jews *before* they entered upon their meals, as may be gathered from [Luke 7:44](#), and from the reason of the custom. I think that John wrote, not *γενομενου*, but *γινομενου*, as in BL. *Cant.* and *Origen*, which latter reading is approved by several eminent critics, and should be translated as above. By the *supper* I suppose to be meant, not only the *eating* of it, but the *preparing* and *dressing* of it, and doing all things necessary previously to the eating of it.

Clarke, Adam. *The Holy Bible with a Commentary and Critical Notes*. New Edition. Vol. 5. Bellingham, WA: Faithlife Corporation, 2014.

Tags: Jn 13:2

Clipped: March 20, 2022

[EB Lk–Ga](#): Chapter VI: The Foot-Washing (John 13:1–17)

In order to account for what follows, the precise time is defined in the words “supper being served” or “supper-time having arrived”; not, as in the Authorised Version, “supper being ended,” which plainly was not the case;* nor, as in the Revised Version, “during supper.” The difficulty about washing the feet could not have arisen after or during supper, but only as the guests entered and reclined at table. In Palestine, as in other countries of the same latitude, shoes were not universally worn, and were not worn at all within doors; and where some protection to the foot was worn, it was commonly a mere sandal, a sole tied on with a thong. The upper part of the foot was thus left exposed, and necessarily became heated and dirty with the fine and scorching dust of the roads. Much discomfort was thus produced, and the first

duty of a host was to provide for its removal. A slave was ordered to remove the sandals and wash the feet.[†] And in order that this might be done, the guest either sat on the couch appointed for him at table, or reclined with his feet protruding beyond the end of it, that the slave, coming round with the pitcher and basin,[‡] might pour cool water gently over them. So necessary to comfort was this attention that our Lord reproached the Pharisee who had invited Him to dinner with a breach of courtesy because he had omitted it.

Dods, Marcus. "The Gospel of St. John." In *The Expositor's Bible: Luke to Galatians*, edited by W. Robertson Nicoll, 5:212. Expositor's Bible. Hartford, CT: S.S. Scranton Co., 1903.

Tags: Jn 13:1–17

Clipped: March 20, 2022

[CHB](#): Chapter 13: The Last Supper

2. Supper being ended] or, 'during supper' (RV). But inasmuch as feet-washing took place at the beginning of a meal, much is to be said for the rendering, 'supper having been served.'

Dummelow, J. R., ed. *A Commentary on the Holy Bible*. New York: The Macmillan Company, 1936.

Tags: Jn 13:2

Clipped: March 20, 2022

[BEMVIXVI](#): Chapter the Thirteenth

1, 2. now ... passo,^a of wh. Jo. gives no acc., his readers' familiarity with it fr. the other Evangs. being assumed. hour,^b oft. spoken of and anticipated. loved,^c practically, ardently, visibly, unchangeably. end, *i.e.*, of life: His and theirs. supper ... ended, *see Gk.*, "being prepared," or "going on." devil ... him,^d this *bef.* the washing, yet our Lord was not moved fr. His purpose.^e put ... heart, lit. *having cast or thrust* as a dart.^f

Gray, James Comper. *Biblical Encyclopedia and Museum*. Vol. 12. Hartford, CT: The S. S. Scranton Co., 1900.

Tags: Jn 13:1–2

Clipped: March 20, 2022

[AROETGSNCJC:ISPEN](#): Chapter 13

2. *Being come.*] See [Matth. 13:21](#); [26:6](#); [Mark 6:2](#); [14:17](#); [Luke 4:42](#); [John 21:4](#); [Acts 12:18](#); [16:35](#); [21:40](#). That supper was not *ended*, appears from v. [26](#), [27](#), [28](#).

Newcome, William. *An Attempt toward Revising Our English Translation of the Greek Scriptures, or the New Covenant of Jesus Christ: And toward Illustrating the Sense by Philological and Explanatory Notes*. Vol. 1. Dublin; London: John Exshaw; J. Johnson, 1796.

Tags: Jn 13:2

Clipped: March 20, 2022

[MPCHBV13](#): Chapter 13

And supper being ended; possibly it were better translated, while they were at supper, or in supper time, Greek, δείπνου γενομένου

Poole, Matthew. *Annotations upon the Holy Bible*. Vol. 3. New York: Robert Carter and Brothers, 1853.

Tags: Jn 13:2

Clipped: March 20, 2022

[NPNF1.7](#): Tractate LV

3. "And the supper," he says, "having taken place,⁴ and the devil having now put into the heart of Judas Iscariot, Simon's son, to betray Him, [Jesus] knowing that the Father had given all things into His hands, and that He has come from God, and is going to God; He riseth from supper, and layeth aside His garments; and took a towel, and girded Himself. After that He poureth water into a basin, and began to wash the disciples' feet, and to wipe them with the towel wherewith He was girded." We are not to understand by the supper having taken place, as if it were already finished and over; for it was still going on when the Lord rose and washed His disciples' feet. For He afterwards sat down again, and gave the morsel [sop] to His betrayer, implying certainly that the supper was not yet over, or, in other words, that there was still bread on the table. Therefore, by supper having taken place, is meant that it was now ready, and laid out on the table for the use of the guests.

Augustine of Hippo. "Lectures or Tractates on the Gospel according to St. John." In *St. Augustin: Homilies on the Gospel of John, Homilies on the First Epistle of John, Soliloquies*, edited by Philip Schaff, translated by John Gibb and James Innes, 7:300. A Select Library of the Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers of the Christian Church, First Series. New York: Christian Literature Company, 1888.

Tags: Aug., Tract. in ev. Joan. 55.3

Clipped: March 20, 2022
