

# 119

## MINISTRIES

*“The following is a direct script of a teaching that is intended to be presented via video, incorporating relevant text, slides, media, and graphics to assist in illustration, thus facilitating the presentation of the material. In some places, this may cause the written material to not flow or sound rather awkward in some places. In addition, there may be grammatical errors that are often not acceptable in literary work. We encourage the viewing of the video teachings to complement the written teaching you see below.”*

### **Answering Your Questions**

**(New Moon, Prayer, Washing Feet, Acoustical Challenges in 1st Century, etc.)**

119 Ministries receives thousands of emails a year. And as you would expect, many of those emails contain questions. Quite often, we repeatedly receive various forms of the same questions. Ideally, we would like to have a teaching available for every question we receive, however, some questions can be answered rather briefly, and do not require a regular length teaching to serve as a response. That is the purpose of this teaching series, to offer an easily available vehicle to answer your common questions.

In this teaching series, we will read a collection of hand-picked questions that we have received via email. Then, for whatever it is worth, we will offer a brief response, hopefully leading those interested in the right direction to find the answers that they are seeking.

So, let's get started. First question:

**Do you all have a teaching or information on Rosh Chodesh/New Moon? How should it be celebrated or observed.**

This is a great question. First, let's read some verses related to the first day of the month.

#### **Numbers 10:10**

On the day of your gladness also, and at your appointed feasts **and at the beginnings of your months**, you shall **blow the trumpets** over your burnt offerings and over the sacrifices of your peace offerings. They shall be a reminder of you before your God: I am the Lord [YHWH] your God.”

#### **Numbers 28:11-15**

“At the **beginnings of your months**, you shall offer a **burnt offering** to the Lord [YHWH]: two bulls from the herd, one ram, seven male lambs a year old without

blemish; also three tenths of an ephah of fine flour for a grain offering, mixed with oil, for each bull, and two tenths of fine flour for a grain offering, mixed with oil, for the one ram; and a tenth of fine flour mixed with oil as a grain offering for every lamb; for a burnt offering with a pleasing aroma, a food offering to the Lord [YHWH]. Their drink offerings shall be half a hin of wine for a bull, a third of a hin for a ram, and a quarter of a hin for a lamb. **This is the burnt offering of each month throughout the months of the year.** Also one male goat for a sin offering to the Lord [YHWH]; it shall be offered besides the regular burnt offering and its drink offering.

In these verses we find the instructions surrounding the first day of the month are limited to the blowing of trumpets in connection with various burnt offerings. Specifically, the trumpets themselves are silver trumpets (Numbers 10:2). The purpose of observing the first day of the month appears to be a means to keep the community in sync calendrically. This was so that everyone in Israelite society could be on the same page agriculturally, civically, and religiously. For instance, marking the first day of the month was important in determining the timing of the holy days, the appointed times (Leviticus 23).

These instructions surrounding the first day of the month are obviously tabernacle or temple related activities. For example, some evidences for this include that the instruction to blow the trumpets is given specifically to the sons of Aaron (Num 10:8). It also assumes a “tent of meeting” at which the community would gather when the trumpets are blown (Num 10:3). There are also the additional sacrifices as dictated by the Torah. Given that there is no functioning Earthly priesthood working in the tabernacle or temple today, there is no way to observe these commandments.

When our Messiah returns, leading to a functioning temple once again, these practices will resume just as the Torah dictates. In the meantime, like we do with similar commandments we technically cannot observe without a tabernacle or temple, we can choose to just practice or memorialize these commandments. That is, we can blow silver trumpets to mark these days should we choose to do so, but it is not necessary since we truly cannot observe these commandments in the exact way that the Torah prescribes.

Outside of the day of Trumpets (Yom Teruah) on the first day of the seventh month, which included some additional commandments such as resting, the first day of the month in general does not contain any special instructions for the torah observant person today. There is some evidence that may suggest that the first day of the month may have traditionally included festival activity of some nature (1 Samuel 20). However, this would only be a historical tradition. Some continue such tradition by scheduling a family or fellowship meal or gathering on the first day of the Biblical month. This is certainly acceptable, as long as it is recognized as a tradition and not a commandment.

The Mishnah states that special synagogue services were held at each new moon. It also specifically distinguishes the new moon from the commanded festivals (m.Megillah 4.2). This might indicate that earlier Jews customarily regarded the new moon as a special day while not considering it a “festival” like the commanded festivals of Leviticus 23. This makes sense seeing as how the new moons are distinguished from the festivals in the Bible itself.

Some may point to Amos 8:4-6 and suggest that the new moon is intended to be a Sabbath. However, we know that the Torah does not declare the new moon to be a Sabbath. Thus, either the new moon became a rest day by tradition, or more likely, Amos 8 is referring to the Day of Trumpets which is both a new moon and a rest day.

Let's proceed to the next question.

**It seems to be more and more prevalent that believers and non-believers agree with the teaching that God answers silent prayers. I have not found and biblical teaching backing either belief. Can you point me to a teaching or could your group do a teaching regarding this?**

It is without question that God does hear “silent prayers”—that is, prayers that are not said aloud—and he is willing to answer them. While most examples of prayer that we see in Scripture seem to be spoken aloud, there are some notable exceptions.

For instance, Hannah's prayer was spoken only “in her heart” and “her voice was not heard” (1 Samuel 1:13), yet God answered it. The Psalms say that God already knows what the prayer is “before a word is on my tongue” (Psalm 139:4), which logically suggests that God hears “unspoken prayers.” God “knows the thoughts of man” (Psalm 94:11). Certainly, he can hear prayers that are prayed via our thoughts.

If prayers must only be said aloud, we would expect to see that in Scripture. But the only types of prayers that are criticized are “prayers” said with the intention of being seen by others (Matthew 6:5), prayers that are reduced to mere “empty phrases” (Matthew 6:7-8), or prayers from a person that rejects the commandments of God (Proverbs 28:9).

The next question is one we receive quite often.

**Is feet washing required at Passover?**

At what is often called the Last Supper, we find that Messiah Yeshua washed the feet of the disciples. There exists some debate as to whether the Last Supper was a Passover meal. For whatever it is worth, 119 Ministries takes the position that the Last Supper was not a Passover meal. For those that are interested, that understanding is presented in the 119 teaching “[\*Was the Last Supper a Passover Meal?\*](#)” Thus, the question we are addressing assumes that the Last Supper was a Passover meal.

Regardless of the exact timing of the Last Supper as it relates to the Passover meal, the question here is whether Yeshua commanded us to literally wash the feet of others. Let's read.

**John 13:1-11**

Now before the Feast of the Passover, when Jesus [Yeshua] knew that his hour had come to depart out of this world to the Father, having loved his own who were in the world, he loved them to the end. During supper, when the devil had already put it into the heart of Judas Iscariot, Simon's son, to betray him, Jesus [Yeshua], knowing that the Father had

given all things into his hands, and that he had come from God and was going back to God, rose from supper. He laid aside his outer garments, and taking a towel, tied it around his waist. Then he poured water into a basin and began to wash the disciples' feet and to wipe them with the towel that was wrapped around him. He came to Simon Peter, who said to him, "Lord, do you wash my feet?" Jesus [Yeshua] answered him, "What I am doing you do not understand now, but afterward you will understand." Peter said to him, "You shall never wash my feet." Jesus [Yeshua] answered him, "If I do not wash you, you have no share with me." Simon Peter said to him, "Lord, not my feet only but also my hands and my head!" Jesus [Yeshua] said to him, "The one who has bathed does not need to wash, except for his feet, but is completely clean. And you are clean, but not every one of you." For he knew who was to betray him; that was why he said, "Not all of you are clean."

Following this, Yeshua gave us an instruction:

### **John 13:14-15**

If I then, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet. For I have given you an example, that you **also should do just as I have done to you.**

Thus, some have concluded that we are to wash each other's feet either the day before the Passover meal or on the Passover meal (depending on how one views the nature of the Last Supper).

But, is that what Yeshua really intended? Let's read the surrounding context. Pay particular attention to the highlighted text.

### **John 13:12-17**

When he had washed their feet and put on his outer garments and resumed his place, he said to them, "**Do you understand what I have done to you?** You call me Teacher and Lord, and you are right, for so I am. If I then, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet. **For I have given you an example,** that you also should do just as I have done to you. Truly, truly, I say to you, **a servant is not greater than his master,** nor is a messenger greater than the one who sent him. If you know these things, **blessed are you if you do them.**

Yeshua used the washing of feet as an example of a higher principle he wanted the disciples to learn...that is we should serve others regardless of who we are or who we think we are. Yeshua is clear that it is the example he set forth that he wants us to follow.

**For I have given you an example,** that you also should do just as I have done to you.

Then Yeshua defines what that example or lesson is:

### **John 13:16**

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

The lesson or example here is that Yeshua is the master, yet he serves others. Thus, we should do the same per Yeshua's teaching. Yeshua chose the washing of feet to illustrate this example, however, we can serve others in any number of ways.

That is why Yeshua asked **"Do you understand what I have done to you?"** The obvious answer is that Yeshua just washed their feet, and it could be assumed that the washing of feet is what he literally wants us to do, but that is not the lesson. The lesson is not a literal washing of feet. Yeshua's lesson can include the washing of the feet, but that is not the point.

Yeshua's question reveals that the point of the teaching is intended to be beyond the literal. The lesson is to serve others no matter who you are or who you think you are...we should humble ourselves in servitude. What Yeshua did was serve others in love, even in a way we may feel is beneath us, and that is what Yeshua wants us to specifically do. As the Torah already teaches, and Yeshua is teaching the same here, we are to love others. In doing this, Yeshua declares that we will be blessed.

The timing of this lesson is practical. Yeshua knew he was about to die on the cross, which was the ultimate example of servitude and loving others, and this lesson of humbling yourself in sacrifice for the love of others is clearly a lesson Yeshua wanted to teach at the Last Supper.

So when are we supposed to follow Yeshua's example here? Did Yeshua want us to only follow his example the day before or the day of the Passover meal? Of course not!

Not only are we to serve others no matter who we are, but we are to do this every day, not just on or before the Passover meal.

Let's move on to the next question.

**Sometimes I ponder goofy things, but aside from a miracle, can you tell me how a crowd of 5,000+ could actually hear Yeshua when he spoke? No sound stage & equipment were available then. Or, was it just simply a miracle?**

This question is not goofy at all, but quite reasonable. In today's modern world we are familiar with electronic amplification of sound as an effective means to present to thousands, or in some cases, tens of thousands. It is hard for us to imagine how such a large crowd could hear just one man speak without the assistance of today's technology.

So in the instance in which Yeshua spoke to thousands of people, how was he heard?

Archaeologist Cobbey Crisler, together with acoustic engineer Mark Myles, conducted tests near Tell Hum, site of ancient Capernaum. (See B. Cobbey Crisler, "The Acoustics and Crowd Capacity of Natural Theaters in Palestine," *Biblical Archaeologist* (Dec 1976), pp. 128-41.)

There are more than a few coves near Capernaum, however, there is one in particular that serves well as a natural amphitheater, and could have been the site of Yeshua speaking from the boat (Luke 5:1-3).

In 1976, acoustical tests revealed that a crowd of five to seven thousand people could have clearly heard a speaker from a boat near the center of the cove via natural sound amplification.

*(For editing process) Archaeologist Crisler and acoustic engineer Myles conducting sound tests at Tell Hum, site near ancient Capernaum, 1976.*



(For editing process) Meticulous measurements were made in the experiments

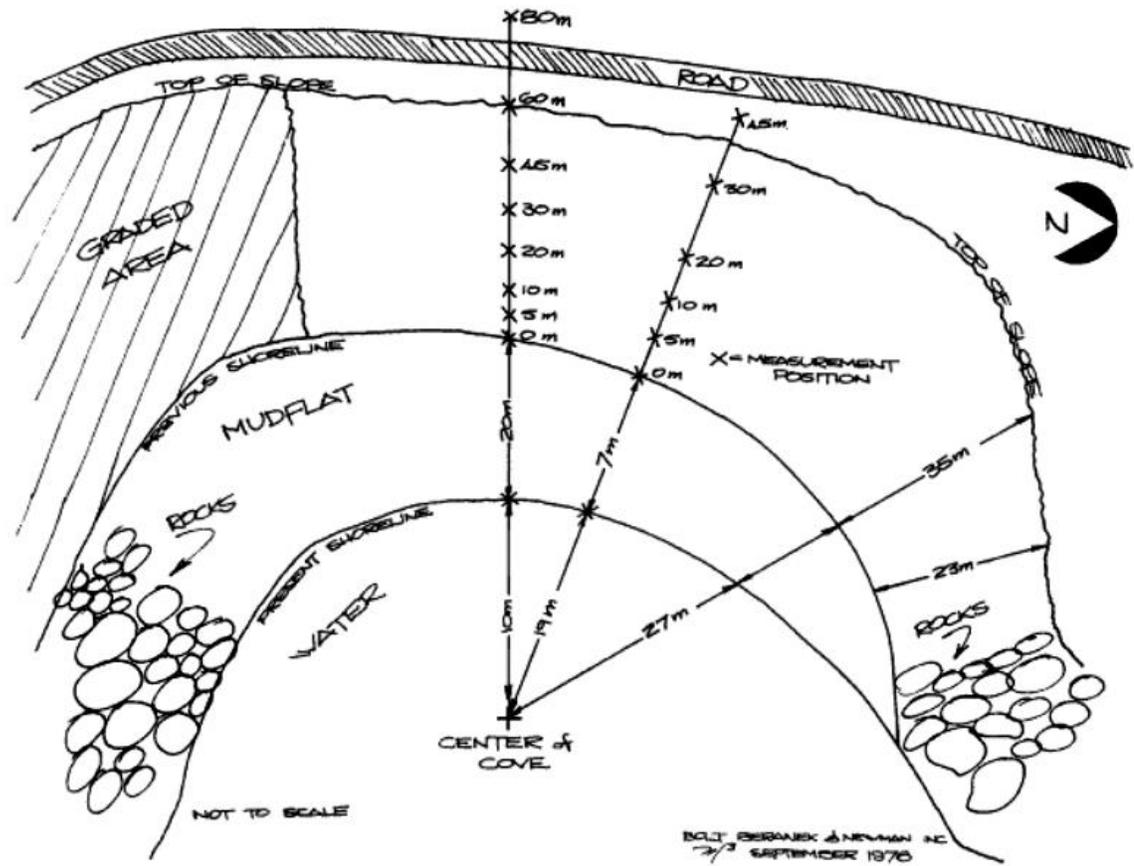


CHART C. Galilee—Site Sketch of "Capernaum Amphitheatre."

Natural geographical amphitheatres were often used as a means for government and/or religious leaders to present messages to large gatherings of people. Eventually, the natural amplification properties were studied and successfully imitated in man-made structures.

*(For editing process) Ancient Roman-built Amphitheatre, making use of similar acoustics principles*



We do not know for certain which natural amphitheater settings in the first century were used by Yeshua. However, what we do know is that such geographical marvels did exist and were commonly used to address large crowds in the first century. There is no shortage of archeological research regarding the existence of natural amphitheatres in the ancient world. There is no reason to suggest that Yeshua did not simply use these natural wonders for his own purposes.

That's all of the questions that we have for this part of the series. If this series and presentation format interested you, there are many more questions we will be covering in the subsequent parts of this teaching series. As always, if you have questions for 119 Ministries, please use the Contact Us page offered on our website, <http://119ministries.com/contact-us>. And if you do contact us, thank you for your patience as our team works to respond.

*We pray you have been blessed by this teaching.*

*Remember, continue to test everything.*

*Shalom!*

*For more on this and other teachings, please visit us at [www.testeverything.net](http://www.testeverything.net)*

**Shalom, and may Yahweh bless you in walking in the whole Word of God.**

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