

Mark 7:1-8. Traditional Setup. The religious right and their professor minions were closely observing Yeshua, gathering closely they noted His students were eating without washing their hands—a moderate violation of norms. You see, faithful believers always wash their hands ceremoniously according to the traditions of their ancestors. Even when coming home from Walmart, they don't eat until they wash. Dining couches, cups, pitchers & kettles are among the objects they wash as well.

So, thinking they had Yeshua on the spot, they asked *Why don't Your disciples live according to what's right—instead they eat with unclean hands.*

The Christ was not impressed with their observational skills—*Isaiah was right when he prophesied about you, you hypocrites.* Quoting Isaiah 29:13, He said, *These people honor Me with their lips, but their raison d'être is far away, and certainly not centered in Me. They waste their worship for Me as their pedagogy is a mere collection of rules created and taught by humans.* Yeshua continued, *You have pushed away the commands of the Lord Our God, and have become seduced by human tradition.*

- Q Why was it important to wash your hands before you eat? Why is it important to wash your hands before you eat? To what extent is this norm a matter of manners or morals?
- Q What rules of manners, traditions, or cultural norms make our worship vain?
- Q What people traditions have permitted people to “let go of the commands of God?”

**MARK 7:1-8**

The Pharisees and some of the teachers of the law who had come from Jerusalem gathered around Jesus and <sup>2</sup>saw some of his disciples eating food with hands that were “unclean,” that is, unwashed. <sup>3</sup>(The Pharisees and all the Jews do not eat unless they give their hands a ceremonial washing, holding to the tradition of the elders. <sup>4</sup>When they come from the marketplace they do not eat unless they wash. And they observe many other traditions, such as the washing of cups, pitchers and kettles.)

<sup>5</sup>So the Pharisees and teachers of the law asked Jesus, “Why don't your disciples live according to the tradition of the elders instead of eating their food with ‘unclean’ hands?”

<sup>6</sup>He replied, “Isaiah was right when he prophesied about you hypocrites; as it is written:

“ ‘These people honor me with their lips, but their hearts are far from me. <sup>7</sup>They worship me in vain; their teachings are but rules taught by men.’ [Isaiah 29:13]

<sup>8</sup>You have let go of the commands of God and are holding on to the traditions of men.”



Mark 7:9-23. *Traditional Resolution*. Jesus was not through with the tongue lashing... *You've got to be kidding—you set aside God's commands to setup your own traditions. For example...*

*The Scripture says to honor your father & mother, and anyone who disrespects his father or mother is to be summarily executed.*

*But here's what you do—you dedicate resources [corban = Hebrew for "offering"] to the temple so you don't have to take care of your mother and/or father. You quash, mock, and nullify the very word of God by your tradition. You all are just filled with this kind of nonsense.*

Jesus called the crowd closer and said...

*Listen to Me, everyone—understand. Nothing outside a person can make a person unclean by going in to a person. Rather, it is what comes out of a person that makes a person "unclean."*

Afterwards, He left the crowd and once inside, His disciples expressed their doubts about this parable. Jesus was not impressed...

*Are you really that dim-witted? Don't you see that nothing which enters a person can make him "unclean." Why? It doesn't become part of his *raison d'être*, but enters the stomach and then goes out. (Mark notes here that Yeshua has now declared all foods "clean.")*

Continuing, Yeshua said, *What comes out of a person is what makes a person unclean. It is from within our *raison d'être* comes evil thoughts, sexual immorality, theft, murder, adultery, greed, malice, deceit, lewdness, envy, slander, arrogance, and folly. All this evil come from inside, and make a person "unclean."*

Q Why did the Lord get rid of all rules regarding kosher here?

Q Why did the Lord create rules for eating certain foods, and avoiding others?

Q Which of one of the items in the list of heart-driven sins is most often overlooked? Which is most important to maintaining a spiritually healthy relationship with the Lord Our God?

## MARK 7:9-23

And he said to them: "You have a fine way of setting aside the commands of God in order to observe [some mss read *setup*] your own traditions! <sup>10</sup>For Moses said, 'Honor your father and your mother,' [Exodus 20:12] and, 'Anyone who curses his father or mother must be put to death.' [Exodus 21:17] <sup>11</sup>But you say that if a man says to his father or mother: 'Whatever help you might otherwise have received from me is Corban' (that is, a gift devoted to God), <sup>12</sup>then you no longer let him do anything for his father or mother. <sup>13</sup>Thus you nullify the word of God by your tradition that you have handed down. And you do many things like that."

<sup>14</sup>Again Jesus called the crowd to him and said, "Listen to me, everyone, and understand this. <sup>15</sup>Nothing outside a man can make him 'unclean' by going into him. Rather, it is what comes out of a man that makes him 'unclean.'

<sup>17</sup>After he had left the crowd and entered the house, his disciples asked him about this parable. <sup>18</sup>"Are you so dull?" he asked. "Don't you see that nothing that enters a man from the outside can make him 'unclean'? <sup>19</sup>For it doesn't go into his heart but into his stomach, and then out of his body." (In saying this, Jesus declared all foods "clean.")

<sup>20</sup>He went on: "What comes out of a man is what makes him 'unclean.' <sup>21</sup>For from within, out of men's hearts, come evil thoughts, sexual immorality, theft, murder, adultery, <sup>22</sup>greed, malice, deceit, lewdness, envy, slander, arrogance and folly. <sup>23</sup>All these evils come from inside and make a man 'unclean.' "

Mark 7:24-37. *The "Secret" to Salvation/Redemption*. Yeshua had had enough of this "religious" territory and went to the rather pagan area of Tyre & Sidon. He entered a house there, trying unsuccessfully to keep it on the down low. A mother, a pagan born in Syrian Phoenicia no less, had the temerity to approach Yeshua. She had a little daughter filled with an unclean spirit and came—falling at His feet, she begged Jesus to drive out the demon.

Jesus offered a cliché—**It's evil to take food away from children and give it to dogs. Let the children eat all they want!**

Yes, sire, she replied, but even the dogs under the table eat the children's crumbs.

Then it happened—*For such a response*, Yeshua declared, *you may leave; the unclean spirit has left your daughter!* Of course, when she got home, the King of Kings' declaration was true—she found her, lying on the bed, fully healed.

Leaving Tyre, Yeshua went through pagan Sidon, down to the Lake/Sea of Galilee, and onto the gentile-dominated area of the ten cities (Decapolis). A deaf & virtually mute man was brought to Him—inserting His fingers into the man's ears, He spit, touched the man's tongue. Looking up to heaven, and with a deep sigh, He said to the man—*Be opened!* At once, not only was he able to hear, he was able to speak quite clearly.

Jesus told them to keep this event on the down low, to no avail. The more He told them to be cool, the less they were. Overwhelmed and amazed—they commented: He has done everything well—He even makes the deaf hear, and the mute speak!

- Q Why couldn't the creator of the universe keep His presence secret in Tyre?
- Q How did the pagan woman from Syria of Phoenicia hear about Yeshua?
- Q What did the woman do which satisfied the Lord Our God? Why? Islam.
- Q Why the fingers in the ears, spitting, and touching the man's tongue? ASL! Empathy!
- Q Most importantly (your homework for this week), why "the deep sigh?"

## MARK 7:24-37

Jesus left that place and went to the vicinity of Tyre [some early ms indicate Tyre *and Sidon*]. He entered a house and did not want anyone to know it; yet **he could not keep his presence secret**. <sup>25</sup>In fact, as soon as she heard about him, a woman whose little daughter was possessed by an evil ["unclean"] spirit came and fell at his feet. <sup>26</sup>The woman was a Greek, born in Syrian Phoenicia. She begged Jesus to drive the demon out of her daughter.

<sup>27</sup>"First let the children eat all they want," he told her, "for it is not right to take the children's bread and toss it to their dogs."

<sup>28</sup>"Yes, Lord," she replied, "but even the dogs under the table eat the children's crumbs."

<sup>29</sup>Then he told her, "For such a reply, you may go; the demon has left your daughter."

<sup>30</sup>She went home and found her child lying on the bed, and the demon gone.

<sup>31</sup>Then Jesus left the vicinity of Tyre and went through Sidon, down to the Sea of Galilee and into the region of the Decapolis. <sup>32</sup>There some people brought to him a man who was deaf and could hardly talk, and they begged him to place his hand on the man.

<sup>33</sup>After he took him aside, away from the crowd, Jesus put his fingers into the man's ears. Then he spit and touched the man's tongue. <sup>34</sup>He looked up to heaven and with a deep sigh said to him, "*Ephphatha!*" (which means, "Be opened!"). <sup>35</sup>At this, the man's ears were opened, his tongue was loosened and he began to speak plainly.

<sup>36</sup>Jesus commanded them not to tell anyone. But the more he did so, the more they kept talking about it.

<sup>37</sup>People were overwhelmed with amazement. "He has done everything well," they said. "He even makes the deaf hear and the mute speak."