

Mark 7

Teaching Notes

Chapter 7

Verses 1-5: The Question

(Mark 7:1 Then the Pharisees and some of the scribes came together to Him, having come from Jerusalem.

Mark 7:2 Now when they saw some of His disciples eat bread with defiled, that is, with unwashed hands, they found fault.

Mark 7:3 For the Pharisees and all the Jews do not eat unless they wash their hands in a special way, holding the tradition of the elders.

Mark 7:4 When they come from the marketplace, they do not eat unless they wash. And there are many other things which they have received and hold, like the washing of cups, pitchers, copper vessels, and couches.

Mark 7:5 Then the Pharisees and scribes asked Him, “Why do Your disciples not walk according to the tradition of the elders, but eat bread with unwashed hands?”)

The Pharisees were supposed to be the teachers of the Bible, the shepherds to lead people to God. Instead, they abused that authority: for sinful gain, for financial gain, for personal gain. False teachers for God in public who privately hated God.

The Hostility of the Pharisees:

By this point, the Pharisees were hostile towards Jesus, Jesus’ teachings, and Jesus’ ministry.

- In Mark 3, the Pharisees already accused Jesus of 3 things:
 - Jesus was not from God, rather Satan.
 - Jesus received his power from Satan.
 - Jesus had an unclean spirit.
- They hated God and rejected the redemption in Jesus Christ. And they did everything they could to destroy Jesus’ ministry and Jesus himself.

“The Tradition of the Elders”:

The key word is in verse 3. “The Tradition of the Elders.” There were various practices that the Pharisees and other religious Jews implemented.

At the time, there was a renewal for the Bible; and a strong passion for religious, pure living. There was a high regard for God’s word.

But here’s what was wrong: The traditions of men became “equal to” and in many cases “superior” to the Bible.

One of those traditions is explained here: “the washing of hands” before you eat.

Now, for you and I, we wash our hands before we eat, (*at least some of you do 😊), for sanitary purposes. But for the Pharisees, the washing of hands was not a matter of hygiene, it was a matter of holiness or unholiness.

More Insight with the Pharisees:

For those unfamiliar, the Pharisees were a religious group who gained prominence decades before Christ and especially during the time of Christ. Saul, later the Apostle Paul, came from this hyper-religious group.

One of the primary agendas of the Pharisaical movement was **PURITY**. As you continue through the gospels, you can attach a twisted form of *purity* to everything the Pharisees taught and did.

- Example: The Apostle Paul. To purify the Jewish race from the disease of Jesus Christ and His followers, Saul, before his conversion, made it his objective to exterminate Christianity to maintain the purity of Judaism. But, on his way to do more damage to the early church in Damascus, Saul meets Jesus Christ, repents and believes in Christ.

Skewed Purity:

You shall see here and throughout the scriptures, their purity was not true biblical purity. It was a superimposed, unbiblical view of purity that deceived many. Jesus will now address this skewed purity in the following verses:

Verses 6-7: Jesus' Response, Isaiah

(Mark 7:6 He answered and said to them, "Well did Isaiah prophesy of you hypocrites, as it is written: 'This people honors Me with their lips, But their heart is far from Me.

Mark 7:7 And in vain they worship Me, Teaching as doctrines the commandments of men.')

Prophecy from Isaiah:

First, Jesus quotes Isaiah 29:13. He opens His statement by quoting His prophet, Isaiah. This was an actual prophecy fulfilled in this moment, which is mind blowing. He called the Pharisees *hypocrites*.

Hypocrite:

ὑποκριτής **hupōkritēs**, hoop-ok-ree-tace; an actor under an assumed character (stage-player), i.e. (fig.) a dissembler ("hypocrite"):— hypocrite.

Strong, James. [The New Strong's Dictionary of Hebrew and Greek Words](#), Thomas Nelson, 1996.

Use this Def: This word hypocrite in Greek is an actor, one who acts a role without sincerity, a pretender."

As It Is Written:

"It stands written." - PERMANENT RECORD¹

The Rebuke:

Are there really people who profess great devotion to the Lord but who are inwardly corrupt?²

Their religion was correct. Their ability to reason about religion and explain religion was profound. Their praise and oratory concerning God was like any other. But their hearts were wicked, alienated from God, unholy, and sinful to the core.

Isaiah 29:13, The Rebuke from the Old Testament

- (1). Lip-Service
- (2). Unredeemed hearts
- (3). Vain Worship

¹ Taken from Precept Austin on the Verse.

² William MacDonald

(4). Teaching man's commands like God's commands

To develop this some more from what we read in scripture:

(1). If a heart is not redeemed, there will not be a true relationship with God or true worship.

(2). The unredeemed heart may speak of God, but they do not know God (no matter how religious they may appear).

(3). Because of ultimate rejection of the Lord, the unredeemed heart will develop religion as a smokescreen, so that they will continue to live a sinful life alienated from God.

(4). And strangely, the religious, unredeemed heart is demonically motivated to seduce others into their false doctrine.

- On this fourth one, To give you a visual, consider what the Lord Jesus said concerning the Pharisees in Matthew 23:
- (**Matthew 23:15** *“Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you travel land and sea to win one proselyte, and when he is won, you make him twice as much a son of hell as yourselves.”*)

The issue in these passages is the fourth issue in Isaiah 29,

“Teaching man's commands like God's commands.”

A common question that all of us have is, “Why?” Ultimately, as Jeremiah and Ezekiel discovered in their generation, these false teachers, false prophets, and false spiritual leaders, and false believers pretended to be holy in public but lived wickedly in private. They loved their sin, never repenting and never believing:

Look at what Jesus Christ says about these types of people:

(**John 3:19** *And this is the condemnation, that the light has come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil.*

John 3:20 *For everyone practicing evil hates the light and does not come to the light, lest his deeds should be exposed.*)

Now, the Lord is referring to all people who reject Jesus Christ. This includes those who will never step foot into the church; and people like false teachers and false believers, people like the Pharisees.

Verses 8-9: Jesus' Response, The Distinction

(Mark 7:8 For laying aside the commandment of God, you hold the tradition of men—the washing of pitchers and cups, and many other such things you do.)

Mark 7:9 *He said to them, “All too well you reject the commandment of God, that you may keep your tradition.”)*

Jesus differentiated the commands of God from the traditions of men. The rabbis had built a fence around the Mosaic Law—by erecting their dos and don'ts—in order to prevent the Israelites from breaking the Law. However, rather than protecting it, their legalistic requirements distorted and even contradicted their God-given Law. This is always the problem that accompanies attempting to legislate obedience to God's Word. Legalism involves making laws that God has not made and treating them as equally authoritative as God's Word. The Pharisees had even abandoned God's commandments in favor of their oral traditions, which came from men. Jesus rejected the authority of the oral law

Constable, Tom. [Tom Constable's Expository Notes on the Bible](#). Galaxie Software, 2003, p. Mk 7:8.

Some of you might be thinking, “An example might help with this.” And that's what Jesus gives in the following verses:

Verses 10-13: Man's Commandments Over God's Commandments

(Mark 7:9 He said to them, “All too well you reject the commandment of God, that you may keep your tradition.

Mark 7:10 *For Moses said, ‘Honor your father and your mother’; and, ‘He who curses father or mother, let him be put to death.’*

Mark 7:11 *But you say, ‘If a man says to his father or mother, “Whatever profit you might have received from me is Corban”—’ (that is, a gift to God),*

Mark 7:12 *then you no longer let him do anything for his father or his mother,*

Mark 7:13 *making the word of God of no effect through your tradition which you have handed down. And many such things you do.”)*

The word of God commands that a believer honors his father and mother. In this time, in many cases, adult children had a duty to support their parents in their older age. This “corban-deed” was a practice of individuals who legally claimed and established that everything they owned was legally given and ultimately the possession of the temple in Jerusalem.

So here's the reasoning: even if they “would” offer help to their parents, they “could not help” because God now owned everything that they possessed. But here's the loophole: the release of their financial assets would not be given to the temple until after death. So until death, they had control over the assets and enjoyed the income and benefits from those assets.

This was a sneaky loophole to disobey God's word of honoring one's parents.

Sadly, this oral tradition, “the corban-syndrome” of the Pharisees, something that the Pharisees practiced and promulgated, was exposed by Jesus Christ at this very moment. **What a momentous moment - their deeds were exposed!** Imagine being there. Imagine being a bystander listening to this. Imagine seeing this Rabbi, Jesus challenge and biblically denounce the Pharisees oral tradition. If I were there, I’d look straight to the Pharisees. I’d be so curious to see the response of those who were just exposed. Interestingly, Mark does not highlight that, but Matthew does. The disciples looked to see how the Pharisees responded and later told Jesus, “did you see how the Pharisees responded to that?”

(**Matthew 15:12** *Then His disciples came and said to Him, “Do You know that the Pharisees were offended when they heard this saying?”*)

- **THEY WERE OFFENDED.**

Contemporary Application:

(1). Are You Listening to Pharisees?

All of us attend a theologically-sound, bible-teaching church. Which many of you, that includes me, are very appreciative of. Thank God for churches like ours and many others like ours, particularly Calvary Chapel churches. With that said, I’m not concerned with what you are taught on Sundays or Wednesdays.

This is where I’m concerned:

- Who are you listening to throughout the week on YouTube or your media platform? Some of you don’t listen to sermons or bible teachings much, apart from our church or other trusted Bible teachers. And that’s a very good thing. I think we should all learn from you.

But then, there are some of us, you are like me, where you are inquisitive, you are intrigued, you are drawn to a good sermon “title” or someone else’s teaching on a passage.

Why is that possibly dangerous?

Simply this: Are you listening to Pharisees? Evil, wicked men with an agenda to twist scripture, reinterpret scripture, and create their own false doctrine that

ultimately lead you away from the simplicity of the gospel, the simplicity of the faith, the simplicity of the word of God?

Teachers, with great charisma, who find loopholes in the Bible to, verse 13, “make the word of God of no effect because of these traditions.”

(2). Exposing the Pharisaical Attitudes in Our Lives

In the New Testament, a recurring issue was that Christians were entertaining the views of the Pharisees, entertaining unbiblical traditions, commandments of men, human thoughts rather than God’s word. And the apostles continued to bring people back to the word of God. Every division and dispute needed to be discussed with this overriding question, “What does the Bible say?”

So understand, that even in the Church, there will be those with Pharisaical attitudes. No doubt we are children of God, but there are some of God’s children who are still entertaining the Pharisaical attitudes. We must be careful about this too, to protect the true purity of the church.

Over the years, the church leadership will hear from someone,

- “To be a pure church, we must have church on Saturdays.”
- “To be a pure church, we must not play drums.”
- “To be a pure church, the women must dress a particular way and the men must dress a particular way. To be more specific, to be a pure church, no one is allowed to wear jeans.”
- “To be a pure church, we must not engage in the pagan holiday, Christmas!”
- “To be a pure church, we must only read from the 1611 King James Version of the Bible.”
- And many more! Remember, the Pharisaical attitude is that attitude of “purity.” “to be pure you must do this, do that, and this, and that, and then ...”

Let me first say,

None of these things are biblically true.

We want to be careful that we don't treat our opinions as if they are Bible doctrine. We want to be careful that we don't start putting fences around the truths of God, holding people back from the simplicity of the word of God because of our opinions.

To use one of the examples: As a musician and worship leader, I want to talk about music. The first thing to ask is, "When it comes to songs and worship in God's church, what does God desire?"

(Psalm 68:4 Sing to God, sing praises to His name; Extol Him who rides on the clouds, By His name Yah, And rejoice before Him.)

(Ephesians 5:19 ...in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord,)

Those with the Pharisaical attitude in the church or those listening to "the Pharisees," will then give opinions like,

- I think drums are sinful so drums can't be used to worship God.
- I think modern sounds and melodies are sinful, so modern sounds and melodies can't be used to worship God.
- I think we should sing only hymns because only hymns are pleasing to God.
- A song that pleases God must meet these theological criterias; otherwise, God will not be pleased.
- I think worship should only be 10 minutes at a church service because the teaching of the bible is supremely important."

Who made up those rules, God or man? Men make these unbiblical rules. Jesus told the Pharisees, "you honor the Lord with your lips but your hearts are from me."

True worship is not a method, not a style, not a format, etc.

What is true worship? True worship is a matter of the heart.

Now, Jesus will expand the matter of the heart in the following verses:

Verses 14-16: True Defilement

(Mark 7:14 When He had called all the multitude to Himself, He said to them, “Hear Me, everyone, and understand:

Mark 7:15 *There is nothing that enters a man from outside which can defile him; but the things which come out of him, those are the things that defile a man.*

Mark 7:16 *If anyone has ears to hear, let him hear!”)*

Again, remember Jesus’s method of teaching? He’d share parables which were hidden to the rejecting; but revealed to those who received in faith. He would not explain the parable to those who rejected him. He would explain the parable to those who received him, for those who received him would ask.

Ultimately, what He told the crowds here is, “the real issue is not rules and regulations, the real issue is the matter of the heart.”

So now, to develop this, his disciples will ask him to expound the truth:

Verses 17-19: The Explanation

(Mark 7:17 When He had entered a house away from the crowd, His disciples asked Him concerning the parable.

Mark 7:18 *So He said to them, “Are you thus without understanding also? Do you not perceive that whatever enters a man from outside cannot defile him,*

Mark 7:19 *because it does not enter his heart but his stomach, and is eliminated, thus purifying all foods?”)*

What one eats does not interfere with the person’s inner being, the heart. Sin or holiness cannot be determined by natural things like food consumption.

“Purifying all Foods”:

Jesus made it very clear that food itself does not change the purity or impurity of a man’s heart.

Then the following question is, “What makes a man pure or impure?”

Verses 20-23: What Defiles A Man?

(Mark 7:20 And He said, "What comes out of a man, that defiles a man.

Mark 7:21 For from within, out of the heart of men, proceed evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, murders,

Mark 7:22 thefts, covetousness, wickedness, deceit, lewdness, an evil eye, blasphemy, pride, foolishness.

Mark 7:23 All these evil things come from within and defile a man.")

A person is not defiled by food, rather he is defiled by sins that come forth from his heart: Jesus lists for us the sins: evil thoughts, sexual immorality, theft, murders, adulteries, greed, evil actions, deceit, self-indulgence, envy, slander, pride, and foolishness.

Jesus first mentions, "evil thoughts." Why do I find this noteworthy? It establishes the widest radius possible. If you skipped this one, someone might say, while I'm not a thief, adulterer, or murderer, so therefore, this does not apply to me. No one can say that. All humans are included together here.

Why? Because all humanity without Christ is depraved, full of evil.

Someone may not commit physical adultery with another person, but they can surely commit adultery in their heart, in the mind.

- Because you and I are sons of Adam, a part of the human race, our nature is sinful, bent, controlled, enslaved to sin and evil. The various true sins are listed here in verses 21-22. And only Jesus Christ can forgive us from our sins and set us free from our sins.

And since you came to Christ, you and I can attest to what God did in our minds and our hearts. Our whole mind and heart has changed since we were born-again. Many have told me this over the years, including some of you: Family, friends, and acquaintances have told me, "You are no longer the same person since you converted. You don't think the same, you don't talk the same, you don't want to do the same things you used to, etc." And each of us can give our personal testimonies. He's liberated you from your addictions, from your vices of choice. He's changed your heart. Once, you rejected God, now you love Him and want to please Him, want to serve Him, want to obey Him. You are willing to sacrifice your time and life for Him. You can't wait to see Him one day in heaven."

Why? Because you were born-again. You were given a new heart. You are a new person!

(2 Corinthians 5:17 Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new.)

The old you is gone, controlled and enslaved by sin.

The new man or woman is here, filled and alive in Jesus Christ.

And because the Holy Spirit came to live inside of you:

CSB: (Romans 8:8 *Those who are in the flesh cannot please God.*

Romans 8:9 *You, however, are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if indeed the Spirit of God lives in you. If anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he does not belong to him.*

Romans 8:10 *Now if Christ is in you, the body is dead because of sin, but the Spirit gives life because of righteousness.*

Romans 8:11 *And if the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead lives in you, then he who raised Christ from the dead will also bring your mortal bodies to life through his Spirit who lives in you.)*

The Spirit of God is now leading your life. This new heart of yours is possessed by God and led by God.

Jesus was teaching His disciples that God came to rescue sinners, to redeem sinners, to liberate them from sin by the blood of Jesus Christ spilled on the Cross.

The people were familiar with the Pharisees' false doctrine, a wicked religion, a religion filled with rules and regulations. The people knew this twisted doctrine, knew the twisted version of the Bible, the same Bible you and I read.

And so, when Jesus Christ came with the simple gospel, not only did it expose the false doctrine of the Pharisees, but it gave sinners like you and I the truth that we can be redeemed to God, the one who created us and loved us. Jesus Christ came to declare the true gospel and redeem sinners to Himself 😊!

With everything we studied, do you now see how comforting Jesus' words are in Matthew 11:28-30?

(Matthew 11:28 *Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.*

Matthew 11:29 *Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls.*

Matthew 11:30 *For My yoke is easy and My burden is light.”)*

PART 2 - DECEMBER 3, 2023

Introduction:

Verses 24-30: Moments in Tyre and Sidon

(Mark 7:24 *From there He arose and went to the region of Tyre and Sidon. And He entered a house and wanted no one to know it, but He could not be hidden.*

Mark 7:25 *For a woman whose young daughter had an unclean spirit heard about Him, and she came and fell at His feet.*

Mark 7:26 *The woman was a Greek, a Syro-Phoenician by birth, and she kept asking Him to cast the demon out of her daughter.*

Mark 7:27 *But Jesus said to her, “Let the children be filled first, for it is not good to take the children’s bread and throw it to the little dogs.”*

Mark 7:28 *And she answered and said to Him, “Yes, Lord, yet even the little dogs under the table eat from the children’s crumbs.”*

Mark 7:29 *Then He said to her, “For this saying go your way; the demon has gone out of your daughter.”*

Mark 7:30 *And when she had come to her house, she found the demon gone out, and her daughter lying on the bed.)*

Mark 7:24-30 reveals God's compassion for two individuals, this demon-possessed girl and her mother.

Before we look at this account of God's personal compassion to these two, I want us to see that Mark 7:24-30 is much larger in biblical significance. Read again verse 24,

Verse 24a: A Momentous Shift

(Mark 7:24 From there He arose and went to the region of Tyre and Sidon. And He entered a house and wanted no one to know it, but He could not be hidden.)

The First Sign of the Shift: Use of Words

I want us to look at the first half of verse 24 for the next few minutes. It has great significance to the trajectory of God's plan.

When reading Mark 7:24 in the Greek, this verses's first word is (ὄέ **dě**, *deh*), translated in scripture as "now."

Why is that significant? Up until this point, when starting a new paragraph, a new account of Jesus' teachings, acts, or miracles, Mark used the Greek word (καί **kai**, *kahee*), typically translated as "And." For example, Mark 3:1, "**And** He entered the synagogue again." Mark 3:13, "**And** He went up on the mountain to pray." The fact that Mark uses the Greek word (ὄέ **dě**, *deh*) instead is noteworthy. Also in Mark 7:24, you see the word, *went*, which is also noteworthy.

The verb for "went" (Gk. *apēlthen*) is somewhat stronger than the normal Greek verb *erchesthai* and in Mark tends to signal a decisive departure.

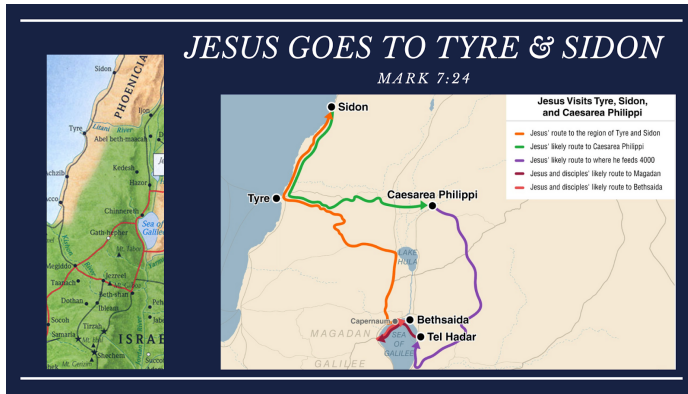
Edwards, James R. [The Gospel according to Mark](#). Eerdmans; Apollos, 2002, p. 216.

The Point: These two Greek words were intentionally placed to reveal a momentous shift in the ministry of Jesus.

- Side note: Here's the thing. While the Greek helps us to see the significant forcefulness by change of words, you don't need to know Greek to understand why these verses are a momentous shift in the ministry of Jesus. It will become obvious with other Biblical truths.

Recall, the events that took place in the previous verses, vv 1-23, occurred in Galilee (in Israel). Now, the events that take place here in vv-30 are in Tyre and Sidon. **Why is that significant?** Tyre and Sidon are Gentile territory.

(Graphic 1)



Ancient Tyre and Sidon were two powerful Phoenician cities. These two ancient port cities are located in modern-day Lebanon. They are close to Israel, still, they are outside of the borders of Israel:

Why is that important?

Matthew records the same account of what we read here. Quoting Matthew helps us in understanding the significance: In speaking to the Phoenician woman Jesus said,

(Matthew 15:24 But He [Jesus] answered and said, "I was not sent except to the lost sheep of the house of Israel.")

Jesus revealed speaking to the woman, that His **primary objective** was to reach the Jewish people, not Gentiles.

It's clear that in Jesus' first coming, at a national level the Jewish people rejected him. This is confirmed in the NT (John 1:11).

Yet as the book of Acts records, there was a remnant of Jews who did believe.

There's another momentous shift in scripture. It's parallel in many ways. It helps us understand what's happening in this moment:

Acts 10: The Similarity with Peter

In Acts 10, a few years after Christ's ascension, God calls the Apostle Peter to open the doors of the gospel to the Gentiles, non-Jews. Before that, the gospel was essentially limited to the Jews and Samaritans. So at the perfect time, it was now time for a momentous shift. The gospel will go and be heard and received among non-Jews!

Interestingly, in Acts 10, God uses the same truth in Mark 7 to explain this shift: Look at what God tells Peter in,

(Acts 10:15 And a voice spoke to him again the second time, "What God has cleansed you must not call common.")

After this, the Holy Spirit commands Peter to go with Gentile men sent by Cornelius to share the gospel to Cornelius and his household. After Cornelius and his family believe in Christ, **everything changes**. The doors of salvation open to the Gentiles.

Initially, this was shocking to the early church. In response to all of this, look at what the early church leaders said:

(Acts 11:17 If therefore God gave them the same gift as He gave us when we believed on the Lord Jesus Christ, who was I that I could withstand God?)

Acts 11:18 When they heard these things they became silent; and they glorified God, saying, "Then God has also granted to the Gentiles repentance to life.")

In God's providence, for the years by the point of Acts 11, Paul was born-again and undergoing personal discipleship by Jesus Christ Himself. Shortly after the door opens to the Gentiles through Peter, Barnabas, an early church leader, goes to find Paul. It is then the momentous shift in the book of Acts takes place. The accounts of the Apostle Paul and others become the focus of the book of Acts, for Paul became the Apostle to the Gentiles.

Now coming back to Mark 7, go back and consider Mark 7:18-19, two verses in last week's study. Jesus re-reveals the truth that the purity of a man's heart is not determined by food.

(Mark 7:18 So He said to them, "Are you thus without understanding also? Do you not perceive that whatever enters a man from outside cannot defile him,

Mark 7:19 because it does not enter his heart but his stomach, and is eliminated, thus purifying all foods?")

Here's the comparison to see that is clear:

Jesus in Mark 7 establishes again the truth that salvation is by faith alone. Salvation is a matter of the heart. In response to this revelation, He goes to Tyre and Sidon!

Peter in Acts 10 is shown by Jesus again that salvation is by faith alone. Using the same metaphor of clean and unclean food, He shows Peter that the gift of

salvation and the gift of the Holy Spirit is not exclusive to the Jewish race, it is also available to the Gentiles. In response to the vision of Acts, the Holy Spirit sends Peter to Cornelius in Caesarea.

Already here, Mark is pointing out that Jesus is indicating Israel's final rejection of their Messiah and indicating that the ministry and salvation of the Gentiles is God's will.

So, when you read Mark 7:24 that Jesus went to Tyre and Sidon after His revelation of "faith alone," you see the **MOMENTOUS SHIFT**. **You start to see the plan of God unfold**: That He was opening the doors of salvation to non-Jews, people like you and me.

Back to the text:

In what personal way is all of this unfolded? Jesus ministering to one Gentile woman.

- This woman had no idea that her personal story not only had personal significance, it had cosmic-level significance with reference to God's plan of salvation for the Gentiles.
- So now, let's shift to the personal miracle of Jesus for this one Gentile woman:

Verse 24b: The Secrecy

(Mark 7:24 From there He arose and went to the region of Tyre and Sidon. And He entered a house and wanted no one to know it, but He could not be hidden.)

A good question that any of us can have is, "Why the secrecy?" Why did he not want the Gentiles to know where he was?

Another good question is, "Whose house did Jesus enter?" Was he in the house of a Jew or Gentile? With whom and what was he sharing among the Gentiles before the Syro-Phoenician showed up in the account?

- Interestingly, the Bible is silent on all our questions. So, we keep moving forward.

Verses 25: The Request And Issue

(Mark 7:25 *For a woman whose young daughter had an unclean spirit heard about Him, and she came and fell at His feet.*

Mark 7:26 *The woman was a Greek, a Syro-Phoenician by birth, and she kept asking Him to cast the demon out of her daughter.*

Mark 7:27 *But Jesus said to her, “Let the children be filled first, for it is not good to take the children’s bread and throw it to the little dogs.”)*

What does the woman request of Jesus? That her daughter be delivered from this demonic-possession.

How Old Was This Girl?

How old was the daughter of this woman?

The Greek word here, *thygatrion*, was also used in reference to Jarius’s daughter in Mark 5, verse 23. So, it could be safe to imagine that this girl was around 12 years old.

Before we study Jesus’ response, I think it’s valuable to think about demonic possession for a moment by answering 2 questions:

(1). Can people still be demon-possessed today? Answer: Yes.

- Not just based on experiential evidence, but more certain is the Bible makes it clear that demon-possession still exists today.
- Jesus said in Mark 16:17 that believers, the Church of Christ, will receive power from God to deliver people from demonic possession.
 - Look at the book of Acts. You will see that after Christ ascended, demonic possession was present; and people were delivered by those early church believers.
- Yes: People are still demon-possessed today.
- And, understand that God will use some of us as His tools to deliver people from demonic possession and oppression.

(2). Can children be demonic-possessed? Yes.

- Soon, in Mark 9 we will study another account of a demon-possessed boy. So here in Mark 7 and then in Mark 9, it is crystal clear that children can be demonically-oppressed and demonically-possessed.

Before we look at the response of Jesus, I want to give an application for the parents in this room:

Application for Parents:

Be careful what you allow into your home. Be careful what you allow your children to see. Be careful what you allow your children to participate in.

Sometimes, the demonic-realm is opened to a child because of doors their parents opened. Other times, the demonic-realm is opened by the child. In some cases, the parents did not protect their children. And in other cases, the parents were simply unaware.

The Powers At Work Today:

The Bible says in the Tribulation to come on the earth after the Church is raptured that demonic activity and witchcraft will reach its highest level of engagement. We are told in Revelation 9 that all of humanity in the Tribulation will be engaged in witchcraft.

And so, leading up to that time, we can presume that there will be a massive increase of witchcraft and sorcery in these last days. And that's not just a presumption anymore. That's our current reality. And adults aren't the only ones engaging in witchcraft and sorcery in these last days... It's also children.

Again, speaking to the parents with underage children:

Are you aware of what your children are doing on their cell phones, computers, social media, etc.? Are you aware of their online activity? Are you aware of the movies, shows, and videos they are watching, possibly behind your backs? Because children can be demonically oppressed and possessed, it is your duty to do your best to protect your children from opening demonic doors.

Think about this girl in Mark 7. I'm curious about her origin story. I'm curious why she became demon-possessed?

- Was it her mom's negligence? Was it a door her mom opened? Was it the daughter's fascination with the realm of spirits? Was it a door the little girl opened which her mother was unaware of?

With that said, I want to remind you of another truth:

You can be the best and most godly parent, and still your child can turn out to be like this girl.

Now, again, none of us are perfect. Some of you parents converted years after the birth of your children. Some of you parents converted after your children become adults. Maybe some of you introduced your children to witchcraft and sorcery which you now regret since Christ redeemed you. Maybe some of you never introduced your children to witchcraft and sorcery but your underage or adult child is now under the influence of other spirits.

Whether your children were raised in a Christian home or not, there are regrets and self-infliction that any loving parent has when they see their children come under any other influence besides the Holy Spirit.

Let's expand this a bit more:

- When your young or older children are under the influence of the demonic.
- When your children are under the influence of alcoholic or drug substances.
- When your children are slaves to sins like anger, homosexuality, adultery, covetousness.

Biblically-speaking, just because someone is not possessed by demons does not mean that they are not under demonic influence. The Bible teaches us this valuable truth: Comparing the believer and non-believer, the Bible says in, *(1 John 5:19 We know that we are of God, and the whole world lies under the sway of the wicked one.)*

And speaking of the non-believer, the Bible says:

(2 Corinthians 4:3 But even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing, 2 Corinthians 4:4 whose minds the god of this age [the devil] has blinded, who do not believe, lest the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine on them.)

Whether your underage unconverted children who have now reached that age of accountability or your unconverted adult children, if they are not born-again, under the leading and control of the Holy Spirit, they are blinded and controlled

by demonic entities, PERIOD.

Remember, that every human being has a free will of their own, including our children, no matter how perfect of a Christian home they may find themselves in.

The Woman's Desperation:

We don't know the background of this woman. We don't know if she had or did not have something to do with her daughter's demonic possession. But what's crystal clear is that this woman is desperately hurting, hurting because her daughter is losing her youth, losing her life, losing her future, losing her eternal soul.

Some of you can truly sympathize with this woman. Losing your children to witchcraft, to drugs, to alcohol, to unnatural sexual lifestyles, to cults, etc.

- There is a depth of sadness and pain a Christian parent goes through when they see their children use their free will to sin and consequently suffer.
- Some of you are in that season. Your kids are wayward, sinning and suffering. And it burdens you deeply. Let Jesus encourage you this morning with what we read.

Verse 26: She Kept Asking

(**Mark 7:26** *The woman was a Greek, a Syro-Phoenician by birth, and **she kept asking Him** to cast the demon out of her daughter.*)

I love that phrase. *She kept asking.* She just wanted her daughter to be healed!

This is a picture for us of the type of prayer that God calls effective:
persistent prayer.

Verse 27: Jesus' Response

(**Mark 7:27** *But Jesus said to her, "Let the children be filled first, for it is not good to take the children's bread and throw it to the little dogs."*)

What did Jesus mean by this statement?

I will quote Matthew 15:4 again because it reveals why Jesus said this:

(Matthew 15:24 *But He answered and said, "I was not sent except to the lost sheep of the house of Israel."*)

Jesus was revealing the obvious fact that His mission was to the Jews, not the Gentiles. He used a common metaphor and reality that she was well aware of to understand what he was saying.

Look at how she responds.

Verse 28: Her Response

(Mark 7:28 *And she answered and said to Him, "Yes, Lord, yet even the little dogs under the table eat from the children's crumbs."*)

The Heart of Jesus:

People have misinterpreted this passage to imply that Jesus was trying to make this woman feel worthless; that was being mean; that was trying to push her away. Any critic of the Bible can misinterpret this passage. As believers, we know the character of Jesus. And when you intently look at this account, Jesus was actually saying the opposite.

He wanted the woman to see how special, how valuable, how much he considered her worth. He wanted her to come to the realization that He was merciful and considered her special and her daughter special.

The Woman's Answer:

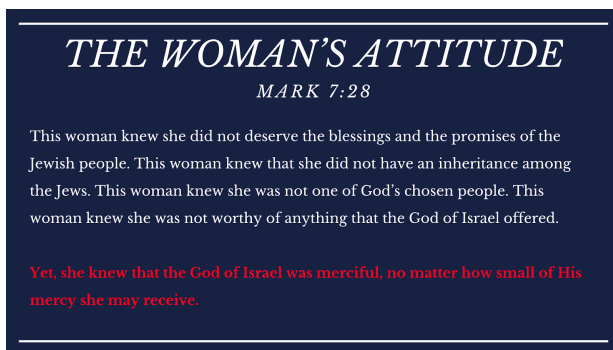
She responds to Christ by putting herself in the metaphor. Within the metaphor, she is without realizing it in her own words, saying Ephesians 2:21, "As a Gentile, I am a stranger to the covenant of promise. But you Jesus, are merciful to the Gentiles too."

(Graphic 2)



This is the heart of Romans 11. You and I, as Gentiles (non-Jews), we were grafted in. This is the metaphor that God uses to describe our special privilege. We are not the chosen people. But God was merciful to adopt us into the family of God. The attitude that this woman had is the attitude of faith that Jesus Christ wants us to have.

(Graphic 3)



Have we forgotten that God saves us, delivers us, blesses, helps, works in our lives, does miracles for our lives, does miracles for our loved ones when we pray, simply because He is merciful?

A good question: Do we have the same heart as this woman?

Verse 29: Jesus' Response

(Mark 7:29) *Then He said to her, "For this saying go your way; the demon has gone out of your daughter."*

Mark 7:30 *And when she had come to her house, she found the demon gone out, and her daughter lying on the bed.)*

(Graphic 4)

JESUS' RESPONSE

MARK 7 & MATTHEW 15

Mark 7:29 Then He said to her, "For this saying go your way; the demon has gone out of your daughter."

Matthew 15:28 Then Jesus answered and said to her, "O woman, great is your faith! Let it be to you as you desire." And her daughter was healed from that very hour.

It's worth pointing out Mark's response and Matthew's response. Looking at Matthew's response first,

- Matthew reveals Jesus praising her faith and answering the desire of her heart, her heart's prayer request.
- Also, Matthew points out that Jesus answers prayers of faith, even prayers that are the desires of the heart.
 - It's worth meditating on the words of Jesus that the Holy Spirit inspires Matthew to write. Truly, we can spend the rest of our time looking at Jesus' words in Matthew. Nevertheless, our series is in the book of Mark and we want to look at the words of Jesus that the Holy Spirit inspires Mark to highlight.

So, what phrase of Jesus does Mark uniquely highlight?

"For This Saying Go Your Way."

In other words, as the CSB translates this, "Because of this reply," I have fulfilled your request: Your daughter is delivered from this demon.

Let me repeat this statement!

"Because of this reply (v28), I have fulfilled your request."

Which should then cause us to close with the revelation of verse 28.

Application:

This woman knew that God would simply answer her prayer, that God would simply do this miracle, not because she deserved it, but because **God is merciful**.

There's is an unbiblical tendency in all of us to think that,

- (1). God owes us good health.
- (2). God owes us wealth and prosperity.
- (3). God owes us the perfect children.
- (4). God owes us the best job.
- (5). God owes us a life without suffering.
- (6). God owes us long life or long life for our children.
- (7). God owes us converted children.
- (8). God owes us miracles.

Always remember: God owes us nothing.

Sometimes, after years of being God's child, we struggle with thinking. I deserve this answered prayer request, I deserve this miracle, I deserve the ideal "_____ fill in the blank _____" because,

- (1). I have been faithful to the Lord for "x" amount of years.
- (2). I have served the Lord in this ministry and that ministry.
- (3). I have served the Lord "x amount" of hours in ministry over the years.
- (4). I have tithed and given "x amount" of my finances to the local church, missions, and charities.
- (5). I have devoted myself to be godly.
- (6). I have devoted myself to raising a godly family.

Always remember: God owes us nothing.

What do we learn from Jesus in this account: You are special to Him. Your loved ones are special to Him. And He wants you to know that this morning. What does Jesus pull from this woman in her response to teach us concerning Himself?

Jesus will answer your prayers. Jesus will do miracles in your life. Jesus will do miracles in the lives of your loved ones:
Not because He owes you anything, but because **He is merciful.**

How many of you can praise the undeserved mercy of God in your life? How many of you can praise the Lord daily for His mercies that are new every morning? Hallelujah!

*Some of you are like this woman. You have children and loved ones who have chosen to reject Christ and who are truly suffering without Christ. Their unknown eternal destiny deeply saddens you. Now, we are going to pray for them. For those who want prayer for their unsaved children and loved ones, please stand up. And for those around, extend your hand. Let's lift up our wayward loved ones.

PART 3 - DECEMBER 10, 2023

I think it's valuable to remember the works of Christ, the miracles of Jesus Christ so far in our study through Mark. Before we look at another miracle, let's meditate on the previous miracles:

The Works Of Christ, in Summary

The Bible reveals that Christ had power over the:

(1). Angelic realm (As He delivered people from demonic oppression and possession - Here in chapter 7 with the healing of the demon-possessed girl of the Syro-Phoenician woman.)

(2). Death (As He raised up Jairus's 12 year old daughter from the dead in Mark 5.).

(3). Natural Realm (As He stopped the windstorm and calmed the sea with a word in Mark 4; as He multiplied food like the five loaves and two fish. - Mark 6).

(4). Physical Issues (As He healed people from leprosy, unstopped blood, blindness, throughout previous chapters of Mark.).

(5). The Hearts of Men (As He declared to men that one's sins are forgiven in Mark 2.)

In regards to the miracles of Jesus Christ, a unique design of the miraculous works of Jesus was to **reveal that Jesus Christ is God** in the Flesh, the Prophesied Messiah.

In our study, we will finish chapter 7 by looking at another one of Christ's miracles. This is the healing of a deaf and mute man.

Verses 31-37: The Healing of the Deaf and Mute Man

(Mark 7:31 Again, departing from the region of Tyre and Sidon, He came through the midst of the region of Decapolis to the Sea of Galilee.

Mark 7:32 *Then they brought to Him one who was deaf and had an impediment in his speech, and they begged Him to put His hand on him.*

Mark 7:33 *And He took him aside from the multitude, and put His fingers in his ears, and He spat and touched his tongue.*

Mark 7:34 *Then, looking up to heaven, He sighed, and said to him, "Ephphatha," that is, "Be opened."*

Mark 7:35 *Immediately his ears were opened, and the impediment of his tongue was loosed, and he spoke plainly.*

Mark 7:36 *Then He commanded them that they should tell no one; but the more He commanded them, the more widely they proclaimed it.*

Mark 7:37 *And they were astonished beyond measure, saying, "He has done all things well. He makes both the deaf to hear and the mute to speak.")*

Verse 31: The Location

Jesus leaves Gentile territory. He comes back to Jewish territory, in a port town near the Sea of Galilee.

As you recall, Jesus spent much time ministering around the Sea of Galilee. It was his "base of operations" so-to-speak.

Verse 32: The Unique Request

(Mark 7:32 Then they brought to Him one who was deaf and had an impediment in his speech, and they begged Him to put His hand on him.)

If you note, this account was not like the Leper in chapter 2. This deaf and mute man did not come to Jesus to request a healing.

Others came begging that Jesus heal this man. That begs a question,

Did this man want to be healed? The text does not give us that implication. I'd like to believe that he did. We'll never know. But that's not the emphasis. Mark is simply reporting the fact of the matter. And it was significant to the Holy Spirit to include this particular healing:

The obvious fact and the thing that must be highlighted is:
Other people around this man wanted this healing for the man so much so that they begged.

Application:

(1). I can see this as a picture of intercessory prayer. Where you and I beg our Lord Jesus to do a miracle in the life of another person. And there is no doubt, make no mistake, that through prayer we can bring people to Jesus and see Jesus answer our prayers for that individual.

(2). The Holy Spirit used Mark to highlight various types of healing in scripture to show us that God listens to the requests of the individual who wants to be healed and equally the requests of people for another person.

This reminded me and inspired me to keep praying for others. I think at times we can fall into the trap to think. "Well, I know God is listening to my prayers that are directed to me for personal benefit. But does He really listen to the requests that we make for others? He absolutely does:

ESV: (**James 5:16** *Therefore, confess your sins to one another and pray for one another, that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous person has great power as it is working.*)

For the Christian, your prayers, for yourself and for others are **POWERFUL!** "GREAT POWER!" It's good to be reminded **how powerful prayer is.**

So we come back to this text. These people are begging Jesus to heal someone else: maybe for some, this was a family member; maybe for others, this was a friend; maybe for others, this was an acquaintance they've known

their whole lives; maybe for some, there were a few skeptics who said, “Who is this healer Jesus? Is there anyone sick? Will he heal?”

Verse 33: Jesus Makes It Personal

(Mark 7:33 And He took him aside from the multitude, and put His fingers in his ears, and He spat and touched his tongue.)

I found this verse to be special. “Jesus took the man aside from the multitude.” Originally, the multitudes brought the man, begging Jesus to heal this man. And now, this man is taken aside to have a one-on-one encounter with the living God.

While this miracle was to reveal that Jesus was God in the Flesh, that He was the Messiah, understand that this miracle was also a personal miracle: For this man to know Christ as healer and God-Incarnate.

Application:

How many of you were invited to church by a family member, friend, or co-worker. They were praying for your conversion. They asked others to pray for your conversion. Not knowing all that it took behind-the-scenes to bring you to your moment with Christ - There in that moment where your heart was receptive to the gospel, you found yourself hearing the gospel of life and believing in the gospel.

Do you remember the day Jesus manifested Himself personally to you?

The day you repented of your sins; the day you believed. That day you encountered Jesus Christ, the Living God in the Flesh? Do you remember how **personal it was?**

Different Methods:

Also, it must be stated here that Jesus’ methods to heal were not the same. There was not a pattern nor format.

- Also, as we'll see in the next verse, there was not a certain word or phrase he used in every healing. The words He chose to use in healings were different.

Why would God use various methods and words to heal? The Biblical answer is simple:

Because healing is not in a particular method or a particular word. Does God use various methods and various words? Yes! Healing is a work of God in the sovereignty of God by the power of God. Ultimately, it is God who has decided to heal. **And it is so wonderful when He heals!**

For the Christian, you learn from scripture that there is no magic method or magic word to guarantee healing. Again, God heals. And it's His decision to heal or not heal. With that said, remember that everything God does is perfect. Every decision He makes is perfect.

CSB: (*James 1:17 Every good and perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights, who does not change like shifting shadows.*)

Everything He decides and gives is perfect.

Before we look at verse 34, let me say one more thing.

While God decides, don't forget that He calls us to pray for healing believing that He can and that He will!

(*John 14:13 And whatever you ask in My name, that I will do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son.*)

John 14:14 *If you ask anything in My name, I will do it.*)

Do not assume you know God's sovereign will. Do not underestimate God's power. Do not underestimate the power of prayer. Let us walk by faith; let us pray in faith; let's see what God will do!

Verse 34: The Use of Aramaic³

Do you see that word, “Ephphatha”? That word is an Aramaic word. Have you ever asked, “What language did Jesus speak?” Maybe that never crossed your mind. Newsflash: He did not speak the Queen’s English while he was on earth.

Based on what we read in history concerning the geographical area and times of Christ, the majority of the Jews did not speak Hebrew in day-to-day life and conversation. Hebrew at this time was read in the synagogues, in the Temple, and used mostly in religious contexts. While the typical Jew in this time was familiar with Hebrew, the primary language spoken was Aramaic.⁴

- Side note: Hebrew will later receive a revival as the common language of the Jews after the siege in Jerusalem in AD70.

Aramaic was the lingua franca for centuries worldwide. But because of the Greek empire, “koine Greek” had become the lingua franca. Interestingly in Israel, especially in northern Israel (Galilee), the Jews were still holding onto the old lingua franca, Aramaic. Remember starting in the book of Acts, starting in chapter 10, the doors of faith opened to the Gentiles. The gospel was essentially in Israel, then Samaria, and now OPENED TO THE WORLD! When you consider the apostles, it is probably to presume that Greek was their third language, after Aramaic and Hebrew. History leads that Luke who wrote the gospel of Luke and the book of Acts (and who wrote with such polished quality), was a Greek himself, a native Greek speaker. And then the Apostle Paul: History presumes that the Apostle Paul also was either a native Aramaic speaker or Greek speaker. And in two locations in Acts 24 and 26, the Apostle Paul spoke fluent Greek, Aramaic, and Hebrew. God considered it necessary, although not the first language of the apostles and writers of the NT, to write it in the “lingua franca” of the day.

With greatest probability, Jesus spoke in the Aramaic as he ministered in Israel. History tells us of this time period that if Christ spoke in Hebrew, the people would not really understand. And this verse reveals that Jesus spoke in Aramaic as He spoke. No other gospel writer points this story out and this particular insight, regarding this word “*ephphatha*,” an Aramaic word. Mark uniquely wants us to know this...

The Question: Why did Mark do this?

Simple answer: Those initially reading his gospel were reading it in Greek. And so it was translated to them in Greek. And in this instance, a translation of Jesus’ word in Aramaic into Greek was valuable insight:

Concerning Translation and Language:

(1). There are individuals who say, “You can’t really understand the Bible unless you know the original languages.” This is a favorite tool of the false

³ Helpful [article](#) on language in the days of Christ.

⁴ A good [reference](#) on Nehemiah 13:24, in reference to the differences of languages in that scenario.

teacher - in which they say, "Because I studied Greek and Hebrew; because I'm the expert on the original languages, you have to listen to me."

(2). There are individuals who use this to say, "That is what you think the Bible says. But I believe the Bible says another thing because "meaning" gets lost in translation over time."

(3). One day, you might lovingly question someone's interpretation of scripture or lovingly rebuke them for their interpretation, and they will say, "I know Greek and Hebrew, so you have no right to tell me what the Bible says because I know what the Bible says."

I remember one time I raised my hand in class and asked the professor: "Professor, you say that the gifts of the Holy Spirit have ceased. Can you give me a Bible verse to prove your point?"

Do you want to know what the professor told me? He said, "Turn to this Bible passage." So I did." He said, "Do you know Greek? Have you studied Greek?"

I said, "No I have not just yet." He said, "Well, if you know the Greek word in this Bible verse, you'll understand the gifts of the Holy Spirit no longer exist."

I say this with a burdened heart, "I walked away realizing that people can misinterpret the Bible, they can believe whatever they want to believe, and one of the ways they do that is by using "I know Greek and you don't know Greek" as their smokescreen. And check this out: People will avoid any form of correction or rebuke by saying, "I know Greek and you don't. So don't tell me what I'm doing right or wrong."

Common Questions Concerning Translation and Language:

(1). Do you need to know Hebrew (Old Testament) or Greek (New Testament) to understand the Bible? The answer is **NO**.

This text proves that words can be effectively translated. Jesus spoke Aramaic. So Mark translates Jesus' Aramaic words into Greek because his gospel (and all the New Testament books were written in Greek). And so, if faithful-to-text translators follow Mark's example, they can translate Jesus' words from Greek into English, into Arabic, into Spanish, and every other tongue.

(Graphic 1)

MARK 7:34
THE WORD, BE OPENED

και ἀναβλέψας εἰς τὸν οὐρανὸν ἐστέναξεν καὶ λέγει αὐτῷ· εφφαθα, ὃ ἐστὶν διανοίχῃτι.

34 Then, ³⁴looking up to heaven, ³⁴He sighed, and said to him, ³⁴"Ephphatha," that is ³⁴"Be opened."

34 et suspiciens in caelum ingemuit et ait illi ephpheta quod est ³⁴aperire

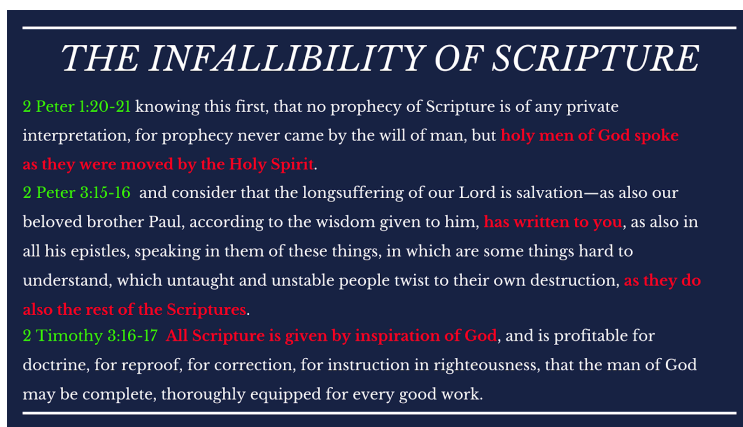
34 y levantando los ojos al cielo, gimió, y le dijo: Efata, es decir ³⁴«sé abierto».

Estanexen kai legay alto ephatha a esten de-enointhaitee.

- ("Τί ἐστὶν τοῦτο;")("Ti estin touto?")

The accuracy of God's word is not exclusive to a language. God's word transcends languages. And God's word is available to every nation and tongue. Although a substantial amount of New Testament writers knew Greek as their 2nd or 3rd language, we know one thing with Mark as an example: Once Mark's pen hit the paper to write the words of the gospel, it became **inspired** scripture.

(Graphic 2)



(2). Does translation change meaning?

Check this out. From this text, we know that **God designed His word to be translated**. If the idea that “translation from one language to another changes the meaning,” then ask this question: Why did Jesus speak Aramaic if He knew that the gospel writers were destined to translate His words into Greek? Think about this. Jesus' original words in Aramaic were never written down (only 5x in scriptures, with short phrases and sentences). They were only remembered in the minds and hearts of the apostles. If Jesus was concerned about words getting lost in translation, why did He not speak Greek; and why did He not write them Himself?

This is what makes the Christian faith and the Holy Scriptures unique. In Islam, the Quran teaches that Allah sent his divine revelation in the Arabic language. That the Arabic language is the language of God. And when you recite the Quran, you are called to speak it in the language of God, because

only the Arabic language, the language of God, reciting the words can provide healing and blessing. But if the Quran is translated into another language, it becomes a man-made version of a divine revelation.

That's what the Muslims think. That's even what the Mormons think!

But for God's Holy word, we learn from Mark that God designed His word to be translated. Remember I told you that each gospel writer offers unique insights that the Holy Spirit wants us to know?

Mark is the one gospel writer, except for one example in Matthew's gospel, to stress that Jesus primarily spoke in Aramaic. Mark 5:41, Mark 7:34, Mark 14:36, and Mark 15:34.

Let me repeat this:

God sent His Son to speak in the Aramaic language; and later led the New Testament writers to translate Jesus' words to reach as many people as possible. And to reach the multitudes, Greek was the lingua franca of the day. When people ask us or tell us, "the scriptures got lost in translation after many centuries," **God's word reveals to us that God's word is not held captive to a language, His word was designed to be translated.**

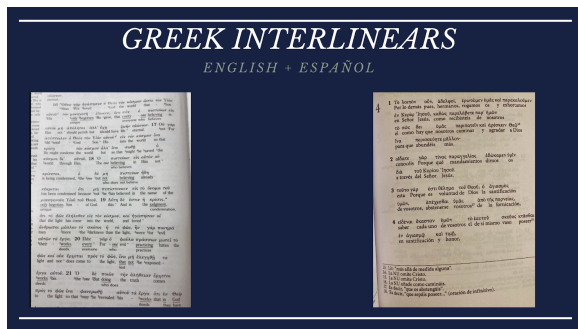
(3). Can I have confidence that God has preserved the accuracy of our translation?

First thought: There are some "translations" called paraphrases. What is a paraphrase? It's where an unqualified individual or group starts to rewrite the Bible saying, "I think the Bible is saying this." "I think the Bible is saying that." That's not a translation; that is called re-writing. Don't buy a paraphrase. We use the NKJV at church. There's also the KJV, ESV, the NASB, the LSB, etc.

Second thought: For those of you who like this stuff, you can analyze the history of the preservation of scripture. One of the most recent discoveries is the Dead Sea Scrolls. When the Dead Sea Scrolls were first discovered about 75 years ago, the critics were just salivating. What was uncovered in the Dead Sea Scrolls were copies of scriptures that were dated centuries before Christ's

birth. The critics were so excited to be able to say, “See, your modern translations of Isaiah are astronomically different from the oldest copy of Isaiah we have!” When those copies of Isaiah were uncovered and put side by side with the other copies of Isaiah which have been used to translate the scriptures into the many languages, the critics were silenced.

(Graphic 3)



To give you another great example, there are these things called Greek interlinear Bibles: where you can follow along with English-Greek side by side or Spanish-Greek side by side. And you will be amazed...

The Bible you are holding in your hands is accurate. The meaning of scripture was not lost in translation after thousands of years.

That shouldn't be a surprise to us Christians, should it? The living God in His sovereign and loving will guarantees that His word will be accurately translated and will guarantee it gets into the hands of anyone who believes in Him. Is the preservation of scripture a miracle to the skeptic? Yes, but they won't admit it. But for you and I, it's a testimony that every time you read your English Bible, you can say, "THIS IS WHAT GOD HAS SAID."

(4). Is it helpful to study the original languages? Why do you study the original languages?

Again, it's not necessary. But it is helpful and sweet.

In a Greek class I took, a famous Greek expert said, God's people can know all of what God has said in the English language for, 1 John 2:27, the Holy Spirit is our teacher. Then he told the class, so then what does Hebrew and Greek serve for the Church? You can see insights into scripture that someone may

gloss over. These insights aren't doctrinal. These insights do not change the plain meaning of the text. But they are just the cherries on top. Here's an example from a few weeks back.

(Graphic 4)

BEYOND MEASURE
ΠΕΡΙΣΣΟΣ ΠΕΡΙΣΣΟΣ

Mark 6:51 Then He went up into the boat to them, and the wind ceased. And they were greatly amazed in themselves **beyond measure** (περισσός pēriśśós), and marveled.

John 10:10b-11a: I came that they may have life and have it **abundantly** (περισσός pēriśśós). I am the good shepherd.

(Graphic 5)

EN GRAN MANERA
ΠΕΡΙΣΣΟΣ ΠΕΡΙΣΣΟΣ

Marcos 6:51 Y subió a ellos en la barca, y se calmó el viento; y ellos se asombraron **en gran manera** (περισσός pēriśśós), y se maravillaban.

Juan 10:10b-11a: Y para que la tengan en **abundancia** (περισσός pēriśśós). Yo soy el buen pastor.

If you were in my shoes a couple weeks back, you might have thought what I thought, “Wait, where did I see perissos? I know I’ve seen that word in another scripture?” And then you realize, oh yes!

As we come back to the text, I want you to know that I did not consider this a detour or rabbit trail from Mark. Mark 7:34 is a unique scripture that gives me the truth and confidence that God’s word was designed to be translated. God’s word and God’s love is for everyone, no matter the color of skin, no matter the race, no matter the language. Jesus Christ, the living Word, will manifest Himself to anyone who calls upon the name of the Lord to be saved!

Verses 34b/35: The Miracle

(**Mark 7:34** Then, looking up to heaven, He sighed, and said to him, “Ephphatha,” that is, “Be opened.”)

Mark 7:35 Immediately his ears were opened, and the impediment of his tongue was loosed, and he spoke plainly.)

One word from Jesus, “ephphatha.” Do you see first that Jesus is praying? Jesus was looking to His Father. And as he said that one word, “this man was healed!” This man who could not hear and this man who had a severe impediment could now speak!

Looking back at verse 33 again, I want you to remember that Jesus took this man aside privately to heal him. Interestingly, in verse 35, it tells us that he started to speak plainly. **What did he say?** The Bible does not tell us what he said.

What does that tell us? It tells us two things:

(1). In the context, this miracle was one-on-one.

- And maybe when we get to heaven, if you meet this man, you can ask him, “The Bible says you spoke plainly to Jesus. What did you say? And what did he tell you?”
- At the end of the day, I’m pretty sure this man never thought his story would be written in scripture. But this story in context has great significance. And what do we learn?

(2). This man’s story was not the whole point of the story. The Holy Spirit in leading Mark did not find it necessary for us to know what the man said, but rather what the people said. What did the people say? Before we look at what the people said, let’s look at what Jesus said to the multitudes.

Verse 36: The Command

(Mark 7:36 Then He commanded them that they should tell no one; but the more He commanded them, the more widely they proclaimed it.)

(1). This reminds us how disobedient we can really be. Jesus commands us to do one thing but we do the opposite. Thank the Lord for His mercy to have patience with sinners like you and I.

(2). Although a text like this might imply that Jesus was not able to control the situation, the Bible makes it clear that God was still absolutely in control.

Some of us can look at this text and say, “OH NO! They’re messing up Jesus’ plan because they disobeyed His words! Is it all going to work out in the end?”

God knew. Jesus knew that these people would disobey him. But that did not change the purpose for which He was sent, even though there might have been “obstacles” in the way.

CSB: (*John 17:4 I have glorified you on the earth by completing the work you gave me to do.*)
No obstacle changed Jesus from His mission to save you and I: to fulfill every detail of His prophesied ministry; to go to the cross; to die; to resurrect on the third day. Everything that Jesus did in scripture was perfect; everything that Jesus did was everything that God planned to do. There was nothing left undone.

Verse 37: The Saying

(*Mark 7:37 And they were astonished beyond measure, saying, “He has done all things well. He makes both the deaf to hear and the mute to speak.”*)

They were “extremely overwhelmed.”

What is worth highlighting is this: Imperfect, disobedient people were now seeing Jesus for who He truly was. And how did they describe Him? “He has done all things well.” This was a statement from an unlikely source, is it not? Disobedient people... But that does not change the reality that this is a beautiful truth.

It’s so natural for us to think of Genesis 1:31,

(*Genesis 1:31 Then **God saw everything that He had made, and indeed it was very good.** So the evening and the morning were the sixth day.*)

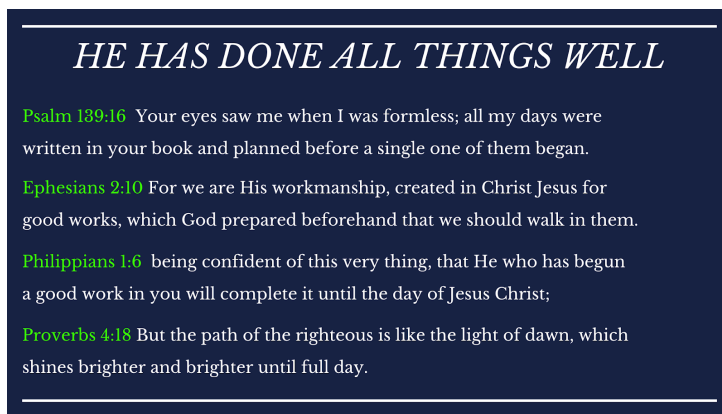
When you look at God's creation, God’s creation of mankind, God’s choice to give man free will, God’s gracious plan of salvation for the past 6,000 years or so; then, God’s word, God’s prophecies; then, Christ’s arrival, death, burial, and resurrection; then the Holy Spirit coming on Pentecost, the establishment of the church, the mystery of the Gentile inclusion, and His future return for His Church. When you think of all the centuries that have gone by and in every generation, God has been gathering His people to Himself - that anyone who calls upon the name of Jesus will be saved! And we can keep going on about

the great things that God has done! You just have to stand back and say, “He has done all things well.”

Personal Application:

As a child of God, we have these promises.

(Graphic 6)



Sometimes, we look at these promises and think:

- I think my mistakes have ruined God’s plan for my life.
- I think the sins of others towards me have ruined God’s plan for my life.
- How is God still working out His plan in my life when trials, suffering, my unwise decisions, my sins, and other people’s sins are affecting me?

As children of God, sometimes we don’t see things the way God sees them. With all your mistakes, sins, sufferings, issues, detours, and all, God is still working His plan in your life.

Even your mistakes don’t change who God is. God remains the same. His love for you remains the same. God will accomplish His will for His glory for your life because You are His son or daughter.

I’m so thankful for moments where God reminds me of these things. It causes me to worship! As I reflect on all that Jesus Christ has done for me: by giving me new life, by blessing me in so many ways, by keeping me close to Him by His grace. Think of those moments: When you can spend that time in worship to the Lord and say, “Lord, you have done all things well.”