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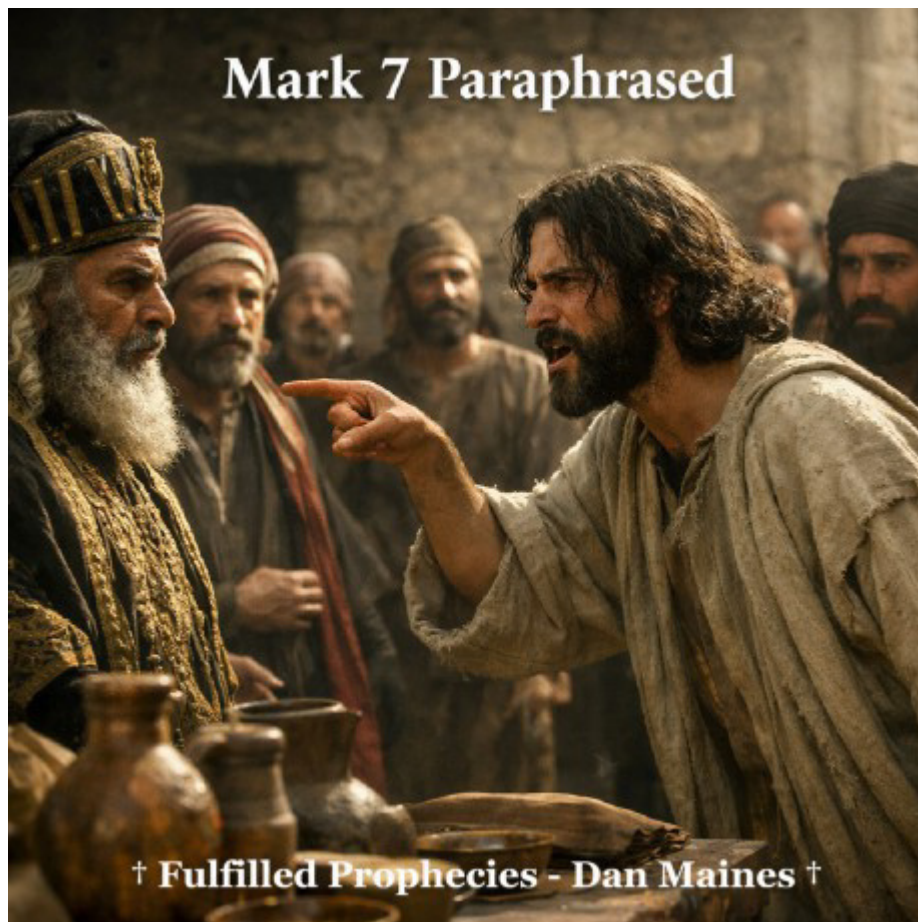
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Mark 7 Paraphrased



By Dan Maines

Mark 7 Paraphrased

Introduction

† Mark chapter 7 records a confrontation between Jesus and the religious leaders of Israel over their traditions and the authority of God's commandments.

† The Pharisees had elevated human traditions to the same level as scripture, and Jesus exposed that error openly.

† This chapter also reveals that true defilement doesn't come from external rituals but from the sinful heart of man.

† The final part of the chapter shows God's mercy reaching

beyond Israel through the faith of a Gentile woman and the healing of the deaf man.

Mark 7:1

Some Pharisees and some scribes gathered around Jesus after coming from Jerusalem.

† Religious authorities from Jerusalem often traveled to observe and challenge Jesus' ministry (John 1:19).

† Their goal was examination and accusation rather than genuine faith (Matthew 12:14).

† Josephus describes how Pharisaic leaders actively monitored religious teaching among the people.

Mark 7:2

They noticed that some of His disciples were eating bread with unclean hands, meaning they had not performed the ritual washing.

† This washing was part of rabbinic tradition rather than a command given in the law of Moses (Matthew 15:2).

† The issue was ceremonial purity, not physical cleanliness.

† Jesus allowed the situation to expose the misuse of religious tradition.

Mark 7:3

The Pharisees and all the Jews do not eat unless they carefully wash their hands, holding firmly to the traditions passed down by the elders.

† The traditions of the elders were interpretations developed by later teachers.

† Over time these traditions became treated as binding law.

† This created a religious system built more on tradition than scripture.

Mark 7:4

When they return from the marketplace they don't eat unless

they wash themselves, and there are many other traditions they observe, such as washing cups, pitchers, and copper vessels.

† Ritual purification expanded far beyond the requirements of the Mosaic law (Leviticus 11:32).

† These traditions shaped daily life for many Jews in the first century.

† Eusebius later wrote about the strict observance of such customs among religious leaders.

Mark 7:5

The Pharisees and scribes asked Him, why do Your disciples not walk according to the traditions of the elders but eat their bread with unclean hands?

† Their accusation assumes their traditions carry divine authority.

† Jesus answers by exposing the deeper hypocrisy behind their question.

† The issue wasn't washing hands but whether human tradition overrides God's word.

Mark 7:6

Jesus answered them, Isaiah was right when he prophesied about you hypocrites, as it is written, this people honors Me with their lips, but their heart is far from Me.

† Jesus quotes Isaiah 29:13 to show that this hypocrisy had long been condemned by God.

† Outward religion can exist without a true heart devoted to God.

† Their behavior matched the same spiritual problem described by the prophet.

Mark 7:7

In vain they worship Me, teaching as doctrines the commandments of men.

† Worship becomes empty when human rules replace God's truth.

† Jesus identified their teachings as commandments of men.

† This statement directly challenges the authority of their traditions.

Mark 7:8

You neglect the commandment of God and hold to the tradition of men.

† The leaders had abandoned God's law while preserving their traditions.

† This reveals how easily religion can drift away from scripture.

† The warning remains relevant whenever tradition replaces truth.

Mark 7:9

He was also saying to them, you are experts at setting aside the commandment of God in order to keep your tradition.

† Jesus points out that they had become skilled at manipulating the law.

† Their authority depended on maintaining their tradition system.

† This criticism exposes deliberate corruption of God's commands.

Mark 7:10

For Moses said, honor your father and your mother, and whoever speaks evil of father or mother must be put to death.

† Jesus cites the law directly from Exodus 20:12 and Exodus 21:17.

† Honoring parents included caring for them materially.

† The law emphasized the seriousness of family responsibility.

Mark 7:11

But you say, if a man says to his father or mother, whatever I

have that would help you is Corban, meaning given to God.

† Corban referred to a vow dedicating property to the temple.

† This practice allowed people to avoid supporting their parents.

† Jesus reveals how religion was used to justify selfishness.

Mark 7:12

You no longer allow him to do anything for his father or his mother.

† The tradition effectively canceled the commandment of God.

† This shows how human systems can override divine instruction.

† The leaders enforced this corrupt interpretation.

Mark 7:13

You invalidate the word of God by your tradition which you have handed down, and you do many things such as this.

† Their traditions nullified scripture.

† Jesus indicates that many similar practices existed.

† The authority of God's word had been replaced by religious tradition.

Mark 7:14

After calling the crowd again, He said to them, listen to Me all of you and understand.

† Jesus turns from rebuking leaders to instructing the people.

† He calls them to understand the deeper truth about defilement.

† The teaching challenges the foundation of ritual purity laws.

Mark 7:15

There is nothing outside the person which can defile him if it goes into him, but the things which come out of the person are what defile him.

† True defilement comes from the inner condition of the heart.

† This teaching challenged the traditional interpretation of purity

laws.

† It anticipates the coming transition away from ceremonial restrictions (Acts 10:15).

Mark 7:18

And He said to them, are you also so lacking in understanding? Do you not understand that whatever goes into the person from outside cannot defile him.

† Even the disciples struggled with the meaning of His teaching.

† Jesus explains the difference between ritual and moral impurity.

† The focus moves from external actions to internal transformation.

Mark 7:20

And He was saying, that which comes out of the person, that is what defiles the person.

† Sin originates from within the human heart.

† External rituals cannot correct internal corruption.

† Only God's transforming work can cleanse the heart.

Mark 7:21

For from within, out of the heart of people, come evil thoughts, sexual immorality, theft, murder.

† Jesus identifies the heart as the source of sinful behavior.

† The prophets had already described the heart as deeply corrupted (Jeremiah 17:9).

† Moral transformation must occur within.

Mark 7:22

Adultery, greed, wickedness, deceit, sensuality, envy, slander, pride, and foolishness.

† These sins represent the natural fruit of a fallen heart.

† Ritual religion cannot remove these internal problems.

† The need for spiritual renewal becomes clear.

Mark 7:23

All these evil things come from within and defile the person.

† The root problem of sin is internal corruption.

† Jesus exposes the weakness of the Pharisaic purity system.

† True cleansing must come from God.

Mark 7:24

Jesus left there and went away to the region of Tyre and Sidon, and when He entered a house He wanted no one to know about it, but He couldn't escape notice.

† Tyre and Sidon were Gentile territories.

† News of Jesus had spread far beyond Israel.

† This movement foreshadows the later expansion of the gospel to the nations.

Mark 7:25

But after hearing about Him, a woman whose little daughter had an unclean spirit immediately came and fell at His feet.

† Her desperation drove her to seek help from Jesus.

† Demon possession was widely recognized as a serious affliction.

† Her humility stands in contrast to the pride of the Pharisees.

Mark 7:26

The woman was a Gentile, a Syrophenician by birth, and she kept asking Him to cast the demon out of her daughter.

† Mark emphasizes her Gentile identity.

† Her persistence demonstrates genuine faith.

† This moment anticipates the opening of salvation to the nations.

Mark 7:27

And He was saying to her, let the children be satisfied first, for it isn't good to take the children's bread and throw it to the dogs.

† The children represent Israel's covenant priority (Romans

1:16).

† Jesus uses the statement to test her faith.

† The scene illustrates the historical order of redemption.

Mark 7:28

But she answered and said to Him, yes Lord, but even the dogs under the table eat the children's crumbs.

† Her reply demonstrates humility and trust.

† She accepts Israel's priority but still seeks mercy.

† Her faith becomes the turning point in the story.

Mark 7:29

And He said to her, because of this answer go, the demon has gone out of your daughter.

† Jesus responds to her faith by granting the miracle.

† The healing occurs instantly without His presence.

† His authority extends over distance and spiritual powers.

Mark 7:30

And after going back to her home she found the child lying on the bed, the demon having left.

† The miracle confirms Jesus' authority over demons.

† It also highlights the power of persistent faith.

† The story demonstrates God's mercy reaching beyond Israel.

Mark 7:31

Again He left the region of Tyre and came through Sidon to the Sea of Galilee, within the region of the Decapolis.

† The Decapolis was a group of largely Gentile cities.

† This journey shows the geographic spread of His ministry.

† Archaeological evidence confirms the Greek cultural influence in these cities.

Mark 7:32

They brought to Him a man who was deaf and had difficulty speaking, and they pleaded with Him to lay His hand on him.

† The crowd believed in Jesus' ability to heal.

† The laying on of hands symbolized blessing and restoration.

† Physical healing often pointed to deeper spiritual truth.

Mark 7:33

Jesus took him aside from the crowd privately, put His fingers into his ears, and after spitting touched his tongue.

† Jesus sometimes used physical gestures during healing.

† The private setting focused attention on the miracle itself.

† These actions helped communicate the healing to the deaf man.

Mark 7:34

Looking up to heaven, He sighed and said to him Ephphatha, that is, be opened.

† The sigh reflects Jesus' compassion for human suffering.

† Ephphatha is an Aramaic command preserved in the text.

† The word demonstrates His authority over physical infirmity.

Mark 7:35

And his ears were opened, and the impediment of his tongue was removed, and he began speaking plainly.

† The healing was immediate and complete.

† This miracle fulfilled the expectations of messianic prophecy (Isaiah 35:5-6).

† It confirmed Jesus as the promised deliverer.

Mark 7:36

And He ordered them not to tell anyone, but the more He ordered them, the more widely they continued to proclaim it.

† Jesus often attempted to limit publicity surrounding miracles.

† Many people misunderstood His mission as political.

† The miracle still spread widely through the region.

Mark 7:37

They were utterly astonished, saying, He has done all things

well, He makes even the deaf hear and the mute speak.

† The crowd recognized the extraordinary nature of His works.

† Their words echo the prophecy of Isaiah about the Messiah (Isaiah 35:5).

† The miracles pointed to the arrival of God's kingdom.

Historical References

† Josephus describes the powerful influence of Pharisaic traditions in first century Judaism.

† Irenaeus wrote that Jesus exposed traditions that corrupted God's commandments.

† Eusebius recorded that early Christians understood these miracles as fulfillment of prophetic promises.

How It Applies To Us Today

† God's word must always stand above human traditions.

† True purity begins with a transformed heart rather than external rituals.

† Faith and humility open the door to God's mercy.

† Jesus' authority over sickness and evil shows His power to restore life.

Q & A Appendix

Q: Why did Jesus condemn the Pharisees' traditions?

A: Because their traditions replaced God's commandments and created hypocrisy (Isaiah 29:13; Matthew 15:3-9).

Q: What did Jesus teach about defilement?

A: Defilement comes from the sinful heart rather than external rituals (Mark 7:15; Jeremiah 17:9).

Q: Why is the Syrophenician woman's faith significant?

A: It demonstrates that faith brings access to God's mercy even beyond Israel (Romans 1:16; Acts 10:34-35).

Q: What do the miracles in this chapter prove?

A: They confirm Jesus as the Messiah fulfilling prophetic

promises (Isaiah 35:5-6).

Q: What lesson does this chapter teach believers today?

A: We must guard against replacing God's word with religious tradition (Colossians 2:8).

† This is the fulfilled perspective we proclaim at Fulfilled Prophecies †

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Source Index

† Mark 7

† Josephus, Antiquities of the Jews

† Irenaeus, Against Heresies

† Eusebius, Ecclesiastical History

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