

# Study of the Gospel of Mark

## Chapter 7 (Part 1)

Early on in this Gospel Mark has revealed the legalism of the Jewish leaders. In Mark 2:13-17 we read about the arrogance of the Pharisees who thought it was improper for Jesus to eat with "sinners." In Mark 2:18-22 they criticized Jesus because He and His disciples did not fast as they did. Then in Mark 2:23-28 they rebuked Jesus for allowing His disciples to break the Jewish Sabbath laws by "harvesting" grain on the Sabbath. In Mark 3:1-6 they were angered because Jesus healed someone on the Sabbath, which they believed was against their Sabbath laws. All of this finally comes to a climax in this section and hand washing, and Jesus uses it as a chance to instruct His disciples and the Jewish leaders on the matter of God's law vs. man's law.

In the centuries before Jesus was born the Jews compiled a list of 613 laws from the Old Testament which had to be followed. In addition to this, Jewish leaders wrote the Talmud, which was a commentary or explanation of the 613 Old Testament laws. It is from the Talmud that the laws referred to by the Jewish leaders in these sections were derived.

1. Mark tells us who it is that has come to oppose Jesus in this section. Who are they and where have they come from?

---

2. Why have they come to the region of Galilee to see Jesus? (Refer to Mark 3:6).

---

---

3. Remember that Mark was writing this Gospel originally for a Gentile audience. Why would the information provided in verses 3-4 have been important for Gentile readers?

---

---

4. What is the accusation of the scribes and Pharisees? Whose law was being broken?

---

---

5. Jesus responds by quoting from the Old Testament book of Isaiah and pointing out their hypocrisy. How were these Jewish leaders being hypocritical?

---

---

---

6. In verses 10-13 Jesus offers a specific example. The Old Testament law required honoring parents. But the Jewish leaders gave exemptions to children from the care of their parents if the money was instead given to the synagogue. What is the problem with this?

---

---

7. Notice that Jesus again refers to directly to the Old Testament in his rebuttal recorded in verse 10. Which two Bible passages does Jesus quote?

A. \_\_\_\_\_

B. \_\_\_\_\_

Why was it so important that Jesus refer to the Old Testament in this instance?

---

---

In verse 15 Jesus uses the example of hand washing to show that the real problem was in the heart. Obeying certain laws or regulations does not make a person righteous. This was addressed to all the people to show the error of the Jewish leaders (v.14). In the following verses, Jesus continues to discuss this with His disciples, but here He brings up a different, but related subject.

8. In verses 18-20 Jesus deals with the issue of food. This is an important section concerning the diet of the New Testament believer. In the Old Testament God had forbidden He people from eating certain types of food (see Leviticus 11). But notice what Mark records parenthetically in verse 19. What does this reveal about the ceremonial laws of the Old Testament? (See also Colossians 2:16-17)

---

---

9. What do we learn about ourselves from verses 21-23?

---

---

**Note:** It is interesting to note that the word "wash" and "washing" in verse 4 come from the Greek word "baptizo" from which we get the word "baptize." Baptize simply and very literally means to "wash with water." It does not mean to "immerse in water" as some suggest, but simply to "wash." Many translations remove the word "couches" or "tables" from the list of things washed at the end of verse 4. But this item, added to the list of "cups, pitchers, and copper pots," shows the foolishness of the idea that the Greek word baptizo must include the act of immersing in water. It is not necessary for one who is baptized to be immersed! Baptism simply needs to include the application of water by any means or method. Sprinkling, pour or immersing can effect a baptism.