

# **Mark 07 - Debate Over Jewish Tradition; Jesus Heals a Gentile Woman's Daughter; Healing of a Deaf Man with a Speech Impediment**

## III. Opposition to the servant (Mark 3:20—8:33)

- (8) More revelation to his disciples (Mark 6:30—8:33)
  - (D) Traditions of the Pharisees (7:1-23)
  - (E) Healing of the Syro-Phoenician girl (7:24-30)
  - (F) Healing of the deaf and dumb man (7:31-37)

## **Mark 7**

(D) Traditions of the Pharisees (7:1-23) (Cf. Matt 15:1-20)

- 1 The Pharisees and some of the scribes \*gathered to Him after they came from Jerusalem,
- 1 The Pharisees and some of the scribes gathered around Him when they had come from Jerusalem,
- 1 The Pharisees and some of the scribes who had come from Jerusalem gathered around Jesus.
- 1 Then came together unto him the Pharisees, and certain of the scribes, which came from Jerusalem.
  - This is the second time the religious leaders came from Jerusalem to investigate Jesus (Cf. 3:22)
- 2 and saw that some of His disciples were eating their bread with unholly hands, that is, unwashed.
- 2 and had seen that some of His disciples were eating their bread with impure hands, that is, unwashed.
- 2 They noticed that some of his disciples were eating with unclean hands, that is, without washing them.
- 2 And when they saw some of his disciples eat bread with defiled, that is to say, with unwashen, hands, they found fault.

- This had nothing to do with personal hygiene, nor were they commanded by the Mosaic Law
  - They were objecting because the disciples had not gone through the accepted purification rituals before eating with their hands
  - These professionals were the theological “hit-men”; they were upset every time that Jesus undermined their authority over the people and their traditions

- 3 (For the Pharisees and all the *other* Jews do not eat unless they carefully wash their hands, *thereby* holding firmly to the **tradition** of the elders;
- 3 (For the Pharisees and all the Jews do not eat unless they carefully wash their hands, *thus* observing the traditions of the elders;
- 3 (The Pharisees—and indeed all the Jewish people—don’t eat unless they wash their hands properly, following the tradition of their elders.
- 3 For the Pharisees, and all the Jews, except they wash their hands oft, eat not, holding the tradition of the elders.
- Verses 3-4 do not appear in Matthew’s parallel account. They explain the Pharisaic tradition, which were orally communicated from generation to generation. Since Matthew was written to a Jewish audience, the explanation was not necessary. Because Mark was written to Gentiles, it was.
  - About 200 AD, the rabbis compiled these traditions into the *Mishnah*, which became the basis for the *Talmud* (~425 AD)
  - The Pharisees traditionally washed themselves after visiting the marketplace to rid themselves of the defilement that contact with Gentiles produced. Most Jews regarded breaking these traditions as sin.
  - "...tradition" - the Jews viewed tradition as protecting God’s Holy Word and assisted His people in keeping it. This probably began with good intentions, but ultimately produced some famous absurdities.
    - Some examples: In the effort to protect the Sabbath from being broken by inadvertent labor, the devout were given an amazing list of prohibitions—“fences”:
    - One could not look into a mirror, lest a gray hair might be plucked
    - One couldn’t wear false teeth, lest they fall out and picking them up would be working
    - The rabbis debated about a man with a wooden leg: if his home caught fire, could he retrieve it on the Sabbath?
    - If someone spit on the Sabbath he had to take care of where it landed: if it landed in the dirt and was scuffed with his sandal it would be cultivating the soil and thus performing work.

*Tradition is a fence around the law. [Mishnah]*

If you are in an Israeli hotel on *Shabbat*, you will encounter the Sabbath elevators: every floor is pre-selected to avoid having to push a button. Usually there are two: one stopping on odd numbered floors; the other on even. The Pharisees' commitment to ritual purity made them extremely pious and self-righteous.

4 and when they come from the marketplace, they do not eat unless they completely cleanse themselves; and there are many other things which they have received as *traditions* to firmly hold, such as the washing of cups, pitchers, and copper pots.)  
4 and when they come from the market place, they do not eat unless they cleanse themselves; and there are many other things which they have received in order to observe, such as the washing of cups and pitchers and copper pots.)

4 They don't eat anything from the marketplace unless they dip it in water. They also observe many other traditions, such as the proper washing of washing cups, jars, brass pots, and dinner tables.)

4 And when they come from the market, except they wash, they eat not. And many other things there be, which they have received to hold, as the washing of cups, and pots, brasen vessels, and of tables.

- The biggest concern of the *Mishnah* (186 pages) was "cleannesses" including ritual washing
  - Originating from the Biblical command that all priests must wash their hands (Ex 30:19; 40:12), all pious Jews began to do it about 200 BC
  - A rabbi who once omitted washing his hands before eating bread was excommunicated. It is reported that another rabbi who suffered imprisonment under the Romans nearly died because he used his ration of drinking water to ritually wash up.
  - Ultimately, the concept of true inner purity had been trivialized to a system of external washings. These washings not only indicated a wrong attitude toward people, they also conveyed a wrong idea of the nature of sin and personal holiness.

5 And the Pharisees and the scribes \*asked Him, "Why do Your disciples not **walk** in accordance with the tradition of the elders, but eat their bread with unholly hands?"

5 The Pharisees and the scribes \*asked Him, "Why do Your disciples not walk according to the tradition of the elders, but eat their bread with impure hands?"

5 So the Pharisees and the scribes asked Jesus, "Why don't your disciples live according to the tradition of the elders? Instead, they eat with unclean hands."

5 Then the Pharisees and scribes asked him, Why walk not thy disciples according to the tradition of the elders, but eat bread with unwashen hands?

- The critics asked Jesus for an explanation of His disciples' conduct because, as their Teacher, He was responsible for them

- They suspected that their failure to “wash” properly indicated that Jesus disregarded all the traditions of the elders
- “...walk” - a Hebrew figure of speech meaning habitual conduct (Cf. Gen 5:24; Ps 1:1)

6 But He said to them, “Rightly did Isaiah prophesy about you **hypocrites**, as it is written: ‘THIS PEOPLE HONORS ME WITH THEIR LIPS, BUT THEIR HEART IS FAR AWAY FROM ME.

6 And He said to them, “Rightly did Isaiah prophesy of you hypocrites, as it is written: ‘This people honors Me with their lips, But their heart is far away from Me.

6 He told them, “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.

6 He answered and said unto them, Well hath Esaias prophesied of you hypocrites, as it is written, This people honoureth me with their lips, but their heart is far from me.

- In His reply, Jesus did not explain or justify His disciples’ conduct; instead, He addressed the issue of the source of religious authority (v6-13) and the nature of defilement (v14-23)

- “...hypocrites” - they professed to honor God with their behavior, but they did not honor Him with their hearts

- Jesus quoted from Is 29:13, which fits these critics exactly: they stressed human “precepts” to the exclusion of principles

Is 29:13: Then the Lord said, “Because this people approaches Me with their words And honors Me with their lips, But their heart is far away from Me, And their reverence for Me consists of *the* commandment of men that is taught;

7 ‘AND IN VAIN DO THEY WORSHIP ME, TEACHING AS DOCTRINES THE COMMANDMENTS OF MEN.’

7 ‘But in vain do they worship Me, Teaching as doctrines the precepts of men.’

7 Their worship of me is worthless, because they teach human rules as doctrines.’

7 Howbeit in vain do they worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men.

8 Neglecting the commandment of God, you hold to the tradition of men.”

8 Neglecting the commandment of God, you hold to the tradition of men.”

8 You abandon the commandment of God and hold to human tradition.”

8 For laying aside the commandment of God, ye hold the tradition of men, as the washing of pots and cups: and many other such like things ye do.

- Jesus differentiates the commands of God from the traditions of men

— The rabbis had built a “fence” around the Law—in the form of “do’s” and “don’t’s”—to prevent Israelites from breaking the Law

- However rather than protecting it, their legalistic requirements distorted and even contradicted the Law
- Legalism involves making laws that God has not made and treating them as equally authoritative as God's Word

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

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

**9** Then he told them, "You have such a fine way of rejecting the commandment of God in order to keep your own tradition!

**9** And he said unto them, Full well ye reject the commandment of God, that ye may keep your own tradition.

- Jesus rejected the authority of the oral law and traditions

*He who expounds the Scriptures in opposition to the tradition has no share in the world to come. — Rabbi Eleazer*

*It is a greater offense to teach anything contrary to the voice of the Rabbis than to contradict the Scripture itself. — Mishnah*

**10** For Moses said, 'HONOR YOUR FATHER AND YOUR MOTHER'; and, 'THE ONE WHO SPEAKS EVIL OF FATHER OR MOTHER, IS CERTAINLY TO BE PUT TO DEATH';

**10** For Moses said, 'Honor your father and your mother'; and, 'He who speaks evil of father or mother, is to be put to death';

**10** Because Moses said, 'Honor your father and your mother' and, 'Whoever curses his father or mother must certainly be put to death.'

**10** For Moses said, Honour thy father and thy mother; and, Whoso curseth father or mother, let him die the death:

- Jesus gives an example of how they used human traditions to set aside divine imperatives

— They professed to honor Moses, who gave God's commandment to honor parents, and threatened disobedience with death (Ex 20:12; 21:17)

**11** but you say, 'If a person says to his father or his mother, whatever I have that would help you is **Corban** (that is, given to God),'

**11** but you say, 'If a man says to *his* father or *his* mother, whatever I have that would help you is **Corban** (that is to say, given to God),'

11 But you say, 'If anyone tells his father or mother, "Whatever support you might have received from me is Corban,"' (that is, an offering to God)

11 But ye say, If a man shall say to his father or mother, It is Corban, that is to say, a gift, by whatsoever thou mightest be profited by me; he shall be free.

- Honoring parents manifests itself in financial support and practical care, if necessary

- "...Corban" - a gift devoted to God

— They side-stepped the Commandment to honor their parents with financial support by simply declaring that their possessions were "Corban" ("given to God"), and thus dedicated for spiritual purposes (Num 30)

— Jewish tradition permitted people to declare something they owned as dedicated to God

12 you no longer allow him to do anything for *his* father or *his* mother;

12 you no longer permit him to do anything for *his* father or *his* mother;

12 'you no longer let him do anything for his father or mother.'

12 And ye suffer him no more to do ought for his father or his mother;

- Declaring something as Corban did not mean that they had to give it to the priests, or even give up the use of it themselves, but it freed them from giving it to someone else, even a needy parent

13 *thereby* invalidating the word of God by your tradition which you have handed down; and you do many things such as that."

13 *thus* invalidating the word of God by your tradition which you have handed down; and you do many things such as that."

13 You are destroying the word of God through your tradition that you have handed down. And you do many other things like that."

13 Making the word of God of none effect through your tradition, which ye have delivered: and many such like things do ye.

- Those who try to justify themselves by the Law end up modifying it in order to escape its authority. Note the tragic sequence:

- Teaching their doctrines as God's Word (v7)
- Laying aside God's Word (v8)
- Rejecting God's Word (v9)
- Robbing God's Word of its power (v13)

- In the same way, those who handle God's Word without submitting to it are in the constant process of conforming it to their self-complacency

14 After He called the crowd to Him again, He began saying to them, "Listen to Me, all of you, and understand:

**14** After He called the crowd to Him again, He *began* saying to them, "Listen to Me, all of you, and understand:

**14** Then he called to the crowd again and told them, "Listen to me, all of you, and understand!

**14** And when he had called all the people unto him, he said unto them, **Hearken unto me every one of you, and understand:**

- Jesus continues to respond to His critics, but now focused on what constituted defilement, which was very important
- The Jews had wandered far from God's will in this matter because of their traditions
- What Jesus had to say was so important, He urged "all the people" to listen carefully to His words
- His response to this point was primarily to His critics directly

**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 the person."

**15** there is nothing outside the man which can defile him if it goes into him; but the things which proceed out of the man are what defile the man.

**15** Nothing that goes into a person from the outside can make him unclean. It's what comes out of a person that makes a person unclean.

**15** There is nothing from without a man, that entering into him can defile him: but the things which come out of him, those are they that defile the man.

- Jesus had the Pharisees reeling and He made his closing remarks as public as possible!
- Jesus clarified what does and does not cause uncleanness: Food does not, but thoughts do (Cf. Is 29:13)
- Obviously Jesus was speaking morally and spiritually, not medically and physiologically
- This is declaring null and void the entire Mosaic system of "clean and unclean" foods!
- The Jew who ate unclean food became unclean because they disobeyed God's Word, not because the food made him or her unclean

**16** [If anyone has ears to hear, let him hear.]

**16** [If anyone has ears to hear, let him hear.]

**16** If anyone has ears to hear, let him listen!"

**16** If any man have ears to hear, let him hear.

**17** And when He *later* entered a house, away from the crowd, His disciples asked Him about the parable.

**17** When he had left the crowd *and* entered the house, His disciples questioned Him about the parable.

17 When he had left the crowd and gone home, his disciples began asking him about the parable.

17 And when he was entered into the house from the people, his disciples asked him concerning the parable.

- The disciples still just did not understand His point. It wasn't "a parable," it was straightforward exposition

— What He said was revolutionary, and they probably could not believe that He really meant what He said

18 And He \*said to them, *"Are you so lacking in understanding as well? Do you not understand that whatever goes into the person from outside cannot defile him,*

18 And He \*said to them, *"Are you so lacking in understanding also? Do you not understand that whatever goes into the man from outside cannot defile him,*

18 He asked them, *"Are you so ignorant? Don't you know that nothing that goes into a person from the outside can make him unclean?*

18 And he saith unto them, *Are ye so without understanding also? Do ye not perceive, that whatsoever thing from without entereth into the man, it cannot defile him;*

19 *because it does not go into his heart, but into his stomach, and is eliminated?" (Thereby He declared all foods clean.)*

19 *because it does not go into his heart, but into his stomach, and is eliminated?" (Thus He declared all foods clean.)*

19 *Because it doesn't go into his heart but into his stomach, and then into the sewer, thereby expelling all foods."*

19 *Because it entereth not into his heart, but into the belly, and goeth out into the draught, purging all meats?*

- Jesus had declared all foods "clean": Christians need not observe the dietary restrictions of the Mosaic Law (Cf. Rom 14:14; Gal 2:11-17; Col 2:20-22)

— This was a freedom that Jewish Christians struggled with for many years during the early church (Cf. Acts 10; 11; 15)

— Later revelation clarified that Jesus terminated the entire Mosaic Law as a code (Rom 10:4; et al)

All foods are clean, says...

- Jesus (Mark 7:14-23)
- Peter (Acts 10:9-15)
- Paul (Rom 14:1-12; 1 Cor 8:4,8; 10:23-33; Col 2:16-17; 1 Tim 4:4)

In v6-13 Jesus equated the Mosaic Law with God's Word and scolded the Pharisees for nullifying God's Word with their tradition. Now Jesus is nullifying God's Word with regard to food. But it is the prerogative of Jesus, as God's Son, to change the Law. Such a change is not human tradition because Jesus' speaks for God, and God wrote the Law originally. In v20-23, Jesus response is maybe the greatest anthropological statement ever made...

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

20 And He was saying, *"That which proceeds out of the man, that is what defiles the man.*

20 Then he continued, *"It's what comes out of a person that makes a person unclean,*

20 And he said, *That which cometh out of the man, that defileth the man.*

- Jesus repeated His point with more specifics so the disciples would understand

21 For from within, out of the hearts of people, come the **evil thoughts, acts of sexual immorality, thefts, murders, acts of adultery,**

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

21 because it's from within, from the human heart, that evil thoughts come, as well as sexual immorality, stealing, murder,

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

- "...evil thoughts" - *dialogismoi hoi kakoi*, evil reasoning within oneself

- "...sexual immorality" - *moicheia*, illicit sexual intercourse; adultery, fornication, homosexuality, lesbianism, bestiality, incest

- "...thefts" - *kleptomania*, stealing, embezzlement, shoplifting

- "...murders" - *phonos*, murders, slaughter

- "...adultery" - *porneia*, sexual immorality

22 **deeds of greed, wickedness, deceit, indecent behavior, envy, slander, pride, and foolishness.**

22 **deeds of coveting and wickedness, as well as deceit, sensuality, envy, slander, pride and foolishness.**

22 adultery, greed, wickedness, cheating, shameless lust, envy, slander, arrogance, and foolishness.

22 Thefts, covetousness, wickedness, deceit, lasciviousness, an evil eye, blasphemy, pride, foolishness:

- "deeds of greed" - *pleonexia*, greed, appetite for what belongs to others

- "...wickedness" - *poneria*, depravity, malice, evil desires

- "...deceit" - *dolos*, craft, guile
- "...indecent behavior" - *aselgeia*, unbridled lust, excess, licentiousness, wantonness, outrageousness, shamelessness, insolence

Now, the relational sins:

- "...envy" - *ophthalmos poneiros*, lusting for something that God has given to someone else; an evil eye that watches another's possessions
- "...slander" - *blasphemia*, slander, detraction, speech injurious to another's good name; thus, also, impious and reproachful speech injurious to divine majesty
- "...pride" - *hyperephania*, haughtiness, arrogance
- "...foolishness" - *aphrosune*, folly, senselessness; thoughtlessness, recklessness

This is radical stuff if you think that mankind is intrinsically good!

- 23 All these evil things come from within and defile the person."
- 23 All these evil things proceed from within and defile the man."
- 23 All these things come from inside and make a person unclean."
- 23 All these evil things come from within, and defile the man.

- Some regard this declaration as the most revolutionary passage in the NT
- Most of us fail to appreciate its impact since we are unfamiliar with the bondage from the fastidious legalism which had taken over
- Some traditions can be helpful as reminders of our heritage, but we must constantly beware lest traditions take the place of truth. Holiness has always been a matter of the heart, a right relationship with God by faith.
- Ceremonial purity was a matter of external obedience to a law as evidence of that faith (Ps 51:6,10,16-17)
- Moses made it clear that God wanted love and obedience to come from the heart, and not be merely outward obedience to rules (Deut 6:4-5; 10:12; 30:6,20)

Jer 17:9: "The heart is more deceitful than all else And is desperately sick; Who can understand it?

(E) Healing of the Syro-Phoenician girl (7:24-30) (Cf. Matt 15:21-28)

- 24 Now Jesus got up and went from there to the region of Tyre. And when He had entered a house, He wanted no one to know *about it*; and yet He could not escape notice.
- 24 Jesus got up and went away from there to the region of Tyre. And when He had entered a house, He wanted no one to know *of it*; yet He could not escape notice.
- 24 Jesus left that place and went to the territory of Tyre and Sidon. He went into a house, not wanting anyone to know he was there. However, it couldn't be kept a secret.

**24** And from thence he arose, and went into the borders of Tyre and Sidon, and entered into an house, and would have no man know it: but he could not be hid.

- The only recorded occasion outside Israel: a summer cottage for privacy, on the Mediterranean coast, about 40 miles from Capernaum
- As Jewish rejection increased, Jesus increased His ministry to the Gentiles
- The logical connection with the previous section (v1-23) is evident by Jesus going directly into Gentile territory. This contact would have rendered Him ceremonial unclean according to Jewish traditions.
- In the last section, Jesus wiped out the distinction between clean and unclean foods; in this section, Jesus wipes out the difference between clean and unclean people

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

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

**25** In fact, a woman whose little daughter had an unclean spirit immediately heard about him and came and fell down at his feet.

**25** For a certain woman, whose young daughter had an unclean spirit, heard of him, and came and fell at his feet:

**26** Now the woman was a Gentile, of **Syrophoenician** descent. And she **repeatedly** asked Him to cast the demon out of her daughter.

**26** Now the woman was a Gentile, of the Syrophoenician race. And she kept asking Him to cast the demon out of her daughter.

**26** Now the woman happened to be a Greek, born in Phoenicia in Syria. She kept asking him to drive the demon out of her daughter.

**26** The woman was a Greek, a Syrophenician by nation; and she besought him that he would cast forth the devil out of her daughter.

- "...Syrophenician" - combines Syrian and Phoenician

— Phoenicia was a part of the larger Roman province of Syria, which included all of Palestine—Galilee, Samaria, Perea, Judea, Idumea, and other regions

- "...repeatedly asked" - the verb tense indicates that she kept on begging

— Her persistent request for help demonstrated her faith in Jesus. She believed Jesus could heal her if He would do so.

- Nationality was against her: a Gentile, not Jewish. "Unclean" by Jewish standards; despised by the religious establishment

— She was a woman; no standing in that society. Satan was against her: demons had taken control of her daughter; disciples were against her, tried to send her away (Matt 15:23)

27 And He was saying to her, "Let the **children** be satisfied first, for it is not good to take the children's bread and throw it to the **dogs**."

27 And He was saying to her, "Let the children be satisfied first, for it is not good to take the children's bread and throw it to the dogs."

27 But he kept telling her, "First let the children be filled. It is not right to take the children's bread and throw it to the puppies."

27 But Jesus said unto her, **Let the children first be filled: for it is not meet to take the children's bread, and to cast it unto the dogs.**

— "...children" - the Jews

— The woman conceded that the Jews had a prior claim on Jesus' ministry

— "...the dogs" - *kynarion*, little pet household dogs, not street scavengers

— The Gentiles are not called "dogs" but "doggies"; not outside scavengers, but household companions

28 But she answered and \*said to Him, "Yes, Lord, *but even the dogs under the table feed on the children's crumbs.*"

28 But she answered and \*said to Him, "Yes, Lord, *but even the dogs under the table feed on the children's crumbs.*"

28 But she answered him, "Yes, Lord. Yet even the puppies under the table eat some of the children's crumbs."

**28** And she answered and said unto him, Yes, Lord: yet the dogs under the table eat of the children's crumbs.

— She used Jesus' own words and used them as the basis for her plea! A bright persistence of faith. This woman was willing to spend untiring energy in pursuit of spiritual things.

— If pet dogs get table scraps, then she felt she had a right to a crumb from Jesus' table

— She implied that Gentiles need not wait to receive Jesus' blessings until a later time: they could feed when "the children" did, namely during Jesus' ministry

— A little Gentile blessing would not deprive the Jews of what God wanted them to have

— She depended entirely upon Christ's goodness and not her own: it was all grace.

Ps 51:17: Purify me with hyssop, and I will be clean; Cleanse me, and I will be whiter than snow.

Heb 11:6: And without faith it is impossible to please *Him*, for the one who comes to God must believe that He exists, and *that* He proves to be One who rewards those who seek Him.

29 And He said to her, "Because of this answer, go; the demon has gone out of your daughter."

29 And He said to her, "Because of this answer go; the demon has gone out of your daughter."

29 Then he told her, "Because you have said this, go! The demon has left your daughter."

**29** And he said unto her, For this saying go thy way; the devil is gone out of thy daughter.

- The woman had quick wit and humility, but it was her persistent faith that Jesus rewarded (Cf. Matt 15:28)

30 And after going back to her home, she found the child lying on the bed, and the demon gone.

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

30 So she went home and found her child lying in bed, and the demon was gone.

**30** And when she was come to her house, she found the devil gone out, and her daughter laid upon the bed.

- The woman's return home without Jesus also shows her faith

— This is the only instance of Jesus healing from a distance, without a vocal command, that Mark recorded

— This miracle shows that Jesus rewards Gentile faith as well as Jewish faith; He came to deliver both Gentiles and Jews

Matt 5:6: "Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be satisfied.

(F) Healing of the deaf and dumb man (7:31-37)

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

**31** Again He went out from the region of Tyre, and came through Sidon to the Sea of Galilee, within the region of Decapolis.

**31** Then Jesus left the territory of Tyre and passed through Sidon towards the Sea of Galilee, in the territory of the Decapolis.

**31** And again, departing from the coasts of Tyre and Sidon, he came unto the sea of Galilee, through the midst of the coasts of Decapolis.

- Jesus took a circular route, from Tyre to Sidon (~20 miles north) around to the east side of the Sea of Galilee (Decapolis)

— Tyre and Sidon were deep in Gentile territory, and the Decapolis region was also primarily Gentile (Cf. 5:1-20)

— This trip may have taken weeks or months

32 And they \*brought to Him one who was deaf and **had difficulty speaking**, and they \*begged Him to lay His hand on him.

32 They \*brought to Him one who was deaf and spoke with difficulty, and they \*implored Him to lay His hand on him.

32 Some people brought him a deaf man who also had a speech impediment. They begged him to lay his hand on him.

32 And they bring unto him one that was deaf, and had an impediment in his speech; and they beseech him to put his hand upon him.

- "...had difficulty speaking" - *mogilalos*, only here in the NT, and only in Is 35:6 in the LXX

— The word's presence in the LXX is significant because Isaiah predicted that Messiah would loose the tongues of the dumb when He came (v37)

33 And Jesus took him aside from the crowd, by himself, and put His fingers in his ears, and after spitting, He touched his tongue *with the saliva*;

33 Jesus took him aside from the crowd, by himself, and put His fingers into his ears, and after spitting, He touched his tongue *with the saliva*;

33 Jesus took him away from the crowd to be alone with him. Putting his fingers into the man's ears, he touched the man's tongue with saliva.

33 And he took him aside from the multitude, and put his fingers into his ears, and he spit, and touched his tongue;

- Why are these details recorded? Jesus' procedure seems to be a form of communication with him; a form of sign language. It also gives us an example to follow: His look, His sigh, His touch, and His Word.

- His was a "hands-on" ministry: it was personal, it was compassionate, it was directed to a specific need (our prayerlessness is probably among our most serious sins)

34 and **looking up to heaven** with a deep sigh, He \*said to him, "**Ephphatha!**" that is, "**Be opened!**"

34 and looking up to heaven with a deep sigh, He \*said to him, "**Ephphatha!**" that is, "**Be opened!**"

34 Then he looked up to heaven, sighed, and told him, "**Ephphatha,**" that is, "**Be opened!**"

34 And looking up to heaven, he sighed, and saith unto him, ***Ephphatha***, that is, **Be opened.**

- "...looking up to heaven" - Jesus associated the healing with God, and the fact that the healing involved spiritual warfare

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

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

35 The man's hearing and speech were restored at once, and he began to talk normally.

35 And straightway his ears were opened, and the string of his tongue was loosed, and he spake plain.

- "...he began speaking plainly" - verb tense suggests he kept on speaking

36 And He gave them orders not to tell anyone; but the more He ordered them, the more widely they continued to proclaim *it*.

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

36 Jesus ordered the people not to tell anyone, but the more he kept ordering them, the more they kept spreading the news.

36 And he charged them that they should tell no man: but the more he charged them, so much the more a great deal they published it;

- Another command to keep the miracle quiet went unheeded (Cf. 1:44; 5:43)

— The multitude is a good example of how many treat Jesus...yielding Him all homage, except obedience

— We get it backwards: He charged us to tell everyone; and we treat it as a secret. The credentials reported to John in his doubts (Luke 7:22).

Jesus' difficult conflicts lie not with demons, for He has authority from God to destroy them, nor does Jesus struggle much in conflict with nature, for He has authority over it. The difficult conflicts arise with people, for Jesus has no authority to control them; people choose and nothing can be forced upon them. He can successfully order a deaf-mute to hear and talk, but he cannot make him keep quiet or stop others from listening to him. Furthermore, he cannot make His disciples understand nor can He constrain the authorities to stop opposing Him.

37 And they were utterly astonished, saying, "**He has done all things well**; He makes even those who are deaf hear, and those who are unable to talk, speak."

37 They were utterly astonished, saying, "He has done all things well; He makes even the deaf to hear and the mute to speak."

37 Amazed beyond measure, they kept on saying, "He does everything well! He even makes deaf people hear and mute people talk!"

37 And were beyond measure astonished, saying, He hath done all things well: he maketh both the deaf to hear, and the dumb to speak.

- "...He has done all things well" - recalls Gen 1:31 where Moses wrote that God saw that everything that he had created was good

— The healing of the deaf man with a speech impediment resulted in this confession of Jesus' greatness, but fell short of identifying Him as God

— The healing of the blind man (8:22-26) was the incident that God used to open the disciples' eyes to the biblical messianic identity of Jesus (8:29)

- The restoration of hearing to the deaf and speaking to the dumb was the work of God (Cf. Is 35:5-6)

— Matthew recorded that Jesus healed many other people with various afflictions at this time (Matt 15:29-31)

From 6:31, the beginning of the second withdrawal and return, to 7:37, Jesus reveals Himself with increasing clarity to the disciples but with little response. This story is a repetition of some of these lessons, culminating in the disciples' confession of Jesus as the divine Messiah (8:1-30).