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Cleansing the Common: A Narrative-Intertextual Study of Mark 7:1-23

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ABSTRACT

CLEANSING THE COMMON: A NARRATIVE-INTERTEXTUAL

STUDY OF MARK 7:1–23

by

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ABSTRACT OF GRADUATE STUDENT RESEARCH

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Title: CLEANSING THE COMMON: A NARRATIVE-INTERTEXTUAL
          STUDY OF MARK 7:1–23

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The conflict story of Mark 7:1–23 between Jesus and the religious leaders
over the issue of defilement is the meeting point of a variety of disciplines: Purity
studies, Jewish studies, exegetical studies, Historical Jesus studies, and studies on
Jesus and the law. The crux of the passage, the meaning of the parable in v. 15 and
the ensuing "cleansing" in v. 19, has been interpreted very differently. Scholars doing
exegetical studies and studies on the relationship between Jesus and the law have
maintained that the Gospel writer correctly reflects in 7:19 the meaning of Jesus'
parable (7:15), abrogating the clean/unclean categories of Lev 11. Scholars doing
purity, Jewish, and recent Historical Jesus studies have generally argued that Jesus
could not have abrogated these food laws in the social and religious setting of his day.

The controversial remark in a narrative aside must be Mark's comment on Jesus' saying to accommodate the Christian community in the later part of the first century.

Chapter 1 introduces the narrative-intertextual methodology used in the subsequent chapters. This methodology allows a careful examination of the literary material in Mark's Gospel in the first part of the dissertation and a careful examination of purity issues arising out of the Hebrew Scriptures and the Second Temple period in the later part.

The narrative analysis in chapters 2–3 reveals that Mark uses space, time, props, movement, prefixes, verb tenses, and technical terminology meticulously and astutely to develop the themes in the pericope and build a cohesive literary unit. The central theme of the entire pericope is "touch defilement," which is first introduced in the observation that the disciples eat with defiled (unwashed) hands. It is augmented with a conflict over authority.

Chapter 4 examines the interrelationship of purity terms in biblical literature of the later Second Temple period. In the major reference works predating the 1970s, the purity terms κοινός ("defiled"), ἀκάθαρτος ("unclean"), and βέβηλος ("profane") were more or less used interchangeably. Since the 1970s though, studies examining the topic of purity have differentiated these terms. An assessment of 1 Macc 1:47, 62; Mark 7:1–23; Acts 10–11; and the parallel passages of Acts 21:28 and 24:6 leads to the conclusion that κοινός/κοινόω is a term unique to the Second Temple period and distinct from other purity terminology. It is best defined as an intermediary defilement that a clean person/object acquires by coming in contact with an unclean person/object. Since κοινός impurity is unknown in the Hebrew Scriptures, Mark is correct in attributing it to the "tradition of the elders."

Scholarship has generally connected allusions in Mark 7:1–23 to the clean/unclean animals of Lev 11. Chapter 5 assesses the intertextual allusions based on literary, thematic, and logical parallels. In each category Mark indeed refers to Lev 11, but not to the section on clean/unclean animals (Lev 11:1–23, 41–43). Instead, the allusions always point to the section on touch contamination by a carcass (Lev 11:24–40) or the section containing holiness language (Lev 11:44–45). Mark underlines the topic of touch defilement and ethical purity by means of these allusions to Lev 11.

A concluding chapter summarizes the findings. In Mark 7:1–23 neither Mark nor Jesus abrogates the clean/unclean distinction of Leviticus. Instead, Mark in v. 19 correctly summarizes Jesus' position that new "traditions," established during the Second Temple period, overextended God's requirements and are hence invalid. In the larger context (Mark 6–8 and particularly Mark 7:24–30), κοινός defilement from Gentiles is therefore an invalid expansion of God's law and, instead, mission to all people is a divine imperative (Gen 12:1–3; Mark 7:24–30; Acts 10–11).

Mark 7:1–23 is shown to be a coherent whole illustrated in four steps. The narrative data demonstrate the unity of the pericope. Jesus' support of the law against Second Temple period additions is found in both vv. 1–13 and 14–23. The passage's marked parallelism to the defilement and holiness theology of Lev 11 exhibits the Evangelist's sensitivity to purity issues. And the congruence of the passage's teaching with the trajectory of mission in Acts 10 demonstrates the heuristic power of this explanation of Mark 7.

Andrews University

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STUDY OF MARK 7:1–23

A Dissertation

Presented in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree

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To my loving wife, Lubica,
who supported and encouraged me in every way possible.

To my daughter, Sophie,
whose pitter-patter steps into the study brought me unending joy.

To family,
who believed in this undertaking and made it possible.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AB   Anchor Bible

ABD   *Anchor Bible Dictionary.* Edited by D. N. Freedman. 6 vols. New York, 1992

ABRL   Anchor Bible Reference Library

AUSS   *Andrews University Seminary Studies*

AASF   Annales Academiae scientiarum fennicae

ABR   *Australian Biblical Review*

BAGD   Bauer, W., W. F. Arndt, F. W. Gingrich, and F. W. Danker. *Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature.* 2d ed. Chicago, 1979

BDAG   Bauer, W., F. W. Danker, W. F. Arndt, and F. W. Gingrich. *Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature.* 3d ed. Chicago, 1999

BECNT   Baker Exegetical Commentary of the New Testament

Bib   *Biblica*

BJS   Brown Judaic Studies

BZ   *Biblische Zeitschrift*

BBR   *Bulletin for Biblical Research*

BBRSup   Bulletin for Biblical Research Supplement

ConBNT   Coniectanea neotestamentica or Coniectanea biblica: New Testament Series

EDNT   *Exegetical Dictionary of the New Testament.* Edited by H. Balz, G. Schneider. ET. Grand Rapids. 1990–1993

EKKNT	Evangelisch-katholischer Kommentar zum Neuen Testament
ESV	English Standard Version of the Bible
ETL	*Ephemerides Theologicae Lovanienses*
HALOT	Koehler, L., W. Baumgartner, and J. J. Stamm, *The Hebrew and Aramaic Lexicon of the Old Testament.* Translated and edited under the supervision of M. E. J. Richardson. 4 vols. Leiden, 1994–1999
HTKNT	Herders theologischer Kommentar zum Neuen Testament
Int	*Interpretation*
IBS	*Irish Biblical Journal*
JAAR	*Journal of the American Academy of Religion*
JJS	*Journal of Jewish Studies*
JSJ	*Journal for the Study of Judaism in the Persian, Hellenistic and Roman Period*
JBL	*Journal of Biblical Literature*
JSNT	*Journal for the Study of the New Testament*
JSNTSup	Journal for the Study of the New Testament: Supplement Series
JSOT	*Journal for the Study of the Hebrew Scriptures*
JSOTSup	Journal for the Study of the Hebrew Scriptures: Supplement Series
JTS	*Journal of Theological Studies*
L&N	*Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament: Based on Semantic Domains.* Edited by J. P. Louw and E. A. Nida. 2d ed. New York, 1989
LB	*Linguistica Biblica*
LSJ	Liddell, H. G., R. Scott, H. S. Jones, *A Greek-English Lexicon.* 9th ed. With revised supplement. Oxford, 1996
NAC	New American Commentary

NIBCNT	New International Biblical Commentary on the New Testament
NICNT	New International Commentary (New Testament)
NIDNTT	*New International Dictionary of New Testament Theology.* Edited by C. Brown. 4 vols. Grand Rapids, 1975–1985
NIGTC	New International Greek Testament Commentary
NRSV	New Revised Standard Version of the Bible
NTC	New Testament Commentary
NTL	New Testament Library
NTS	New Testament Studies
OTL	Old Testament Library
PRSt	*Perspectives in Religious Studies*
R&T	*Religion and Theology*
ResQ	*Restoration Quarterly*
RevQ	*Revue de Qumran*
Semeia	*Semeia*
SBLDS	Society of Biblical Literature Dissertation Series
SJLA	*Studies in Judaism in Late Antiquity*
STDJ	*Studies on the Texts of the Desert of Judah*
TDNT	*Theological Dictionary of the New Testament.* Edited by G. Kittel and G. Friedrich. Translated by G. W. Bromiley. 10 vols. Grand Rapids: 1964–1976
THKNT	Theologischer Handkommentar zum Neuen Testament
USQR	*Union Seminary Quarterly Review*
VTsup	Vestus Testamentum Supplements
WBC	Word Biblical Commentary

WMANT	Wissenschaftliche Monographien zum Alten und Neuen Testament
WTJ	*Westminster Theological Journal*
WUNT	Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen zum Neuen Testament
ZNW	*Zeitschrift für die neutestamentliche Wissenschaft und die Kunde der älteren Kirche*

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Scholarship has long deliberated the problematic saying "καθαρίζων πάντα τὰ βρώματα" ("Thus he declared all foods clean," ESV) found in Mark 7:19c. Though scholars have offered various solutions to resolve the tensions of this passage, it has remained a troublesome clause nonetheless. These tensions consist of a challenging linguistic and syntactical construction, contextual uncertainties related to the extent of the pericope, and differences among scholars regarding the interpretation of the passage within its Markan context.

Background of the Problem

Two interpretive perspectives can be roughly identified in attempting to resolve the challenges of this text. The first perspective is illustrated by commentators who have wrestled with the passage in light of other conflict stories and have tried to resolve the participial phrase of Mark 7:19c either as a narrative aside or as a radical saying of Jesus himself. Most of these commentators have concluded that Jesus abrogated the food laws.[1]

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[1] Ralph P. Martin represents this group by stating that Mark 7 is concerned about recording "in the plainest terms Jesus' detachment from Jewish ceremonial and to spell out in clear tones the application of this to his readers." Ralph P. Martin, *Mark, Evangelist and Theologian* (Exeter: Paternoster Press, 1972), 220. Collins is more mindful of the difficulties of the text but concurs with Martin's conclusions in her most recent publication: "The comment of v. 19c . . . implies, at the very least, that the observance of the food laws for followers of Jesus is not obligatory." Adela Yarbro Collins, *Mark: A Commentary* (Hermeneia; ed. Harold W. Attridge, Minneapolis, Minn.:

This interpretive conclusion has been collectively termed the "mainstream" or

"traditional" model.[2] The second perspective is represented by two groups of scholars,

those researching the historical Jesus[3] and those investigating purity issues in their

progression from the Pentateuch to the Second Temple period.[4] They have reexamined

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Fortress, 2007), 356. Other representatives include: James A. Brooks, *Mark* (NAC 23; Nashville, Tenn.: Broadman Press, 1991); Robert A. Guelich, *Mark 1–8:26* (WBC 34A; Waco, Tex.: Word Books, 1989); C. S. Mann, *Mark: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary* (AB 27; Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1986); Martin, *Mark, Evangelist and Theologian*; Heikki Räisänen, "Jesus and the Food Laws: Reflections on Mark 7:15," *JSNT* 16 (1982): 79–100; Robert H. Stein, *Mark* (BECNT; Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2008); Walter W. Wessel, *Mark* (Expositor's Bible Commentary: With the New International Version of the Holy Bible; Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1976); William Hendriksen, *Exposition of the Gospel According to Mark* (NTC; Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1975).

[2] Jesper Svartvik, *Mark and Mission: Mk 7:1–23 in Its Narrative and Historical Contexts* (ConBNT 32; Stockholm: Almqvist & Wiksell International, 2000), 3.

[3] Thomas Kazen's introduction provides a detailed analysis of major figures in recent literature. He divides scholars into two broad categories: The first and second wave of the historical Jesus research versus the third wave. He further subdivides the third wave into three subsections each employing the same basic premise of the "Jewish Jesus" but with very different end results. Thomas Kazen, *Jesus and Purity Halakhah: Was Jesus Indifferent to Impurity?* (ConBNT 38; Stockholm: Almqvist & Wiksell, 2002), 2–25. Some of the most prominent scholars and their contributions include: John Dominic Crossan, *The Historical Jesus: The Life of a Mediterranean Jewish Peasant* (San Francisco: HarperSanFrancisco, 1991); David Flusser, *Jewish Sources in Early Christianity* (New York: Adama Books, 1987); Martin Hengel, *Judentum und Hellenismus; Studien Zu Ihrer Begegnung Unter Besonderer Berücksichtigung Palästinas Bis Zur Mitte Des 2. Jh. v. Chr* (WUNT 1/10; Tübingen: J.C.B. Mohr, 1969); Burton L. Mack, *The Lost Gospel: The Book of Q & Christian Origins* (San Francisco: HarperSanFrancisco, 1993); Jacob Neusner, "Pharisaic Law in New Testament Times," *USQR* 26, no. 4 (1971): 331–340; E. P. Sanders, *Jesus and Judaism* (London: SCM, 1985); E. P. Sanders, *The Historical Figure of Jesus* (London: Allen Lane, 1993); Géza Vermès, *Jesus the Jew: A Historian's Reading of the Gospels* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1981); Géza Vermès, *Jesus and the World of Judaism* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1984); Géza Vermès, *The Religion of Jesus the Jew* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1993).

[4] Some representatives and their contributions include: Yonatan Adler, "The Ritual Baths Near the Temple Mount and Extra-Purification before Entering the Temple Courts: A Reply to Eyal Regev," *Israel Exploration Journal* 56, no. 2 (2006): 209–215; Mary Douglas, *Purity and Danger: An Analysis of the Concepts of Pollution and Taboo* (London: Ark, 1984); Mary Douglas, "The Forbidden Animals in Leviticus," *JSOT* 59

this passage in light of similar passages in the Gospel of Mark and the cultural backdrop of the first-century setting. On this basis, these scholars have concluded that Jesus not only adhered to food purity laws himself, but never abrogated the food laws of the Hebrew Bible.

<div align="center">Overview of the "Traditional" Approach</div>

The majority position among scholars has viewed Jesus as challenging the law of Moses in part or in whole in the passage of Mark 7:1–23. It is contended that the ethical principles set out at the end of the pericope (7:20–23) thereby stand in contradiction to the earlier legalistic Jewish model and serve as the basis of the New Testament church. Svartvik summarizes the traditional approach into three statements: "First, emphasis is put on v 15. . . . Secondly, they see no reason to doubt the authenticity of the parabolic and rather elusive statement in v. 15. . . . [Thirdly, they] consider the teaching of the historical Jesus as both (a) *anti-tradition . . .* and (b) *anti-nomistic.*"[5]

(1993): 3–23; Roy Gane, *Cult and Character: Purification Offerings, Day of Atonement, and Theodicy* (Winona Lake, Ind.: Eisenbrauns, 2005); Hannah K. Harrington, *The Impurity Systems of Qumran and the Rabbis: Biblical Foundations* (SBLDS 143; Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1993); Hannah K. Harrington, *Holiness: Rabbinic Judaism and the Graeco-Roman World* (Religion in the First Christian Centuries; London: Routledge, 2001); Jonathan Klawans, *Impurity and Sin in Ancient Judaism* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000); Jonathan Klawans, *Purity, Sacrifice, and the Temple: Symbolism and Supersessionism in the Study of Ancient Judaism* (Oxford: New York, 2006); Gerald A. Klingbeil, *Bridging the Gap: Ritual and Ritual Texts in the Bible* (BBRSupp 1; Winona Lake, Ind.: Eisenbrauns, 2007); Jacob Milgrom, *Leviticus 1–16: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary* (AB 3; New York: Doubleday, 1991); Jacob Milgrom, *Leviticus 17–22: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary* (AB 3A; New York: Doubleday, 2000); Jacob Milgrom, *Leviticus 23–27: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary* (AB 3B; New York: Doubleday, 2001); Jacob Milgrom, "On the Purification Offering in the Temple Scroll," *RevQ* 16, no. 1 (1993): 99–101; Jacob Neusner, *Purity in Rabbinic Judaism: A Systematic Account: The Sources, Media, Effects, and Removal of Uncleanness* (South Florida Studies in the History of Judaism 95; Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1994).

[5] Svartvik, *Mark and Mission: Mk 7:1–23 in Its Narrative and Historical*

This view, with small modifications, is represented in all the major commentaries as well as popular works which are too numerous to number. Jan Lambrecht summarized this view and its representatives in the 1970s[6] and Roger P. Booth examined this and the following approaches in the 1980s.[7] Some of the more influential commentaries in recent years that espouse this traditional view have been written by R. T. France,[8] Joel Marcus,[9] and Adela Yarbro Collins.[10]

Overview of the Purity and Historical Jesus Approach

In the 1970s a new interest in the issue of purity arose. From an anthropological viewpoint Mary Douglas examined Leviticus as a list of cultural *tabu* akin to similar practices in religions around the world.[11] Her contribution resulted in decades of intense

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Contexts, 3–4. In contrast to the three statements of the "traditional" view this study contends that (1) v. 15 needs to be understand in the purity context of the entire pericope, (2) the saying is best understood as being authentic, and 3) based on the context Jesus is not *anti-nomistic* (the "law of Moses" and the "words of God") but is *anti-tradition* (the "tradition of the elders").

[6] Jan Lambrecht, "Jesus and the Law: An Investigation of Mark 7:1–23," *ETL* 53, no. 1 (1977): 29–30.

[7] Roger P. Booth, *Jesus and the Laws of Purity: Tradition History and Legal History in Mark 7* (JSNTSup; Sheffield: JSOT 1986), 55–112.

[8] R. T. France, *The Gospel of Mark: A Commentary on the Greek Text* (NIGTC; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2002).

[9] Joel Marcus, *Mark 1–8: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary* (AB 27A; ed. William Foxwell Albright and David Noel Freedman; New York: Doubleday, 2000).

[10] Collins, *Mark: A Commentary*.

[11] Douglas, *Purity and Danger: An Analysis of the Concepts of Pollution and Taboo*; Mary Douglas, "The Abominations of Leviticus," in *Anthropological Approaches to the Old Testament* (Philadelphia, Pa.: Fortress, 1985), 100–116.

study and exchange between various scholars, most significantly Jacob Milgrom. Milgrom largely agreed with Douglas's exploration of Leviticus but challenged her on the details of the cultic language and therefore concluded that the Jewish purity system is more complex than Douglas had proposed. As such it cannot be compared to *tabu* ideology of other religions, a view Douglas adopted in her later writings as well.[12]

The explanation of this intricate system of purity legislation was further developed by David Wright[13] and Jonathan Klawans.[14] Not only did Wright and Klawans argue for separate categories of purity (holy versus pure) but also for a distinction within the setting of a category. The category of unclean should therefore be subdivided into "tolerated uncleanness" and "prohibited uncleanness." Additionally, Klawans examined how sin and purity interact.

During that same timespan, from 1960 to the present day, scholars also reexamined purity matters from a historical perspective. Jacob Neusner and E. P. Sanders, though with different approaches and conclusions, challenged the prevailing attitude of the previous decades. Sanders pointed out that Jesus was deeply connected to the Jewish culture rather than antagonistic towards it. In this sense Sanders argued for a relative sense of the parable in Mark 7:15 rather than an absolutist; that is, Jesus valued

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[12] Mary Douglas, *In the Wilderness: The Doctrine of Defilement in the Book of Numbers* (JSOTSup 158; Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1993); Mary Douglas, "The Compassionate God of Leviticus and His Animal Creation," in *Borders, Boundaries and the Bible* (London: Sheffield Academic Press, 2002).

[13] David P. Wright, "Observations on the Ethical Foundations of the Biblical Dietary Laws: A Response to Jacob Milgrom," in *Religion and Law: Biblical, Judaic and Islamic Perspectives* (ed. E.E. Firmage, B. Weiss, and J. Welch; Winona Lake, Ill.: Eisnebrauns, 1990), 193–198; David P. Wright, "Unclean and Clean," *ABD* 6:729–741.

[14] Klawans, *Impurity and Sin in Ancient Judaism*.

ethical purity *more* than ritual purity rather than abrogating ritual purity altogether. Neusner contributed to the historical understanding of the first-century with extensive studies on the first-century setting and the developments of Jewish thought and culture from the Second Temple period into the Diaspora and Mishnaic era. In regard to purity, Neusner argues that, though first-century documents are scarce, purity concerns must have been an important point of discussion in the first century as the Mishnah deals with purity concerns that must have arisen in the decades and centuries before its writing. He proposes that Jesus opposed the expansionist idea of the Pharisees that urged the common meal of ordinary people to be consumed in a state of purity corresponding to the priests in the temple.

In more recent years other scholars have further revised and corroborated these ideas. Roger P. Booth supported a relative view of Mark 7:15 and concluded that, generally speaking, the historical setting described in the Gospel of Mark correctly represents the issues of the first century.[15] Hannah Harrington first examined the various religious factions in the Second Temple period and their view on purity matters, concluding that these different groups took different approaches to dealing with the purity regulations of the Hebrew Bible and to filling the gaps not addressed in the ancient writings.[16] Later on Harrington expanded her research to include the non-Jewish historical setting as well.[17]

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[15] Booth, *Jesus and the Laws of Purity: Tradition History and Legal History in Mark 7*.

[16] Harrington, *The Impurity Systems of Qumran and the Rabbis: Biblical Foundations*. See also Ian C. Werrett, *Ritual Purity and the Dead Sea Scrolls* (STDJ 72; ed. Florentino Garcia Martinez; Leiden: Brill, 2007).

[17] Harrington, *Holiness: Rabbinic Judaism and the Graeco-Roman World*.

Studies on the historical Jesus have taken a different approach in the last decades. Rather than focus on the "otherness" of Jesus in regard to his social and religious environment, the third quest of Historical Jesus studies has emphasized his Jewishness.[18] Kazen summarizes the phases of historical Jesus research: "While the counter-cultural Cynic has a number of disciples, and a Protestant preacher still lingers in some quarters, the Galilean Jew, Jesus, is more and more taking centre stage."[19] The earlier phases of study positioned Jesus as rebel, as advocated by John Dominic Crossan,[20] or as secular sage, as advanced by Robert W. Funk.[21] In contrast, the latest group of scholars has instead seen Jesus as having "shared a sufficient number of general concepts and presuppositions belonging to contemporary paradigms" regardless to what extent he might have been a "social and/or religious reformer, an authoritative teacher, or a charismatic healer, intent on communication and response."[22] This view of Jesus places Jesus firmly into the cultural and religious setting of his time, but it does not negate tensions that must have existed between Jesus and the authority figures, otherwise the conflict stories in the Gospels and Jesus' ultimate death would be inexplicable.

Besides the typical three-phase approach to the development of Historical Jesus studies, Svartvik proposes an alternate approach to chronicle the different attitudes

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[18] See N. T. Wright's chapter detailing the development of New Testament studies leading up to 1986 in S. Neill and N. T. Wright, *The Interpretation of the New Testament* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1989), 379.

[19] Kazen, *Jesus and Purity Halakhah: Was Jesus Indifferent to Impurity?*, 347.

[20] Crossan, *The Historical Jesus: The Life of a Mediterranean Jewish Peasant*.

[21] Robert W. Funk, *Honest to Jesus: Jews for a New Millenium* (San Francisco: HarperSanFrancisco, 1996).

[22] Kazen, *Jesus and Purity Halakhah: Was Jesus Indifferent to Impurity?*, 347.

toward the historical Jesus. He divides Historical Jesus studies into their view of Jesus:

Jesus the Cynic, Jesus the Secular Sage, Jesus the Other, Jesus the Galilean Charismatic

Jew, Jesus the Radical Eschatologist, Jesus the Object of Mission, Jesus the θεῖος ἀνὴρ,

and the Question of the Unique Jesus.[23]

The group of scholars contributing to this latest view has been represented already

in part in the previous paragraphs describing the development of purity studies. This

overlap is not surprising as purity concerns were an important aspect of the Jewish life of

the first century as can be demonstrated through the writings of Philo, Josephus, the New

Testament, as well as the archeological evidence, for example, of *miqvaot* basins in

Jerusalem.[24] Many recent Historical Jesus scholars who view Jesus as a part of the

cultural setting of his time (e.g., Sanders, Neusner, Booth, and Kazen) feature

significantly in both historical Jesus and purity studies. Because this dissertation is

focused on the interrelation of purity and Jesus, more emphasis will be placed on the

previously mentioned authors than on other well-known Historical Jesus scholars such as

John P. Meier[25] and Géza Vermès.[26]

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[23] Svartvik, *Mark and Mission: Mk 7:1–23 in Its Narrative and Historical Contexts*, 61–104.

[24] Adler, "The Ritual Baths Near the Temple Mount and Extra-Purification before Entering the Temple Courts: A Reply to Eyal Regev"; Yonatan Adler, "Second Temple Period Ritual Baths Adjacent to Agricultural Installations: The Archaeological Evidence in Light of the Halakhic Sources," *JJS* 59, no. 1 (2008): 62–72; Yonatan Adler, "Ritual Baths Adjacent to Tombs: An Analysis of the Archeological Evidence in Light of the Halakhic Sources," *JSJ* 40, no. 1 (2009): 55–73. See also Roland Deines, *Jüdische Steingefässe und Pharisäische Frömmigkeit: Ein Archäologisch-historischer Beitrag zum Verständnis von Joh 2,6 und der Jüdischen Reinheitshalacha zur Zeit Jesu* (WUNT 2:52; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1993).

[25] John P. Meier, *A Marginal Jew: Rethinking the Historical Jesus,* Vol. 1: *The Roots of the Problem and the Person* (New York: Doubleday, 1991); Vol. 2: *Mentor, Message, and Miracles* (ABRL, New York: Doubleday, 1994); Vol. 3: *Companions and Competitors* (New York: Doubleday, 2001); Vol. 4: *Law and Love* (ABRL; New York:

The most recent work that examines Mark 7:1–23 from a combined approach of purity and Historical Jesus studies is Thomas Kazen's dissertation: Jesus and Purity Halakhah: Was Jesus indifferent to purity? Though Kazen argues against a starting point of disputed and difficult texts, such as Mark 7:1–23, he does return to the passage after he has examined the clear passages. Based on his research in these passages and building on previous research by Sanders, Neusner, and Booth, he concludes that Jesus was indifferent to the purity issues raised and expanded in the Second Temple period. Although Jesus was not anti-nomistic, as the traditional view posits, Kazen argues that the troublesome parable in Mark 7:15 should be understood in a relative sense: Jesus considers ethical purity as more important than practices of ritual purity.[27]

Overview of the Narrative Approach

The discipline of narrative analysis is a fairly recent addition in the field of biblical studies and was not fully developed until the 1980s. As early as the 1960s scholars noted that the traditional methods of the historical-critical approach were leaving questions unanswered. Paul J. Achtemaier summarizes these earlier works succinctly by stating: "Redaction-criticism has reached the point where it asks a (literary) question it is

Doubleday, 2009).

[26] Vermès, *Jesus the Jew: A Historian's Reading of the Gospels*; Vermès, *Jesus and the World of Judaism*; Vermès, *The Religion of Jesus the Jew*.

[27] Kazen's dissertation, though it incorporates purity and Historical Jesus studies, focuses more on Jesus' relationship to purity concerns. Two subsequent volumes focus more on the development of purity concerns in the late Second Temple period. Thomas Kazen, *Scripture, Interpretation, or Authority? Motives and Arguments in Jesus' Halakic Conflicts* (WUNT 320; ed. Jörg Frey; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2013); Thomas Kazen, *Issues of Impurity in Early Judaism* (ConBNT 45; Winona Lake, Ind.: Eisenbrauns, 2010).

not equipped to answer, and as a result makes the analysis of Mark as literature a logical step."[28] Contributions to the concept of applying literary methods to the Gospels began with scholars such as Amos N. Wilder in the 1960s,[29] Robert C. Tannehill in the 1970s,[30] and Robert Alter in the 1980s.[31] The breakthrough for narrative analysis as a complete literary study can be attributed to David Rhoads and Donald Michie in their book *Mark as Story* in which they proposed the term "narrative criticism" for this new discipline.[32] Significant contributions to narrative criticism have been Elizabeth Struthers Malbon's narrative structuralism[33] and the contribution of commentaries employing narrative criticism in conjunction with text critical and exegetical methods such as Francis J. Maloney,[34] M. Eugene Boring,[35] and James W. Voelz.[36]

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[28] Paul J. Achtemeier, *Mark* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1986), 41.

[29] Amos N. Wilder, *The Language of the Gospel: Early Christian Rhetoric* (New York: Harper and Row, 1964).

[30] Robert C. Tannehill, "Disciples in Mark: The Function of a Narrative Role," *Journal of Religion* 57, no. 4 (1977): 386–405; Robert C. Tannehill, "The Gospel as Narrative Christology," *Semeia* 16 (1979): 57–95.

[31] Robert Alter, *The Art of Biblical Narrative* (San Francisco: Basic Books, 1981).

[32] David Rhoads and Donald Michie, *Mark as Story: An Introduction to the Narrative of a Gospel* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1982). See also the companion volume reflecting upon this original work: Kelly R. Iverson and Christopher W. Skinner, eds., *Mark as Story: Retrospect and Prospect* (Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2011).

[33] Elizabeth Struthers Malbon, *Narrative Space and Mythic Meaning in Mark* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1991). See also her presentation on narrative criticism in "Narrative Criticism: How Does the Story Mean?," in *Mark and Method: New Approaches in Biblical Studies* (ed. Janice Capel Anderson and Stephen D. Moore; Minneapolis, Minn.: Fortress Press, 1992), 23–49.

[34] Francis J. Moloney, *The Gospel of Mark: A Commentary* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2002).

[35] M. Eugene Boring, *Mark: A Commentary* (ed. C. Clifton Black and John T. Carroll; NTL; Louisville, Ky.: Westminster John Knox, 2006).

The passage of Mark 7:1–23 has been touched on by many narrative scholars examining topical references to the law, to space, and to the structure in the Gospel of Mark. In his dissertation *Mark and Mission: Mk 7:1–23 in Its Narrative and Historical Contexts,* Jesper Svartvik, though, takes a different approach.[37] He focuses exclusively on the pericope at hand from a *Wirkungsgeschichte* and narrative-critical point of view. The latter, which is of interest to this study, is a valuable contribution limited only by its narrow focus in the field of narrative criticism. Svartvik restricts his study to four areas of narrative criticism he considers most important: The Markan understanding of the word παραβολή for the saying of 7:15, the spatial reference in the pericope, the characterization in the pericope, and the *rôle* the passage plays in the setting of the entire Gospel.

Summary of the Overview of the History of Interpretation

In their respective processes, the primary interpretive perspectives have left some gaps in dealing with the passage. The traditional approach, usually developed in commentaries, has been used to focus on the difficulty of the participial phrase. Generally other linguistic issues, such as the distinction between κοινός and ἀκάθαρτος,[38] are overlooked, along with contextual considerations. The Historical Jesus/Purity studies have advanced our understanding of the cultural setting of the Gospels, but these approaches are often based more on social science, the historical setting, and a theological rather than a linguistic or literary-contextual approach. Additionally, because

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[36] James W. Voelz, *Mark 1:1–8:26* (Concordia Commentary; Saint Louis, Mo.: Concordia, 2013).

[37] Svartvik, *Mark and Mission: Mk 7:1–23 in Its Narrative and Historical Contexts*.

[38] Both terms are usually translated as "unclean."

of the intricacy of food issues in the larger framework of purity regulations and the New Testament, the specific issue of dietary restrictions is not always a part of the purity discussion.[39]

Duncan Derrett realized the need to philologically reexamine Mark 7:19 in light of past etymological assumptions. "For many years, and by this writer amongst others, it has been assumed that κοινός and κοινόω . . . ought to be rendered 'unclean' and 'to render unclean.'"[40] Derrett's article is geared to reverse this error and point scholarship in a new direction. "It is painful to admit an error, and to have helped to mislead others. The facts should be set out, in order that those who occupy themselves with Christ's attitude to purity and impurity, may start from the right starting-point."[41]

The complexity of the questions about dietary restrictions in the New Testament extends beyond any single discipline as it touches on issues of authorship, audience, genre, religio-historical setting, linguistic-contextual issues, historical Jesus and intertextual studies. A process that combines the contributions of each field will yield better results in determining the meaning of the Markan passage than any discipline on its own.

In this reexamination, four questions need to be answered in order to find a resolution to the difficulties of the passage and to fill the gap between the two perspectives above: (1) What is the scope of the literary context? (2) Is Mark's use of

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[39] Kazen's influential dissertation does not deal with food purity, though he briefly presents his position in his introduction. Kazen, *Jesus and Purity Halakhah: Was Jesus Indifferent to Impurity?*, 10.

[40] J. Duncan M. Derrett, "Κοινός, Κοινόω," in *Jesus among Biblical Exegetes* (vol. 6 of *Studies in the New Testament*; Leiden: Brill, 1995), 111.

[41] Ibid.

language simplistic or precise? Does the author reflect careful use of terminology in the pericope? (3) What do the Greek words κοινός and καθαρίζω mean in this passage and how do they relate to other purity terminology? Does he use purity terminology as technical terms? (4) To what extent does the Hebrew Bible impact the Markan pericope?[42] Below, I delineate in more detail just what the research on these questions will entail.

<div align="center">Contextual Difficulties</div>

The extent of the immediate context has a significant impact on the interpretation of the passage. Mark 7:1–23 can be subdivided into two main sections: a conflict story (7:1–13) and a parable with its interpretation (7:14–23).[43] Over the years, commentators have seen these two sections as two different events that the Gospel author placed side by side on the basis of thematic similarities.[44] Verse 19c is therefore seen as an explanation of v. 15 and becomes a concluding remark of the public teaching of 7:14–16 and the private teaching of 7:18–19.[45] As a result the phrase in v. 19c becomes a general teaching of Jesus that abrogates the Jewish dietary laws.

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[42] The background of the Hebrew Bible has not posed a problem to scholarship in regard to the understanding of this passage. It is therefore not represented under the heading of Background to the Problem, but instead will be part of the solution (see Methodology).

[43] "In its present form, 7:1–23 has two main parts. Verses 1–13 constitute a scholastic or controversy dialogue in which the interlocutors are the Pharisees and the scribes. Verses 14–23 are structured as a typically Markan scene in which Jesus first instructs the crowd and then gives private instruction to his disciples." Collins, *Mark: A Commentary*, 342.

[44] Rudolf Pesch, *Das Markusevangelium: Einleitung und Kommentar zu Kap. 1,1–8,26* (HTKNT 2; Freiburg, Germany: Herder, 1976), 367.

[45] For a list of articles dealing with these two passages see Derrett, "Κοινός, Κοινόω," 111, fn. 1.

Contrary to this view, purity scholars allege that there is sufficient proof to view the entire pericope as a unit recounting a single event. The clause in question (v. 19c) would then be the culmination of the conflict story rather than the parable, and the "cleansing" action (καθαρίζων, v. 19c) would stand in contrast to the "defiled hands" (κοιναῖς χερσίν, v. 2). Consequently, v. 19c would oppose the teachings of the elders (vv. 3–4), challenging their interpretation of the action of Jesus' disciples, but not making any statement about Jewish dietary laws.

Difficulties of Authorship

Next to the grand Gospel of Matthew, the Gospel of Mark has for centuries had a much smaller following. With the advent of modern synoptic criticism and the majority view of the two-source hypothesis, the Gospel of Mark has received more attention although this has not reduced the stereotype that Mark is an unsophisticated writer.[46] Matthew's Gospel in this view improves on the raw material of the Markan source. Contrary to this perspective, recent developments in Markan studies, especially in the discipline of narrative analysis, have instead pointed to a highly developed[47] as well as accurate Gospel.[48] These contrary views, presenting a simplistic and a sophisticated

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[46] The Gospel of Mark "was long neglected as an epitome of Matthew with little to offer in its own right." Collins, *Mark: A Commentary*, 1.

[47] Malbon, *Narrative Space and Mythic Meaning in Mark*; Malbon, "Narrative Criticism: How Does the Story Mean?"; David Rhoads, Joanna Dewey, and Donald Michie, *Mark as Story: An Introduction to the Narrative of a Gospel* (Minneapolis, Minn.: Fortress Press, 2012); David Rhoads, *Reading Mark, Engaging the Gospel* (Minneapolis, Minn.: Fortress Press, 2004).

[48] James G. Crossley, *The Date of Mark's Gospel* (ed. Mark Goodacre; JSNTsupp; London: T&T Clark, 2004); James G. Crossley, "Halakah and Mark 7.4: '. . . and Beds,'" *JSNT* 25, no. 4 (2003): 433–447; James G. Crossley, "Halakah and Mark 7.3: 'With Hand in the Shape of a Fist'," *NTS* 58, no. 1 (2012): 57–68.

understanding of the author's writing style, directly impact the conclusions scholars arrive at. If Mark lacks a refined writing style it becomes uncertain how accurate the narrative asides are as interpretive comments on the historical context (Mark 7:3–4) and the Jesus sayings (Mark 7:19). Additionally, the use of technical terminology, specifically purity language, must be put in question since a simple work would hardly distinguish nuances of purity terms. If Mark on the other hand displays a nuanced and meticulous approach to his writing, then the accuracy of the narrative asides and the technical terminology can be asserted.

The best approach to examine whether the author is in fact a meticulous writer or not is to examine closely the pericope in detail. This entails studying the major and minor elements of the pericope in order to establish the carefulness or lack thereof of the story teller. These findings can be subsequently applied to the relevant details of purity terminology. A narrative analysis is best suited for this.

<div align="center">Linguistic Difficulties</div>

An overlooked aspect in the study of this pericope has been a careful look at how the author uses purity terminology. The need to analyze terminology closely is especially true of κοινός and καθαρίζω. The need for such a study (see Duncan Derrett)[49] and some exemplary attempts to investigate the terms (e.g., Colin House,[50] Clinton Wahlen[51]) have

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[49] Derrett discredits the traditional Greco-Roman association of βέβηλος/βεβηλόω as etymological background. Derrett, "κοινός, κοινόω," 111.

[50] In an article on Acts 10, House argues for a close reading of the technical purity language and suggests a purity category besides "clean" and "unclean." Colin House, "Defilement by Association: Some Insights from the Usage of κοινός/κοινόω in Acts 10 and 11," *AUSS* 21, no. 2 (1983): 143–153.

[51] In his dissertation Wahlen applies House's initial concept to the Markan pericope. Clinton L. Wahlen, *Jesus and the Impurity of Spirits in the Synoptic Gospels*

been pursued only by a handful of scholars. It is critical to note that καθαρίζω is not

employed in contrast to ἀκάθαρτος—as one would expect—but rather in contrast to

κοινός. In fact the word family surrounding κοινός is referred to six times (7:2, 5, 15, 18,

20, 23), while καθαρίζω and all related words are mentioned only a single time in this

section (7:19c). How does the author employ these terms and how are they used in the

writings of the time? This mandates a closer look at the usage of κοινός and καθαρίζω

and will be a substantial part of this dissertation.

Intertextual Difficulties

It has generally been accepted that the Markan pericope addresses the food laws

of Lev 11, in one way or another, either by Jesus himself in v. 15 or by the narrator in the

explanation of v. 19. But this connection has not been intertextually verified or

substantiated. This lacuna is significant as the Hebrew Bible contains food regulations

beyond the prohibitions for clean and unclean animals found in Lev 11 and Deut 14 such

as prohibitions for boiling a young goat in its mother's milk (Exod 23:19; 34:26; Deut

14:21), regulations on touch defilement of a carcass (Lev 11:24–42), and prohibitions

against eating of blood (Lev 17:10–16). A careful study is therefore necessary to identify

properly which antecedent the Markan pericope is referencing.

Statement of the Problem

Scholarship is divided over the interpretation and the implications of the conflict

passage of Mark 7:1–23. On the one hand most commentators have examined the

syntactical difficulties and concluded that the food laws of Lev 11 have been abrogated.

(WUNT 185; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2004), 72–81; Clinton L. Wahlen, "Peter's Vision and Conflicting Definitions of Purity," *NTS* 51, no. 4 (2005): 505–518.

On the other hand, Historical Jesus and Purity scholars argue that the passage does not teach the abrogation of food laws based on Jewish social and historical self-concepts. With varying methodologies and contrary conclusions, the consequences are far-reaching and transcend the immediate implications on food purity.

Purpose

The purpose of this study is to resolve the problematic passage regarding the Mark 7 cleansing by a detailed investigation of the food purity parenthesis of Mark 7:19 within its linguistic context of Mark 7:1–23 and against its intertextual backdrop.

Justification of Study

The contributions and limitations of the interpretive perspectives have already been considered above. So far scholars have either examined the historical background or the syntactical difficulties of the passage, but an examination that combines the linguistic, syntactical, contextual, and intertextual aspects of the passage is necessary to understand what the original author intended to convey. This multi-layered approach is necessary to reconcile the stalemate among the various perspectives and to properly understand the Mark 7:1–23 pericope.[52]

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[52] Colin House's article made important linguistic contributions by analyzing the purity language in Acts 10. Wahlen applies House's distinction of κοινός and καθαρίζω to Mark 7, but does not include intertextuality in his study as his research focuses on the impure spirits in the Gospel of Mark.

Scope of Study

Four of the most significant and recent commentaries on the Gospel according to Mark, no two can agree on its authorship, intended audience, or *Sitz im Leben*.[53] The challenge of these conflicting views deserves a thorough investigation to which this study cannot do justice, although the difficulties of these issues will be kept in mind as this study unfolds. This study is mainly literary and intertextual in nature and can therefore not engage in detail into the debate on the historical Jesus.[54] It will draw on the research pertaining to Historical Jesus studies regarding to Mark 7:1–23.

This dissertation will contribute to Markan studies by focusing on a literary approach. Text-critical considerations will be given to variant readings within the passage, but the different trajectories and biases found in manuscripts of different origin cannot be delved into in this study.

A social science approach is outside the reasonable scope of this study. This study will examine the Hebrew Bible as literary background of Mark 7. This literary record is both reflective of the social background of the Markan community and directive for it. While relevant research will be included in the analysis of this

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[53] Robert H. Gundry, *Mark: A Commentary on His Apology for the Cross* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1993); Collins, *Mark: A Commentary*; France, *The Gospel of Mark: A Commentary on the Greek Text*; Marcus, *Mark 1–8: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary*; Richard J. Bauckham, *The Gospels for All Christians: Rethinking the Gospel Audiences* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1998).

[54] As an example of issues in the historical Jesus debate, Svartvik notes the complexity of ascertaining the *ipsissima verba* of Jesus. "The student of the NT is, no doubt, familiar with the fact that scholars have taken a substantial interest in identifying the original words of Jesus, the *ipsissima verba Jesu*. The acid baths in which the NT Gospels have been immersed in order to present indubitable sayings are notorious." Svartvik, *Mark and Mission: Mk 7:1–23 in Its Narrative and Historical Contexts*, 9.

passage, a more detailed study of political, religious and social factors of the Greco-Roman world will not be considered in this study.

In recent years and especially with the discovery of the desert community of Qumran, studies on purity-related issues have flourished. Relevant material from these extensive studies on purity concepts throughout the era of the Hebrew Bible and amongst the various sectors of Judaism in the post-exilic and Second Temple period is helpful for a proper understanding of the first-century setting in this study. The dissertation will refer to and build upon relevant existing research in regard to the Second Temple period, but cannot fully engage in a historical examination of the development of purity concepts. This historical research has received repeated and thorough analysis beginning with Jacob Neusner,[55] E. P. Sanders,[56] Roger P. Booth,[57] James Crossley,[58] and more recently Hannah Harrington[59] and Thomas

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[55] Neusner proposes the expansionist view of Pharisees. They exhorted ordinary people to eat ordinary meals in a state of purity required of priests in the temple. Jacob Neusner, *The Idea of Purity in Ancient Judaism* (SJLA: The Haskell Lectures: 1972–73; Leiden: Brill, 1973); Neusner, *Purity in Rabbinic Judaism: A Systematic Account: The Sources, Media, Effects, and Removal of Uncleanness*.

[56] E. P. Sanders, *Jewish Law from Jesus to the Mishnah: Five Studies* (London: SCM, 1990); E. P. Sanders, *Judaism: Practice and Belief 63 BCE–66 CE* (Philadelphia: Trinity Press International, 1994); Sanders, *Jesus and Judaism*.

[57] Booth dedicates half of his study to "historico-legal criticism" which concludes that "the Pharasiaic question is credible in the time of Jesus on the basis that the Pharisees concerned were *haberim* who did handwash before *hullin*, and were urging Jesus and his disciples to adopt the supererogatory handwashing which they themselves practiced, i.e. to become *haberim*." It was an exhortation to undertake a higher standard of piety, addressed to Jesus as a religious leader." Booth, *Jesus and the Laws of Purity: Tradition History and Legal History in Mark 7*, 202.

[58] Crossley, "Halakah and Mark 7.4: '. . . and Beds'"; Crossley, *The Date of Mark's Gospel*; Crossley, "Halakah and Mark 7.3: 'With Hand in the Shape of a Fist'."

[59] Harrington, *The Impurity Systems of Qumran and the Rabbis: Biblical Foundations*. See also her works on the larger historical setting including the Greco-

Kazen,[60] to name a few. There is general agreement among these scholars that (1) purity

concerns were a central element of the self-image of the various sects within Judaism

during the Second Temple period and that (2) the purity concerns raised in Mark 7:1–23,

to a smaller or greater extent, fit the historically verifiable information of the first

century. It is therefore not of primary importance in this study to argue for the historical

plausibility or the historical development of purity concepts at the time of Jesus. Instead

this study will focus on the literary evidence for purity terminology.

Finally, the food purity discussed in Mark 7 is closely related to a complete and

intricate system of purity issues including corpse contamination, leprosy or scaly skin

disease, and discharges.[61] Significant research has recently been done on the conceptual

aspect of purity laws as well as examinations of contact-contagion impurity and

purification rituals.[62] Focus will be given to the food aspect of these studies within the

Roman world: Harrington, *Holiness: Rabbinic Judaism and the Graeco-Roman World*;
Hannah K. Harrington, *The Purity Texts* (Companion to the Qumran Scrolls 5; London: T
& T, 2004).

[60] "The hand-washing custom ascribed to the Pharisees was a Second Temple
period development arising from a realist and systemic understanding of impurity, which
based itself on innovative components but also had earlier roots. In its turn, it could be
understood to have evolved as an answer to the challenge of the real innovation in the
Second Temple period: the extreme emphasis on purity of food that required immersion
before every meal, which is evidenced in the texts from Qumran." Kazen, *Scripture,
Interpretation, or Authority? Motives and Arguments in Jesus' Halakic Conflicts*, 176;
See also his studies in Kazen, *Jesus and Purity Halakhah: Was Jesus Indifferent to
Impurity?*

[61] David P. Wright, *The Disposal of Impurity: Elimination Rites in the Bible and
in Hittite and Mesopotamian Literature* (SBLDS 101; Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1987);
Milgrom, *Leviticus 1–16: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary*;
Harrington, *The Impurity Systems of Qumran and the Rabbis: Biblical Foundations*.

[62] Kazen's dissertation is very detailed on the previous, but he clearly delimits the
food laws and refers only in passing to these. Kazen, *Jesus and Purity Halakhah: Was
Jesus Indifferent to Impurity?*, 4.

overall purity legislation and the proper understanding of a cohesive and unified model.[63]

Methodology

This study will answer the four questions posited above: (1) What is the scope of the literary context? (2) Is Mark's use of language simplistic or precise? Does the author reflect careful use of terminology in the pericope? (3) What do the Greek words κοινός and καθαρίζω mean in this passage and how do they relate to other purity terminology? Does he use purity terminology as technical terms? (4) To what extent does the Hebrew Bible impact the Markan pericope?

Methodologically this dissertation will seek a broad understanding of all the issues (contextual, linguistic, syntactical, intertextual) before making conclusions about whether Jesus abrogated the food laws or stood within the traditions of Judaism in this matter.[64] Kazen's study looked at the broad issues dealing with unambiguous purity

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[63] Harrington asserts that "the Sages recognize a system in Scripture's purity laws. . . . This evokes no surprise since in any tradition, a system of rules must be logical in order to be viable." Harrington, *The Impurity Systems of Qumran and the Rabbis: Biblical Foundations*, 41.

[64] Svartvik astutely characterizes the problem of the passage in the introduction of his study and proposes a similar multi-faceted approach, though with different parameters. "The proposal suggested in the present study is that the above-mentioned quandary necessitates, more than ever, the application of multifarious methods. When interpreting Mk 7:1–23, we suggest that three approaches are of interest: (a) the *effect*, (b) the *text* and (c) the *context, i.e.,* first the study of the sphere, degree and sort of influence of the elusive saying in 7:15, its *Wirkungsgeschichte,* during the first three hundred and fifty years; secondly, the study of the narrative flow of the text; and thirdly, the historical reconstruction of the context of the Gospel." Svartvik, *Mark and Mission: Mk 7:1–23 in Its Narrative and Historical Contexts*, 8. This present study focuses primarily on the linguistic setting of the pericope and the linguistic intertextual context. The studies on the *Wirkungsgeschichte* by Räisänen and Svartvik have sufficiently shown the lack thereof in the following decades and centuries, though whether this speaks to the inauthenticity of the saying of 7:15 or rather to a different understanding, as proposed in this study, cannot ultimately be proven by the lack of a history. This present study agrees with Svartik's

passages in Mark, this study on the other hand will look at the more ambiguous Mark 7 passage and place it within its linguistic and intertextual context (Lev 11).

Chapter Overview

This study can then best be described as a narrative-intertextual approach. At the conclusion of chapter 1 the first question of the unity of the pericope and details of the syntactical construction of Mark 7:19 will be addressed in a preliminary examination in order to answer the first question mentioned above. Chapters 2 and 3 will employ narrative analysis to examine Mark 7:1–23 in detail. The elements of storytelling (characterization, space, props, etc.) in the pericope will be assessed to determine the author's use of language and his qualification as a meticulous or careless storyteller (question 2). Chapter 4 presents an intertextual comparison of purity terms shared by the LXX and the New Testament, particularly the book of Acts. These findings are then applied to the Markan pericope and answer the third question stated above. Chapter 5 addresses the final question and examines the intertextual links between Mark 7:1–23 and Lev 11 in a linguistic and thematic comparison.

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second and third steps though this study will focus on more details. Svartik limits his narrative analysis to "four narrative components of particular importance for a better understanding of Mk 7:1–23" (ibid., 205): The Markan understanding of the word παραβολή for the saying of 7:15, the spatial reference in the pericope, the characterization, and the rôle the passage plays in the setting of the entire Gospel. This study agrees in part with Svatvik but proposes to examine all narrative elements, the purity terminology, and the larger intertextual context beyond the Gospel.

Preliminary Discussion

Two considerations need to be addressed before dealing with the specifics of the Markan pericope in the subsequent chapters: Syntactical difficulties and considerations on the unity of the pericope.

The narrative aside[65] of v. 19 ("cleansing all foods") contains not only a contentious phrase but one riddled with syntactical difficulties, especially in the opening participle. There have been multiple approaches to resolve this issue and the following sections outline how this study will proceed on this issue.

The passage is clearly divided into multiple sections: The introduction to the conflict along with the accusation of the religious leaders (7:1–5), Jesus' first response with quotations of Isaiah and Moses (7:6–14), and Jesus' second response to the crowd and the disciples (7:15–23). The question whether these are independent sections stitched together by the common theme of purity or a single, cohesive event is critical to the interpretation of the difficult narrative aside.

Syntactical Difficulties

Commentators have generally focused on the crux of the problem in Mark 7, the difficult saying of Mark 7:19c. Since the participial clause in v. 19c lacks a clear subject and predicate, the syntactical usage of the participle has come under close scrutiny. Daniel Wallace categorizes this as a nominative absolute participle, which he considers "simply a substantival participle that fits the case description of *nominativus pendens*."[66]

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[65] This term is frequently used in narrative criticism to describe a parenthetical explanatory phrase inserted by the narrator to comment on activity happening in story time. It will be used throughout this study to describe these comments inserted by Mark into the story of Mark 7:1–23.

[66] Daniel B. Wallace, *Greek Grammar Beyond the Basics: An Exegetical Syntax of the New Testament* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1996), 654.

Wallace defines the pendent nominative as *syntactically* unrelated and yet *logically* related to the main clause. While the former is true in 7:19c, the latter is not.[67]

Compounding the difficulties of this complex anarthrous participle, most commentators think that it conveys a verbal rather than adjectival idea. The verbal participle would then imply a prior agent as subject of the cleansing action. There is some dispute about which masculine antecedent καθαρίζων points back to. The immediate context could suggest the masculine ἀφεδρῶνα (latrine), but this presents an interpretive difficulty. In this scenario the latrine as a cleansing agent of food would function as a highly satirical statement. Joachim Gnilka summarizes this view: "Für den Abschluß von 19 sind verschiedene Übersetzungen möglich, je nachdem, worauf man ihn bezieht. Die einen beziehen die Reinigung aller Speisen auf die Ausscheidung, die sich im Abtritt von selber reinigen würde. Dies wäre ein Sarkasmus."[68]

Examining the larger context, the implied pronoun "he" of v. 18a (καὶ λέγει αὐτοῖς— "and *he* says to them") could also serve as the possible antecedent in the larger context. The participle καθαρίζων would thereby refer back to the speaker of the short parable of vv. 18–19, namely Jesus.

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[67] Wallace's definition identifies the *nominative pendent* as "grammatically independent" but, in contrast with the *nominative absolute,* it is "*the logical rather than syntactical subject* at the beginning of a sentence, followed by a sentence in which this subject is now replaced by a pronoun in the case required by the syntax." Ibid., 51–52.

[68] "Several translations are possible for the conclusion of verse 19 depending on the antecedent. Some refer to the cleansing of all foods as the excrement that cleanses itself in the latrine. This would be a sarcastic statement" (translation mine). Gnilka only presents this view and personally favors a narrator aside. "Näher liegt die Annahme einer Paranthese, die eine prinzipielle Feststellung einbringt, die auf den Redenden zurücklenkt: damit erklärte er alle Speisen für rein." Joachim Gnilka, *Das Evangelium Nach Markus* (EKKNT; Zürich, Switzerland: Benziger, 1978), 285.

The peculiarity of 19c finally gives way to one more consideration. Is this Jesus' own saying or the narrator's aside of the Gospel writer? The implication of a narrator's aside would entail questions whether the author intended this comment to be explanatory or interpretive in nature. As a result, would the audience have understood this as a descriptive or directive remark? If indeed the aside is based on an interpretive argument of the Gospel author, social science factors—including the cultural, religious, political, and social backdrop—need to be considered.[69]

This study agrees with the majority view that the participle of Mark 7:19c finds it appropriate antecedent in the person of Jesus. The narrative examination in the next chapter will demonstrate that the pericope establishes Jesus as the main character and syntactically the only singular character in the passage. Additionally, the narrative analysis will explain that the awkward construction of the participial phrase can best be explained as the narrator's attempt to disrupt the flow of Jesus' argument as little as possible while at the same time resolving the original dispute (v. 5).

The phrase in Mark 7:19c seems most logically to be a narrative aside in which the narrator comments on the preceding words of Jesus. As such it represents the narrator's view on the previous material. Whether it accurately or inaccurately reflects Jesus' own view has been disputed. In the narrative analysis section of this work it will be argued that the frequent narrative asides throughout this passage (vv. 2, 3–4, 11, 19)

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[69] For example Mann argues for a specific Markan community in which antinomian ideas were especially prevalent. "This phrase must have been derived from some community tradition to which Mark had access, for *katharizou* (making clean) has overwhelming manuscript attestation." Mann, *Mark: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary*, 317. Richard Bauckham takes a unique view by arguing against a specific community setting for the Gospel authors. Richard Bauckham, *The Gospels for All Christians: Rethinking the Gospel Audiences* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1998).

should be evaluated for their accuracy to the textual and historical context as a means to appraise properly the controversial narrative aside of v. 19. It will be argued, based on the nature of the narrative asides of the passage, that Mark uses narrative asides in an explanatory and descriptive manner, not an interpretive and directive manner. In this he is driven to depict accurately the setting and words of Jesus rather than catering to the social situation of a particular community of believers at a later point in time.

Cohesion in Mark 7

The question at the outset of exploring this pericope is the question of unity. On the one hand, if the passage is dealing with a single event, then Jesus' responses must be explained in light of the conflict introduced at the beginning of the chapter. If on the other hand, Mark is redacting multiple, separate events and placing them side by side for thematic purposes, then Jesus' parable and explanation (Mark 7:15–23) are generic in character and independent of the conflict at the outset of the chapter.

From the narrative perspective,[70] the pericope of Mark 7:1–23 can be divided into three distinct settings, two public and one private:[71] First, the Pharisees and scribes

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[70] In this heavily debated passage scholars arrive at different conclusions on the number of sections in the passage and the basis of determining such sections. This is largely due to their approach. Booth and Kazen agree on the number of sections in the passage, but differ on the methodology: *Redactionsgeschichte* and *Traditionsgeschichte*, respectively. Though Kazen declares his "misgivings about the possibilities of overly detailed redaction critical exercises on Markan material" and he is "skeptical of the results of some of these studies," he nonetheless appreciates Booth's prior work on the pericope. Kazen, *Jesus and Purity Halakhah: Was Jesus Indifferent to Impurity?*, 62–64. Guelich uses source criticism to conclude that Mark already found various strata of tradition combined. Guelich, *Mark 1–8:26*, 362. The narrative perspective on the number of sections is rooted in spatial and temporal markers, shifts in the audience and the public and private nature of Jesus' discourse.

[71] Dschulnigg divides the pericope *form-* and *gattungskritisch* into these three parts. He considers the first a "Streitgespräch," the second a "weisheitlichen Lehrspruch," and the final section a "Sonderbelehrung der Jünger." Peter Dschulnigg, *Das*

approach Jesus publicly with an accusation to which Jesus responds with a twofold retort (vv. 1–13). The actors include the scribes and Pharisees, the disciples, and Jesus. Second, Jesus addresses the bystanders and issues a general but peculiar statement (vv. 14–15) in parable fashion. Here Jesus' challenge is addressed only to the crowd but could also include the assembled scribes and Pharisees and the ever-present disciples. Third, the disciples approach Jesus with the request to explain the parable from the previous public setting (vv. 17–23). This private teaching moment is between only Jesus and his disciples. Jesus reiterates the previous saying, explains it, and concludes with a list of vices.

Cohesion between Verses 14–15 and 17–23

Even though the last two settings differ in location, audience, and approach, it is best to view these as two related parts of a single event. The disciples are troubled by Jesus' earlier parable and seek an explanation. Jesus responds to this request in a twofold manner. First, he reiterates word for word the quintessence of the public declaration (vv. 15 and 18) by repeating key words (ἄνθρωπος, κοινός and κοινόω, and εἰσ– and ἐκπορεύομαι) though with a slight alteration in word order. Second, Jesus provides a detailed interpretation of the parable and ends with an ethical application.

Markusevangelium (Stuttgart: Verlag W. Kohlhammer, 2007), 201. See also Iris M. Blecker, "Rituelle Reinheit vor und nach der Zerstörung des Zweiten Tempels: Essenische, Pharisäische und Jesuanisches Reinheitsvorstellungen Im Vergleich," in *Fremde Zeichen: Neutestamentliche Texte in der Konfrontation der Kulturen* (ed. Andreas Leinhäupl-Wilke and Stefan Lücking; vol. 15 of *Theologie*; Münster, Germany: LIT, 1998), 27–28. Fritzleo Lentzen-Deis, *Das Markus-Evangelium: Ein Kommentar für die Praxis* (Stuttgart, Germany: Katholisches Bibelwerk, 1998), 158–160. Michael Fitzpatrick, "From Ritual Observance to Ethics: The Argument of Mark 7.1–23," *ABR* 35 (1987): 22–23.

Even though a time gap must exist between these two passages on logical grounds—the dismissal of the crowd and the relocation to the private setting—the two sections are logically dependent on one another and a separation would render both incomprehensible. Additionally, the private instruction of the disciples in 7:17 underscores the unity of the passage since it is consistent with other Markan passages. In 4:10 Jesus instructs the Twelve in private about the meaning of parables and in 9:28 Mark places the location for the private instruction in a house.

Among scholars these last two settings are generally viewed as a unit, although there is considerable debate concerning the authenticity of these settings based on source, form, and redaction criticism.[72] From a narrative perspective these two settings form a cohesive unit: The second response of Jesus.[73]

Cohesion between Verses 1–13 and 14–23

The relationship between the first section and the second section is more difficult. Pesch recognizes that there are strong linguistic connections between vv. 1–14 and 15–23 such as the common thread of κοινός, but he strongly asserts that these two sections deal with different topics: halakhic tradition and levitical purity laws, specifically food laws, respectively.[74] Based on these differences, the *Traditionsgeschichte* of the sections is

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[72] Malbon, in her introduction, details the various methods and the questions these approaches answer. She summarizes source criticism, form criticism and redaction criticism as asking the *what* question. "To ask *what* did the text mean is to seek referential meaning. The text's meaning is found in what it refers to—what it refers to other than and outside itself." Malbon, "Narrative Criticism: How Does the Story Mean?," 22–23.

[73] Recognizing the close ties and for ease of use these two distinct settings unified under the parable theme will be considered as a single unit from hereon.

[74] Pesch, *Das Markusevangelium: Einleitung und Kommentar Zu Kap. 1,1–8,26*, 367.

therefore different for each section. Thus, according to Pesch, the author has arranged

two independent sources in one larger framework, centered on their thematic similarities.

In direct contrast to Pesch, Guelich with the same reference to κοινός asserts that

Mark redacted a single event adding a shift in setting and that "since 7:14–23 belonged

originally with 7:1–13, it inevitably relates thematically." Therefore, in the second

section Mark reemphasizes the issue of defilement (κοινός) first introduced in 7:2, 5b.[75]

In his tradition- and redaction-critical analysis of Mark 7:1–23 Booth concludes

that the pericope is made up of multiple fragmentary sayings, which the author–redactor

assembles. The fragments that have been inserted consist of the introduction, part of the

initial question, the Isaiah, *qorban*, and purity replies, as well as the change of setting, the

medical and ethical replies.[76] Booth bases this on the understanding that all references to

παράδοσις (therefore also part of the initial accusation in v. 5) must be of a later date.[77]

Additionally all the phrases that reveal the author's "editorial hostility towards the

traditional law in vv 3 and 4"[78] contain material frequently used by the church to attack

the threat of legalistic religion,[79] or display material of a polarizing (tradition versus

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[75] Guelich, *Mark 1–8:26*, 374.

[76] Booth, *Jesus and the Laws of Purity: Tradition History and Legal History in Mark 7*, 61–62.

[77] Ibid.

[78] Ibid., 65.

[79] Westerholm contends that Isa 29 was frequently employed such as in Rom 9:20; 11:18; 1 Cor 1:19; Col 2:22. As a result the Isaiah reference in Mark must also reflect a later church development rather than a saying of the historical Jesus. Stephen Westerholm, *Jesus and Scribal Authority* (ConBNT 10; Lund, Sweden: CWK Gleerup, 1978), 76.

law)[80] or generalizing ("all the Jews" in v. 3) nature, all of which are layers of a late redaction. Finally, Booth and Kazen date the *qorban* discussion to the historical Jesus but argue for a different and unrelated context than the defilement section. This is based on their assessment that the divine law versus human tradition conflict must be of a later church polemics era.

Kazen agrees in basic terms with Booth's assessment of the various fragments, though he differs in methodology. He cites Westerholm's study on introductory formulas in the pericope "as evidence for the passages hanging together very loosely."[81] At the same time he submits that the Markan redactor could have amended a single historic event with these additions rather than patching together several independent sayings. "It is obvious that the text consists of several separate passages. At the same time it is possible to see one 'original' tradition (7:1, 5, 15) rather than two, into which material has been inserted with the aim of generalizing Jewish behavior and opposing παράδοσις to divine commandments."[82]

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[80] Based on this divine law versus human tradition redaction, Booth and Kazen argue that the *qorban* discussion originated with the historical Jesus. But they argue for a different and unrelated original context. Booth, *Jesus and the Laws of Purity: Tradition History and Legal History in Mark 7*, 68–71, 74; Kazen, *Jesus and Purity Halakhah: Was Jesus Indifferent to Impurity?*, 64–65.

[81] Kazen, *Jesus and Purity Halakhah: Was Jesus Indifferent to Impurity?*, 63. See also Stephen Westerholm, *Jesus and Scribal Authority,* 72.

[82] Thomas Kazen, *Jesus and Purity Halakhah: Was Jesus Indifferent to Impurity?*, 63–64. For similar views see Klaus Berger, *Die Gesetzesauslegung Jesu: Ihr Historischer Hintergrund im Judentum und im Alten Testament* (WMANT 40; Neukirchen-Vluyn, Germany: Neukirchnener Verlag, 1972), 464; and Heikki Sariola, *Markus und das Gesetz: Eine Redaktionskritische Untersuchung* (AASF 56: Dissertationes Humanarum Litterarum; Helsinki: Suomalainen Tiedeakatemia, 1990), 49.

Hübner, on the other hand, disagrees with the premise that references to παράδοσις cannot be original and instead considers them to be the oldest parts of this pericope.[83] Sanders and Westerholm support this by asserting the authenticity of the *qorban* reply as belonging to the historical Jesus since it fits well into the religio-cultural setting and the character of Jesus.[84]

Method and Implications

As can be seen from the above discussion there is little agreement among scholars about the cohesion of the pericope or the authenticity of its content. The diverging and contradictory views among scholars show the struggle over methodology[85] and reveal the opening question with which the scholar approaches the passage. Different questions will obviously result in different answers: What was part of the original event? What have redactors contributed? What does this tell us about the historical Jesus? What is the author trying to communicate? This starting question then leads to different conclusions in regard to the major issue of the passage: the "cleansing all foods" phrase of v. 19c.

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[83] Hans Hübner, *Das Gesetz in Der Synoptischen Tradition: Studien zur These einer Progressiven Qumranisierung und Judaisierung innerhalb der Synoptischen Tradition* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1986), 146.

[84] See a more detailed discussion further down. Sanders, *Jewish Law from Jesus to the Mishnah: Five Studies*, 51–57; Westerholm, *Jesus and Scribal Authority*, 76–78.

[85] Heikki Räissenen's contribution cannot be disregarded. His study of the *Wirkungsgeschichte,* or the lack thereof, has added a new dimension to the study of this pericope. Räisänen, "Jesus and the Food Laws: Reflections on Mark 7:15." This has also prompted others to further examine the *Wirkungsgeschichte.* Svartvik*, Mark and Mission: Mk 7:1–23 in Its Narrative and Historical Contexts.*

There is little disagreement in scholarship about the topics raised in the sections: Verses 1–5 address the issue of defilement, vv. 6–13 deal with the law versus tradition, and finally vv. 14–23 redefine defilement as ethical purity rather than purity on the basis of regulations of the Hebrew Bible. Instead, the underlying tension that scholars wrestle with explicitly or implicitly is the seemingly contrary uses of the Hebrew Bible in this pericope: How can one pericope have such vastly different responses to the question of the law and to whom should these disparate views be attributed: Jesus, Mark, or the church?[86]

In Jesus' first response (vv. 6–13) the prophets and the Torah are the authoritative reference points from which Jesus can condemn the scribes and Pharisees as hypocrites. The law of God therefore supersedes the traditions of men. But, in the traditional reading of the Gospel of Mark, the following parable and its explanation (both by Jesus and the narrator) appear to abrogate the law itself and supersede it by ethics. The unsettling question is: How can the law that has been abrogated be used as authority to rebuke the religious leaders? or How can Jesus espouse both a high and low view of the law in regard to the same accusation (v. 5)? To resolve this scholars have found it easiest to assign the various sections to different events in the life of the historical Jesus, different authors or redactors, different settings, or any combination of these.

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[86] Svartvik notes this as one of the main problems with the "traditional" view: "Even a cursory analysis of the argumentation of Mk 7:1–23 leads to the conclusion that it is extraordinarily inconsistent of the Markan Jesus, on the one hand, to accuse Pharisees and scribes of making void the commandments of God by holding fast to interpretations that contradict the plain meaning of Ex 20f. and, on the other hand, immediately afterwards to make void the fundamental laws for contemporary Judaism in Lev 11 and Deut 14." Svartvik, *Mark and Mission: Mk 7:1–23 in Its Narrative and Historical Contexts*, 6.

But this already presupposes an *a priori* interpretation. The underlying

assumption of traditional scholarship has been identifying vv. 14–19 as directly dealing

with the purity rituals of Lev 11–15 and specifically food purity (Lev 11).[87] But this

assumption has often been presumed rather than argued and recently has been called into

question completely.

> When put into its historical context, the chapter is perfectly clear. Mark was a Jew
> and his Jesus kept kosher. At least in its attitude toward the embodied practices of the
> Torah, Mark's Gospel does not in any way constitute even a baby step in the direction
> of the invention of Christianity as a new religion or as a departure from Judaism at
> all.[88]

If, as shall be pointed out in the remainder of this work, Jesus—and Mark, who

accurately summarizes his viewpoints—is actually condemning purity regulations of the

religious establishment, rather than purity regulations of Leviticus, then the two

responses of vv. 6–13 and 15–23 would contain the same proclamation just worded

differently. The earlier dilemma would be resolved as Jesus then exhibits a high view of

the law in both instances, as well as a negative view of various forms of tradition that

interfere with the keeping of the law. As a result, the two sections could very likely relate

to the same incident. The first part of Jesus' response to the sharp accusation of the

religious leaders is a direct and pointed response with detailed references to the Hebrew

Bible and current practices (*qorban* discussion). The second part is the parabolic and

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[87] Pesch tries to bridge this conundrum by clearly identifying Lev 11 as the antecedent to v. 19 but at the same time linking the sections thematically: "Der Evangelist hat zwei Traditionskomplexe (7,1–13 und 7,14–23), die ihrerseits je ein eigenes Thema (rituelle Reinheit—Speisereinheit) behandeln und eine je eigene Traditionsgeschichte durchlaufen haben, ihrer thematischen, besonders durch das Stichwort (vgl. VV 3.5.15.18.20) angezeigten Verwandtschaft wegen zusammengestellt." Pesch, *Das Markusevangelium: Einleitung und Kommentar Zu Kap. 1,1–8,26*, 367.

[88] Daniel Boyarin, *The Jewish Gospels: The Story of the Jewish Christ* (New York: New Press, 2012), 126–127.

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picturesque explanation to the uninvolved crowd by presenting a general life lesson on the same issue.

Unity of the Pericope

Besides the logic of the argument—at this point still an assumption—other unifying features have already been identified by scholars. The first and primary connective element is the use of purity language in the adjectival κοινός (vv. 1, 5) and the cognate verb κοινόω (vv. 15, 18, 20, 23).[89] This is all the more striking as the verb is used only in this pericope in Mark and the parallel passage in Matthew (15:11, 18, 20). The adjective is employed only in this passage in the Gospels. As Pesch has observed, this links the passage together linguistically.[90]

Challenges to a Late Redaction of Verses 14–23

There are additional challenges to propositions suggesting two separate units. Contrary to Pesch, a two-fold tradition history, in which vv. 14–23 are a later addition, poses some daunting challenges. The observation and the ensuing question of the religious leaders deal with the issue of defilement (κοινός) to which the reply of the parable of v. 15 is the first proper reply that addresses the issue of defilement (κοινόω). Following the Markan account the initial response (vv. 6–13) focuses on the broader

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[89] One should not forget that the use of καθαρίζων in the controversial narrative aside of v. 19c is also part of the purity language of the pericope, and besides this only occurs in one other passage in the Gospel of Mark: A leper asks for cleansing, Jesus agrees to the cleansing, and the cleansing is summarized (1:40–42). Since the word only occurs a single time in the pericope of Mark 7 it cannot therefore unify the sections within the pericope. Its significance will be discussed further below.

[90]Pesch, *Das Markusevangelium: Einleitung und Kommentar Zu Kap. 1,1–8,26*, 367.

issue of the dichotomy between the law of God and the tradition of men. This initial

response broadens the topic to a general concern that is linguistically unrelated but

thematically associated to the original question. But in the parable rendered to the

crowds, Jesus refers linguistically to the earlier question (v. 5) and gives a direct and

specific response, albeit one shrouded in mystery.[91] Without this defilement parable and

explanation (vv. 14–23), Jesus' first response (vv. 6–13) would have to be considered an

evasive counterattack without actually dealing with the issue at hand. This would be

atypical of Mark's portrayal of Jesus' manner of responding to attacks[92] and would place

the authority of Jesus (1:22) in question.

Challenges to a Late Redaction of Verses 6–13

The opposite assessment—the later addition of the response concerning tradition

(vv. 6–13)—also fails to do justice to the passage. Guelich suggests that v. 15 "served as

the original response to the issue of 'defiled hands' raised by the setting in 7:1–2, 5b.

When the story was expanded to address the question of 'tradition' (7:5a, 6–13), this

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[91] The use of an illustration or parable in a response of Jesus to a conflict question is not without precedent: the use of medical terminology (physician, 2:17), a wedding feast (2:19), unshrunk cloth and old wineskins (2:21–22), a divided kingdom/house (3:24–25), a strong man's house (3:27) and a riddle about the authority of John the Baptist (11:30). In 3:23 Jesus responds "with parables," setting another precedent for the parabolic response of 7:15.

[92] Mark presents Jesus as one who masterfully responds to questions not by avoidance or counter-claims, but by direct reply that connects both linguistically and thematically to the initial question. Jesus does not skirt such difficult topics as his association with sinners (2:16–17), fasting (2:18–19), Sabbath observance (2:24, 27–28), demand for a sign (8:11–12), divorce (10:2–9), his own authority (11:27–29), taxes (12:14, 17), and hierarchy of commandments (12:28–31). Jesus even responds directly and publicly to unspoken accusations such as issuing forgiveness (2:6–7, 9) and healing on the Sabbath (3:1, 4).

response still addressed the issue of defilement as the concluding statement."[93] This view recognizes the importance of Jesus' response to the issue of defilement in the accusation (7:6) but still faces substantial problems: First, Jesus' response would be directed to the bystanders not the accusers. Second, Jesus' response would be enigmatic rather than understandable. Third, Jesus' response would be very mild rather than forceful. These three points would run counter to the development of the Gospel and larger context of the Gospel of Mark.

First, Jesus' response in the conflict stories of the Gospel of Mark is always a direct and immediate response to his opponents. Often the crowd and the disciples are included in a general teaching following the rebuttal against the religious leaders. Only in the two disputes arising from a healing, the paralytic (2:3–12) and the man with the withered hand (3:1–5), does Jesus address the afflicted individual first before engaging the religious leaders. The difficulty of this view is not alleviated even if the setting of 7:14 is removed and the parable of v. 15 is directed toward the scribes and Pharisees. The parable, while it questions the values of the religious leaders, is enigmatic and lacks the forthrightness expected from a conflict story.

Second, throughout the Gospel Jesus' response to accusations in conflict settings is consistently clear and easy to discern, even if illustrations or parables are employed as part of the answer. In the conflict setting—religious leaders accusing Jesus—Jesus leaves no doubt concerning his stance about the issue at hand among the recipients or the general audience. The clarity in the conflict passages of Mark 2–3 is so pronounced that it results in accusations of blasphemy (2:7) and demonic powers (3:22) and leads to a death

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[93] Guelich, *Mark 1–8:26*. 375. See also Dieter Lührmann, ". . . womit er alle Speisen für rein erklärte (Mk 7,19)," *WD* 16 (1981): 88–89.

plot (3:6). If, as Guelich argues, Jesus' response to the scribes and Pharisees consisted only of the parable in 7:15 there would be no clarity in response. This becomes all the more evident in the parallel to Mark 4:1–20.

As has been mentioned before, the genres of conflict story and teaching event overlap in Mark 7:1–23. This is evident in the use of the parable in v. 15. The enigmatic nature of this particular parable[94] requires a private interpretation. A similar development can be observed in Mark 4:1–20 in which a public teaching is unclear to the disciples and a private interpretation is necessary. The parallels between these two passages (4:1–20 and 7:1–23) include the enigmatic parable (4:1–9; 7:14–15), the relocation of Jesus and his disciples (4:10; 7:17), the inquiry for clarification (4:10; 7:17), a rebuke by Jesus (4:11–13; 7:18), and finally the interpretation of the parable (4:14–20; 7:18–23). While some of the conflict stories in chs. 2–3 show traits of a miracle story and a conflict story, Mark 7 exhibits both traits of conflict stories and also elements of a public teaching.[95] Guelich's proposition would have no analogous account in the Gospel but instead would be out of character with Jesus' persona.

Third, the Gospel account has so far displayed a rising tension between Jesus and the religious leaders. After Jesus' manifestation of his authority in Mark 1, chs. 2–3 are filled with the growing conflict that will ultimately result in his crucifixion. This

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[94] The use of "παραβολή" in this context should be understood as broader than the specific identification of the genre. It could be a riddle, or as Pesch contends: "ein Denkspruch—ein Spruch zum Umdenken." Pesch, *Das Markusevangelium: Einleitung und Kommentar Zu Kap. 1,1–8,26*, 380.

[95] Malbon adds that "chapter 7 also echoes chapter 4 in the introduction of Jesus' explanation of the parable by questioning the disciples' lack of understanding (7:18; 4:13)." Malbon, "Narrative Criticism: How Does the Story Mean?," 43. For a detailed examination see Elizabeth Struthers Malbon, "Echoes and Foreshadowings in Mark 4–8," *JBL* 112, no. 2 (1993): 211–230.

intensification has also left its mark on the conflict stories. Jesus' responses to accusations increasingly carry challenges and biting retorts. The first two conflict stories start mildly: Jesus uses a question to expose secret thoughts (2:8) and in the second encounter Jesus replies briefly and without posing a question to his opponents. From then on though, Jesus meets every exchange with the religious leaders first with a searing return question before continuing on with his reply: "Have you never read . . ." (2:25), "Is it lawful on the Sabbath to do good . . ." (3:4), "and he sighed deeply in his spirit and said, 'Why does this generation seek a sign . . .'" (8:12), the question over the authority of John the Baptist (11:30), and the critical retort, "Is this not the reason you are wrong, because you know neither the Scriptures nor the power of God?" (12:27). Since the conflict stories intensify in chs. 2 and 3 climaxing with Jesus' "anger" and "grieving at their hardness of heart" (3:5) and the religious leaders' plot to put Jesus to death (3:6), it would seem out of place if the narrative of the Gospel merely showed a placid Jesus who in 7:6 sedately replied to the accusation of the religious leaders with the parable. Considering the development of the conflict in Mark, the label "hypocrites" (7:6) does not seem out of place. In fact, the lack thereof would surprise the reader of the Gospel.

In summary, the three considerations above place the pericope of Mark 7:1–23 into the context of other conflict stories in the Gospel of Mark. The conflict story in Mark 7 exhibits the same characteristics found in previous conflict stories and the development of the conflict between Jesus and the religious leaders is best preserved if the unity of the pericope is maintained.

To further affirm the unity of the pericope, Mark employs a bridge word at the junction in v. 14 to connect the two different sections. The participle προσκαλεσάμενος switches the audience from the religious leaders to the crowd. Guelich correctly notes the

significance of προσκαλεσάμενος: "Mark frequently uses the participial form of προσκαλεῖσθαι to introduce a pronouncement by Jesus or to set a new scene (eg, 3:23; 7:14; 8:1, 34; 10:42; 12:43)."[96] The shift introduced by the participle προσκαλεσάμενος does not necessarily set up a completely new scene but can just as well shift the focus within a scene. In Mark 7:14 προσκαλεσάμενος can thus function as a marker to expand the previous exchange to include a wider or different audience.

This usage in Mark 7:14 can also be seen in the closest parallel, the conflict story of 3:22–30. Both narratives share the same actors and the same genre in the Gospel. The accusation of "the scribes who had come down from Jerusalem" that Jesus is possessed by Beelzebul is advanced, though it is not directly brought to Jesus (v. 22). In an attempt to bring to light what has been rumored, Jesus then confronts the authorities from Jerusalem directly by calling them to him (προσκαλεσάμενος) and responding directly to them. The προσκαλεσάμενος here changes the actor and the recipients from the scribes engaging an unknown group, to Jesus challenging the scribes. In this sense it changes characters of a scene but it does not change the pericope or introduce a shift to a new scene. Instead προσκαλεσάμενος introduces Jesus' response to the attempt at the Beelzebul character assassination. The remaining references in Mark all function in a similar way, shifting actors or settings, but always as part of the pericope.[97] The intent of

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[96] Guelich, *Mark 1–8:26*, 321.

[97] The most difficult passage dealing with προσκαλεσάμενος is 8:34 as this at first seems to suggest a complete switch in setting. In 8:27 Mark presents a private and intimate setting consisting of Jesus and his disciples. In the following verses Peter will confess that Jesus is the Christ and Jesus will prepare the disciples with the first passion prediction to which Peter reacts with disdain. The private setting is replaced by a public setting in 8:34 introduced by Jesus calling the crowds and the disciples to him (προσκαλεσάμενος). In 8:34–9:1 Jesus then teaches the crowd and disciples about suffering and discipleship. But Jesus' lengthy instruction at this point is a continuation of the rebuttal against Peter. After the harsh rebuttal against Peter in 8:33, Jesus now

the author is to use the new setting within the pericope to clarify the previous setting (8:34) or to bring a new insight to light (15:44).

In conclusion, scholarship has presented a host of approaches to deal with the difficulties of Mark 7:1–23. In regard to the unity and authenticity of the text itself, three broad categories can be identified with many more nuances within. First, the initial response (vv. 6–13) is a late addition and the parable with or without the explanation is Jesus' original response to the accusation in v. 5. Second, the initial response is the authentic reply of Jesus to which Mark added a thematically similar passage either from the historical setting of Jesus or the later ecclesiastical setting. Finally, the material of the pericope has been assembled with a multitude of fragments in several levels of redaction. As much as the disciplines of *Traditionsgeschichte, Wirkungsgeschichte,* or *Redaktionsgeschichte* might have added insight into their respective fields of study, they have also created new problems on the textual and intertextual level. The results of the proposed modifications to the pericope have resulted in a residual text that no longer fits into the context of the Gospel itself. In this redacted text the patterns of conflict stories, the logical flow of the argument, and the use of connecting phrases in the Gospel of Mark have been disassociated from their context. These new challenges can be addressed either by assuming that the other passages in the Gospel have all been redacted in the same fashion as 7:1–23 or that the residual parts of the pericope of 7:1–23 are unique in their style and development and do not follow the general practices of the author.

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presents what the proper response of a disciple to suffering should be. Again Mark wants the reader to see the interconnection between the two passages by employing προσκαλεσάμενος. "Mark 8:34–9:1 forms a natural continuation of the preceding pericope (8:27–33)." Craig A. Evans, *Mark 8:27–16:20* (WBC 34B; Nashville, Tenn.: Thomas Nelson, 2001), 24.

The above proposals for dealing with the tensions of Mark 7:1–23 presume a contrast between 7:1–13 and 7:14–24. They resolve the tension by positing different sources for the material or different trajectories for the teaching of Jesus and the interpretation by the Evangelist. But each of these resolutions poses new and greater problems to the pericope itself and its place in the progression and development of the Gospel. Considering the difficulties presented, it seems best to retain the narrative structure of the entire pericope as a unit. This retains the passage in its larger textual context while wrestling with the meaning and implication of Jesus' multiple responses to the question of defilement. Though France is aware of the difficulties of this passage, he proposes that "the continuity of the subject matter is such that . . . it is better treated here as a single unit."[98] In the following chapters a case will be made for the unity of the pericope based on a strong narrative coherence between the various sections within the passage. Furthermore, a detailed study of purity terminology in the pericope with an eye toward the development of purity concerns in Second Temple Judaism will remove the tensions within the pericope (e.g., nomistic vs. anti-nomistic) and substantiate the unity. Finally, the intertextual link between Lev 11 and Mark 7:1–23 will demonstrate the same logical progression of both passages, further uniting the Markan pericope.

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[98] France, *The Gospel of Mark: A Commentary on the Greek Text*, 276.

CHAPTER 2

NARRATIVE STUDY OF MARK 7:1–23: PLOT, SETTING,

PROPS, CHARACTERS, AND MOVEMENT

Mark 7:1–23 has been examined from many different viewpoints: textual criticism, redaction criticism, *Wirkungsgeschichte*, and narrative criticism. This situation has led scholars to develop an understanding about the historical Jesus, Jesus' relation to the law, purity, *halakhah*, and mission, often with opposing results.

The current study argues that Mark 7:1–23 is a well-crafted narrative unit that focuses on the themes of defilement and authority. The author achieves this unity and thematic focus by masterfully comparing and contrasting the many narrative elements contained in the pericope: Spatial markers, religio-cultural setting, props, characters, tenses, and movement.

It has long been realized that the two parts of the pericope (7:1–13 and 7:14–23) deal with the topic of defilement as the distinctive use of κοινός suggests. But the narrative analysis below suggests a much closer connection between the two parts. The unique stylistic features of this passage, such as movement as well as some of the more typical Markan features such as characterization, indicate a single unit with two sections rather than two units grouped together based on a common theme. This is so deeply engrained into the language of the passage and across multiple narrative elements that it is difficult to reason for an elaborate written redactional process.

The main concern of the passage is defilement, as the charge of the religious

leaders (v. 5) and Jesus' response (vv. 14–23) clearly indicate. Jesus' resolution to this

defilement is an argument from inside to outside, countering the outside-to-inside claim

of the religious leaders. This defilement movement is already prefigured in the narrative

in the props and spatial terminology in the narrative before Jesus elaborates on this first

cryptically (v. 15) and then clearly (vv. 18–23). As will be demonstrated in the following

chapters, defilement (κοινός) is not to be confused with uncleanness (ἀκαθαρίζω).[1]

In Mark 7:1–23 the issue of defilement is just the most recent spark in an ongoing

conflict between Jesus and the religious leaders. The pericope casts this conflict as a

clash concerning authority both in persons and in sources. A group of religious

authorities, including representatives from the capital, are placed in opposition to Jesus.

They cite their tradition as the authoritative standard for living, which Jesus contrasts

with the "word of God" (v. 13) through the Law and the Prophets. Again the narrative

stylistic features, such as spatial terminology, characterization, and verb tenses, underline

the theme of authority and present Jesus as an authoritative teacher.

In the following chapters it will be argued that since Mark carefully employs

language in the narrative it is not surprising that he is also deliberate in his use of

defilement language. The result of this will reveal that the often-stated dichotomy

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[1] It will be argued in detail in chapter 4 that during the Second Temple period
Jews progressively moved to an enhanced sensitivity to purity regulations. This
sensitivity became the basis for the extension of the concept of defilement and something
defiled (κοινός). Defilement covers a spectrum between the clean (καθαρίζω) and
unclean (ἀκαθαρίζω) categories established in the Hebrew Bible. In this expansionist
ideology a clean animal or individual who comes in contact with an unclean animal or
individual is rendered defiled (κοινός).

between Hebrew Bible regulations and Jesus cannot be sustained, nor a misunderstanding or misapplication between the Gospel author and Jesus. In summary, Mark in the narrative aside of v. 19 correctly interprets Jesus' position of retaining Hebrew Bible purity regulations while at the same time condemning the excessive purity regulations within the "tradition of the elders."[2]

Narrative Analysis

Introduction

The pericope is a conflict story in form, and the majority of the verses will focus on Jesus' rebuttal to the religious authorities (7:6–13) and the teaching of the crowd with the ensuing interpretation for the disciples (7:14–23). As a result, activity, as is common in miracle stories, is sparse within the passage. Instead, Jesus' words are the central feature and as such the narrative pericope transitions from a conflict story to a teaching pericope.

Plot

The plot of the story encompasses the entire pericope of 7:1–23. The problem begins with the infringement of purity regulations by some of the disciples (7:1–2). After the explanatory narrative aside of vv. 3–4, the problem is further developed and intensified by the accusation against the disciples directed towards Jesus. This development changes the direction of the problem as well. The infraction of the disciples

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[2] As will be demonstrated this will prove that both the "traditional commentators," with their conclusion that Mark correctly transmits Jesus' abrogation of the OT purity regulations, and the historical Jesus/purity scholars, with their conclusion that Mark incorrectly transmits Jesus' adherence to OT purity regulations, are correct in some parts while incorrect in others.

becomes Jesus' problem rather than remaining with the disciples in question. Jesus' rebuttal (7:6–10) becomes the actual crisis of the pericope. It is the crisis for everyone listening as Jesus first addresses the religious leaders, but later the crowd, and then the disciples. The plot enters the complication phase with the parable (7:14–15). This riddle leaves the listeners and the disciples bewildered. The reader is furthermore challenged by the narrative aside of v. 19. The resolution finally arrives in the form of the ethical teaching (vv. 20–23) at the conclusion of the pericope. The resolution answers the issue of ritual defilement from the opening of the pericope but also clarifies Jesus' parable.

Setting

Narrative setting identifies the story's original geographic and cultural setting. In this it unmistakably embeds the story in its historic context as the narrator portrays it. Here we explore not only the tangible and concrete geographic markers (such as specific locations like Jerusalem and more generic places like "the wilderness"), but also the religio-cultural settings that set the stage for the audience to understand the religious and cultural environment of the passage.

Geographic Setting

Spatial settings play a central role in the narrative of Mark 7 and this chapter itself plays a crucial role in the concept of space in Mark. To understand the way space is described in Mark 7 and the role of the chapter in the book's sense of space, it is important to briefly review the scholarly debate over space in Mark. Scholars have long

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taken an interest in space in the Gospel of Mark.[3] Traditional commentators have found

Mark's use of space to be confusing or erroneous and this is usually taken as a clear

indication that either Mark was unfamiliar with the region or was not the actual author.

Marcus considers this "the most difficult problem for the John-Markan hypothesis"

though he acknowledges that the "errors" (5:1; 6:45; 6:53; 7:31; 10:1; 11:1) are not

decisive.[4] He lists several possible reasons for these mistakes: First, people tend to have

abysmal knowledge of their own geographic surroundings. It is true today and was more

so back then. Secondly, Mark incorporates earlier traditions into his own story and these

different traditions cause the geographic problems. Thirdly, the passages are organized

on theological considerations rather the geographic succession. Marcus lists passages in

support for each of these possibilities.

Among narrative scholars Elizabeth Struthers Malbon's research on the

geography of Mark stands out. Based on a structuralist methodology[5] Malbon develops a

comprehensive list of all geographic references in Mark (geopolitical, topographical, and

architectural). After categorizing and analyzing the data Malbon concludes that Mark

separates space ideologically into "irreconcilable opposites."[6] The north-south divide of

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[3] As early as 1956 Willi Marxsen used *Redaktionskritik* to examine the "geographishe Aufriß" in the Gospel of Mark. Willi Marxsen, *Der Evangelist Markus: Studien Zur Redaktionsgeschichte des Evangeliums* (Göttingen: Vandenhock and Ruprecht, 1956).

[4] Marcus, *Mark 1-8: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary*, 21.

[5] Malbon adapts the work of Claude Lévi-Strauss and applies it to the Gospel of Mark. Malbon, *Narrative Space and Mythic Meaning in Mark*, xi.

[6] In his critique of Malbon's work Svartvik considers the binary opposites to be the method of structural antithesis rather than the result of her research. The opposites are therefore sought out rather than emanating from the text. How this general statement

Galilee and Jerusalem/Judea is one of nine pairs of opposites that contrast order and

chaos. Malbon's contribution is not the novelty of her results but rather the exhaustive

narrative approach of her research. Ernst Lohmeyer and Robert Henry Lightfoot had

already pointed out this north-south contrast in Mark in the 1930s.[7] Building on Malbon's

study, van Iersel structured the Gospel of Mark into five geographic sections (desert 1:2–

13, Galilee 1:16–8:21, way 8:27–10:45, Jerusalem 11:1–15:39, tomb 15:42–16:8)[8] but

was correctly criticized for neglecting to take the Sea of Galilee into consideration. Sean

Freyne engages in a literary and historical study of Galilee. Though he values Malbon's

research, Freyne disagrees with her approach and proposes a "surface analysis" instead.[9]

But critics of Freyne have labeled his approach more symbolic, and indeed Freyne uses

very symbolic language to express his views: "Galilee is charged with a highly positive

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applies specifically to Malbon is left unsaid nor does Svartvik propose a different
solution. He will instead agree to a north-south axis and even more interestingly add a
binary opposite himself (west-east axis) where the text itself does not specify it. It can be
argued that the expression πέραν ("across") is not limited to the binary of west-east but
could include any number of constellations on a compass needle as long as the lake is
traversed to some extent (e.g. west-southeast or south-northwest). Svartvik therefore
becomes subject to his own criticism. Svartvik, *Mark and Mission: Mk 7:1–23 in Its
Narrative and Historical Contexts*, 230–240.

[7] In expressing the nature of the dichotomy between Galilee and Judea, Lightfoot
famously stated: "Galilee is the sphere of revelation, Jerusalem the scene only of
rejection." R. H. Lightfoot, *Locality and Doctrine in the Gospels* (London: Hodder &
Stoughton, 1938), 125. See also Ernst Lohmeyer, *Galiläa und Jerusalem* (Göttingen:
Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1936).

[8] B. Van Iersel, "Locality, Structure, and Meaning in Mark," *LB* 53 (1983): 45,
48.

[9] Sean Freyne, *Galilee, Jesus and the Gospels: Literary Approaches and
Historical Investigations* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1988), 34.

symbolism in terms of the proclamation."[10] Freyne not only extends the north-south

opposition to new levels but adds the notion that Gospel writers develop a historic shift in

perspective: The faithful and pious Jews from Judea had traditionally looked down on

Galilee both culturally and religiously, but the kerygma of Jesus restored and elevated the

northern territory.

In contrast to Freyne, Svartvik deemphasizes the north-south contrast, without

denying it, in favor of a west-east shift. Many scholars have always seen Mark 7:24 as a

transition that breaks the ground open for a new Gentile mission. Svartvik establishes this

divide based not only on a thematic shift but based on the geographic position centering

around the Sea of Galilee. "Since Mk 7:1–23 is surrounded by these travels, we choose to

look into the spatial references of *whence* and *whither.*"[11] Svartvik's thesis is built on the

six references to the directional preposition πέραν. He concludes that Mark understands

"the western side of the sea as Jewish lands and the eastern side of it as Gentile lands."

To Svartvik this "west-east relation should be considered as comparatively more

fundamental to the spatial setting of the narrative of Mark" than the north-south

counterpart.[12] Here Svartvik overextends his evidence. In contrast, Malbon's work has

highlighted the deep-rooted structure of regions, cities, villages, and environs in the

Gospels. Even institutions and political groups are associated with regions (e.g., scribes

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[10] Ibid., 269.

[11] Svartvik, *Mark and Mission: Mk 7:1–23 in Its Narrative and Historical Contexts*, 237.

[12] Ibid., 239.

from Jerusalem in 7:1).[13] This is far more entrenched in the Gospel than six references to the preposition πέραν.

The spatial setting of Mark is an area of ongoing research in which there are currently only two constants: "(1) the geography of Mark is confused, and (2) the Markan distinction between Galilee and Jerusalem is important."[14] More than anybody else Malbon has contributed significantly to this area in terms of focus on the literary nature of the narrative as well as the detailed study of individual pericopes in Mark that her research enables.

Mark 7:1–23

The pericope under question is at the heart of the larger section of chs. 6–8 based on geographic makers,[15] internal themes,[16] and structural parallels. Malbon's research on this specific section of Mark has demonstrated that the spatial markers are an important part of these chapters. The chapters are arranged to show Jesus feeding and healing people first in Jewish territory then in Gentile territory. The geography becomes one of several contrasting elements that signal a change in the ministry of Jesus. "The duality of

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[13] Malbon, *Narrative Space and Mythic Meaning in Mark*, 39.

[14] Ibid., 15.

[15] Though Mark 7:1–23 lacks the mention of the sea itself, it is at the heart of a larger section of Mark centering around the Sea of Galilee. Additionally, the transition from Jewish soil (6–7:23) to Gentile territory in the remaining section (7:24–8) is significant.

[16] France identifies a "bread motive" starting and ending with the feeding of 5000 and the 4000 respectively in chs. 6 and 8 and the related ideas of food, feast, and bread in the remaining passages. France, *The Gospel of Mark: A Commentary on the Greek Text*, 296.

the Markan Jesus' technique reflects the twofoldness of the Markan implied author's convictions: Jesus is Messiah for both Jews and Gentiles."[17] Many have identified Mark 7:1–23 as a turning point event but Malbon identifies Mark 7:1–23 as the *geographic* center and turning point of this section (chs. 6–8). The geographic markers within the passage of 7:1–23 complement and enhance the plot. The geographic markers of the pericope begin at the distant and obscure (Jerusalem and the open space) and end in the close and personal (the house). Additionally, the contrast of the geography leads the reader from the authoritative to the personal.

Structural overview of Mark 7:1–23. The pericope of Mark 7:1–23 has five geographic spatial domains: First, the open area, though never mentioned directly, serves as the meeting point for the protagonist, his followers, the antagonists, as well as the observing crowd.[18] Second, the city of Jerusalem is the origin for the scribes. Third, the *agora* in the narrative aside is the meeting point of Jews and Gentiles. Fourth, the house, as a spatial setting, is implied in the narrative aside as the place that needs cleansing from the contact with Gentiles. Finally, the pericope closes with the spatial setting of a house to which Jesus and his disciples retreat following the interchange with the religious leaders.

The main story line has three spatial settings (the open space, Jerusalem, and the house). The remaining two are found in the first narrative aside (vv. 3–4). Based on

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[17] Malbon, "Narrative Criticism: How Does the Story Mean?," 47.

[18] Here Malbon notes that a geographic space "need not be manifest in the narrative sequence" in order to still be obvious. She uses the example of somebody moving first south then west and then east. It is obvious that the geographic starting point was the northern point in this sequence. It need not be explicitly mentioned. Malbon, *Narrative Space and Mythic Meaning in Mark*, 5.

Lévi-Strauss's formula, Malbon develops a structure to illustrate the contrast of spaces. She notes that "an initial opposition (A vs. B) [is] replaced by another, but equivalent, opposition (C vs. D)." Thus "A is to B as C is to D" could also be displayed as

B
    D
    C
A[19]

The pericope at hand, based on the main storyline versus narrative asides, could be rendered similarly as

B	Open Space in Galilee (vv. 1, 2, 5)	
B'	Jerusalem (v. 1)	
	D	Agora (v. 4)
	C	Jewish houses (v. 4)
A	The house (v. 17)	

The author presents the combined Jerusalem and open space unit at the outset of the pericope in contrast to the house in the second part of the story. In a parallel development the narrative aside contrasts the open space of the *agora* with the privacy of the Jewish houses.

The two sets of contrasting pairs closely correspond to each other. First, both pairs begin with a public space and conclude with a private setting. Second, both pairs employ the same movement of outside to inside. In this they prefigure the move away from outward to inward that will be at the heart of Jesus' teaching exemplified by the parable (v. 15) and expounded in the explanation (vv. 18–23): It is not the outside that defiles but rather the inside. Third, both pairs begin in the context of defilement and end with purity. In the first pair the disciples eat with defiled hands in the public space held in common with the religious leaders and presumably the crowd (v. 2). The solution to the

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[19] Ibid., 6. Malbon bases this structure on Lévi-Strauss's understanding that prefers a bottom-up rather than a top-down approach.

impurity is suspended throughout the pericope and only indirectly resolved: Impurity is not defined by a lack of washing but a lack of internal purity. The second pair, located in the narrative aside, indicates that Jewish citizens returning from the marketplace consider themselves to have contracted impurity. The solution is immediate: Personal washings and washings of household items restore purity.

Another angle from which to look at the geographic markers in the passage is to limit the selection to the geographic markers directly mentioned by the author. These include the city of Jerusalem, the open space of the *agora,* and the house. This progression highlights two further aspects developed in the pericope: The movement from distant to close proximity and the movement from a threatening to a private environment.

Before looking at the specifics, an overview will show the progression of the named geographic locations. The city of Jerusalem is the furthest spatial setting from the Sea of Galilee in the pericope and in the Gospel of Mark itself[20] and foreshadows the final destination of Jesus in the Gospel and in this represents the very real threat to his life. The *agora* is not further defined and could be located in any city. In fact the reference to "all the Jews" implies that every Jew had access to an *agora*, underlining the universality of this location. The *agora* in this context is the meeting point for Jews and Gentiles and stands for a threat to the cultic purity of the Jew. The local city center moves the special setting closer and into the realm of every Jew. It additionally advances the threat of impurity to each Jew. Finally, the house is the intimate setting that shelters Jesus

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[20] Malbon's comprehensive list of locations lists this Jerusalem as a counterpart to the cities surrounding the lake (Nazareth, Capernaum, Gennersaret, Dalmanutha, Magdala) in the larger setting of the controversy of Judea and Galilee. No other geographic setting is as far removed from the region of the lake as Jerusalem.

and the disciples. This locality is the closest physical setting and nullifies the previous threats.

This progression of geographic space and representative threats sets up the development of the pericope and enhances the teaching of Jesus on the issue of purity (outside versus inside). It is therefore not surprising to find the disciples asking and Jesus answering in the private setting of the house.

Jerusalem. The pericope of Mark 7:1–23 begins in an unusual manner. The author does not begin in his usual manner of setting the scene with an opening spatial frame.[21] A vague reference is made to the space around Jesus (συνάγονται πρὸς αὐτὸν "they gathered to him," v. 1) before quickly identifying the origin of the scribes: They have gathered from Jerusalem. The focus is immediately placed on the religious leaders not only in terms of an action ("gathering") but in terms of space as well. The opening seems to place Jesus in the background: Jesus is introduced with a personal pronoun and placed as direct object in a cryptic reference to space.[22] This elevates the place and action of the religious leaders and sets the stage for the impending conflict.

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[21] Frame theory contends that the author places specific catchwords to help the audience place the narrative into a specific category. For a discussion of the theory and application to the conflict stories of Mark 2:1–3:6, see Yoon-Man Park, *Mark's Memory Resources and the Controversy Stories (Mark 2:1–3:6)* (Linguistic Biblical Studies 2; ed. Stanley E. Porter; Leiden: Brill, 2010).

[22] Most pericopes in the Gospel of Mark identify Jesus' location at the outset of the narrative. Usually the narrator places Jesus in a specific geographic region or location such as "the region of Galilee" or "Gerasene." More frequently though the setting is a generic location such as "the sea," "a house," or "a boat." The passages leading up to ch. 7 that place Jesus in a geographic setting at the outset include Mark 1:14, 16, 21, 29, 35; 2:1, 13, 15, 23; 3:1, 7, 13, 20; 4:1; 5:1, 21; 6:1, 45, 53.

Besides the distant setting, the mention of Jerusalem carries with it the inherent idea of conflict. While Collins is certainly correct in asserting that "there were close religious and cultural ties between Galilee and Jerusalem in the first century CE,"[23] this fact does not support her thesis of a neutral relationship between the two provinces for the narrative itself. Collins's assessment is based on the external data, not the force of the narrative. But Mark is not presenting a neutral political and cultural report on the state of the Israelite nation of the first century. He is instead telling a story about Jesus, and spatial references are woven into the narrative as a means to add meaning to the story. Here Malbon's research mentioned above contributes significantly by affirming the north-south divide in the Markan narrative. Based on the previous encounters with the scribes and Pharisees (Mark 3:6; 3:22), and even more so the climactic conflict with the religious leaders leading to the passion event in Jerusalem, the mention of Jerusalem is not a neutral report. It instills in the audience a sense of conflict and ultimately doom. The religious party arriving from Jerusalem therefore suggests to the reader "some sort of investigatory commission sent from Jerusalem to question or attack Jesus' activity in Galilee."[24]

The marketplace. The narrator in ch. 7 moves from the distant city of Jerusalem to the marketplace as the next mentioned location (7:4). This public setting of the ἀγορά is the venue of city life and the point of interaction for children, workers (Matt 11:16;

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[23] Collins, *Mark: A Commentary*, 344.

[24] Meier, *A Marginal Jew: Rethinking the Hisorical Jesus*, Vol 3: *Companions and Competitors,* 554. Sanders's assessment that the Pharisees and scribes made "a special trip from Jerusalem to Galilee to check on whether or not [Jesus'] disciples washed their hands" overextends the purpose of this trip.

20:3), the healthy and the sick (Mark 6:56), the religious elite and the commoner (Mark 12:38, Luke 11:43; 20:46) and Jews and Gentiles. This mixed environment explains the purity uncertainty that Pharisees are concerned about. It is not clear whether ritual purity can be maintained (7:3, 4). The narrator emphasizes the widespread access to the marketplace by expressing that "all Jews" (7:3) ritually cleanse themselves after returning from the marketplace, therefore implying that "all Jews" frequent the marketplace.

The pericope is located at a turning point in Jesus' ministry. The feeding and healing miracles on Jewish territory listed prior to Mark 7 are subsequently performed also in the Gentile region. Based on the larger context surrounding Mark 7 the marketplace is not only the meeting point of a mixed Jewish culture but implicitly also the interaction of Jews and Gentiles. Impurity therefore derives from intercultural and intracultural contamination. The marketplace is the spatial dimension that prefigures the turning point in Jesus' ministry by introducing a spatial setting in which Jews and Gentiles interact.

The house. The public setting of the agora is contrasted with the final location mentioned in the pericope, the private setting of a house.[25] The house in Mark is a personal space in which to reside and to which one returns after an encounter with Jesus (2:11; 5:19; 5:38; 7:30; 8:3). It is also a place to which Jesus retreats unsuccessfully (2:1;

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[25] Halvor Moxnes is correct in cautioning the modern reader not to equate our modern view of the "home" with the first-century concept of the "home." Instead of the sheltered place of security for the immediate family, the Jewish setting of the "home" included extended family and was at times a public meeting point. Nonetheless this does not exclude that this space could also function as a private and secluded setting. This latter view is at the heart of Mark 7:17 as the text specifically mentions the retreat from the crowds. See also Mark 7:24 for a similar use in the extended context. Halvor Moxnes, *Putting Jesus in His Place: A Radical Vision of Household and Kingdom* (Louisville, Ky.: Westminster John Knox, 2003), 25–28.

3:20; 7:24) and a place of private instruction for his disciples (7:17; 9:28, 33; 10:10).[26] Sometimes Jesus heals people in the privacy of people's homes (1:29–31; 5:38). At other times the intimate setting is disrupted as word spreads that Jesus is speaking (2:1–2; 3:20) or healing (1:32; 2:1–2) in a house. At still other times Jesus is the honored guest at feasts (2:15; 14:3). In a house Jesus can associate more closely with individuals as opposed to the large crowds. In keeping with the close and personal nature of this location Jesus recommends that his disciples should follow the same approach of instruction as they proclaim the good news in all of Palestine (6:10). Finally, the private setting of a house can also serve as a location for Jesus to provide special instructions to his disciples (3:25, 27; 6:4; 7:17–23; 10:29, 30; 12:40; 13:15, 34, 35). The closest parallel to the reference in 7:17 is 9:28. In both cases after Jesus enters into a house his disciples ask about Jesus' preceding words. The only differences are (1) The ὅτε followed by a third person aorist in 7:17 is replaced by a genitive absolute in the later reference, (2) while 7:17 emphasizes the separation from the crowd, 9:28 adds the private nature of the disciples' question, and (3) the accusative object (parable) in 7:17 is replaced by a direct speech in 9:28. The house then is the meeting point of Jesus and the people for various purposes: proclamation, healing, and teaching.

This "meeting metaphor" is then even applied to the temple as the "house of God." Mark adds to the cultic element of the temple the personal aspect of a meeting point with God, a house. The religious experience in the temple thus focuses on the

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[26] Park lists characters, props, and actions that happen in the house according to the Frame theory. His summary though only includes actions that are introduced as house frames: Mark 7:17 is not included in his list but Mark 7:24 is. Park, *Mark's Memory Resources and the Controversy Stories (Mark 2:1–3:6)*, 105.

intimate: the meeting point of God and man.[27] It is in this setting of the "house of God"

that David enters and shares the showbread with his men, disregarding priestly rules

(2:26)[28] and Jesus condones this behavior. In Jesus' view the function of the temple is

thus one of communion. His aggressive response to people interfering with this purpose

is more understandable. Jesus then restores the temple back to its purpose as a "house of

prayer for all nations" (11:17). When Mark therefore uses the term "house" it carries

more meaning than the physical shelter. It implies at least a "meeting of people," more

frequently though a meeting of God with man. The retreat to the house in 7:17 is

therefore a stark contrast to the reference to Jerusalem in 7:1. The religious leaders who

arrive from the "holy city" and the temple initiate the conflict. It is in the privacy of the

house that the true encounter with Jesus happens.

Summary

In summary, the two approaches to examining space in Mark 7:1–23 complement

each other and support the development of the narrative. First, the inclusive view of

analyzing all spaces, named and unnamed, presents two sets of corresponding geographic

developments from outside to inside prefiguring Jesus' reasoning to his disciples.

Secondly, investigating only the specifically named geographic locations results in a

movement towards the intimate. As a result of this careful and multilayered construction

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[27] Mark does not concern himself with the details of the cult. He neither separates the temple into its various sections (holy and most holy or the various courts for the different people groups such as Gentiles or women) nor does he distinguish between priests and common worshippers, men or women, or even Jews or Gentiles. In 2:26 a non-priest disregards the cultic protocol and in 11:17 the house of God "shall be called a house of prayer for all the nations."

[28] The terminology in this passage is crucial. Jesus does not mention the "temple" but instead uses the phrase "house of God" (2:26).

the idea that Mark is confused about geographic space cannot be maintained. Instead it is apparent that Mark employs geographic space as part of his storytelling style. Space mirrors and prefigures the narrative development of the pericope and therefore is part of the story itself rather than merely setting the stage.

Religio-Cultural Setting

Since this pericope is a conflict story, it comes as no surprise that the religio-cultural markers in ch. 7 center around authority figures and purity regulations. Authority is expressed through various figures of authority as well as authoritative writings.

The theme of authority is underlined by references to central authority figures—the religious leaders, the prophets, and Jesus. The Pharisees (7:1, 3, 5) and the scribes (7:1, 5) are featured at the beginning but they pale in comparison to the Hebrew Bible authorities of Isaiah (7:6) and Moses (7:10). For the narrator, Jesus, as the main speaker, is the central authority figure in the pericope. This is demonstrated by at least three factors: First, Jesus is portrayed as a worthy and even daunting contender for the religions authorities. They gather to examine this itinerant rabbi. Secondly, Jesus emerges as the debate winner. The religions leaders do not counter Jesus' accusation against them ("hypocrites," v. 6) nor his argument concerning law and tradition. Finally, Jesus is seen as a teacher for the crowds and the disciples. He instills a new teaching that should guide his followers' behavior.

Authoritative writings also support the theme of authority. The religious leaders cite the "tradition of the elders" (7:3, 5, 13) as their basis of judgment, but Jesus counters this with the "word of God" (7:13). In the example of the *qorban* vow (7:11), Jesus illustrates how the "tradition of the elders" undermines the "word of God." At the close

of Jesus' response to the religious leaders the issue of authority is resolved. Jesus has

rendered the criticism of the religious leaders, ineffective based on the double standard of

the antagonists. As a result, Jesus emerges victorious and demonstrates what the disciples

and the crowds already knew: "he taught them as one who had authority, and not as the

scribes" (1:22). Authority language does not resurface in the remainder of the pericope.

While these authority references in the passage are limited to the first section of

the pericope (vv. 1–13), purity language is employed extensively in both the introduction

(vv. 1–5) and the second part of the pericope (vv. 14–23). Rather than the stative nouns

of the authority language, purity references are adjectival or verbal. The main signal for

purity terminology is the adjective "defiled" (κοινός 7:2, 5, 15, 17). It is contrasted in

7:19 by the verb "clean" (καθαρίζω). Additionally, in the lengthy narrative aside, Mark

explains the usage of "unclean" with washing images: The unwashed (ἄνιπτος, 7:2)

hands along with the practice of washing (νίπτω, 7:3) even with the rather enigmatic

phrase: "They wash their hands with a fist" (πυγμῇ, 7:3).[29] In the next verse the washing

even includes submersion, as the narrator indicates with βαπτίζω and βαπτισμός (7:4).

The narrator uses a variety of different expressions and words to give a detailed

description of the purification practices of the Jews. It seems the narrator is aware of the

nuances of purification practices and takes great care to relate accurately the religio-

cultural setting.

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[29] Whether the πυγμῇ here refers to the amount of water, the manner of washing, or both is not of preeminent importance here. See Hengel's extensive coverage of this difficult word. Martin Hengel, "Mc 7 3 Πυγμῇ Die Geschichte einer exegetischen Aporie und der Versuch ihrer Lösung," *ZNW* 60, no. 3–4 (1969): 182–198. See also Stephen M. Reynolds, "Πυγμῇ (Mark 7:3) as 'Cupped Hand,'" *JBL* 85, no. 1 (1966): 87–88; Joel Marcus, "The Jewish War and the *Sitz Im Leben* of Mark," *JBL* 111, no. 3 (1992): 444; Boyarin, *The Jewish Gospels: The Story of the Jewish Christ*, 117–118, 181–182.

In summary the religio-cultural setting employs references from two different categories: The issues of authority and defilement. In the introduction the two topics converge as the narrative presents a battle of authority between the religious leaders and Jesus on the issue of defilement. The issue of authority is developed in the introduction (vv. 1–5) and Jesus' response (vv. 6–13). The authoritative language extends to the respective sources they draw from: The tradition of the elders for the religious leaders and the prophets of the Hebrew Bible and their writings as the word of God for Jesus.

In regard to the defilement, the audience is familiarized in the introduction with the intricacies of impurity (vv. 2, 5) and the detailed procedures to regain purity (vv. 3–4). In the second section of the pericope (vv. 14–23) Jesus returns to the original issue of defilement and, according to the author, cleanses the profane as well as establishes ethical guidelines for purity.

<center>Props</center>

The props in the narrative basically can be divided into three categories: body parts, household items, and food. Each of these adds to the development of the themes within the passage.

The body parts begin and conclude the passage and move from the extremities, the hands and fist, to the internal organs, the stomach and the heart.

The hands begin the section and are the bone of contention (7:2). The image of the defiled hand is then expanded by informing the reader that the Jews use their fists (7:3)[30] to cleanse their hands (7:3). The negative concept of defilement is thereby

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[30] Dschulnigg summarizes: "Das Abspülen der Hände wird der 'Überlieferung der Alten' zugeordnet, an die sich besonders pharisäische Juden hielten, welche die mündliche Tora parallel zur schriftlichen als gleichrangig beachteten, da beide dem Mose am Sinai von Gott übergeben worden seien (so zumindest im späteren rabb. Verständnis,

<center>60</center>

juxtaposed with the positive announcement of purification from defilement. This interplay of negative and positive is then applied to the religious leaders themselves within the pericope. In an analogous statement to the uncleanness of the disciples' hands (v. 2), Jesus exclaims that the religious leaders have contaminated lips and hearts (7:6). Jesus then justifies the disciples' earlier behavior by explaining what defilement really is (vv. 18–19): It is not an understanding of outer "κοινός" (based on tradition) but instead inner morality. The disciples are vindicated in their lack of hand washing while the religious leaders are indicted for their unethical lifestyle (vv. 8–13). In the interlude consisting of the explanation of the parable, Jesus puts forth physiological reasoning[31] by pointing to the biological process of food digestion that includes the stomach (7:19) and the external latrine (7:19) but not the heart. Finally, Jesus concludes with positive encouragement by exhorting the listeners to keep their hearts undefiled, since the heart is the true source of uncleanness (7:21).

The narrator structures the body parts in the passage in an external to internal movement. As the passage increasingly shifts from the tangible towards the personal and ethical, the bodily extremities make way for the new props of the internal organs. The passage is framed by the hands (7:3) and the heart (7:21), persuasively supporting the general flow of the argument—from outside to inside.

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vgl. mAv 1,1)." Dschulnigg, *Das Markusevangelium*, 204. For a detailed discussion see Crossley, "Halakah and Mark 7.3: 'With Hand in the Shape of a Fist'."

[31] Based on earlier studies of Kümmel and Schmidthals, Guelich contends that this phrase "corresponds neither in thrust nor in style to Mark's redaction." It must therefore be part of v. 15. Guelich, *Mark 1–8:26*, 377. France considers this an "earthy account" of what happens to food. France, *The Gospel of Mark: A Commentary on the Greek Text*, 291.

The second set of props revolves around household items: cups, pots, and vessels and probably even beds (7:4).[32] These props are listed in the explanatory segment the narrator inserts in vv. 3–4. The public setting of the ἀγορά and the private setting of the personal household items exhibit the tension of this section and act as a model for the entire pericope. The household items (7:3–4) function as a preview of the upcoming movement of Jesus and his disciples to the privacy of the house (7:14–17). By employing these household items, the narrator shows that the religious leaders are not concerned only about external but also internal space. This sets up Jesus' dialogue about external and internal. There are two crucial differences between the religious leaders' view and Jesus' view: First, the religious leaders are concerned about body parts and physical objects. Jesus on the other hand is concerned about the human heart as the center of ethical decisions. The second difference follows the direction of the movement. The religious leaders consider the external elements to be the offensive part. Jesus counters this with the opposite statement: The inner self is contaminated and negatively affects the external environment. Thus the narrative aside of vv. 3–4 functions not just as an explanatory insert but also as an anticipation of the development in the following verses (vv. 5; 15–23) by comparing and contrasting the concerns and actions of the religious leaders with those of Jesus.

Finally, the third set of props focuses on food. In the opening scene the narrator references "bread" (ἄρτος) two times: The observation that "some of the disciples were eating bread" with unwashed hands (κοιναῖς χερσίν) is the narrator's view of events (7:2),

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[32] The "difficulty of the idea of immersing beds or dinning couches has apparently led to the omission of the words καὶ κλινῶν" in several manuscripts. Collins, *Mark: A Commentary*. Based on Lev 15 Crossley prefers the reading of "dining couch" rather than "bed." Crossley, "Halakah and Mark 7.4: '. . . and Beds'."

but this is then restated in direct speech by the religious leaders as they confront Jesus (7:5). This pattern continues the larger theme related to food and specifically "bread" in the surrounding chapters.[33] In the second section of the pericope the theme of food is picked up again, though this time referring to the more generic βρῶμα.

The traditional understanding espoused by commentators that Jesus abrogated the food laws of Lev 11 in v. 19 must categorize the βρῶμα as the unclean meat of Lev 11. The βρῶμα would then have to act as a contrast to the ἄρτος of the first section. While it is possible for βρῶμα to refer to meat (1 Cor 8:13) in Pauline literature, the Gospel narratives consider βρῶμα to be anything that is considered edible by the community (Matt 14:15; Luke 3:11; 9:13). For first-century Palestinian Judaism this would have included both bread and clean meat, but not unclean meat.[34] In the context of this pericope it seems more likely that the narrator in v. 19 is referring back to his earlier narrative aside of v. 2 rather than contrasting the two narrative asides. The reasons for this assertion include: First, the usage of βρῶμα in the Gospels carries the idea of acceptable foods within the diet of a Jew. Second, if βρῶμα is viewed as primarily referring to the unclean meats of Lev 11, it needs to be understood as biting satire.

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[33] France points out that "bread is certainly a recurring theme of this part of the narrative" and substantiates this with the two feeding stories in which bread appears (6:52, 8:19) and the "concept of the 'children's bread' in 7:27." The usual plural use of 7:2 is a reference back and an anticipation of the later events in the Gospel narrative. France, *The Gospel of Mark: A Commentary on the Greek Text*, 281.

[34] The usage of βρῶμα in the Pauline writings is different from the Gospels. The Pauline corpus deals with the question whether meat sacrificed to idols is acceptable for consumption by Christians or not. The Pauline writings do not address the nature (clean or unclean) or the current state (defiled or not) of the sacrificed animal. Paul uses the word βρῶμα to refer to this specific question of meats (Rom 14:20; 1 Cor 8:13), but frequently Paul refers to food on a sustenance rather than a religious purity level (1 Cor 3:2; 6:13; 1 Tim 4:3; even specifically to Mannah, 1 Cor 10:3).

Contextually, the meat would have to oppose the earlier mention of bread. But there is no specific sarcasm against bread and in favor of meats in the pericope. Third, the context of Jesus' parable illustrates the biological progression of foods in general through the body ending in the latrine. The narrator does expand the category beyond the specific mention of bread, but the context does not allow for an antagonistic or sarcastic contrast between bread and meat.

In summary, the props in the pericope belong to three categories: body parts, household items, and food. Each of these props is closely connected to the issue of defilement. Additionally, the body parts and household items also parallel the movement from outside to inside that will feature prominently in the second speech of Jesus, thereby prefiguring the theme before it is fully developed. Finally, the props closely connect the two parts of the passage. The props introduced in the opening section are completed in the second section.

<div align="center">Characters</div>

In any story the characters and their portrayal are an essential part of the narrative. Narrative analysis not only looks at who is represented in the narrative but how the author presents them. "An author is never more mighty than in the moment the features of the characters are being chiselled."[35] Two theories have especially gained influence in analyzing the author's characterization of individuals or groups in a narrative. First, Edward Morgan Forster advanced the idea of round and flat characters. Round characters have dimension and development and are "capable of surprising in a convincing way."[36]

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[35] Svartvik, *Mark and Mission: Mk 7:1–23 in Its Narrative and Historical Contexts*, 241.

[36] Edward Morgan Forster, *Aspects of the Novel* (London: Penguin, 1990), 81.

The complexity of a round character gives depth to the characterization. Flat characters on the other hand are predictable and unchanging. They can be summarized in a single sentence.[37] Secondly, Robert Alter contrasts the storytelling techniques of *showing* and *telling*.[38] The author presents a character through *showing* by describing what the character is doing. The reader is allowed to follow and observe the character as in the example "John gave his wife a bouquet of flowers." In *telling* the author summarizes the action of the character. The reader is succinctly told what the author wants the reader to know, so "John loves his wife."

The pericope of Mark 7:1–23 includes three sets of characters: the antagonists (Pharisees and scribes), the protagonist (Jesus), and the minor characters (the disciples and the crowd).

Religious Leaders

The narrative begins with the ominous appearance of the Pharisees and some of the scribes at the outset of the passage (v. 1). As previous encounters with these groups in the Gospel suggest, this scenario indicates impending conflict. "The listing of *two* groups gathered together, the Pharisees and scribes, adds to the impression of hostile bands ganging up against him."[39] Narrative analysts have generally held that the religious leaders are treated separately as a result of Mark's nuanced view of the various religious

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[37] For an extensive discussion of challenges and responses to Forster's theory see Svartvik, *Mark and Mission: Mk 7:1–23 in Its Narrative and Historical Contexts*, 242–244.

[38] Alter, *The Art of Biblical Narrative.*

[39] Marcus calls this introduction a "sinister connotation." Marcus, *Mark 1-8: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary*, 440.

factions.[40] Svartvik correctly comments: "Mark does not use expressions such as 'Jewish leaders.' Instead, he designates them as members of different groups, *i.e.* Pharisees, Sadducees, Herodians, scribes, Chief priests, elders *etc.*"[41] Mark differentiates the groups by origin (scribes from Jerusalem) or region of influence (the Sadducees only appear in the city of Jerusalem), by their issue of concern, and even by their absence (the Pharisees are not involved in the passion proceedings). Though the scribes and Pharisees appear together as antagonists in Mark 7:1–23 they are not one homogenous group.

Pharisees

The Pharisees have been already featured as antagonists to Jesus over the questions of Jesus' association with sinners (2:16) and the Sabbath (2:24; 3:6). The Sabbath controversy contains two events with different so-called wrongdoers but the same disdain by the Pharisees. In the first part the disciples are accused of eating grain on

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[40] This is contrary to earlier views of redaction critics. Michael Cook contends that Mark's view of Jewish leaders is derived from three independent and regional sources. The various groups are therefore more indicative of the distinct pre-Markan sources than a cohesive understanding of the Gospel author. The historic value is minimal as these groups are "likely only general constructs, i.e., literary devices created and utilized for the narrators' convenience; they were hardly technical terms reflective of specific groups operative in Jesus' time or ever" (p. 17). For this reason Cook sees no need to distinguish between groups such as the Pharisees and the scribes (p. 88) but he is equally clear that the scribes must have represented two different groups of scribes, i.e., Pharasaic scribes and Sadducean scribes (p. 91) based on the different strata of redaction. Michael J. Cook, *Mark's Treatment of the Jewish Leaders* (VTSup 51; ed. W.C. van Unnic et. al.; Leiden: Brill, 1978). Malbon is weary of Cook's introduction of hypothetical sources and rightfully questions Cook's prominence of answering the origin question at the cost of explaining "away the significance of the narrative." Elizabeth Struthers Malbon, "Jewish Leaders in the Gospel of Mark," *JBL* 108, no. 2 (1989): 263. Malbon and Svartvik approach the Gospel from a narrative perspective and therefore as a narrative unit. The religious leaders are examined as individual units. In this view Mark displays a nuanced depiction of the various religious leaders.

[41] Svartvik, *Mark and Mission: Mk 7:1–23 in Its Narrative and Historical Contexts*, 268.

the Sabbath (2:23–28). In the second, Jesus is accused of healing a man with a chronic disease (3:1–6) on the Sabbath. The Pharisees respond to these two encounters by planning to destroy Jesus (3:6). The Pharisees are the primary group of antagonists during Jesus' ministry, but decline toward the end of Jesus' ministry in favor of the more powerful authorities located in Jerusalem: the scribes, chief priests, and elders. Kingsbury points out that the controversy with the Pharisees intensifies throughout the Gospel as the accusations move from side issues to the central question of authority. At first the accusations concern people close to Jesus before intensifying and focusing on Jesus himself (8:11–13). "At this, Mark has so guided events in the middle of his story that the conflict between Jesus and the authorities has intensified to the point where it has become acutely confrontational: Attacks are no more indirect but face-to-face."[42]

Scribes

Mark's mention of the scribes in 7:1 might seem to be just a duplicate reference to the Pharisees and therefore insignificant, but Mark considers the scribes to be a different group altogether.

The scribes have been mentioned previously (1:22; 2:6.16; 3:22) and they will feature prominently in the second part of the Gospel as well (9:11, 14; 11:18, 27; 12:28–32, 35–40; 14:1, 43, 53; 15:1, 31). Marcus examines the two groups and concludes: "In contrast to Matthew, however, Mark maintains a nuanced distinction between scribes and Pharisees in 2:16 and 7:1."[43] Thus the scribes consist of a second and different group of

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[42] Jack Kingsbury, *Conflict in Mark: Jesus, Authorities, Disciples* (Minneapolis, Minn.: Fortress, 1989), 69.

[43] Marcus, *Mark 1–8,* 524. Marcus makes this comment especially in regard to the unique expression of "scribes of the Pharisees" in 2:16. Contrary to some commentators Marcus builds on E. P. Sanders and D. Schwartz to maintain a distinct rather than unified

antagonists. Whether the early references to the scribes refer to local factions (1:22; 2:6) or already to the Jerusalem religious elite is unclear. But in Mark 3:22 and 7:1 the author clearly establishes the Jerusalem origin of the group. Henceforth, the Gospel of Mark implicitly demonstrates the Jerusalem origin by showing the influence the scribes have in Jerusalem and the collaboration in which they engage with the chief priests and elders (11:27; 14:1, 43; 15:1, 31). The mention of Jerusalem in 7:1 reminds the reader that Jesus has caught the attention not just of people of the northern region of Palestine, and the neighboring districts of Tyre and Sidon (3:8), but also of Jerusalem, Judea, and Idumea. This has resulted in a large crowd that follows Jesus (3:8), but inevitably it has also attracted the attention of the religious authorities from Jerusalem (3:22; 7:1).

In the Gospel of Mark the scribes appear in three repetitive cycles of increasing intensity (see table 1). Each cycle begins with a focus on the teaching of the scribes before shifting to the actions of this party. Each cycle also begins with a simple comparison of Jesus' teaching versus the teachings of the scribes but gains momentum culminating in a confrontational encounter at the end of each cycle. Additionally, each cycle commences with the scribes as a single unit, but in the progression they increasingly collaborate with other factions (Pharisees, chief priests, elders and even Judas Iscariot) to accomplish their goal of destroying Jesus.[44] Only in the last cycle is this collaboration successful, leading into the passion narrative. See table 1.

view of the scribes and Pharisees.

[44] Smith comments on 7:1 by stating that the "purpose of this composite group is really to forge a link with all the controversies which have taken place, for it represents the full range of religious leaders who have taken issue with Jesus thus far . . . and foreshadows their collaboration with the chief priests and elders from Mark 11 onwards." Stephen H. Smith, "The Role of Jesus' Opponents in the Markan Drama," *NTS* 35 (1989): 171.

Table 1. Cycles of Scribes

SUMMARY	FIRST CYCLE	SECOND CYCLE	THIRD CYCLE
Teaching of the scribes	1:22	9:11	12:28–32
Disputation	2:6.16	9:14	12:35–40
Prophetic preview		8:31; 10:33	
Destruction in mind	3:22	11:18	14:1
Collaborative attack	7:1.5	11:27	14:43, 53
Successful attack			15:1.31

The reference to the Pharisees and scribes in Mark 7:1 is the culminating point of the first cycle and the climactic conflict in the first half of the book.[45] As the first reference to a collaborative attack, it also demonstrates that this group of religious authorities will stop at nothing to accomplish their set goal of destroying Jesus. In this the passage anticipates the ultimate conflict in Jerusalem. Freyne notes that in contrast to the Sabbath dispute with the Pharisees "it is the arrival of the Jerusalem-based scribes that sets up the real tension of the plot, pointing forward to its eventual, if ironic, resolution in

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[45] Stephen Smith has argued for a "loose" concentric structure of controversy stories with Mark 2:1–3:6 and 11:27–12:40 on the outskirts, 3:20–35 and 11:12–25 moving inwards, 7:1–23 and 10:2–9 further and 8:11–13 at the center of the conflict. He does not suggest "that this arrangement is *strictly* concentric for it fails to satisfy what might be described as the relevant criteria with any measure of consistency." But he notes that each set corresponds in different ways: formal, theological, rhetorical, and literary-critical. His observations are helpful to ascertain Mark's purposeful structure across large and short passages in the Gospel. Smith's research searches for structure on a different basis than the above chart, which is based on the characterization of the scribes. Ibid., 179–180.

Jerusalem."[46] At the end of the third cycle the tables are turned. Instead of the scribes coming to meet Jesus in Galilee, Jesus is now coming to Jerusalem, though it is not with the intent of meeting them. Additionally, the scribes increase their level of collaboration. After the unsuccessful attempts of attacking Jesus by collaborating with one group, the Pharisees, in 7:1, and two groups, the chief priests and elders, in 11:27, the scribes now collaborate with three groups, namely Judas Iscariot, the chief priests, and the elders (14:43). The Jerusalem authorities "form a united front in the relentless opposition they all mount against Jesus."[47]

Insofar as 7:1–23 prefigures the passion narrative, in this pericope the Pharisees and scribes are seen as collaborating in their actions against Jesus. The narrator presents the two parties as a unit to mark the intensity of the conflict. This is not a conflated or simplistic approach to the complexity of Jewish factions in the first-century setting but a narrative device of intensification. The actions of gathering (v. 1), observing (v. 2) and accusing (v. 5)[48] are actions of both groups and Jesus' response, including the charge of being "hypocrites," is directed to "them" (vv. 6, 9).

Surprisingly though, the narrative aside explaining the hand washing ritual in v. 3 identifies the "Pharisees and all the Jews" as the adherents of these rituals, rather than the scribes and Pharisees. The phrase is surprising and has led scholars to consider Mark

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[46] Freyne, *Galilee, Jesus and the Gospels: Literary Approaches and Historical Investigations*, 50.

[47] Kingsbury, *Conflict in Mark: Jesus, Authorities, Disciples*, 65.

[48] Smith notes that the ἐπερωτάω is not simply a question, but in an examination of the use and lack of use in the conflict stories of Mark ἐπερωτάω marks "probing and cunning" or "devious questions." Smith, "The Role of Jesus' Opponents in the Markan Drama," 174.

hopelessly prone to exaggeration.[49] This view has been countered by two different arguments: First, Guelich proposes that this expression "reflects the accepted practice of generalizing about a group."[50] He argues that Mark does so repeatedly himself as can be seen in 1:5, 32–33; 6:33; and 11:11. As support for this linguistic feature Guelich notes that the second-century Epistle of Aristeas also uses this type of generalization even with the concept of hand washing: "And as the custom of *all the Jews*, they washed their hands and prayed to God."[51] Secondly, Collins contends that Mark's statement is reflective of the purity concerns of the time. "Archaeological evidence . . . indicates that many Jews of the first-century CE attempted to live in a state of ritual purity."[52] This attitude is not limited to Jerusalem itself but "many Jewish residents in the towns of Galilee were just as observant as those of Jerusalem."[53] These two theories are not as mutually exclusive as they at first appear. Though a custom can be the accepted norm for a society, this does not prevent individuals from abstaining willingly or unwillingly (e.g., tax collectors, the sick).

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[49] For example: Walter Grundmann, *Das Evangelium Nach Markus* (THKNT 2; ed. Friedrich Hauck; Berlin: Evangelische Verlagsanstalt, 1977), 193; Gnilka, *Das Evangelium Nach Markus*, 1:281.

[50] Guelich, *Mark 1–8:26*, 364.

[51] Epistle of Aristeas, 305.

[52] Collins, *Mark: A Commentary*, 345. Eugene Boring counters Collins's argument and agrees with the generalization theory. He observes: "The statement is not technically correct, since many segments of the Jewish population (e.g., Sadducees and the common people, the *'am ha'ares*) did not adhere to the strict practice of the Pharisees, and it is disputed how widespread the practice was in the first century even among the observant population." Boring, *Mark: A Commentary*, 199.

[53] Collins, *Mark: A Commentary*, 346.

Additionally, the use of πᾶς/πᾶν functions within the passage as a means of anticipating and contrasting. See table 2. Of the five forms in the passage two are masculine and three are neuter. The masculine use of πάντες describes the group of the Jews (7:3) that joins the Pharisees in the outward action of ritual hand washing. This prepares the reader for the contrast with the second group of people in the passage: those who are following Jesus. Jesus addresses these "πάντες" (7:14) himself and challenges them to "listen and understand." They are to apply the parable of v. 15 to their life and setting. Both of these groups are defined by an action: the former to the outward actions of purification and of following the traditions of the elders, the latter to the internal actions of listening and understanding the parable with its ethical claim (7:21–22). These two groups therefore agree in following a religious leader and practice but contrast each other in whom they follow and what they do.

Table 2. Distribution of πᾶς/πᾶν in Mark 7:1–23

FORM	GENDER	NUMBER	OBJECT	REFERENCE
πάντες	Masculine	Plural	Jews	7:3
πάντες	Masculine	Plural	Crowd	7:14
πᾶν	Neuter	Singular	"Things"	7:18
πάντα	Neuter	Plural	Foods	7:19
πάντα	Neuter	Plural	"Things"	7:23

The neuter use of πᾶν in v. 18 is situated within the explanation of the parable ("all things that enter"). It anticipates the neuter use in v. 19 ("cleansing all foods"). Both

of these express the idea of food intake and deny the possibility of ritual defilement from either of these; the first one in a general and vague sense, the second in a concrete setting. The final reference of πᾶς/πᾶν in the passage contrasts the neuter singular use of πᾶν (7:18) to the neuter plural in v. 23 ("all these things defile"). While the former "all" cannot defile, the latter does defile. The first also is expressed in reference to rituals while the latter addresses everyday situations of ethical discipleship.

In summary, the short interjection of πᾶς/πᾶν fulfills a stylistic feature in the pericope. The masculine πάντες (v. 3) contrasts the two groups of the "Pharisees and all the Jews" with the crowd (v. 14). The religious leaders and their followers therefore act as a foil to introduce those who follow Jesus. The neuter singular πᾶν in the parable (v. 14) prepares the reader for a food-related (v. 19) and an ethical-related response (v. 23).

In the narrative the religious authorities are initially portrayed by the narrator as covert. The main narrative itself does not divulge a lot of information about these religious authorities. They appear as the silent watchmen who gather together to observe. They are presented through *showing* as combative sticklers waiting for the inevitable to happen—a mistake. The narrator shows this by attributing only three actions to the religious leaders in the narrative itself: "they gather" (v. 1), "they see" (v. 2), and "they were asking" (v. 5). Of these three actions only the first and last are rendered by the author in the indicative mode. The action of observing the disciples (v. 2) is rendered as a participle in an awkward anacoluthon.[54] The logical conclusion to the thought of v. 2 is

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[54] Scribes have puzzled over this difficult construction throughout the ages. Several variants have been suggested to smooth out the awkwardness of the partial sentence of v. 2 and the continuation of the thought in v. 5. Grammarians have equally struggled with this passage. For a discussion on the various options see Guelich, *Mark 1–8:26*, 363.

not completed until v. 5, but the sentence structure of v. 5 is an independent and complete sentence. By means of the clumsiness of this phrase and the clarification that only some of the disciples (τινὰς τῶν μαθητῶν αὐτοῦ) ate with defiled hands, the narrator shows the pedantic nature of the religious leaders' challenge. They have also been identified earlier in the Gospel in a similar fashion. Yoon-Man Park has identified this as a "person frame" already for the conflict passages of 2:1–3:6 that "leads the audience to anticipate and understand the legal teachers' typical (i.e. disputable) reaction to Jesus' practice . . . and this, in turn, results in the audience's increased interest in the story and their sense of suspense as they anticipate a further development of conflict between Jesus and the legal interpreters."[55] They readily pounce on the issue of defilement once the occasion presents itself.

It is only through the invasive and lengthy narrative asides that the narrator informs (*telling*) the audience about the actual practice of these religious leaders. With unprecedented clarity the narrator interrupts the story to explain the details of pharisaic purity *halakhah* for the specific setting of the market. In vv. 3–4 two conditional clauses parallel each other closely. The apodosis of both third-class conditional clauses is identical: οὐκ ἐσθίουσιν (they do not eat). Also, both following verses rationalize this behavior on the basis of the "tradition of men." Finally, the protasis of both conditional phrases carries an analogous subjunctive verb: "they wash" (νίψωνται v. 3) and "they baptize" (βαπτίσωνται v. 4). This parallel construction expands the practice of the religious leaders and all the Jews beyond the means to the association with a location— the ἀγορά. Not only is the proper method of ritual purification important, but also the

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[55] Park, *Mark's Memory Resources and the Controversy Stories (Mark 2:1–3:6)*, 273.

awareness that contact with foreigners and other Jews, who do not follow proper washing techniques, will render the individual ritually unclean. By closely paralleling these two ideas, the author wants to clarify the various aspects of the defilement understanding of the religious leaders. At the same time he uses this to set up the story of the Syrophoencian woman (7:24–30): If the ἀγορά can cause defilement, how much more (*a fortiori*, which the rabbis have called *qal vehomer*) would walking and residing in foreign territory (7:24).

Besides the narrative asides, Jesus also informs the audience about the religious leaders. Jesus shares the information of the *qorban* practice with the Pharisees, scribes, and to a larger audience, consisting of the disciples and possibly a larger crowd (v. 14). But rather than assigning blame to the individual requesting the *qorban* ruling, Jesus focuses on the religious leaders as culprits for enabling individuals to make use of it ("ὑμεῖς δὲ λέγετε" v. 11). This then is the example of the superimposition of the tradition of the elders over the law of Moses. This shows that the leaders consider their authority and that of the elders not just to explain the Torah or amend it, but also to override it with regulations that circumvent the spirit of the law of Moses. Much of the debate in scholarly circles has focused on finding a historical antecedent for this practice.[56] But

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[56] Kazen notes the rabbinic discussion about "vows that affect one's parents" in *mNed* 5:6; 9:1 and agrees with Westerholm's interpretation. Early rabbinic literature did not allow for a release from a vow even if it interfered with the command to honor parents. Later rabbis around Rabbi Eliezer (in the early Yavnean period) made provision for a release. "Jesus could thus be seen as putting his finger on a conflict between two laws, which was real and later given a rabbinic solution." Kazen though, against Sanders, does not ascribe this *qorban* passage to the historical Jesus but rather to the later church polemics on the vague argument that this opposition "suits . . . better" the latter time frame. Kazen, *Jesus and Purity Halakhah: Was Jesus Indifferent to Impurity?*, 64–65; Westerholm, *Jesus and Scribal Authority*, 76–78, 80, 104–113; Sanders, *Jewish Law from Jesus to the Mishnah: Five Studies*, 51–57; Hübner, *Das Gesetz in Der Synoptischen Tradition: Studien Zur These Eine Progressiven Qumranisierung und Judaisierung Innerhalb Der Synoptischen Tradition*, 150–151. For further discussion and a critical

whatever this *qorban* practice represents, the narrator assumes that the implied audience will either understand this practice from the wording itself or is already acquainted with it. For the flow of the argument the *qorban* example underscores Jesus' initial assessment of the religious leaders as "teaching as doctrines the commandments of men" (v. 7) and as a result they "leave the commandment of God" (v. 8). Because of this, Jesus proclaims them hypocrites and declares their worship vain. The narrative demonstrates Jesus' indignation with the religious leaders' elevated view of the tradition by intentionally denigrating and personalizing the term "tradition" throughout his reply. What at first is the "tradition of the elders" (vv. 3, 5) is subsequently reduced to merely the "tradition of men" (v. 8), and finally it becomes "your tradition" (vv. 9, 13). Jesus makes it clear to the listeners that the religious leaders' tradition is just that, their tradition.

Jesus' assessment of the religious leaders' tradition levels the narrative playing field as both the disciples and the religious leaders have been shown to fail in the observance of regulations, the former the "tradition of men," the latter the "law of Moses." Only the stern warning against the religious leaders makes it clear that Jesus does not perceive the gravity of the offense to be on the same level.

The religious leaders disappear after Jesus' rebuttal. They do not respond to Jesus or interact in the story again as in 3:6.

In summary, Mark has traced the religious leaders carefully up to this point and will continue to develop the narrative with these antagonists. For Mark these two groups are clearly defined and independent factions in Judaism. He does not hold a simplistic or

review of literature see Moshe Benovitz, *Kol Nidre: Studies in the Development of Rabbinic Votive Institutions* (BJS 315; Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1998); Jon Nelson Bailey, "Vowing Away the Fifth Commandment: Matthew 15:3–6/Mark 7:9–13," *ResQ* 42, no. 4 (2000): 193–209.

conflated view of Jesus' antagonists but masterfully combines the two distinct parties in the conflict of this pericope as a narrative technique intended to heighten the conflict. The issue of authority is thereby raised to a new level from the perspective of the audience. Despite Jesus silencing the religious leaders in this pericope, the audience is aware that Jesus and his antagonists will meet again.

Jesus

As the main character of the pericope, Jesus appears in both sections (vv. 1–13 and 14–23) and is the leading speaker throughout the passage only interrupted by two questions. In Forster's terminology Jesus is a round character. He has many dimensions and can surprise. In this Jesus is the antithesis to the religious leaders: "Jesus may well be labeled as being a round character. Furthermore, the religious authorities . . . are extremely *flat* characters."[57] Voelz concurs with the multi-faceted description of Jesus in the Gospel of Mark. He has identified at "least six specific ways in which Jesus is portrayed: 1. *A man of authority* . . . 2. *A man of power* . . . 3. *Someone to be feared* . . . 4. *Someone who is divine* . . . 5. *Someone who is fully human* . . . 6. *Someone who is odd.*"[58]

The concept that Jesus is a man of authority is central to this passage as the issue of authority is paramount in this pericope. The multitudes of different ways this is portrayed in the pericope has and will continue to be presented in this narrative analysis. In addition the narrator presents Jesus to the readers in this passage as a man full of surprises: First, he remains in the background for the entire introduction (vv. 1–5). In

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[57] Svartvik, *Mark and Mission: Mk 7:1–23 in Its Narrative and Historical Contexts*, 244. An exemption to this general statement about the group can be observed in the individual action of a righteous scribe in Mark 12:28–34.

[58] Voelz, *Mark 1:1–8:26*, 41–42.

other conflict stories Jesus knows and challenges what the religious authorities are thinking (2:8), he intervenes in a question directed to the disciples, not to him (2:17), and preemptively engages the Pharisees before the actual "offense" (3:4). Jesus appears close to the action and always in control of the situation. But in this pericope Jesus is surprisingly removed from the action for the duration of the lengthy introduction. This is a narrative foil to emphasize the forcefulness of Jesus' counterattack in vv. 6–13. As a point of comparison, even the conflict over the Sabbath (2:23–25) does not carry as much tension with it. While there are plenty of parallels between the two passages, in both an "offense" by the disciples leads to a question by the religious leaders that Jesus subsequently answers, there are also significant differences: The pericope begins with a spatial movement from Jerusalem to Jesus' present location (7:1) and the narrator's aside (7:2–4) stretches out the introduction with a spatial shift in point-of-view perspective.[59] Both spatial markers make Jesus' absence appear more obvious.

Second, Jesus surprises with his sternness. To use Adler's terminology, Jesus' anger has been *told* at the end of the conflict stories in 3:5 but now it is *shown* in his responses. This sternness is first directed to the religious leaders by calling them hypocrites. Though Matthew uses this expression frequently (13 times) and Luke occasionally (3 times), in Mark it is found only in this pericope. Additionally Jesus confronts the religious leaders' practices in a lengthy dispute (vv. 6–13) accusing them of

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[59] In a perspective criticism the author introduces a spatial shift in the narrative aside interrupting the regular flow of the pericope and thereby extending the suspense of how Jesus will react to the situation. While the first verse of the pericope takes a Jesus' centric spatial view, vv. 2–4 shift the focus only to return to Jesus in v. 5. See Gary Yamasaki, *Pespective Criticism: Point of View and Evaluative Guidance in Biblical Literature* (Eugene, Oreg.: Cascade, 2012), 18–34.

disregarding the "word of God." The disciples are not totally exempt from this either as Jesus questions them for their lack of understanding (v. 18).

Third, Jesus changes the audience at the seemingly most inappropriate moments. It would seem natural to play down a conflict with the religious leaders, but instead Jesus quickly expands the audience to include the crowd. After shortly engaging the crowd, Jesus withdraws into the privacy of a house. If Jesus' purpose was to win over the crowd one must question why Jesus rapidly withdraws from the crowd without explaining the parable or sharing his ethical teaching. Whatever solutions to these questions arise from other passages, this depiction adds depth to the characterization of Jesus.

Fourth, Jesus surprises with the content of his discourses particularly of the second discourse (vv. 14–23). Instead of siding with the religious leaders in matters of defilement, Jesus overturns the prevalent ideology. At the same time Jesus surprisingly does not negate the regulations of the Hebrew Bible, the obvious alternative to the religious leaders' position. Instead Jesus recasts the issue of defilement as a matter of tradition (the word of the elders versus the "word of God")[60] and cites the Hebrew Bible in his support. He thus calls to a higher standard of following the Hebrew Bible, rather than to a lesser standard. This stunning turn in how to solve the issue of defilement leads to a role reversal between the religious leaders and Jesus. While the opening is all about the religious leaders and Jesus remains silent, the result of Jesus' speech in turn leaves the religious leaders silent. Additionally, not only does Jesus challenge the basic

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[60] Obviously the narrator has already prepared the audience for this issue in the opening with a triple reference to "tradition" (vv. 3–5). The Markan author thereby points out the narrator's omniscience of the real cause of the conflict and at the same time expresses the narrator's congruity in perspective with Jesus. Summarizing Rhoads, Yamasaki asserts: "Jesus' ideological viewpoint coincides with that of the narrator." Gary Yamasaki, *Watching a Biblical Narrative* (New York: T&T Clark, 2007), 75.

presuppositions of the religious leaders but he is very explicit in the ethical implications of his teaching. These ethical considerations are unique in their content and length. As a point of comparison Jesus' speech in the conflict over the Sabbath (2:23–28) contains no critique of the Pharisees nor an ethical discourse.

Jesus is presented both by telling and showing. All the reader is told about Jesus revolves around the topic of speaking: Jesus answers (v. 6), was saying (v. 9), calling to him (v. 14), says (v. 18), and was saying (v. 20). Even the report that Jesus entered a house (v. 17) is the introduction to a new speech. The narrator portrays Jesus as forcefully responding to an accusation, skillfully teaching the crowds, and carefully explaining the parable to his disciples. Jesus is in complete control in a variety of settings and circumstances throughout the passage. He is a gifted orator who can deal with an attack, get to its core, and play it out against his opponents. Instead of retreating to the defensive after being attacked, Jesus goes on the offensive. He rebuts the charges leveled against him in an unexpected and astonishing manner. The narrator does not develop the character of Jesus in the classical sense of a progression of character but unfolds the range of Jesus' interaction in paradoxes. Jesus is shown to be angry at the religious leaders but concerned about the crowds. He appears disheartened by the disciples' lack of understanding. His intent is to challenge all three groups of people to a higher moral living: The religious leaders through strongly worded challenges, the crowd by engaging them in a riddle, and the disciples through clear ethical teaching. Jesus is seen as being clear and stern towards the religious leaders (vv. 6–13), cryptic and unorthodox towards the crowd (vv. 14–15), and practical and elucidatory towards the disciples (vv. 17–23).

In summary, Jesus is presented as a round character who surprises the readers on multiple levels in this pericope. Jesus is presented as an authoritative figure who takes

control of a conflict situation, is careful to discern the issues, and is a teacher who

rebukes. As has been pointed out here and will be argued more extensively in the section

on verbal tenses: Jesus presents the "word of God" with an authority equal to Moses.[61]

"The main character operates with a sense of his own authority as God's spokesperson

for his coming kingdom."[62]

Disciples

The disciples are minor characters in this pericope and their involvement is

reduced to the initial offense and the question they ask. In this they first act as a foil for

the religious leaders to mount their charges and later they function as foil for Jesus to

clarify the riddle of v. 15.

The disciples are introduced at the outset of the pericope and are presented as the

culprits for the erupting dispute. In this they are identified by *showing*: Some of them do

not adhere to the pharisaic code of ritual purification. The diversity of practice within the

group of disciples is stated as a matter of fact.[63] This is not surprising to the audience, as

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[61] As has been well documented Matthew builds an elaborate comparison between Jesus and Moses. In Matthew Jesus is the "greater Moses" and this establishes Jesus' divinity. "Clearly, Matthew has in mind the story of Moses as he narrates the story of Jesus. . . . Jesus is the antitype of Moses." Donald A. Hagner, *Matthew 1–13* (WBC 33A, Dallas, Tex.: Word Books, 1993), 34. Cf. Dale C. Allison Jr., *The New Moses: A Matthean Typology* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1993). In Mark the Moses-Jesus analogy is not developed to the same extent. The Markan Jesus in this pericope is placed on an authoritative level with Isaiah and Moses. Jesus thus speaks the "word of God" authoritatively but for Mark this does not lead to an elevation of Jesus above the prophets or a statement on Jesus' divinity.

[62] Freyne, *Galilee, Jesus and the Gospels: Literary Approaches and Historical Investigations*, 50.

[63] The narrative is silent concerning Jesus' adherence to the practice of ritual washings. It can be inferred that Jesus did practice the ritual cleansing, since the attack of the religious leaders refers only to the disciples. If Jesus had been careless in the purification rituals it stands to reason that the religious leaders' attack would not have

the disciples have already been identified as a rag-tag group of followers comprised of

various factions of Jewish life in the first century including a zealot (3:18) and possibly a

tax collector.[64] It is important to realize that neither the narrator nor Jesus fault "some of

the disciples" for the lack of purification rituals or the insensitivity they expressed in the

company of more rigorous practitioners of traditions. Jesus himself has at times even

provoked an exchange of ideas with the religious leaders by healing on the Sabbath (3:2–

3), fellowshipping with religious and social outcasts (2:15), and even forgiving sins (2:5).

The disciples also have been featured previously as culprits of the lack of fasting

practices (2:18) and breaking the traditions on Sabbath observance (2:23). In 7:1–23 the

disciples are not chided by the narrator or Jesus for their part in these conflict stories;

instead, Jesus defends the actions of the disciples in each ensuing dispute. The

significance is heightened by the fact that Jesus is not usually shy to criticize the disciples

in the Gospel of Mark (cf. 4:13, 40; 7:17; 8:33; 9:19; 10:18). As such the disciples appear

to be in line with Jesus' understanding of purity, though unaware of the arguments he will

use, and the ethical teaching that Jesus will develop from this discussion on defilement.

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been limited to his disciples' behavior but would have included their master as well. For
the narrator this question does not arise as he clearly presents Jesus as defending the
behavior of "some of the disciples."

[64] The identity of "Levi" in Mark 2:14 and the synoptic parallels in Matt 9:9 and
Luke 5:27 has been extensively disputed. The option that "Levi" should be translated as
"Levite" referring to a tribe rather than a person as proposed by Albright and Mann has
generally been discredited based on Josephus identifying numerous individuals by this
name. William Foxwell and Christopher Steven Mann Albright, *Matthew: Introduction,
Translation, and Notes* (AB 26; ed. William Foxwell Albright and David Noel Freedman;
New York: Doubleday, 1971), clxxvii–cclxxviii. Another option identifies James, the
son of Alphaeus (3:18), as the same individual as Levi, the son of Alphaeus. But "it is
hard to see how the name Levi could have been added if the original reference was to
James." France, *The Gospel of Mark: A Commentary on the Greek Text*, 132. A third and
most popular option is that Levi is an otherwise unknown individual. Finally, from the
synoptic comparison, Matthew and Levi could be the same individual. Ibid., 131.

In the narrative of 7:1–23 the disciples do not participate in the debate and resurface again only in the second section (v. 17): They inquire about the meaning of the parable of v. 15. Their inquiry is introduced by the same ἐπηρώτων ("asking") that introduced the inquiry of the religious leaders (v. 5). The narrator indicates that the disciples, similar to the religious leaders, do not understand the message of Jesus fully. Though they have just heard the parable in the context of ritual purification and tradition, they fail to understand the meaning. As the question of the religious leaders is the launch pad for the first speech of Jesus, so the question of the disciples is the springboard for Jesus' second discourse. Kingsbury observes that Jesus "also enters into conflict with the disciples."[65]

This is not a trivial conflict throughout the Gospel, but it is very different from the conflict against Israel, according to Kingsbury. This conflict with his followers "revolves around the disciples' remarkable lack of comprehension and their refusal to come to terms with either the central purpose of Jesus' ministry or the true meaning of discipleship."[66] Kingsbury points out that this negative theme is found in the center of the Gospel in a series of three boat scenes (4:35–41; 6:45–52; 8:14–21) and two feeding miracles (6:34–44; 8:1–10).[67] Though Kingsbury does not add 7:1–23 into his overview of the progressive incomprehension of the disciples, it nonetheless fits neatly into this larger development. What Kingsbury therefore summarizes for his representative passages equally applies to the disciples in 7:1–23: They "comprehend neither the

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[65] Kingsbury, *Conflict in Mark: Jesus, Authorities, Disciples*, 89.

[66] Ibid.

[67] Ibid., 98–101.

parables of Jesus nor his identity nor the nature of either his authority or the authority

granted them. The result is that they fail badly in situations calling for insight, faith,

courage, confession, or action."[68] Others have given more credit to the disciples. Smith

notes that the "use of ἐπερωτάω in Mark 7.17 to introduce the disciples' request for an

explanation of Jesus' pronouncement on defilement is innocuous enough, as is its

appearance in 12.28 where true hostility is not in question."[69]

The little information the passage transmits about the disciples places them firmly

in the context of the surrounding passage. Jesus' opening statement to the disciples (Mark

7:18) echoes this sentiment by pointing out their incomprehension as ἀσύνετοί. This

statement parallels his earlier declaration directed towards the religious leaders: After

their question Jesus pronounces the religious leaders hypocrites. In a forthright and

unflattering statement Jesus assesses their frame of mind. In a similar but curtailed

statement, Jesus points out that the disciples lack understanding (ἀσύνετοί) after their

question.[70]

While there are some similarities between the conflict of the religious leaders and

the misunderstanding of disciples, there are also significant differences between the two

encounters. First, the disciples respond to a statement made by Jesus himself rather than

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[68] Ibid., 103.

[69] Smith, "The Role of Jesus' Opponents in the Markan Drama," 174.

[70] In the Gospels this unique reference to the lack of understanding (ἀσύνετοί) in Mark is paralleled only by the synoptic counterpart in Matt 15:16. The positive cognate (σύνεσις) is revealed to the children though hidden to the wise (Matt 11:25; Luke 10:21; see also, 1 Cor 1:19). Jesus possesses this understanding (Luke 2:47) in the temple as does the proconsul Sergio Paulus (Acts 13:7). The understanding that Jesus is referring to is not cognitive or intellectual but that of a spiritual insight (Mark 4:12; 12:33). Conzelmann points out "that understanding is a divine gift." Hans Conzelmann, "συνίημι, σύνεσις, συνετός, ἀσύνετος," *TDNT* 7:895.

the observation of a lack of orthopraxy. In this the narrator makes it clear that the disciples' question is asked internally, within Jesus' group, while the religious leaders thrust their accusation upon the group from the outside. The earlier is a question for clarification based on Jesus' own words, the latter is an observation from the outside. To reinforce the religious leaders' calculated measure of attacking Jesus, the narrator introduces the story with the "gathering" of the religious leaders to portray the combined force of Pharisees and scribes.

Second, the location of the disciples' question is a private setting. This is not uncommon. The disciples wait for the opportunity to ask Jesus "when he was alone" in Mark 4:10, 34 and 9:28. In Mark 7:17 the narrator even employs a twofold expression to emphasize the privacy of the moment. Not only does the setting of the house (v. 17) contrast the crowd (v. 15) but the explicit mention that they are now "away from the crowds" restates the obvious. The locality of the house as a physical location is also placed in juxtaposition to the physical location of Jerusalem at the outset of the pericope. The former is a private and even secretive setting (v. 24) while the latter adds to the impression of a grave threat. Jerusalem is the religious capital of the nation from where the scribes come and even more so it is the location of the climactic final conflict.

Finally, the narrator uses direct speech for the accusation of the religious leaders but only indirect speech for the disciples. Similar to the use of the location mentioned above, the narrator pits the confrontational threat of the religious leaders against the private petition of the disciples. To further add to the perception of an attack, in contrast to the narrator, the religious leaders do not differentiate between observing and unobserving disciples in their question to Jesus. They simply refer to the disciples as a whole: "Why do your disciples . . ." (v. 5).

The disciples appear twice in this pericope. The first time they present the opportunity for the religious leaders to launch an attack against Jesus. The second time they present an opportunity for Jesus to explain his parable clearly. The disciples are not presented in a positive light but neither are they presented negatively. Jesus defends their behavior vigorously in the opening dispute and answers their question.

Crowd

The crowd, as a side character, makes a surprise appearance only in v. 14. But even in this instance they are not active. They are only brought into view by Jesus. But besides their presence we know nothing about who made up the crowd, where they came from, and what they thought about the encounter. Were they privy to the early confrontation between Jesus and the religious leaders? Or even the preceding meal? The crowd appears out of nowhere and disappears immediately after Jesus has finished addressing them. Jesus implores the crowd to "hear and understand" (v. 14), of which the former is self-evident and the narrator does not reveal the latter.

Contrary to other passages the crowd is not introduced at the outset (3:7; 4:1; 5:21) nor do they react to the message (1:22, 28; 2:12). Instead the colorless crowd remains uninvolved and neutral throughout the conflict passage. In this the crowd acts as a center figure between the religious leaders and the disciples. The lack of resolve in the crowd casts a positive light on the disciples. They do respond to the message. Their question is intended to improve understanding. As Jesus turns his attention, the apparently ignorant crowd disappears from this and the following narrative pericopes. Jesus' ministry in the Gentile territories of Tyre, Sidon, and the Decapolis also draws

crowds (7:33; 8:1) but most likely of Gentile origin. The Jewish crowd resurfaces only

again at the outset of the second half of the Gospel of Mark in 8:34.

Moses and Isaiah

Moses and Isaiah are introduced as side characters in the pericope by Jesus as two

authority figures. While the Pharisees cite the authority of the elders in their accusation,

Jesus instead grounds his rebuttal on the supreme authorities of the author of the Torah

and the great prophet of the pre-exilic time. It is important to note the specific mention of

Isaiah and Moses in Jesus' rebuttal. Of the sixty-nine direct citations or references to the

Hebrew Bible[71] referred to by Mark, only a small fragment clearly identify the Hebrew

Bible author in question. Isaiah is mentioned twice (1:2; 7:6) and Moses is referred to six

times as the author of the Pentateuch, particularly the law (1:44; 7:10; 10:3, 4; 12:19, 26).

Jesus pits the iconic figures of Isaiah and Moses against the nameless and loosely defined

group of elders. The narrative presents this as a comparison of named versus unnamed;

prophets versus elders; the word of God through direct communication (visions for Isaiah

and the Sinai experience for Moses) versus the handed-down transmission. Jesus' reply

presents Isaiah and Moses as active in the history of the Jewish nation with writings that

apply to Jesus' time. Additionally, they are held in high esteem by Jesus and, if the

argument is to have weight, presumably by the religious leaders and the audience.

These two side characters of the narrative are considered authoritative and their

writings condemn the behavior of the religious leaders.

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[71] Rikk E. Watts, "Mark," *Commentary on the New Testament Use of the Old Testament* (ed. G. K. Beale and D. A. Carson; Grand Rapids: Baker, 2007), 111.

Movement

The concept of movement is instrumental to the understanding of this passage. Especially in the final section the reader is dazed by the rapid succession of inside and outside contrasts, pointing to the importance of movement in this narrative. Table 3 displays the indicators of movement throughout the pericope.

The introductory scene immediately opens with movement. In setting the scene and explaining the backdrop, the author surrounds two movements that express outward movement with the circular movement "around." The subsequent first response of Jesus is completely devoid of any indicators of movement, only to pick up movement again forcefully in the brief response of inner purity (v. 15) and its longer explanation (vv. 17–23). The two spatial markers in vv. 14 and 17 pick up the language and direction of the earlier introductory scene.

The pericope begins with the movement of the religious leaders in v. 1 as they gather. This gathering does not move in the typical contrasting pattern of "in" or "out" exemplified throughout the rest of the chapter.[72] The Gospel has already made reference to multiple gatherings (συνάγω) always in the presence of Jesus (2:2; 4:1; 5:21; 6:30; 7:1). Throughout the beginning part of Jesus' ministry the crowds gather around him in various places and once the disciples gather around Jesus (6:30).

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[72] The synoptic comparison in Matthew does not carry the idea of a gathering. Instead the Matthean account opens by stating that the religious leaders approached Jesus (προσέρχομαι, Matt 15:1). This same verb is then repeated when the disciples similarly "approach" Jesus (Matt 15:12).

Table 3. Movement References in Mark 7:1–23

MOVEMENT	MARKER	DIRECTION	VERSE
Scribes and Pharisees gather before Jesus	συνάγω	Around	1
From Jerusalem	ἔρχομαι + ἀπὸ	Outwards	1
From marketplace	ἀπὸ	Outwards	4
Walk/conduct life	περιπατέω	Around	5
Jesus calls to himself	προσκαλέω	Towards	14
Nothing outside enters	ἔξωθεν, εἰσπορεύομαι	Inwards	15
Out of a man exits	ἐκ, ἐκπορεύομαι	Outwards	15
Jesus enters house	εἰσέρχομαι	Inwards	17
From the crowd	ἀπό	Outwards	17
Everything outside entering	ἔξωθεν, εἰσπορεύομαι	Inwards	18
Does not enter heart	οὐκ εἰσπορεύομαι	Inwards	19
Enters pit	ἐκπορεύομαι	Outwards	19
Exits a man	ἐκπορεύομαι	Outwards	20
From inside the heart exits	ἔσωθεν, ἐκπορεύομαι	Outwards	21
All these evils inside exit	ἔσωθεν, ἐκπορεύομαι	Outwards	23

The opening of this chapter is the last reference to συνάγω in the Gospel and is unique among the gatherings. The gathering in 7:1 introduces a conflict story rather than a teaching (4:1) or miracle story (2:2; 5:21), and the group meeting is not a friendly or interested group but an oppositional force. The circular movement "around" of this gathering around Jesus is contrasted in the second part of the pericope with an additional gathering: Jesus calls (προσκαλέω) the crowd to himself. The preposition of the verb adds direction to an otherwise static verb. Contrary to συνάγω, the προσκαλέω meeting is not self-initiated by the group itself. The προσκαλέω is an invitation throughout the Gospel by Jesus[73] to participate in the event itself. The author is careful not to conjure directly in the mind of his audience another threatening gathering by reusing συνάγω but instead emphasizes the invitational aspect of the second gathering by employing a different verb (προσκαλέω). In this he also further demonstrates the shift from Jesus being the object of an involuntary gathering to Jesus being the subject who initiates a gathering based on participation ("hear and do" v. 14) and holy inner motives (vv. 20–23). Verse 14 then picks up the circular movement of v. 1 but reverses its threatening force to prepare for Jesus' own teaching.

The introductory scene closes its frame with a second non-directional movement to complete the frame of the opening section (1–5) of the pericope. The scribes and Pharisees have been portrayed as intentionally and literally gathering around Jesus. The author contrasts this with the disciples who are, according to the scribes and Pharisees, careless in their lifestyle. The use of περιπατέω "to walk" as the idiom for lifestyle,

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[73] Only once is someone other than Jesus the initiator of a προσκαλέω statement. Pilate summons the centurion in 15:44 to inquire whether Jesus has indeed already died.

similar to the Hebrew Bible idiom הלך of which *halakah* is derived, continues Mark's movement theme.[74]

Encased by these non-directional references, the narrator places two movements that are expressed by the preposition ἀπὸ. Contrary to the preposition ἐκ in vv. 15–23, the ἀπὸ expresses movement that distances itself away from a geographic marker, Jerusalem and the marketplace. This preposition ἀπὸ is picked up again in the transitional marker in v. 17. Jesus now moves away (ἀπὸ) from the crowd and enters into the private setting of the house.

The Markan author is especially careful to keep the same words for each setting. The close synonyms of ἔρχομαι and πορεύομαι are distinctly used in different contexts. The usage of ἀπὸ and ἔρχομαι is restricted to the narrative developments while ἔξωθεν/ ἔσωθεν, ἐκ, and πορεύομαι are used in the speeches of Jesus. It is important for the dilemma of v. 19 to realize that the author is keenly aware of his role as narrator in guiding the story along, separately from the sayings of Jesus.

Mark's clear distinction in his use of the directional language becomes especially evident by comparing the Markan pericope to the synoptic parallel in Matt 15.[75] Matthew uses ἔρχομαι and πορεύομαι interchangeably in the passage. The parable

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[74] As early as Gen 17:1 the idiomatical use of "walking" has been used to describe the lifestyle of individuals: God commands Abraham to "*walk* before me and be blameless." The Hebrew equivalent to περιπατέω is הלך used in the hitpael. The accusation of the religious leaders seems to imply that the disciples have at best carelessly—if not intentionally disregarded—treated God's command to "walk before me and be blameless." Jesus counters this accusation. For a discussion on the "nonliteral use of the word" περιπατέω, see "περιπατέω," BDAG, 803.

[75] It is beyond the scope of this study to examine what this comparison posits for the discussion on the Synoptic Problem and whether this supports Markan or Matthean priority. It is sufficient to point out at this stage that Mark displays a nuanced understanding in regard to movement.

contrasts the "entering" (εἰσερχόμενον, Matt 15:11) with the "exiting" (ἐκπορευόμενον, Matt 15:11). In the explanation the "entering" (εἰσπορευόμενον, Matt 15:17) is first contrasted with "exiting" (ἐκπορευόμενα, Matt 15:18) and then followed by "exiting" (ἐξέρχεται/ ἐξέρχονται, Matt 15:18). Additionally, Matthew does not mention the emphatic locational adverbs of ἔξωθεν/ ἔσωθεν in the synoptic pericope although he is aware of them and employs these in the woes against the religious leaders in ch. 23:25, 27, 28.

The final section in Mark 7:1–23 contains Jesus' second response primarily directed to the crowd and the later explanation to the disciples. Language containing movement is pervasive in this section but is limited to the contrasting notions of "in" and "out." The movement is characterized by the prepositions ἐκ and εἰς and the verb πορεύομαι. The uncommon adverbial location markers ἔξωθεν and ἔσωθεν reveal the origin of the movement. After a well-balanced parable that equally addresses the "in" and "out" dichotomy, Jesus answers the disciples in two parts. The first part involves a triple attestation with movement from outside to inside (vv. 18–20) followed in the second part by a triple attestation of movement from the inside to the outside (vv. 21–23). Jesus negates the importance of the first and instead places prominence on the latter.

Mark employs the uncommon adverbs ἔξωθεν and ἔσωθεν to emphasize the inside/outside dichotomy in an emphatic manner. In other synoptic passages Jesus will use the same adverbs of ἔξωθεν and ἔσωθεν to address the hypocricy of the religious leaders. They should cleanse the inside rather than focusing only on the outside of a person (Matt 23:25, 27, 28; Luke 11:39, 40). The common theme of purity is not the only factor that unites these three passages and Mark 7 (ἀκαθαρσία Matt 23:27). In each instance Jesus directs the discussion to the ethical responsibility of a righteous life as

outlined in a negative list of vices in each passage (Matt 23:25, 28; Luke 11:39; Mark 7:21–23). In all of this similarity, though, Mark is the only author who adds an element of movement to these adverbs ἔξωθεν and ἔσωθεν.

The amount of movement language exemplified in this pericope is not surprising. The issue of purity raised by the religious leaders' accusation of the disciples implies the concept of movement. The disciples are accused of violating the rules governing touch impurities. The touch-impurities regulations originate in the book of Leviticus and cover touch contamination through emission, menstruation, or child birth (Lev 12; 15), contact with an animal carcass (Lev 11:8, 11, 24–38) or a corpse (Lev 21:1–4; Num 19), or scaly skin disease (Lev 13–14). These regulations not only cover first-degree contamination, but, more importantly for our context, individuals who directly or indirectly come in contact with an impure individual. This transfer by touch can extend up to four degrees removed from the original source and can be transferred by human touch, touch of an object, or even proximity such as the overhang of a house (Lev 12–15; Num 19).[76]

The Second Temple period saw not only a resurgence of adherence to these purity regulations but an expansion to the extent that the "Tosefta criticizes the Sages for excessive concern for purity."[77] Hannah Harrington argues that during the Second Temple period the rabbis attempted to systemize methodically and quantitatively the incomplete regulations in Leviticus.[78] In this resurgence phase the Pharisees seem to have

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[76] "Impurity can also be transferred by touch, pressure, and overhang. Merely being in a house with certain sources of impurity can render a susceptible item unclean by the overhang of the roof." Harrington, *The Impurity Systems of Qumran and the Rabbis: Biblical Foundations*, 41.

[77] Ibid., 35.

[78] Ibid., 41–42.

attempted to extend the influence of their party by requiring all the Jews to follow their rules in attaining outside the temple precincts the same level of ritual purity as that of a priest while officiating at the temple. That is, while serving in the temple a priest must be free from ritual impurity and must perform ritual washings (ref. in Exod 30 to washing with water from the laver before entering the sanctuary or officiating at the outside altar).[79]

In the context of this pericope the ἀγορά was a place of possible contagious touch transferal. Because an individual could not be certain that all others present had followed the strict washing regulations, the individual could be unintentionally defiled. The "pagans are metaphorically labeled unclean because of their association with idols" therefore "gentiles were considered ritually unclean."[80]

With all this language of motion Jesus is explicitly addressing the implicit premise of the religious leaders on which they base their accusation (v. 5): Defilement moves from outside to inside. Jesus' second response (vv. 14–23) is therefore a very appropriate rejoinder to the conflict question in v. 5. The first response (vv. 6–13) counters the accusatory tone of the religious leaders and places the tradition of the elders in direct opposition to the law of God. The second response of Jesus (vv. 14–23) addresses the content of the original question, namely defilement. Jesus positions himself

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[79] "The Pharisees sought to convince other Jews to adhere to their new standards of strictness." Boyarin, *The Jewish Gospels: The Story of the Jewish Christ*, 115, 126. Cf. Jacob Neusner, *From Politics to Piety: The Emergence of Pharasaic Judaism* (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall, 1973).

[80] Harrington, *The Impurity Systems of Qumran and the Rabbis: Biblical Foundations*, 39–40.

in relation to touch impurities and thereby switches from a conflict event to a teaching moment for the crowds and the disciples.

In summary, the second discourse is filled with movement language. Jesus uses this movement language to teach his audience about defilement and to counter the implicit understanding of the religious leaders.

CHAPTER 3

NARRATIVE STUDY OF MARK 7:1–23: TEMPORAL MARKERS

Introduction

The pericope does not make mention of specific temporal markers such as hours

of the day or time spans. There are some obvious temporal dependents, such as the ritual

washing after returning from the marketplace, but the text makes no absolute temporal

references.[1] Instead, the subtleties of analepsis/prolepsis as well as the tenses of verbs are

employed in the narrative to convey a structure and underline the theme of authority and

defilement in the pericope.

Analepsis/Prolepsis

Analepsis and prolepsis indicate temporal shifts in the narrative flow, looking

back and looking ahead from the story time perspective respectively. Mark employs this

technique abundantly in other passages[2] and also in 7:1–23. There are a total of five

analepses and two prolepses (see table 4).

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[1] Malbon points out the importance of temporal markers in the first and last chapters of the Gospel with different but important implications. Malbon, "Narrative Criticism: How Does the Story Mean?," 31–32.

[2] Ibid., 29–30.

Table 4. Temporal Shifts in Mark 7:1–23

TEXT	KIND	RANGE	VERSE
ἃ παρέλαβον κρατεῖν which they received to hold	Analepsis	Midrange	4
ἐπροφήτευσεν Ἠσαΐας Isaiah prophesied	Analepsis	Long range	6
ἀφέντες τὴν ἐντολὴν τοῦ θεοῦ having left the commandment of God	Analepsis	Short range	8
Μωϋσῆς γὰρ εἶπεν For Moses said	Analepsis	Long range	10
τίμα τὸν πατέρα σου καὶ τὴν μητέρα σου Honor your father and your mother	Prolepsis	Long range	10
ἣ παρεδώκατε which you have handed down	Analepsis	Short range	13
ἀκούσατέ μου πάντες καὶ σύνετε Hear me, all, and understand	Prolepsis	Short range	14

The five analepses accentuate the tension between the religious leaders and the

prophets Isaiah and Moses. The religious leaders received the tradition (v. 4), reject the

command of God (v. 8), and finally pass on this tradition (v. 13). In contrast to the

religious leaders two analepses contrast the previous analepses: Isaiah prophesied (v. 6)

and Moses spoke (v. 10). These five analepses follow a two-fold pattern: First, they

follow a parallel structure and can be rendered as

> A   "which they received to hold"
> > B   "Isaiah prophesied"
>
> A'   "having left the commandment of God"
> > B'   "Moses said"
>
> A" "which you handed down"

The actions of the religious leaders are pitted against the prophets of the Hebrew Bible.

The chiastic center (A') demonstrates forcefully that the traditions and the

commandments of God cannot stand side by side. Accepting traditions means rejecting

God's commandment. The outside elements (A–A") focus on the transmission of the tradition. The current generation of religious leaders is the recipient of the transmission in A but also the ones transmitting to the next generation in A". The religious leaders thus continue the cycle of the transmission into the next generations.

Secondly, the increase in intensity in the conflict is demonstrated by a rise in contrast between the two sets of analepses. The contrast between the A and B sets can be expressed in their ranges. In A, Mark looks back several generations of religious leaders amounting to several decades or a couple of centuries (midrange). This is contrasted in B by a longer range: The Hebrew Bible prophet Isaiah reaches back beyond the establishment of any tradition. Subsequently, in the next pair the gap between A' and B' is enlarged. The culprits in A' are now the current religious leaders (short range). The reach in B' goes beyond Isaiah in Israel's history to Moses. The two contrasting pairs close when the religious leaders commit to perpetuate this cycle (A'').

The author employs these analepses in the first section of the pericope (vv. 1–13) to characterize the conflict from Jesus' perspective. Jesus' first response takes issue with this tradition of the elders (vv. 6–13). The narrative counteracts the religious leaders' attack forcefully: First, as has been stated earlier, Jesus contrasts the nebulous group of elders with the concrete persons of Isaiah and Moses. Second, Jesus employs the authority of these two individuals to counter the claim of authority that the religious leaders leveled against Jesus. Third, Jesus uses the exact words of Isaiah and Moses in direct citations rather than the loose statements of handed-down traditions. Finally and more important for this section, Jesus uses two increasingly far-reaching analepses to counter the current practice of the ritual hand washing.

The Matthean parallel employs a different order than the Markan account, citing Exodus (Exod 20:12) first before the prophet Isaiah (Matt 15:3, 7).[3] The Matthean account does not mention the person of Moses, instead referring to the quotation from the Decalogue as the "commandment of God" (15:3). The juxtaposition between human tradition and the law of God is forceful and immediate in Matthew. The Markan account on the other hand slowly builds momentum throughout the response, climaxing in the final pronouncement that "thus making void the law of God by your tradition that you have handed down" (v. 13). This is supported by the two analepses that increase in their reach. The Isaiah citation reaches back several centuries while the reference to the Decalogue reaches back even further. Additionally, both sets of analepses are external in nature. They reach outside of the encounter of Mark 7 itself and build primarily on the authoritative voice of the Hebrew Bible but also the authoritative history.

The two prolepses in the passage point from their origin to a future application. The fifth commandment, cited in v. 10, was written proleptically to include not just the Israelites but as the "word of God" every generation after that. Similarly, Jesus calls the crowds proleptically "to listen and understand" (v. 14) and proceeds to teach the parable of v. 15. Jesus' primary intention is that the immediate crowd including the disciples discern the parable.[4] The narrator extends the immediate audience to include the readers as part of the audience. He indicates this not only by transmitting the story in his Gospel

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[3] It is not within the scope of this study to examine the extent of synoptic dependence or synoptic priority. The comparison of the Markan narrative to the Matthean narrative is intended to show only the different development of the same themes in both pericopes.

[4] The disciples, though not specifically mentioned in v. 14, are expected to understand the parable as well as the contrast of "understand!" (σύνετε, v. 14) and "don't you understand?" (ὑμεῖς ἀσύνετοί ἐστε;, v. 18) clearly implies.

as part of the *kerygma* of Jesus but also how he uses it within the passage: First, the narrator places the prolepsis of Jesus as a parallel to the prolepsis of Moses. The teaching of Jesus functions proleptically like the "word of God" in Exodus. Secondly, the author considers the teaching to be applicable to the Christian community by summarizing the parable in the narrative aside of v. 19. Thus, the narrator considers it important to the teaching of Jesus that the short-range prolepsis in v. 14 has a long-range application. The parable then is to be understood not only for the immediate crowd, the proleptic nature of Jesus' statement invites all listeners to understand the parable. The two prolepses in the passage employ long-range prolepses that reach outside of the narrative unit. The narrator uses these to underline the message of the pericope: Jesus and Moses have meaningful and enduring words while the tradition of the elders is restricted to analepses.

In summary, the significance of temporal jumps (analapses/prolepses) in this narrative unit further strengthens the authoritative nature of Jesus' initial response. The analepses present the two opposing positions in a contrasting and intensifying arrangement. The prolepses solve the authority question by showing the continued validity of the "word of God" through Moses' and Jesus' words.

Verb Tenses

In narrative studies examinations of verb tenses have usually been limited to discussions on the temporal development of the pericope. They have not been treated independently. Recent studies advocating a non-temporal view of tenses and instead promoting an aspect-driven approach and more moderate studies advocating a contextual approach, allowing for both temporal and aspect nature in tense, give reason to reevaluate this viewpoint.

In addition, Mark in particular has a unique use of tenses in the New Testament

corpus. Mark employs verb tenses as a means to unite the passage and emphasize the

central message of the pericope. At first this might be surprising as Mark uses very

common verbs, but Mark is no stranger to employing tenses for his purposes as a story-

teller. The use of the historical present in the Gospel of Mark is well documented[5] and

serves as an example that Mark will at times place higher value on the narrative force of

an indicative verb than its strict temporal nature or its aspect. It is the contention of this

study that Mark expertly uses verb tenses in the narrative unit of Mark 7:1–23: First, the

verb tenses function not only to express actions at certain times, as tenses in this passage

often transcend their temporal boundaries, but more importantly they are strategically

placed as a narrative technique to aid the storytelling. Secondly, the speech introductions

in particular develop the theme of authority. In his words and actions Jesus continues the

line of authority of the prophets. Significantly, Jesus continues the line of Moses and the

law; he does not stand in contrast to it. Finally, Mark's pattern of verb tenses is not

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[5] The historical present and its particular use in the Gospel of Mark is mentioned in good grammars and most commentaries. F. Blass and A. Debrunner, *A Greek Grammar of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature* (trans. Robert Funk; Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1961), 167; A. T. Robertson, *A Grammar of the Greek New Testament in the Light of Historical Research* (Nashville, Tenn.: Broadman, 1934), 866–869; James A. Brooks and Carlton L. Winbery, *Syntax of New Testament Greek* (Lanham, Md.: University Press of America, 1979), 87–88; Wesley J. Perschbacher, *New Testament Greek Syntax* (Chicago: Moody, 1995), 282–283; Wallace, *Greek Grammar Beyond the Basics: An Exegetical Syntax of the New Testament*, 527–530; Voelz, *Mark 1:1–8:26*, 14–16; France, *The Gospel of Mark: A Commentary on the Greek Text*, 16–17. For independent works on the topic see Stanley E. Porter, *Verbal Aspect in the Greek New Testament: With Reference to Tense and Mood* (New York: Peter Lang, 1989); Stephen E. Runge, "The Verbal Aspect of the Historical Present Indicative in Narrative," in *Discourse Studies and Biblical Interpretation: A Festschrift in Honor of Stephen H. Levinsohn* (ed. Stephen E. Runge; Bellingham, Wash.: Logos Bible Software, 2011), 191–224.

limited to the first section (7:1–14) but carries on in the second section (7:15–23). The verb tenses further unite the two parts into a complete narrative.

Historical Development of Tense and Aspect

A short overview of the historical development of temporal and aspect nature of tenses is necessary before applying these principles to the pericope of Mark 7:1–23.

The linguistic discussion of the nature of tenses, especially the indicative tenses, gained renewed interest[6] at the end of the last century.[7] The present study cannot engage in the debate over the intricacies of the various theories promoted by the linguists. But at the risk of oversimplification, suffice it to say that Stanley Porter and Kenneth McKay argue that verb tenses carry only the concept of aspect and therefore no reference to time while Buist Fanning and Daniel Wallace consider both aspect and time to be imbedded in the verb tense in varying degrees dependent on the context. "The unaffected meaning of the tenses in the indicative involves both aspect and time. However, either one of these can be suppressed by lexemic, contextual, or grammatical intrusions."[8]

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[6] For an overview and discussion of earlier works, especially 19th-century grammarians, see Buist M. Fanning, *Verbal Aspect in New Testament Greek* (Oxford Theological Monographs; Oxford: Clarendon, 1990).

[7] See Porter, *Verbal Aspect in the Greek New Testament: With Reference to Tense and Mood*; Fanning, *Verbal Aspect in New Testament Greek*; Kenneth L. Mckay, *A New Syntax of the Verb in New Testament Greek: An Aspectual Approach* (New York: Peter Lang, 1994); Wallace, *Greek Grammar Beyond the Basics: An Exegetical Syntax of the New Testament*.

[8] Wallace, *Greek Grammar Beyond the Basics: An Exegetical Syntax of the New Testament*, 511. "Although an author may use a tense in the indicative, the time indicated by that tense may be other than or broader than the real time of the event. All such examples belong to phenomenological categories. As such, there will normally be sufficient clues (context, genre, lexeme, other grammatical features) to signal the temporal suppression." Ibid. 498.

For the purpose of this study it is sufficient to note that the proponents of the

temporal nature of tenses and of the lack thereof can agree upon the fact that tenses can at

times be employed by a writer to transmit to the audience a deeper or additional meaning

beyond the temporal nature of a given tense.

Mark has become a prime example of broadening or replacing the actual temporal

nature of the tense. Two examples, both embedded in the narrative style of the Gospel,

illustrate this: First, the frequent use of the historical present and secondly, the extensive

use of the imperfect.

The historical present has traditionally divided grammarians into the "zero tense"[9]

and the "zero aspect" groups. The argument for "zero tense" looks at the historical

present as a tense among a series of different past tenses (usually aorist). The historical

present then follows in a series of earlier past tenses by a coordinated syntactical

structure. In this "conjunction reduction"[10] the temporal element of the historical present

is completely abandoned (the action of the verb does not literally happen in the present)

and instead assumes the tense of the context (usually an aorist). On the other hand others

have argued against this theory and assumed a "zero aspect" position.[11] They contend that

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[9] Paul Kiparsky, "Tense and Mood in Indo-European Syntax," *Foundations of Language* 4, no. 1 (1968): 30–57. Rodemeyer uses examples of the future tense followed by a historical present to illustrate that the historical present continues the previous tense but without reference to duration. Karl Theodor Rodemeyer, *Das Präsens Historicum bei Herodot und Thukydides* (Basel: Werner Riehm, 1889). See also Harald Weinreich, *Tempus: Besprochene und erzählte Welt* (Stuttgart, Germany: W. Kohlhammer, 1964); Saul Levin, "Remarks on the 'Historical' Present and Comparable Phenomena of Syntax," *Foundations of Language* 5 (1969): 386–390; Stephen M. Reynolds, "The Zero Tense in Greek: A Critical Note," *WTJ l* 33 (1969): 68–72; Carroll D. Osburn, "The Hsitorical Present in Mark as a Text Critical Criterion," *Bib* 64 (1983): 486–500.

[10] Kiparsky, "Tense and Mood in Indo-European Syntax," 33–34.

[11] Fanning, *Verbal Aspect in New Testament Greek*; Wallace, *Greek Grammar Beyond the Basics: An Exegetical Syntax of the New Testament*; Werner Thomas,

historical present tenses often follow a string of different past tenses and sometimes are the only tense in a passage. In either case the present tense would not be "zero tense." Instead the historical present seems to carry the idea of summarizing the action much like the aorist, albeit in a vivid and dramatic sense. In this view then the aspect of the present is nullified.

In recent years several new theories have been advocated. Stanley Porter has argued along with the "zero tense" grammarians but has emphasized the background-foreground characteristic of the historical present. According to Porter, the historical present breaks the spatial pattern of a narrative and moves the action from the background to the foreground.[12] Steven Runge has challenged the classical "zero tense" and "zero aspect" factions by arguing that the historical present does not follow the typical behavior of the present tense and the historical present should therefore be assessed based on the local narrative context rather than a global (intra-language and inter-language) and general understanding. This "discourse processing hierarchy" examines the tense in three stages: First it assesses the relevance of the tense beginning at the semantic level. Secondly, this method progresses to the "processing function"—adding prominence to discontinuity. Finally, it concludes with a "discourse-pragmatic function"—adding unique meaning to the tense in its specific and individual narrative context.[13]

Historisches Präsens oder Kunjunktionsreducktion? Zum Problem des Tempuswechsels in der Erzählung (Wiesbaden, Germany: Franz Steiner, 1974).

[12] Porter, *Verbal Aspect in the Greek New Testament: With Reference to Tense and Mood*.

[13] Runge, "The Verbal Aspect of the Historical Present Indicative in Narrative."

The above views, with the exception of Runge's view, attempt to assess the tense in the broad scope of all of Greek language to find a unifying principle or usage of the tense across time, genre, and at times within the larger framework of language families. This, though, might not always adequately account for the peculiar usage an individual author might employ. The specific study of the historical present in the Gospel of Mark has brought the proponents of various theories together. Proponents of both groups allow for the historical present to have a function in the text beyond the temporal or aspectual nature. Fanning, a "zero aspect" proponent, asserts that "occurrences of the historical present display a clear pattern of discourse-structuring functions, such as to highlight the beginning of a paragraph, to introduce new participants into an existing paragraph, to show participants moving to new locations, or to portray key events in lively fashion."[14] Mark then uses the historical present not just as a rhetorical device to convey the vividness of the scene but to shape and give meaning to the narrative itself. For Fanning this use of the historical present does not include speech introductions like λέγει.

In regard to the speech introductions in Mark, Fanning asserts that these are exceptions to the rule of discourse-structuring functions because of a "stereotyped use."[15] But Stephen Levinsohn has argued contrary to this by observing that the historical

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[14] Fanning, *Verbal Aspect in New Testament Greek*, 232. Fanning expands on Buth's original work and lists four specific usages: "1. to begin a paragraph . . . 2. to introduce new participants in an existing paragraph or setting . . . 3. to show participants moving to new directions within a paragraph . . . 4. to begin a *specific* unit after a sentence introducing the *general* section in which it falls." Ibid. S. Randall Buth, "Mark's Use of the Historical Present," *Notes on Translation* 65 (1977): 7–13; Ralph Enos, "The Use of the Historical Present in the Gospel Accoridng to St. Mark," *Journal of the Linguistic Association of the Southwest* 3 (1981): 281–298.

[15] Fanning, *Verbal Aspect in New Testament Greek*, 233.

present points to the "direction" the following action or speech will take.[16] This erases the distinction Fanning first suggested between the historical present tense in a narrative setting and a speech introduction.

The discourse-pragmatic approach, advocated by Runge, concurs that the historical present can function in the above-mentioned ways, but would expand the range of possible meanings to fit the semantic necessity. This is based on a different approach to the historical present. First, since he considers the historical present to be "a direct result of the marked departure from expected usage,"[17] he therefore treats it as an irregular usage of the present tense and argues that the semantic context determines the meaning. As such Mark is then evaluated against his own corpus, rather than attempting to make a categorical statement for all Greek genres and time periods. Secondly, contrary to Fanning, Runge follows Levinsohn by not dividing the historical present into two distinct categories (narrative versus speech introduction or "stereotypical" historical presents).

To summarize, linguists have struggled in the past and at present with making sense of the oftentimes perplexing use of tenses in the Greek language. Particularly the narrative genre and specifically the Gospel of Mark have caused differing interpretations in respect to the nuances of tenses. But most would agree today that Mark deliberately uses tenses as a device to add meaning to the narrative account, whether it be directional, spatial, or even more specific to the individual pericope. In this, scholarship has generally

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[16] Stephen H. Levinsohn, "Preliminary Observations on the Use of the Historical Present in Mark," *Notes on Translation* 65 (1977): 13–28.

[17] Runge, "The Verbal Aspect of the Historical Present Indicative in Narrative," 208.

moved away from considering Mark's use of language as "vulgar" and instead has moved to a meaningful use of language in Mark.[18] In recent years even the problematic occurrences of historical present indicatives in speech introductions have been shown to be employed purposefully rather than haphazardly.

Mark 7:1–23

Mark's use of tenses in Mark 7:1–23 follows some of the patterns of his narrative style throughout the Gospel but also presents some challenges. First, the main tense of the narrative is the present rather than the aorist. This results in several additional observations: The historical presents are not embedded in a string of aorists. Instead the aorist indicative verbs are most commonly found in subordinate clauses. Second, speech introductions are rendered in three different tenses (aorist, imperfect, and historical present). Mark generally prefers to introduce speeches in a pericope by at most two different tenses. The use of tenses in the narrative and particularly in speech introductions will be examined in turn.[19]

This section will demonstrate that Mark's use of tenses in Mark 7:1–23 showcases a well-crafted narrative unit. This is evident in the manner in which Mark employs tenses to underline the theme of authority, unite the two responses, separate asides from story line and dialogue, establish a structure, and develop a universal ethical theme. Mark

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[18] Ibid., 192.

[19] The examination of the narrative (story line, narrative asides, and speeches) apart from the speech introductions and vice versa is to some extent arbitrary and should not be perceived as following the model of Fanning. The speeches and their respective introductions are indeed part of the narrative (and in this pericope the largest section) and cannot be divorced from their context. The sole reason for this artificial separation is to explore the two observations listed above in their respective contexts and analyze the uniqueness of these introductory formulas in this pericope.

accomplishes this by specifically employing tenses based on the parameter he wants to establish.

Narrative Tense

Present tense

In this pericope the flow of the story is developed in the present indicative tense. The discourses within the story are introduced by a variety of tenses (see table 5).

Table 5. Distribution of Indicative Verb Tenses

TENSE	NUMBER OF USES	CATEGORY IN WHICH IT IS USED
Present	29	Story time, narrative asides, direct speech, speech introductions
Imperfect	4	Speech introductions
Aorist	6	Narrative aside, speech introduction
Perfect	1	Direct speech

As can be seen from table 5, the present tense is the dominant and most versatile tense of the passage. It progresses the story time (vv. 1, 2, 5, 18), describes the practices of the day in narrative asides (vv. 3, 4, 11), is used as the main tense within discourse (vv. 5–9, 12–13, 15, 18–21, 23) and introduces speeches twice (vv. 11, 15).

In each of these usages the present tense takes on a slightly different force: In the story time the present tense is best viewed as a historical present. The narrative asides explain the Jewish religio-cultural context and therefore clearly refer to a general

practice. It is best identified as a habitual present.[20] In the direct speech of the first

discourse (7:1–13) the present tense is employed mainly to describe the practices and

attitudes of the religious leaders, and therefore the references should be best rendered as

progressive presents.[21] In the second discourse and its explanation (7:14–23) Jesus moves

from the immediate setting to the universal or a timeless application. The present tenses

are used in the context of the parable and the subsequent ethical teaching and achieve a

timeless dimension. The gnomic present[22] best transmits this meaning.

The present tense encompasses the entire pericope. It opens the pericope with a

historical present and closes it with a gnomic present (vv. 1, 23). Throughout the passage

the author uses various usages of the present to structure and unite the passage. They will

be discussed in turn below.

Historical present

The present tense indicative verbs serve as a guide through this pericope. In this

passage it is the tense of the story line. The story begins with the gathering (συνάγονται,

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[20] In this and the subsequent categorization of tenses I am following Wallace's terminology. The habitual present is "an action that *regularly occurs* or an *ongoing state*." Wallace, *Greek Grammar Beyond the Basics: An Exegetical Syntax of the New Testament*, 521.

[21] The progressive present is "used to describe a scene in progress, especially in narrative literature" and "normally involves *continuous* action." Ibid., 518.
Jesus views the three present indicative verbs spoken by Isaiah (vv. 6–7) as having relevance in the present situation. These words accurately describe the current situation according to Jesus though they were spoken and written centuries prior. From Isaiah's point of view one could argue for a futuristic present. Nonetheless the stress is on the current situation Jesus is addressing. The point of view remains with Jesus. The progressive present best expresses this.

[22] The gnomic present is "used to make a statement of a general, timeless fact. "It does not say that something *is* happening, but that something *does* happen." The action or state continues without time limits. The verb is used "in proverbial statements or general maxims about what occurs at *all* times." Ibid., 523.

v. 1) and the observation that some of the disciples eat (ἐσθίουσιν, v. 2) with unclean hands.[23] This leads to the present tense question of the scribes and Pharisees (ἐπερωτῶσιν, v. 5). These main developments lead to a debate with various speech introductions in aorist, imperfect, and present tenses. The actual story line is picked up again in verse 14 and 17 when Jesus first expands his audience to include the people and later retreats with his disciples to a private location.

As part of the story time flow, even the lead-in to the story, the Pharisees and some of the scribes gathering (v. 1), is rendered in the present indicative. This is unusual since narratives typically begin with an external aspect verbal form (aorist) and move to an internal aspect verbal form (present or imperfect) following a focalization pattern. Instead, this pericope immediately places the reader at the scene of the conflict. Similarly, the passage concludes abruptly without a defocalization as the present tense concludes the pericope (v. 23).

Aorist participles and subjunctives in this story flow are used to express temporal relationships, indicating recent prior action upon which the action of the present indicative tense is contingent.[24] The aorist infinitive functions in a similar temporal

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[23] The observation that the disciples ate (ἐσθίουσιν) with unwashed hands (v. 2) could be rendered with a habitual present ("the disciples always ate . . .") but the author is not concerned about the frequency of this behavior. It certainly stands to reason that some of the disciples would have regularly engaged in this behavior, but the passage itself does not convey this. Additionally, Mark has already illustrated that a single transgression of food *halakhah* warrants a conflict with Jesus (Mark 2:23). The force of the passage is the expansion of a historical event (portrayed simply as *an* event) that Jesus uses to pronounce a universal or gnomic truth.

[24] As examples of this, observe v. 3 "ἐὰν μὴ πυγμῇ *νίψωνται* τὰς χεῖρας οὐκ ἐσθίουσιν" or v. 4 "ἐὰν μὴ *βαπτίσωνται* οὐκ ἐσθίουσιν."

manner to the aorist participles and subjunctives. But instead of expressing prior action, the infinitive looks to future actions, or the absence thereof.[25]

Progressive present

By definition the progressive present relates continuous action in the present. In this pericope the narrator, who predominantly uses the historical present, does not employ the progressive present. Primarily it is used in direct speeches when characters in the pericope evaluate other characters. Three such evaluative statements are made in the pericope. A secondary and minor use is to define terminology. The three primary usages are: First, the scribes and Pharisees describe the behavior of the disciples (they do not "walk" . . . because they eat . . . , v. 5). This accusation extends beyond the observable facts (v. 2) by generically stating that the collective group of the disciples, because of the singular transgression of some of the disciples, does not "walk" (περιπατοῦσιν) according to the traditions (v. 5).

Second, Jesus extensively details the behavior of the religious leaders (they honor . . . their heart is far . . . they worship . . . you hold . . . you reject . . . you say . . . you keep . . . you handed down[26] . . . you do,[27] vv. 6–13). In direct response to the scribes and

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[25] As example of this observe verse 18 "οὐδέν ἐστιν ἔξωθεν τοῦ ἀνθρώπου εἰσπορευόμενον εἰς αὐτὸν ὃ δύναται κοινῶσαι αὐτόν."

[26] This aorist seems to defy the list of present tenses listed here as it is the only aorist in a list of nine verbs describing the actions and behavior of the religious leaders. But this seemingly anomaly is in fact a crucial argument for the purposeful use of the tenses. The author switches to the aorist only in this list when it overlaps with the general theme of the passage, in this case the theme of authority as represented by the aorist. In every reference to authoritative teaching, such as handing down the traditions, or the prophetic utterance of the Hebrew Bible prophets, the aorist is used regardless of the temporal shift it might initiate under a classical understanding of the temporal and aspect nature of tenses. The emphasis in this list then is not on a temporal shift (the various actions all imply some past, present, and continued action) but a shift in meaning. Therefore for the author the meaning associated with a tense overrides the temporal

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Pharisees, Jesus employs a citation from the Hebrew Bible to describe the attitudes of the

religious leaders (v. 6). This immediate response to the previous rebuke in v. 5 balances

the scales in the narrative. The accusers have now been accused themselves. Additionally

the internal parallel of the Isaiah quotation places the observable behavior of lip service

(τοῖς χείλεσίν με τιμᾷ, v. 6) and worship (μάτην δὲ σέβονταί με, v. 7) against the internal

attitude, the distant heart (ἡ δὲ καρδία αὐτῶν πόρρω ἀπέχει ἀπ᾽ ἐμοῦ, v. 6).

A   Observed Behavior: "They honor me with lips" (τοῖς χείλεσίν με τιμᾷ, v. 6)
    B   Internal Attitude: "but their heart is far from me" (ἡ δὲ καρδία αὐτῶν
            πόρρω ἀπέχει ἀπ᾽ ἐμοῦ, v. 6)
A' Observed Behavior: "They worship me in vain" (μάτην δὲ σέβονταί με, v. 7)
    B'   External Result: "teaching as doctrine the commandments of men"
            (διδάσκοντες διδασκαλίας ἐντάλματα ἀνθρώπων, v. 7)

This exemplifies the contrast to the disciples who are presumed to be internally close to

Jesus, since they follow Jesus, but seem to be deficient in following outward regulations.

Third, Jesus directs his attention to the state of being of the disciples: "Then are

(ἐστε) you also without understanding? Do you not understand (νοεῖτε) . . . ?" (v. 18).

This rebuke by Jesus is a temporary assessment of their current understanding and is not

to be understood as gnomic, otherwise the following explanation (vv. 18–23) would be

futile. In contrast to the religious leaders the disciples lack understanding of the issues but

according to Jesus are not acting in disagreement to the kingdom of God. The religious

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aspect of tense. See the subsequent section on the aorist for further discussion.

[27] The final element in this list ("many such things you do," v. 13) stretches the
list beyond those behavioral observations mentioned in the pericope but to many similar
issues. Similarly it stretches the temporal nature of the progressive present and seems to
extend itself to a habitual present. This extension is hard to place into categories. In
Wallace's categories the instantaneous, progressive, habitual, and gnomic present tense
categories gradually increase their scope of time by covering the temporal spectrum from
immediate (punctiliar) to timeless respectively. The final element of "you do" with its
broadening usage moves further along the continuum. The difference here, whether this is
a progressive or a habitual present, is more of a semantic nature than a textual one.

leaders on the other hand seem to have understanding, as they have developed intricate

arguments to justify their behavior as can be seen in the *qorban* example, but are in fact

clearly acting against the kingdom of God. The multitude of actions of the religious

leaders and the singular action they accuse the disciples of demonstrate the disparity

between the two groups. The nine offenses of the religious leaders against the Hebrew

Bible, and by implication the kingdom of God, stand in contrast to the one transgression

against the tradition of the elders committed by "some of the disciples." Jesus' forceful

counteraction puts this relationship into the proper perspective.

On a smaller note, the progressive present is also used with a stative verb in three

subclauses to define terminology unfamiliar to the audience (vv. 2, 4, 11). Contrary to the

narrative aside[28] of vv. 3 and 4 it describes only an abstract term with the progressive

present rather than a habitual behavior of individuals, as will be observed below.

In summary, the progressive present is primarily used in speeches to describe

behavior of a group of individuals. The longest of these descriptions is Jesus' portrayal of

the religious leaders. The singular aorist tenses (v. 13) surrounded by eight present tenses

in this setting are not indicative of a temporal shift but instead signal the conflict over

authority.

Habitual present

The habitual present is employed in two sections describing the customary

practices of the religious leaders and Jews at the time. It is once used in the narrative

aside of vv. 3 and 4 and the second time at the end of Jesus' first response. Jesus there

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[28] The term "narrative aside" is a technical term used in narrative criticism to describe a parenthetical explanatory phrase. See chapter 1 for a clarification of terminology.

critically describes the practices of the religious leaders. In both instances in which the habitual present is used it is used to underline the distance between the traditions of men and the commandments of God.

In the narrative aside of vv. 3 and 4 Mark describes the current practices of the Pharisees and "all Jews" to his audience. In the semantic-cultural context this pattern of life can be best understood as a customary or habitual present. This habit is in contrast to the previous statement of the Pharisees observing the disciples eating with unwashed hands. As has already been noted, v. 2 does not give any indication that the disciples regularly abstained from washing hands (though it also cannot be excluded). Multiple reasons for such a neglect could exist such as the lack of sufficient water at the location,[29] the possibility of improperly following the ritual, or indeed the complete lack of commitment to perform the ritual. In light of the lack of clarification and additionally the observation that all other present tenses in the main story flow should be best identified as historical presents, it is best to treat the disciples eating (ἐσθίουσιν) with unwashed hands as a historical present with a constative force.

The narrative aside with its clear customary references intensifies the previous ambiguous statement in two ways. First, the intensification is displayed in number. What "some" disciples do not do is contrasted by what the "Pharisees and all Jews" do. Secondly, the escalation is presented in tense classification. What the disciples did

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[29] In the previous conflict story of Mark 2:23–28 the disciples ate while walking through the fields. If this is a similar situation and they were removed from a water source, an oversight might have limited their access to water. Such an oversight might be less surprising considering that in Jesus' presence crowds forgot to take (sufficient) nourishment along (Mark 6:34, 35; 8:1–4).

(historical present) is contrasted by what has continually happened (progressive present) since the tradition of the elders was handed down (vv. 4, 5).

Jesus concludes his first speech by exposing the current practices of the religious leaders. In the narrative aside of vv. 3 and 4 Mark explains to his audience the general customs of Jewish culture. In vv. 12 and 13 Jesus brings to light a lesser known practice of the day as an example of the many other things that the religious leaders do. The expansion to the "many such things you do" (v. 13) indicates the exemplary rather than the exhaustive function that Jesus intends with the mention of the *qorban* ruling. The religious leaders' attempt to discover a single transgression among the disciples is answered with the revelation of a multiplicity of transgressions subsumed under the heading of "tradition of man above the commandment of God."

Gnomic present

In the final speech of Jesus, the riddle and its explanation (but not the narrative aside of v. 19), Jesus transcends the local and specific setting and issues a universal statement. In the traditional interpretation this has been understood as redefining the Hebrew Bible regulations and ushering in a new era.[30] In this model the passage is generally understood as having universal implications beginning with this Jesus logion. In the newer interpretative models, the saying of Jesus does not stand in contrast to Hebrew Bible regulations and the teaching therefore is reflective of the view of the

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[30] For example see Voelz's comments on v. 19: "The Law of Moses has reached its fulfillment and come to an end in Christ." Voelz even goes further by attributing to the defilement (κοινός) a state in which the individual is "in jeopardy of not inheriting the reign and rule of God." Voelz, *Mark 1:1–8:26*.

Hebrew Bible.[31] In this perspective, the passage is a universal teaching reaching

backwards and forwards in time.

For a number of reasons the later view is closer to the intention of the author:

First, the entire pericope is closely interconnected, and a disregard for the laws of the

Hebrew Bible in the second speech would directly contradict Jesus' argument of the first

speech.[32] Second, the speech of Jesus itself, leaving aside for now the narrative

explanation of v. 19, is not in contradiction to any Hebrew Bible regulations. In fact, the

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[31] See as an example Kazen who summarizes: "The most convincing explanations, however, place the saying in a context *not* of clean and unclean foods (in the sense of Lev 11:1–23), but of ritual hand-washing." Kazen, *Jesus and Purity Halakhah: Was Jesus Indifferent to Impurity?*, 65.

[32] Voelz attempts to reconcile the abrogation of the food laws with a retention of the Ten Commandments and is representative of many commentaries that struggle with the implications of an anti-nomistic view.

To justify his view of the food law abrogation he first attempts to establish that Jesus "*does not establish the Ten Commandments as, e.g., 'what should really be obeyed.'*" Since Jesus "is the bringer of the eschatological reign and rule of God . . . *it is not a time of law and regulations but a time of relationships*–a time when the people will not need to be instructed." For Voelz, Jesus' ministry ushers in the complete abandonment of the Mosaic Law. In the following section, Voelz then retreats from the radical claims. "Does Jesus' abrogation of the Mosaic Law suggest that believers can now . . . do whatever they wish . . . ? The theology articulated in the foregoing paragraphs can and should in no way be understood to support such a conclusion; neither does anything in the Gospel of Mark." Instead, he argues Jesus "in no way 'loosens' standards for conduct of believers. Instead, he actually tightens such standards." The ethical conclusion of 7:20–23 actually enforces the Law of Moses. Voelz concludes with a dichotomy between the old "surface" covenant and the new covenant, which is "*faith/believing*, as opposed to overtly *doing* the Law."

This abrogation of law but intensification of the law conflict extends to his understanding of the covenant as well. On the one hand the new covenant is not about "doing," but on the other hand it is about "conduct." Additionally, to consider the old covenant as represented in the Hebrew Bible to be a "surface" treaty focused merely on "doing" without the element of faith does not do justice to the evidence of the Hebrew Bible. Equally so, the Christian experience in the new covenant of "faith" cannot be reduced to a "relationship" without "overtly doing the Law."

Voelz's argumentation reads an Evangelical view of Pauline theology into the Markan pericope by primarily basing the section on a selection of Pauline passages. Voelz, *Mark 1:1–8:26*, 469–474.

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relevance of the "heart" as representative of concept of "coming from within" in matters of the law is clearly a Deuteronomistic view (Deut 5:29; 6:5, 6). Jesus is thus expounding on Deut 6 more than issuing a completely new decree. Third, as has been demonstrated above, the pericope initiates Jesus' expansion from the Galilean ministry to the Gentile ministry. Even this is not a novel concept that contradicts the ideology of the Hebrew Bible. Especially the prophet Isaiah, quoted in this pericope, includes the nations as part of "my people" (Isa 19:25; cf. 45:20–25). In conclusion, Jesus does not initiate something radically new or contrary to the Hebrew Bible. Instead Jesus expounds on Hebrew Bible virtues and the gnomic present best represents a backward and forward universal statement from the perspective of the narrative.

In summary, the present tense with its far-reaching interpretive span is the main tense in the passage. This is unusual as aorists typically dominate narrative accounts. The range of tense usages extends from the historical to the gnomic present. Each of the usages is artistically placed into the composition of the pericope on the basis of contrast, comparison, or development. Not only the tense but even the lexico-semantic usages adds meaning to the narrative.

Aorist

The aorist indicative tenses fall into two groups. Three of the six aorist indicatives in this pericope are used to introduce speeches; the remaining are used in relative clauses or temporal clauses.

Aorist verbs are used twice in subclauses to indicate the transmission of the tradition of the elders. In the narrative aside of vv. 3–4 Mark employs a block parallelism to emphasize the importance of the tradition:

3   οἱ γὰρ Φαρισαῖοι καὶ πάντες οἱ Ἰουδαῖοι
             ἐὰν μὴ πυγμῇ νίψωνται τὰς χεῖρας οὐκ ἐσθίουσιν,
                κρατοῦντες
                     τὴν παράδοσιν τῶν πρεσβυτέρων,
4   καὶ ἀπ᾽ ἀγορᾶς ἐὰν μὴ βαπτίσωνται οὐκ ἐσθίουσιν,
           καὶ ἄλλα πολλά ἐστιν
                 ἃ παρέλαβον
           κρατεῖν

Both verses employ a negative subjunctive clause (ἐὰν μὴ) with a condition (νίψωνται, βαπτίσωνται) that results in abstaining from food (οὐκ ἐσθίουσιν). Additionally, the transmission process is mentioned either in substantival or verbal form (παράδοσιν, παρέλαβον). Finally, tradition is observed (κρατοῦντες, κρατεῖν). This structure reinforces the importance of the tradition as the authoritative principle for daily life beginning with the religious elite down to the commoner.[33] In his first speech Jesus will challenge this double attestation to the tradition of the elders with a twofold reference to the prophets, thereby pitting the tradition of the elders against God's word through the mouth of prophets.[34] These two prophetic voices issue their warnings and commands in aorist tenses (vv. 6, 10) further aligning the aorist with a discussion on authority.

The aorist tense is used again in this pericope in v. 13. At the conclusion of the first speech Jesus summarizes his main point by drawing a sharp contrast between God's law and man's tradition. The aorist indicative tense is used to intensify the aorist phrase in the narrative aside of vv. 3–4: First, the tradition is now rendered as "yours" (τῇ

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[33] See Collins for a convincing case for the significant numbers among the Galilean population adhering to ritual purity regulations. Collins, *Mark: A Commentary*, 345–347.

[34] This contrast between tradition and commandments, between elders and God, will ultimately be between "you" and "Moses" (v. 11). S. Guelich, *Mark 1–8:26*, 368.

παραδόσει ὑμῶν) rather than "the elders" (v. 3). The current generation cannot excuse themselves from responsibility. They are not merely followers of previous rulings, but themselves active in creating and distributing traditions. Secondly, the aorist indicative παρεδώκατε will confirm this by stressing the act of "passing on" rather than the act of "receiving" the tradition (παρέλαβον, v. 4). Finally, Jesus uses the example of the *qorban* (v. 13) to point out the religious leaders' attitude. It is clear from Jesus' generalization ("and many such things you do," v. 13) that this instance is only exemplary of their attitude, not exhaustive.

The aorist tense in vv. 4 and 13 is found in the midst of the debate about authority. The religious leaders' authority stems from their tradition while Jesus cites the authority of the prophets. In v. 4 the aorist tense "which they received to keep" indicates a past action, which happened prior to the action of the present tense (story time). The temporal dimension of the aorist in v. 13 "which you handed down" is slightly different though. It transcends the temporal limitation of a completed action in the past, the typical aorist temporal description, to describe a practice both in the past and the present. The context makes this clear, for Jesus could not so forcefully accuse them of transmitting tradition if they are no longer doing this. Additionally, the following present tense "many such things you do" (v. 13) expands the list of offenses to the present. It seems that here and in the remaining aorist tenses, Mark points the audience—to borrow Runge's term— to "discourse-pragmatic" reasons for employing the tense. In this chapter the aorist instances seem to describe the power struggle between the religious leaders and Jesus. As has been observed, this is not limited to the typical temporal designation of a past action.

Verse 17 reveals the final aorist in a temporal phrase. Instead of employing the more standard temporal participle, Mark here places the aorist indicative in a temporal

clause introduced by ὅτε. This convoluted construction is not without reason: The aorist indicates that Jesus is *the* authoritative figure of the pericope as he initiates a counter ideology on defilement. The religious leaders are no longer present.

In the main story flow, the transition into the new setting of the house is a significant change. After the mention of Jerusalem this is only the second explicit reference to a spatial setting in the story flow.[35] As such it contrasts the reference to Jerusalem with that of the house: The contrasts include the public versus the private, the city versus the house, leaving the city versus entering the house, the crowds versus the solitude away from the crowds. Additionally, while the pericope so far featured the teaching and practices of the religious leaders and the people, this second part features Jesus' own teaching on the matter. It is at this juncture that Jesus' perceived role changes. So far he has been attacked (v. 5) and has responded to the attack (vv. 6–13), only alluding to his own position on defilement (vv. 14–15). Now for the first time in the narrative, Mark portrays Jesus as completing an action (other than speaking). Jesus transitions from being the orator, who controls the speech, to the one who controls the actions as well. At the outset of the pericope Jesus appears to be inactive—a recipient of a hostile encounter rather than one in control—but now the reverse happens. The religious leaders disappear without any mention and Jesus controls the setting. This private venue will allow him to develop his own "tradition" that is handed to the disciples—one of observance of the law and ethical/moral purity.

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[35] The narrative aside of vv. 3–4 introduces the spatial marker of the marketplace and by the reference to household items implicitly also the house. This spatial marker is part of the narrative aside, not the main story flow.

This spatial shift therefore also marks a shift in Jesus' approach from public rebuke to private teaching. Removed from the contention, Jesus can now engage in the authoritative interpretation of his parable. To better indicate the significance of this transition, the author utilizes an aorist indicative rather than a temporal participle. The narrator uses the aorist indicative to introduce Jesus as acting authoritatively. The use of the aorist tense corresponds to the spatial shift in order to emphasize this authoritative action. As with the previous aorist tenses, the temporal clause of v. 17 indicates that the aorist action precedes the historical present of the main clause. At the same time the aorist tenses have continually decreased in their backward reach from far-reaching to almost simultaneous in relation to the main verb.

In summary, the narrative account employs the aorist tense to describe authoritative actions.[36] This is clearest in the dual reference to the process of the transmission of the tradition of the elders (7:4, 13), which the religious leaders hold as authoritative. The third reference to an aorist indicative in the temporal phrase of v. 17 at first seems insignificant, but upon closer inspection indicates a crucial shift in the narrative that introduces Jesus' authoritative teaching to the disciples. As will be argued in the following section, the three aorist speech introductions are used to introduce authoritative speeches contrasting or complementing the above narrative aorist tenses. Since all aorist indicatives follow this authoritative pattern and no other tenses are used in connection to authoritative actions, Mark seems to carefully employ tenses in a

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[36] As in the Hebrew perfect tense, the aorist refers predominantly to a completed action. In this specific narrative unit the author goes beyond the basic aspect attributed to the tense and layers the notion of authority onto the aorist. Even Jesus' speech, though just beginning in v. 6, is rendered in the aorist, indicating a completed action before the first word has been spoken. The idea of words as authoritative as the spoken and written words of canonical prophets is demonstrated by using the aorist only in these instances.

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"discourse-pragmatic" approach that transcends the temporal or aspectual nature of the tense.

Speech Introductions

The narrative introduces a series of speeches by three different parties (the scribes and Pharisees, Jesus and the disciples) and implies speeches of previous prophets (Isaiah, Moses) but introduces these speeches in a variety of tenses: aorist, imperfect, and present. In fact, Jesus' speeches in particular are introduced by all three of these tenses. Such a variety in just a few verses is astonishing and raises the question of whether this is intentional or not.[37] See table 6.

It is especially in the speech introductions that the earlier discussion of tense usage comes to full weight. By carefully examining the different tenses in speech introductions, it will be argued that Mark carefully employs tenses to enhance the meaning of the pericope. The tenses do not solely convey temporality or aspect but are used in a "discourse-pragmatic" sense.[38]

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[37] In the Gospel of Mark only a few pericopes have a similar diverse range of tenses in speech introductions: Mark 5:6–19; 7:27–29; 8:1–10; 8:27–30; 10:1–12; 11:27–33; 12:35–37; 14:26–31; 14:65–72; 15:1–5. The present study cannot go into a detailed comparison of these passages to the pericope at hand but a significant number of dissimilarities exists to most passages. The dialogue in the healing of the Gerasene in Mark 5:6–19 exhibits the closest parallels in terms of tense usage.

[38] Runge, "The Verbal Aspect of the Historical Present Indicative in Narrative," 205.

Table 6. References to Discourse Time in Introductory Phrases

SPEAKER	WORD	TENSE	VERSE
Pharisees & scribes	ἐπερωτῶσιν	Present	5
Jesus	εἶπεν	Aorist	6
Isaiah	ἐπροφήτευσεν	Aorist	6
Jesus	ἔλεγεν	Imperfect	9
Moses	εἶπεν	Aorist	10
Jesus	ἔλεγεν	Imperfect	14
Disciples	ἐπηρώτων	Imperfect	17
Jesus	λέγει	Present	18
Jesus	ἔλεγεν	Imperfect	20

Present

In the narrative section the present tense features primarily as the tense of the story time. It is therefore no surprise that the first speech introduction features a present tense. The observed fact of v. 2 now transitions into a question (ἐπερωτῶσιν, v. 5). This present tense question of the religious leaders shifts the narrative from story to dialogue. Surprisingly, the response of Jesus is not introduced with a present but an aorist tense (εἶπεν, v. 6). According to Porter's background-foreground theory, this would place the question of the religious leaders in the foreground, while Jesus' response is relegated to the background. This of course counters the flow of the passage and needs to be

rejected.[39] Runge instead would postulate a pragmatic use of the tenses, specifically the present tense. Either approach requires an examination of the second present-tense speech introduction.

The second present-tense introduction commences Jesus' second major speech (vv. 18–23). This last use of the historical present (λέγει, v. 18) is followed only by "redundant imperfects"[40] in the pericope and therefore presents the final act of the story line.[41] The question of the religious leaders and the final speech of Jesus share a unique set of thematic and semantic connections in this pericope. The thematic parallels include the reference to body parts (hands v. 5, stomach and heart v. 19), food (bread v. 5, foods v. 19), purity (κοινός, vv. 5, 18), and eating and digestion (vv. 5, 19). The present tense speech introduction connects the two speeches semantically. The first speech of Jesus (vv. 6–13) addresses none of these, and even the parable of v. 15, upon which the final speech is based, parallels only the purity language. This second speech then picks up the thematic material of the story line of vv. 1–5 and presents Jesus' response to the issue. The first response of Jesus (vv. 6–14) is a lengthy dispute addressing the motives of the religious leaders rather than the defilement issue itself. As such, Mark presents this first response (vv. 6–13) as a side issue and uses aorist and imperfect tenses rather than the

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[39] Jesus has already been established as the central character in the discussion of characterization in the previous chapter. This can be established on several grounds: The gospel genre and specifically Mark's introduction in 1:1 specify Jesus as the main character. The quantity as well as the quality of wording attributed to Jesus further supports this.

[40] See the following discussion on the imperfects in the passage.

[41] The Gnomic present tenses discussed earlier will conclude the pericope while this present tense (v. 18), in the form of a historical present, will introduce the last action of the pericope.

present tense. When Mark rejoins the story line proper, he signals this by reintroducing the present tense into the narrative.

In this pericope the seemingly generic present tense establishes the story line and helps to structure the passage. The thematic and semantic parallels in the passage point to an accusation (v. 5) and rebuttal (vv. 18–23) structure that is separated by a lengthy moral indictment against the religious leaders. In this sense the historical present of the speech introductions is used specifically for the pragmatic reason of structuring the narrative.

Imperfect

Mark's use of the imperfect is distinctive. Wallace notes:

> Mark has more than twice as many verses as Matthew in the *narrative* sections. To him the narrative *is* the story. To Matthew narrative functions more as stage-setting for the great discourses of Jesus. Thus, Matthew usually uses the aorist tense to simply point out that an event took place. Mark may use the imperfect to describe the same event, showing more specifically how it happened.[42]

In the narrative account of this pericope the imperfect tense is employed only in the speech introductions. This can be best explained by viewing present tense as the tense that carries the story line rather than the aorist and that the story line is rather brief in lieu of the long dialogues.

Two of the four usages of the imperfect in this passage follow, what Runge calls, the imperfect redundancy. An imperfect verb of speaking "is inserted into an ongoing speech, thus reintroducing the same speaker. It is semantically redundant, but has the effect of segmenting a single speech into smaller parts."[43] The first imperfect continues

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[42] Wallace, *Greek Grammar Beyond the Basics: An Exegetical Syntax of the New Testament*, 502.

[43] Runge, "The Verbal Aspect of the Historical Present Indicative in Narrative," 202. Runge notes the important difference between the imperfect in speech introductions and the historical present. Contrary to the imperfect the historical present is anything but

the first speech of Jesus introduced with an aorist (v. 9). The second imperfect continues the second speech of Jesus introduced with a present tense (v. 20).

But contrary to Runge's general observation the imperfects are not completely redundant. In the first speech of Jesus the part of the speech introduced by the aorist (Ὁ δὲ εἶπεν αὐτοῖς, v. 6) contains only the Isaiah quotation. The application to the present-day situation of the religious leaders is then introduced by the imperfect (καὶ ἔλεγεν αὐτοῖς, v. 9). The same pattern can be observed in the second speech. Jesus first restates the categorical statement of the parable with a present-tense introduction (v. 18). This is hardly more cryptic than the original parable (v. 15). The second part of Jesus' speech then resolves the enigmatic saying by means of a detailed explanation and application of this parable. This resolution is introduced by the imperfect verb of speech in v. 20 (ἔλεγεν δὲ). The imperfects therefore function to give a new direction to a previous statement. Both the ancient saying of Isaiah and the recent parable of Jesus receive their interpretive layer through the imperfect speech introduction formula.

This observation also reveals the odd placement of Mark's narrative aside of v. 19c as it is sandwiched between the parable (vv. 18–19) and Jesus' own interpretation (v. 20). Although it generally has been assumed that Mark interprets either correctly or incorrectly and applies the parable of v. 15 and its restatement in vv. 18–19, there are several problems with this approach: First, Jesus' own interpretation of the parable follows in v. 20. It would seem peculiar and counterproductive to the work of the Gospel itself to add a secondary interpretation if one originally exists by none other than Jesus

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redundant. "Historical present verbs of speaking typically introduce direct discourse in contexts where they are semantically required, such as changes of speaker or at the beginning of shorter speeches." Ibid.

himself. To avoid stating that Mark considered Jesus's own interpretation insufficient or inaccurate, it is necessary to presume either that the narrative aside was an earlier conclusion to the pericope or that it was a specific explanation to the Markan audience. The earlier assumption is speculative and fits neither the narrative flow nor the usage of the imperfect in v. 9. The latter also does not fit the repeated usage of explanatory narrative asides in the pericope. These are constructed as subclauses and interjected in midsentence with a present-tense stative verb (vv. 2, 4, 11). This is not the case in v. 19c. Second, as indicated above, elsewhere Mark uses imperfect speech introduction formulas for the interpretation sections. The narrative aside in v. 19c is a participial phrase, not an imperfect construction, and therefore does not follow this pattern. Finally, the sentence fragment of v. 19c and Jesus' interpretation in vv. 20–23 are vastly different. Jesus interprets the parable as dealing primarily with internal motives leading to an ethical standard with universal dimension. But the Markan aside is instead concerned with the external dimension of food. Additionally, while Jesus is solely concerned about individuals in the parable, the narrative aside addresses only objects. For these syntactical, semantic, and contextual reasons it is unlikely that the two statements, Mark's aside of v. 19c and Jesus' interpretation of vv. 20–23, cover the same ground.

The best resolution to this dilemma is to consider that Mark is using the narrative aside not as a means to interpret the parable but rather as a narrative device to wrap up the loose ends of the story line. To this point in the narrative the initial observation (v. 2) and accusation (v. 5) have not been addressed. Jesus has countered the religious leaders by pointing out their double standard, but the issue of eating food while in a state of κοινός is left unanswered (vv. 6–13). After this Jesus addresses the issue of defilement cryptically to the assembled crowds (vv. 14–15). Technically, Mark could have

interrupted the flow at this point and added the narrative aside. But this could have easily appeared as if the narrator was summarizing Jesus' words as the crowd understood it, thus elevating the comprehending crowd above the perplexed disciples. Mark therefore prudently waits for the disciples to ask Jesus for the explanation of the parable and Jesus' rephrased parable (vv. 17–18). Mark inserts this narrative aside at the close of the story time just before Jesus' ethical development in the final speech departs from the local setting and carries the reader beyond the story line to the universal application. The narrative aside should therefore not be conceived of as "interpretive" but rather as a "resolution" to the original accusation.

The two remaining imperfects also introduce dialogues. Contrary to the previous two imperfect speech introductions, however, these two do not continue a previously introduced speech. In this sense they do not fully conform to the "redundancy pattern." In v. 14 Jesus turns to the larger audience of the crowd and addresses them (ἔλεγεν). Both the audience and the content of the brief speech are vastly different from the previous speech. In the case of the question of the disciples concerning the parable in v. 17 (ἐπηρώτων) there is also a significant shift: The setting of the private location is a marked change from the previous open environment, and for the first time in the pericope the disciples become actively involved in the proceedings.

As dissimilar as they at first appear, these latter two imperfect speech introductions agree with the previous two in the shared aspect. As with the previous imperfects these latter two develop the discourse argument in a new direction. Fanning underlines this when he describes the aspect of the imperfect as focusing on the "*development or progress.*"[44]

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[44] Fanning, *Verbal Aspect in New Testament Greek*, 103.

In v. 14 the direction changes from a dispute between Jesus and the religious leaders to a universal teaching that applies to the larger audience of the crowd, the disciples, and the readers of the Gospel of Mark. Initially it seems that this is a radical shift in the pericope, and countless interpreters have indeed considered v. 14 as the beginning of a separate discussion and event. But the author surprises the reader with the imperfect at the beginning of this new section.

Throughout the Gospel, Mark prefers to begin new pericopes with aorist or present-tense verbs. Only a handful of imperfects usher in a new section and even then they are employed to indicate a close connection to the previous section.[45] The imperfect stresses the continuity of the passage and the close connection to the previous pericope rather than disconnection. It stands to reason therefore that Mark uses the imperfect to continue the pericope, albeit in a new direction, rather than indicating a separate tradition that will follow (vv. 14–23).

[45] Imperfect tenses are used at the beginning of sections in Mark 4:21, 26, 30, 33; 6:6; 9:30; 10:13, 17, 32; 12:35, 38; 13:3; 14:1; 15:6, 16 but usually function to connect to the previous section. The passages of ch. 4 introduce new parables as part of a larger sermon. Mark 6:6 functions as "summary statement" of Jesus' teaching and healing ministry (3:20–6:5) (see Guelich, *Mark 1–8:26*, 315). The genitive absolute preceding the imperfect already functions as a "link composed by Mark to connect the traditional story to the current context" (Collins, *Mark*, 475). The two passages are connected by a common theme. The "belongs the kingdom of God" (v. 14) is paralleled by "inherit eternal life" (v. 17). The previous section answers the question "who" while this section answers the "how." Mark 10:32 continues the journey of Jesus and his disciples already indicated in 10:17, 23. It is part of the larger structured journey moving first northward than southward (Collins, *Mark*, 484). Mark 12:35, 38 is linked to the previous passage (11:27–12:34) based on spatial, character retention, temporal, and catchphrase ("γραμματεῖς") (Collins, *Mark,* 578, 582). Mark 15:6, 16 continues the passion narrative with a narrative aside in v. 6 and a shift in characters in v. 16. The passages of Mark 9:30, 10:13, and 14:1 are more complex.

The closest parallel to Mark 7 is the apocalyptic discourse of Mark 13. The imperfect speech introduction (ἐπηρώτα, v. 3) is preceded by a present (λέγει, v. 1) and an aorist speech introduction (εἶπεν, v. 2) in the short dialogue between Jesus and the disciples leading into the lengthy apocalyptic discourse.

The final imperfect tense introduces the question of the disciples in v. 17 (ἐπηρώτων). It follows the aorist εἰσῆλθεν establishing the spatial setting of the private house. Just like the previous imperfect in v. 14 linked the speech of Jesus to the crowd with the preceding passage, so the disciples' question is connected to the parable of vv. 14–15. This connection is accomplished by the unified themes of the crowd or absence thereof (vv. 14, 17), comprehension or lack thereof (vv. 14, 18), the parable (vv. 15, 17), and the use of the imperfect. The connection to the preceding speech by Jesus places this question of the disciples in a vastly different context than the question of the religious leaders. The inquiry of the disciples is one for comprehension of the previous enigmatic parable, while the religious leaders initiate a conflict. The different tenses in the respective questions also express different types of questions. The imperfect (ἐπηρώτων, v. 17) beckons an answer to reveal the true nature of the preceding parable, while the present tense (ἐπερωτῶσιν, v. 5) questions the orthodoxy of the disciples based on the previous story time development. Another way of expressing the difference between the two questions is to use Porter's spatial terminology of foreground and background.[46] The original question of the religious leaders employs a historical present, placing it in the foreground. The disciples' question with its imperfect is surprisingly pushed outside of the main story line into the background. The answer of Jesus ushered in by another present-tense speech introduction resurfaces in the foreground and concludes the main story line. Thus, the author chooses his tenses very carefully in this passage. Mark juxtaposes two questions but emphasizes their differences more than their similarities.

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[46] As stated in the historical background to this chapter, Runge's approach to allow the lexiosemantic context to govern the interpretation of the tense seems to allow best for the spectrum of tense usages Mark employs. Porter's background–foreground, as pointed out earlier, does not always adequately portray the use of the tense. Here though Porter's model correctly describes the lexiosemantic context.

In summary, the four imperfects in the passage are employed at strategic positions in the narrative to shift direction, introduce new developments, and give application and interpretation to the passage. The difference between the use of the imperfects is not one of aspect but of intensity. Some of them continue the direct speeches while others develop the larger flow of the pericope.

Aorist

Besides the three aorist tenses discussed in the narrative section, three other aorists introduce speeches. The words of Isaiah and Moses are introduced by two aorists: Isaiah prophesied (ἐπροφήτευσεν, v. 6) and Moses spoke (εἶπεν v. 10). Each of these references transmits the idea of an authoritative statement or action. Jesus cites the words of Isaiah and Moses as authoritative statements upon which he bases his teaching, while the religious leaders' actions are based on the tradition of the elders.

The narrative establishes several points of comparison and contrast: First, both the tradition of the elders and the words of the prophets are related in the aorist tense. Second, various groups in the passage consider the tradition of the elders and the prophets to be authoritative. Third, both the tradition and the prophets precede the story time, though the prophets precede the tradition. Finally, different word groups identify the different authoritative corpuses. On the one hand, the tradition is identified by verbs of transmission ("hand down/over"). On the other hand, the prophets' words are presented only with verbs of speech ("prophesy/speak"). These words convey that the authority of God himself rests behind it, in the case of Isaiah through the lexical understanding of "prophesy" and in the case of Moses by Jesus' evaluation of Moses'

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words as "word of God" (v. 13). The author uses the aorist to highlight the dispute between the transmission of the tradition versus the words of the prophets.

The final aorist to be considered introduces Jesus' own speech (εἶπεν, v. 6) in his first response to the scribes and Pharisees (v. 5). In this pericope featuring multiple speech introductions, only Jesus' first speech is presented with the aorist tense. Both in the narrative flow and the speech introductions, the pragmatic semantic usage of the aorist indicates an authoritative action. From the speech introduction alone, it can be gathered that Jesus enters the conflict with his own authoritative response to the question of the religious leaders. The speech itself (vv. 6–13) ratifies this with an intensity not seen in the Gospel up to this point. The religious leaders are rebuked in strong and clear language and shown to act contrary to God's intention. The narrator stresses that Jesus not only cites the Hebrew Bible prophets in his reproach but also that the response itself is an authoritative statement on par with the statements of the prophets. The authority with which Jesus teaches and preaches, mentioned explicitly in Mark 1:22, 27, is now shown in this conflict story. Jesus' authoritative statement, portrayed by the aorist, shows him to be a superior authority than the religious leaders.

Summary

As has been noted in previous sections, the pericope of Mark 7:1–23 consists of layers of meticulously arranged storytelling devices. Mark employs the indicative tenses to build and structure the narrative. The intentionality of the author can be seen in uniformity of the lexico-semantic tense usage. First, the tenses display uniformity across the lexico-semantic range. All the historical presents are employed only in the story line. All habitual presents are in the narrative asides. The progressive presents are found in

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subclauses or speeches, and the gnomic present tense verbs are only in Jesus' final speech. Secondly, there is uniformity in the pragmatic usage within the tenses. The imperfect tense always functions interpretatively and the aorist is located in contexts dealing with authority. Finally, the tenses or, in the case of the present, the lexico-semantic usage, have one function each. Not only is the narrative aside rendered only in habitual presents, but conversely the habitual presents are found only in the narrative aside. That is to say, the story time is not rendered with aorist verbs as is common among other writers. The historical present singularly carries the story time. Similarly only the aorist relates sections dealing with authority. The imperfect or present tenses are not found in these contexts. The same is true for the interpretative theme of the imperfect tense in this passage. The present or aorist tense does not convey this sense of interpretation.

This conclusion has significant bearing on the passage. It suggests that the author was deliberate and careful in how he recounted this event. Additionally, this has implications for the passage:

First, the understanding of Mark's use of the imperfect aspect clarifies the problems of the structure. Mark considers the two parts as cohesive units rather than separate events.

Second, the imperfect-tense speech introductions move the discourse to the interpretive level. In both speeches Jesus becomes his own interpreter, clarifying and applying an aforementioned principle. As a result, the awkward position of the narrative aside of v. 19c is emphasized. The narrative aside is located between the parable and Jesus' interpretation of the parable. As such it hardly qualifies as the proper interpretation of Jesus' parable. Either Mark was mistaken in his vastly different approach to interpret

the parable or the Markan aside fulfills a different function in the narrative unit. It seems best to see the narrative aside as a storytelling device that is employed to resolve the unanswered issue of defilement related to food in the introduction.[47]

Third, the concept that the aorist in this pericope transmits notions of authority underlines the basic tension of the passage. This tension is built on the persons of the religious leaders and Jesus but also their respective authoritative frames (tradition of men versus commandments of God). But this also forces a reexamination of the problematic v. 19c. If the question of authoritative reference is the guiding theme of the first half even down to verb tenses, it makes it harder to argue that Jesus would have completely abandoned the Mosaic regulations he upheld so vigorously a few verses earlier.

Additionally, the aorist-authority conception has Christological implications. Jesus is portrayed as an authoritative figure who sees himself as an extension of the great prophets of the Hebrew Bible. Jesus' first speech applies the message of the Hebrew Bible to the first-century setting. In his second speech Jesus extends his authority by presenting his own teaching to the disciples. Jesus' ethical, universal truths are "words of God" not by transmission but instead by his own authority.[48]

Finally, this study has grammatical implications. Runge's approach to the historical present seems to represent most accurately the diversity of this tense category. His view, that the historical present is an anomaly rather than attempting to confine it into the straightjacket of "zero tense" or "zero aspect" and therefore categorically excluding

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[47] For questions regarding the terminology of narrative criticism see chapter 1.

[48] Jesus' authority is in harmony with previous biblical authority, demonstrating that his authority is legitimate, unlike that of the scribes and Pharisees.

one or the other, allows for a more contextual approach.[49] This approach allows the

temporal and aspect nature of the verb to remain in tension rather than categorically

excluding one or the other. Additionally, it allows for the tense to be interpreted primarily

within its own setting rather than imposing a generic concept on the specific situation. At

the same time this examination might give the impetus to examine further whether

Runge's "discourse-pragmatic" solution might extend to tense categories beyond the

historical present.

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[49] Though Jesus most likely conversed in Aramaic with his followers attributing the above stated results cannot readily be attributed to a Hebraic or Aramaic influence for several reasons: First, authors, like John, who are arguably very influenced by the Semitic background do not have an affinity for the historical present as Mark does. Second, based on Runge's research it is best to evaluate each historical present in its own setting. Third, the historical present tenses do not appear in the direct speeches by Jesus or others but in the narrative data retelling the story which is crafted no doubt by a narrator.

CHAPTER 4

PURITY TERMINOLOGY IN THE NEW TESTAMENT

Introduction

The previous chapters identified the question of defilement as the central theme of

the pericope of Mark 7:1–23. This in and of itself is not astonishing as this is accepted by

all the various groups of interpreters. The intricacies of this theme and the cohesiveness

of the pericope on the other hand have generally been disputed in the past.

In dealing with the topic of defilement in this and the next chapter, two questions

need to be examined: First, what antecedent in the pericope is the cleansing activity of v.

19 addressing? Or stated another way, what is being cleansed? Secondly, what context,

background reference, and social setting is the passage invoking?

In response to the first question, scholars taking the traditional or mainstream

view[1] hold that the antecedent to Mark 7:19 is the Levitical food laws, which are not

specifically identified or mentioned in the passage.[2] Proponents of this view usually do

not see a connection between Mark 7:19 and the initial introduction with conflict over

defilement (Mark 7:1–5). They instead advocate that the immediate context of v. 15

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[1] See chapter 1 for a detailed discussion of the various views in scholarship.

[2] See for example Brooks, *Mark*; Guelich, *Mark 1–8:26*; Hendriksen, *Exposition of the Gospel According to Mark*; Ralph P. Martin, *Mark* (Atlanta: Knox, 1982); Collins, *Mark: A Commentary*; Mann, *Mark: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary*; Stein, *Mark*; Voelz, *Mark 1:1–8:26*; Wessel, *Mark*.

("eating") and v. 19 ("cleansing" and "food") is sufficiently clear to warrant the abrogation of the Levitical food laws. This idea is reinforced, in response to the second question, as the food laws of Leviticus are generally assumed to be the cultural and textual background.

The narrative analysis of the previous two chapters has established the unity of the narrative in structure and details. Therefore, the second part of the pericope (Mark 7:14–23) cannot be disconnected from the preceding context and instead needs to be enlightened by it. The cleansing activity of v. 19 must be informed by the context—the infringement of purity regulations mentioned in vv. 2 and 5. In response to the first question then, the inner-textual antecedent of the cleansing (καθαρίζω, v. 19) is the κοινός first introduced in v. 2.

The present chapter builds on the κοινός–καθαρίζω relationship and explores the purity terminology in detail in an attempt to understand "what is being cleansed" entails. Most reference works and scholars have recognized κοινός as an uncommon expression as it is not found as terminology for defilement in the LXX's translation of the Hebrew Bible nor in classical Greek. In an attempt to reconcile κοινός into the available passages, it has been generally assumed that there is an interchangeability between κοινός and ἀκάθαρτος or κοινός and βέβηλος or sometimes both. If that is indeed the case, the passage would indeed argue for a complete disregard of all Hebrew Bible purity regulations based on the precedent of the unwashed hands. If on the other hand Mark is deliberate in his use of distinct purity terminology—as has been demonstrated in regard to other terminology in the previous two chapters of this dissertation—and κοινός is not synonymous with ἀκάθαρτος or βέβηλος then Mark 7:19 cleanses *only* the κοινός category of defilement.

This chapter argues that New Testament reference works and scholarship have generally oversimplified purity terminology, often based on a simplistic view of purity concerns in the Hebrew Bible. Recent contributions by Jacob Milgrom,[3] David P. Wright,[4] Jonathan Klawans,[5] and Hannah Harrington,[6] just to name a few, have demonstrated a complex and nuanced approach to the contraction, transmission, and resolution of uncleanness. But while great strides have been made in Hebrew Bible studies as well as historical studies of the Second Temple period,[7] linguistic studies of purity terminology in the New Testament lag behind.

This chapter attempts to advance New Testament linguistic studies on purity terminology by first surveying the state of scholarship in regard to the linguistic studies

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[3] Milgrom, *Leviticus 1–16: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary*.

[4] Wright argues for a distinction within the unclean (טמא) category of impurity between a "permissible," later revised to "tolerated," and a "prohibited" category. Wright, "Unclean and Clean"; David P. Wright, "The Spectrum of Priestly Impurity," in *Priesthood and Cult in Ancient Israel* (ed. Gary A. Anderson and Saul M. Olyan; Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1991), 150–181.

[5] Klawans follows Wright in general terms and distinguishes between "ritual purity" and "moral impurity." Klawans, *Impurity and Sin in Ancient Judaism*.

[6] Harrington examines the systems of impurity contraction in the various factions of Jewish life and their reasoning. Harrington, *The Impurity Systems of Qumran and the Rabbis: Biblical Foundations*.

[7] Scholars from various disciplines—Jewish studies, Historical studies, Purity Studies, and Historical Jesus studies—are interested in the Second Temple period, and are thereby rapidly advancing our understanding of this period. Booth, *Jesus and the Laws of Purity: Tradition History and Legal History in Mark 7*; Neusner, *The Idea of Purity in Ancient Judaism*; Harrington, *The Impurity Systems of Qumran and the Rabbis: Biblical Foundations*; Crossley, "Halakah and Mark 7.4: '. . . and Beds'"; Crossley, "Halakah and Mark 7.3: 'With Hand in the Shape of a Fist'"; Jerome H. Neyrey, "The Idea of Purity in Mark's Gospel," *Semeia* 35 (1986): 91–128; John C. Poirier, "Purity Beyond the Temple in the Second Temple Era," *JBL* 122, no. 2 (2003): 247–265; Sanders, *Jesus and Judaism*; Klawans, *Impurity and Sin in Ancient Judaism*.

on purity terminology and then examining the interplay of purity terminology in the New Testament and the apocryphal writings in the LXX, especially the relationship of κοινός with ἀκάθαρτος and βέβηλος. This chapter will demonstrate that the term κοινός should not be taken as an equivalent synonym to ἀκάθαρτος or βέβηλος in any of the relevant passages. These three instead cover semantically divergent sets. This has implications for the study in Mark 7: The cleansing activity of v. 19 then actually refers to the abrogation of the defilement category of v. 2 instead of an abrogation of food laws in Lev 11.

The following chapter will respond to the second question mentioned above: What context is the Markan passage invoking? It will be argued that the clean/unclean food laws of Lev 11 do not exhibit strong parallels to the passage, but instead the appropriate antecedent can be found in the touch contamination through a carcass found in Lev 11:24–40. It is therefore more appropriate to consider Mark 7 as addressing the abrogation of touch impurities in relation to humans instead of the food laws.

Κοινός, Ἀκάθαρτος, and Βέβηλος

Scholarship has generally assumed that κοινός is an interchangeable synonym either for ἀκάθαρτος or for βέβηλος/βεβηλόω or sometimes both. Colin House laments this in his study on Acts 10 and 11. Even though the New Testament passages differentiate "between 'common' and 'unclean,' it seems reasonable to assume that the various translators of the English Scriptures believed this distinction to be defunct. Cognizance of their unstated bias aids in understanding why no modern attempt has been made to distinguish between the words . . . that is to say 'κοινός /κοινόω, 'common'/'to

render common,' has been taken as synonymous with ἀκάθαρτος, 'unclean.'"[8] The language of lexica and dictionaries has aided in this impression.

Reference Works

A Greek-English Lexicon (LSJ)

It comes as no surprise that the purity terminology is mentioned only briefly in this lexicon. The use of κοινός, ἀκάθαρτος, and βέβηλος purity language is largely if not wholly unique to the biblical material and therefore absent from the Classical Greek literature. In the discussion of κοινός the lexicon notes "of forbidden meats, *common, profane*" with the mention of Acts 10:14, Rom 14:14, and Mark 7:2. Though the phrase in Acts 10:14 ἔφαγον πᾶν κοινὸν καὶ ἀκάθαρτον is mentioned, the relationship between the two purity words in not further explored.[9]

Instead the lexicon seems to suggest that κοινός and βέβηλος cover the same semantic domain. The same English translation "profane" is used also for βέβηλος especially in regard to the Sabbath, citing Exod 31:14 and Matt 12:5. Under a separate heading it allows for the translation of "pollute, defile" and "profanation" based on Lev 21:9 and 21:4 respectively.[10]

The term ἀκαθαρσία receives a distinct translation in the lexicon as "*ceremonially unclean*, of food" with reference made to Lev 5:2 and Acts 10:14. The mention of Acts

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[8] House, "Defilement by Association: Some Insights from the Usage of Κοινός/Κοινόω in Acts 10 and 11," 146.

[9] "κοινός," LSJ 969.

[10] "βέβηλος," LSJ 312.

10:14, however, does not give a hint as to how the lexicographers view the relationship to

κοινός.[11]

Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament (BDAG)

The *Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament* defines κοινόω as "make common or impure, defile" and "consider/declare (ritually) unclean." The adjective κοινός adds the possibility of "ordinary" and "profane" and sample passages are translated in the section with "unclean."[12] Similarly the adjective ἀκάθαρτος pertains to the process of making "impure, unclean (the cultic sense)." It is also translated as "actions . . . that defile" and is equated to κοινός in Acts 10:28.[13] Thus the BDAG views the κοινός category of defilement at best as largely overlapping if not synonymous with ἀκάθαρτος.[14] In addition to the similarity to ἀκάθαρτος the BDAG makes a brief mention that κοινόω can also refer to "profane, desecrate" as in Acts 21:28.

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[11] "ἀκαθαρσία," *A Greek–English Lexicon: Compiled by Henry George Liddell and Robert Scott,* 46.

[12] Walter Bauer, "κοινός," BDAG, 522. The content of this dictionary entry has been slightly reworded through the years. The latest editions of the BDAG, in reference to Colin House's article on the definition of κοινός, are more judicious in their translation of text passages, preferring "defiled" rather than "unclean." Earlier editions made no distinction between these two terms. See Walter Bauer, "κοινός," BAGD, 439; Walter Bauer, "κοινόω," BAGD, 439.

[13] Walter Bauer, "ἀκάθαρτος," BDAG, 34.

[14] Other lexica follow the same approach as the BDAG. See Willam D. Mounce, *The Analytical Lexicon to the Greek New Testament* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1993), 58, 257, 285.

Friedrich Hauck in the *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament* is even more assertive by claiming that in the New Testament the "unclean hands" (Mark 7:2) clearly correspond "to the Heb. טָמֵא, so that ἀκαθάρτοις would be a more precise translation."[15] He extends this same reasoning to Acts 10:15; 11:9. Surprisingly, Hauck, in the same breath, has just argued that κοινός should be rendered "'profane' as distinct from ἅγιος."[16] He has already asserted the equivalence to "profane" earlier in the section on the Hebrew Bible and Judaism stating that "κοινός corresponds to the Heb. חֹל 'given up to general use,' from the root חלל. . . . The opposite is that which is sanctified or dedicated and hence withdrawn from ordinary use (→ἅγιος,)."[17] Despite this claim, Hauck immediately relativizes his own observation noting that the "LXX, however, consistently uses βέβηλος for חֹל, e.g., Lv. 10:10."[18] Hauck then references to the Talmudic tractate *Hullin* and applies the concept to the Apocrypha, claiming that "only in the apocr. is κοινός used for חֹל instead of βέβηλος, e.g., 1 Macc. 1:47."[19] In an analogous argument Hauck considers the verb κοινόω to also carry both "unclean" and "profane" meanings.[20]

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[15] Friedrich Hauck, "κοινός, κοινωνός, κοινωνέω, κοινωνία, συγκοινωνός, συγκοινωνέω, κοινωνικός, κοινόω," *TDNT* 3:797.

[16] Ibid.

[17] Ibid., 791.

[18] Ibid. The LXX regularly uses βέβηλος/βέβηλοω as equivalent to חלל/חֹל though μιαίνω is at times also used. In a corresponding pattern the LXX regularly uses ἀκάθαρτος as equivalent to טמא though μιαίνω derivatives are also employed for this category. κοινός is never used to represent either Hebrew term. See the Appendix for details.

[19] Ibid.

[20] Ibid., 809.

Exegetical Dictionary of the New Testament (EDNT)

F. G. Untergassmair in the *EDNT* understands κοινός/κοινόω as the contrast to both the term ἅγιος found in the Hebrew Bible and the entire Levitical purity system. He translates the word either as "impure" or, more frequently, "unclean." Based on Peter's vision in Acts 10 and an appeal to a general sense of Pauline literature, Untergassmair asserts that in "the NT there is no *objective* cultic impurity, but there is a *subjective* impurity: 'it is *impure* only for one who views it as *impure*.'"[21]

He then takes a specific look at the conflict story of Mark 7:1–23 and Peter's vision in Acts 10. These stories are used to justify Hauck's comment of the "NT doctrine of the common religious purity of all that has been created."[22] Because of this general principle he argues that the charge against Paul in Acts 21 "misses the mark" because desecration is no longer compatible with this "NT doctrine."

Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament (Louw-Nida)

In Louw-Nida's lexicon of semantic domains, κοινόω and κοινός are equated to both βέβηλοω and ἀκάθαρτος. The distinction made between any of these three categories is marginal. The categories of κοινόω/βέβηλοω (53.33) and κοινός/ἀκάθαρτος (53.39) refer to something as either causing "ritual impurity" or being "ritually unacceptable." Louw-Nida also uses the English words "unclean" and "defiled/defilement" interchangeably between these two entries and employs Mark 7:23, Acts 10:14, and Acts 24:6 as scriptural evidence.

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[21] F. G. Untergassmair, "κοινόω," *EDNT* 2:302.

[22] Ibid., 303.

As a small caveat the lexicon concedes for both entries that other views might be possible: "Βέβηλοω may differ significantly from κοινόω in denoting a more serious degree of defilement"[23] and "it is possible that there is some subtle distinction in meaning particularly on a connotative level, between κοινός and ἀκάθαρτος in Ac 10.14."[24] Nonetheless Louw-Nida are convinced that "this cannot be readily determined from existing contexts."[25] The mention of κοινός and ἀκάθαρτος in Acts 10:14 together is "primarily for the sake of emphasis."[26]

Trench's Synonyms of the New Testament

Trench's Synonyms of the New Testament also equates κοινός with βέβηλος, but does this in a more nuanced manner than the *TDNT*. Richard Trench notes that "in the New Testament *koinos* gradually encroached on *bebēlos*'s original meaning" so that they eventually became synonyms.[27] Trench argues in two different directions: First, that κοινός in the New Testament was "being used more often"[28] replacing the LXX use of βέβηλος. Secondly, the reverse also happened, causing the overlap in meaning: βέβηλος was replacing κοινός since κοινός was "out of place and perhaps even unintelligible"[29] in

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[23] *Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament Based on Semantic Domains* (ed. Johannes P. Louw and Eugene A. Nida; New York: United Bible Socities, 1989), 53.33.

[24] Ibid., 53.39.

[25] Ibid., 53.33.

[26] Ibid., 53.39.

[27] Richard Chenevix Trench, "Profane, Defiled, Common, Unclean: *Bebēlos, Koinos*," in *Synonyms of the New Testament* (ed. Robert G. Hoerber; Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1989), 398.

[28] Ibid.

[29] Ibid.

a gentile setting. To substantiate his claim Trench lists four texts "(Matt. [sic] 7:2; Acts 10:14; Rom 14:14; Heb 10:29)"[30] and a comparison between Acts 21:28 and 24:6.

Response: κοινός and βέβηλος in Acts 21:28 and 24:6

Since the comparison between Acts 21:28 and 24:6 plays a significant role in defining the meaning of κοινός in regard to βέβηλος for the reference works mentioned above, the passages in question deserve a brief evaluation.

Overview

Acts 21:28 and 24:6 are parallel accounts. In Acts 21:27–30 Jews from Asia in the temple area lay hands on Paul and claim that he has "defiled" (κεκοίνωκεν) the temple by bringing Greeks there. This event is then recounted at Paul's trial before Felix in Acts 24:6. Tertullus charges Paul that "he even tried to profane (βεβηλῶσαι) the temple."

BDAG and *TDNT* seem to equate the two passages as they merely place the two passages side by side. Trench, by contrast, elaborates on the relationship between the two passages, arguing that the switch from κοινός to βέβηλος occurs because "such a use of *koinos* was unfamiliar and probably unknown to the heathen."[31]

Problem

Several concepts militate against equating the two terms: First, the two passages are located in different genres and take place in different settings. Acts 21 depicts a series of historical events beginning with the journey to Jerusalem (vv. 1–16), meeting with the

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[30] Ibid. Presumably Trench invokes Mark 7:2 instead of Matt 7:2.

[31] Ibid.

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religious leaders of the Jerusalem church (vv. 17–25), the ritual washings first recommended (v. 24) then performed (v. 26), and finally the events surrounding the capture of Paul (vv. 27–36), all reported by the narrator. In contrast, the passage of Acts 24 is a legal disposition before Felix starting with the accusation by Tertullus (vv. 2–8) followed by Paul defending himself (vv. 10–21). As has been widely proven, the passage closely mirrors the rhetorical style of the Greco-Roman legal system (e.g., the *captatio benevolentiae, insinuato, exordium, seditio, cognition*).[32]

The settings of the two passages are also very distinct, as ch. 21 is a third-person narrative account set within the Christian community (21:1–26) as it collides with the Jewish community (21:24–36) and ch. 24 is a collision of the Jewish community with the Roman authorities over the issue of Paul. The narratives reinforce these two contrasting settings. In ch. 21 the story takes place in the city of Jerusalem and more specifically the temple and its precincts. It employs the location, props, language, and characters of a Jewish setting. Contrary to this, ch. 24 is located in the governor's judgment hall in Caesarea. The angry mob of ch. 21 has given way to new characters: The high priest Ananias, elders, a lawyer and Felix the governor in his duty as a judge. All of these markers identify ch. 24 as a legal dispute before the Roman official.

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[32] Craig S. Keener, "Some Rhetorical Techniques in Acts 24:2–21," in *Paul's World* (ed. Stanley E. Porter; vol. 4 of *Pauline Studies,* ed. Stanley Porter; Leiden: Brill, 2008), 221–252. Winter agrees to the Greco-Roman legal setting of ch. 24 but based on a literary comparison of forensic speeches he argues for a slightly different set of categories: The *exordium, narratio, confirmatio, refutatio,* and *peroratio.* Bruce W. Winter, "Official Proceedings and the Forensic Speeches in Acts 24–26," in *The Book of Acts in Its Ancient Literary Setting* (vol. 1 of *The Book of Acts in Its First Century Setting,* ed. Bruce W. Winter and Andrew D. Clarke; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1993), 329–330.

The very different genres and settings make it very difficult to simply equate the two purity terms. Trench's position might be a possible solution to account for the different genre and setting, but a conclusion on the meaning of the two words is still difficult.

Second, Felix is not ignorant of the intricacies of the inner-Jewish debate. Contrary to Trench's claim that the purity terminology needs to be modified to a Gentile audience, the passage itself makes clear that Felix is very well aware even of the position of the Christian sect ("the way") within the Jewish religion (ἀκριβέστερον εἰδὼς, "accurate knowledge" 24:22). This implies a fairly extensive knowledge of the nuances of the Jewish religion, which must include an understanding of purity regulations so defining to first-century Judaism and so obvious in the signs in the temple demarcating the Jewish from the Gentile worship areas. Additionally, Felix's soldiers stationed at the temple are quick to react to the disturbance (21:31, 32), showing they and the governor are aware of the volatility of the occasion of the feast especially in reference to the cult. Paul, being accused over the intricacies of purity regulations, considers Felix to be a qualified judge on these matters as "for many years you have been a judge over this nation" (Acts 24:8).[33] All this must lead to the conclusion that Felix did not need to be

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[33] Paul probably has in mind not only the 4–5 years that Felix has been a governor, but "may include the additional four years or so when Felix served in Samaria as a subordinate to Cumanus immediately prior to his becoming procurator." Additionally, Polhill correctly notes that Paul uses a *capitatio benevolentia,* but "his was markedly contrasting to Tertullus's–no fawning, no stretching of the truth, only a reference to Felix's having for some time been a judge over the Jewish nation." John B. Polhill, *Acts* (NAC 26; ed. David S. Dockery; Nashville, Tenn.: Broadman, 1992), 481.

Paul is in a precarious situation. "Felix's misconduct was notorious" and Taciticus points to Felix as one who "practiced every kind of cruelty and lust, wielding the power of a king with all the instincts of a slave" (*Hist.* 5.9). Steve Mason, *Josephus and the New Testament* (Peabody, Mass.: Hendrickson, 2003), 174. Felix is largely remembered by Josephus in *Jewish War* for crushing terrorists and pseudo-prophets (especially an "Egyptian pseudo-prophet" [2.262] which Paul was mistaken for in Acts 21:38) and

accommodated regarding purity-related terminology. Trench's claim is therefore hard to
maintain.

Third, it is unlikely that κοινός could have replaced βέβηλος in the first place.
Hauck has already noted that the "LXX, however, consistently uses βέβηλος for הֹל, e.g.,
Lv. 10:10."[34] Trench's argument, that a switch from κοινός to βέβηλος indicates an
accommodation to the Gentile audience, bases its impetus on the assumption that κοινός
had replaced βέβηλος as the preferred terminology in the Jewish community. Trench just
assumes this while Hauck seems to hint in this direction by referencing the mention of
κοινός in 1 Macc 1:47. Hauck states that in 1 Macc 1:47, and presumably the other
κοινός passages dealing with defilement (1 Macc 1:62; 4 Macc 7:6), κοινός is used as a

killing many Jews in Caesarea over disputes with their Greek-speaking neighbors
(2.270). Tertullus, in his accusation, portrays Paul as a Jewish terrorist (Acts 24:5) and
religious fanatic of prophet-like stature in an attempt to bias Felix against Paul. Paul,
despite the option to easily identify himself as a Greek-speaking Roman citizen, affirms
his Jewish heritage (24:14–15) and desire to visit the temple in Jerusalem (24:11, 17–18).
He also does not diminish his role in the Christian movement (24:14). Additionally, Paul
does not use flattery to alter Felix's view of him as he does not qualify "judge" with
positive attributes (24:10) or elevating titles as Tertullus has demonstrated (24:2–3).
Paul's defense instead rests solely upon justice as he presents reconstructible, factual
information (24:11–12) and points out the lack of witnesses (24:19) against him. He
appeals to a "clear conscience" (24:16) as motive for his actions.

As has been pointed out by Steve Mason, Paul instead confronts Felix on moral
grounds. In the follow-up visit Felix visits Paul with his wife Drusilla, who had
"abandoned both her lawful husband and Jewish custom when she succumbed to Felix's
enticement." Ibid., 176. Mason points out that Paul speaks to them not about "the
resurrection of Jesus or faith in Christ"—central hallmarks of apostolic message in
Acts—but about "justice, self-control, and coming judgment" (Acts 24:25). "Paul's
discussion . . . seems to have been carefully tailored to the governor's situation." Ibid.,
177. This further underscores that Paul does not employ flattering rhetoric in his defense
or later arraignment even at his own peril.

[34] Hauck, "κοινός, κοινωνός, κοινωνέω, κοινωνία, συγκοινωνός, συγκοινωνέω,
κοινωνικός, κοινόω," *TDNT* 3:791.

translation for the Hebrew חֹל, usually reserved for βέβηλος.[35] But, in contrast to Hauck and Trench, it must be noted that:

a. This suggestion is only conjecture as the Hebrew original is not available to us.

b. These three passages deal exclusively with food impurities and better fit into the same idea of food impurities expressed in Mark 7:15–19 and Acts 10 than profaning the temple precincts.[36]

c. The historical context does not support the shift in terminology. For Hauck's and Trench's argument to work, the Jews must have replaced the LXX wording of βέβηλος with new wording that was completely unknown in their cultural context only to revert back to the LXX terminology when they communicated with Gentiles (Acts 24:6).

d. Most importantly βέβηλος/βεβηλόω remain the predominant terms for purity issues throughout the Second Temple period.[37]

In contrast to the three food defilement (κοινός/κοινόω) references (1 Macc 1:47, 62; 4 Macc 7:6) the term βέβηλος/βεβηλόω is employed sixteen times in 1–4 Maccabees alone, usually in the context of "profaning the temple" (e.g., 1 Macc 2:12). In the end,

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[35] "Only in the apocr. is κοινός used for חֹל instead of βέβηλος, e.g., 1 Macc. 1:47." Ibid.

[36] It will be argued that κοινός better renders a defilement category that is distinct from the "holy-profane" and "clean-unclean" opposites expressed in Lev 10:10.

[37] References to βέβηλος in the Maccabees: 2 Macc 5:16; 3 Macc 2:2, 14; 4:16; 7:15. References to βεβηλόω in the Maccabees: 1 Macc 1:43, 45, 63; 2:12, 34; 3:51; 4:38, 44, 54; 2 Macc 8:2; 10:5.

Hauck's and Trench's attempt to make sense of κοινός does not hold up to scrutiny, though, as shall be pointed out, it has often been repeated.

Fourth, Paul is charged with different offenses that he supposedly committed at his capture. Tertullus in his accusation of Paul before Felix does not present a historically accurate account of the altercation. There are significant changes to the narrative of Acts 21:

a. The charge of the Asian Jews against Paul is "one of causing trouble 'everywhere,' but they had correctly seen it as involving the Jewish law and the temple."[38] Tertullus on the other hand broadens the offense, making it a charge of sedition that threatens the entire empire. This is a "charge the Romans would not take lightly. . . . They *would* take seriously any threat to the *pax Romana*."[39]

b. The riot originated with the Asian Jews who "stirred up the whole crowd and laid hands on him" (Acts 21:27) but Tertullus reverses the incident, blaming Paul for being the "one who stirs up riots among all the Jews" (Acts 24:5).

c. Tertullus adds a charge that does not feature in Acts 21: Paul is a "ringleader of the sect of the Nazarenes" (Acts 24:6). By using the term "Nazarenes" "Tertullus implied that the Christians as a whole were a dangerous and seditious sect."[40] In a similar manner, Tertullus uses the term "ringleader" as pejorative language designed to evoke fear and loathing. Though Paul is

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[38] Polhill, *Acts*, 480.

[39] Ibid.

[40] Ibid.

undoubtedly a key figure in the Christian community (and he does not refute his leadership role) the passage of Acts 21 portrays Paul primarily as a member of a religious community rather than its autocratic leader: He travels to Jerusalem as messenger and bearer of an offering for the Jerusalem church (Acts 24:17), he meets and reports to the Jerusalem leaders (Acts 21:17–19), and follows their instructions (21:23–24, 26).

d. Though the Jews are sure that Paul has already completed an act of defilement (notice the perfect tense of κεκοίνωκεν, Acts 21:28) Tertullus instead charges Paul with the intent to profane the temple (ἐπείρασεν βεβηλῶσαι, Acts 24:6). Not only has the act itself changed, but whether the act has been completed or not also has been altered.

The "accusations (24:5–6) indicate for Luke's audience that Paul's opponents have altered the charges against him (21:28)."[41] This is a case in which Tertullus twists "the facts even more violently than Lysias had done in his letter to Felix,"[42] presenting at best a "half-truth"[43] and "incendiary claims"[44] in an effort to assassinate the character of Paul[45] and deliver "a presentation calculated to excite the intense interest of Felix and the emperor against a Jew."[46]

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[41] Keener, "Some Rhetorical Techniques in Acts 24:2–21," 229.

[42] F. F. Bruce, *The Book of the Acts* (NICNT; ed. F. F. Bruce; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1988), 441.

[43] Simon J. Kistemaker, *Exposition of the Acts of the Apostles* (NTC; Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1990), 837.

[44] Richard I. Pervo, *Acts: A Commentary* (Hermeneia, ed. Harold W. Attridge; Minneapolis: Fortress, 2009), 597.

[45] Ibid.

This legal disposition (Acts 24) is therefore very different from the historical depiction (Acts 21) and should be appropriately viewed as an exaggeration or alteration intended to incite Felix against Paul. It is therefore possible and indeed appropriate to view the third and final charge also as an elevated and exaggerated accusation: The potential defilement (κοινός) of the temple in Acts 21:28 is elevated to a charge of an attempted act of profaning the temple (βέβηλος, 24:6). The two terms κοινός and βέβηλος simply cannot be equated.

Alternate resolution

The passage of Acts 21:28 and 24:6 might be better resolved with a proper and distinct understanding of "defile" (κοινός) versus "profane" (βέβηλος). Two problems arise from the offense and subsequent trial that can be resolved only with this nuanced view of purity language. First, how can the two different purity terms be reconciled? From the literary context, it has already been shown above that a synonymous treatment does not fit into the literary context. Secondly, why is Paul and not Trophimos captured and brought to trial? Pervo already recognizes the peculiarity that there is no mention of Trophimos's capture: "It is worth asking whether the first task would have been to secure and punish the offending foreigners and then attend to the individual responsible for their presence."[47] Pervo goes on to speculate what formal penalty somebody could be charged with for introducing Gentiles into the temple, since no legal charge or precedent is known.

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[46] Winter, "Official Proceedings and the Forensic Speeches in Acts 24–26," 322.

[47] Pervo, *Acts: A Commentary*, 550.

In regard to the first question, establishing a proper definition of the terms will alleviate the tension between the passages. The term βέβηλος as profane is undisputed in its meaning. As shall be noted in detail later, the LXX always renders חלל/חֹל as βέβηλος and places this in direct opposition to קדֹשׁ or ἅγιος (Lev 10:10; 19:8). The former renders an act or state of being as antithetical to God's own nature of holiness.

Κοινός, on the other hand, with the meaning of "defiling," has no background in the Hebrew Bible and is first mentioned in the Second Temple period (1 Macc 1:47). Defilement, as will be demonstrated more fully later on, does not emanate out of the Hebrew Bible purity regulations but instead from purity concerns of the Second Temple period. It is an extension of touch impurity regulations and is applied to a clean animal/human that comes in contact with an unclean animal/human. By their very nature or state-of-being, a clean animal, such as a sheep, cannot become unclean, equivalent to a pig. However, the purity concerns of the Second Temple period declare a clean animal to become "defiled," that is, unfit for sacrificial service and for food if it comes in contact with an unclean animal. In his detailed examination of Acts 10 and 11, Colin House considers κοινός/κοινόω to be part of the "Jewish concept of defilement of association" and applies this to Peter's vision: "What was it that Peter declared to be 'common'? The 'clean' creature associating with the 'unclean' in the sheet. Only the 'clean' could be rendered 'common,' and then only by the 'unclean,' for these 'unclean' creatures were the very agents of defilement."[48]

In regard to the second question, the definition above is essential in explaining why Paul is captured in Acts 21 rather than the (supposedly) actual offending party, the

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[48] House, "Defilement by Association: Some Insights from the Usage of κοινός/κοινόω in Acts 10 and 11," 149.

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Gentile Trophimos. Even if Paul has been deemed to encourage Trophimos to enter the forbidden areas of the temple and thereby profane the temple, it is Trophimos who is the offending party who should be captured and tried. The offense that can be leveled against Paul is that of sedition—inciting a Gentile to enter the temple, not profaning the temple himself.

Since Paul is a Jew and therefore not considered "unclean," he cannot "profane" the temple, but by associating with Trophimos he could "defile" the temple. Assuming that Paul, after completing his ritual washings (21:26; 24:18) and thereby acquiring a state of "cleanness," touches the unclean Trophimos he consequently becomes "defiled." This defilement of Paul, supposedly defiling the temple, is cause for concern and gives the justification to the crowd to capture him. With this understanding of "defilement" Paul can now be charged with an active crime (defilement) rather than merely permitting or encouraging a Gentile to enter the temple.

In summary, the charge of "defilement" would be a correct assessment of the temple event—that is, if it had happened. Luke's use of the correct purity terminology fits the pattern of the historical genre of Acts 21. In Acts 24, on the other hand, the charge of "defilement," in line with the other charges, is grossly exaggerated into a charge of "profaning" the temple. Since the charge cannot be proven, however, as there are no witnesses to testify and Trophimos has not been captured, Tertullus limits the charge to the "attempt of profaning the temple."

In summary, the assumption that κοινός and βέβηλος are synonymous possesses a host of problems. It disregards the genre of the two passages (historical versus legal), the immediate context (temple setting versus incendiary accusation), as well as the peculiarities of the incident, such as Paul's capture instead of Trophimos's. A correct

definition of the purity terms in Acts 21 and 24 best explains the author's use of genres, resolves the problems of the charges, and best clarifies the context.

New International Dictionary of New Testament Theology (NIDNTT)

The *NIDNTT*, in a section on "purity," takes a slightly different route than previous reference works by placing the New Testament ritual system in the setting of an evolutionary development of purity regulations beginning with primitive religions, including Judaism, and culminating in Jesus and the New Testament writings of Paul and John. The Christian church in the first century and the centuries after that, from Marcion to Anabaptist and Pietist, reverted back to the state of primitive religions, according to Hans-Georg Link and Johannes Schattenmann.

Primitive religions attribute dangerous powers to a supernatural but evil force (*tabu*) that is revealed especially in birth, death, and sexual processes. As religious systems progress, the evil spirits are replaced by positive supernatural forces that need to be appeased in order for the human to remain in a beneficiary position. "This is how the demand for cultic purification arose" as the purification rids the individual of the evil and demonic power (*tabu*). Only in more advanced religious systems is the individual "freed from ritual and linked instead to morality, so gaining an ethical character."[49] In addition to this development, the Hebrew Bible uses purity as a cultic measure to ward off neighboring religions. Later Judaism surrounded the "laws of purity with a multitude of casuistic and sometimes grotesque prohibitions and commands."[50] Jesus in conflict with

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[49] H.-G. Link and J. Schattenmann, "Pure," *NIDNTT* 3:103.

[50] Ibid., 3:105.

the Pharisees develops a new concept of purity, by which "he broke through the innermost essence of Judaism and left it behind him."[51] Jesus' elevated view of ethical purity was not readily adopted by the early Christian church. The authors note a regression in the understanding of purity, with the exception of the writings of Paul and John, leading to Marcion, the Anabaptist movement, and Pietism. A Christ-centered concept of purity is liberating "rather than bringing legalism and anxiety to men."[52]

An article on "defilement" in the *NIDNTT* by J. I. Packer examines κοινός/κοινόω in the New Testament. He offers a multitude of translation options: common, impure,

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[51] Ibid., 3:106.

[52] Ibid., 3:108. Space does not permit an adequate response to this view. Suffice it to say that this theory has been repeatedly refuted especially by anthropological modernism. This movement, dominant in the 1920s to 1980s, championed the value of "participant-observation" and rejected "naïve evolutionism." Ronald Hendel summarizes the theory: "An important strand of anthropological modernism is the turning away from evolutionary theories of human culture, which had, in good Victorian fashion, produced triumphal narratives of human ascent from primitive superstition to modern Western science." Ronald S. Hendel, "Mary Douglas and Anthropological Modernism," *Journal of Hebrew Scriptures* 8 (2008): 3. The leading figures of this movement included A. R. Radcliff-Brown, B. Malinowski, E. Durkheim, and Mary Douglas. Mary Douglas refuted this theory as early as her first book on purity issues in Leviticus, *Purity and Danger*, and even more so in her later works. Douglas, *Purity and Danger: An Analysis of the Concepts of Pollution and Taboo*. The responses of purity scholars, foremost Jacob Milgrom, to Douglas's work further substantiated the untenability of an evolutionary view of Judaism and its purity regulations. For a discussion of various methodologies in purity studies see Jonathan Klawans, "Methodology and Idealogy in the Study of Priestly Ritual," in *Perspectives on Purity and Purification in the Bible* (ed. Baruch J. Schwatz et al.; New York: T & T Clark, 2008), 84–95.

Overlooking for a moment the methodological fallacies involved in an evolutionary model, Link and Schattenmann, in order to maintain their view, disregard the Holiness Code in Leviticus, a rich ethical code that demands a high moral treatment of oneself, kin, and foreigners, while at the same time overemphasizing the contentious sentence fragment of Mark 7:19c and downplaying Jesus ratification of the Holiness Code (Mark 12:35) and the Torah in general (Matt 5:17; Mark 7:9–13). In regard to making claims about Jesus' view on purity, Kazen is correct in his warning not to jump hastily to conclusions in Mark 7 since a conflict story by nature and the difficulty of the passage in particular do not warrant a simple answer.

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unclean, defiled, and profane. Packer translates κοινός/κοινόω as unclean in Mark 7 and

Acts 10, noting that in the latter, Peter "was commanded to eat unclean creatures."[53] The

κοινός/κοινόω word group therefore is reminiscent of the old covenant.

<div align="center">Linguistic Studies</div>

The definitions proposed by the reference works, that κοινός is either

synonymous to ἀκάθαρτος or βέβηλος, have generally been accepted by scholars in

various disciplines. This section surveys several authors who to a greater or lesser degree

have wrestled with and at times challenged the standard definitions.

J. Duncan M. Derrett

Contrary to the reference works, J. Duncan M. Derrett cautions against a

conflated view.[54] Instead he reexamines the meaning of κοινός in light of Acts 10. "For

many years, and by this writer amongst others, it has been assumed that κοινός and

κοινόω . . . ought to be rendered 'unclean' and 'to render unclean.'"[55] Derrett's article is

geared to reverse this error and point scholarship in a new direction. "It is painful to

admit an error, and to have helped to mislead others. The facts should be set out, in order

that those who occupy themselves with Christ's attitude to purity and impurity, may start

from the right starting-point."[56]

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[53] J. I. Packer, "Defile," *NIDNTT* 1:448.

[54] Derrett traces κοινός through reference works prior to Bauer's contributions noting that these early dictionaries and lexica more accurately render purity language. Derrett, "κοινός, κοινόω," 112.

[55] Ibid., 111.

[56] Ibid.

Derrett specifically examines Acts 10:14 and discredits the common understanding that κοινός and ἀκάθαρτος are to be understood as two synonyms. "The conjunction καὶ, as is well known, can mean 'and even', 'and especially'. The presence of *both* words shows that they are *not* synonymous."[57] Derrett then applies this understanding to Mark 7:1–23 noting: "Jesus is aware of the difference between 'unclean' and 'profane'. . . . It is the root κοινόω, with this metaphorical gloss, which is the key in the discussion, not ἀκαθαρσία."[58] For Derrett, Jesus is not cleansing the "unclean" animals but removing the issue of "profane" in the context, as exemplified by the κοινός references.

Derrett is correct in his exegetical insight into Acts 10 and Mark 7 but he struggles and ultimately comes short on his definition of κοινός. He asserts that "κοιν- was adopted instead of its near-parallel in classical and Hellenistic Greek, βέβηλος/βεβηλόω, for some reason which must have been clear to NT authors while it may remain a speculation to us."[59] Into this realm of speculation Derrett states his own definition of the term: "κοινός (heb. *ḥol*) is 'profane', the opposite of ἅγιος (*qôdeš*) irreversible by mere volition."[60]

While Derrett gives a detailed exegetical analysis that shows why κοινός cannot be synoymous to ἀκάθαρτος he gives no support for the conclusion of equating κοινός with βέβηλος/βεβηλόω or Hebrew חֹל. It remains merely an assumption on his part.

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[57] Ibid., 117. Italics original.

[58] Ibid., 119.

[59] Ibid., 111.

[60] Ibid.

Christian Stettler

Contrary to Derrett and Hauck, Christian Stettler correctly cites the LXX usage as clear evidence that "*κοινός* and *κοινόω* do not mean 'profane' or 'to profane' in contrast to 'holy', 'to make holy', and are not synonymous with βέβηλος or βεβηλόω which stand for חלל in the LXX."[61] Instead he asserts that "the word κοινός, which first appears in the books of the Maccabees (for example 1 Macc. 1:47, 62; 4 Macc. 7:6), is always used synonymously with ἀκάθαρτος (and as the opposite of καθαρὸς)."[62] Although relegated to a footnote, this definition establishes for Stettler the basic foundation upon which he builds his argument that Jesus' "kingdom of heaven" ethics supersedes the food laws of Lev 11. In support of his absolute claim that κοινός is always synonymous with ἀκάθαρτος Stettler cites Roger P. Booth. Booth, though, in the cited passages, addresses the concept of the washings only in relation to Mark's "defiled hands" (Mark 7:3, 5) based on the evidence of the Hebrew Bible, not the LXX. He distinguishes between different kinds of uncleanness, without any specific reference to the exact terminology or its LXX background. Booth concludes that the accusation is one that "*assumed* [the

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[61] Christian Stettler, "Purity of Heart in Jesus' Teaching: Mark 7:14–23 as an Expression of Jesus' *Basileia* Ethics," *JTS* 55, no. 2 (2004): 472. Moskala agrees with Stettler and expands the research: "It is very significant that the LXX always translates the Hebrew term חל as βέβηλος, and not κοινός. The Septuagint never uses κοινόω for "to make/declare common," but constantly employs βεβηλοῦν 'to profane.' In LXX the Hebrew word טָמֵא is translated ἀκάθαρτος, and טָהוֹר is rendered καθαρός. The adjective κοινός in the sense of 'common/profane' is absent from the LXX. The two pairs חֹל-קָדוֹשׁ and טָהוֹר-טָמֵא in Lev 10:10 are translated in the Septuagint in the following way: ἅγιος-βέβηλος, ἀκάθαρτος-καθαρός. κοινόω with the meaning of cultic profanation is used for the first time in the apocryphal book 4 Macc 7:6." Jiři Moskala, *The Laws of Clean and Unclean Animals of Leviticus 11: Their Nature, Theology, and Rationale (an Intertextual Study)* (Berrien Springs, Mich.: Adventist Theological Society Publications, 2000), 373–374.

[62] Stettler, "Purity of Heart in Jesus' Teaching: Mark 7:14–23 as an Expression of Jesus' *Basileia* Ethics," 472.

hands] to be defiled"[63] because they were unwashed. Contrary to Stettler, this cultic

impurity for Booth is distinct from "the flesh of a creature prohibited for eating by Lev.

11" and "meat which was unclean because the creature had not been duly killed by ritual

slaughter (Lev. 17.4–15)."[64]

Response: κοινός and ἀκάθαρτος in 1 Maccabeans 1:43–50

The passages in the Maccabean books are not as simple as Stettler presumes.

First, of the three passages Stettler lists, only 1 Macc 1:47 places κοινός and ἀκάθαρτος

in proximity. The passages of 1 Macc 1:62 and 4 Macc 7:6 place κοινός in proximity to

μιαίνω and βεβηλόω (1 Macc 1:63)[65] and μιαίνω and μιαροφαγίᾳ (4 Macc 7:6),

respectively. Secondly, as Derrett has accurately pointed out (see above), in Acts 10 the

close proximity of ἀκάθαρτος and κοινός does not necessarily indicate a synonymous

relationship. As in Acts 10 κοινός can cover a distinct but related concept.

The passage under consideration (1 Macc 1:47) places κοινός and ἀκάθαρτος in a

subclause connected by a καί: "to sacrifice swine and defiled animals" (καὶ θύειν ὕεια καὶ

κτήνη κοινὰ). A closer examination of the context of 1 Macc 1:43–50 will clarify the

relationship between κοινός and ἀκάθαρτος. The passage is filled with language denoting

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[63] Booth, *Jesus and the Laws of Purity: Tradition History and Legal History in Mark 7*, 121.

[64] Ibid.

[65] In 1 Macc 1:62 many people of Israel "resolved in themselves to not eat defiled things (κοινός)." The next verse demonstrates the violent nature of the times. People paid with their lives because they did not want to (1) defile (μιαίνω) themselves by means of foods and (2) profane (βεβηλόω) the holy covenant. Though listed in proximity, the terms κοινός and βεβηλόω address very different issues and cannot be seen as synonymous here.

impurity: βεβηλῶσαι (v. 45), μιᾶναι (v. 46), κοινὰ (v. 47), ἀκαθάρτῳ (v. 48), βεβηλώσει
(v. 49). For Stettler's argument, proposing the synonymous relationship between κοινός
and ἀκάθαρτος, to be convincing the subclause καὶ θύειν ὕεια καὶ κτήνη κοινὰ must be a
parallelism in which the second part (καὶ κτήνη κοινὰ) functions as an appositional
phrase to the first (καὶ θύειν ὕεια). [66] In other words the "defiled animals" are unclean
animals such as a "swine." But in the context this is difficult to maintain.

The construction of an infinitive followed by one (v. 48), two (vv. 45, 46, 47), and
even three (vv. 45, 47) object nouns relating to a purity or impurity regulation and linked
by καὶ is the recurring pattern of the passage, including the subclause in question (v.
47b). See table 7.

In this list of seven infinitive subclauses with their respective objects, it is
important to note that the second and third objects relate to the first object thematically
but not appositionally. That is to say the καὶ inserted between the objects introduces a
related concept with the next object but does not function as equating or explaining one
object with another. As an example the "festivals" are related to the "Sabbaths" based on
a similar theme of temporality and worship but the two are not synonymous. It
subsequently follows that the context does not warrant equating "defiled animals" with
the "swine."[67] It should rather be stated that, much like Acts 10, both κοινός and
ἀκάθαρτος fit into the realm of food impurities but differ in their scope and meaning.

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[66] The translators of the NRSV augment the text, adding "other" into the
translation, to emphasize the presumed parallelism: "to sacrifice swine and other unclean
animals."

[67] It would not make sense to call pigs "defiled animals" because they are
intrinsically impure.

Table 7. The Infinitive Clauses of 1 Maccabees 1:43–50

VERSE	INFINITIVE	1ST OBJECT	2ND OBJECT	3RD OBJECT
v. 45	to forbid	burnt offerings	sacrifices	drink offerings
	to profane	Sabbaths	festivals	
v. 46	to defile	sanctuary	priests	
v. 47	to build	altars	sacred precincts	shrines for idols
	to sacrifice	swine	defiled animals	
v. 48	to leave	their sons uncircumcised		

In summary, Stettler's attempt to use passages from the Maccabees to justify a synonymous use of κοινός and ἀκάθαρτος cannot be sustained. First, Stettler simplifies and generalizes the Maccabean material by noting that *all* of the references imply a κοινός/ἀκάθαρτος synonymous relationship. Instead, only 1 Macc 1:47 places the words or categories ("swine" as an "unclean" animal) into proximity. Secondly, the structure of the seven infinitive subclauses within 1 Macc 1:43–50 does not portray a synonymous relationship between multiple objects of an infinitive. As a result it is not possible to sustain the notion that κοινός and ἀκάθαρτος are synonymous. Instead the context calls for a distinct view of the two terms.

Colin House

Colin House's significant study on Acts 10 and 11 has already been noted above, but his discussion of the linguistic nature of κοινός and ἀκάθαρτος deserves a closer look. Based on his examination House concludes that the two words are "separate, albeit

related, concepts. Rather than being synonymous, the relationship is processional or filial, for the Jewish idea of 'commonality'—defilement by association—proceeded or grew from the concept of 'unclean.'"[68]

House bases his conclusions on two observations: First is Peter's own understanding of the terminology as he relates the vision of ch. 10 to the assembly in Jerusalem. Peter testifies that "nothing common or unclean has ever entered my mouth" (κοινὸν ἢ ἀκάθαρτον οὐδέποτε εἰσῆλθεν εἰς τὸ στόμα μου, 11:8) and distinguishes the two terms by the clear disjunctive ἢ (or). Therefore, in Peter's own understanding the terms cannot be considered synonymous. Second, the divine declaration in the vision specifically lists only the "'common'–with no mention of the 'unclean' (Acts 10:15 and 11:9)"[69] as being cleansed by God. The voice addressing Peter in vision "never mentioned 'unclean.' It invariably reprimanded Peter for declaring creatures to be 'common.' He was never directed to consume the 'unclean' creature, but rather immediately to desist from describing as 'common' the creatures that God had declared 'cleansed.'"[70] As a result the divine voice in the vision itself and Peter's understanding during and after the vision clearly speak to a differentiated view of κοινός and ἀκάθαρτος.

Based on this information House proposes that three, not two, categories of defilement exist in Peter's understanding. First, undoubtedly there must be the category of "clean" animals not only by implication, since the text does not explicitly mention the

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[68] House, "Defilement by Association: Some Insights from the Usage of Κοινός/Κοινόω in Acts 10 and 11," 146.

[69] Ibid.

[70] Ibid., 148.

clean animals, but also by virtue of God's cleansing activity (ἃ ὁ θεὸς ἐκαθάρισεν, σὺ μὴ

κοίνου, Acts 10:15). This category of animals is suitable for consumption based on

Hebrew Bible regulations and Peter's understanding. By claiming to have never eaten

anything "common" or "unclean," Peter implicitly acknowledges the eating of "clean"

meat. Second, the category of "unclean" animals stands in contrast to the "clean"

animals. According to Peter "unclean" animals are not suitable for food and no new

directive is given in the passage concerning this category. Finally, the "common" animal

is considered unsuitable for food by Peter, but the voice in the vision invalidates this

position (Acts 10:15 and 11:9). This category then takes an intermediate position between

the opposing pair of "clean" and "unclean."

To understand properly this κοινός category House points to Peter's dilemma by

quoting F. F. Bruce: "It has been asked at times whether Peter could not have killed and

eaten one of the clean animals. But he was scandalized by the unholy mixture of clean

animals with unclean."[71] Bruce's point is crucial as he establishes that the sheet in the

vision contained both clean and unclean animals, an observation that is usually

overlooked.[72]

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[71] Bruce, *The Book of the Acts*, 218, quoted in House, "Defilement by Association: Some Insights from the Usage of κοινός/κοινόω in Acts 10 and 11," 145.

[72] Witherington agrees with Bruce and House in his commentary: "Commentators have sometimes pondered why Peter would think, with all the different sorts of creatures before him, that he was being commanded to eat an unclean animal. The answer may be that more attention needs to be paid to the exact response of Peter—he refers to both the common (κοινόν) and the unclean (ἀκάθαρτον). The former probably refers to something that could be defiled by association with something unclean, the latter to something inherently unclean." Ben Witherington III, *The Acts of the Apostles: A Socio-Rhetorical Commentary* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1998), 350.

The textual evidence that clean animals are included in the heavenly sheet is twofold: First, the animals mentioned cover some of the categories found in Lev 11, "the four-footed animals, creeping things of the earth, and the birds of the air" (Acts 10:12), but importantly include "all" (πάντα) of the animals in each category. Secondly, House points out that Peter uses the graphic description of ἀτενίζω, "to stretch out the eyes," to recount the experience in Acts 11:6. "It was as a result of careful perception" that Peter saw the presence of clean and unclean animals in the sheet.[73] A careful examination of the contents of the sheet would not have been necessary if Peter quickly realized that it contained only unclean animals.

As a result of House's textual examination he argues that the κοινός category is not a part of the regulations of the Hebrew Bible, since the terminology is non-existent in the LXX translation of the Hebrew Bible,[74] but rather a Jewish concept developed in the Intertestamental period:

> It is recognition of the fact that the NT incorporates and reflects this exclusive Jewish sense of κοινός that illuminates why Peter should argue with his Lord over whether he should eat the "clean" creature. In his mind, the "clean" creatures in the sheet of the vision had now been rendered "common" through being defiled by the presence of the "unclean." . . . According to traditional Jewish law, therefore, he could eat neither.[75]

Though House does not detail the historical development of this Jewish concept, he does suggest that the "concept of defilement by association probably grew from God's

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[73] House, "Defilement by Association: Some Insights from the Usage of κοινός/κοινόω in Acts 10 and 11," 145.

[74] House agrees with Hauck's assessment of the LXX's use of κοινός that has already been extensively discussed above.

[75] House, "Defilement by Association: Some Insights from the Usage of κοινός/κοινόω in Acts 10 and 11," 147.

principle of separation" noted in Lev 20:24b–26.[76] House argues that the passage relates the separation of clean and unclean animals to the separation of God's people from the nations surrounding them. But he clarifies that this is not a completely analogous relationship. The distinction of people relies only on the "concept of symbolic separation to the established fact of the two categories of creatures."[77] That is to say, the passage actually does not state that people are clean or unclean on the basis of their affiliation to a nation. God merely uses the concept of a distinction already established in relation to food as a pattern for human interaction.[78]

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[76] Ibid., 150.

[77] Ibid.

[78] House's argument that Lev 20:24b–26 is a likely point from which a Jew-Gentile distinction originated warrants an extended study on the historical development of Jewish thought. This cannot be accomplished in this work. But it seems necessary to point out what the passage in Lev 20 is *not* saying. First, human separation is based on God's action, not human action. Milgrom follows *HALOT* in distinguishing linguistically between two usages of the hiphil verb הִבְדִּיל: "Followed by the preposition *min,* it means 'set apart' the nations . . . , Levites . . . , idolaters . . . , foreigners . . . , and those of mixed descent . . . – from Israel. Followed by *bên* . . . it means 'distinguish.' It is perhaps no accident that in this pericope the subject of the former is God (vv. 24, 26), and of the latter, Israel (v. 25a)." Milgrom, *Leviticus 17–22: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary*, 1761. The responsibility of mankind, according to this passage, is honoring the distinction of clean/unclean animals. It is God himself who separates the Israelites from their environment. Second, separation is one of function and purpose and does not imply hierarchy or superiority. God's action of separation is most pronounced in the creation account as God creates order by separating (הִבְדִּיל, Gen 1:4, 7, 14, 18). God's "choice of Israel is a continuation (and climax!) of the process of creation." Ibid., 1764. God's act of setting apart for example the heavens and the earth, or the day and night, is functional without the notion of a superiority of one over the other. Similarly the distinction of clean and unclean animals is not a hierarchical assessment, but rather the issue of "fit for human consumption." A lion or eagle is not a second-tiered animal due to its inherent state of uncleanness; these animals are used even to describe characteristics of God himself (Isa 31:4; Exod 19:4) and heavenly creatures (Ezek 1:10; 10:14). And yet they are not permissible for food. The "setting apart" of the Israelites by God is therefore best viewed as an election based on a purpose rather than a superiority. In the ABB'A' structure of Lev 20:24b–26 God's purpose for the Israelites is clearly stated in the second call to holiness in v. 26 (A'): "that you should be mine." Third, separation in this passage does not limit contact to the "other." In the BB' section (Lev 20:25a, b), the passage does

According to House the Cross Event then breaks the κοινός barrier, the defilement by association, and ushers in a new era that grants universal interaction between Jews and Gentiles. House concludes his examination of the purity language by applying the results not only to Acts 10 and 11 but also to Rom 14:14 and, more importantly for this work, Mark 7:1–23. In Mark 7:1–23, according to House, the pre-cross Jesus anticipates the significance of that event and models this inclusive behavior in which the κοινός barrier is no longer relevant.[79]

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not clarify how the Israelite contracts the state of being "detestable" and only urges one to "distinguish (הַבְדִּיל) between clean beast from the unclean, and the unclean bird from the clean" (Lev 20:25). In Lev 11:47 this has already been clearly stated: ". . . to make a distinction (הַבְדִּיל) between the unclean and the clean and between the living creature that may be eaten and the living creature that may not be eaten." The eating, not the touching, of a unclean animal places the individual in a state of being "detestable." The passage of Lev 20 does not expand or alter this. In the AA' section (Lev 20:24b, 26) the "setting apart" from other nations is similarly not followed by any practical advice on how to remain separate. But this is also not the task of the Israelite; it is God who is the subject and agent of the "setting apart." Significantly, there is therefore also no contraction of a state of "being unclean" or "detestable" as a result of interaction with foreigners.

In summary, only a historical study can justify House's claim that Lev 20:24b–26 is the foundation for a Jewish "defilement by contact" understanding that leads to the development of a κοινός category in the New Testament era. Nonetheless, it is clear that the passage itself does not advocate such a view. God is the agent who "sets apart" Israel based on function and purpose, not exclusivity. The passage instead addresses election rather than hierarchy. Additionally, the passage is not concerned with how to maintain this state of separation; certainly "defilement by touch" is not in view in this passage.

[79] House bases this understanding of the Cross Event on the aorist tense of Acts 10:15: "What God has cleansed (ἐκαθάρισεν), do not call common." He argues that only the cross is a past event—predating Acts 10—significant enough to warrant such a dramatic change. Turning to Mark 7:1–23 House must now explain why the Gospel presents the same κοινός-καθαρίζω development prior to the cross. He solves this by postulating that Jesus in this pre-cross story anticipated the significance of the cross and acted in light of the cross. The apostles in the post-cross era are to model Jesus' example (Acts 10).

In the Gospel of Mark Jesus is aware of the significance of the cross and foreshadows the event (8:31–32; 9:30–32; 10:32–34). He is also aware of the special nature of his presence among the disciples (the bridegroom is present) and acknowledges that in a post-resurrection era the disciples will adapt by fasting again (Mark 2:18–20). Though the Gospel could have built on this pattern in Mark 7:1–23, neither Jesus in his

Other Interpreters

House's study of Acts 10 and 11 is a thorough and exceptional reevaluation of κοινός in scholarship. Though others have not dealt with the linguistic understanding of κοινός in this detail, other scholars have reached similar conclusions in their examination of Mark 7:1–23.

Roger Booth

In his influential dissertation Roger Booth presents not only a new methodology (historico-legal) but also brings to the mainstream a relative view of Jesus' relation to the law.[80] In regard to the purity terminology he observes that there are

> three different kinds of unclean food. First, in Lev. 11 various creatures are declared to be unclean (טָמֵא) to the people, and they are forbidden to eat such flesh; we will term this *prohibited food.* Secondly, at Lev. 17.14 the people are forbidden to eat the blood of any creature. . . . Food not slaughtered according to the correct ritual is termed *non-kosher.* Thirdly, food which has been defiled by an unclean thing, usually

speeches nor the narrator places defilement concerns in the context of the cross or the post-resurrection era. Instead Jesus, in Mark 7, is clear that the defilement categories are invalid as they are not a part of the "word of God." The defilement concerns are rather a part of the "tradition of the elders" and those who enforce these regulations are denounced as "hypocrites" (Mark 7:6). Additionally, the subsequent narrative units (Mark 7:24–8:10) portray Jesus as treating Gentiles no different from the Jews: They receive healing, teaching, and feeding analogous to the Jews. Jesus' mission in gentile territory is thus a practical application of his teaching in 7:15–23. None of these passages though demonstrate that Jesus acts only in anticipation of the cross. Jesus' actions are thus more reminiscent of "treating the foreigner as a native" and "love the foreigner as yourself" (Lev 19:34) than Jewish election theology.

Similarly, Acts 10–11 makes no mention of the cross as a rationale for the removal of these defilement categories. The cross appears neither in ch. 10 nor does Peter refer to the Cross Event in his defense in Acts 11.

[80] For example Thomas Kazen follows Booth in his basic claims. Because Kazen focuses on the historical Jesus, he places less emphasis on the differences between Mark and Jesus. "The most convincing explanations, however, place the saying in a context *not* of clean and unclean foods (in the sense of Lev 11:1–23), but of ritual hand-washing, and interpret it in a relative sense." Kazen, *Jesus and Purity Halakhah: Was Jesus Indifferent to Impurity?*, 65.

by its touch, is unclean (טָמֵא), and the law on this was developed from Lev. 11.38, as previously discussed. We will call this *contaminated food.*[81]

Booth then goes on to argue more closely the three possibilities and how they relate to the logion of Mark 7:15 in the subsequent pages. The *prohibited food* category never addresses the issue of eating, as Booth points out, as it is either a non-issue or implied in the idea of touching the carcass of an unclean animal (Lev 11:24, 26, 27). In contrast to this Mark 7:15 deals with "the power of the food to defile the *eater,* not the toucher."[82] As a result, Booth rejects the idea that the logion in Mark addresses the *prohibited food* category. Booth also rejects the notion that Mark addresses the *non-kosher foods.* This concept, in which Mark addresses the *non-kosher foods*, is based on Sifra's interpretation of Lev 17:15, 22:8, and 11:40.[83] But contrary to Hyam Maccoby, Booth dates "the material in Sifra to the second century [AD] or later" and this midrash did not "prevail in the time of Jesus, or of Mark or Matthew."[84] After eliminating the

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[81] Booth, *Jesus and the Laws of Purity: Tradition History and Legal History in Mark 7*, 208. Italics original. Although tracing the development of impurity terminology in the Second Temple period is fraught with difficulties, a case could be made that the development of the κοινός term is based on the concept of *contaminated food*. Here the concepts of touch and food come together as in Mark 7. The difference between the κοινός category and the category of טָמֵא/ ἀκάθαρτος animals is that the former is derived impurity that is temporary and remediable unless it cannot be removed (see Lev 11), but the latter is inherent and therefore permanent. See the discussion in the following chapter.

[82] Ibid., 209.

[83] Lev 11:40; 17:15; and 22:8 address the issue of someone eating a carcass, a non-kosher food. The Sifra to Leviticus interprets 17:15 as applying only to the individual eating the carrion of a clean bird and only as long as the digestive track processed the food. In 22:15 the regulation for the priest is interpreted similarly. But in Lev 11:40 Sifra takes a different stance on the same issue: "The toucher of carrion is only defiled if he touches an amount not less than the amount which can be eaten, i.e. a mouthful or olive's bulk." Hyam Maccoby uses this fluctuating interpretation "which cannot naturally be deduced from the verses," as an indication of the ancient origin of this document, but Booth is unconvinced. Ibid.

[84] Ibid.

above two options Booth comes to the conclusion that Jesus was "thinking primarily of *contaminated* food (to which the Pharisaic question related)."[85]

But despite Booth's clear statement to this effect, he does not follow through on the implications of this conclusion. His conclusion instead insists that the passage dismisses all cultic purity regulations. This is predicated upon a twofold hypothesis in his work:

First, Jesus and Mark, the redactor, have contrasting interests in this passage. Jesus takes a relative view of cultic purity while Mark makes it absolute. "Jesus, in our view, did not deny the fact of cultic impurity in the logion, but only treated it as of less gravity than moral impurity."[86] He bases Jesus' position on two arguments:

a. Jesus' historical and cultural setting. The logion (v. 15) "should be interpreted relatively on the ground that an absolute statement by Jesus, that nothing outside man defiles, is unlikely in view of his usual respect for the Pentateuch and the pervasiveness there of the concept of cultic purity."[87]

b. Jesus and Philo take the same allegorical approach to the Hebrew Bible. "There is thus good reason for believing that Philo's attitude was similar to Jesus' in not denying cultic, but placing greater emphasis on ethical rather than cultic purity, and this Philo achieved by the use of allegory."[88] On the other hand Mark

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[85] Ibid.

[86] Ibid., 219. He also states that "the evidence in the passage indicates that Jesus did not deny the concept of cultic purity absolutely, but only relatively in comparison with ethical purity." Ibid., 9.

[87] Ibid., 218.

[88] Ibid., 85.

interprets Jesus—and he himself takes the position—as an absolutist. The "Purity Dispute shows Mark as well versed in the basic principles of the purity laws, but as opposed to those laws in their entirety."[89] Though Booth concedes that v. 19c "may only be a typical summary," he postulates that it "includes prohibited food since Lev. 11 ordains that the forbidden creatures are unclean." He argues this based on God "declaring meats to be permitted diet" in Acts 10:15 and 11:9.[90]

Second, for Booth the pericope of Mark 7:1–23, though showing thematic similarities, contains two separate accounts joined by Mark. Mark is thus "motivated by theological reasons" in placing these passages together.[91] Though Booth acknowledges "the link between vv. 5 and 15, between hand washing and general purity, which causes the prevalence of the root κοιν- in both halves of the passage,"[92] he nonetheless considers Jesus as dealing with "concerns for cultic purity"[93] rather than the "tradition of elders."

Booth's greatest advancement comes in his *historico-legal* study that confirms that the concerns of ritual purity mentioned in Mark were legitimate issues of the time. However, there are several problems with Booth's presentation. The argument for Jesus' relative view of the purity law is contingent upon the connection to Philo and an allegorical approach to passages in the Hebrew Bible, which is more problematic than helpful. Additionally, the relative view is unnecessary should the issue at hand be the

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[89] Ibid., 220–221.

[90] Ibid., 221. Booth does not examine the Acts passages but instead takes them at "face value."

[91] Ibid., 31.

[92] Ibid., 33.

[93] Ibid., 9.

contaminated foods rather than *prohibited foods.* Jesus is not shy in denouncing the religious leaders' understanding in an absolute sense if it conflicts with God's law (Mark 2:17, 19; 27–28; 3:4, 12:10, 24). Furthermore, Booth categorically dismisses arguments for the unity of the passage because Mark's readership was certainly not "intellectually superior to those Corinthians of whom Paul wrote (1. Cor. 1.26) that not many were wise." Therefore any "over-arching structure would, to be discernible need to be plain and explicit, not tortuous or allusive."[94] He also argues against conceptual links in the two parts of the pericope (vv. 1–14 and 15–23) because he doubts "they would have crossed the redactor's mind."[95] Contrary to this argument for simplicity, based on tradition-historical, redaction, form, and historico-legal criticism, Booth proposes an elaborate process of authentic and redacted elements in the pericope of various parties (Jesus, Pharisees, the church, and the redactor Mark). It is highly doubtful that the "simplistic" audience and redactor would have been able to uncover or weave together these strata. Booth's argument actually works against him. It is more probable that the audience, especially if the audience is "simplistic," would have heard and assumed a narrative unit for Mark 7:1–23. Finally, despite his claims for a relative view and the issue of *contaminated foods* instead of *prohibited foods*, Booth in his conclusion extends the reach of the logion of v. 15 from "the defilement of food by unclean hands" first to "unclean food generally" and then to "cultic impurity *in toto*."[96] This conclusion overstates his previous study of the passage.

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[94] Ibid., 30.

[95] Ibid., 33.

[96] Ibid., 219. This is not far from an "absolutist" position and raises the question of how Booth can maintain a strict dichotomy between the setting, position, and theology of the redactor Mark and Jesus.

Daniel Boyarin

Daniel Boyarin approaches the Markan passage from his expertise in Jewish studies and concludes that "when Jesus speaks of the purity or impurity of foods, he is not speaking about the kosher system at all, but about the pharisaic understanding of purity practices."[97] The point of contention in Mark 7, according to Boyarin, is not the dietary laws or kosher rules but the "unclean hands." This then is a very different issue from kosher regulations: "pollution (*tuma'h vetaharah*), is an entirely separate system of rules and regulations that apply to a different sphere of life, namely, the laws having to do with the touching of various objects."[98] Throughout the passage Mark is "such a close observer and manifests such intimate knowledge of pharisaic practice,"[99] as can be clearly examined in his detail on "washing with the fist" (Mark 7:3). This can then also be observed in the careful distinction of pharisaic traditions versus the dietary and kosher regulations of the Hebrew Bible. "So really what the Gospel describes is a Jesus who rejects the pharisaic extension of these purity laws beyond their original specific foundations."[100] These "pharisaic innovations"[101] clearly go "beyond what is written in the Torah."[102]

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[97] Boyarin, *The Jewish Gospels: The Story of the Jewish Christ*, 125.

[98] Ibid., 114.

[99] Ibid., 117.

[100] Ibid., 116.

[101] Ibid., 118.

[102] Ibid., 126.

Yair Furstenberg

Yair Furstenberg, like Boyarin, examines the Jewish background elucidated by

the Markan passage. Along with Boyarin, he shares the premise of the unity of the

passage and the "unclean hands" as the object of Jesus' criticism. He arrives at two

conclusions: First, Jesus countered purity regulations that "were not biblical in origin, but

rather were a Pharisaic innovation which reflected a new understanding of ritual

contamination, one which changed the focus and significance of ritual purity."[103] Second,

Furstenberg demonstrates that "the cultural origin of the hand-washing custom lies in

Greco-Roman practice, and not in the priestly purity laws."[104] He points to the underlying

philosophical shift of the origins of hand impurity as deriving from Greco-Roman table

manners that became customary in Jewish circles, eventually leading Hillel and Shammai

to discuss when best to wash the hands in connection with the meal.[105] While the origin

was outside of Judaism, the justification for the practice was "a concern that

contamination will spread from the impure hands" through touch.[106] Furstenberg lists

four "innovations" in the rabbinic approach that counter the biblical purity laws and thus

are at the root of Jesus' reaction against them in Mark 7: "(a) hands are susceptible to

light impurity which does not affect the whole body, and (b) contaminated food can

transmit impurity to the person eating it . . . (c) contamination can spread from food to

food, and (d) by coming into contact with liquids, impurity can be transmitted to vessels

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[103] Yair Furstenberg, "Defilement Penetrating the Body: A New Understanding of Contamination in Mark 7.15," *NTS* 54, no. 2 (2008): 178.

[104] Ibid.

[105] Ibid., 192.

[106] Ibid., 193.

and people."[107] Like House, Furstenberg concludes that the issue Jesus is addressing is a new tradition of touch impurities, not the Hebrew Bible purity laws. In fact, Jesus fortifies the Hebrew Bible purity laws against the additional "innovations."

Jiři Moskala

Moskala's dissertation on the clean and unclean animals of Lev 11 establishes the close inter-textual links between the creation account and the dietary restrictions of Lev 11 and examines possible explanations for the dietary laws. In the conclusion of his work Moskala addresses the New Testament implications of his study and suggests ten conclusions from his studies that need to be considered in New Testament studies:

> 1. The rationale for the dietary laws is respect for the Creator. This motive and concept is also valid in the New Testament. . . .
> 2. A comparative study of the various kinds of uncleanness reveals that there are two distinctive types. . . . One type/category of uncleanness is ceremonial/ritual and temporary, and the other one is nonritual and permanent.
> 3. There is nothing typological or symbolic in the nature or rationale of the Mosaic dietary laws regarding clean and unclean animals/food. . . .
> 4. These Pentateuchal laws of permitted and forbidden food have a perpetual character. . . .
> 5. An alien (גֵּר) who lives in the midst of God's people (Israel) had to observe these laws (Lev 17:13–14). . . .
> 6. The origin of these laws is tied to pre-Mosaic times, at least to the time of Noah.
> 7. The call to holiness, the dominant theme in the book of Leviticus, contains a strong emphasis and admonition for Christians in the New Testament writings (1 Pet 1:15–16; Heb 12:14). . . .
> 8. The Pentateuchal dietary regulations include an ethical motivation. Respect for life is also emphasized in the New Testament.
> 9. The close connection between dietary prohibitions, warning against idolatry, and prohibition of all immoral sexual behavior (all three activities are called תּוֹעֵבָה "abomination") is a strong indication that this triune entity has to find continuity in the New Testament era.
> 10. The aspect of health should not be overlooked.[108]

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[107] Ibid., 196.

[108] Moskala, *The Laws of Clean and Unclean Animals of Leviticus 11: Their Nature, Theology, and Rationale (an Intertextual Study)*, 371–373.

In a brief discussion on how these principles could resolve the difficult passages of Mark 7:1–23 and Acts 10–11 Moskala cites and builds on House's study. Additionally, Moskala adds a brief discussion on the relevance of Acts 15:20 and Pauline texts to this discussion.

Clinton Wahlen

Wahlen's dissertation examines purity issues in the Synoptic Gospels especially in relation to "unclean spirits" (πνεύματα ἀκάθαρτα). In dealing with the contrast of clean and unclean, Wahlen also examines the food defilement passage of Mark 7:1–23. This comparative perspective gives him a unique approach to evaluate the purity issues of Mark 7 in relation to other passages, since he does not approach the passage with the premises of a traditional commentator—the pericope more or less in isolation—nor a historical Jesus scholar—the focus on the actions and attitudes of Jesus alone. Instead, he utilizes a biblical theology approach to the study of the text. Wahlen argues that the cleansing activity of v. 19 (καθαρίζω) needs to be understood in relation to other cleansing events in the Gospel (καθαρίζω, Mark 1:41) and additionally this controversy on food needs to be examined in light of the three eating controversies in Mark 2:13–17; 18–22; 23–28. Each of these passages focuses on a "theme of newness" in contrast to "the Jewish leaders' desire to maintain the old ways"[109] and therefore "the issue concerns not the validity of a certain biblical law but whether or not the Pharisaic *halakhah* in connection with that law is obligatory."[110] In the pericope of Mark 7:1–23 he finds evidence for this in the repeated "denigration of παράδοσις . . . sandwiched between

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[109] Wahlen, *Jesus and the Impurity of Spirits in the Synoptic Gospels*, 72.

[110] Ibid., 75.

similarly derogatory references."[111] Wahlen considers the two crucial questions for a proper understanding of the passage to be: What is meant by 'cleansing'? and What is meant by 'food'? In regard to the first question, he argues that the defilement (κοινός) "implies a form of ritual defilement which is of a less serious nature than that which the Torah specifies, hence the need only to wash one's hands."[112] The cleansing then is the rejection of "a distinction and the Pharisaic scruples which result from [tradition]. . . . In fact, the passage gives no hint that unclean meats are under consideration."[113] In regard to the second question, Wahlen argues that in the LXX, Josephus, and Philo, food is "not normally understood to include unclean animals or meat improperly slaughtered."[114] Food is then not all things *edible*, but instead all things *permissible*. As a result "a better translation of 7.19c would be, 'Thus he declared ritually pure all (permissible) foods'."[115]

Wahlen's work excels in examining the food controversy of Mark 7:1–23 within the framework of other food controversies in the Gospel and in distilling the problem to two main questions. Unfortunately, the work does not demonstrate how he arrived at these conclusions. He lists as his methodology a combined redaction-critical and narrative approach, but it remains unclear throughout the work where and under what circumstances he chooses what approach. This is also apparent in the passage at hand. On the one hand he ascribes to the author, Mark, a heavy-handed, intervening, redaction of

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[111] Ibid., 76. Wahlen lists the narrative aside of vv. 3–4 and the *qorban* example as evidence for additional "derogatory references."

[112] Ibid., 77.

[113] Ibid.

[114] Ibid., 78.

[115] Ibid.

the original material in Mark 7:1–23. On the other hand the pericope is assumed—never argued—to be a narrative unit in which the first section explains the second.[116]

In a second study, an article on "Peter's Vision and Conflicting Definitions of Purity," Wahlen builds on House's study of Acts 10–11. Wahlen states, similarly to House, that "upon examination of the vision in its context, κοινόν and ἀκάθαρτον appear to be used as distinct terms."[117] He concludes that κοινός is an "intermediate category of purity" between the holy (ἅγιος) and the unclean (ἀκάθαρτος) and should be treated as "potentially defiled and hence unacceptable as food" but not equivalent to unclean.[118] Wahlen expands House's study by including two important sections:

First, he deals with κοινός references in Maccabees. In 1 Macc 1:47, 62 the author cannot refer to "the eating of unclean animals because this has been clearly referred to already in v. 48." Instead the κοινός food "must refer to eating clean animals which are somehow objectionable *as food*, not just unacceptable as a sacrifice."[119] The reference to the verb κοινόω in 4 Macc 7:6 is used in the context of eating a *clean* animal (4 Macc 6:15). Eleazar, an elderly leader of the people (4 Macc 5:4), considers this inappropriate. "Even clean meat, if received from a Gentile and so presumably offered to idols (εἰδωλόθυτος, 5.2, 26), could be potentially defiling."[120]

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[116] This present study agrees with Wahlen's ultimate conclusions, but attempts to establish that Mark is very precise and careful in his explanatory remarks and the pericope is a carefully constructed unit.

[117] Wahlen, "Peter's Vision and Conflicting Definitions of Purity," 510.

[118] Ibid., 514.

[119] Ibid., 512.

[120] Ibid.

Second, he explores how the idea of touch defilement might have advanced from animals to humans. He suggests that the Rabbinic literature dealt extensively with the question of how to apply issues of purity regarding food when interacting with a Gentile.[121] According to Wahlen, this led to a heightened sense of purity defilement that eventually led to the categorization of humans into the categories of "clean," "common," and "unclean" as Israel, the God-fearers, and Pagans, respectively. He sees this confirmed in "the vision likening people to animals of varying purity." This is "significant in light of the few hints that we have about Pharisaic *halakhah* related to food."[122] In the vision God "cleansed" the "common" category, allowing Peter to meet with the household of Cornelius.

Wahlen's conclusion reflects an attempt to apply systematically the concept of the vision to the reality of Jew-Gentile relations in the first century. The contribution on Second Temple period is helpful but Wahlen's implicit definition of κοινός as an "intermediary" purity category has a number of challenges.

First, Wahlen applies an overly broad semantic range to the term κοινός: On the one hand it includes Jews with "unwashed hands" (Mark 7:2); on the other hand it refers to Gentiles who have accepted the Jewish faith (the "God-fearers," Acts 10:2). Also on the one hand it signifies an increase in defilement—from clean to defiled (Mark 7:2); on the other hand a decrease—from unclean to defiled (Acts 10:2). It is difficult to maintain such a breadth of meaning while at the same time attempting to establish nuances in the

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[121] Wahlen mentions the entire tractate of *Demai* as well as *b. Pesaḥ 9b,* 15a, 20b, *b. Nid.* 5b–6a, and *Ṭehar.* 5.10–14. He acknowledges the late date of these tractates but argues that the debate is very similar to material from the Second Temple period and that a line of argument can be established even if the specifics remain hazy. Ibid., 513.

[122] Ibid., 515.

distinction of κοινός from ἀκάθαρτος. Wahlen is not incorrect in identifying κοινός as an intermediary position between clean and unclean, but this is a result of its definition, not the definition itself. That is to say, κοινός is defined as touch defilement—or rendering a clean object or person defiled due to contracting the touch of an unclean object or person[123]—resulting in an intermediary position.

Second, Wahlen's systemization of the κοινός category is given priority over the textual evidence of Acts 10–11. The text of Acts 10 is concerned with purity understanding from a Jewish perspective as represented in Peter. The concerns of increasing his defilement prohibited him and other Jews from associating with Gentiles. In this story Cornelius is only a side character who prompts the issue. The passage therefore does not address the changes of Gentile defilement but instead the perceived changes a Jew would have been concerned with. Parsons's examination of the text, as noted below, takes careful account of the structural and linguistic elements in the passage and therefore renders the intended meaning of the author more clearly.

Mikeal C. Parsons

Mikeal C. Parsons takes the difficult passage of Acts 10:14 as a case in point to explore whether the conjunction καὶ at times can function in a disjunctive manner (as "or"). The comparison of the key phrase of Acts 10:14, κοινὸν καὶ ἀκάθαρτον, and 11:8, κοινὸν ἢ ἀκάθαρτον, allows a direct comparison. Parsons contends that, contrary to Derrett, the change from the conjunctive καὶ to the disjunctive ἢ is very significant, especially since the majority of Peter's recounting of the vision in ch. 11 is verbatim of ch. 10. He argues that the conjunctive καὶ in 10:14 represents Peter's Jewish view that

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[123] Note the singular direction of impurity contraction.

Gentiles are unclean and association with them will defile the Jew. In 11:8 Peter then

renders his new insight based on the vision: "Jews (like Peter who were made

κοινός\"unclean") by association with Gentiles are now clean."[124]

> Acts 10–11, then, is as much about the conversion of Peter's perspective as it is about Cornelius' conversion to the Christian sect. . . . To render as κοινὸν καὶ ἀκάθαρτον "common or unclean" is to obfuscate for the modern audience the difficult path Peter must follow in order to be able to accept that God is able to cleanse both the "defiled" Jew, impure by association with the Gentile, and the Gentile, who is unclean by nature.[125]

To reach this conclusion though, Parsons must—and does—assume that the two

purity terms refer to different purity categories. Since his focus is on the conjunctive and

disjunctives, Parsons assumes definitions of κοινός and ἀκάθαρτος that are based on the

work of House: "Luke intends his audience to understand κοινός to refer to the Jew who

is ritually defiled by association with a Gentile and ἀκάθαρτος to refer to Gentiles who

are by nature unclean."[126]

Parsons supports this in two ways: First, he establishes a parallelism in the Greek

text of Acts 10:28 in which he corresponds A "men of Judea" with the A' "defiled" and

the B "foreigner" with the B' "unclean."[127] In this Parsons takes a different position from

Wahlen. Wahlen argues that the κοινός category represented the "God-fearers" as an

intermediate category between the clean Jews and the unclean Gentiles. Parsons bases his

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[124] Mikeal C. Parsons, "'Nothing Defiled and Unclean': The Conjunction's Function in Acts 10:14," *PRSt* 27, no. 3 (2000): 268. "Here in chapter 11, Peter's subsequent reflection on the meaning of the vision has shaped his retelling of it and puts him in a better light, since the retelling does not reflect Peter's ignorance of the 'divine semantics' at work." Ibid.

[125] Ibid., 271.

[126] Ibid., 264.

[127] Ibid., 266.

κοινός category appropriately on the concept of touch defilement, as the analogy to the canvas in the vision indicates, and therefore correctly places "defiled Jews"—Jews who have come in contact with a Gentile—in the κοινός category. Second, Parsons argues for the Jewish practice of isolation in the Second Temple period. This "isolation was almost altogether a direct result of Jewish adherence to dietary regulations and laws of impurity."[128] Jubilees 22:16 supports this by stating: "Keep yourself separate from the nations, and do not eat with them; and do not imitate their rites, nor associate yourself with them."

Summary

In summary, κοινός is an uncommon term in purity terminology. As a purity term, it is unique to the New Testament and books of the Maccabees and is predominantly associated with some food-related contamination. In the New Testament this purity category has been cleansed or annulled (Mark 7:19; Acts 10:15). The handful of relevant passages (1 Macc 1:43–50; 4 Macc 76; Matt 15:1–11/Mark 7:1–23; Acts 10/11; Acts 21:26/24:6; Rom 14:14) have spawned among scholars widely divergent and mutually exclusive hypotheses of the relationships between κοινός, ἀκάθαρτος, and βέβηλος.

J. Duncan M. Derrett comes to the conclusion that κοινός is equivalent to βέβηλος based on his understanding that it cannot be synonymous to ἀκάθαρτος in Mark 7:1–23 and Acts 10–11. Christian Stettler, on the other hand, argues that κοινός must be synonymous with ἀκάθαρτος based on 1 Macc 1:47, but certainly not to be confused with βέβηλος. The standard reference works, the *Greek-English Lexicon* and the *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament,* do not clarify these opposing views but exacerbate the

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[128] Ibid., 265.

problem by allowing a synonymous usage of κοινός, ἀκάθαρτος, and βέβηλος, either by explicit mention (*TDNT*) or in translation (BDAG). Of the reference works only *Trench's Synonyms* clearly defines κοινός as equivalent to βέβηλος based on Acts 21:28 and 24:6.

In the second part of the twentieth century, purity studies gained a renewed interest in various scholarly disciplines with the famous contributions of Mary Douglas, Jacob Milgrom, Jacob Neusner, and E. P. Sanders as well as the more recent studies of Roger Booth, Jonathan Klawans, and Hannah Harrington. The result is a more nuanced view of Hebrew Bible purity regulations than the conflated view of the beginning of the century as exemplified by the reference works. Subsequent scholarship has not only differentiated between holy and unholy, clean and unclean (Lev 10:10) but also between ritual and moral uncleanness.

The traditional view that has equated κοινός to either ἀκάθαρτος, βέβηλος, or both—reference works, most commentaries, and representatives like Derrett and Stettler—argues either for some form of parallelism or appositional/epexegetical use of κοινός in relation to ἀκάθαρτος or βέβηλος in Acts 10–11, 21:28 and 24:6, or 1 Macc 1:42–50, 64, or concludes that there is no better alternative than to just assume the synonymous nature of the terms (Derrett). This chapter has argued that these conclusions do not satisfactorily deal with the passages at hand and that an alternate perspective on purity terminology needs to be explored.

Colin House's study is a radical examination of κοινός as he argues against the prevalent assessments of κοινός and instead advocates that κοινός is a unique and independent category of impurity based on his work in Acts 10–11. For House κοινός is neither related to the purity regulations of Lev 11–15 as exemplified by ἀκάθαρτος, nor related to the aspect of holy versus profane (ἅγιος versus βέβηλος, Lev 10:10). Instead

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κοινός is merely a Jewish custom that developed in the Second Temple period based on a concept of touch defilement. House's view has found followers in Moskala, Wahlen, Witherington, and Parsons and, on a more general note, support from Boyarin, Furstenberg, Booth, and Kazen.

As House and later Parsons have aptly shown, a distinct view of κοινός best resolves the issues in Acts 10–11. On the textual level this view best explains (1) the conjunctive and disjunctive markers in Acts 10:14 and 11:4 and (2) God's singular cleansing activity of the κοινός and not the ἀκάθαρτος (Acts 10:15). On the contextual level this view best explains (1) Peter's reluctance to eat a clean animal from the sheet and his stringent observation that he has not eaten anything "common and unclean," (2) the purity concerns of first-century Jews in regard to Gentiles,[129] and (3) the continued concern for food matters at the Jerusalem Council (Acts 15:29).

In this chapter the additional passages of Acts 21:28/24:6 and 1 Macc 1:43–50 have been examined in order to clarify the purity terminology. Several reference works have argued that κοινός and βέβηλος should be viewed as synonyms based on the switch from κοινός (Acts 21:28) to βέβηλος (Acts 24:6) in the description of the same event of Paul entering the temple. But this view does not take into account the different genres (historical versus legal), settings (temple versus Felix's court), and contexts (Paul's journey to support the brethren and worship at the temple versus Tertullus's vilification of Paul before Felix). Additionally, it does not explain why Paul, not Trophimos, is captured and accused before Felix. Instead, applying to the passages a view of touch

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[129] It is difficult to establish a reason why Peter could not have visited Cornelius without this concept of contamination through touch that renders a Jew defiled. The idea of associating with an immoral individual has already been removed in the introduction (Acts 10:1–2).

defilement (21:28) versus profanation (24:6) resolves the issue. Paul could correctly be accused of entering the temple in a defiled (κοινός) state under Jewish customs if he had come in contact with an unclean person after his ritual washings. In the slanted accusation, however, Tertullus is not able to provide any evidence of this defilement (κοινός), neither witnesses nor Trophimos. Tertullus exaggerates the claims, raising them to the level of profaning (βέβηλος) the temple. This exaggeration of Tertullus is characteristic of each of his accusations against Paul. Tertullus' speech cannot be understood as an objective retelling of the temple event in ch. 21 and therefore the purity terminology cannot be simply equated.

The passage in 1 Macc 1:47 lists "swine" and "defiled animals" (ὕεια καὶ κτήνη κοινὰ) together in a short subclause and this has been used to link κοινός to ἀκάθαρτος. But it is impossible to argue for a parallelism or an appositional syntactical construction in this phrase since the context presents seven identical syntactical constructions in succession in which the word pairs are complementary rather than repetitive or explanatory. The passage instead demonstrates that the two terms cannot be seen as covering the same semantic domain.

Based on the above discussion it is thus paramount to differentiate properly between these three purity terms:

1. The word pair ἅγιος and βέβηλος should be rendered as "holy" and "profane/unholy."

2. The word pair καθαρός and ἀκάθαρτος and their derivatives should be translated as "clean" and "unclean" or "pure" and "impure."[130]

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[130] The nuance between "clean/unclean" and "pure/impure" can be established based on context: For an ontological difference "clean/unclean" is the better choice, while defilement by actions is better rendered with "pure/impure."

3. Finally, κοινός assumes a touch contamination that renders an otherwise clean animal or human as "defiled"—a state of contamination that is neither "clean" nor "unclean." Thus, a "clean" animal or human that comes in contact with an "unclean" animal or human is rendered "defiled."

The implications for Mark 7:1–23 are profound. Since there is no evidence to equate κοινός with either ἀκάθαρτος or βέβηλος[131] and instead the passages in question unequivocally favor a touch defilement definition of κοινός, the concern of Mark 7:1–23 must be equally placed under the heading "conflict over touch defilement." The cleansing activity (καθαρίζω, Mark 7:19) relates solely to the category of touch defilement (κοινός) as representative of the "tradition of the elders." Extrapolations to Hebrew Bible laws are unsupported by the text and thus mere conjecture.

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[131] While the terms cannot be equated, they all address some form of defilement and therefore are conceptually linked. This is also true of κοινός which comes from contact with the "unclean" category.

CHAPTER 5

INTERTEXTUALITY

Introduction

Explicitly or implicitly, intertextuality has been an important element in understanding the pericope of Mark 7:1–23 among all scholars. Scholars adopting the traditional position have posited that Jesus abrogated the food laws of Lev 11. Historical Jesus scholars have generally asserted that Jesus maintained purity regulations, but that Mark's narrative aside (Mark 7:19) adapts Jesus' saying and expands it, thereby negating the purity laws, including the dietary restrictions. Regardless of their opinion as to who abrogates the food laws regarding clean/unclean animals, both groups agree on the intertextual relationship of Mark 7:1–23 and the dietary restrictions of Lev 11.

The question of whether the regulations of clean and unclean animals in Leviticus actually serve as the proper antecedent for the Markan conflict story has not been substantiated or challenged: The common themes in Mark 7 and Lev 11 of food, eating, and the law have so far seemed sufficiently clear to establish the interrelationship between the clean/unclean to validate the background of the dietary restrictions (Lev 11).

However, the present chapter of this dissertation questions this long-held assumption based on an intertextual study that examines the literary links, thematic echoes, and logical progression of the passage. Instead of the regulations outlining the clean and unclean animals (Lev 11:1–23, 41–43) as the backdrop against which Jesus or

Mark speaks, it will be argued that the more appropriate intertextual connection is the defilement of a human by a carcass in Lev 11:24–40. Although the regulations on unclean animals and the contamination through a carcass are located in the same chapter, the two should not be confused. The former addresses a permanent state of defilement for the animal based on its nature and offers no recourse to the human in the event of consumption. The latter refers to an unnatural state for the human in which physical ritual impurity is contracted and can be remedied through ritual washings and time.

The intertextual parallel between the carcass defilement in Lev 11:24–40 and Mark 7:1–23 is based on three components: linguistic, thematic, and logical connections. In the linguistic section, word parallels between the two passages will be examined, showing that the links between Mark 7:1–23 and the central section of Lev 11 dealing with touch contamination are significantly closer than to the earlier section regarding distinctions between clean and unclean animals. Regarding the thematic parallels, the previous chapter has already demonstrated that the conflict in Mark 7:1–23 ensues over the issue of the "defiled (κοινός) hands"—a Second Temple period expansion of the concept of touch contamination. In Lev 11 the middle section (vv. 24–40) introduces the topic of touch contamination that is then further developed in Lev 12–15. The dietary restrictions between clean and unclean meats (Lev 11:2–23; 41–43) do not address touch impurity at all. Finally, in the section on the logical connection this study follows the progression of both passages and finds that both Mark 7:1–23 and Lev 11, after addressing purity concerns, climax in ethical exhortations.

Clarification on Intertextuality

As has been lamented by scholars, the "the term intertextuality is used in such diverse and imprecise ways that it becomes difficult to know what is meant by it."[1] Many have abandoned the term altogether, including Julia Kristeva, who initially coined the term; instead, she now prefers "transposition." In the biblical disciplines many have labeled books and chapters "The Old Testament in the New Testament" to avoid the ambiguous expression altogether.[2] On the other hand, Grant Osborne argues that the word intertextuality would not be the first word in biblical scholarship to be contentious. Instead of abandoning the term, "we must define it carefully."[3] Following this line of argument, a short history of thought will be presented and intertextuality will be defined as it is used in this study.[4]

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[1] Richard B. Hays, Stefan Alkier, and Leroy A. Huizenga, eds., *Reading the Bible Intertextually* (Waco, Tex.: Baylor University Press, 2009), xi. See also G. K. Beale, *Handbook on the New Testament Use of the Old Testament* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2012), 39.

[2] Cf. *The Old Testament in the New Testament: Essays in Honour of J.L. North* (JSNTSup 189; ed. Stanley E. Porter; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 2000), 16; Beale, *Handbook on the New Testament Use of the Old Testament*.

[3] Grant R. Osborne, *The Hermeneutical Spiral: A Comprehensive Introduction to Biblical Interpretation* (Downers Grove, Ill.: IVP Academic, 2006), 331.

[4] Only a brief overview is possible in this study with the express purpose of clarifying the definition of intertextuality as employed by this study. Most examinations of intertexuality present the conclusions a particular author has drawn but lack the hermeneutical discussion on which the study was based. This brief overview is intended to give clarity to the following discussion.

Development of Intertextual Studies[5]

Julia Krestiva introduced the term intertextuality in 1969 based on

poststructuralism and her literary studies with Mikhail Bakhtin. The original intent

espoused by Kristeva was a multidirectional dialogue between various authors, genres,

and eras. To her, a text was a sign no different from any other cultural marker and the

"reader is always engaged in the production of meaning through creating dialogical

relationships between the text and other sign systems."[6] Her approach, then, is

appropriately considered a semiotic methodology in which "the distinction between 'text'

and 'culture' was dissolved altogether."[7]

Biblical studies adopted the term intertextuality but did not consistently apply

Kristeva's poststructuralist ideology. Some biblical scholars applied the term to

structuralist studies like source criticism[8] and later canon criticism.[9] Others continued the

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[5] For a deeper discussion of the development of intertextuality in literature see Graham Allen, *Intertextuality* (London: Routledge, 2011). Niall McKay traces the distinctive area of intertextuality in biblical studies and highlights different eras: At first intertextuality examined relationships based on sources, then culture, and later history. After Richard Hay's historical focus studies turned to "playful intertextuality" as the intertextuality of Hollywood movies and the New Testament were explored (see Roland Boer, "Christological Slippage and Ideological Structures in Schwarzenegger's Terminator," *Semeia* 69/70 (1995): 165–193; Susan Lochrie Graham, "Intertextual Trekking: Visiting the Iniquity of the Fathers Upon 'the Next Generation'," *Semeia* 69/70 (1995): 195–219 and concluding with ideological forces. Niall Mckay, "Status Update: The Many Faces of Intertextuality in New Testament Study," *R&T* 20 (2013): 84–106.

[6] *Reading the Bible Intertextually*, xii.

[7] Ibid., xiii.

[8] George W. Buchanan, *Introduction to Intertextuality* (Lewiston, N.Y.: Edwin Mellen Press, 1994). Buchanan gives examples of a variety of intertexual approaches including source criticism, Jewish midrash, typology, and inner-biblical links.

[9] Mckay, "Status Update: The Many Faces of Intertextuality in New Testament Study," 86.

poststructuralist theory of Kristeva and continued to expand the concept to the fields of

semiotics and reader-response theory.[10] Even though the starting position of the groups of

scholars is the same—the biblical text—the results have been dramatically different.

In order to portray the differences on the topic of intertextuality in biblical

scholarship it is helpful to examine two representatives of these opposing views: Steve

Moyise and Gregory C. Beale.[11] These two scholars have particularly engaged each other

in questions of intertextuality in the book of Revelation, in which the issues of

intertextuality are especially complex.

Steve Moyise has stated that intertextuality is not "a method but a theory"[12] in

which the meaning of the text is not limited just to a citation or interpretation of an

original work by a later author but where the original work also interprets the later

work—hence the often-cited phrase "dialogical"[13] to express this concept. He arrives at

this point after noticing that scholars for centuries have not been able to agree on the

allusion of some New Testament passages to texts in the Hebrew Bible or what intent the

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[10] Ibid.

[11] Jon Paulien examines the differences between Beale and Moyise, elicits their response, and attempts to find a middle ground. Jon Paulien, "Dreading the Whirlwind: Intertextuality and the Use of the Old Testament in Revelation," *AUSS* 39, no. 1 (2001): 5–22; Jon Paulien, "New Testament Use of the Old Testament," in *"For You Have Strengthened Me": Biblical and Theological Studies in Honor of Gerhard Pfandl in Celebration of His Sixty-Fifth Birthday* (ed. Martin Pröbstle; St. Peter am Hart, Austria: Seminar Schloss Bogenhofen, 2007), 167–188.

[12] Steve Moyise, "Intertextuality and Historical Approaches to the Use of Scripture in the New Testament," in *Reading the Bible Intertextually* (ed. Richard B. Hays, Stefan Alkier, and Leroy A. Huizenga; Waco, Tex.: Baylor University Press, 2009), 23.

[13] Steve Moyise, "Intertextuality and the Study of the Old Testament in the New Testament," in *Old Testament in the New Testament* (*JSNTSup* 189, ed. Stanley E. Porter; Sheffield, England: Sheffield Academic Press, 2000), 25.

author pursued. This "reality" has persuaded Moyise to criticize traditional scholarship and allow a multitude of meanings. He sees the value of historical-critical studies in their analysis of the text and the historical and cultural context, but he feels they overstep the bounds when examining authorial intent and meaning. As a result Moyise's intertextual theory allows a wide spectrum of meaning to be attributed to a given text. Moyise is aware that this carries the danger of losing the original setting and historical context. Moyise is aware of these two conflicting ideologies and their respective benefits and deficiencies. On the one hand, he notes that "historical criticism that only pursues original authorial intention is completely unsuited for studying Scripture," and on the other hand, studies—such as intertextual theory—that base themselves on "poststructuralism locate meaning in an infinite matrix of possible influences and are thus unable to say anything definite about a text."[14] Moyise then proposes a complementary approach in which both studies contribute equally to the final result.

Gregory Beale, on the other hand, maintains that since there is an original author behind the words of Scripture, there was an original intent and a specific meaning. Building on E. D. Hirsch, K. J. Vanhoozer, and N. T. Wright, Beale argues for "critical realism."[15] Although a scholar might not be able to uncover the full intent of the original author, it does not follow that "we can retrieve nothing from what has been said or

[14] Moyise, "Intertextuality and Historical Approaches to the Use of Scripture in the New Testament," 32.

[15] E. D. Hirsch Jr., *Validity in Interpretation* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1967); Kevin J. Vanhoozer, *Is There a Meaning in This Text? The Bible, the Reader, and the Morality of Literary Knowledge* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1998); N. T. Wright, *The New Testament and the People of God* (vol. 1 of *Christian Origins and the Question of God*; Minneapolis: Fortress, 1992).

written."[16] Beale argues against Moyise's position by pointing out that (1) writers in the New Testament follow the original intent found in the Hebrew Bible;[17] (2) the author John, in Revelation, is aware of the context of Hebrew Bible passages when he alludes to them; (3) in the cases where New Testament writers do shift the original meaning, the source in the Hebrew Bible already had this trajectory in mind; and (4) the method of allegory, prevalent in the first century CE, is not employed by New Testament writers. He concludes that New Testament writers carefully applied passages from the Hebrew Bible into new contexts.[18] Subsequently, Beale disagrees with the notion of multiple or "circular" interpretations and instead proposes a step-by-step "approach to interpreting the Old Testament in the New Testament."[19]

Definition of Intertextuality

The present dissertation chapter approaches the topic of intertextuality from the perspective that intertextuality is a method rather than a theory, even if this challenges the original intent of Kristeva and later semioticians such as Moyise. For this chapter intertextuality between the two biblical testaments will be defined as the "study of the

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[16] Beale, *Handbook on the New Testament Use of the Old Testament*, 31.

[17] See for example, David Instone Brewer: "The predecessors of the rabbis before 70 CE did not interpret Scripture out of context; did not look for any meaning in Scripture other than the plain sense; and did not change the text to fit their interpretation, though the later rabbis did all these things." David Instone Brewer, *Techniques and Assumptions in Jewish Exegesis before 70 CE* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1992), 1. See also the collection of works in G. K. Beale, ed., *The Right Doctrine from the Wrong Texts? Essays on the Use of the Old Testament in the New* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1994).

[18] G. K. Beale, "Questions of Authorial Intent, Epistemology, and Presuppositions and Their Bearing on the Study of the Old Testament in the New: A Rejoinder to Steve Moyise," *IBS* 21 (1999): 167–170.

[19] Beale, *Handbook on the New Testament Use of the Old Testament*, 41–54.

reuse of an Old Testament passage in a New Testament context."[20] Osborne's threefold

exegetical steps serve as the methodological steps for this chapter: Original meaning in

its context, Jewish understanding,[21] meaning in its New Testament context.[22]

In practical terms this chapter examines Mark's use of Lev 11 in ch. 7:1–23. It is

immediately obvious that no direct quotation links the two passages together. This study

will therefore examine the allusions of these two passages. Since there is a significant

"debate about the definition of an allusion and the criteria by which one can discern an

allusion,"[23] and allusions "must be judged along a spectrum of being virtually certain,

probable, or possible,"[24] this chapter will differentiate the allusions into three categories

in descending degrees of certainty: Linguistic, thematic, and logical connections.[25] In the

section on linguistic connections this study examines parallels on the level of a word or

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[20] Osborne, *The Hermeneutical Spiral: A Comprehensive Introduction to Biblical Interpretation*, 331.

[21] The background of the Second Temple period has already been explored in the previous chapter in regard to the purity concept of κοινός.

[22] Osborne, *The Hermeneutical Spiral: A Comprehensive Introduction to Biblical Interpretation*, 332. Hirsch's distinction between *significance* and *meaning* serves as an underlying premise. Hirsch separates the common expression of "authorial intent" into two elements: *significance* of a text in its original context and *meaning* an author has in mind at the time of writing. While the former can be studied, the latter is based on an author's personal motivation and therefore outside of the scope of scientific analysis. Hirsch Jr., *Validity in Interpretation*.

[23] Beale, *Handbook on the New Testament Use of the Old Testament*, 31.

[24] Ibid.

[25] Beale notes the difficulties of naming parallels along the typical lines of "quotations," "allusions," and "echoes." First, the terminology is not applied consistently and sometimes even used interchangeably. Second, scholars who argue for a qualification for "allusion" versus "echo" do not agree at what point a parallel shifts from one to the other. Therefore Beale states: "I will not pose criteria for discerning allusions in distinction to criteria for recognizing echoes." Ibid., 32.

phrase.[26] Thematic connections are comprised of similar themes or motifs but lacking identical words. Logical connections follow the line of an argument and the structure and development of a narrative for comparison.

Contrary to Stanley Porter's proposition to abandon the term "intertextuality,"[27] this chapter retains the term for three reasons:

1. It is descriptive of the process of examining the relationship between two texts.

2. It is an understandable and succinct term. In contrast to other propositions by Beale, such as "inner-biblical allusions"[28] or by Richard Hays, such as "intertextual canonical reading,"[29] the term "intertextuality" is concise and descriptive, allowing the writing and reading to be not unnecessarily confounding.

3. It has been sufficiently defined above. As Osborne has observed, retitling this field of study "is an overreaction, but it is true that we must define it carefully."[30]

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[26] To facilitate the process of comparing words, the Greek text of Mark 7:1–23 will be compared to the LXX text of Lev 11. Since Mark 7 has already cited Isaiah and quoted Moses from the LXX (vv. 6, 10) it is appropriate to use the LXX rather than the MT as the point of comparison. Collins, *Mark: A Commentary*, 350–351.

[27] Stanley E. Porter, "The Use of the Old Testament in the New Testament: A Breif Comment on Method and Terminology," in *Early Christian Interpretation of the Scriptures of Israel: Investigations and Proposals* (ed. Craig A. Evans and James A. Sanders; Sheffield: Academic Press, 1989), 84–85.

[28] Beale, *Handbook on the New Testament Use of the Old Testament*, 40.

[29] Richard Hays has proposed clarifying the distinction between the poststructuralist intertextuality of Kristeva and the intertextuality based on "diachronic order . . . and critical attention . . . on the biblical author's intention in appropriating references to earlier texts within a new literary setting" by labeling the latter "intertextual canonical reading."*Reading the Bible Intertextually*, xii–xiii.

[30] Osborne, *The Hermeneutical Spiral: A Comprehensive Introduction to Biblical Interpretation*, 331.

Textual support

An examination of Mark's explicit intertextual references in 7:1–23—the quotations of Isaiah, Moses, and the reference to the tradition of the elders—lends support for the definition of intertextuality adopted for this study. Three points of evidence arise from within the pericope that counter the idea of a "circular" approach or a multiplicity of interpretations.

First, the religious leaders have a very clear understanding of how Jesus' disciples should apply the tradition of the elders, especially in regard to purity regulations. In their mind there is no multiplicity of meanings or multidirectional interpretation. They do not exhibit a spirit of tolerance toward a different interpretive model. This does not come as a surprise to the reader, as the religious leaders are generally not presented in a favorable light. What does come as a surprise is that Jesus is no more tolerant or accepting of a multiplicity of meanings. Jesus does not criticize the religious leaders' approach (or hermeneutic), but instead the source on which they build their claim—the tradition of the elders rather than the "Word of God."

Second, Jesus' clear rebuke of the religious leaders shows that Jesus himself held that there was a normative understanding of the law of Moses. In the case of the *qorban* in Mark 7:10–13, Jesus rebukes the religious leaders for their vows, which effectively interpret the law of Moses in light of their own tradition. The narrative indicates that the *qorban* ruling reveals the religious leaders' attitude of upholding the letter of individual laws to serve purposes for which these laws were not intended. For Jesus the supremacy of the "word of God" and its intention is undermined by this approach. His approach exemplifies a holistic view in which individual laws are faithfully applied in their proper place within the whole system. Jesus' point to the religious leaders is that they should

have known the proper interpretation and should have continued to uphold the law and its intentions.

Finally, Jesus considers his own teaching to be normative, as the narrative analysis has previously demonstrated: The gnomic use of the tenses in Jesus' ethical application (Mark 7:20–23) and in the speech introductions underlines the authoritative voice of Jesus and establishes his claim as an authoritative teacher. It is certainly correct to speak of an ethical dimension that Jesus develops in this conflict story, but it would be amiss to define Jesus' ethics as an abstract set of moral principles open to each individual's personal convictions. Jesus instead issues a list containing thirteen non-negotiable behavioral expectations: "evil thoughts, sexual immorality, theft, murder, adultery, coveting, wickedness, deceit, sensuality, envy, slander, pride, foolishness" (Mark 7:21–23).

Introduction to Leviticus 11

A thorough discussion of Mark 7:1–23 has already been presented in the previous chapters. To understand Lev 11 appropriately, the following section will deal with relevant issues in this chapter in order to examine the intertextuality of Mark 7:1–23 and Lev 11.

Leviticus 11 is a chapter full of innovations. First, there is the obvious focus on distinctions between unclean animals. While these were introduced earlier (e.g., Gen 1–2, 7–9),[31] in Lev 11 they are spelled out in explicit and repetitive patterns. Second, there is a

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[31] Moskala, *The Laws of Clean and Unclean Animals of Leviticus 11: Their Nature, Theology, and Rationale (an Intertextual Study)*, 199–276; Wright, "Unclean and Clean," 6:731. Grunfeld argues from a logical and ontological position that "the first law in human history was a dietary law." I. Grunfeld, *The Jewish Dietary Laws* (2 vols.; London: Soncino Press, 1972), 1:43.

detailed section on touch impurity (Lev 11:24–40). Touch impurity already has been

mentioned earlier in Lev 5:2, 3; 6:18, 27; 7:19, 21 but Lev 11 introduces the first full-

fledged discussion of touch contamination and purification procedures: נגע ("to touch")

is repeatedly mentioned (Lev 11:8, 24, 26, 27, 31, 36, 39). Finally, the concluding

rationale for these regulations in vv. 44–46 introduces holiness language for the first time

in the book of Leviticus.[32] The phrases "I am the Lord your God" (v. 44), "be holy" (vv.

44, 45), "I am holy" (vv. 44, 45), and references to Egypt and the Exodus (v. 45)[33] are

peculiar to the latter part of the book (Lev 17–26), the Holiness Code, and seem out of

place in this section of Leviticus. The terminology is especially prevalent in the Holiness

Code.

Especially the final statement in Lev 11:44–45 is remarkable. Three observations

underline the significance of this Holiness Code language: First, chs. 1–10 and 12–16 do

not employ Holiness Code language. Second, references to God's holiness and his desire

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[32] Harris notes, "The phrase 'be holy, because I am holy' is interesting because it is like the words of 19:2, which are said to be characteristic of the Holiness Code." R. L. Harris, *Leviticus* (The Expositor's Bible Commentary, vol. 2; Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1990), 573. Israel Knohl recognizes that vv. 43–45 bear "the distinctive traits of HS [Holiness School]." Israel Knohl, *The Sanctuary of Silence: The Priestly Torah and the Holiness School* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1995), 69.

[33] The references to the land of Egypt and the Exodus event are used in a twofold manner in Leviticus. They can function as a reminder to the Israelites of their status as slaves and therefore evoke compassion and fair treatment of foreigners and resident aliens (19:34; 25:42). But, more importantly, they function as a reminder that the Israelites are indebted to God (25:55) and therefore he has a rightful claim to be Israel's God (22:33; 25:38; 26:13, 45), call them to holiness (11:45), and impose regulations on them (18:3; 19:36). For a detailed study on the use of "land of Egypt" and its chiastic usage in Leviticus leading to the "Ziel der Herausführung aus Ägypten, das Gottsein Jhwhs für Israel" see Wilfried Warning, "Terminologische Verknüpfungen und Leviticus 11," *BZ* 46, no. 1 (2002): 101.

for the Israelites to be holy are repeated in adjacent verses (11:44 and 45). Third, no other

passages combine these four phrases within a literary unit. See table 8.

Table 8. Holiness References in Leviticus

PHRASE	REFERENCE
אֲנִי יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵיכֶם "I am the Lord your God"	11:44; 18:2, 4, 30; 19:2–4, 10, 25, 31, 34, 36; 20:7, 24; 23:22, 43; 25:17, 38, 55; 26:1, 13
הִיִיתֶם קְדֹשִׁים "Be holy"	11:44, 45; 19:2; 20:7, 26; 21:6
קָדוֹשׁ אָנִי "I am holy"	11:44, 45; 19:2; 20:26; 21:8
אֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם "Land of Egypt"	11:45; 18:3; 19:34, 36; 22:33; 23:43; 25:38, 42, 55; 26:13, 45

The observation that Leviticus is comprised of different units and particularly the

perplexing use of Holiness Code language has led to divergent conclusions: On the one

hand, redaction critics such as Jacob Milgrom have assigned the various elements in Lev

11 to diverse schools: the priestly writings of P^1 (vv. 1–23, 41–42, 46), P^2 (vv. 24–38,

47), P^3 (vv. 39–40)[34] and the holiness writings of H (vv. 43–45).[35] Others, such as

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[34] Milgrom proposes this elaborate theory of insertion and redaction, based on the difficulty of this passage and the long history of failed attempts to reconcile the biblical account. He outlines a series of historic positions (starting with Wellhausen), as well as linguistic and contextual arguments to support his thesis. Following an example of Milgrom's three-tiered view of priestly writings (P): "The purification block (vv 24–40) constitutes a later insert into the chapter. Furthermore, as its two passages on quadrupeds are not contiguous, the second one (vv 39–40) may itself be a later supplement to the block." Milgrom, *Leviticus 1–16: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary*, 691–694. Similar views are represented by scholars such as Klaus Koch, *Die Priesterschrift: Von Exodus 25 bis Leviticus 16: Eine Überlieferungsgeschichtliche und literarische Untersuchung* (Göttingen: Vandenhoek & Ruprecht, 1959), 78; J. E. Hartley, *Leviticus* (WBC 4; Dallas, Tex.: Word Books, 1992), 154; E. S. Gerstenberger, *Leviticus: A Commentary* (trans. D. W. Scott; OTL; Louisville, Ky.: Westminster John Knox, 1996), 142; E. Firmage, "The Biblical Dietary Laws and the Concept of Holiness,"

Wilfried Warning and Jiřì Moskala, have seen the passage as a cohesive unit. Warning

argues that the literary patterns of the chapter, among them several chiastic structures,

> point to the literary integrity of the extant text. Since all of the supposedly secondary
> and tertiary additions have been integrated into one or more of the terminological
> patterns, the dismembering of Lev 11 into several redactional layers should be
> seriously questioned.[36]

It can be argued that Mark did not and could not engage in a redaction-critical

analysis of Leviticus and that any intertextual connections by Mark (quotations, allusions,

logical links) are based on the final form of the MT and/or the LXX. A closer look at the

purity language in Lev 11 will not only clarify Mark's intertextual link but will also

demonstrate the unity of the chapter and its place in the overall structure of the book of

Leviticus.

Structure of Leviticus 11

To assess the intertextual links adequately between Mark 7:1–23 and Lev 11, it is

necessary to examine the structure of Lev 11 briefly. It will be argued in this section that

the two distinct sections of Lev 11—the clean and unclean animals (vv. 2–23 and 41–43)

VTSup 46 (1990): 207.

[35] Milgrom, *Leviticus 1–16: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary*, 694. See also Knohl, *The Sanctuary of Silence: The Priestly Torah and the Holiness School*, 69; Koch, *Die Priesterschrift: Von Exodus 25 bis Leviticus 16: Eine überlieferungsgeschichtliche und literarische Untersuchung*, 79.

[36] Wilfried Warning, "The Contribution of Terminological Patterns to the Literary Structure of Leviticus" (Ph.D diss., Andrews University, 1997), 86–87. See also Moskala, *The Laws of Clean and Unclean Animals of Leviticus 11: Their Nature, Theology, and Rationale (an Intertextual Study)*. Roy Gane assumes the cohesiveness of the chapter by viewing the holiness language in vv. 44–45 as a summary of "the most important point of the chapter: Observing the Lord's dietary regulations has the purpose of emulating the Lord's holiness." Roy Gane, *Leviticus, Numbers* (NIV Application Commentary; Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2004), 206.

and the touch contamination of a carcass (vv. 24–40)—are (1) separate units that introduce distinct concepts of impurities ("tolerated" vs. "prohibited" categories) and continue to develop these categories in subsequent chapters (touch or "tolerated" impurities in chs. 12–15; "prohibited" impurities in 17–20) and (2) culminate in the call to holiness (11:44–46), as shown by linguistic factors.

After an initial introduction (Lev 11:1), the first section of Lev 11 introduces distinctions between clean and unclean animals and lists several categories of creatures— land animals (vv. 2–8), fish (vv. 9–13), and birds and winged insects (vv. 14–23)—that are unfit for food (vv. 2–23). In the middle section the attention is turned to touch impurity by carcasses (vv. 24–40), even if they are of clean animals (vv. 39–40). The final section picks up where the last section left off and expands the section on swarming creatures (vv. 41–43). The chapter concludes with the climactic statement of the holiness of God and his expectation that the people be holy as well (vv. 44–47).

Moskala classifies this as a typical chiastic A B A' structure.[37] In general terms and on a thematic basis, this is certainly correct.[38] But this designation does not do justice to the unique section consisting of Holiness Code language.[39] Not only is this repeated

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[37] Moskala, *The Laws of Clean and Unclean Animals of Leviticus 11: Their Nature, Theology, and Rationale (an Intertextual Study)*, 188.

[38] Milgrom notes a much more complicated structure based, among other elements, on the double mention of the "swarming things" (שֶׁרֶץ, vv. 29–31, 41–43). Milgrom, *Leviticus 1–16: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary*, 670.

[39] Moskala concludes his structure with v. 43 and leaves out the conclusion (vv. 45–46) in his consideration of the structure. As has been argued above, the conclusion is a—if not *the*—significant element of the chapter and should not be ignored. Additionally, Moskala proposes a classic chiastic structure in which the central section (vv. 24–40) exhibits the strongest emphasis. In light of the complete pericope (vv. 1–47) it is preferable to view the two unclean categories (A, A' and B) on an equal footing that

reference to holiness (vv. 44 and 45) a peculiarity, but at first it seems even unnecessary since a purpose statement is present outside of the holiness passages (vv. 46–47). The purpose phrase in v. 47, introduced with a לְ of purpose, could logically close the chapter as it summarizes the majority of the passage (A and A'). Instead, a motive clause is added, introduced with כִּי (vv. 44–45), that applies to the entire chapter. These two phrases are different but related, in that distinguishing between "pure/fit" and "impure/unfit" to eat (vv. 46–47) is crucial for being holy as God is holy (vv. 44–45) because holiness and impurity are antithetical. A more complete structure for the chapter would therefore better be rendered as an A B A' C structure. Since holiness language (vv. 44–45) is so prominent it seems appropriate to regard it as its own section instead of grouping it into the conclusion (vv. 46–47).[40]

The ending of Lev 11, section C and the conclusion (vv. 44–47), is arranged in a complex way in order to summarize various elements of the chapter. These closing statements summarize the A' section ("You shall not defile [טָמֵא] yourselves with any swarming thing"; v. 44), summarize the A B A' sections with an ethical rationale ("Be

culminate in the holiness language of vv. 44–45.

[40] Moskala focuses on the rationales for distinguishing between clean and unclean animals and therefore focuses primarily on the A and A' sections. He groups the Holiness Language section (vv. 44–45) into the conclusion.
    The opposite view, that the Holiness Code language (vv. 44–45) is a latter redaction and not originally part of the passage, removes the phrase from the original passage.
    This study argues that the Holiness Code language (vv. 44–45) is both original and significant, i.e., it should be treated as a distinct part of the pericope as well as an integral and original part of the pericope. For further arguments see below.

holy, for I am holy"; vv. 44–45),[41] and summarize the A and A' sections with a purpose

clause ("This is the law about beast and bird and every living creature that moves through

the waters and every creature that swarms on the ground, to make a distinction between

the unclean and the clean," vv. 46–47).

In summary Lev 11 can best be diagrammed as shown in table 9.

Table 9. Structural Diagram of Leviticus 11

Introduction	v. 1	
A	vv. 2–23	Unclean animals (quadrupeds, fish, bird, insects)
B	vv. 24–40	Touch impurity of carcass
A'	vv. 41–43	Unclean animals (swarming creatures)
C	vv. 44–45	Summary of A' Summary of A B A' – ethical rationale
Conclusion	vv. 46–47	Summary of A A' – purpose rationale

טָמֵא as a Structuring Element in Leviticus 11

The key term in Lev 11 is טָמֵא ("unclean," 11:4–8, 24–29, 31–36, 38–40, 43–44,

47) and it is augmented by שֶׁקֶץ ("detestable," 11:10–13, 20, 23, 41–43). Despite the

presence of both impurity terms, טָמֵא is the primary term. Several reasons support this:

First, the frequency of טָמֵא is much greater. It occurs 23 times versus 9 times for שֶׁקֶץ.

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[41] This will be substantiated below.

Second, טָמֵא is used in sections A, B, and C, while the latter appears only in A and A'. The term שֶׁקֶץ is used for the categories of fish (vv. 10–12), birds (v. 13), and swarming things (especially vv. 41–43) but it does not appear in the central section B or the closing verses of the chapter.

Third, it is often argued that שֶׁקֶץ refers to a separate category of uncleanness that is distinct from that denoted by טָמֵא.[42] Since Wellhausen, this distinction has led scholars to consider the terms as representative of different sources.[43] Nevertheless, there are good reasons to consider שֶׁקֶץ as a sub-category of טָמֵא. This is evident in the summary of the chapter. In v. 46 the four categories of animals (beasts, birds, living creatures in the waters, and swarming things) are listed followed by the purpose statement "to make a distinction between the unclean (טָמֵא) and the clean (טָהוֹר)" (v. 47). The same pattern can also be observed in vv. 43–44: The שֶׁקֶץ ("you shall not make yourselves detestable [שֶׁקֶץ]," v. 43) in relation to the swarming thing is followed by three טָמֵא references expressing the same concept ("you shall not defile [טָמֵא] yourself," vv. 43–44; "become unclean [טָמֵא]," v. 43). Thus, the overarching term טָמֵא is used to signify all animals prohibited for consumption.

As a result of the central place of טָמֵא in Lev 11 it is now possible to examine the varied usage of טָמֵא in the different sections within the chapter. It will be argued that sections A and A' exclusively present an adjectival use of טָמֵא, section B primarily employs a verbal use, and the Holiness Code language, section C, utilizes both adjectival

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[42] Milgrom, *Leviticus 1–16: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary*, 657–659. In the specific case of the swarmers (vv. 41–43) שֶׁקֶץ seems to be more restrictive than טָמֵא as there "swarmers allow for no exceptions—all (*běkol;* six times in vv 41–43) are forbidden." Ibid., 685–686.

[43] Ibid., 692.

and verbal forms of מֵאָט. The adjectival use is employed when the passage deals with the essence of a creature—its nature or ontology. The verbal use comes into play when the passage addresses actions that transmit impurity—touch contamination. The language of holiness then is the appeal both to concern for ontological impurity as well as touch impurity.

Section A and A' (Leviticus 11:2–23, 41–43)

The nuances of purity regulations have often been overlooked. This is especially true for Lev 11. Even Milgrom oversimplifies when he states that "the use of *ṭāmēʾ* in this chapter implies contracting impurity by touch as well as by ingestion."[44] While the former is explicitly stated in section B, the latter is not. In fact the passage does not consider the possibility of ingestion as it never addresses any consequences for ingestion, only for touch.

Wright and Klawans have argued for a more nuanced approach. Both have subdivided the "unclean" category in purity regulations into "permitted" or "tolerated" and "prohibited" uncleanness.[45] The former consist of actions that are unavoidable, contracted through contact with unclean objects or people, or the result of God's explicit command (e.g., Gen 1:28 encourages procreation through childbirth—a source of impurity in Leviticus). If contracted this impurity can be removed through prescribed ritual washings and the passing of a specified length of time. In contrast to the "tolerated" uncleanness, the "prohibited" category describes only very serious actions that are

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[44] Ibid., 667.

[45] Klawans, *Impurity and Sin in Ancient Judaism*, 16–17, 31–32; Wright, "Unclean and Clean"; Wright, "The Spectrum of Priestly Impurity."

usually identified as "abominations." Idolatry, sexual immorality, murder, and the

transgression of dietary restrictions constitute this class.[46] Should this uncleanness be

contracted there is no means for restitution. Additionally, the temple and the land are

defiled by this event. As Wright and Klawans have correctly noted, both categories occur

in Lev 11.

In the opening section of the chapter (A, vv. 2–23) the term טָמֵא is used five times

(vv. 4–8). Each of these טָמֵא references follows the same syntactical pattern only

differentiated by a singular or plural subject. The adjective טָמֵא is always the predicate

adjective separated from the subject—the personal pronoun—by the implied copula and

followed by an object marker: "It is unclean to you" (v. 4).[47] In this construction the

"predicate adjective serves in a verbless clause to make an assertion about the subject of

the clause."[48]

The adjective functions in a stative or ontological manner by equating an animal

with the condition or state of being unclean. The focus here is on the animal itself and its

status, not the human being or the interaction of the human with the animal. In fact the

copula, or the stative verb "to be," does not express an action, such as ingestion, at all.

The focus is therefore not on any action or *doing* of the animal or a human, but instead on

the essence or *being* of the animal. "The declaration *ṭāmēʾ hûʾ* 'it is impure' is found only

in cases of impurity that are indefinite and irreversible by man. . . . Thus, certain animals

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[46] Klawans, *Impurity and Sin in Ancient Judaism*, 31–32; Moskala, *The Laws of Clean and Unclean Animals of Leviticus 11: Their Nature, Theology, and Rationale (an Intertextual Study)*, 355.

[47] See Bruce K. Waltke and M. O'Connor, *An Introduction to Biblical Hebrew Syntax* (Winona Lake, Ind.: Eisenbrauns, 1990), 71–73, 260–263.

[48] Ibid., 260.

and objects are declared impure irrevocably."[49] This ontological statement, based on the syntactical structure, is even extended to the following animal groups in which the טָמֵא terminology is replaced with שֶׁקֶץ (vv. 11, 12, 20, 23, 41, 42). Thus טָמֵא in section A and A' focuses on the ontology of the creature rather than the human ingestion of an unclean animal.[50]

Moskala arrives at similar conclusions: First, "the type of uncleanness of the unclean animals is permanent, and thus natural and universal." Second, "there is no provision for making unclean animals clean. It is impossible to cleanse it or cure it." Third, in the passage "there is no punishment for disobedience against these dietary laws, no penalty for the actual eating of the meat of an unclean animal."[51] However, far from viewing the dietary laws lightly, Moskala argues that "they belong to the category of sins which were not atoned by rituals in the sanctuary, such as the moral offenses of murder, marital unfaithfulness, or idolatry."[52]

Section B (Leviticus 11:24–40)

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[49] Milgrom, *Leviticus 1–16: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary*, 648. See also *Sifre* Numbers 126: "What does Scripture mean by *ṭāmēʾ*? [It means] , *ṭāmēʾ lĕʿôlām* impure forever."

[50] This understanding should not be read as an attempt to relativize the prohibition concerning the consumption of unclean meats. This prohibition is repeatedly stated in the passage (11:1–3, 9, 41, 47). In fact, the passage is not clear on the consequences of ingestion, thereby implying immitigable severity.

[51] Moskala, *The Laws of Clean and Unclean Animals of Leviticus 11: Their Nature, Theology, and Rationale (an Intertextual Study)*, 277.

[52] Ibid. Milgrom points out that the chapter implies that ingestion must at least render the offending individual in a state of ritual impurity. Additionally, Lev 20:22–26 implies that the penalty of exile may result as a consequence of ingesting unclean meats (Lev 20:22, 25).

In contrast to the A and A' section, the middle section B uses טָמֵא very

differently. This section introduces the additional concept of טָמֵא as a verb in its very

first sentence. The *hitpael* (reflexive) תִּטַּמָּאוּ (v. 24) ushers in this new dimension and is

followed throughout this section with twelve *qal* perfects and imperfects (vv. 25, 26, 27,

28, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 39, 40). The subject of these verbs of טָמֵא is an individual or an

object that has contracted impurity by an action whether actively—the human touching

the carcass—or passively—the object upon which a carcass falls.[53] The focus in this

section is the action that results in acquired impurity.

The B section distinguishes itself from the A and A' section not only by the

verbal use of טָמֵא but it also renders the subject in a conditional format. This conditional

subject is usually introduced using כָּל־ ("all") followed by a descriptor. In the case of a

human subject the כָּל־ is succeeded by the participles הַנֹּגֵעַ or הַנֹּשֵׂא ("all who touch" or

"all who carry," vv. 24–27, 31).[54] If the subject is an object, the relative clause אֲשֶׁר־יִפֹּל־

עָלָיו functions as modifier narrowing the כָּל־ "all" ("all upon which it falls," vv. 32, 33,

35).

This contracted touch impurity can be remedied by waiting until evening (vv. 33,

35), by ritual washing and waiting until evening (vv. 24, 25, 28, 32, 40), or alternatively

by breaking the object (vv. 33, 35).[55] As a result there is a switch from a *being* view in

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[53] English translations of this passage have struggled to maintain this important
distinction between the adjectival and verbal forms since the English language does not
have a verbal form of "unclean." The difference between the predicate adjective
translated as "they are unclean" (e.g., 11:8) and the verbal forms "they shall be unclean"
(11:24) or "be unclean" (11:28) is minimal.

[54] The participles function substantivally without the כָּל־ modifier in vv. 28, 39,
40.

[55] The impurity concept of section B follows the pattern of other touch impurity
passages (Lev 12–15) in identifying the source of an impurity (e.g., carcass, scaly-skin

section A and A' to a *doing* view in B. In fact, by implication the default *being* state of individuals and objects is pure, since they can contract impurity by certain actions. The complete reverse is true of the unclean animals in the first section: Their *being* state is impure and there is no action to reverse this.

While the verbal use of טָמֵא is the focus of the middle section, it is not the only impurity concept in this setting. The adjectival form discussed in section A is still present. As was the case in section A the adjective is used to refer to the irremediable state of *being* of unclean animals (vv. 26, 27, 28, 29, 31).

Surprisingly, the adjectival form טָמֵא is used three times (vv. 35, 38) in the passage to point out two inanimate objects, the oven and the seed, despite the majority of objects accepting the verbal form. Upon closer examination the two objects in question, an oven and seed that has had water put on it, show similarities and differences to the other objects in the passage. They are similar in that they have contracted impurity like the other items in section B. But they differ since they are the only two objects that cannot be cleansed—they must be destroyed. The oven is broken after contamination (v. 35) and the wetted seed becomes impure, which makes it useless for consumption or planting (v. 38).[56] In this distinction to other objects in section B the oven and the seed more closely resemble the unclean animals. For the oven and the seed, like the unclean animals, there is no remedy to their uncleanness. See table 10.

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disease, bodily emissions), describing an action that results in contamination (usually touching), pronouncing a verdict of uncleanness ("he shall become unclean"), and outlining a resolution to the initial problem (usually involving a time element and a purification rite, or both).

[56] For other objects that have contracted impurity and must be destroyed see Lev 13:51, 55; 14:44.

Table 10. טָמֵא Forms in Leviticus 11:24–40

SUBJECT	FORM	MORPHOLOGY	VERSE
Human	תִּטַּמָּאוּ	Hitpael imperf.	24
Human	יִטְמָא	Qal imperf.	24
Human	וְטָמֵא	Qal perf.	25
Animals (beasts)	טְמֵאִים	Predicate adj.	26
Human	יִטְמָא	Qal imperf.	26
Animals (beasts)	טְמֵאִים	Predicate adj.	27
Human	יִטְמָא	Qal imperf.	27
Human	וְטָמֵא	Qal perf.	28
Animals (beasts)	טְמֵאִים	Predicate adj.	28
Animals (swarmers)	הַטָּמֵא	Predicate adj	29
Animals (swarmers)	הַטְּמֵאִים	Predicate adj	31
Human	יִטְמָא	Qal imperf.	31
Object (generic)	יִטְמָא	Qal imperf.	32
Object (generic)	וְטָמֵא	Qal perf.	32
Object (contents of vessel)	יִטְמָא	Qal imperf.	33
Object (food)	יִטְמָא	Qal imperf.	34

Table 10—*Continued.*

SUBJECT	FORM	MORPHOLOGY	VERSE
Object (vessel)	יִטְמָא	Qal imperf.	34
Object (everything)	יִטְמָא	Qal imperf.	35
Object (oven)	טְמֵאִים	Predicate adj.	35
Object (oven)	וּטְמֵאִים	Predicate adj.	35
Human	יִטְמָא	Qal imperf.	36
Object (seed)	טָמֵא	Predicate adj.	38
Human	וְטָמֵא	Qal perfect	40

In summary, Lev 11 exhibits a twofold understanding of uncleanness: ontological uncleanness and acquired or touch impurity. The former is developed in sections A and A' while the latter is examined in section B. The former describes a state of being that is unalterable and immitigable; the latter refers to a contracted impurity that can be remedied (except in the cases of an oven or wetted seed).

Section C (Leviticus 11:43–47)

The convergence of both ideas finds its culmination in the call to holiness leading up to v. 44. The trajectory of section B has been to add a verbal concept to the previous adjectival usage of טָמֵא. Section A' (vv. 41–43) now conjoins the previously separate terms טָמֵא and שֶׁקֶץ of section A and joins the verbal and adjectival usage. The call to holiness in section C continues the A' trajectory and becomes the climactic rationale for

the chapter. This is accomplished not only through holiness language but also in linguistically joining the previous sections.

The final verses of Lev 11 are the most problematic. The hotly debated items include the source, redaction, and even structure of the passage.[57] As the present study examines the passage as a narrative unit the first two questions (source and redaction) will remain unresolved here.[58] In regard to the structure, Milgrom proposes to include v. 43 in the H source rather than with the section on swarming animals (vv. 41–42). Consequently, he has a swarming animals category (vv. 41–42) followed by the holiness section (vv. 43–45). He bases this on the intricate structure that links vv. 43 and 44. Such a "symmetric, introverted structure" suggests to him a single source, and therefore these verses should be grouped together as originating from the H source.[59] However, if the passage is examined as a narrative unit, vv. 43–44 present an intricate woven tapestry connecting two different elements. From a thematic and narrative perspective, v. 43 poetically bridges between the foregoing (vv. 41–42) and following sections (vv. 44–45). Allowing for v. 43 to fulfill a dual role—summarizing the previous section while commencing the new—it seems best to stress the significance of the holiness language and therefore group vv. 44–45 together.[60]

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[57] Milgrom points to personal discussions that he has had with other scholars on these issues. Milgrom, *Leviticus 1–16: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary*, 698.

[58] See Warning for a brief discussion on terminological arguments for the unity of Lev 11. Warning, "Terminologische Verknüpfungen und Leviticus 11."

[59] Milgrom, *Leviticus 1–16: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary*, 683–684.

[60] Moskala also places v. 43 in the preceding section. Moskala, *The Laws of Clean and Unclean Animals of Leviticus 11: Their Nature, Theology, and Rationale (an Intertextual Study)*, 187–188.

After the touch impurity section of B (vv. 24–40), the swarming things briefly return to ontological impurity signified by the adjectival use of שֶׁקֶץ (vv. 41, 42) as would be expected for the A' unit. But surprisingly in v. 43 purity terminology is introduced in a verbal form as in section B: תְּטַמְּאוּ ("you shall not make yourself unclean," v. 43). As in section B (v. 24) the term טָמֵא is rendered in a hitpael. There are several reasons why the hitpael of v. 43 is an allusion to the identical inflected word of v. 24:

First, the three hitpaels (vv. 24, 43, 44) in this passage are structurally connected. This is very clear in the last two references. The intricate structure of vv. 43 and 44 places the two hitpaels תְּטַמְּאוּ ("you shall not make yourselves unclean," v. 43) and הִתְקַדִּשְׁתֶּם ("you shall consecrate yourselves," v. 44) on the same structural level.[61] In regard to the first and second references the hitpael exhibits not only the identical inflection תְּטַמְּאוּ but both times it is placed at the beginning of a new section: The hitpael in verse 24 initiates section B and in v. 43, the bridge verse between section A' and C, it introduces the holiness language.

Second, of the fifteen references to verbal forms of טָמֵא in Lev 11 only three are located outside section B. All three of these verbs are in vv. 43 and 44, the structural unit leading to the call to holiness. In section B the hitpael is followed by a mixture of qal perfects and imperfects. In v. 43 the hitpael is followed by a niphal (v. 43) and a piel (v. 44).

Third, the hitpael stands out in ch. 11 not only because of its unique usage just mentioned but also because the passage presents an alternative construction to express the reflexive force usually associated with the hitpael. The piel construction at the beginning

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[61] Milgrom places the two hitpaels in corresponding pairs that he labels B₁. Milgrom, *Leviticus 1–16: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary*, 683.

of v. 43 (אַל־תְּשַׁקְּצוּ אֶת־נַפְשֹׁתֵיכֶם, "You shall not make yourself detestable") presents a piel verb followed by a reflexive object נַפְשֹׁתֵיכֶם (lit. "your throat"),[62] exhorting the individual to respond to God's call to holiness. Since an alternate construction is readily available, the hitpael appears to be used purposefully.[63]

Fourth, the book of Leviticus lists eight instances of verbs of טָמֵא in the hitpael (11:24, 43; 18:24, 30; 21:1, 3, 4, 11) that are clustered into three pericopes: the pericope on clean and unclean foods (ch. 11), the pericope on appropriate and inappropriate sexual conduct (ch. 18), and regulations for priests and carcass contamination (ch. 21). Chapter 18, as part of the Holiness Code, uses טָמֵא in the context of abominable acts of sexual immorality that carry the gravest of consequences: They defile the land (18:27–28) and the offending individual is "cut off" from the Israelites (18:29). The rationale, similar to Lev 11, is because "I am the Lord your God" (18:30). The offending individual cannot atone for the offense or remedy his uncleanness at this point. The passage in Lev 21 is very different. It deals with specific instructions for the priests and the high priest in regard to corpse contamination. The contamination is one of touch impurity and is permissible in some cases. Although no purification rituals are mentioned in the passage itself, the general purification rituals for corpse contamination apply (Lev 11:25, 28, 31; see Num 19). In light of the usage in Lev 18 and 21, the טָמֵא hitpael can therefore be invoked in the case of abominable impurity, which originates in a violation of God's commands, and touch impurity. The larger context of Leviticus therefore warrants that

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[62] Ibid., 684.

[63] The opposite is certainly applicable as well: The piel + *nepesh* construction is used purposefully, possibly to utilize the semantic range of *nepesh* effectively, with its range of meaning of referring to the throat, appetite, and the entire person.

Lev 11:43 can be used to summarize both the ontological impurity (sections A and A')
and also the touch contamination (section B). It is clear from the language of v. 43 that
the call to holiness addresses ontological impurity. The convergence of the verbal form of
טָמֵא and the use of the specific hitpael of מֵאטָ in the rest of the book indicate that touch
impurity is also in view.

In conclusion, the discussion above has demonstrated that the inflected verb טָמֵא
in v. 43 exhibits strong links to the previous section B (vv. 24–40). Undoubtedly the טָמֵא
verb needs to be understood in its immediate context of the swarming things. But in the
chapter the inner-textual links suggest that the hitpael is not only a reference to the
swarming things but alludes to section B. As a result, the text itself expects the call to
holiness to be understood in the larger context of the chapter and not only in regard to the
swarmers, as Milgrom argues.[64] Or stated differently: The holiness language in verses
43–44 is the culmination of the entire chapter, not merely a regulation for the category of
the swarmers (vv. 41–42).

Leviticus 11 in the Structure of the Book

Lev 11 marks the beginning of a new section in the book of Leviticus dealing
with a series of different impurities. Chapters 12–15 cover various touch impurities and
rituals to remove the acquired impurity. Beyond the immediate context, ch. 11 also
prefigures chs. 17–20 based on the holiness language prevalent in both passages.[65]

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[64] Milgrom, *Leviticus 1–16: A New Translation with Introduction and
Commentary*, 685–687.

[65] This section will examine the relationship of ch. 11 to the surrounding chapters
based on the linguistic markers of purity and impurity regulations and holiness language.
The structure of the book of Leviticus as portrayed by William Shea and Roy Gane best
fits this linguistic view of ch. 11. Other compositional elements have been examined to
structure the book of Leviticus. The two predominant views of John H. Walton and Mary

In a detailed study on the overall structure of Leviticus, William Shea has argued

for a chiastic structure centering around the Day of Atonement (ch. 16).[66] In sections A

Douglas and the relationship of ch. 11 to its context in these respective models follows below.

John H. Walton organizes the book based on sacred space. The first part of Leviticus (chs. 1–23) establishes equilibrium relative to deity. The second part (chs. 24–27) indicates equilibrium relative to Israel. In this structure the movement begins in the Holy of Holies (chs. 1–7), expands to the priests who set up to maintain the enclosure zone (chs. 8–10), extends to the entire camp (chs. 11–15), and even outside of the camp (ch. 17). In Walton's model one could argue that ch. 11 is tied naturally to chs. 12–15 and expands to include the space outside of the camp in ch. 17. Additionally, ch. 11 is linked to chs. 18–20, which Walton classifies as disqualification of the people from the camp, by covering the same space (the camp). Even though the links are slightly different Lev 11 relates to the same texts, albeit on different grounds, as the model advocated by Shea and Gane. John H. Walton, "Equilibrium and the Sacred Compass: The Structure of Leviticus," *BBR* 11, no. 2 (2001): 304.

Mary Douglas structures the book of Leviticus on the basis of a Greek ring composition in which ch. 19 is the main turning point and ch. 26 the secondary turning point on the topic of righteousness. In this model chs. 1–7 begin the exposition on the issue of holy things which is mirrored by chs. 23–25 that address holy time. The second section (chs. 8–10) addresses priests and their defilement and is mirrored by chs. 21–22 dealing with the same topics. The unclean things (chs. 11–17) lead to the central passage: Regulations on sex and Molech worship (chs. 18, 20) frame the primary turning point (ch. 19). The ring structure is completed with the "latch" of ch. 27 on the issue of holy things. In this model chs. 11–17 do not have a corresponding passage in the second part of the ring structure, as all the other sections do. Instead chs. 11–17 lead the reader of this ring structure from the focus on ritual in chs. 8–10 to the emphasis on moral righteousness in chs. 18–20. As in Walton's model, ch. 11 is linked to the immediate chapters (chs. 12–17) on "unclean and blemished things" as well as the larger context of chs. 18–20. Mary Douglas, "Poetic Structure in Leviticus," in *Pomegranates and Golden Bells: Studies in Biblical, Jewish, and Near Eastern Ritual, Law, and Literature in Honor of Jacob Milgrom* (ed. David Noel Freedman, David P. Wright, and Avi Hurvitz; Winona Lake, Ind.: Eisenbrauns, 1995), 247–255. Jacob Milgrom added his support to this structure in Milgrom, *Leviticus 17–22: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary*, 1364–1365. See also Mary Douglas, *Leviticus as Literature* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), 192–193.

[66] William Shea, "Literary Form and Theological Function in Leviticus," in *The Seventy Weeks, Leviticus, and the Nature of Prophecy* (ed. Frank B. Holbrook; vol. 3 of *Daniel and Revelation Committee Series*; Washington, D.C.: Biblical Research Institute, 1986).

For a similar structure of Leviticus that also focused around the Day of Atonement (ch. 16) although better nuanced, see Roy Gane's sevenfold structure: I. Sacrificial Worship (chs. 1–7). II. Descriptions of Ceremonies That Founded the Ritual System (chs. 8–10). III. Purity versus Impurity (chs. 11–15). IV. Purgation of Sanctuary

and A' (chs. 1–7 and 24–27) the book deals with legislation regarding the sanctuary. In sections B and B' (chs. 8–10 and 21–23), legislation regarding priests is addressed. Sections C and C' (chs. 11–15 and 17–20) present legislation that applies to all members of the Israelite community and the central passage D (ch. 16) deals with the Day of Atonement.[67]

The section consisting of chs. 11–15 or alternately 11–16[68] is generally accepted. There are good reasons for this: First, as noted by Shea, the general theme reflects legislation that affects the individual and his or her immediate surroundings.[69] Moskala notes that "in Lev 11–15 we leave the sanctuary and enter the secular sphere which deals with issues such as food laws, childbirth, skin diseases, and sexual functions. The core of concern in this section is the concept of being clean or unclean."[70] Second, the concept of touch (נגע) is prevalent throughout these chapters. The touch impurity often extends not

and Camp on Day of Atonement (ch. 16). V. Holy (Sacrificial) Slaughter (ch. 17). VI. Community Holiness (chs. 18–20). VII. Special Holy Entities (chs. 21–27). Gane, *Leviticus, Numbers*, 35.

[67] Analyzing the 37 divine speeches of Leviticus, Warning comes to the same conclusion. Warning, "The Contribution of Terminological Patterns to the Literary Structure of Leviticus." Davidson also builds on Shea's and Warning's work to arrive at a eschatalogical structure of the Hebrew Bible. Richard M. Davidson, "The Eschatological Literary Structure of the Old Testament," in *Creation, Life, and Hope: Essays in Honor of Jacques Doukhan* (ed. Jiří Moskala; Berrien Springs, Mich.: Old Testament Department, Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary, Andrews University, 2000); Moskala, *The Laws of Clean and Unclean Animals of Leviticus 11: Their Nature, Theology, and Rationale (an Intertextual Study)*, 162–169.

[68] Milgrom, *Leviticus 1–16: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary*, 642.

[69] Shea, "Literary Form and Theological Function in Leviticus," 149.

[70] Moskala, *The Laws of Clean and Unclean Animals of Leviticus 11: Their Nature, Theology, and Rationale (an Intertextual Study)*, 165.

only to the initial touch but by extension it can be transferred to a secondary object or person. Third, usually impurity can be remedied through washing rituals and the passage of time.

The literary connections between Lev 11:1–46 to chs. 17–20 has not received as much attention.[71] Yet, the cross references and allusions between the passages demonstrate their affinity. First, the unique element of holiness language is prevalent in both passages. The holiness phrases in 11:44–45 function as the climax of ch. 11, as argued above.[72] In chs. 18–19 holiness language is a constant reminder of the rationale of the regulations of the Holiness Code. The Holiness Code is a call to a divine-ethical lifestyle as illustrated by a variety of real-life examples. The use of holiness language in ch. 11 is significant since it is a unique and explicit reference to holiness language outside of the Holiness Code.

Second, the legislation in chs. 17–20 addresses the individual and his immediate environment. This is similar to chs. 11–15 but in contrast with the remainder of the book that focuses on the priest or the cultic system.[73] Shea correctly categorizes the chapters as

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[71] Since the works of Israel Knohl and Jacob Milgrom the holiness language of Lev 11:43–45 has been linked to the H source which is also responsible for the Holiness Code of chs. 17–26. Based on the redaction-critical approach of their work, they consider the H reference in Lev 11:43–45 to be an insert to the multiple P sources of the remainder of ch. 11. The result of this approach is a connection based solely on the addition of phrase in ch. 11, which is foreign to the original source. From a narrative or canon-critical perspective, the unity of the chapter is preserved, allowing a comparison not only of the holiness phrase in vv. 43–45 but also of the chapter as a whole.

[72] On the importance of the holiness language for the chapter and the unity of the chapter see Leigh M. Trevaskis, *Holiness, Ethics and Ritual in Leviticus* (Hebrew Bible Monographs 29; Sheffield: Sheffield Phoenix, 2011).

[73] The sabbatical and jubilee legislation is also treated from a universal rather than personal perspective (Lev 25). The topic is presented from the perspective of "the land" and framed structurally on this, rather than an individualistic, perspective (Lev 25:2, 4, 5, 6, 23, 24). Instead of individuals keeping the Sabbath as a remembrance of creation

primarily dealing with "personal legislation" as the individual—every member of the community—is addressed in the section: "Chapters 17–20 touch on personal moral laws."[74] This does not negate the wider influence the individual has upon his community.

Third, the sections A and A' of ch. 11 and chs. 17–18 address the category of "prohibited impurities." Moskala notes that the passages are related "by moral connections with prohibitions of sexual perversities and idolatry (the same moral connections and implications will be seen in the book of Deuteronomy in regard to the notion of תּוֹעֵבָה)."[75]

Finally, the dietary food laws are reiterated at the beginning and the conclusion of chs. 17–20. Shea points out that ch. 17 leads into the subject of legislation on food "by means of some concluding remarks on sacrificial animals" and continues the subject of food by adding "the prohibition that the blood of no animal should be eaten. The passage from Lev 17:15–17 about contact with dead animals is almost a direct quote from Lev 11:39–40. Also the penalty and the instruction for rectification are the same in both cases."[76] At the close of the section, in Lev 20:25, food laws are reiterated emphasizing the distinction of clean and unclean animals. This concluding comment for the section is

(Exod 20:8–11) or salvation from slavery (Deut 5:12–15), the chapter sets out that "the land shall keep a Sabbath to the Lord" (Lev 25:2). The individual, as caretaker of earth (Gen 2:15), is responsible to honor and respect this "Sabbath of the land" with all the consequences that arise for the individual (Lev 25:20–22).

[74] Shea, "Literary Form and Theological Function in Leviticus," 145.

[75] See Lev 18:22, 26, 27, 29, 30; 20:13 and Deut 14:3, the parallel passage to Lev 11. Moskala, *The Laws of Clean and Unclean Animals of Leviticus 11: Their Nature, Theology, and Rationale (an Intertextual Study)*, 164.

[76] Shea, "Literary Form and Theological Function in Leviticus," 145.

followed, as in Lev 11, by a call to holiness: "You shall be holy to me, for I the LORD am holy" (Lev 20:26).

In addition to the envelope structure generated by food regulations Shea points out that chs. 11–15 follow the same progression of topics as do chs. 17–20. He charts the following comparison:[77]

Personal Laws of Uncleanness
A chap. 11—food laws
B chap. 12—sexual laws: childbirth
C chaps. 13–14a—misc. diseases[78]
D chap. 14b—unclean houses of men
E chap. 15—sexual laws: discharges

Personal Moral and Ethical Laws
A' chap. 17—food laws
B' chap. 18—sexual laws: marriage
C' chap. 19—misc. laws
D' chap. 20a—defiling God's house
E' chap. 20b—sexual laws: intercourse

In summary, Lev 11 is closely related to two larger sections in the book: Chapters 12–15 address detailed regulations regarding touch impurities and remedies for their removal. Chapters 17–20 deal with ethical laws that are required because of God's holiness. Beyond the thematic links to these passages, Lev 11 is integrally connected to chs. 12–16 and 17–20 based on linguistic and structural considerations. Leviticus 11 prefigures both the ritual (chs. 12–15) and ethical (chs. 17–20) sections: The concept of touch impurities and the basic remedies for such contamination are first explored in section B of Lev 11 (vv. 24–40) and then further developed in chs. 12–15.[79] The food

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[77] Ibid., 146.

[78] Though Shea uses the term "miscellaneous" it should be better named *tsara'at* regulations, which have to do with deterioration of surfaces, whether of human skin, garments, or houses.

[79] In regard to the center section of Lev 11 (vv. 24–40) Milgrom notes: "Their concern with contact impurity and its purification are of a piece with the theme and vocabulary of the subsequent chapters, 12–15, especially chaps. 12 and 15." Milgrom, *Leviticus 1–16: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary*, 693.

restrictions of section A and A' in Lev 11:2–23, 41–43 are expanded at the beginning of

the section (Lev 17:10–15) and reiterated at the end (20:24–25). Additionally, the

irremediable ontological nature of the uncleanness of certain animals in Lev 11 finds a

parallel in the irremediable "abominable" practices mentioned in the Holiness Code. In

this sense the A and A' section of Lev 11 prefigure the ethical laws in the Holiness

Code.[80]

Leviticus 11 functions as the introduction to two concepts of uncleanness

("prohibited" and "permitted" impurity) that are then further developed in the sections on

ritual impurity in chs. 12–15 and the call to ethical purity in chs. 17–20. Leviticus 11 is

careful to distinguish between these two concepts by using adjectives and verbs in

relation to the "unclean." It is crucial not to confuse or blend these two models of

impurity.

In the development of Lev 11 the theme proceeds beyond the two unclean

concepts to the ultimate rationale: the holiness of God. This holiness has implications for

God's people first in the immediate context of the dietary regulations but even beyond

that in an ethical lifestyle as developed in the Holiness Code. Thus Holiness has both

cultic and ethical manifestations. Leviticus begins with cultic holiness and then

transitions to ethical holiness, but both are bound together by the fact that ethical holiness

is based on the holy character of God (Lev 11:44–45; 19:2, etc.), which is expressed in

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[80] Though Milgrom does not connect Lev 11:43–44 to chs. 17–20, he has argued extensively for the ethical rationale for dietary restrictions on logical grounds. Jacob Milgrom, "The Biblical Diet Laws as an Ethical System," *Int* 17 (1963): 288–301; Milgrom, *Leviticus 1–16: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary*, 704–742.

the cult. So Lev 11:44–45 is a crucial "cotter pin" that holds the two aspects of holiness

together. Lev 11 anticipates and prepares for this as it develops this theme.

Intertextuality

After a brief study on Lev 11—its twofold use of uncleanness, internal structure,

and place in the structure of the book—this study now returns to the question of

intertextuality. It will be argued in this section that Mark 7:1–23 builds on Lev 11 in a

twofold manner: Mark 7:1–23 builds on the topic of touch impurity established in Lev

11:24–40 and Mark 7:1–23 models the trajectory of Lev 11—from touch contamination

to ethical conclusion.[81]

Before examining the details of the interrelationship between Lev 11 and Mark

7:1–23, Lev 11 needs to be verified as the appropriate intertextual reference. The key

words and themes of Mark 7 can be summarized as follows: The literary references to

food (βρῶμα, v. 19), cleansing (καθαρίζω, v. 19), and the implied as well as explicitly

stated contamination (κοινός, vv. 2, 5, 15, 18, 23) indicate a blend of purity and food

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[81] The development of Lev 11 begins with the distinction of clean and unclean foods, a regulation without any stated rationale. This is followed by specific regulations for touch impurity in the center section of the chapter (vv. 24–43). Ultimately, the chapter concludes with the direct call to holiness. The holiness language (vv. 44–45) gives motive to the previous regulations and points to the ethical issues found in the Holiness Code (chs. 17–26) through its common language. The motive clause (vv. 44–45) and the purpose clause (vv. 46–47) render dealings with unclean food, either by consumption of ontologically unclean food (vv. 1–23, 41–43) or through touch impurity (vv. 24–40), as ethical violation akin to violations found in the Holiness Code. From a narrative perspective or developmental view, the passage begins with a rationale-free regulation and leads to the Holiness Code.

Mark 7:1–23 takes a similar trajectory, though it leaves out the initial distinction of clean/unclean animals. The center section of Lev 11 and the conflict in Mark address touch impurities. Both passages expand from touch impurities to the larger issue of ethical behavior that includes among others "evil thoughts, sexual immorality, theft, murder, adultery" (Mark 7:21). This ethical climax in both passages does not hold ethical behavior as superior to keeping food regulations, but argues instead that adhering to the food regulations is one of many more ethical claims.

issues. In addition the thematic material of Mark 7 specifies a conflict over the "word of God" (v. 13) and Jesus specifically refers to an example from the Pentateuch in this conflict (v. 10). In the literature of the Hebrew Bible Lev 11 and the parallel in Deut 14 systematically address food concerns in the context of divine regulations. In addition to the dietary restrictions, Lev 11 also has a large section that addresses purity concerns involving touch and cleansing rituals. Based on the literary and thematic markers between the two passages, Lev 11 seems the more likely antecedent to Mark 7.

The intertextual connection to Lev 11 is overwhelmingly accepted among scholars, though a word of caution needs to be noted. The interrelationship between these two passages is not as clear as it at first appears. First, the passages are of different genres. The Leviticus passage is a specific case of purity regulation in the larger corpus of purity concerns with hints of holiness language. In contrast, the Markan passage represents a gospel narrative beginning with a dispute and concluding with a hortatory appeal (7:20–23) to a prior declaration (7:15).

Second, the purpose of the Leviticus passage is the distinction between proper and improper foods (11:47), while the Markan passage is Jesus' defense of his disciples coupled with an attack against the religious leaders for their hypocrisy in matters of tradition versus the law of Moses. The purpose of these two passages is very different, urging a careful examination of the intertexuality.

Third, the linguistic links are not as obvious as one would expect. Both passages indeed address food, Mark in a generic sense—Mark 7:1–23 is part of the larger "bread motif" (6:34–8:9)[82]—and even biological sense (7:18) and Leviticus in a precise and

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[82] The overarching theme of "bread" has been noted in the narrative analysis. Loader argues for a dual centerpiece in ch. 7: "The broader context of these passages, from 6.6b to 8.26, includes the feedings of the 5000 and 4000. . . . The dual centerpiece,

taxonomic manner. The Markan food-centered thread is aptly called a "bread motif."

With the exception of two fish in 6:38 and a small but unidentified number of fish in 8:7,

the passages are united by references to bread (6:8, 37–44, 52; 8:4–5), breadcrumbs

(7:27–28), and leaven (8:15). In Mark 7:1–23 the food (βρῶμα, 7:19) and the implied

reference to food in 7:2 are not as specific regarding the food item, but still need to be

viewed as part of the larger theme. The "bread motif" views food in the context of

nourishment and presents Jesus as the provider for individuals (Syrophoencian woman)

as well as large groups (5,000 Jewish men and 4,000 people in Gentile territory).

Leviticus 11, on the other hand, places the emphasis on the categories of permissible and

prohibited foods, either because of the ontological uncleanness of an animal or the touch

contamination of a carcass. The connection between these two types is not as strong as

has been often asserted.

On the linguistic level the use of unclean/clean terminology in Mark 7 and Lev 11

appears to favor an intertextual link. Yet, the link to uncleanness in the original languages

is not as clear as in English. The contrast of clean and unclean in Lev 11 is presented in

the juxtaposition of טָמֵא and טָהוֹר (11:47) with a final appeal to קדשׁ (11:44). The LXX

Greek renders the purity contrast as καθαρίζω and ἀκάθαρτος. But in contrast to the

LXX, Mark contrasts a different pair of words καθαρίζω and κοινός.

7.1–23 and 7.24–30, both directly addresses food issues and uses food imagery. Jesus'
encounter with the Syrophoenician woman celebrates the inclusion of Jew and Gentile in
the feast of the kingdom, the children and the dogs." William Loader, "Challenged at the
Boundaries: A Conservative Jesus in Mark's Tradition," *JSNT* 63 (1996): 46.

    For a different structural analysis of the bread motif see Rhoads's chiastic
structure climaxing in Mark 7:19 "declaring all foods clean." David Rhoads, "Jesus and
the Syrophoenician Woman in Mark: A Narrative-Critical Study," *JAAR* 62, no. 2 (1994):
348.

With these warnings in mind, the observations listed above warrant an intertextual connection based on literary and thematic grounds. However, the connection should be approached with caution. Simply connecting these two passage without properly examining their respective contexts and differences between them would not do justice to the complexity of the intertextual relationship between them.

<div align="center">Linguistic Connections</div>

As has been pointed out above, the linguistic connection to the unclean animals of Lev 11 is not as firmly embedded in the Markan pericope as generally has been assumed. A comparison of Greek terminology in the LXX and the Gospel is needed to examine the proper linguistic agreements between the two passages. Since Mark cites from the LXX in his direct quotations of Isaiah and Moses,[83] a comparison between the LXX translation of Lev 11 and Mark 7 promises the best results for this study. See table 11.

Despite an impressive number of linguistic overlaps, not all of these parallels are of equal importance. The link of "hands" barely establishes any relationship between the two passages. In Leviticus it refers to the extremities of quadrupeds that walk on "hands," that is, paws, while the scribes and Pharisees in Mark accuse the disciples of not washing their hands. The use of πορεύομαι with or without prefixes is similar. In Leviticus it is used for animals that "go" on any number of legs. In Mark it takes a more figurative meaning of things that enter or leave the heart or stomach. The references to words such

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[83] Aside from a change in word order and a change from plural to singular, "Mark is close to Rahlfs's critical text" in rendering the Isaiah quotation. Collins, *Mark: A Commentary*, 350. In regard to the quotations attributed to Moses, Collins notes: "The citation to honor one's parents agrees with Deut 5:16 LXX. . . . The wording of the commandment that one who speaks evil of either of his parents shall die is closer to Exod 21:16 LXX than to Lev 20:9 LXX." Ibid., 351.

as λέγω show at most the difference in genre. The frequency of this word in Mark can be attributed to the narrative nature of the passage, which adds little to the interrelationship of the two passages. The reference to Moses becomes more significant since it is Moses who passes on the regulation in Lev 11:1 but whose regulations the scribes and Pharisees transgress in Mark 7:10.

Table 11. Linguistic Linkages between Leviticus 11 and Mark 7:1–23

VERB	LEVITICUS 11 (LXX)	MARK 7:1–23
ἐσθίω (to eat)	2, 3, 4, 8, 9, 11, 21, 22, 39, 40, 42, 47 (2x)	2, 3, 4, 5
βρῶμα (food)	34	19
καθαρίζω, καθαρός (to cleanse, clean)	32, 36, 37, 47	19
ἀκάθαρτος (unclean)	4–8, 24–29, 31–36, 38–40, 43, 47	—
κοινόω/κοινός (to defile, defiled)	—	2, 5, 15 (2x),18, 20, 23
Μωϋσῆς (Moses)	1	10
ἐκ– εἰσ– πορεύομαι (to go out/in)	20, 21, 27, 42	15 (2x), 18, 19 (2x), 20–21, 23
λέγω (to say)	1, 2	6, 9–11, 14, 18, 20
χείρ (hand)	27	2, 3, 5

The remaining parallels—food and eating as well as purity language—are more substantial as they demonstrate similarities between the two passages, even though they carry different nuances: First, the aspect of eating (ἐσθίω) involves a significant number

of parallel instances, although with a divergent meaning. Leviticus refers to eating in a repeated negative command, while in Mark it is descriptive of the actions of the disciples ("they eat with defiled hands," vv. 2, 5) and of the Jews ("they do not eat without ritual washings," vv. 3, 4). Additionally, Leviticus presents a universal aspect to consumption—it functions gnomically with application to all Israelites—while the references to ἐσθίω in Mark are limited to specific individuals, such as the disciples or the Pharisees. It is surprising that Jesus does not refer to ἐσθίω in his parable and its explanation (Mark 7:15–23). Thematically the topic of eating is raised in the second section of Mark 7, but a strict literary connection between the ἐσθίω usages in Mark 7 and Lev 11 cannot be established.

Second, the parallel of βρῶμα in Lev 11 and Mark 7 is more significant than it appears at first. The term appears three times in LXX, the book of Leviticus (11:36; 25:6, 37), in unrelated passages. In Lev 11 it occurs once at the close of the section on touch defilement (section B, 11:24–40). A carcass contaminates all foods (πᾶν βρῶμα) in a bowl through the medium of water (11:34). Significantly, the context makes it clear that the category of food, though prefixed by the qualifier πᾶς ("all"), refers only to permissible foods.[84] The food items are located in kitchen utensils and do not include

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[84] The LXX Lev 11:34 reads καὶ πᾶν βρῶμα, ὃ ἔσθεται ("and all/any food, that which is eaten"). The modifying subclause ὃ ἔσθεται ("that which is eaten") could be viewed as an apposition to the main clause or a qualifying/limiting statement about the main clause. If this subclause is taken as apposition, food is defined as that which is (permitted to be) eaten. However, if "that which is eaten" is taken as qualifying/limiting βρῶμα, it could be argued that "that which is eaten" must be added precisely because βρῶμα is not limited to permissible food.

The subclause must be rendered as an apposition to πᾶν βρῶμα for the following reasons: First, the sentence continues by stating that the food turns unclean due to contact with water. This implies that the food was not unclean before this. Since all prohibited foods in the chapter are deemed unclean, it would make no sense to denote something as unclean that was unclean to begin with. Second, the construction of v. 34 is surrounded by five similar phrases (vv. 32–35) in which a πᾶς clause is followed by a subclause. The

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prohibited animals just excluded in section A. The reference to βρῶμα in Mark 7:19 parallels Lev 11 on multiple levels:

a. The term βρῶμα is used only a single time in the Gospel in 7:19. This is even more noteworthy as the larger section, as has been noted above, is subsumed in the "bread motif." Mark, just this once, breaks the clear pattern of using primarily ἄρτος ("bread") established throughout the larger passage (6:6–8:21) and refers to food with a new term.[85]

b. As in Lev 11:34, the reference to βρῶμα in Mark 7:19 is qualified by πᾶς. This modifier with βρῶμα occurs together only in Mark 7:19 in the New Testament. This unique use of βρῶμα in the New Testament builds on a prior understanding. Besides Lev 11:37 the LXX joins πᾶς with βρῶμα in a few other passages: Gen 6:21; 14:11; 41:35, 48; Ps 106:18 [Ps 107:18 in English translations]; Sir 36:18 [Sir 36:23 in English translations]; Hag 2:12. Significantly all references use the expression to denote foods specified for consumption in accordance with divine guidelines. This is most clearly expressed in Gen 6:21: "Take with you every sort of food (πάντων τῶν βρωμάτων) that is eaten, and store it up. It shall serve as food for you and for them."

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items mentioned include articles of wood, cloth, skin, or sackcloth (v. 32), earthenware vessel (v. 33), food and drink (v. 34), and an oven or stove (v. 35). The similar construction to vv. 33 and 35 and the identical construction to drink in v. 34 point to an appositive reading.

[85] The other Gospels are similarly scarce with the term βρῶμα: Matt 14:15; Luke 3:11; 9:13; John 4:34. Even though the word itself covers the full range of edible items, the writers of the Gospels rarely use this word, preferring instead to clarify what food item is being consumed, most commonly bread and fish. This is even the case in Mark 7, where the more popular term ἄρτος ("bread," v. 2) is used.

c. Finally, both Lev 11 and Mark 7 place βρῶμα in the context of touch defilement. In Lev 11:34 this is beyond dispute. With regard to Mark 7, the discussion of the meaning of κοινός in the previous chapter has already argued this same point. Interestingly, Sir 36:18 and Hag 2:12, already noted above for their use of βρῶμα with the πᾶς qualifier, add a dimension of touch defilement to βρῶμα. Therefore, the use of βρῶμα in both Lev 11 and Mark 7 is a strong indicator of intertextuality based on the idea of touch defilement.

Third, both Lev 11 and Mark 7 are concerned with purity, although the dissimilarities between the passages can be easily ascertained by examining the negative purity terms, ἀκάθαρτος and κοινός ("unclean" and "defiled") in table 11 above: While Lev 11 is deeply concerned with uncleanness (ἀκάθαρτος) in every section (A, B, A', and C), Mark 7 never mentions uncleanness (ἀκάθαρτος) at all. The reverse is true for the term κοινός: Mark mentions this throughout the pericope seven times and, remarkably, in every section of the passage. Yet, Leviticus does not mention this term once. Each passage uses its preferred term—ἀκάθαρτος in Lev 11 and κοινός in Mark 7—in its introduction (Lev 11:2; Mark 7:2) and conclusion (Lev 11:47; Mark 7:23), forming an inclusio with this terminology.

Similarities between the passages can be observed in the use of the positive purity terms καθαρίζω (verb)/καθαρός (adjective), "to cleanse/clean." Lev 11 and Mark 7 address the issue of "cleansing." In LXX Lev 11 the verb καθαρίζω is not used but two different usages of the adjective καθαρός are employed: The first places it together with a future stative form of the verb "εἰμί" in the expression καθαρὸν ἔσται ("it will be clean") in order to express the action of "cleansing" (Lev 11:32, 36, 37). Here in section B, a "cleansing" ritual remedies the physical ritual impurity acquired by touch. An individual

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who completes this ritual "will be pure." The second use employs the adjective καθαρός as a modifier of a noun and places it in contrast to the ἀκάθαρτος ("unclean") animal in the singular case of 11:47. Here it functions descriptively and ontologically rather expressing an action.

In the Markan pericope the only reference to "cleansing" is the participle form of the verb καθαρίζω in v. 19 ("cleansing all foods"). This reference to καθαρίζω is placed in the narrative aside (v. 19) in which the narrator places Jesus' words in the context of the conflict at the beginning of the pericope.[86] This connection of καθαρίζω to the beginning of the conflict story clarifies that the foods in v. 19 must be understood as defiled (κοινός) foods.

In contrast to Lev 11, Mark does not make use of an adjectival form at all.[87] Instead, Mark places the focus on an action by means of the verbal participle καθαρίζων,[88] here attributed to Jesus, rather than on an ontological statement. In other

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[86] For a discussion on the antecedent of καθαρίζων see chapter 1. For a discussion on the purpose of the narrative aside see chapter 3.

[87] Mark uses "cleansing" language—the adjective καθαρος, the verb καθαρίζω, or the noun καθαρισμός—only in two passages: First, the cleansing of a leper mentions the verb καθαρίζω three times (Mark 1:40–42) and the noun καθαρισμός once (Mark 1:44). Second, the passage under consideration, the conflict story over hand-washing, mentions καθαρίζω once (Mark 7:19).

In the miracle story of the healing of a leper Jesus is presented as the one who can remove impurity through a cleansing activity both in telling (Mark 1:40) and showing (Mark 1:42). Remarkably Jesus does not use water or prescribe the elapse of time, but instead touches and speaks to the leper (Mark 1:41). At the conclusion of the miracle Jesus commands the former leper to abide by the regulations of Moses and show himself to the priests. The noun is used only once as a summary to the proceedings (Mark 1:43) between Jesus and the leper.

Mark 7 shares several similarities with Mark 1: First, Jesus is portrayed as actively removing impurity. Second, Jesus accomplishes this through his words in both passages. Third, both passages emphasize the continued validity of Mosaic regulations.

[88] The lack of a finite verb in the clause reinforces this notion.

words, according to the narrator "Jesus cleanses all food" rather than "all food is clean." It is Jesus' action, presumably his words since no other action is specified (see also Mark 1:41), that initiates a purification of the food. The narrator's use of καθαρίζω therefore comes closest to the first usage of καθαρός in Lev 11, the adjective with a future stative verb ("it will be clean"), mentioned above.

In both passages, then, the "cleansing" activity removes touch contamination: In Leviticus, carcass contamination is eradicated after a ritual and a specific time duration; in Mark, Jesus eradicates the category of touch defilement (κοινός). The intertextual parallel exhibited by the use of καθαρίζω/καθαρός therefore does not link Mark 7:19 to the "clean" animals of Lev 11:47—the adjectival use—but instead connects the cleansing activity in Mark to the cleansing action in the touch impurity section of Leviticus.

Although there are similarities between Mark 7:1–23 and Lev 11, differences remain. Both passages demonstrate the cleansing activity of touch impurity, but the nature of the contamination by touch remains different. In Lev 11 the carcass of an animal defiles persons and objects it comes in contact with as expressed by the term ἀκάθαρτος. In Mark 7:1–23, though, the source of the touch defilement for the disciples is unknown or whether there was any touch defilement in the first place. The narrative aside of vv. 3–4 explains the most likely circumstance for contracting defilement according to the religious leaders: The location of the marketplace (ἀγορά, v. 4) and the implied interaction with Gentiles.[89] This general statement on the behavior of the religious leaders and the Jews specifies a common concern but does not address where the disciples contracted defilement or whether it is even possible for the religious leaders

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[89] For a detailed examination of this see chapter 2.

to know if defilement actually occurred. The act of ritual washing practiced by the religious leaders and expected as regular behavior of the disciples then is a precautionary measure and is clearly identified as "tradition" in the pericope rather than "law of God" or "word of God." The category is therefore correctly referred to by Mark as κοινός rather than ἀκάθαρτος and the cleansing activity is correctly modified from an adjectival construction (καθαρὸν ἔσται) in Lev 11 to the verb (καθαρίζω) in Mark 7 to account for the difference in meaning. The κοινός touch impurity in Mark 7 does not relate to an ontological form of impurity[90] nor does it directly relate to touch impurity in Lev 11. Instead the κοινός defilement is viewed as an extension of the Levitical law as understood by scribes and Pharisees.

In summary, considering the linguistic level of intertextuality, the above observations suggest an intertextual link between Lev 11 and Mark 7:1–23. However, the linguistic links do not connect Mark 7 to the unclean animals found in sections A and A' in Leviticus, but rather to section B dealing with touch contamination. This is substantiated on multiple levels by means of the term βρῶμα and the use of purity language.

<div align="center">Thematic Connections</div>

The passage of Lev 11 and Mark 7 are thematically connected by shared topics such as food, eating, and purity issues. Since these already have been addressed in the section dealing with the stronger linguistic parallels, this section will explore secondary themes that do not share the same words. These themes include: washings, kitchen utensils, and the law.

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[90] See also the previous chapter on the definition of κοινός.

In both passages, ritual washings reverse the impact of different kinds of contamination. In Lev 11, water can have both cleansing effects (vv. 32, 36) as well as defiling aspects (vv. 34, 38).[91] The act of washing (vv. 25, 28) also certainly implies the use of water, and this is part of the ritual purification process of washing (πλύνω) and waiting till the evening. This ritual washing removes the carcass contamination incurred by an individual through touch. In Mark 7:1–23 ritual washings are introduced as part of the ensuing conflict: In a narrative aside, the defiled (κοινός) hands of the disciples are described as unwashed (ἄνιπτος, v. 2). This lack of ritual washing by the disciples is in contrast to the strict hand-washing rituals (νίπτω, "wash"; v. 3),[92] of the "Pharisees and all the Jews." The subsequent narrative aside magnifies the ritual washings of the "Pharisees and all the Jews" by twice describing them as complete immersions, βαπτίζω ("baptize," v. 4), not only of themselves but of all kitchen utensils.[93] In contrast to Leviticus, the contamination in Mark is not clearly defined. It can be inferred that something in the marketplace caused the perceived need for the washing. From the understanding of κοινός gleaned in the previous chapter, a concern for touch defilement is at the heart of the Pharisees' critique of the disciples, though what infraction the

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[91] "Water constitutes an anomalous, indeed, paradoxical status. It is the purifying agent par excellence (v 32b); yet it is most vulnerable to impurity." Milgrom continues to argue that the best way to understand this paradox is to view water as so susceptible to impurity that it absorbs the impurity of the object or person in question. Milgrom, *Leviticus 1–16: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary*, 679.

[92] For a comprehensive discussion on the enigmatic term πυγμῇ and its possible meanings see Crossley, "Halakah and Mark 7.3: 'With Hand in the Shape of a Fist'."

[93] For a detailed study on the historical viability of the Markan account see Crossley, "Halakah and Mark 7.4: '. . . and Beds'"; Adler, "Second Temple Period Ritual Baths Adjacent to Agricultural Installations: The Archaeological Evidence in Light of the Halakhic Sources "; Adler, "The Ritual Baths Near the Temple Mount and Extra-Purification before Entering the Temple Courts: A Reply to Eyal Regev."

disciples violated—what unclean person or object they came in contact with—is not known to the reader and possibly not to the scribes and Pharisees either. The Pharisees' washing rituals therefore appear to be more cautionary and preemptive measures rather than targeting defilement that is known to have been incurred. While there are similarities and differences between Mark 7 and Lev 11, the parallel textual unit in Lev 11 is once again section B (vv. 24–40), which involves washing, rather than sections A and A' (vv. 2–23, 41–43), which do not.

The kitchen utensils at first appear to be a trivial point of comparison. But a closer look demonstrates that these items, especially in Mark, are anything but ordinary. In Mark 7:4 a list of kitchen containers is enumerated: Cups, pots, and copper vessels (ποτηρίων καὶ ξεστῶν καὶ χαλκίων). In Mark and the remainder of the New Testament this list is unique in theme and scope. Of these words only ποτήριον ("cup") occurs again in Mark (9:41; 10:38–39; 14:23, 36) while both ξέστης and χαλκίον are *hapax legomena*. None of these exact terms is specifically employed in LXX Lev 11, but the theme of kitchen containers is found in vv. 33–35. The specific "earthenware vessel" is a term unique to Leviticus and occurs only three times in the touch impurities section of Leviticus (Lev 11:33; 14:50; 15:12; cf. 6:21). In addition to the common theme and the unique terminology, the action associated with these objects is also similar: The objects require a cleansing ritual in order to be considered fit for use. As noted in the previous paragraph, the contamination might differ slightly, though touch is unquestionably involved, but the similar theme and its treatment suggests another parallel between Mark 7:1–23 and section B of Lev 11.

A final observation needs to be made: Both passages treat the theme of regulations or commandments. In Lev 11:1 the chapter is introduced as a divine speech

("The Lord said to Moses and Aaron," v. 1) that in no uncertain terms makes an authoritative statement that these are the words of God himself. The passage concludes by summarizing the chapter as "this is the instruction/law" (תּוֹרָה [LXX νόμος], v. 46). As has been pointed out in the narrative analysis, Mark deals with the theme of authority in Mark 7:1–23. In his first speech (vv. 6–13) Jesus brings to a head two opposing principles: The "commandment of God" (ἐντολὴν τοῦ θεοῦ, vv. 8, 9) or the "word of God" (λόγον τοῦ θεοῦ, v. 13) versus the "tradition of the elders" (παράδοσιν τῶν ἀνθρώπων, v. 8) or "your tradition" (παράδοσιν ὑμῶν, vv. 9, 13). To prove his point that the religious leaders have placed their own tradition over the "commandment of God" Jesus presents the *qorban* tradition as an example to demonstrate disregard for two Mosaic laws (Exod 20:12; 21:17) in favor of tradition. The narrative then presents Jesus' own authoritative speech in the parable (v. 15) and its explanation (vv. 18–23). This emphasis on Jesus' authority is substantiated by the use of gnomic presents, speech introductions, and the trajectory to ethical purity, which alludes to and supports the "commandment of God." Though the terminology is not identical in LXX Lev 11 and Mark 7 (νόμος/ἐντολή) and the passages represent different genres (divine speech/conflict story), nevertheless, both passages deal with the law and contain new regulations (Mark 7:18–23).

Concluding this section of the present analysis, it needs to be noted that thematic links are inherently weaker and more subjective than the linguistic links mentioned above. Nonetheless these secondary markers further underscore the connection of Mark 7:1–23 to Lev 11. The thematic parallels relating to washings, kitchen utensils, and commandments continue the pattern noted above of linking Mark to the touch impurity

section in Lev 11:24–40 rather than to the surrounding passages concerned with the distinction between clean and unclean animals.

Logical Connection

A final connection between Lev 11 and Mark 7:1–23 deserves to be examined. It can be labeled as "flow of the argument" or a logical trajectory. Both Lev 11 and Mark 7 begin with a discussion of purity and build up to an ethical proclamation.

In the structure of Lev 11, noted above, it has already been demonstrated that the climax of the pericope is the reference to the Holiness Code language in verses 44–45. Both sections on "prohibited impurity" and "tolerated impurity" culminate in the call to holiness. Additionally, the larger structure of Leviticus uses 11:44–45 to prefigure the Holiness Code of chs. 17–20. These chapters express a code of ethical behavior that covers interactions with animals (ch. 17), sexual interactions (ch. 18), interactions with fellow citizens (the poor, elders, children, authorities, ch. 19) and foreigners (19:34), with punishments for those who violate these instructions (ch. 20). By employing Holiness Code language at the end of ch. 11, the author internally links ch. 11 to the Holiness Code in 17–19 and prefigures the ethical concerns expressed there. Therefore, the food restrictions of ch. 11 cannot be separated from ethical behavior, but are a part of them.[94]

In Mark 7 a similar trajectory appears. Jesus expands the discussion on touch impurity initiated by the scribes and Pharisees in a twofold counter-argument: First, "Jesus' response in vv. 6–8 does not address the question of hand-washing explicitly,"[95]

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[94] See also Milgrom's discussion on the ethical principles of the dietary restrictions. Milgrom, *Leviticus 1–16: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary*, 704–742.

[95] Collins, *Mark: A Commentary*, 350.

instead Jesus attacks the notion of the "tradition of the elders" included by the scribes and Pharisees in the original question as their authoritative reference point. In the second speech Jesus attacks the issue of touch defilement directly by means of a public parable (vv. 14–15) and a private explanation (vv. 18–23). The trajectory of this second section is a general statement (v. 15), which is later explained (vv. 18–19) and expanded to a vice list (vv. 20–23). Jesus' list of vices is reminiscent not only of the ten commandments given at Sinai (Exod 20), but also of the Holiness Code (Lev 17–26). Lists of vices became popular in the Second Temple period among various religious movements among the Jews, from Qumran to Philo, in their quest for purity, but they based their material on the Hebrew Bible in different ways.[96] Jonathan Klawans has demonstrated that specific vices in Mark's list are based, much like similar vices in the *Temple Scroll*, on Deut 25:15–16 and Lev 19:15, 35.[97] For Jesus the issue at the close of the conflict story in Mark 7 is "with the morally defiling effect that sin can have on individual sinners."[98] Thus both Lev 11 and Jesus in Mark 7:20–23 arrive at the same moral or ethical charge. The trajectory of ritual defilement has been expanded to moral defilement in both passages.

Klawans does not stop at this point. In the context of the Second Temple period Jesus' vice list "fits well within the range of ancient Jewish attitudes toward impurity."[99]

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[96] See Collins for a detailed study on purity documents from Qumran and Philo as well as a lengthy discussion on current research. Ibid., 356–363. Cf. also Marcus, *Mark 1—8: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary*, 459. For an important study examining the complete purity system of various Jewish factions, see Harrington, *The Impurity Systems of Qumran and the Rabbis: Biblical Foundations*.

[97] Klawans, *Impurity and Sin in Ancient Judaism*, 49–50, 122–123, 148.

[98] Ibid., 150.

[99] Ibid., 149.

What differentiates Jesus from some other factions is that even though he points to moral defilement he does not oppose ritual defilement. Contrary to Philo, who viewed ritual defilement as merely a symbol of moral defilement, "Jesus nowhere defends ritual purity as a symbol of moral purity."[100] Klawans can therefore claim that "I remain convinced that Jesus did not reject these laws [dietary restrictions] himself; too much gospel evidence testifies that these laws did remain important to him."[101]

In summary, Lev 11 and Mark 7:1–23 begin with ritual purity—carcass impurity in section B of Lev 11 and touch (κοινός) defilement as exemplified by hand–washing impurity in Mark 7—before expanding to moral impurity. While Lev 11 points forward to the ethical principles embedded in the Holiness Code (Lev 17–20), the vice list in Mark 7:20–23 reflects back on this same Holiness Code.[102] Significantly, in both passages ritual purity is not minimized or denigrated in favor of moral impurity. Instead ritual and moral purity cover different but complementary aspects of purity.

Summary

This chapter has set out to examine the intertextual relationships between Mark 7:1–23 and Lev 11. First, this chapter established that Leviticus has a twofold definition of טָמֵא ("unclean") differentiated on the basis of its syntactical use and its context:

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[100] Ibid. See Klawans's extensive study on Philo's view as well as other Second Temple period groups.

[101] Ibid.

[102] The Gospel of Mark reflects not only on the Holiness Code in Mark 7. In Mark 12:31 Jesus explicitly ratifies the importance of the Holiness Code when he cites from it (Lev 19:18) when questioned what the greatest commandment is: "The second is this: 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.'"

a. In sections A and A' (vv. 2–23; 41–43) טָמֵא describes the nature of unclean animals and is rendered as an adjective in a predicate position. Since it is ontological it cannot be reversed or mediated.

b. In section B (vv. 24–40) טָמֵא expresses the unclean state a person or object acquires after coming in contact with a carcass. This state is expressed with a verbal form of טָמֵא and it can be remedied usually by means of ritual washings, passage of time, and rarely destruction of an unclean object.

Second, based on the structure of the passage and the grouping of the adjectival and verbal use of טָמֵא, the holiness language in vv. 44–45 serves as the culmination of the entire chapter. In addition this holiness language prefigures the ethical concerns elaborated in the Holiness Code in Lev 17–20. Internal, thematic, and structural considerations point out this connection.

These two observations about Lev 11 are important for the intertextual comparison. Though Mark does not quote Lev 11 directly, linguistic, thematic, and logical parallels are featured throughout the passage. Food-related (ἐσθίω, βρῶμα) and purity-related terminology (καθαρίζω, ἀκάθαρτος, κοινός) connect the two passages linguistically. Contrary to commonly held beliefs, Mark connects to the touch impurities section in Lev 11:24–40 rather than to the section on the ontological impurity of the unclean animals (Lev 11:2–23; 41–43). This same pattern can be observed in the thematic connections of ritual washings (ἄνιπτος, βαπτίζω, πλύνω), kitchen utensils (cups, pots, vessels, stove), and law terminology (νόμος, ἐντολή, παράδοσις).

Finally, the development of Mark's pericope follows the same trajectory of Lev 11: An issue of touch impurity is expanded to a call to moral purity. Both passages are

careful not to supplant ritual purity by moral purity. Instead, the two concepts of purity stand along side each other.

Mark's intertexual link to sections B and C of Lev 11 leads to two results: First, it further supports the definition of κοινός established in the previous chapter as relating to touch impurities. Second, it further supports the understanding that the Markan pericope is focused on touch defilement rather than ontological impurity. The cleansing activity in v. 19 therefore has to refer to the abrogation of touch impurity—that is, "Jesus declared all defiled (κοινός) foods clean." The removal of the distinction between clean and unclean animals—that is, "Jesus declared all unclean animals clean"—cannot be sustained.

CHAPTER 6

CONCLUSION

Summary of Chapters

This study has examined Mark 7:1–23 in its literary setting and context (including the intertextual context), and in relation to the biblical and later Jewish systems of purity. The results of the analysis illustrate that the passage is a tightly woven narrative unit in which Mark presents a conflict between Jesus and the religious leaders over the issue of touch impurities. Jesus rebukes the religious leaders in 7:6–13, has a teaching directed to the crowd in 7:14–15, and gives the disciples further instruction in 7:18–23. The rebuke contrasts the tradition of the religious leaders with the "word of God." In this rebuke Jesus responds to the foundation of authority of the religious leader—the tradition—as expressed in their question (7:6). The teaching, with the provocative parable (7:15) and narrative aside (7:19), responds to the issue of purity which the religious leaders raised in their accusation (7:6). Jesus points away from outward purity, as exemplified through the regulations on ritual washings by the religious leaders, and towards inner purity defined by an ethical code (7:20–23). On a thematic level then, the entire pericope presents a natural and logical unity.

On the linguistic level, based on a narrative analysis of the pericope in chapter 2, the unity of the passage was further illustrated. In surprising detail the various components of the narrative—plot, geographic space, props, characterization, and

movement—prefigure the developments of the pericope and closely connect the various elements.

In addition to the traditional elements of narrative analysis presented in chapter 2, chapter 3 presented a model for examining verbal tenses. The pericope uses a variety of tenses to aid the process of storytelling. For example, the passage shifts from historical presents to gnomic presents in harmony with the movement from the narrative setting (7:1–5) to Jesus' authoritative teaching (7:20–23).

Even more significant is the use of aorist indicatives in speech introductions as a marker of an authoritative statement. Mark's introduction of Jesus' speech (Mark 7:6) in the aorist places him in the same category as the prophets Isaiah and Moses. In linguistic terms the use of the aorist underscores what had been stated earlier in the Gospel ("For he taught them as one who had authority, and not as the scribes," Mark 1:22). The reader of the conflict story (Mark 7:1–23) has already noted that Jesus is the dominant character of the pericope. The aorist tense reinforces this notion linguistically. Additionally, the use of tenses betrays the author as more sophisticated than is usually attributed to him.

Chapter 4 examined and engaged various scholars on the topic of purity in the New Testament. The reference works, such as dictionaries and lexica, largely agree on a conflated view of purity: Purity terminology is grouped together in a positive category (ἅγιος, καθαρίζω) and a negative category (ἀκάθαρτος, βέβηλος, μιαινω, κοινός/κοινόω) with little or no distinction between the terms within a category. This scholarly viewpoint is based on comparisons of the Gospel accounts with Acts 10–11, 21:28 and 24:6, and 1 Macc 1:47.

This view was prevalent in the early to mid-twentieth century based on a limited understanding of ritual in Judaism, often with an evolutionary trajectory leading from

Judaism to Christianity. In the 1970s Mary Douglas and Jacob Milgrom, among others, produced insightful purity studies in the Hebrew Bible. This new focus continued with notable works by Jonathan Klawans and David Wright in the Hebrew Bible and Hannah Harrington in Second Temple period studies. The impact of these studies of the Hebrew Bible and Second Temple period is only beginning to have an effect on New Testament studies. Among the New Testament scholars rethinking the traditional view of purity are Christian Stettler, Colin House, Clinton Wahlen, and Mikeal C. Parsons. Additionally scholars from Hebrew Bible and Jewish studies have extended their research to include New Testament material (Jiří Moskala, Yair Furstenberg, and Daniel Boyarin).

In addition, chapter 4 examined the LXX and the NT passages other than Mark 7:1–23 that combine different purity terms or ideas: The Maccabean refusal to eat anything common and swine (1 Macc 1:47), Peter's vision of the heavenly sheet commanding Peter to "rise and kill" (Acts 10–11), and the two versions of Paul entering the temple (Acts 21:28 and 24:8).

It was discovered upon closer examination that 1 Macc 1:47 does not treat the two ideas of impurity, κοινός and ἀκάθαρτος, as overlapping terms at all. The surrounding grammatical structure suggests the opposite. The two accounts of Paul visiting the temple (Acts 21:28; 24:8), it was argued, cannot be treated as illuminating each other due to the different genre and setting, and the complexity of Acts 10–11 is best resolved by treating the terminology as distinct. The often-cited idea that God commanded Peter to eat "unclean food" is an interpretation that does not fit the textual evidence, nor does God cleanse the "unclean" but instead the "defiled" (κοινός, Acts 10:15).

These three passages are best explained by a nuanced view of purity in which κοινός is defined as an intermediary impurity category that arose in the Second Temple

period and addresses touch defilement of a clean person/animal by an unclean person/animal. This conclusion implies that Mark 7:1–23 also should be best interpreted with a differentiated view of purity. Applying the definition of κοινός to the theme of defilement in the passage allows the purification referred to in v. 19 to be viewed in the appropriate context. The cleansing is one of touch impurity not of the unclean animals of Lev 11.

Chapter 5 explored the intertextual links between Lev 11 and Mark 7:1–23, as asserted by many scholars. Based on a literary, thematic, and logical comparison, a relationship between Lev 11 and Mark was verified. However, the allusion in Mark 7:1–23 is limited to the holiness language (Lev 11:44–45) and the center section of Lev 11 (vv. 24–40) dealing with the touch impurity transmitted by a carcass coming in contact with a person or object. The ontological impurity of the unclean animals is never alluded to and therefore does not present the appropriate antecedent for the purity discussion of Mark 7:1–23.

The four questions set out in the introduction as the object of this study have been examined in the various chapters:

1. What is the scope of the literary context? This study found that the pericope of Mark 7:1–23 is best viewed as a unit since allotting any portion to a later redaction would render the passage incomprehensible (ch. 1).

2. Is Mark's use of language simplistic or precise? Does the author reflect careful use of terminology in the pericope? This study established that the author is very meticulous in his choice of words. Every element of the narrative is carefully chosen to develop the story and clarify the background of the passage (ch. 3–4).

3. What do the Greek words κοινός, and καθαρίζω mean in this passage and how do they relate to other purity terminology? Does he use purity terminology as technical terms? This study demonstrated that Mark uses the rare word κοινός purposefully and distinctly from ἀκάθαρτος. The cleansing activity of v. 19 refers to this κοινός defilement as an intermediary category between clean and unclean states. It is based on touch impurity which developed during the Second Temple period (ch. 4).

4. To what extent do the Hebrew Bible impact the Markan pericope? This study argued that Mark 7 is connected to Lev 11 linguistically, thematically, and logically. Surprisingly, the interconnection is not between Mark 7 and the ontological distinction between clean and unclean animals, as often asserted, but instead between Mark 7 and the touch impurity derived from carcass impurity. Additionally, the call to holiness in Lev 11:44–45 is mirrored in Mark 7:20–23 (ch. 5).

Reflections on Scholarship

Scholarship has arrived at two opposing conclusions: Jesus abrogated the dietary restrictions of Lev 11 or Jesus did not abrogate these laws but Mark did. This study concluded that Jesus did not have the dietary restrictions of Lev 11 in mind and that Mark did not allude to these either. The various methodologies used in the present study all concurred on this point.

Scholars taking the traditional or mainstream view[1] have correctly noted the importance of the text as a primary means to understand and gain insight into the nature of the conflicts and the reaction of Jesus. The close alignment of Jesus and the narrator,

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[1] For a detailed summary of the different scholarly viewpoints see chapter 1.

even in the narrative asides, generally assumed by scholars taking the traditional position[2] also can be substantiated with a detailed examination of the passage.

Purity scholars and Historical Jesus scholars have correctly noted that Jesus, in first-century Judaism, could not have easily dismissed the dietary regulations, especially of Lev 11, because they were too engrained in the self-understanding of Jews. The brevity and complexity of the parable (7:15) together with the grammatically incomplete narrative aside (7:19) seem quite inadequate to bear the weight of the conclusion by some scholars that Jesus is doing away with the distinction between clean and unclean animals as described in Lev 11. Furthermore, as scholars such as Räisänen and Svartik have convincingly demonstrated,[3] the *Wirkungsgeschichte* of the passage does not demonstrate that the apostles or the early church understood Jesus' saying to mean that the distinction between clean and unclean animals was abrogated.

Implications

Several implications arise from this study.

Purity Studies

Purity studies have largely examined rabbinic and sectarian documents to understand the setting of the Second Temple period and the centuries leading up to the Mishnah. Additionally, purity scholars have adopted redaction-critical studies of the biblical text in the analysis of biblical material. This study proposes that narrative

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[2] Malbon questions this close alignment between the historical Jesus and the narrator. Elizabeth Struthers Malbon, *Mark's Jesus: Characterization as Narrative Theology* (Waco, Tex.: Baylor University Press, 2009).

[3] Räisänen, "Jesus and the Food Laws: Reflections on Mark 7:15"; Svartvik, *Mark and Mission: Mk 7:1–23 in Its Narrative and Historical Contexts*.

analysis of biblical texts can be a valuable aid in understanding purity issues in the biblical text. Further studies on purity-related matters, such as Jesus' relation to touch impurities (i.e., lepers), could benefit from a narrative perspective. Additionally, studies on purity, especially κοινός, in other passages (Rom 14:14; Rev 21:27) could benefit from a nuanced view of purity concepts.

Jesus and Mission

It has been repeatedly and correctly noted that Mark 7:1–23 prepares the reader for the Gentile mission of Jesus, beginning with the Syrophoencian woman. Similarly, Acts 10, in addressing the κοινός defilement, leads to the Gentile mission of the apostles. Jesus in his parable (Mark 7:15) and God through the vision to Peter (Acts 10) give instructions to "break down the barriers," as it is often stated, to the Gentiles. Traditionally, the argument has been that because Jesus in Mark 7 and God through the vision in Acts 10 abolished the distinction between clean and unclean animals, Christians should not distinguish between Jews and Gentiles—both are the object of divine healing and salvation. This view of comparing clean/unclean to Jew/Gentile though has several difficulties: First, if Mark 7 and Acts 10 abolish the ontological category of clean/unclean animals from the Hebrew Bible it must be implied that the distinction of Jew/Gentile is also an ontological distinction. This implication, however, cannot be substantiated or justified from the Hebrew Bible.

There are several distinctions that the Hebrew Bible establishes between Israelite and foreigner: Worship of the true God versus idolatry, practice of righteous acts versus abominations, a pure individual versus one who has accrued touch impurity. These distinctions, though, are based on specific actions, not ontology. As a result, a foreigner

can act in a God-fearing manner (e.g., Ruth) and an Israelite can act in an abominable, or God-removed, manner. The only distinction between Israelites and foreigners not built directly on the actions of the individual is the concept of the "chosen" (Deut 7:6; 14:2) or "my people" (Exod 3:10). God chose Israel not because of any accomplishments of their own, but because of his "love" (Deut 7:8) and "faithfulness" (Deut 7:8–9). This covenant concept is not irrevocably bestowed upon the Israelites ("those who love him and keep his commandments," Deut 7:9–10) nor is it exclusive to them (Gen 12:3, Isa 19:25). This election is therefore not an ontological distinction, but rather a covenantal distinction, which God graciously grants to the faithful Israelites and those who join the Israelites. Thus the Hebrew Bible does not endorse an ontological distinction between Israelites and foreigners or Jews and Gentiles.

Furthermore, an ontological distinction between Israelites and foreigners cannot be extrapolated from Lev 11. The clean/unclean distinction in Lev 11 is a distinction between species—pig versus sheep—based on a set of rules (e.g., parted hoofs and chewing cud, Lev 11:3), not between kind—a spotted sheep versus a plain-colored sheep. It therefore follows that Israelites and foreigners, or Jews and Gentiles, cannot be assigned different ontological states, as they are members of the same species.

Second, the possibility that the abrogation of the clean/unclean animals' distinction is representative of the abrogation of all ritual impurity is not tenable on two counts:

1. The clean/unclean distinction concerns an ontological, not ritual, impurity which is anchored in the creation and flood accounts and therefore stands outside of the cult itself. Since this ontological category predates the cult, it cannot stand as a representative for the category of ritual impurity, of which it is not a part.

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2. Not all food regulations are abolished in New Testament times, since the Jerusalem council upholds the requirement to drain the blood in order not to consume it (Gen 9:4; Lev 3, 7, 17) for all members of the Christian body—Jews and Gentiles (Acts 15:20).

Based on these observations, the claim that the abrogation of the clean/unclean distinction of animals opens up the possibility for mission to the Gentiles is not feasible. This study instead promotes the abrogation of an intermediary category of touch defilement (κοινός) as the appropriate context for the mission to the Gentiles. This category, in which a ritually clean person contracts "defilement" (κοινός) by coming in contact with a Gentile of unknown ritual impurity, resolves the problems listed above as this category is a Second Temple period development based on ritual purity rather than ontological purity. In practical terms Jesus removes the anxiety for Jews of contracting touch "defilement" when they engage with Gentiles. Jesus maintains the ontological equality of human beings and challenges individuals—both Jew and Gentile—to act in a morally pure manner (Mark 7:20–23).

Thus Jesus does "break the barriers," but instead of Hebrew Bible "barriers" in the form of clean/unclean distinctions of animals, Jesus breaks tradition and asserts the model of the Hebrew Bible (Mark 7:10–13). The parable in the second half of the narrative unit continues the staunch defense of the "word of God" in the form of the Hebrew Bible (Mark 7:6–13).

As a result of this dissertation, the topic of "Jesus and Mission" gains a new dimension. Instead of attributing to the Hebrew Bible a denigration of foreigners as ontologically impure, this work supports the notion that Jesus revitalizes the Hebrew Bible concept of ontological equality. By "breaking the barrier" of tradition Jesus instead

points to moral impurity as the barrier humans place in their relationship to God and to people.

In summary, Mark 7:1–23 looks backward to Lev 11 on the parallel issues of touch impurity, ethical purity, and the implied ontology of human beings. Additionally, Mark 7:1–23 sets the trajectory for the issue of defilement and mission that will be repeated and implemented by the early church in Acts 10 and 11. Jesus' teaching on purity issues in Mark 7:1–23 and his subsequent mission to the Gentiles becomes the heuristic explanation for Acts 10 and 11.

<div align="center">Jesus and the Law</div>

Two passages have been at the center of the discussion on Jesus' relationship to the law of the Hebrew Bible: The conflict and Jesus' teaching about the Sabbath (Mark 2:23–3:6) and purity (Mark 7:1–23). This study has not examined the question of the Sabbath, but the reevaluation of the traditional view of the purity conflict (Mark 7:1–23) in this study presents the challenge to revisit the Sabbath discussion as well. If Jesus, in Mark 7:1–23, is actually addressing a specific Second Temple period tradition (*halakah*) rather than the clean/unclean distinction of animals in Lev 11, then the case for Jesus superseding the law is less certain. Rather than abrogating the law, Jesus in this study is seen citing the law as authoritative (Mark 7:10–13) and building on the law of the Hebrew Bible for his own teaching (Mark 7:20–23, cf. Lev 17–20).

The implication for a revision of the traditional view extends to covenant theology and the interplay of concepts such as "grace versus law" and "ethics versus ritual." The present study would argue for a *both/and* approach on these themes rather than an *either/or*. In Mark 7:1–23 Jesus does not elevate ethics above ritual, or vice versa, he

instead argues that human tradition cannot displace divine ethics. As this concept is broadened to the Gentile mission (Mark 7:24–30; Acts 10), grace through Jesus in the form of healing and salvation does not warrant the rejection of the law.

Markan Studies

This study has found Mark to be an astute author and narrator. The often-cited phrases such as "simplistic," "exaggerated," "historically inaccurate" in relation to Mark 7:1–23 could not be verified. The opposite is true instead. Seemingly minor expressions, such as geographic space or characterization, are highly nuanced and are an integral part of the development of the story. Even outwardly mundane verb tenses (e.g., historical present) and common words (e.g., ἔρχομαι versus πορεύομαι) are used strategically in the passage. Mark's use of technical language, such as κοινός, is therefore not accidental. Continued studies in Mark, whether narrative or not, would benefit from a high view of Mark's writing style rather than a simplistic view.

THE LXX TRANSLATION OF HEBREW PURITY TERMINOLOGY

HEBREW	GREEK[a]	REFERENCE[b]
חלל	βεβηλόω	Exod 31:14; Lev 18:21; 19:8, 12, 29; 20:3; 21:4; 24:6, 7, 9, 12, 14, 15, 23; 22:2, 9, 15, 32; Num 18:32; 30:3; Isa 48:11; 56:2; 56:6; Jer 34:16; Ezek 7:21, 22; 13:19; 20:9, 13, 14, 16, 21, 22, 24, 39; 21:19, 25; 22:8, 26; 23:38, 39; 24:21; 25:3; 28:18; 36:20–23; 39:7; 44:7; Amos 2:7; Zeph 3:4; Mal 1:12; 2:10, 11; Pss 55:21; 74:7; 89:32, 35, 40; Lam 2:2; Neh 13:17, 18
	μιαίνω	Gen 34:27; 49:4; Exod 20:25; Isa 43:28; 47:6; Ezek 7:22, 24; 9:7; 23:38; Dan 11:31
חֹל	βέβηλος	Lev 10:1; 1Sam 21:4, 5; Ezek 22:26; 44:23
טמא	ἀκάθαρτος	Lev 5:2, 3; 7:19, 21; 10:10; 11:4–8, 24–29, 31–36, 38–40, 43, 44, 47; 13:11, 15, 36, 45, 46, 51, 55, 59; 14:36, 40, 41, 44–46, 57; 15:2, 4–11, 16–27, 31; 17:15; 20:25; 22:4–6; 27:27; Num 5:2; 6:12; 9:6, 7, 10; 18:15; 19:7, 8, 10, 11; 19:13–17, 19–22; Deut 12:15, 22; 14:7, 8, 10, 19; 15:22; 26:14; Josh 13:4; Isa 6:5; 35:8; 52:1, 11; 64:5; Jer 19:13; Ezek 4:13, 14; 22:5, 10, 26; Amos 7:17, 2:10; Job 14:4; Ecc 9:2; Lam 4:15; 2 Chr 23:19
	μιαίνω	Gen 34:5, 13, 27; Lev 13:3, 8, 11, 14, 15, 20, 22, 25, 27, 30, 44, 59; 15:31, 32; 18:20, 23, 24, 25, 27, 28, 30; 19:31; 20:3; 21:1, 3, 4, 11; 22:5, 8; Num 5:3, 13, 14, 20, 27, 28, 29; 6:7, 9; 19:13; 35:34; Deut 21:23; 24:2; 2 Kgs 23:8, 10, 13, 16; Jer 2:7, 23; 7:30; 39:34; Ezek 4:14; 5:11; 9:7; 14:11; 18:6, 11, 15; 20:7, 18, 26, 30, 31, 43; 22:3, 4, 11; 23:7, 13, 17, 30, 38; 36:17: 37:23; 44:25; Hos 5:3; 6:10; 9:4; Hag 2:13, 14; Pss 79:1; 106:39; 2 Chr 36:14
	βεβηλόω	Ezek 43:7, 8
	other	Lev 15:33; Josh 22:19; Isa 30:22; Ezek 36:18

^a Only the primary word is given. Depending on the syntactical structure a derivative might be used.

^b The references follow the listings of the Biblica Hebraica Stuttgartensia.

[a] Only the primary word is given. Depending on the syntactical structure a derivative might be used.

[b] The references follow the listings of the Biblica Hebraica Stuttgartensia.

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