

## (40) Traditions Attacked (Mt. 15:1-20; Mk. 7:1-23)

1. The Lord's peaking popularity and absence from Jerusalem prompted the Pharisees to dispatch a criticizing delegation to his location (Mt. 15:1; Mk. 7:1).
2. The Pharisees observed that "some" of Jesus' disciples did not observe traditional purification rituals (Mt. 15:2; Mk. 7:2).
  - a. Mosaic Law stipulated purification rituals for skin diseases (Lev. 13-14), sexual discharges (Lev. 15) and contact with a dead body (Num. 19:11-19).
  - b. Jewish traditions amplified and expanded Mosaic Law into a systematized and intensive structure for maintaining ritual (ceremonial) cleanness. The sixth division of the Mishnah is focused on purities in twelve lengthy sections.
  - c. [A.T. Robertson](#) has a good citation for this matter in Matt. 15:2.
3. Christ answered them by not answering them. He did not explain why His disciples failed to live up to the Pharisees' expectations. The Lord highlighted how the Pharisees failed to live up to God the Father's expectations (Mt. 15:3-9; Mk. 7:6-13).
  - a. The Pharisees were the living embodiment of Isaiah's message against Israel (Isa. 29:13).
  - b. The Pharisees exchanged God's commandment for man's tradition (Mt. 15:3; Mk. 7:8). They were actually "experts" in this activity (Mk. 7:9).
  - c. Their practice of Corban violated Ex. 20:12; & 21:17 (Mt. 15:4-6; Mk. 7:10-13).
    - 1) κορβᾶν korban <sup>#2878</sup><sub>Hap.</sub>
    - 2) קֹרְבָן qorban <sup>#7133</sup><sub>82x</sub>
4. The Lord then used the occasion of this accusation to teach Divine viewpoint regarding personal defilement (Mt. 15:10-20; Mk. 7:14-23).
  - a. "Listen and understand" forms the great imperative for disciples (believers under teaching) (Mk. 7:14).
  - b. The Pharisees were paranoid over ritual obedience to guarantee ceremonial cleanness. Jesus described the reality of mental-attitude sin for personal defilement (Mt. 15:11; Mk. 7:15).

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Twin Principles: [1] Behavior does not determine clean vs. unclean. [2] Behavior is a reflection of a clean vs. unclean mental attitude.

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- c. The Pharisees were offended (Matt. 15:12). They heard, but did not understand. They were not the Father's planting, and they are not our responsibility to deal with.
- d. The disciples required additional explanation and the Lord patiently re-taught the principles (Matt. 15:15-20; Mk. 7:17-23).
- e. Temporal life issues are temporal. Spiritual life issues are eternal.