

MONDAY**Clean Hands or Clean Heart?**

- Jesus called out His critics = silencing their oral traditions
- Now continues in this context = exposing root problem of conflict over oral tradition = hypocrisy
- Tradition = all food made unclean if touched w/hands not ceremonially washed

Mark 7:14–19 ¹⁴When He had called all the multitude to Himself, He said to them, “Hear Me, everyone, and understand: ¹⁵**There is nothing that enters a man from outside which can defile him; but the things which come out of him, those are the things that defile a man.**

- Defile = made unclean
- Clean = means God has sanctified something
 - setting it apart for His purposes
- Unclean = unholy / unacceptable to God
- In context = Jesus is discussing conflict w/traditions of ritual purity = not laws of clean/unclean animals that were established by God

¹⁶If anyone has ears to hear, let him hear!”

¹⁷When He had entered a house away from the crowd, His disciples asked Him concerning the parable. ¹⁸So He said to them, “Are you thus without understanding also? Do you not perceive that whatever enters a man from outside cannot defile him, ¹⁹because it does not enter his heart but his stomach, and is eliminated, thus purifying all foods?”

- **In context = irrespective of whether person eating had performed prescribed ritual cleansing**
- Declared Pharisees’ oral tradition of “touch contamination” = INVALID

- This, for example, is that false notion that if you could be contaminated by coming in contact with Gentiles, then you could also be contaminated through contact with food that they had touched.

- Pointing to Pharisees' hypocrisy = Not worried about **moral purity**
 - Pharisees worried about **ritual purity**
- Not worried about **KIND** of food= but only by **WAY** it was eaten
- Sin is matter of moral purity / not ritual purity
- Purity = comes from intimate love relationship w/ God
 - cleanses heart
- Cannot ignore context = if Jesus had eliminated distinction between clean/unclean foods = Why would Peter have responded so vehemently to idea of eating unclean flesh foods
 - **Acts 10:14** Vision of sheet clean/unclean animals
¹⁴But Peter said, "Not so, Lord! For I have never eaten anything common or unclean."
 - **Explained in Acts 11** = God was showing Peter not to consider Gentiles unclean
- **Jesus = not setting aside health laws of God = established in Genesis 7 before Levitical system**
 - Lord sent two each of unclean animals into ark, but directed seven pairs (fourteen creatures in total) of each clean animal into shelter from the storm (Genesis 7:1–5).
 - More were needed =. Only clean animals could be sacrificed to God and were permitted by Him to be consumed for food after Flood.

What did Jesus say causes contamination of a person?

ABSG In Mark 7:19 Jesus notes that food does not go into the heart but into the stomach and then passes out through the intestinal tract. But in Mark 7:21–23, He notes that evil comes from inside the heart, from the center of who a person is. He presents a list of vices that start from evil thoughts but then end in evil actions.

Mark 7:20–23 ²⁰And He said, "What comes out of a man, that defiles a man. ²¹For from within, out of the heart of men, proceed evil thoughts,

adulteries, fornications, murders, ²²thefts, covetousness, wickedness, deceit, lewdness, an evil eye, blasphemy, pride, foolishness. ²³All these evil things come from within and defile a man.”

- **When thoughts / actions / words come from evil / rebellious heart = sin = moral pollution**
- **All sin is unrighteousness = contrary to God’s government of love**

Proverbs 4:23 Above all else, guard your heart, for it is the wellspring of life.

Matthew 12:34–35 Out of the overflow of the heart the mouth speaks. ³⁵The good man brings good things out of the good stored up in him, and the evil man brings evil things out of the evil stored up in him.

Jesus’ words in this passage have been a conundrum for many as they ponder their relationship to the teachings of Leviticus 11 regarding clean and unclean foods. Is Jesus doing away with such distinctions? Are Seventh-day Adventists mistaken in teaching that church members who eat meat are to eat it only from the clean-animal list?

First, it would be odd for Jesus suddenly to dismiss Mosaic instructions in Mark 7:14–19 when He had just defended Moses against tradition in Mark 7:6–13. Second, the very tradition that the Pharisees were promoting does not have a basis in Old Testament teaching; the food laws, in contrast, do. Third, what Mark 7:19 means when it says that Jesus cleanses all food is not that the food laws are abolished, but instead that the tradition of touch contamination that the Pharisees had made was invalid.

Mark 7:7 ⁷And in vain they worship Me, Teaching as doctrines the commandments of men.’

You might have the right theology, but who fully and ultimately has your heart?