

Jesus + Contagious Holiness in Mark 1–8

Winchester Vineyard, April 28th, 2013

Jesus *Touches* the Unclean

Jesus touches contagious impurity:

Leprosy: Mk 1:41: 'stretching out his hand *he touched him* (the leper)'.

Corpse Impurity: Mk 5:41: 'he entered the house ...' and '*taking the child's hand* he said to her'.

Menstrual Impurity: Mk 5:27: 'coming from behind *the menstruating woman touched his garment*'.

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Full Immersion Washing Installations (*mikva'ot*)



Jesus is Supercharged with Contagious Holiness

Notice Mk 5:30 'aware that power had gone out of him ...'.

'The Torah expelled the impure in order to witness to God as the God of life, wholeness and purity. Jesus witnessed to the same God by healing people, thus fulfilling the ultimate purpose of the Torah.'

Christian Settler

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1 Cor 11:28 Let a person examine himself, then, and so eat of the bread and drink of the cup. 29 *For anyone who eats and drinks without discerning the body eats and drinks judgment on himself.*

30 *That is why many of you are weak and ill, and some have died.*

Explaining 1 Cor 11:28–30.

After Adam the power of death afflicts all humanity.

Jesus and his Spirit bring power to heal; to push back the power of death.

Jesus and his Spirit are offended, dishonoured, grieved when we mistreat each other (when we do not “discern the body of Christ”)

When that happens, the power of Jesus and the Spirit are frustrated.

Mark 8:14–21 “Beware of the Yeast of the Pharisees ...”

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8:14 And they forgot to take loaves of bread with them in the boat—except for one loaf. 15 And he instructed them, saying, ‘Beware, look out for the yeast of the Pharisees and the yeast of Herod. 16 And they were arguing with one another because they had no bread. 17 And knowing, Jesus said to them, ‘Why are you arguing about the fact that you have no bread? Do you still not see and understand? Have your hearts become hardened?’

18 Though you have eyes, you do not see, and though you have ears, you do not hear (cf. Jer 5:21; Ezek 12:2; Isa 6:9)

And do you not remember? 19 When I broke the five loaves for the 5,000, how many baskets full of crumbs did you take up? They said to him, ‘Twelve’ 20 ‘And when there were seven for 4,000, how many basket full of crumbs did you take?’ They said to him, ‘Seven’. 21 And he said to them, ‘Do you still not understand’.

Pharisaic + Herodian Yeast:

Pharisees = (ultra-)orthodox, law-keeping, inclined to violent revolution (a popular party).

Herodians = liberal, open-to-Roman culture (wealthy, classically-educated elite).

Verse 18: Jesus says “do you not remember?”

Verses 17, 21: ‘... “Do you still not see and understand? ... “Do you still not understand?”’ recalls:

6:52: “they did not understand about the loaves, ...”.

7:18 Jesus says to disciples “Then do you also fail to understand?”

Verse 17: “Have your hearts become hardened?” recalls:

6:52, “... they did not understand ..., but their hearts were hardened”.

8:11–13: Pharisees come to test Jesus, seeking a sign from heaven from him.

Immediately after he has just fed 4,000 people in 8:1–10.

So, the Pharisees have eyes but do not see.

Jesus implies in 8:14–21 that now the disciples are like the Pharisees:

7:17: 'Do you still not understand?'

- Perhaps then the disciples *have been influenced by the Pharisees?*

Yeast = influence, contagion

Sometimes *positive*:

- Luke 13:21 Jesus said that *the Kingdom of God "is like yeast that a woman took and mixed in with three measures of flour until all of it was leavened."*

Yeast = influence, contagion

Sometimes *negative*:

- In 1 Cor 5:6–7 Paul warns: 'Your boasting is not good. Do you not know that *a little leaven leavens the whole lump?* 7 Cleanse out the old leaven that you may be a new lump, ... '(cf. Gal 5:9).

A Narrative Sensitive Interpretation

Yeast = influence, contagion:

- *Jesus has a particular kind of influence.* Healing, creative power. He *has or is* the leaven of the kingdom:
 - contagious healing power.
 - feeding 5,000 = Mark 6:30–44.
 - feeding 4,000 = Mark 8:1–10.

Jesus' Power Frustrated

The life of Jesus (in Mark) is a game of two halves:

- Mark 1–8: numerous healings, exorcisms, power over nature.
- Mark 9–16: only two healings (9:14–29 + 10:46–52).

Jesus' Power Frustrated

- ◁ Mark 1-6: effortless, instantaneous healings.
- ◁ Mark 7:34: Jesus takes man away from crowd, *groans* + then heals him ...
- ◁ Mark 8:22-26: Blind man healed in *two* stages.

8:19-20: Feeding Stats.

6:30-44	8:1-10	
5,000+ fed	4,000+ fed	- 20%
5 loaves	7 loaves	+ 40%
12 baskets of leftovers	7 baskets of leftovers	- 42%

Jesus' Waning Power

1:16-3:35: Jesus' power to heal + overcome evil.	53 verses
4:35-5:43: Jesus calms raging sea, casts out a legion of demons, heals a haemorrhaging woman, raises a dead girl.	50 verses
6:6-13, 30: Mission of 12 disciples to heal and deliver.	14 verse
6:30-56: The feeding of the 5,000, walking on the sea, healing many sick in and around Gennesaret.	26 verses
7:31-37: Deaf + dumb man healed,	7 verse
8:1-10: feeding of 4,000.	10 verses

Increasing Uncleaness

3:6: Pharisees + Herodians <i>seek to destroy Jesus</i>	1 verse
3:22: scribes <i>accuse</i> Jesus of demonic activity.	1 verse
6:1-6: <i>Rejection</i> at Nazareth: only few healed.	6 verse
6:14-29: Herod <i>kills</i> John the Baptist.	16 verses
7:1-23: Dispute with Pharisees about handwashing. Jesus warns about uncleaness.	23 verse
8:11-13: Pharisees 'test' Jesus (just as Satan had).	3 verses

Pharisees' Contagious Unholiness (8:11-13)

8:11 Pharisees 'test (*peiradzo*)' Jesus asking for a sign,

just as Satan 'the accuser' 'tested (peiradzo)' Jesus (1:13)

Jesus on the Defiling Heart (7:14-23)

7:15 "There is nothing outside a person that by going into him can defile him, but *the things that come out of a person are what defile him.*" ... 20 And he said, 'What comes out from a person, that makes them common, 21 for the bad thoughts come from inside, from peoples' hearts—sexual immorality, theft, murder, 22 adultery, greed, evils, deceit, debauchery, the evil eye, blasphemies, arrogance, foolishness—23 *all these evil things come out from inside and defile a person.*"

Pharisees' Contagious Unholiness (8:11-13)

Hence Jesus 'groaning in his spirit' (8:12), compare:

7:34—"looking up to heaven he groaned ...";

9:19 'Oh faithless generation! How much longer must I be with you!':

Even Jesus is deeply affected by the Pharisees' power/influence.

Pharisaic + Herodian Yeast: Conclusion

Jesus' power is diminished by the uncleanness of those who:

Murder/conspire to murder

Ill-wish Jesus (fearing loss of power & position),

Breathe *fear* into the population, from a false position of leadership,

Engage in *godless living* (self-worship, deceit, sexual immorality etc ...) *that abuses the human being.*

Conclusion

Jesus is desperate that we (the disciples then + now) *discern* the malevolent forces at work, lest we too,

get entangled in the web of human fear, violence, debauchery—*the culture of dishonour*—that pollutes the Pharisees + Herodians,

Become *blind + hard hearted* (Mk 8:17-18) (deformed idolaters).

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30 That is why many of you are weak and ill, and some have died.

Danny Silk, *A Culture of Honor: Sustaining a Supernatural Environment*, 2012

'Creating a safe place is the essential condition for a revival culture'
Danny Silk, *Culture*

