

***It is important to ensure fellowship with God before the study of the Word.***

If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness (1 John 1:9).

**Isaiah 55:11** So will My word be which goes forth from My mouth; it will not return to Me empty, without accomplishing what I desire, and without succeeding in the matter for which I sent it.

- The Lord is still in Capernaum with the 12 disciples that remained after His teaching in the synagogue.
- The teaching was harsh.
- “As a result many of His disciples withdrew and were not walking with Him anymore.” **John 6:66**
- He leaves the synagogue with the 12 and the academic theologians arrive from Jerusalem.

**Mark 7:1-3** The Pharisees and some of the scribes gathered around Him when they had come from Jerusalem, <sup>2</sup> and had seen that some of His disciples were eating their bread with impure hands, that is, unwashed.

- Mark explains how offensive this is to the scribes and Pharisees in **Mark 7:3-5**.

<sup>3</sup>(For the Pharisees and all the Jews do not eat unless they carefully wash their hands,

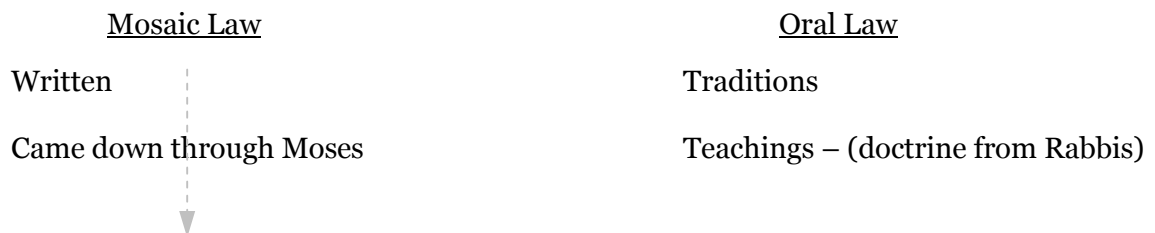
- carefully wash their hands - **πυγμῆ νίψονται τὰς χεῖρας**
- **νίπτω** – NIPTO - “to wash oneself” preceded by **πυγμῆ** – PUGME – “with fist”

Interpretive translation - *For the Pharisees and all the religious Jews who follow their doctrine do not eat unless they wash their hands with fist . . .*

- *thus observing the traditions of the elders* - **κρατοῦντες τὴν παράδοσιν τῶν πρεσβυτέρων**
- **Observing** – **κρατέω** – KRATEO – “To support or to hold fast”

The Pharisees and those who followed them were supporting or holding onto the traditions or teaching (**παράδοσις**) of the **elders** (**πρεσβύτερος** – “the ancients”).

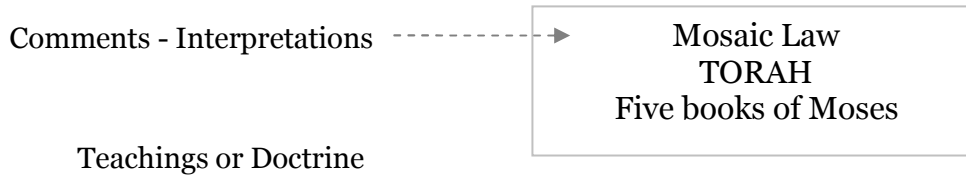
- The teachers of the Law from the days of old
- These teachings or traditions were considered the oral law.



**Pharisees**

The religious Jews tenuously held to those teachings.

- So much so, that if the tradition (the oral law or teachings) appeared to be in conflict with the Scriptures [*Mosaic Law*], then tradition was considered to have greater authority and precedence.
- These teachings expanded upon the Mosaic Law and where the Mosaic Law was silent, the teachings filled in the gaps.



This body of tradition or rabbinical teaching was finally put in written form about 200AD.

- Called the *Mishnah* – Oral law that has been put into writing
- Talmud came about 400AD - Rabbinical discussion and commentary on the Mishnah.

Article “Washing Before Eating”

- References the Mishna
- Part I: Orach Chayim Chapter 10 from <http://torahsearch.com/>

Introduction to Tractate Keilim Chapter 24 and Tractate Mikvaos Chapter 7

- Translated and elucidated versions
- <http://www chevrah lom de imishnah.org/>

**Mark 7:3** Interpretive translation – “*For the Pharisees and all the religious Jews who follow their doctrine do not eat unless they wash their hands with fist.*”

**Mark 7:4-7** and *when they come from the market place, they do not eat unless they cleanse themselves . . .*

- If they came into contact with a Gentile, they were considered Tumah- ritually unclean.
- They were required to cleanse themselves.
  - cleansed themselves - βαπτίζω – BAPTIZO - *To immerse; to dip*

*. . . and there are many other things which they have received in order to observe, such as the washing of cups and pitchers and copper pots.)*

- This was serious business to the Pharisees.
- The Lord and His remaining disciples violated the traditions or teachings that were passed down.

<sup>5</sup>The Pharisees and the scribes asked Him,

- Asked - ἐπερωτάω – EPEROTAO – “*To interrogate*”

“Why do Your disciples not walk according to the tradition of the elders, but eat their bread with impure hands?”

<sup>6</sup> And He said to them, “Rightly did Isaiah prophesy of you hypocrites, as it is written: ‘THIS PEOPLE HONORS ME WITH THEIR LIPS, BUT THEIR HEART IS FAR AWAY FROM ME. <sup>7</sup> BUT IN VAIN DO THEY WORSHIP ME, TEACHING AS DOCTRINES THE PRECEPTS OF MEN.’ “

- That was the Lord’s view of their oral law - the traditions of the ancients.
- He quoted from the Septuagint (the LXX) in **Isaiah 29:13**.

**Isaiah 29:13** Then the Lord said, “Because this people draw near with their words and honor Me with their lip service, But they remove their hearts far from Me, And their reverence for Me consists of tradition learned *by rote*,

- The problem was that the nation did not worship the Lord from the heart.
- They worshipped the Lord by their long winded prayers and their works – their ritualistic washings without any change of heart.
- It was an exterior form of worship - not from within.

During the time the Lord walked the earth, it was said as long as you –

- Prayed twice a day
- Washed
- Spoke in Hebrew
- You would eat bread in the Kingdom

- Working your way to heaven by what you can do.

**Mark 7:8-13** “Neglecting the commandment of God, you hold to the tradition of men.” <sup>9</sup> He was also saying to them, “You are experts at setting aside the commandment of God in order to keep your tradition. <sup>10</sup> For Moses said, ‘HONOR YOUR FATHER AND YOUR MOTHER’; and, ‘HE WHO SPEAKS EVIL OF FATHER OR MOTHER, IS TO BE PUT TO DEATH’; <sup>11</sup> but you say, ‘If a man says to *his* father or *his* mother, whatever I have that would help you is Corban (that is to say, given to God),’ <sup>12</sup> you no longer permit him to do anything for *his* father or *his* mother; <sup>13</sup> *thus* invalidating the word of God by your tradition which you have handed down; and you do many things such as that.”

**Mark 7:5** “Why do Your disciples not walk according to the tradition of the elders, but eat their bread with impure hands?”

**Mark 7:14-18** After He called the crowd to Him again, He *began* saying to them, “Listen to Me, all of you, and understand: <sup>15</sup> there is nothing outside the man which can defile him if it goes into him; but the things which proceed out of the man are what defile the man. <sup>16</sup> [“*If anyone has ears to hear, let him hear.*”] <sup>17</sup> When he had left the crowd *and* entered the house, His disciples questioned Him about the parable. <sup>18</sup> And He said to them, “Are you so lacking in understanding also?”

**Matthew 15:11-14** "It is not what enters into the mouth that defiles the man, but what proceeds out of the mouth, this defiles the man." <sup>12</sup> Then the disciples \*came and \*said to Him, "Do You know that the Pharisees were offended when they heard this statement?" <sup>13</sup> But He answered and said, "Every plant which My heavenly Father did not plant shall be uprooted. <sup>14</sup> Let them alone; they are blind guides of the blind. And if a blind man guides a blind man, both will fall into a pit."

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*All Scriptures quoted are from New American Standard unless otherwise noted.*