

## 15th Sunday after Pentecost September 2, 2018

14<sup>th</sup> Sunday after the Trinity Proper 17 (22)

Year B – the Gospel of Mark

**LUTHERAN**

# LIVING THE ^ LECTIONARY

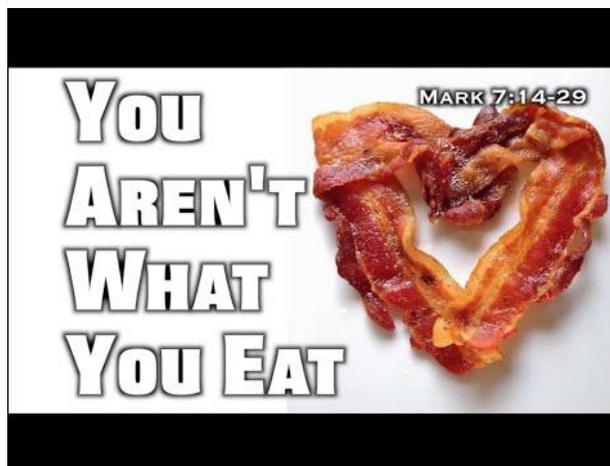
*A weekly study of the Scriptures for the coming Sunday since May 4, 2014.  
An opportunity to make Sunday worship more meaningful and to make the  
rhythms of the readings part of the rhythms of your life.*

### Available on line at:

- ✦ [www.bethlehemplutheranchurchparma.com/biblestudies](http://www.bethlehemplutheranchurchparma.com/biblestudies)
- ✦ Through [www.Facebook.com](http://www.Facebook.com) at “Living the Lutheran Lectionary”, “Bethlehem Lutheran Church Parma”, or “Harold Weseloh”
- ✦ All links in this on-line copy are active and can be reached using Ctrl+Click

### Gather and be blessed:

- ✦ **Thursdays at 10 AM:** Bethlehem Lutheran Church, 7500 State Road, Parma, OH 44134
- ✦ **Fridays at 7 PM in a house church setting:** For details, contact Harold Weseloh at [puritaspastor@hotmail.com](mailto:puritaspastor@hotmail.com)
- ✦ **First Sunday of the month at 11 AM:** St. Philip Lutheran Church, 11315 Regalia Ave., Cleveland, OH 44104



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=peqNX4boGYU>

### Hymn of the Day

**Lutheran Service Book (LSB) 566 The Lutheran Hymnal (TLH) 373**

“By grace I’m saved, grace free and boundless”

“Johann Balthaser König (b. Waltershausen, near Gotha, Germany, 1691; d. Frankfurt, Germany, 1758) composed this tune, which later became associated with Johann Mentzer's hymn "O dass ich tausend Zungen hätte" (Oh, That I Had a Thousand Voices).”, LSB 811. The tune as it is used in LSB 566 was written by Cornelius Heinrich Dretzel, 1697-1775.

- [https://hymnary.org/text/by\\_grace\\_im\\_saved\\_grace\\_free\\_and\\_bounde](https://hymnary.org/text/by_grace_im_saved_grace_free_and_bounde)
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6lakjU-efRg> Piano accompaniment. [Andrew Remillard](#)
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hY1lWYzuR7Q> Not what you were expecting, and neither was Dretzel. [Koine https://www.koinemusic.com/](https://www.koinemusic.com/)
- [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tKJyb\\_oiNOw](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tKJyb_oiNOw) Higher Things, youth conference 2014
- 

Commentaries have been chosen because the author has written in a way that compliments the reading. Not all of the commentaries are from Lutheran sources. They have been edited for length and in some cases for additional content that is not in keeping with a Lutheran understanding of Scripture. Links are provided for those who wish to read the entire commentary.

The Holy Bible, [English Standard Version \(ESV\)](#) Copyright © 2001 by [Crossway Bibles, a publishing ministry of Good News Publishers.](#)

**Deuteronomy 4:1-2, 6-9; Revised Common Lectionary (RCL), Deuteronomy 4:1-2, 6-9 or Song of Solomon 2:8-13 (Next week: Isaiah 35:4-7a; RCL, Isaiah 35:4-7a or Proverbs 22:1-2, 8-9, 22-23)**

*“Psalm 119:97 proclaims: "Oh, how I love your law!"*

*This statement may seem strange to many Christians, especially those of us for whom the law has been contrasted with grace and described as something negative, oppressive, or obsolete. We cannot hear "law" without hearing "legalism," and we throw them both out indiscriminately.*

*Through a study of Deuteronomy, we discover this mindset to be mistaken and perilous. Christians would do well to re-capture the awe with which the Israelites approach God's law. The word torah, often narrowly translated and understood as "law," includes a fuller definition of "instruction" or "teaching." A Jewish blessing connectst Torah with eternal life, saying, "Blessed is our God, who has...separated us from them that go astray, and has given us the Torah and planted everlasting life in our midst."<sup>1</sup> Such an understanding of torah is what we find in the lectionary text in Deuteronomy. The "law" itself is a sign of God's presence, and even shares his attributes: life-giving power, wisdom, and understanding. Approaching the law in this way, Christians can better appreciate what it means for Jesus to be the incarnate word (John 1:1), the final "nearness" of God, the embodiment of wisdom and understanding (Colossians 1:15 ff.), and the fulfillment of the law (Matthew 5: 17)...*

- [https://www.workingpreacher.org/preaching.aspx?commentary\\_id=381](https://www.workingpreacher.org/preaching.aspx?commentary_id=381) [Sara Koenig](#) Associate Professor of Biblical Studies, Seattle Pacific University, Seattle, WA

## Moses Commands Obedience

4 “And now, O Israel, listen to the statutes and the rules<sup>[a]</sup> that I am teaching you, and do them, that you may live, and go in and take possession of the land that the LORD, the God of your fathers, is giving you. <sup>2</sup> You shall not add to the word that I command you, nor take from it, that you may keep the commandments of the LORD your God that I command you. <sup>3</sup> *Your eyes have seen what the LORD did at Baal-peor, for the LORD your God destroyed from among you all the men who followed the Baal of Peor.* <sup>4</sup> *But you who held fast to the LORD your God are all alive today.* <sup>5</sup> *See, I have taught you statutes and rules, as the LORD my God commanded me, that you should do them in the land that you are entering to take possession of it.* <sup>6</sup> Keep them and do them, for that will be your wisdom and your understanding in the sight of the peoples, who, when they hear all these statutes, will say, ‘Surely this great nation is a wise and understanding people.’ <sup>7</sup> For what great nation is there that has a god so near to it as the LORD our God is to us, whenever we call upon him? <sup>8</sup> And what great nation is there, that has statutes and rules so righteous as all this law that I set before you today?

<sup>9</sup> “Only take care, and keep your soul diligently, lest you forget the things that your eyes have seen, and lest they depart from your heart all the days of your life. Make them known to your children and your children's children—

- a. [Deuteronomy 4:1](#) Or *just decrees*; also verses [5](#), [8](#), [14](#), [45](#)

“4:1-2. LISTEN TO THE STATUTES AND ORDINANCES..

“**Now, Israel**” (v. 1a). This phrase connects what Moses had said in chapters 1-3 with what he is about to say in chapter 4. It is as if he had said, “Given what I have just recounted concerning our history, hear what follows.”

“**listen to the statutes and to the ordinances, which I teach you, to do them**” (v. 1b). Moses will give the details of these statutes and ordinances in chapters 5-26. These are the laws, given by Yahweh, that the Jewish people are expected to observe.

But in this chapter, Moses is not outlining specific laws, but is instead emphasizing the importance of the Jewish Law to the future of the Jewish people...

4:6-8. KEEP YAHWEH’S LAWS...

“**Keep therefore and do them; for this is your wisdom and your understanding in the sight of the peoples, who shall hear all these statutes, and say, ‘Surely this great nation is a wise and understanding people’**” (v. 6). In verse 1, Moses called the Israelites to obey the law “that you may live, and go in and possess the land which Yahweh, the God of your fathers, gives you” (4:1).

Now, in this verse, he gives another compelling reason for obedience—to gain the respect of surrounding nations. Such respect would confer at least two significant benefits:

- First, anyone who thinks of Israel as a “great nation” and “a wise and understanding people” is less likely to try to conquer Israel—and is more likely to treat Israel with respect.

- Second, the enhanced status of Israel would bear witness to Yahweh, because people from surrounding nations would know that Israel worshiped Yahweh—and their respect for Israel would translate into respect for Yahweh. This brings to mind Jesus’ counsel, “Let your light shine before men; that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in .

**“What great nation is there, that has statutes and ordinances so righteous as all this law, which I set before you this day?”** (v. 8). It isn’t often that we stop to consider the value of good laws—but they are considerable. The United States is privileged to have a legal system built on the Constitution, which is a truly remarkable document. To the extent that we are a great nation, our greatness is derived from a great Constitution.

Israel was even more blessed, because the Israelites built their society on the foundation of the Torah—God-given laws. These laws were not given to constrain them, but to free them from the pain associated with bad decisions and wayward lives...

4:9. MAKE THEM KNOWN TO YOUR CHILDREN...

**“Only take heed to yourself, and keep your soul diligently, lest you forget the things which your eyes saw, and lest they depart from your heart all the days of your life”** (v. 9a). Without remembrance, faith soon dies. It is all too easy to be distracted by the everyday concerns of everyday life so that we forget to remember. Moses cautions against that and calls the Israelites to remember their history—what they have seen—so that they might keep faith alive in their hearts.

Yahweh called Israel to remember all that God had done for them, and promised to bless them if they did—and to punish them if they didn’t (Deuteronomy 8:18-19). He established numerous provisions to help them to remember...

For Christians, the New Testament prescribes various liturgical acts to keep our remembrance alive. The regular coming together on the Lord’s Day to worship is one of those. Observing special days in the church calendar, such as Palm Sunday, Good Friday, and Easter is another. But the greatest encourager of remembrance is the Lord’s Supper, where Jesus says, “Do this, as often as you drink, in memory of me” (1 Corinthians 11:24)...

➤ <https://www.sermonwriter.com/biblical-commentary/deuteronomy-41-2-6-9/> Richard Niel Donovan publishes SermonWriter.

**Psalm 119:129-136; RCL, Psalm 15 or Psalm 45:1-2, 6-9 (Psalm 146; RCL, Psalm 146 or Psalm 125)**

*“...Psalm 119 luxuriates in the word, the decrees, the ordinances, and the law of God. It is not a psalm of half measures or cool reserve. The psalmist longs for God like a ferociously thirsty dog pants for water -- slobber everywhere, heavy breathing, sucking the bowl dry (verse 131). The psalmist laments other people’s sins, and of course also her own (verse 136). Sin is not an occasion for blame or shame or gossip, but for tears. They are, as the Orthodox Church has long taught, like a second baptism, a cleansing -- there’s a reason you feel better after a good cry. The psalmist asks for God’s face to shine on her the way Aaron asks for God’s face to shine on those whom he blesses in the famous passage Numbers 6:22-27. The shining face of God is what calls all things from non-existence to existence, from selfish sin to abundant and self-giving life...”*

- [https://www.workingpreacher.org/preaching.aspx?commentary\\_id=3358](https://www.workingpreacher.org/preaching.aspx?commentary_id=3358) [Jason Byassee](#) Butler Chair in Homiletics and Biblical Hermeneutics, Vancouver School of Theology, Vancouver, B.C., Canada

## Pe

- <sup>129</sup> Your testimonies are wonderful;  
therefore my soul keeps them.
- <sup>130</sup> The unfolding of your words gives light;  
it imparts understanding to the simple.
- <sup>131</sup> I open my mouth and pant,  
because I long for your commandments.
- <sup>132</sup> Turn to me and be gracious to me,  
as is your way with those who love your name.
- <sup>133</sup> Keep steady my steps according to your promise,  
and let no iniquity get dominion over me.
- <sup>134</sup> Redeem me from man's oppression,  
that I may keep your precepts.
- <sup>135</sup> Make your face shine upon your servant,  
and teach me your statutes.
- <sup>136</sup> My eyes shed streams of tears,  
because people do not keep your law.

“This long Psalm deserves a long introduction. The author is unnamed; older commentators almost universally say it is a Psalm of David, composed throughout his entire life... The sections and verses are not like a chain, where one link is connected to the other, but like a string of pearls where each pearl has equal, but independent value.

The Psalm is arranged in an acrostic pattern. There are 22 letters in the Hebrew alphabet, and this Psalm contains 22 units of 8 verses each. Each of the 22 sections is given to a letter of the Hebrew alphabet, and each line in that section begins with that letter. The closest parallel to this pattern in Scripture is found in Lamentations 3, which is also divided into 22 sections, and there are a few other passages in the Hebrew Scriptures which use an acrostic pattern...

In this Psalm there are 8 basic words used to describe the Scriptures, God’s written revelation to us:

**Law** (torah, used 25 times in Psalm 119): “Its parent verb means ‘teach’ or ‘direct’; therefore coming from God it means both ‘law’ and ‘revelation.’ It can be used of a single command or of a whole body of law.” (Kidner)

**Word** (dabar, used 24 times): The idea is of the spoken word, God’s revealed word to man. “Proceeding from his mouth and revealed by him to us.” (Poole)

**Judgments** (mispatim, used 23 times): “From shaphat, to judge, determine, regulate, order, and discern, because they judge concerning our words and works; show the rules by which they should be regulated; and cause us to discern what is right and wrong, and decide accordingly.” (Clarke)

**Testimonies** (edut/edot, used 23 times): This word is related to the word for witness. To obey His **testimonies** “signifies loyalty to the terms of the covenant made between the Lord and Israel.” (VanGemeren)

**Commandments** (miswah/miswot, used 22 times): “This word emphasizes the straight authority of what is said... the right to give orders.” (Kidner)

**Statutes** (huqqim, used 21 times): The noun is derived from the root verb “engrave” or “inscribe”; the idea is of the written word of God and the authority of His written word. “Declaring his authority and power of giving us laws.” (Poole)

**Precepts** (piqqudim, used 21 times): “This is a word drawn from the sphere of an officer or overseer, and man who is responsible to look closely into a situation and take action... So the word points to the particular instructions of the Lord, as of one who cares about detail.” (Kidner)

**Word** (imrah, used 19 times): Similar in meaning to dabar, yet a different term. “The ‘word’ may denote anything God has spoken, commanded, or promised.” (VanGemeren)

The theme of the glory of Scripture is diligently explored in this Psalm, but always in connection with God Himself...

“This wonderful psalm, from its great length, helps us to wonder at the immensity of Scripture. From its keeping to one subject it helps us to adore the unity of Scripture; for it is but one. Yet, from the many turns it gives to the same thought, it helps you to see the variety of Scripture... Some have said that in it there is an absence of variety, but that is merely the observation of those who have not studied it. I have weighed each word, and looked at each syllable with lengthened meditation; and I bear witness that this sacred song has not autology in it, but is charmingly varied from beginning to end. Its variety is that of a kaleidoscope: from a few objects a boundless variation is produced. In the kaleidoscope you look once, and there is a strangely beautiful form. You shift the glass a very little, and another shape, equally delicate and beautiful, is before your eyes. So it is here.” (Charles Spurgeon)...

“Luther professed that he prized this Psalm so highly, that he would not take the whole world in exchange for one leaf of it.”... ”

- <https://enduringword.com/bible-commentary/psalm-119/> ©2018 David Guzik – No distribution beyond personal use without permission

**Ephesians 6:10-20; RCL, James 1:17-27 (James 2:1-10, 14-18; RCL, James 2:1-10, (11-13), 14-17)**

Final reading from Ephesians that began July 15.

*“As the letter to assemblies of believers in Ephesus and throughout the great cities of Asia Minor draws to a close, the author offers a final extended metaphor for how a person of faith in Jesus as God’s own anointed one, Lord over all, might shape the life of believers.*

*It is important for preachers to keep in mind that the addressees of this letter were very much a minority group in the first century. The language used to describe their God and Lord was very similar to that used to describe imperial officials, especially the emperor. Even the word for their gatherings, *ekklesiae*, was a term for political gatherings at the local level. This letter, then, was written for people for whom their allegiance to Christ set them at conspicuous odds with the allegiances of others in their families and cities. Perhaps for these folks a certain kind of armor would be exactly what they craved...”*

- [http://www.workingpreacher.org/preaching.aspx?commentary\\_id=2600](http://www.workingpreacher.org/preaching.aspx?commentary_id=2600) [Sarah Henrich](#) Professor Emeritus of New Testament, Luther Seminary, St. Paul, MN

### **The Whole Armor of God**

<sup>10</sup> Finally, be strong in the Lord and in the strength of his might. <sup>11</sup> Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the schemes of the devil. <sup>12</sup> For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers over this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places. <sup>13</sup> Therefore take up the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand firm. <sup>14</sup> Stand therefore, having fastened on the belt of truth, and having put on the breastplate of righteousness, <sup>15</sup> and, as shoes for your feet, having put on the readiness given by the gospel of peace. <sup>16</sup> In all circumstances take up the shield of faith, with which you can extinguish all the flaming darts of the evil one; <sup>17</sup> and take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God, <sup>18</sup> praying at all times in the Spirit, with all prayer and supplication. To that end, keep alert with all perseverance, making supplication for all the saints, <sup>19</sup> and also for me, that words may be given to me in opening my mouth boldly to proclaim the mystery of the gospel, <sup>20</sup> for which I am an ambassador in chains, that I may declare it boldly, as I ought to speak.

“No matter when and where you read this, you are under attack. After all, Ephesians 6:10-20 at least implies that those who read, study, consider, proclaim and hear it are under siege. So Paul summons his readers to properly arm ourselves for that battle lest we go down to at least temporary defeat in the lengthiest, bloodiest and most important war ever fought...

Both Christians’ suspicion and love of military imagery are reasons for those who proclaim Ephesians 6:10-20 to carefully identify just who has declared war on Jesus’ followers. “Take your stand,” writes Paul there, “against *the devil’s* schemes. For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the *rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realm . . .* Take up the shield of faith, with which you can extinguish all the flaming arrows of *the evil one*” (italics added)...

Those who proclaim Ephesians 6 need to try to be very honest about just what’s at stake in this war. Satan and his henchmen at least strongly suspect they’ve already lost the war to God in Jesus Christ. Yet they’re determined to inflict as many casualties as they can...

Quite bluntly, Satan and his thugs want nothing more than to drag those who proclaim Ephesians 6 as well as those who hear it into the eternal destruction those evil ones at least strongly suspect awaits them. While Paul elsewhere insists nothing can separate God’s chosen people from God’s love, the evil one and his thugs are doing all they can to sever that bond.

So how do God’s adopted sons and daughters “arm” ourselves for this pitched battle? By putting “on the full armor of God, so that when the day of evil comes, [we] may be able to stand [our] ground, and after [we] have done everything, to stand” (13)...

Yet Paul doesn’t call God’s people to arm ourselves so that we can defeat the principalities and powers aligned against us. He, after all, understands that we can’t defeat those forces on our own. What’s more, even more importantly, we don’t have to win the spiritual war because

Christ Jesus has already defeated the evil one. God's people just have to stand our ground in the war it wages on us..."

- [http://cep.calvinseminary.edu/sermon-starters/proper-16b/?type=lectionary\\_epistle](http://cep.calvinseminary.edu/sermon-starters/proper-16b/?type=lectionary_epistle)  
Doug Bratt

Consider this text through the eyes of "The African American Lectionary". "...There are violent wars and battles occurring all over the world, but we have our own wars on the streets right here. We do not have to look into Iraq or Afghanistan for terrorism. We have it right here -- terrorism on our streets. Senseless shootings and beatings of innocent men. "I am a man?" Is violence the only way for young black men to express their manhood? Are there other options in the battle called life? Ephesians shows us another way to say, "I am a man..."

- <http://www.theafricanamericanlectionary.org/PopupLectionaryReading.asp?LRID=36>

Another way to look at the "whole Armor of God":

## The Whole Armor Of God According To OT

"Most of us are all educated and schooled under a very Greek setting and worldview. We often open our minds and souls to globalization, new age and humanism, ultimately leading to the worship of man instead of the Creator.

As we are being schooled, the same mindsets and mentality prevail and follow us into our churches. Greek philosophy gears towards the tree of the knowledge of good and evil; satisfying the minds and intellect; whereas the Hebraic philosophy gears towards the tree of life, satisfying the hearts and issues of life.

One of the most common misunderstandings regarding the whole armor of God is unduly caused by Greek and Roman cultural views. Many commentaries compared the whole armor of God with the armor of the Roman soldiers. But the problem is this: Paul was not referring to the Roman armor at all! He was actually making reference to an ancient Hebraic armor! A heavenly armor! Paul did not come up with the idea of the full armor of God on his own. He drew his wisdom and understanding from the Old Testament.

### Isaiah 59:16-17

He saw that there was no man,  
And wondered that there was no intercessor;  
Therefore His own arm brought salvation for Him;  
And His own righteousness, it sustained Him.  
For He put on righteousness as a breastplate,  
And a helmet of salvation on His head;  
He put on the garments of vengeance for clothing,  
And was clad with zeal as a cloak.

### Isaiah 11:4-5

But with righteousness He shall judge the poor,  
And decide with equity for the meek of the earth;  
He shall strike the earth with the rod of His mouth,  
And with the breath of His lips He shall slay the wicked.  
Righteousness shall be the belt of His loins,  
And faithfulness the belt of His waist.

**Exodus 28:1-4**

- 1 Now take Aaron your brother, and his sons with him,  
from among the children of Israel,  
that he may minister to Me as priest,  
Aaron and Aaron's sons:  
Nadab, Abihu, Eleazar, and Ithamar.
- 2 And you shall make holy garments  
for Aaron your brother, for glory and for beauty.
- 3 So you shall speak to all who are gifted artisans,  
whom I have filled with the spirit of wisdom,  
that they may make Aaron's garments, to consecrate him,  
that he may minister to Me as priest.
- 4 And these are the garments which they shall make:  
a breastplate, an ephod, a robe,  
a skillfully woven tunic, a turban, and a sash.  
So they shall make holy garments  
for Aaron your brother and his sons,  
that he may minister to Me as priest.

Obviously, Paul was making reference to the holy garments of the priesthood called by God. Not the armor of unholy, violent and merciless Roman soldiers, thirsting to torture others and kill people.

**1 Peter 2:9-10****How is the priesthood dressed? And how is the High Priest dressed?****The Belt of Truth: Leviticus 8:6-7, John 17:17**

The belt holds the priestly garments together. Without it, all the other portions will fall apart. The Lord desires to wash His priests with water, and sanctify them by His Truth! So that they will not be led astray, embrace false gods and worship idols!

**The Breastplate Of Righteousness: Exodus 28:4, Exodus 28:15, Exodus 28:22-30, Leviticus 19:15**

The priests are to be righteous before God. They cannot play favoritism towards the rich and despise the poor! They have to pray for every tribe in the community regardless of their financial status. Not one less.

A high priest does not have a holier-than-thou attitude towards others. He ministers to everyone, and bear their names and burdens over his heart. There is no discrimination or bias against anyone.

**Let's look at Jesus, our High Priest:, Matthew 4:23-24, Deuteronomy 6:25, Luke 1:5-6**

But a Roman soldier does not have any righteousness on his breastplate. Neither does he desire to keep the commandments of God!

**Shod Your Feet With The Preparation Of The Gospel Of Peace, Exodus 28:32-35**

Priests minister to God without wearing any shoes or sandals! They walk barefoot on the floors of the temple courts. However they are always ready to bring good news, proclaim peace, bring glad tidings of good things, and proclaim salvation. A Roman soldier wears shoes but bring bad news and proclaim war!

**The Shield of Faith, Genesis 15:1, Psalm 3:1-3**

How does God shield His people? The best picture is from the Exodus out of Egypt. **Exodus 13:21-22, Exodus 14:19-20** when God shields us, it is a complete divine full protection on all sides, top and bottom, 360 degrees, all round about. But the Roman shield is just human, partial protective and fully vulnerable to attacks.

#### **The Helmet Of Salvation, Exodus 28:36-41, Revelation 20:4, Revelation 22:4**

Holiness to the LORD. The Lord Himself will separate the holy ones from the unholy. His name shall be on the foreheads of the righteous saints.

#### **The Sword Of The Spirit (The Word Of God), Isaiah 49:2, Isaiah 11:4, Hebrews 4:12, Revelation 1:16**

Not a physical Roman sword of violence killing and destroying others but a sharp two-edged sword out of the mouth, proclaiming the Word of God! Very often, it is reciting the priestly blessing to bless others. **Numbers 6:22-27**

#### **Praying Always With All Prayer And Supplication,**

Most Roman soldiers did not spend any time on prayers for themselves and almost never pray for the cause of the poor and needy. Only the priests were called to pray and make intercession to God on behalf of others., **Exodus 34:8-9**

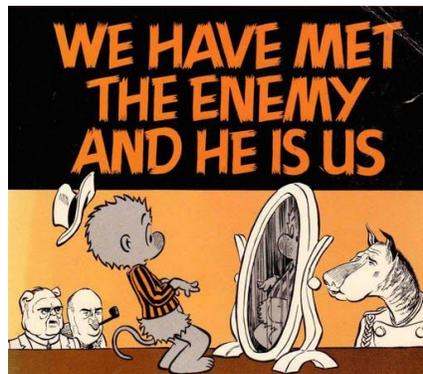
In Christianity today, we have prayer warriors and intercessory generals, waging spiritual warfare against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places. But very few of these people can stand righteous and blameless before a holy God! Many have behaved like militant and brutal Roman soldiers, fighting in vain. They are always lording over others instead of serving others in humility and love. Most of them are not gracious, merciful and kind; loving God and loving their neighbors. They do not put on the correct armor of God!

One good example of wearing a wrong armor is David when he fought against Goliath.

#### **1 Samuel 17:38-47 , Ephesians 6:10-13**

Let us remove the unholy Roman armor and put on the holy priestly garments! And this is how the royal priesthood does spiritual warfare. **2 Chronicles 20:14-24**. Not by fruitless screaming, roaring, barking and yelling, but with the high praises of God in their mouth, and a two-edged sword in their hand. They just praised the Lord, and the Lord set ambushes and destroyed their enemies; not one escaped. **Psalms 149:5-9...**

- <https://www.thejoshlink.com/article307.htm> Joshua Ong If you follow the link, all the verses will print for you.



<https://archinect.com/news/article/123681236/eric-owen-bids-not-farewell-but-fare-forward-at-sciarc>

**Mark 7:14-23; RCL, Mark 7:1-8, 14-15, 21-23 (Mark 7:(24-30) 31-37; RCL, Mark 7:24-37)**

“...This story is bracketed by stories of Jesus’ power to do miraculous works and people’s response to his display of power:

- It is preceded by the feeding of the five thousand (6:30-44), Jesus walking on water (6:45-52) and the healing of the sick in Gennesaret (6:53-56). The concluding verse of chapter 6 reads, “And wherever he went, into villages or cities or farms, they laid the sick in the marketplaces, and begged him that they might touch even the fringe of his cloak; and all who touched it were healed” (6:56).

This story is followed by several stories of ministry with Gentiles:

- The healing of the Syrophenician woman’s daughter (7:24-30).
- Travel through Tyre, Sidon, and the Decapolis (literally, “Ten Cities”) (7:31). Tyre and Sidon are Phoenician cities. The Decapolis has a large Greek and Roman population. To speak of Tyre, Sidon, and the Decapolis is to speak of Gentiles.
- The healing of a deaf man in the Decapolis (7:31-37).
- The Feeding of the Four Thousand which, in the absence of any additional geographical marker, appears to have taken place in or near the Decapolis..”.

➤ <https://www.sermonwriter.com/biblical-commentary/mark-71-23/>

Richard Niel Donovan publishes SermonWriter

### What Defiles a Person

<sup>14</sup> And he called the people to him again and said to them, **“Hear me, all of you, and understand: <sup>15</sup> 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.”**<sup>[a]</sup>

<sup>17</sup> And when he had entered the house and left the people, his disciples asked him about the parable. <sup>18</sup> And he said to them, **“Then are you also without understanding? Do you not see that whatever goes into a person from outside cannot defile him, <sup>19</sup> since it enters not his heart but his stomach, and is expelled?”**<sup>[b]</sup> (Thus he declared all foods clean.) <sup>20</sup> And he said, **“What comes out of a person is what defiles him. <sup>21</sup> For from within, out of the heart of man, come evil thoughts, sexual immorality, theft, murder, adultery, <sup>22</sup> coveting, wickedness, deceit, sensuality, envy, slander, pride, foolishness. <sup>23</sup> All these evil things come from within, and they defile a person.”**

- a. [Mark 7:15](#) Some manuscripts add verse [16](#): *If anyone has ears to hear, let him hear*
- b. [Mark 7:19](#) *Greek goes out into the latrine*

“At least one part of this passage is straightforward, although disturbing: Jesus explains where evil comes from.

It comes from within all those people who bug you. But also from within you. Me, too.

Of course, it takes a while for Jesus to get to that basic point in this tongue-lashing delivered to a group of Pharisees and scribes from Jerusalem. Their exchange (began) with a question to Jesus about traditions, particular interpretations of laws given through Moses...

The reference to Isaiah 29:13 (LXX) also allows Jesus to redirect the conversation (which proceeds as a monologue, really) when the setting changes later, beginning in verse 14. The Isaiah passage introduces a contrast between the lips/mouth and the heart, and Jesus builds on this contrast to transform the issue into one about defilement and how a human body becomes polluted. Simply put, impurity is a matter of the heart, not the mouth.

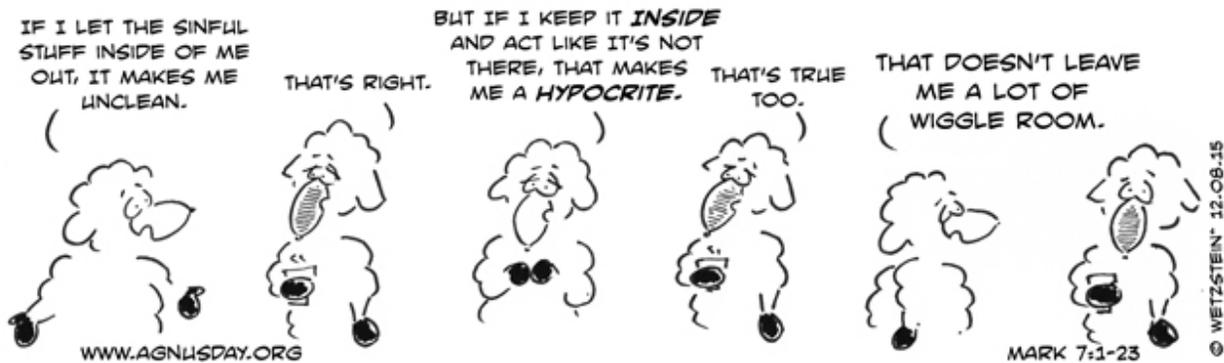
And so the passage ends with a representative (not exhaustive) list of things capable of making a person impure (verses 21b-22). Some are deeds, others are character traits and attitudes. All originate, Jesus says, in "the human heart," which for the ancients represented the seat of rationality and will. Defilement dwells deep within...

To be clear, Jesus does not dismiss the issue of defilement as insignificant. He does not declare the Mosaic law unimportant. He disagrees with these scribes and Pharisees' interpretations of certain laws. He reasserts the law's basic concern to be about restraining evil and avoiding defilement. Yet here's the problem for us human beings: evil and defilement stem from places rather deeply embedded within our very selves.

As any reader of the Old Testament knows, Jesus was hardly the first to propose such an idea. Further, not all of his contemporaries would have experienced offense over his disagreements with these scribes and Pharisees. So don't preach about differences between Judaism and Christianity. Don't extol the bacon cheeseburger as a sign of God's benevolence. Preach about the evil output of the human heart. Tell people:

"We have met the enemy and [it] is us."<sup>2</sup>

[http://www.workingpreacher.org/preaching.aspx?commentary\\_id=1381](http://www.workingpreacher.org/preaching.aspx?commentary_id=1381) **Matt Skinner**  
Professor of New Testament, Luther Seminary, St. Paul, Minn. This commentary covers verses 1:8, 14-15 and 21-23 as they appear in the Revised Common Lectionary.



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