

THE GREAT WENCHOSTER BIBLE

Mark 7: 1-8, 14-15, 21-23

1. Then came together unto Jesus the Pharisees, and certain of the scribes, which came from Jerusalem, and other various peoples who were passing on their way to market or the stalls and people standing on street corners selling street food and divers things, for it was nearing lunchtime.
2. And when they saw some of His disciples eat bread with defiled, that is to say, with unwashen, hands, they found fault, for they did note the dirty finger marks on the crusts and the filth under their nails, and were put off to say the least,
3. For the Pharisees, and all the Jews, except they wash their hands oft, eat not, holding the tradition of the elders as they had received them, using fine soaps and fragrant oils that are lush and perfume the house with exceeding floral scent. Which, let's face it, are nice things to do.
4. And when they come from the market, except they wash, they eat not, no matter how hungered they be, nor how plaintively the children crieth and tug at their skirts. And many other things there be, which they have received to hold, as the washing of cups, and pots, brasen vessels, and of tables, and napkins and toast racks, cooking pots and mixing bowls, napkins and many linens, and small spoons which come in sets of twelve.
5. Then the Pharisees and scribes asked Him, Why walk not thy disciples according to the tradition of the elders, but eat bread and meat pies and pasties with unwashen hands? Eew! Gross! And where is the moisturiser? Please.
6. He answered and said unto them, Well hath Esaias prophesied of you hypocrites, as it is written, This people honoureth me with their lips, but their heart is far from me. And they did wonder which of the prophets He meant, for they knew not Esaias. And there was much fumbling of scrolls. And some did turn to their Apocrypha but found not a book by that name.
7. And Jesus said, Oh for heaven's sake! Look ye at Isaiah, O ye of little understanding. Howbeit in vain do they worship Me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men. And yet it is not only this generation that doth this, for in the ages to come many will set up temples and places of worship and meet in houses drinking as yet undiscovered beverages, and teach their own understanding as the Word of God. Trust me – it's gospel, else I would not tell you these things.
8. For laying aside the commandment of God, ye hold the tradition of men, as the washing of pots and cups and, recently, platters bigger than a man's head: and many other such like things ye do. You scrubbers! And notwithstanding the benefits of personal hygiene, for some of you do whiff a bit, see ye not that the washing of the body – even the unmentionable bits - toucheth not the washing of the soul? And don't get me started on nose hairs and their place in the kingdom of God. I'm going to take a short break now to let that sink in.
14. And then when He had called all the people unto Him, He said unto them, Hearken unto me every one of you, yes, even you there at the back who looketh down at his scrolls and those of his neighbour, and understand:
15. There is nothing from without a man, or woman, or other, that entering into him or – you get the drift - can defile him, not even body piercing in the most unusual places, and there are many: but the things which come out of him, especially after a dodgy stew or curry, those are they that defile the man. And those within range. Discuss that for a moment. And no, I'm not going to mention toilets this time.
21. May I continue? Right. For from within, out of the heart of men, and women, and others proceed evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, and murders. And they began to murmur but He sayeth, Hang on, I haven't finished yet.

22. Thefts, covetousness, wickedness, deceit, lasciviousness, an evil eye, blasphemy, pride, misdirected and silent wind, foolishness, bad dress sense, excessive make-up, singing out of tune and writing choruses, tampering with livestock and trading in illicit scrolls:
23. All these evil things come from within and defile the man. Where do you think you are going? And at this some went in search of hot flannels and towels, for they were convicted of their uncleanness.