

Peculiar means to heal a deaf man

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[0 : 0 0] Let us look or open up our Bibles. We're going to look in Mark chapter 7. We're going to finish up Mark chapter 7. Today, we're looking at the life of Jesus, just going verse by verse through this account from Mark.

Mark, many people think that his information from the mouth of Peter. And so, in this gospel account, there's four gospels, and this one from Mark is the kind of more brief of the gospel accounts.

And also has a lot of, focuses less on the teachings of Jesus and more on the things that Jesus did. And that will be similar or the same that we look at today.

We're going to be looking at this account, it's just Mark 7, 31 through 37, in which Jesus heals a deaf man, a man who is deaf, and also has an impediment in his speech.

This account is somewhat curious to a lot of people. If you read the Bible commentators on this, there's a lot of questions about, well, what exactly is going on?

[1 : 1 8] Typically, when Jesus heals, he heals with just a word or sometimes a touch. In this case, there's a lot more things going on that seem kind of strange, at least to us. We'll see what we can do to try to make sense of it.

One of the most strange things is there's some spitting involved. And that seems crude, and that's something that is crude to us, but I think was also a crude thing even back then.

It was not something that was polite. It wasn't something that was something that, you know, people did in polite company. This is actually one of the few accounts that's only mentioned by Mark.

We get details here about the healing of this deaf man that is only mentioned in Mark. We see with a lot of the Gospels, there's a lot of overlap. In fact, specifically with the Gospel of Mark, almost all of the accounts that he gives, we can find in at least one other Gospel account.

This is one of the few that only Mark gives. It's only found in this Gospel of Mark. There is a mention of the circumstances surrounding this in the book of Matthew, chapter 15, that we looked at last week, or I guess two weeks ago, but it's a lot more generic.

[2 : 3 4] He just talks about him healing some people. And we'll actually look at some of those verses as we go along here. This is the first time in Mark where we see Jesus heal a deaf man.

We've seen him heal in other ways, but this is the first time in Mark that we read of him healing a deaf man. So, we'll consider that. Just to kind of bring up some of the healings that have happened up until now, we've seen Jesus cast out spirits.

We saw him heal a fever, specifically with his mother-in-law. It talks about him healing the diseased. There have been those who have had leprosy that he has healed.

The lame to walk again. We've seen him heal a withered hand. A flow of blood, so some kind of a blood issue or disease. And we've even seen him heal the dead.

But up until this point, at least in the Gospel of Mark, we have not seen him heal the deaf. Or, you know, the mute or those with an impediment of speech.

[3 : 41] Let's go ahead and read through these verses, and then we're going to go and talk through them. So, again, Mark chapter 7. We'll start with verse 31 to the end of the chapter.

Again, departing from the region of Tyre and Sidon, he came through the midst of the region of Decapolis to the Sea of Galilee. Then they brought to him one who was deaf and had an impediment in his speech, and they begged him to put his hand on him.

And he took him aside from the multitude, and he put his fingers in his ears, and he spat, and he touched his tongue. Then, looking up to heaven, he sighed, and he said to him, Ephatha, that is, be opened.

Immediately his ears were opened, and the impediment of his tongue was loosed, and he spoke plainly. Then he commanded them that they should tell no one. But the more he commanded them, the more widely they proclaimed it.

And they were astonished beyond measure, saying, He has done all things well. He makes both the deaf to hear and the mute to speak.

[4 : 54] So again, Jesus is traveling around. He has a teaching ministry. He has a miracle and healing ministry. And this is just a continuation of that. Two weeks ago, when we looked at the last passage, we looked at Jesus and his interaction with a Gentile woman.

And he had traveled. He had just highly offended and agitated the Pharisees and the scribes, the leaders of the Jews. And so it seems he was kind of looking to maybe get away from their anger and rage at him.

And so he traveled up north from the Sea of Galilee, it said, to the outskirts of a region called Tyre and Sidon, which was a Gentile area. And so here in verse 31, it says, again, departing from the region of Tyre and Sidon, he came through the midst of the region of Decapolis to the Sea of Galilee.

And so, well, what is this Decapolis? And I believe we've talked about this before. When Jesus healed the demoniac, that was also in this area of Decapolis.

Decapolis, just as a reminder, is this region of ten cities that were kind of bound together and called Decapolis, which Deca, if you think about Latin roots or Greek roots, I guess, in this case, Deca is a Greek root for ten.

[6 : 15] Think of the word decimal or I guess there are other words that have Deca in it, and it means ten. And polis is a Greek word for city. And so this area was called the area of the ten cities, Decapolis.

And they were united together, not necessarily politically, but just through culture. All of these cities, this area, this region had been thoroughly Hellenized by the Greeks.

Hellenized just means to be made like the Greeks. And so it was referred to, both in the Bible, and we actually see this in other writings around this same time, as Decapolis.

Today, this region, and it is just, if you think about where the Sea of Galilee is, and just south of the Sea of Galilee is the Jordan River, and to the east, and I'll kind of flip around to your view, the east of Galilee was this region of Decapolis.

It was just directly east of the Sea of Galilee and then extended pretty far south. It was a fairly large area. Today, that area is part of the country we call today Jordan.

[7 : 29] There is a little bit of a debate about, well, how far into Decapolis did Jesus go? In fact, with Jesus' interaction with a Gentile woman up in the region of Tyre and Sidon, many have, and then this traveling to somewhere around Decapolis, people think, well, this is a time when Jesus started ministering to Gentile people, where he actually was teaching and ministering and healing Gentile people.

But we know, and I think we should surmise from what we talked about last week, that Jesus didn't actually go into Gentile areas. Now, there were Gentiles living among the Jews, and where Jesus was at was actually bordering more Gentile areas, such as Decapolis, such as Tyre and Sidon.

But Jesus was not going into the heart of those places. Really, what we see happening here is Jesus is looking for somewhat of a respite to avoid, I think, the bigger city areas, the bigger towns, to avoid the rage of the Jewish leaders.

And I think also, one of the things that we saw with the feeding of the 5,000s, the feeding of the 5,000 was that after that happened, there were some who wanted, they recognized that this is the Messiah.

This is the one who is going to restore the kingdom of Israel. And they wanted, it said, to make him king right then and there. So, what it appears to me is, is that Jesus is looking to avoid, you know, some of the heavily populated areas, to avoid both the rage of the Pharisees.

[9 : 15] His time had not come yet. He was going to confront that head on, actually fairly soon from now. In fact, he's getting ready to head down to Jerusalem. But then also to avoid the people trying to force him into, you know, making him king of the Jews before his time has come.

So, as we read here, though, it says that, again, in verse 31, again, departing from the region of Tyre and Sidon, he came through the midst of the region of Decapolis to the Sea of Galilee.

And this word that is, I'm reading from the New King James Version, but other versions actually use the word from the coast. Instead of region, it says from the coast of Tyre and Sidon, or the coast of Decapolis, or some other translations say the border.

When we think of coast, we think about a coast at the water. And in these cases, Tyre and Sidon, the border was not anywhere near the water. Now, Decapolis was actually bordered the Sea of Galilee.

Just a portion of Decapolis bordered the Sea of Galilee. But what I think is going on here, Jesus is going into the outskirts, into the unpopulated areas, and this is along the borders of area.

[10 : 34] Usually where there's a border, there's not a lot of people. Not always. Sometimes at a border, there's lots of population. When we read in the parallel account in Matthew, it says that he left Tyre and Sidon, and he went to the Sea of Galilee and found a mountain.

And so the mountains was not usually where a lot of people lived, and so he went to find some privacy up on a mountain near the Sea of Galilee. And I believe from what it says here, near the border of Decapolis.

Jesus wasn't going to the Jews. Jesus says, I wasn't sent except for to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. That was what his mission and his ministry was to.

So Jesus is not going to the Gentiles, though he does meet some along the way. We read about that a couple weeks ago. All right, we'll continue on. Verse 32. Then they brought to him one who was deaf and had an impediment in his speech, and they begged him to put his hands on them.

So this man did not come, it seems, of his own accord, just by himself. It seems that there were others, whether friends or family, that brought him to Jesus.

[11 : 46] And I can imagine, you know, one of the things we'll talk about here in a second is the life of a person who has no hearing at that time.

And I imagine that travel, even just travel, right, for somebody who is not able to hear, especially during this time, during ancient times, was extremely difficult.

So there were others, friends or family, that brought him to Jesus. They had heard about Jesus and what he was doing and that he was healing and performing miracles, and so they brought him. It says that he was both deaf and that he had an impediment in his speech.

So was it that he was deaf and mute? Well, it actually doesn't use the word mute here. There are other places in the Bible where you'll see that it talks about someone being mute, which means they cannot speak.

Sometimes it uses the word dumb in some translations. Dumb or mute, they both mean the same thing. Unable to talk. In this case, it seemed that he had the ability to speak somewhat, but there was an impediment.

[12 : 51] You know, we don't necessarily use that terminology, but we'll talk about having, maybe they have a stammer or what's the other thing that you call it?

A stutter, yeah, a stutter. And so people will have impediments to their speech. In this case, it seems that his impediment almost certainly had to do with his lack of ability to hear.

We don't necessarily realize this or think about this, but the ability to speak has a lot to do with our ability to hear. And when you cannot hear yourself, it's very difficult to form words that other people can hear.

And so when there is someone who is born deaf, it's actually very difficult for them to talk at all because they have never actually heard any words from anyone else, much less from their own mouth.

And so being able to form words really requires the ability to hear. However, there are people who have not been born deaf, but have, over time, whether when they were younger or maybe when they were older, lost the ability to hear.

[14 : 14] And we actually find that they have more of an ability to actually speak, even though it is difficult to understand. Again, our family has, there's a TV show from about 20 years ago.

It's actually a pretty good one. It's clean, which, you know, you don't find a lot these days. But it's called Sue Thomas FBI. And it's like a crime type show.

But it focuses on one of the characters is a lady. Her name is Sue Thomas. And Sue Thomas was an actual person that the show is based on. Now, the stories are all made up.

But it's based on a woman who worked for the FBI, and she was deaf. Her story is that she became deaf as a child. I'm not sure what age she was.

But when she was younger, all of a sudden, poof, her hearing was gone. I don't think it was 100%. I think it was mostly gone. I think there was just a little whisper of noise left that she could hear.

[15 : 17] But for the most part, could not hear anything. But she was able over, you know, as she grew up from a young child, to learn how to verbalize, even though she couldn't hear.

But I think her experience, even as a young child, knowing how to speak, helped her to know how to form those words so that other people could understand. I believe she's actually married to a man who is, I believe, was born deaf.

And he actually has a much harder time speaking in any kind of way that you can understand. It's very, very garbled. But for her, she's actually able to verbalize a lot better because of her experience.

So from the language used here about an impediment of speech, it seems that the scenario here is a man who probably had the ability to hear in the past, but lost his ability to hear at some point.

In fact, we're going to actually look in a bit, a little later on, about this word. It's only used one time in all the New Testament, this word for impediment of speech.

[16 : 30] And we'll look at that later. I want to briefly consider, what is it like to live without the ability to hear? What's it like?

You know, it's actually very difficult for us to understand. I remember when I was in school, we had like this empathy session where we tried to experience what it was like to be blind, right?

And so we put, you know, some kind of a blinder on and spent, you know, an hour of the class just trying to get around and do things without the ability to see.

That's pretty easy to cover up your eyes and experience what it's like to be blind. Now, we can't experience what it's like to be blind your whole life. You know, we don't have the ability to kind of go back in time or whatever, right?

We can just experience it temporarily. But, you know, it's actually very, very difficult to experience what it's like to be deaf, right? Because even if you stop your ears, you know, you do this, stick your fingers in your ears or put some headphones on, you can still hear something, right?

[17 : 36] Even if it's not much. So it's difficult for us to even temporarily experience that. And also today, I think it's hard for us to think about what life was like for this man because today, even for those who are deaf, we have so many aids, so many ways to overcome that obstacle that this man did not have back at that time.

Communicating without the ability to hear is very, very difficult. And especially back then, communication was primarily oral. It was the spoken word.

There were books. There were the scriptures. There were other books. There were even libraries at the time. But books were hard to come by. Even the scriptures themselves were hard to come by.

And so today, if you're deaf, you can go to a library, you can have access to all kinds of information and learning just by grabbing, you know, checking out any number of books and just reading them with your eyes.

Back then, books were somewhat limited, especially if you didn't have a lot of money. Also, they didn't have sign language at that time, at least not that we know about.

[19 : 00] I mean, I'm sure that there were, you know, when you're deaf, you tend to use signs. But, you know, the system that we have today, actually there are two, American Sign Language, and there's another one.

I can't remember the name of it. Were developed fairly recently, I think in the last 200 years. Sign language, this concept of a systematized way to, quote, speak or communicate with just signs using your hands.

They didn't have that back then. You know, we've seen, even in that show I talked about, the Sue Thomas FBI, she actually, one of the reasons she works for the FBI is because she has this ability to read lips, right?

And so we think, oh, well, if you're deaf, you just read lips, as if it's this easy, you know, thing to do if you just practice for a little while. Reading lips is actually extremely difficult.

And even those who, like Sue Thomas, was able to master that skill, it's still very difficult. And, you know, not everything is clear. A lot of times you have to guess what somebody is saying.

[20 : 03] You know, in different languages, depending on the type of language, some don't enunciate with their lips. You know, you can have one movement with your lips that might mean five or even ten different things.

Make five or ten different sounds. Today we have computers. We have email. We have, even if you watch a movie, you have closed captioning where you can read what the characters in the film or show are saying.

You know, being deaf, people say, is very lonely. It's isolating. You feel cut off from the world.

There's actually a quote from Helen Keller. Many of us, I think, are familiar with Helen Keller and her story. Multiple movies and books have been written about her life.

Helen Keller was born, I can't remember if she was born, but she was both blind and deaf. You can imagine how cut off you would be from the world being both blind and deaf.

[21 : 19] But she actually learned to overcome those disabilities and actually thrive in life amazingly. An amazing story. But here's a quote from Helen Keller.

She says this, Blindness separates people from things. We can see all the things around us. But she said, Deafness separates people from people.

And that was her perspective. When you can't see, it's one thing. You know, you can't see objects and obstacles to get around and, you know, traveling and mobility is difficult.

But when you can't hear, what's really difficult is relationships. Getting to know people. It's really hard to communicate. And so, some people have said, I'd rather be blind than to be deaf.

Even though, you know, our eyes are so important to us and we use them for so many things. But when you think about it, what's more important? What's the biggest thing, you know, Joe talked about this last week.

[22 : 26] What's the most important thing in life? It's relationships. And being deaf is a huge obstacle to building relationships. relationships. So, when you're deaf, your ability to communicate and build relationships with other people is very, there's very much a hurdle there.

Your, quote, vocabulary in speaking with people is crude. Just using hand motions and maybe facial expressions. You can communicate emotions, point to things, you know, make crude signs.

But that's it. You can imagine you, maybe over time, can develop a system to communicate with people who are close to you. But as soon as you go out into the world with people who don't know you, you're lost.

It's hard to find your way. It's hard probably to have a job to make a living. And so, when you're communicating as a deaf person, there's a lot of demonstrative behavior.

You know, you talk like an Italian with your hands like this. Back in the early days of film, there was no sound, right? And so, they made movies before they had talkies, right?

[23 : 48] Later on, they introduced sound and they called them talkies. Before that, it was just a movie. You just saw the movement. That's why we called them movies. But in those early silent films, people acted so weird and strange.

It was just over-the-top dramatic. And why was that? Well, it was because, really, you had to communicate. They did have captions, the occasional captions. They didn't have, like, the, you know, the captions like we have today, which give you word by word.

They would just have the occasional, like, you know, word up there every once in a while, every, you know, few scenes to give you an indication of what was happening. But people mostly told the story through their actions, these demonstrative actions, these expressions on their face that were so over-the-top and other things.

Actually, Abby, my daughter, Abby, she got the whole family to watch an old silent film by Charlie Chaplin. Anybody remember Charlie Chaplin? Well, his films are actually out of copyright, so you can go find, I think, all of his films on YouTube today or online somewhere.

And we watched, I think, the first feature film that he did called The Kid. And it's just incredible how well they made a film without any sound at all.

[25 : 10] And you can kind of get the gist of what was going on just by watching the characters and how they interact with each other. It's a story about a mom who's in desperate straits and she ends up leaving her child with this man.

and it's Charlie Chaplin and all the funny but also kind of heartwarming things that go on. So that's the life of a deaf person as far as, you know, we can probably surmise at this time.

Back to Mark 7, verse 33, it says, he took him aside from the multitude and he put his fingers in his ears and he spat and he touched his tongue.

And then looking up to heaven, he sighed and he said to him, Ephaphatha, that is, be opened.

And so he does all these things. You know, in other times we see Jesus say, it says, with a word he healed them. He said, be healed. And here he says, be opened. But it's after he does all these other things.

[26 : 21] In some instances, he touches those to be healed. In other cases, other people touch him, right? And they're healed. But what's going on? Well, one, why did he take them aside?

Well, I'm not sure. But it seems he, it says here, he took him aside from the multitude. We don't know if it was like way away or if it was just kind of, all right, here's this crowd and we'll just take you over to the side here.

It seems, I mean, we know people were watching and listening. That's how we have an account. People saw and what was going on and there was a record of it. But this is so strange.

There's fingers in the ears. There's spitting involved. That's gross. There's touching his tongue. Then there's a looking to heaven. And then there's this sighing or as we'll talk about in a second, it's actually the word for grown.

So why is this? And I'm going to give my best guess. And like I said, a lot of commentators and people who are Bible teachers really kind of struggle with what's going on here.

[27 : 24] Why all this demonstrative behavior? But my best guess is this is a man who, communication is very different from how you communicate with other people.

What I see here is Jesus doing his best to communicate with a man where he's at. He can't hear. And so, his way of speaking to this man, of quote, talking to him, is through these demonstrative behaviors of touch with his fingers and of kind of what he can perceive with his sight.

We'll talk about each of these things individually. So fingers in the ears. I think simply Jesus is trying to tell the man, listen, your ears, I'm putting my fingers in and I'm taking them out and I'm telling you that I'm going to unstop your ears.

I'm going to unplug them. I'm going to open them up. Then it says that he spits. This one, I'm just going to do my best guess, just like everybody else that I've read on this.

It's unclear, did he spit on the ground? Did he spit in his hand? Some people say, well, it sounds like he spit directly on his tongue. Now that's really gross.

[28 : 53] I don't, you know, who knows? You know, some people have said, well, you know, there is a, there's actually healing properties in our saliva.

And that is actually true. Our saliva has properties that are actually antibacterial. You can imagine how God would put antibacterial things in our mouth.

You know, that's nice to have. But one of the things that we see in nature, right, is that animals, what do they do when they have a wound? They lick them, right?

Animals lick their wounds. And, you know, we see that a lot. Whether you have a cat or a dog or an animal in the wild, it's an instinctual thing for animals when they have a wound, when there's some kind of a blood flow or even just a scrape or something like that, they will lick their wounds.

And as scientists have looked into this, they've seen that this actually does help. Actually helps to prevent infection and cause healing to come more quickly.

[29 : 59] And so, it's possible that maybe this whole spitting thing was, hey, here's some healing saliva. Some have said that, well, the Jews, some of the, what do you call it, the writings, the later writings of the Jews, these oral traditions, say that spit could actually heal a blind man.

And that is true, but that kind of tradition, tradition came later. And it's really not true. But that wasn't something that was, something that was around during the time of Jesus as far as, as far as we know.

We do see two other times where Jesus spits when he's healing somebody. The other time, actually, is just one chapter away in Mark chapter 8 where he spits on the face of a blind man to heal his eyes.

So that's interesting. You know, these are very close in proximity to one another. And then, the other one is where he actually spits on the ground and makes some mud. Remember that story?

And he puts it in the man's eyes so that he can see. And that's in, that's in the book of John, the Gospel of John.

[31 : 15] Some people have said, well, it looks to me, and usually this comes from skeptics, that Jesus is practicing some kind of dark magic or sorcery.

Because you see with witchcraft and sorcerers and things like that, there's these magic potions and spells and there's a lot of weird things involved, right? You see like, a tincture of like, maybe snake venom and, you know, rat tails and all kinds of weird, kind of usually gross things.

And these things are supposed to do something for people. And I'm sure, even to this day, there were people who practiced witchcraft or sorcery who did these kinds of things. And so, some, especially skeptics, had said, well, Jesus is just mimicking and copying these other people.

I don't think that's the case at all. I mean, this is just some saliva. So, anyway, whether he spits on the ground or spits in his hand, then he touches the man's tongue.

He touches his tongue. And again, I think this is a way for Jesus to communicate. Listen, I'm going to unstop your ears. I'm going to open up your ears and I'm going to loosen your tongue.

[32 : 33] And then, the next thing it says is that he looks up to heaven. Why would he look up to heaven? Again, a way to communicate.

When Jesus speaks, he can't hear the words that he speaks. And what would looking up to heaven signify? What's in heaven? Yeah, the Lord is up there.

That's where the Lord is. And that's where our help comes from. From the heavens. And the heavens are actually, a lot of times we read about the heavens, we'll see the word heaven used as a figure of speech to reference God.

We look up to the heavens. In fact, some people get confused about the phrase the kingdom of God versus the kingdom of heaven. Both of those phrases are used and it seems like they're used interchangeably but some people think, oh, well, there's the kingdom of God and there's a separate thing called the kingdom of heaven and what's the difference?

And I don't think there's any difference at all. I think the kingdom of heaven is just the kingdom of God but it's just using a figure of speech. The kingdom of heaven, heaven is where God lives and so we call it the kingdom of heaven because that's where God lives.

[33 : 51] So he looked up to heaven, I think, I believe, to show this man that hey, your help is coming from heaven. It's coming from God. It's coming from the Father.

And then it says this, he sighed. He sighed. And this word actually in many places and usually is translated not as sighed but groaned.

And I want to look at this just briefly. During, in Acts chapter 7, Stephen is giving this long sermon.

This is right before Stephen is stoned. And he's talking about the Israelites and their oppression in Egypt. And he says this in Acts chapter 7 verse 34.

And he's actually quoting God from the Old Testament scriptures. So God says this, I have surely seen the oppression of my people who are in Egypt. I have heard their groaning and have come down to deliver them.

[34 : 53] and now come I will send you to Egypt. So this is God talking to Moses and telling the story of that. But it's the same word. So when in the book of Acts, the book of Acts is written in Greek and it's translating this from Hebrew but it's that same word to groan.

So in describing the people of Egypt who are under the oppression of the Egyptians, God heard their groaning. There's also the same word is used in 2 Corinthians chapter 5 talking about our life, our temporal life in this earth.

2 Corinthians 5.4 says this, For we who are in this tent, this body, this mortal body, this body that breaks down, this body that has trouble, this body that is weak.

For we who are in this tent groan. being burdened. Not because we want to be unclothed but further clothed that mortality may be swallowed up by life.

These mortal bodies that we have, they groan. There's burdens that we bear. There's things that we suffer. And so this word groaning really has to do with suffering, with being burdened, with being oppressed.

[36 : 14] Even in Romans, the same word is used. Romans chapter 8 verse 23. Not only that, but we also who have the first fruits of the spirit, that's talking about Christians who have received God's spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves.

He says, even us who have received God's spirit, we still have these mortal bodies that suffer. And even though we are God's children and have his spirit, we still groan because our redemption is not yet complete.

There's still further, there's still something more that God is going to do in us specifically with our bodies to give us new, immortal bodies. But at this time, even we ourselves, it says in Romans 8, groan within ourselves, eagerly waiting for the adoption, the redemption of our bodies.

And so, this term that's used here, sigh, is this same word for groaning. And I think what Jesus is doing is he's expressing to this man in a way that the man will understand in a very demonstrative way.

I see your suffering and I want to communicate to you my compassion. And we see this many times when Jesus healed. It says, and Jesus had compassion on them and he healed them.

- [37 : 40] In many different places we see that. Here's a way that Jesus is demonstrating compassion through this groaning. I'm empathizing with you.
- You have this burden. And he's indicating really in a visual way because when you groan, your chest goes up, you sigh, you groan.
- It's a very visual way to demonstrate his empathy, his compassion. and that he is bearing a burden that this man is carrying.
- And then he says these words in the original language that Jesus would have spoken of Aramaic during that time. So, from what I'm told, it's pronounced Ephatha.
- Ephatha. This word, Ephatha, it's an Aramaic word. Aramaic was the language spoken during that day. The native language of the Judeans, the Jews at that time.
- [38 : 44] There was also the Hebrew language which there is some similarity. They're both Semitic languages. They have the same sort. I'm sure there's a lot of overlap in words that were spoken. But the daily language and the language that Jesus would have spoke was this Aramaic.
- And so, it's interesting. Mark just points out this is the actual word that Jesus used. And why would he do that? I mean, he doesn't do that everywhere. There was one other time before this where Mark points out the Aramaic word that Jesus actually spoke.
- Does anybody remember what that was? It was the young girl who was raised from the dead. And remember, he told her, in fact, let me see, I wrote it down.
- He said, Talitha kumi, which means little girl arise. Talitha kumi. And Mark, in that instance, did the same thing. This was a command that Jesus gave to perform a miracle, to heal someone.
- And so, he gives a little bit of insight into the actual language. And I think it's just interesting. He didn't have to do that. I mean, what's the value? What's the benefit? I mean, not really much, but it just makes it a little bit more personal.
- [40 : 04] You can actually see or read the actual words that Jesus said with his own mouth. He actually spoke that word, Ephatha, be open.
- the other time that we see where we get an account of the actual words that Jesus spoke was when he was on the cross.
- Remember that? And Jesus said this, Eloi, Eloi, Eloi, Eloi, excuse me, Eloi, Eloi, lama sabaccathani, which is translated, my God, my God, for what have you forsaken me?
- these powerful instances where something was happening in Jesus' life and we get this just brief insight into the actual language that he spoke.
- I think it's pretty neat. We'll go to verse 35. Immediately it says his ears were opened and the impediment of his tongue were loosed and he spoke plainly. So Jesus gives all these indications of what he's going to do and then he says that word, be opened, and immediately says, not after a time, but immediately his ears were opened and the impediment of his tongue was loosed and he spoke plainly.
- [41 : 21] So indicating that before he could maybe speak but not plainly. It wasn't clear. But now he could speak plainly. This word I mentioned before, impediment of the tongue, is only used, this Greek word, is only used one time in all the New Testament.
- Right here. But it is found also in the translation of the Old Testament into Greek. There was a translation that happened I don't know, a couple hundred years before the time of Jesus of the whole Old Testament into the Greek language.
- We call that the Septuagint or Septuagint I've heard. And in the Septuagint there is a translation of a prophecy of Isaiah. And it uses this same Greek word.

And here is the prophecy. Isaiah 35, verse 5. It says this, Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened and the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped.

Then the lame shall leap like a deer and the tongue of the dumb, that same word, the dumb. It's not actually a good translation because it doesn't actually mean dumb as in mute, can't speak, but just an impediment.

[42 : 35] But it's that same word used here. The dumb shall what? Shall sing. For waters shall burst forth in the wilderness and the streams in the desert. And what was this a prophecy about?

This prophecy was about the restoration of Israel. And who comes with the restoration of Israel? The Messiah.

And so Mark uses this rare word that's not used very much in the Greek language at all, but it's the same word that's found in the prophet Isaiah, in the Greek translation of the prophet Isaiah.

You can see the tie-in there. Then he commanded them that they should tell no one, but the more he commanded them, the more widely they proclaimed it.

Again, why is he telling them not to tell anybody? Well, I think it's just to try to, you know, his time is not yet. Don't let the word get out too much. I don't want the Jewish leaders to come after me right at this time.

[43 : 33] But then it says the more he commanded, the more they proclaimed. You know, it's really hard to keep secrets. Anybody have problems keeping secrets? Somebody tells you something exciting or thrilling or whatever and you want to tell people, right?

Especially something as amazing and astonishing as this. You want to tell people what you saw. You saw something so amazing you want to let people know and Jesus said, well, don't actually tell anybody. Well, they didn't listen.

Verse 37, and they were astonished beyond measure saying he has done all things well. He makes both the deaf to hear and the mute to speak. He was or they were astonished and you can imagine this is a dramatic scene.

You know, when we read the Bible there's not always a lot of detail and so we just read that he did these things and then he could hear. You know, and you just read that and it's just okay.

but, you know, one of the reasons, you know, there's this new series that's come out, The Chosen, which I still have not seen a single scene from that other than like clips and there's a lot of controversy around it, right?

[44 : 43] Some people think, oh, I don't know about it. You know, I think, you know, should you really be doing that? Because, you know, there's a lot of things you can add in and they do, right? And that's part of dramatizing anything is you add details in to give life to the story.

I actually do appreciate that. Because when you watch this film and what I've heard other people tell me is that you see a miracle of Jesus and you see the expressions on people's face and the emotion that comes with it.

And that's there, it's just not described in the Bible. There was a lot of emotion and excitement and astonishment. But, you know, we have to use our own imaginations to really think about, think through how amazing this was and how astonishing it would be.

But this man went from silence, it was nothing, to all of a sudden being able to hear voices, the rain, you know, coming down, thunder, all these things that so many of us take for granted, right?

Just the little things. I'm sure even the bickering of children in the background this man would have appreciated after this, getting his hearing back.

[46 : 05] I've seen videos, have you seen these videos online where we have modern technology today where we can actually, I've seen some recently where they had these special glasses, people who cannot see color, and they have these special glasses and it will allow them to see color.

I don't think it's for all types of color blindness, but for certain type of color blindness, you put on these special glasses and you can see color. And there are all kinds of videos online where these people put on these glasses for the first time and they see color.

I mean, they could see before, but it was just black and white or maybe different, you know, just a few colors or something like that. And now the vibrancy of the color comes into their eyes and you watch the video and you can't help but crying because they're crying.

I'm not crying, you're crying. It's such an amazing thing. There's also some videos because we have these things called cochlear implants now.

And they're pretty crude. It's amazing what they've done. But they can allow some semblance of hearing. It's not the same thing that we hear, but they're able to actually, you know, have a microphone that can send some kind of, because our hearing is just amazing.

[47 : 25] It's basically taking vibrations and using cells in our ears to convert those vibrations into electrical signals that go into our brain. And our brain interprets them into sound.

It's just amazing. So they have somewhat of a crude thing. I mean, it's amazing, but they have a microphone and they pass electrical signals that can go to the brain.

And people have described it as just kind of, you know, garbled noise. But it's something. And so I've seen videos where you turn on this cochlear implant.

It's usually done on little children and their eyes get big. They've never heard anything before in their whole life. And all of a sudden, there's sound.

And it's not, it's not anything amazing. It's not very clear, but they hear something. And it's just incredible. And I can imagine that kind of thing happening at this scene where this man is just beside himself with joy because his hearing is restored.

[48 : 34] Also, people are astonished because this kind of thing has never happened before. You know, I was thinking, even in the Old Testament, there are miracles in the Old Testament, right?

Was anyone ever healed of deafness in the Old Testament? I looked. Never. Never happened.

The time of Jesus is the only time ever recorded in the history of the whole Bible of someone who was deaf. Same thing with blindness. Deafness and blindness.

Only in the ministry of Jesus do we actually see a recording of this happening. In the Old Testament, there were women who were barren who were healed, leprosy, even the raising of the dead. King Hezekiah had some boils that he was healed from.

There was the snake bites in the wilderness. And that's kind of it. And so the people were astonished because this kind of thing, they'd never seen this before.

[49 : 34] They'd never even heard of it. It wasn't even the Old Testament scriptures that somebody who was deaf would hear again. And then they said this, He has done all things well.

And what does that mean? It's like, oh, you did a good job. I think what they're saying here is that, hey, you know what we heard from the leaders, the scribes and the Pharisees?

What did they say about Jesus? Oh, he's a witch doctor. He uses the power of the demons to do these things. Don't let this guy, Jesus, fool you.

He uses the power of the devil to do all these things. He's a sorcerer. But these people saw with their own eyes the compassion, the love of Jesus, his goodness, his grace.

And this wasn't like the witch doctors. I mean, they might do some hocus pocus something, but they didn't open up anybody's ears or anybody's eyes. In the parallel account in Matthew 15, verse 31, it says this, so the multitude marveled when they saw the mute speaking, the maimed made whole, the lame walking and the blind seeing.

[50 : 48] And it says they glorified the God of Israel because they knew where these miracles came from. It didn't come from the devil. It came from heaven.

That's where Jesus looked, right? He looked to the heavens. This isn't coming from the demons of hell. This is coming from the God of heaven. And they glorified God. They knew that.

This was an indication to them of who this man was. That he was the one that the prophet spoke of, the Messiah, the Christ, the coming one. You know, John the Baptist, he actually, you know, announced Jesus is coming.

But he was kind of confused and not, he was unsure. And so he sent his disciples at one point to go ask Jesus himself, are you the guy?

It says this in Matthew 11, verse 2. This is when John the Baptist, it says, and when John had heard in prison about the works of Christ, he sent two of his disciples and said to him, are you the coming one or do we look for another?

[51 : 58] And Jesus answered and said to them, go and tell John the things which you hear and see. The blind see and the lame walk. The lepers are cleansed and the deaf hear.

The dead are raised and the poor have the gospel preached to him or preached to them. These are the signs of the Messiah. And it goes back to that passage from Isaiah the prophet using that same word for loosening the tongue.

I'll read it again. Isaiah 35, 4. Say to those who are fearful hearted, be strong and do not fear.

Behold, your God will come with vengeance with the recompense of God. He will come and he will save you. The Messiah is coming to save Israel. Then the eyes of the blind will be opened and the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped.

Then the lame shall leap like the deer and the tongue of the dumb shall sing. For the waters shall burst forth in the wilderness and streams in the desert. These were signs.

[53 : 08] This is what's going to happen when salvation comes to Israel. And yet, here's salvation. Salvation has come. He's right here before you. And the leaders, they doubted.

There's another story and I'm just going to briefly point to it because I think it brings up what was going on with these leaders. Well, actually look at the man who was healed of blindness at the pool of Siloam.

This was another spitting miracle. Jesus spits in the ground. He puts some mud in his eyes. And actually, this was a two-step miracle. I think it was the only like two-step miracle. Usually, Jesus' miracles were immediate.

We won't get into why. But after that miracle, the leaders were really upset that this man had been healed and it brought so much attention to Jesus.

So, in talking to this blind man, this blind man is just beside himself like, why are you guys so upset? I used to be blind and now I'm not. John 9, verse 29.

[54 : 16] The Pharisee said, we know that God spoke to Moses. But as for this fellow, we do not know where he is from. the man answered and said to them, why, this is a marvelous thing that you do not know where he is from?

Yet he has opened my eyes. Now we know that God does not hear sinners. But if anyone is a worshiper of God and does his will, he hears him.

This is that blind man, the restored blind man, speaking. And then he says this, since the world began, it has been unheard of that anyone opened the eyes of one who was born blind.

This has never happened before. Blind eyes being opened, deaf ears being unstopped. This is truly a sign of someone special.

And so, even today, we have skeptics. Well, who is this man?

[55 : 23] Should we listen to him? Should we give any thought to this man, Jesus? He is, as we sang about this morning, the savior of the world.

In fact, I, you know, the, the song that the ladies sang, Mary, did you know? It has that phrase there, did you know that Jesus was going to do all these things?

That the, that the deaf will hear and the lame will walk and the blind will see? But we know, so we read about it and we have multiple accounts of what Jesus did. That he is who he said he was.

And that he has the power over life and over death. And he has the power to give us eternal life for all who are willing. He's great, isn't he?

And not only is he great, but he's also good. He's also good. Amen? All right, let's close with a word of prayer. Father, we love you. We thank you. Thank you for these accounts.

[56 : 25] We know there are probably hundreds of other accounts that you didn't even record, but you chose to reveal these accounts to us for our encouragement, for our edification, for us to have insight into, into the life of Jesus and what you have for us.

I pray that these words would, would, would be in our hearts and make the impact that you intend them to have.

That we would glory and we continue to marvel and be astonished at your work then and at your work in us now. In Jesus' name, Amen.