

# Jesus and the Adulterous Woman

Pastor Grant Castleberry

December 4, 2022

John 7:53 – 8:11

There are SERIOUS DOUBTS that this STORY was originally part of JOHN's GOSPEL (John 7:53 – 8:11).

- These verses do not appear in any of the Oldest GREEK MANUSCRIPTS.
- The REALITY is that even though we don't have the original copy of JOHN's GOSPEL - there ARE SO MANY HUNDREDS of COPIES of the original TEXTS of SCRIPTURE that we KNOW with GREAT CERTAINTY what the ORIGINAL ACTUALLY STATED.
  - There are over 5,000 ancient Textual fragments of the NT.
    - In comparison there are only 10 fragments of Julius's Caesar's Gaelic Wars.
    - The earliest document of Homer's *The Iliad* from the 9<sup>th</sup> Century
- IN LIGHT of that EVIDENCE, it is not likely this story was PART of JOHN's GOSPEL.
  - In all of the EARLY MANUSCRIPTS it's simply not THERE.
  - In the Later manuscripts, this story is FREE-FLOATING.
  - Often off-set with BRACKETS or an ASTERIK.
  - No GREEK father, pastor, or theologian even commented on the text until the 10<sup>th</sup> Century.
  - The Vocabulary is very different from John's.
- So why is it HERE? Most scholars think it's AUTHENTIC.
  - Saint Augustine believed it was part of SCRIPTURE.
  - Calvin said it carries the MARK of APOSTOLIC AUTHORITY.
  - It was included in the ENGLISH TRADITION with the KJV.

## The Context

John 7:53 – [53] *They went each to his own house, [1] But Jesus went to the Mount of Olives.*

- Jesus SLEPT outside. Under the STARS.
  - Luke 9:58 – *“Foxes have holes, and birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay his head.*
- This was JESUS's WAY of LIFE. He chose to do this. Everyone went to their HOMES. JESUS went to the MOUNT of OLIVES.

John 8:2 – [2] *Early in the morning he came again to the temple, all the people came to him, and he sat down and taught them.*

- In this ONE verse you have a MICROCOSM of JESUS's whole MINISTRY!
- 1) DILIGENCE of HIS MINISTRY – he's up EARLY in the MORNING in order to TEACH the WORD of GOD.
  - John 4:34 – [34] *My food is to do the will of him who sent me and to accomplish his work.*
  - Eccl 9:10 – [10] *Whatever your hand finds to do, do it with all your might...*
  - Jesus was on a MISSION to SAVE sinners.
- 2) NATURE of HIS MINISTRY
  - He sat down. Just like the SCRIBES would sit down. This meant that he was SPEAKING with AUTHORITY.
  - John 5:24 – [24] *Truly, truly, I say to you, whoever hears my word and believes him who sent me has eternal life. He does not come in to judgment, but has passed from death to life.*
- 3) SCOPE of HIS MINISTRY

- *All the People came to Him.* This would have BEEN thousands coming to HEAR him in the TEMPLE. Remember over a million would have been in Bethlehem for the Feast.
  - John 7:46 – the OFFICIALS said – *“No one ever spoke like this man.”*

## A Sinner in the Hands of Angry Sinners

John 8:3 – [3] *The scribes and the Pharisees brought a woman who had been caught in adultery, and placing her in the midst*

- Scribes and Pharisees are two different GROUPS. Not mutually exclusive. Overlapping.
  - Scribes are the experts in the Law. The Teachers of the Law.
  - The Pharisees were a religious group who devoted themselves to the ORAL law that the scribes taught.
- The Pharisees were the chief opponents of JESUS. *Focusing on the LETTER of religion but not the heart of religion.*
- They connived a SCHEME to TRAP HIM.

And notice what they say to JESUS: [4] *they said to him, “Teacher, this woman has been caught in the act of adultery.*

- They call him teacher – when the day before they called him a deceiver.
- They say they CAUGHT this woman in the ACT of ADULTERY – CAUGHT has the connotation of Caught Red-Handed.
  - Paul uses the same word to describe how people will be surprised at the Lord’s second coming. 1 Thessalonians 5:4 – *But you are not in darkness brothers for that day to surprise you like a thief...*
- So the WOMAN is standing in complete SHAME and CONDEMNATION before the Lord. Before THOUSANDS of PEOPLE.

[5] *Now in the Law, Moses commanded us to stone such women. So what do you say?”*

- It is true – in the LAW of MOSES – God had COMMANDED the DEATH penalty for adultery – though stoning was NOT necessarily specified.
- And of course it specified death for BOTH parties.
  - Leviticus 20:10 – [10] *If a man commits adultery with the wife of his neighbor, both the adulterer and the adulteress shall surely be put to death.*
  - Deuteronomy 22:22 – [22] *If a man is found lying with the wife of another man, both of them shall die, the man who lay with the woman and the soman.*
- But the JEWS under ROME were not allowed to execute CAPITAL PUNISHMENT (see John 19).

[6] *This they said to test him, that they might have some charge to bring against him.*

- WHAT’s the TEST?
  - If JESUS says the WOMAN should be let go – He will be in VIOLATION of the LAW of MOSES.
  - If JESUS says the WOMAN should be STONED – He will be in VIOLATION of ROMAN LAW – and also will alienate the following he had of SINNERS.
- IT IS A DANGEROUS thing to TEST the LIVING GOD.
  - 1 Corinthians 10:9 – [9] *We must not put Christ to the test, as some of them did and were destroyed by serpents.*
    - You PUT CHRIST to the TEST by continuing in KNOWN SIN.
    - You PUT CHRIST to the TEST by deliberately defying Him.
    - You PUT CHRIST to the TEST by DARING HIM to do something.

[6b] *Jesus bend down and wrote with his finger on the ground.*

- Jesus stoops DOWN – essentially turning his back on everyone
- What did Jesus write?
  - 1) He wrote a Condemnation – Jeremiah 17:13 – [13] *Those who turn away from you will be written in the dust because they have forsaken the LORD the fountain of living water.*
  - 2) He is simply drawing Pictures in the Dirt – He’s basically responding to these Pharisees with apathetic SILENCE.

[7] *And as they continued to ask him, he stood up and said to them, “Let him who is without sin among you be the first to throw a stone at her.”*

- They want him to adjudicate.
- In His response, He AFFIRMS the LAW but turns it on its head against the PHARISEES.
  - In the OT LAW – the WITNESSES of the VIOLATION would cast the FIRST stones – then EVERYONE would JOIN in.
  - Deuteronomy 17:7 – [7] *The hand of the witnesses shall be first to put him to death, and afterward the hand of all the people. So you shall purge the evil from your midst.*
  - So JESUS reminds them that the WITNESSES must be the ONES to cast the FIRST STONES.
- ESSENTIALLY Jesus calls these men out on their own SIN.
  - Matt 7:1 – [1] *Judge not, that you be not judged.* [2] *For with the judgment you pronounce you will be judged, and with the measure you use it will be measured to you.*

[8] *And once more he bent down and wrote on the ground.*

[9] *But when they heard it, they went away one by one, beginning with the older ones, and Jesus was left alone with the woman standing before him.*

- The SCRIBES and PHARISEES go away in their OWN SHAME.
- JESUS is ALONE with her in the sense that the SCRIBES and PHARISEES are no longer there.

## A Display of Mercy

[10] *Jesus stood up and said to her, “Woman, where are they? Has no one condemned you?”*

[11] *She said, “No one, Lord.” And Jesus said, “Neither do I condemn you; go, and from now on sin no more.”*

- Notice her ADDRESS. She addresses JESUS as – “LORD.” It’s hard to know her HEART – but she CALLS him LORD.
- Jesus says to her – Neither do I condemn you. By CONDEMN – Jesus means he does NOT sentence her. He is not GOING to JUDGE her.
  - HE displays MERCY to her.
- Go and from now on – SIN no MORE. It is a CALL to REPENTANCE.
  - TURN from your SIN. And TRUST in me completely.
  - This is WHAT SALVATION is. IT’s REPENTANCE from your PREVIOUS convictions and its FAITH in the LORD JESUS CHRIST.

## Jesus’s Mission in the First Coming

- It EXPLAINS to us the REASON for our LORD’s FIRST COMING.

- There are TWO COMINGS of CHRIST.
  - Sometimes CALLED in LATIN - *adventus*. Greek word – *Parousia*
  - In the FIRST COMING – JESUS came for 2,000 years AGO.
  - The SECOND COMING is still FUTURE. We LIVE between the TWO ADVENTS.

The PURPOSE for EACH COMING is DIFFERENT.

HIS PRIMARY MISSION in the FIRST ADVENT was to SAVE the LOST.

- Luke 19:10 – [10] *For the Son of Man came to seek and to save the lost.*
- Luke 5:32 – [32] *I did not come to call the righteous but sinners to repentance.*
- To preach the GOSPEL. And ULTIMATELY to die SACRIFICIALLY. And rise from the DEAD.
- In His first coming – He did not come to JUDGE.
  - John 3:17 – [17] *For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him.*
  - John 8:15 – [15] *You judge according to the flesh; but I judge no one.*
  - John 12:47 – [47] *If anyone hears my words and does not keep them I do not judge him; for I did not come to judge the world but to save the world.*
  - JESUS came to the MANGER on a SALVATION MISSION. To SAVE SINNERS

The PRIMARY PURPOSE in the SECOND ADVENT is to COME to VANQUISH all of HIS ENEMIES and To ESTABLISH HIS ETERNAL KINGDOM. To REIGN. It's called the "Blessed Hope" for the BELIEVER.

- But it's ALSO JUDGMENT DAY for the UNBELIEVER.
- John 5:27, 28 – [27] *And he has given him authority to execute judgment, because he is the Son of Man. [28] Do not marvel at this, for an hour is coming when all who are in the tombs will hear his voice [29] and come out, those who have done good to the resurrection of life, and those who have done evil to the resurrection of judgment.*
- Matthew 25:31ff – [31] *When the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, then he will sit on his glorious throne [32] Before him will be gathered all the nations, and he will separate people one from the other as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats.*

JESUS CAME HERE in HIS FIRST COMING to SAVE SINNERS. NOT JUDGE THEM!