

Intro: There was a division between the Jews who believed in (or at least tolerated) Jesus, and those who did not. Nicodemus defends Jesus, and the unbelieving Pharisees dismiss Jesus as hailing from Galilee. We ended chapter 7 with everyone going into their own house - Jesus by contrast went into the Mount of Olives.

- 1 Jesus went unto the mount of Olives.**
- 2 And early in the morning he came again into the temple, and all the people came unto him; and he sat down, and taught them.**

I. THE WOMAN TAKEN IN ADULTERY V.3-11

- 3 And the scribes and Pharisees brought unto him a woman taken in adultery; and when they had set her in the midst,**
- 4 They say unto him, Master, this woman was taken in adultery, in the very act.**
- 5 Now Moses in the law commanded us, that such should be stoned: but what sayest thou?**

Lev. 20:10 - And the man that committeth adultery with another man's wife, even he that committeth adultery with his neighbour's wife, the adulterer and the adulteress shall surely be put to death.

Deut. 22:22 - If a man be found lying with a woman married to an husband, then they shall both of them die, both the man that lay with the woman, and the woman: so shalt thou put away evil from Israel.

If He says "Don't stone her." He would be condemned as one who rejected Moses' law.

If He says "Stone her." He would be condemned for attempting to usurp the authority of the Romans, for they had the power of life and death.

The Jewish religious authority, the Sanhedrin, would have never brought such a case before Jesus, as in their eyes, He had no authority to deliver a verdict and sentence on such a case. The only reason for this situation, was to destroy Jesus' reputation and credibility in one way or another.

- 6 This they said, tempting him, that they might have to accuse him. But Jesus stooped down, and with his finger wrote on the ground, as though he heard them not.**

"Tempt" πειράζω - (perirazo) "to submit one to a test", "to trap, or attempt to catch in a mistake", "to test for the purpose of making one sin"

"Writing on the ground" was probably not sand, but stone, as is expected in the Temple complex. There is probably nothing specific or special about *what* was written (as it was on stone). The last phrase is not in the originals.

Jesus is not giving them the attention they desire. He knows their motives.

- 7 So when they continued asking him, he lifted up himself, and said unto them, He that is without sin among you, let him first cast a stone at her.**

The crowd continued to press the matter upon Jesus. We should remember that numerous times, the Judean religious leadership attempted to condemn Jesus regarding His upholding (or breaking) of the Law.

This is incredible! Jesus never says that she isn't guilty, or not to stone her.

"In the punishment by death, one of the witnesses threw the culprit from the scaffold, and the other threw the first stone, or rolled down a stone to crush him. See Deuteronomy 17:6-7. This was in order that the witness might feel his responsibility in giving evidence, as he was also to be the executioner. Jesus therefore put them to the test. Without pronouncing on her case, he directed them, if any of them were innocent, to perform the office of executioner. This was said, evidently, well knowing their guilt, and well knowing that no one would dare to do it."
-Barnes' Notes

It is also interesting to note that the adulterous male is not here. How did they catch this woman "in the act?" Also, it seems a definite possibility that sexual sin is what is implied by Jesus' words "without sin."

- 8 And again he stooped down, and wrote on the ground.**
- 9 And they which heard it, being convicted by their own conscience, went out one by one, beginning at the eldest, even unto the last: and Jesus was left alone, and the woman standing in the midst.**

Here, each of the accusers is shown the wickedness of their own hearts by Jesus Himself. "Eldest...to the last" is

probably not a reference to age, but rather rank and position.

10 When Jesus had lifted up himself, and saw none but the woman, he said unto her, Woman, where are those thine accusers? hath no man condemned thee?

11 She said, No man, Lord. And Jesus said unto her, Neither do I condemn thee: go, and sin no more.

For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved.

-John 3:17

Jesus does not ignore her sin, he rather kindly rebukes her for it. He does not put Himself in the position of her Judge, Jury, and Executioner.

II. JESUS IS THE TRUE LIGHT V.12-30

12 Then spake Jesus again unto them, saying, I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life.

"In the center of the Temple court were four golden menorot, built on bases 50 cubits high... each had four branches terminating in huge cups into which oil was poured. The wicks were made from the worn garments of the priests. Throughout the night, the cups were kept full, & the lights of those menorot was so intense that it is said to have illuminated all of Jerusalem!" - From Mark's study on the Feast of Tabernacles

13 The Pharisees therefore said unto him, Thou bearest record of thyself; thy record is not true.

14 Jesus answered and said unto them, Though I bear record of myself, yet my record is true: for I know whence I came, and whither I go; but ye cannot tell whence I come, and whither I go.

We must remember that Jesus' authority is one of the central themes of John's Gospel.

15 Ye judge after the flesh; I judge no man.

16 And yet if I judge, my judgment is true: for I am not alone, but I and the Father that sent me.

17 It is also written in your law, that the testimony of two men is true.

18 I am one that bear witness of myself, and the Father that sent me beareth witness of me.

"Storr, Moulton, Godet. suggest "I by myself" - I alone, independently of the Father, judge no man. Meyer rejects all these attempts to add to the text, and maintains that our Lord is claiming the lofty position of Saviour rather than Judge. He came with that as his primary aim, purpose, intent; to heal, not to wound; to save, not to destroy; to give time for repentance, not to hurry sinners to their doom; to illumine, not to cover with darkness ...it does not rest on my mere human consciousness, on what you who judge after the flesh might suppose it would rest, but on the eternal decisions of him who gave me my commission. The Father is in me and with me. I think the Father's thoughts and do the Father's will. Christ's testimony concerning himself, his implicit judgments on human nature, his indirect condemnation of the whole crowd, by his gracious refusal to condemn the sinful woman to immediate doom, all issue forth with the sign manual of Almighty God, with whom and in whom he dwells as the only begotten Son..." - Pulpit Commentary on John 8:16

John 5:30-38 gives us some additional teaching along this same line.

19 Then said they unto him, Where is thy Father? Jesus answered, Ye neither know me, nor my Father: if ye had known me, ye should have known my Father also.

This comment by the Pharisees is almost assuredly in relation to false allegations that Jesus was an illegitimate child of a human father.

20 These words spake Jesus in the treasury, as he taught in the temple: and no man laid hands on him; for his hour was not yet come.

The fact that Jesus was speaking in (or near) the treasury shows that He knew the hearts and minds of the religious leadership who hated Him primarily because He was a threat to their power, position, and wealth.

21 Then said Jesus again unto them, I go my way, and ye shall seek me, and shall die in your sins: whither I go, ye cannot come.

Here, as He will in the second half of this chapter, Jesus focuses once again like a laser on the heart of the issue - sin.

22 Then said the Jews, Will he kill himself? because he saith, Whither I go, ye cannot come.

23 And he said unto them, Ye are from beneath; I am from above: ye are of this world; I am not of this world.

24 I said therefore unto you, that ye shall die in your sins: for if ye believe not that I am he, ye shall die in your sins.

Making "Aliyah" to Israel means "ascent." Whenever anyone goes to Jerusalem, even if it is from the north, they are always going "up to Jerusalem." This is due to two factors. Topographically, Jerusalem is on a hill. It is a higher elevation than all of the surrounding areas. It is also looked at as being higher spiritually, because it is where God put His name, it is the location of the holy Temple. It is the center of the Jewish world, and the seat of the Jewish religious authority. In contrast, Jesus hailed from Galilee - a place where second class peasants and fishermen dwelt with a mixed crowd of unclean "goyim."

Standing in the highest esteemed area of the Temple complex (the treasury), in the highest spiritual location (the Temple), speaking to the highest up on the spiritual ladder (the Judean religious authorities), Jesus, a Galilean, tells them that they are below Him, and that He is from above! Don't miss the context of this statement!

He then drives it farther by telling them that He is not from this world, as they are. If they don't believe that He is the *Messiah*, they will die in their sins!

25 Then said they unto him, Who art thou? And Jesus saith unto them, Even the same that I said unto you from the beginning.

26 I have many things to say and to judge of you: but he that sent me is true; and I speak to the world those things which I have heard of him.

27 They understood not that he spake to them of the Father.

This is the first honest question we hear from the religious leaders. Jesus answer however has mixed reception. We will find shortly that many "believe." This belief is not a saving faith. It is not a reception of Him as their Savior. It is a superficial, temporary acceptance of what Jesus has told them **thus far**.

28 Then said Jesus unto them, When ye have lifted up the Son of man, then shall ye know that I am he, and that I do nothing of myself; but as my Father hath taught me, I speak these things.

29 And he that sent me is with me: the Father hath not left me alone; for I do always those things that please him.

The "lifting up" of the Son of man is parallel to the gospel presentation given by Jesus to Nicodemus in John chapter 3. There were many after Jesus' death, burial, and resurrection who believed on Him as Messiah. The phrase "ye shall know" is pointing out to them not that they will necessarily accept Him, but that the proof will be there, and the evidence sufficient and complete.

Jesus only, always pleases His Father. Is this true of us?

30 As he spake these words, many believed on him.

As mentioned previously, these who "believed" were "professors" - NOT possessors. In a few verses this same crowd will be calling Jesus demon possessed. Verse 30 simply shows us their willingness to listen to Jesus' words **up to this point. IT IS THIER DENIAL OF SINFULNESS AND NEED OF A SAVIOR THAT IS THE PROBLEM.**