

Please open your Bible to the Gospel of John, Chapter Eight.

“Neither Do I Condemn You ...”

John 7:53

And everyone went to his own house.

John 8:1-11

But Jesus went to the Mount of Olives.

2 Now early in the morning He came again into the temple, and all the people came to Him; and He sat down and taught them.

3 Then the scribes and Pharisees brought to Him a woman caught in adultery. And when they had set her in the midst, 4 they said to Him, "Teacher, this woman was caught in adultery, in the very act. 5 Now Moses, in the law, commanded us that such should be stoned. But what do You say?" 6 This they said, testing Him, that they might have something of which to accuse Him. But Jesus stooped down and wrote on the ground with His finger, as though He did not hear.

7 So when they continued asking Him, He raised Himself up and said to them, "He who is without sin among you, let him throw a stone at her first." 8 And again He stooped down and wrote on the ground.

9 Then those who heard it, being convicted by their conscience, went out one by one, beginning with the oldest even to the last. And Jesus was left alone, and the woman standing in the midst.

10 When Jesus had raised Himself up and saw no one but the woman, He said to her, "Woman, where are those accusers of yours? Has no one condemned you?"

11 She said, "No one, Lord."

And Jesus said to her, "Neither do I condemn you; go and sin no more."

In John Chapter 7 Jesus fulfills the prophecy of Zechariah 14 as He comes to the temple in Jerusalem for the Feast of Tabernacles.

Zechariah 14:1-4 says that Messiah will come to the Mount of Olives in Jerusalem.

**Behold, the day of the LORD is coming,
And your spoil will be divided in your midst.
2 For I will gather all the nations to battle against Jerusalem;
The city shall be taken,
The houses rifled,
And the women ravished.
Half of the city shall go into captivity,
But the remnant of the people shall not be cut off from the city.**

**3 Then the LORD will go forth
And fight against those nations,
As He fights in the day of battle.
4 And in that day His feet will stand on the Mount of Olives,
Which faces Jerusalem on the east.
And the Mount of Olives shall be split in two,
From east to west,
Making a very large valley;
Half of the mountain shall move toward the north
And half of it toward the south.**

Most of the commentaries put the fulfillment of Zechariah 14 in some future millennial reign of Christ but it is my belief that all of Zechariah 14 is about the first coming of Christ and that John's Gospel makes the connection.

These scholars go astray when they fail to see the spiritual application of a prophecy and insist that nearly everything must be literal. The fulfillment of a prophecy does not require that every detail of a poetic description be seen. The point is that Jesus came to the Mount of Olives and the remnant is being called out.

Jesus is splitting the nation apart.

“Do you want to go away also?”

“Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life. Also we have come to believe and know that You are the Christ, the Son of the living God.”

Peter is one of the “remnant” and is separated from unbelieving Israel.

Unbelieving Israel is being divided from believing Israel, the remnant that is referred to in Zechariah and Isaiah and called up in Romans 11:5. A very large “valley” is being formed between the unbelievers and the remnant.

Is there any question that the crucifixion of Jesus is the fulfillment of Zechariah 13:1-2? We sing "There is a Fountain filled with Blood".

"In that day a fountain shall be opened for the house of David and for the inhabitants of Jerusalem, for sin and for uncleanness.

2 "It shall be in that day," says the LORD of hosts, "that I will cut off the names of the idols from the land, and they shall no longer be remembered. I will also cause the prophets and the unclean spirit to depart from the land.

In the same manner John shows that Jesus fulfills Zechariah 14:21:

Zechariah 14:21

In that day there shall no longer be a Canaanite [merchandiser] in the house of the LORD of hosts.

John 2:13-17

Now the Passover of the Jews was at hand, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem. 14 And He found in the temple those who sold oxen and sheep and doves, and the money changers [merchandiser] doing business. 15 When He had made a whip of cords, He drove them all out of the temple, with the sheep and the oxen, and poured out the changers' money and overturned the tables. 16 And He said to those who sold doves, "Take these things away! Do not make My Father's house a house of merchandise!" 17 Then His disciples remembered that it was written, "Zeal for Your house has eaten Me up."

The word Canaanite is "merchandiser."

So in John's Gospel we have three connections with the prophecy of the coming of Messiah in Zechariah:

Jesus casting out the merchandisers;
Jesus fulfilling the Feast of Tabernacles;
and Jesus coming to the Mount of Olives.

No one disputes that Zechariah 13 is about the "Fountain Filled with Blood"! John is giving us the commentary on Zechariah, along with other OT Scriptures.

In John Chapter 8 we have Christ, the Great Lawgiver from whom Moses received the Law and who is Himself the "end of the law for righteousness to all who believe."

The scene is the morning after the conclusion of the Feast of Tabernacles and the Lord is seated in the temple and is no doubt teaching about the law, the prophets, and the psalms.

The irony here is that the scribes and Pharisees, who put the law above everything else, plot to use the Law against the Lawgiver Himself!

And they bring in a woman who has been caught in the act of adultery and bring her before Jesus and invite Him to pass judgment upon her.

Some modern translations of the Bible question the authenticity of 7:53-8:11. It is my conviction that this section is part of the original text.

The originality of this passage cannot be proved either way. One theory is that it was in the original but was removed by those who thought it might excuse infidelity.

However, the passage fits the context of John and the theme of much of the OT on Israel's spiritual adultery.

Here is a woman [and don't forget that there was a man involved] in spiritual darkness that is forgiven of her sin and then Jesus preaches that He is the "Light of the world."

Israel habitually committed spiritual adultery as she worshipped her idols.

What better example than this woman to illustrate the principle of mercy over justice?

Try reading 7:52 and then skip over to 8:12, with this passage omitted, and it just doesn't make sense.

After their attempt to arrest Jesus failed the people go home but Jesus retires to the Mount of Olives. Then early the next morning He comes to the temple again, the people come to Him, and He sat down and taught them.

There are some strong lessons in the text.

A judgment is being enacted in which the accusers become the accused and the repentant sinner finds forgiveness and rest.

The sinful nation of Israel is hastening to its inevitable doom and is being judged in the temple treasury, which has become the courtroom of the woman.

How often has Israel in the OT been represented as the adulterous wife of Jehovah, giving herself to the idols of the heathen? These accusers are all involved in that adultery in rejecting the heavenly Bridegroom of Israel, whom they would soon condemn and crucify.

These hypocrites assume to right to speak in the name of Moses:

"Teacher, this woman was caught in adultery, in the very act. 5 Now Moses, in the law, commanded us that such should be stoned. But what do You say?"

This is a subtle attempt to draw Jesus into a confrontation with the law, but the Lord perceives their perversity and does not answer them.

Instead Jesus stooped down and wrote on the dust of the temple floor as though He did not hear them.

The lawyers persist in their badgering of Jesus until He raises His head and tells them to go ahead with the sentence of death. **But**, he who was without sin among them was to cast the first stone.

What Jesus says here are some of the most quoted words of the Bible.

"He who is without sin among you, let him throw a stone at her first."

If this saying were an invention of man and not from the Holy Spirit in the original it would be remarkable indeed. How often is this saying used to remind us that we are all sinners who need to be forgiven?

“See what this woman is!”

Yes, but what about you? What about me?

This is not an excuse for immoral conduct but it is a rebuke of judging another person’s sin while we conveniently excuse our own sin.

There is another feature of this story that most of the commentaries have missed. In fact, only Charles Alexander, to my knowledge, has opened any light on it.

From verse 2 it is clear that the ground upon which He wrote was none other than the floor of the temple. Jesus is teaching the people and this woman is cast in the midst and accused of adultery and Jesus is asked to judge her.

But Jesus stoops and writes something on the ground, not once but twice.

It is recorded in Holy Scripture that God wrote twice on Mount Sinai when He traced with His own finger on tables of stone.

Now here in John 8, with the same finger, He writes on the ground.

On each occasion He writes twice.

The punishment for adultery under the law was stoning, to be made a public example. That was one of Joseph's options when he first learned that Mary was with child. That is what "to make her a public example" means.

[Matthew 1:19]

The plot invented by the scribes and Pharisees was that Jesus could not say, "Let her go." Because He had said that He came to fulfill every jot and tittle of the law. [Matthew 5:17] The legalists of every age demand the letter of the law and forget mercy!

They had plotted that if He said, "Stone her." He would not be the "Friend of publicans and sinners." The one "Who came to seek and to save that which was lost." How can Justice and Mercy be reconciled?

The Lawgiver keeps the Law for His people and He is their Substitute.

The words of the lawyers are still in the ears of the people:

Now Moses, in the law, commanded us that such should be stoned.

But what do You say?

But Moses did not write the Law. It was the finger of God that wrote the Law of the Ten Commandments.

Of course all that Moses wrote was from God and was about Christ.

But Moses never commanded anything!

It was God who gave all the law and it is God who is writing on the floor of the temple!

But what did Jesus write on the ground?

Again, I credit Charles Alexander for this connection in John with the OT.

Jeremiah 17:12-13

**12 A glorious high throne from the beginning
Is the place of our sanctuary.
13 O LORD, the hope of Israel,
All who forsake You shall be ashamed.**

**"Those who depart from Me
Shall be written in the earth,
Because they have forsaken the LORD,
The fountain of living waters."**

John 8:9

Then those who heard it, being convicted by their conscience, went out one by one, beginning with the oldest even to the last. And Jesus was left alone, and the woman standing in the midst.

It would be impossible to miss the connection between Jeremiah's prophecy and this event in John 8.

But what did Jesus write on the ground?

Those who depart from Me shall be written in the earth.

I cannot prove this, but it is my conviction that one by one Jesus wrote a name and a sin, a name and a sin, a name and a sin, until every scribe and Pharisee standing there accusing this woman and trying to trap Jesus saw their name and a specific sin written on the ground.

Then those who heard it, being convicted by their conscience, went out one by one, beginning with the oldest even to the last. And Jesus was left alone, and the woman standing in the midst.

What else could convict their conscience but a specific sin?

It is not enough to pray, "Lord, forgive me of my shortcomings."
Pray, "Lord, forgive me of stretching the truth until it became a lie."

You can think of plenty of examples for yourself can't you?

"If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." [1 John 1:9]

But the saddest thing in this story is that the woman's accusers forsake the only hope for their soul and walk away. **Such is the power of sin.** To be convicted of sin and to know the remedy and then to harden your heart and turn away from the truth!

As sad as that part of the story is, it ends with good news.

Hypocrites demand justice!
A repentant sinner only wants mercy!

A sinner is saved. There is rejoicing in the presence of the angels in heaven as a sinner repents and comes to faith in Jesus!

10 When Jesus had raised Himself up and saw no one but the woman, He said to her, "Woman, where are those accusers of yours? Has no one condemned you?"

11 She said, "No one, Lord."

And Jesus said to her, "Neither do I condemn you; go and sin no more."

No one to condemn her, not even God!

This is not mercy at the expense of justice. Jesus is her Substitute. He will take her sin on Himself and suffer the righteous wrath of God. Her sins will be punished. All sin will be punished either in the Substitute or in the sinner and sin will only be punished one time! It would not be justice if God punished all sin in Christ and then in the sinner.

"Mercy and truth have met together; Righteousness and peace have kissed each other." [Psalm 85:10]

Those scribes and Pharisees who turned away needed a Substitute every bit as much as did this woman but they would not agree that they needed Jesus!

Later in this chapter Jesus will say:

John 8:23-24

23 And He said to them, "You are from beneath; I am from above. You are of this world; I am not of this world. 24 Therefore I said to you that you will die in your sins; for if you do not believe that I am He, you will die in your sins."

Has the Holy Spirit spoken to you? Do you want to hold on to your sin?

My sin is the only thing that I can claim as really mine.

Why would we want to keep our sin?

Why would you want to die in your sins?

Therefore I said to you that you will die in your sins; for if you do not believe that I am He, you will die in your sins.

Notice that Jesus did not say to her, "Go and sin no more and **then** I will forgive you." That is the formula of works. You do so and so and then God will save you. What is the order of grace?

"Neither do I condemn you; go and sin no more."

There is therefore now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus.
[Romans 8:1]

There can be no question of Christ's claim to be God.

Only God can forgive sin.

We must be quick to see how easy it is to accuse another while overlooking our own sin. How easy it is to see the speck in another person's eye while we cannot see the large piece of lumber in our own eye!

This is not to excuse sin but rather to make us more conscious of how sinful we all are.

The sin of spiritual adultery was the national sin of Israel.

And on the physical level, the Priests and rabbis in those days are said to have been particularly addicted to this sin of the flesh. This may shed some light on why the male partner to the woman's crime appears nowhere in this story although the woman was "caught in the very act."

If you want to learn about the spiritual adultery of Israel you should read Hosea and Ezekiel 23, in fact, most of the OT.

Jesus is the Lover of Souls.

Jesus is the only Savior. Do you need to have your sins forgiven?

Jesus is as ready to save you, as He was this woman. She alone was left before Jesus while the scribes and Pharisees turned and walked away.

The Gospel is preached and the Holy Spirit uses the foolishness of the message preached to convict sinners of sin and guilt. And when the Holy Spirit does that, the sinner is taught of God and they will come to Christ.

Then you come to Jesus in faith and repent and believe the Gospel.