



THE WOMAN CAUGHT IN ADULTERY

INTRODUCTION

They were caught in a trap. One was guilty and the other innocent. She was a sinful woman. He was a sinless Man. The woman stood breathless as her destiny lay in the balance. The Man, who was Jesus, was in complete control of all the circumstances. As usual, He was unmoved by the waves of emotions which had declared her guilty. Man's evil desires and schemes of deceit had brought them together. They had met by divine appointment.

The woman in our study remained nameless. A decision made by the writer of the Gospel, as the Holy Spirit directed him. Yet her story is entrenched in the pages of Scripture as a beautiful illustration of the compassion and tender mercies of Christ. As we study, we will look into just one episode in her life, the moment that she was accused of adultery and judged by a vicious jury. We'll contemplate the instant that she was forgiven, when she came face to face with the One whose name is above all names, the Most High Judge.

SCRIPTURE MEMORY VERSE

And Jesus said unto her, 'Neither do I condemn thee: go, and sin no more' (John 8:11b).

Name Given to the Woman in this Story

Woman taken in adultery

And the scribes and Pharisees brought unto Him a woman taken in adultery . . . (John 8:3).

SECTION 1 – The Compassionate Teacher

Jesus had spent the previous day teaching in the temple during the Feast of Tabernacles¹. The people of Israel were divided over Him because of His teachings. The Jewish leaders sought to entrap and arrest Him. Unable to take Him, they returned to their own homes to await another opportunity. Perhaps tomorrow . . .

READ John 8:1-12.

- 1. Jesus came early into the temple. Where did He come from (John 8:1, 2)? _____

LOOK DEEPER

Jesus frequented the Mount of Olives. WRITE out Luke 21:37, 38. _____

Throughout the Gospels we read of Jesus departing to a solitary place. What do the following Scriptures indicate He did?

Mark 1:35 _____

Mark 6:46 _____

Luke 5:16 _____

Luke 6:12 _____

¹ Feast of Tabernacles: religious celebration commemorating the years of wandering in the wilderness by the Israelites.

What was Christ's attitude toward prayer (Luke 18:1)? _____

2. Why did Jesus come to the temple early in the morning (John 8:2)? _____

LOOK DEEPER

We read that throughout His life Jesus went from town to town. What was He doing (Matthew 9:35, 36)?

What motivated Him? _____

What did Jesus teach His disciples (vv. 37, 38)? _____

READ Lamentations 3:22, 23. What does God say about His compassion? _____

PERSONAL

God is always full of compassion towards you. MEDITATE on Hebrews 4:15, 16. Take a few moments now to PRAY for those things that burden you. How are you to come before the Lord? Why?

SECTION 2 – The Wise Reprover

We saw our prayerful and compassionate Lord teaching in the temple, doing the will of the Father. As we move on in our study, events shift and there emerge those who desire to carry out a diabolical scheme.

RE-READ John 8:3-6.

1. Who was brought to Jesus in the temple (v. 3)? _____

What was her sin? _____ ²

What did they do with her? _____

Who were her accusers? _____ ^{3 4}

2. What was she doing right at the moment she was caught (v. 4)? _____

What title did the scribes and Pharisees use on Jesus? _____ ⁵

Where was the man caught in adultery with her? _____

PERSONAL

How have you been caught in the very act of sin? _____

How have you been accused in like manner? _____

Who is called the accuser of the brethren and how often does he accuse them (Revelation 12:9, 10)?

Satan, our accuser will ultimately be cast into the lake of fire (Revelation 20:10).

² adultery: sexual relations with someone other than one's spouse; breaking the marriage vows and covenant.

³ Scribes - Greek *grammateis* experts versed in the Law: a class of learned men who made the systematic study of the Law and its exposition their occupation.

⁴ Pharisees: closely organized Jewish religious group who pledged themselves to obey all facets of the religious traditions. They believed they alone could interpret God and His Word. They bitterly opposed Jesus and His teachings.

⁵ Master - Greek *didaskalos* instructor: Teacher.

3. According to the scribes and Pharisees, what does the Law of Moses say should happen to the woman (John 8:5)?

READ Leviticus 20:10. Who was to be put to death? _____

4. What was the ulterior motive for the scribes and Pharisees in bringing this woman to Jesus (John 8:6a)?

LOOK DEEPER

What did Jesus say really filled the hearts of these men (Matthew 23:25-28)? _____

What will they be unable to escape (v. 33)? _____

These religious leaders had ulterior motives for bringing her to Jesus. They were seeking to accuse Jesus of breaking the Law of Moses.

In Matthew 23:13-33, Jesus pronounces woes against them. What did Jesus call them and what did He say about them?

v. 13 *Woe unto you* _____

... for ye _____

v. 14 *Woe unto you* _____

... for ye _____

v. 15 *Woe unto you* _____

... for ye _____

v. 16 *Woe unto you* _____

... which say _____

v. 17 *Ye* _____

v. 23 *Woe unto you* _____
...for ye _____

5. In spite of the scene before Him, how did Jesus react to the situation (John 8:6b)? _____

It is not known what Jesus wrote. Could it have been the sins of each one of the accusers?

LOOK DEEPER

What is Jesus' attitude toward the sinner?

Luke 19:10 _____

II Peter 3:9 _____

PERSONAL

What should our attitude be toward the sinner? _____

Have you ever found yourself with an attitude like the scribes and Pharisees? _____

How did Jesus respond to your sin (Romans 5:8)? _____

SECTION 3 – The Righteous Advocate

RE-READ John 8:7-9.

1. Who did Jesus say would be permitted to cast the first stone at this woman (v. 7)? _____

2. Who is the only one that is without sin (Hebrews 4:15)? _____⁶

3. What did He continue to do (John 8:8)? _____

PERSONAL

THINK for a moment about your secret sins. MEDITATE on Psalm 103:8-12, John 3:16 and Romans 6:23. How has God dealt with your sin?

4. When the scribes and Pharisees heard all Jesus said, what happened to them? What did they do (John 8:9a)?

These men were convicted by their conscience. Jesus sent the Holy Spirit to convict the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment (John 16:8-11).

5. Who alone was left (v. 9b)? _____

In this mock trial this woman stood before Jesus, guilty as charged.

LOOK DEEPER

When we sin, what does Christ become to us (I John 2:1, 2)? _____

⁶ High Priest: the priesthood of Christ was established in the eternal decrees of God before the foundation of the world and has been exercised on behalf of God's elect (Psalm 110:4).

⁷ advocate: one who pleads the cause of another; a lawyer who intercedes on a person's behalf.

What does He become for our sins and the sins of the whole world? _____

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How does Jesus judge (John 5:30)? _____

In order to put a few things into perspective, RE-READ John 8:1-9 and LIST the different ways Jesus ministers to the believer and nonbeliever.

We all stand as guilty as this woman accused by Satan, in the midst of the world and the heavenly host. *For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God* (Romans 3:23). We stand forgiven by the blood of Jesus, which was shed for our sins at Calvary. *For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord* (Romans 6:23). We have a personal lawyer who intercedes to the Father on our behalf . . . *He ever liveth to make intercession for them* (Hebrews 7:25b).

Take a moment now to thank Him for who He is and what He has done for you.

SECTION 4 – The Forgiver of Sins

RE-READ John 8:10-12.

1. What did Jesus ask the woman (v. 10)? _____

2. What did she respond? What did she call Him (v. 11a)? _____

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3. Jesus directed two final statements to her. What were they (v. 11b)? _____

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⁸ propitiation - Hebrew *kippereth* and Greek *hilasterion* mercy seat: a covering for our sin. An atoning sacrifice that satisfies the wrath of God on behalf of all those who believe.

⁹ Lord - Greek *kurios* master: owner; one who has supreme power and authority.

¹⁰ condemn: to pass judgement on, to sentence.

Jesus did not pass sentence on her but told her to *go and sin no more*. In saying this, He told her adultery is sin. As she left He gave her the path to follow (John 8:11).

4. What did Jesus say of Himself and of those who follow Him (v. 12)? _____

PERSONAL

If you have sin in your life what must you do (I John 1:9)? _____

What is He faithful and just to do? _____

What is the promise and the conditions to be met (Romans 8:1a)? _____

Are you walking in a sin that is bringing darkness into your life? If so, RE-READ I John 1:9 and CONFESS that sin to God, then *go and sin no more*.

MEMORY VERSE

_____ (John 8:11b).

Through the study of the adulteress woman, we learn of the great compassion and forgiveness there is through the Lord Jesus Christ. All we need to do is ask, receive forgiveness in faith, and turn from our sinful ways.

Despite her sin, the adulteress woman was able to recognize Jesus as the Savior of the world and surrendered to His lordship over her life. Knowing the Scriptures, the scribes and Pharisees willfully chose to reject Christ even though the Scriptures clearly testify of Him.

NOTES: _____

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