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John 8 - Part I

Adultery

John 8:1-5: 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. 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 say you? Did the woman break the law? Yes she did, as she was taken in the very act. Why bring her to Jesus?

John 8:6a: 6. This they said, tempting him, that they might have to accuse him; as they were trying to trap Jesus, because no matter how he answered their question they would be able to accuse him. Had Jesus condemned the woman to death, the Pharisees would be able to accuse him to Pilate, as assuming the power of life and death, which the Romans had taken away from the Jews. Additionally, Roman laws did not condemn an adulteress to be put to death. If he said that she should not be put to death then the Pharisees could represented Jesus to the people as teaching contrary to the law.

John 8:6b-8: ...But Jesus stooped down, and with his finger wrote on the ground. (as though he heard them not). 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. 8. And again he stooped down, and wrote on the ground. Is anyone without sin?

Romans 3:10-11: 10. As it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one: 11. There is none that understands, there is none that seeks after God. We are seeking truth and fellowship with other believers because we have responded to the impressions that God has put into our hearts. God initiated it, not us.

Many believe that Jesus wrote on the ground the sins of the men who were accusing the woman. Until I learned that Jesus taught and acted out parables, I could not explain this. Compare these two verses concerning another incident: **Luke 11:20:** But if I with the finger of God cast out devils (demons), no doubt the kingdom of God is come upon you. **Matthew 12:28:** But if I cast out devils (demons) by the Spirit of God, then the kingdom of God is come unto you. From the parable of the sower earth/ground is the mind of a person. What is a demon? It is an unclean spirit (Luke 9:42). Luke used “finger” as a symbol for God’s spirit, which is a figure of God’s understanding, or His faith (cf John 20:25-29 Thomas’ faith was in his literal finger). Jesus was acting out a parable by writing on the ground (temple floor) with his finger, a metaphor of speaking to the conscience.

John 8:9-11: 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. 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. Jesus was not writing their sins, but delaying a response until the spirit of God could bring to each conscience a sin that they would not want exposed publically. They may have even thought that Jesus would expose them before the people. **Ecclesiastes 12:14:** For God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good or whether it be evil (cp Luke 12:2).

The spiritual Pharisee applies the letter of the law. This woman's sin of adultery was exposed publically, imagine her embarrassment. And Jesus said to her, after no one accused her anymore, *Neither do I condemn thee: go, and sin no more.* We all have committed spiritual adultery. You can read Israel's example in Jeremiah 3:6-8. However, there is a principle contained in this story that I had not seen before. The Lord has revealed this for a reason.

A spiritual Pharisee will use the law to condemn another, or expose their error. What did Jesus do? He showed the woman mercy. Both Israel and Judah has committed spiritual adultery against God. Here is what the Lord spoke through the prophet: **Hosea 6:6-7:** *6. For I desired mercy, and not sacrifice; and the knowledge of God (God's knowledge) more than burnt offerings. 7. But they like men have transgressed the covenant: there have they dealt treacherously against me.* God would have us show mercy rather than apply the letter of the law. The covenant that was transgressed consisted of two major components - obey the voice of God, keep the law (Exodus 19:5; Deuteronomy 30:10). If we obeyed the voice of God, we would love others as ourselves, and we would show mercy, and not apply the law according to our own understanding. God HAS TO BE in everything we do, or else we are only manifesting self.

Not one human being can condemn another for their sin, as we are all guilty before God. The Bible says *judge not, lest you be judged*, and another scripture says, *Moreover if thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone.* However, we cannot condemn another because of what they believe or what they do—even if we are right. The Pharisees were right about the woman's adultery, but they were wrong in the way they handled the situation by exposing her publically. When it comes to a specific fault by another, the person should be privately approached, in a prayerful and humble manner, and in the kindness and love for their soul. If they will not hear or what they are doing or believing is affecting others, then is it to be taken to the church. We are to speak and teach the truth, at the same time following the guidelines laid out in the Bible. If we choose to talk behind a person's back, that is malicious gossip, or a form of character assassination. However, a person doing this is also destroying their own soul. While the Pharisees did not literally kill the woman, they did kill her spiritually, by their way of thinking. This is what Paul meant, **Romans 2:23:** *You who boast in the law, do you dishonor God by breaking the law?* The spirit of the law is to show love.

One purpose of having *koinonia* (joint participation, partnership) is to bring out concerns and disagreements and discuss them in a calm manner. That way all can benefit, especially a person who has made a mistake. If we do not do this, then are we no better than those with a worldly way of thinking, and we will continue to wallow in our own pride and spiritual corruption.

Romans 13:8, 10: *8. Owe no man any thing, but to love one another: for he that loves another has fulfilled the law. 9. For this (reason), Thou shalt not commit adultery, Thou shalt not kill, Thou shalt not steal, Thou shalt not bear false witness, Thou shalt not covet; and if there be any other commandment, it is briefly comprehended in this saying, namely, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. 10. Love works no ill to his neighbor: therefore love is the fulfilling of the law. Amen.*