

## SCRIBES AND PHARISEES CARRY US TO JESUS

**John 8:1** *Jesus went unto the mount of Olives.*

**John 8:2** *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.*

**John 8:3** *And the scribes and Pharisees brought unto him a woman taken in adultery; and when they had set her in the midst,*

**John 8:4** *They say unto him, Master, this woman was taken in adultery, in the very act.*

Jesus went to the mount of Olives, a place laden with significant historical and spiritual meaning. It was where David walked in grief when he suffered for his sins and lost his throne to Absalom. It is also the site where the Lord prophesied the coming judgment upon Jerusalem and the destruction of the Temple and where He will return to judge the nations. The chapter thus begins with a foreboding sense of judgment. From there, Jesus went into the Temple to teach. Notice that initially, the scribes and Pharisees were absent—only “all the people” came to Him, as recorded by John. This absence suggests that they did not believe they had anything to learn from Him. Here lies the first lesson: the mount of Olives and the Temple symbolize judgment, and true believers seek the Temple so that the Lord may teach and judge their sins. When the Lord instructs and we repent, our hearts and consciences will no longer condemn us.

**1 John 3:19-21** *And hereby we know that we are of the truth, and shall assure our hearts before him. For if our heart condemn us, God is greater than our heart, and knoweth all things. Beloved, if our heart condemn us not, then have we confidence toward God.*

As the Lord taught, the scribes and Pharisees suddenly appeared, dragging a woman caught in adultery. This abrupt interruption was more than disrespectful; it was a grave sin, an attempt to redirect God’s sermon toward condemnation and judgment. Jesus came not to condemn but to save, yet the scribes and Pharisees sought to trap Him, compelling Him to pronounce a death sentence upon the woman. John notes, “they set her in the midst,” emphasizing the public shaming and humiliation intended for her. This tactic reflects how the world and the Devil aim to expose and shame. Why, we must ask, did they not also apprehend the man involved in the act? The Law of Moses they so fervently cited states, “And the man that committeth adultery with another man's wife, even he that committeth adultery with his neighbor’s wife, the adulterer and the adulteress shall surely be put to death” (Leviticus

20:10). How typical it is for blame to be placed on women; history echoes with examples of women bearing the brunt of accusations. Recall Adam's words: "The woman whom thou gavest to be with me, she gave me of the tree, and I did eat" (Genesis 3:12). However, God Himself became the ultimate scapegoat for humanity: "But the goat, on which the lot fell to be the scapegoat, shall be presented alive before the LORD" (Leviticus 16:10).

***John 8:5-7** Now Moses in the law commanded us, that such should be stoned: but what sayest thou? 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. 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."*

This chapter is often mistakenly labeled as the story of the woman caught in adultery. However, it is truly the story of the scribes and Pharisees who sought to accuse Jesus. They aimed to trap Him into showing mercy contrary to the Law of Moses, effectively condemning Him. We should not merely shake our heads at their audacity but recognize our capacity for similar treachery. Jeremiah 17:9-10 warns, "The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it? I the LORD search the heart, I try the reins." Note that Jesus only responded when they persisted. Initially seated, He stood up when challenged. How blessed is the day when the Lord rises to defend us!

***Revelation 12:10** Now is come salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of his Christ: for the accuser of our brethren is cast down."*

Jesus then assumed His role as the Judge. What did He write on the ground? We are not told, but perhaps He wrote the Law or revealed their sins. Whatever it was, by the time He looked up, they were gone, leaving only the woman. When God writes, accusers become the accused, and the guilty find forgiveness. Such is the power of the Lord's judgment. If the scribes and Pharisees had not brought the woman to Jesus, her fate might have been different. Their sins weighed so heavy on their consciences that the stone they wanted to throw became a mountain too heavy to bear. We, too, should pray that any accusations against us lead us to Jesus, for only in His presence do we find mercy. Jesus turned the tables and became our advocate.

***John 8:9-11** 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. 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? She said, No man, Lord. And Jesus said unto her, Neither do I condemn thee: go, and sin no more.*

At the end, the woman stood alone with the Lord. This signifies a moment we will all face when accusers depart, and we stand before Jesus. 2 Corinthians 5:10 (KJV) reminds us, “For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ.” When we sin, the best place to be is alone with Jesus. The mercy of God is profound, leading to true repentance. May the scribes and Pharisees take us to be with Jesus! May they accuse us continually in his presence for then he will arise, judge them, and forgive us. The woman, we must believe, sinned no more after this. Jesus saved her life. This is why we tell people to go to Jesus with their sins. If not, the scribes and Pharisees will find you and they show no mercy. What happened to all the other women they caught in adultery and took elsewhere? We shudder to think of the consequences. The goodness of God leads to repentance. Romans 2:4 (KJV) says, “Or despisest thou the riches of his goodness...not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance?”

This passage teaches us that condemnation comes easily from the world, but salvation comes solely from Jesus. Just as He forgave the woman and commanded her to sin no more, He offers each of us a path to repentance, forgiveness, and transformation. May we seek His presence, where we find both judgment and mercy, and may His goodness guide us to a life renewed and free from the bondage of sin.

Repent of your sins, be baptized in Jesus' name, and receive the Holy Spirit (Acts 2:38)!