

"Sin, Sinner, and Savior"  
The Gospel of John Chapter 8: 1-11

Scholars are divided as to whether the last verse of John chapter seven and the first eleven verses of chapter eight are authentic. They are not found in the oldest and best Greek manuscripts. However, the evidence that they constitute part of the word of God is strong.

- 1) The verses are found in over 900 later manuscripts.
- 2) Jesus as portrayed in this story is "in character" with His conduct with the woman in Luke 7:36-50 and the Samaritan woman in John 4:7-26. 3) The Jewish religious leaders are also "in character" in their attempt to entrap Jesus (Matt. 19:3-9, 22: 15-40).
- 4) Eusebius, in his *Ecclesiastical History III*, records a story by Papias, a disciple of John, about a woman accused before the Lord.
- 5) The Latin theologian and Bishop Augustine wrote that this story was removed because women could use it to excuse marital infidelity.

Early in the morning, Jesus begins to teach in the temple area. He was diligent to preach and be about His Father's business (Lk. 2:49). The scribes and Pharisees set a trap to catch Him and destroy Him.

The Law of Moses prescribed the death penalty for adultery, for both the man and the woman (Lev. 20:10; Deut. 22:22). They were not interested in fulfilling the Law, for where is the man? Jesus' accusers believe they have Him on the horns of a dilemma. Should He answer to put her to death, He would be in violation of Roman law which did not have a death penalty for adultery. Also, His reputation as the friend of sinners and publicans with the common people would be jeopardized (Lk. 7:36-50). If He says to let her go free, He would be accused of violating the Law and would incur trouble with the Jewish legalists.

There is a period of silence (Rev. 8: 1). We do not know what Jesus wrote. There is discourse in Jeremiah that may apply to these evil men (Jer. 17:9-13). Did Jesus write their secret sins (Ps. 90:8)? Under the Law, the witnesses had to begin the stoning of the guilty (Deut. 17:6-7).

Jesus now turns to the woman after all her accusers leave. He does not accuse her, for the Son of Man came not into the world to condemn the world, but to save it (Jhn. 3: 17 -18). He came to seek and to save the lost (Lk. 19:10). Her responsibility is to repent, and sin no more (Rom. 2:4, 12:1-2).