

The **NEW TESTAMENT** is all any Christian needs ?

For centuries many people have been told, “**The only Scripture you really ever need for salvation is the “NEW” Testament.** Figuratively speaking, this is the same as trying to build a house from the roof down. It sounds pretty foolish. *Because whether it is your theology or your house they both need to be built on a strong and firm foundation!*

Another good analogy could be given between a story in a novel and a story in the Bible. The way some people read or skim through a mystery novel, could serve as an appropriate example; in order to show how some of the numerous continuing errors concerning “**NEW**” **Testament** theology began.

Sometimes a reader gets impatient. They may just scan the pages for clues, to see if they can determine the end before the author reveals it. Most authors will give a number of clues along with the basic story line in the first few chapters. Then they throw in a lot of vital information and complex details in the middle. Finally, in a good book, the author brings all of those “**LOOSE**” ends together in the last chapters or two. Some readers who don’t care for “**MYSTERY’S**” get bored with all the details. Often they will skip over the beginning and the middle of the book (never mind if they miss the whole point of the story), and go right to the last chapter. Sadly, some people are arrogant enough to think they can determine the entire plot, from what they read in the last chapter. If the author is any good at all, these poor souls will usually arrive at a totally erroneous conclusion. Instead of outwitting the writer, they may well end up being “**Dead Wrong**” in their theoretical conclusion. These same individuals would probably make derogatory remarks about the book, regardless of how good it might have been. The fact that they never bothered to read the whole book, in the manner it was intended, couldn’t have any bearing on their assessment, now could it?

In John Chapter 8 verses 4 through 11 there is an illustration of how important understanding the “**foundation**” and “**background**” of the Law of Moses really is to have an accurate understanding of what is actually going on. It seems that nearly every sermon or commentary we have heard or read seem to come to different conclusions. As to what is transpiring in this particular part of the chapter, we have yet to find a New Testament theologian that addresses the most important principles of this story. These are only to be found in the Old Testament. Perhaps there is someone, somewhere who has figured it out, but at the moment (while this is being written) we haven’t stumbled across him or her.

John 8:4-11 (NASB)

(4) They said to Him, “Teacher, this woman has been caught in adultery, in the very act.”

(5) “Now in the Law Moses commanded us to stone such women; what then do You say?”

- (6) And they were saying this, **testing Him, in order that they might have grounds for accusing Him.**
- (7) But when they persisted in asking Him, He straightened up, and said to them. **“He who is without sin among you, let him be the first to throw a stone at her.”**
- (8) And again He stooped down, and wrote on the ground.
- (9) And when they heard it, they began to go out one by one, beginning with the older ones, and He was left alone, and the woman, where she had been, in the midst.
- (10) And straightening up, Jesus said to her, **“Woman, where are they? Did no one condemn you?”**
- (11) And she said, “No one, LORD.” And Jesus said, **“Neither do I condemn you; go your way. From now on sin no more.”**

Some study Bibles have footnoted these verses from John as *“Not found in most of the oldest manuscripts”*. Even so, if it is an accurate account, which seems logical, we must look at the passage in light of traditional Biblical Jewish Laws. Individuals, who are not familiar with The Mosaic Laws referred to in this scenario, would not know the **“legal”** procedure required to bring charges for a death penalty offence. If this had been a proper legal proceeding the following questions would have to have been addressed:

Did the accusers follow the Laws of God in the manner in which charges were brought against this woman?

Did the accusers claim that they personally caught this woman in the act or did they just have eye witnesses who would testify?

How many witnesses were needed to convict someone of a death penalty sin?

What was a judge required by God to do in a court under His Laws?

Did Jesus (Yeshua) qualify as a judge under the Law?

These questions would need answers before the reader could know for certain whether or not the Law had been broken or upheld by Jesus; when He said He did not condemn her. Many people adamantly (but ignorantly) proclaim that Jesus broke the Law of God by not having the woman stoned. If Jesus had, indeed, broken the Laws of God, He would have **“SINNED”!** And if He **“SINNED”**, then He would not have been a suitable **Sacrifice** for our **“Sins” on the cross!** If Jesus was not a suitable sacrifice for **“Sin”**, then where does that leave your hope for Redemption and Salvation?

So, perhaps we need to look a little closer at these passages. Verse six states that the accusers wanted to trap Jesus in order to have grounds for accusing Him. Is it possible, that they

tried to present the case in such a way that it would not matter whether Jesus agreed or disagreed with them, they would still have something to accuse Him for? If so, either way they would have had some legal grounds to accuse Him of breaking the Law; or so they thought. The reader can only know this if they are familiar not only with the Levitical Law, but also the Nature of God.

The Law required two or more eyewitnesses (one - was not enough) to testify in court before anyone could be put to death. Their testimonies must agree without any significant differences being found. In these verses we do not see any eyewitnesses being produced, only “**second hand**” testimony.

One other important fact for us to note is that the “**eye**” witnesses were required to be the initial executioners.

Deuteronomy 17:5-7

(5) then you shall bring out that man or that woman who has done this evil deed, to your gates, that is the man or the woman, and you shall stone them to death.

(6) “On the **EVIDENCE OF TWO OR THREE WITNESSES**, he who is to die shall be put to death; **he shall NOT BE PUT TO DEATH ON THE EVIDENCE OF ONE WITNESS.**”

(7) “**THE HAND OF THE WITNESSES SHALL BE FIRST AGAINST HIM TO PUT HIM TO DEATH**, and afterwards the hand of all the people. So you shall purge the evil from your midst.”

Is it possible the words written in the sand by Jesus pertained to the verses of the Law they were trying to use against Jesus? Were they trying to use verse 5 “**out of context**” in order to trick Jesus? It seems very probable that Jesus might have reminded these accusers of the scriptures that immediately followed the legal requirements of verses 5, 6 and 7.

Read carefully:

Deuteronomy 17:8-12

(8) “If a case is too difficult for you to decide, between one kind of homicide and another, between one kind of lawsuit or another, and between one kind of assault and another, being cases of dispute in your courts, then you shall arise and go up to the place which the LORD your God chooses.”

(9) “So you shall come to the Levitical priest or the Judge who is in office in those days, and you shall inquire of them, and they will declare to you the verdict in the case.”

(10) “And you shall do according to the terms

of the verdict which they declare to you from that place which the LORD chooses; and you shall be careful to observe according

TO ALL THAT THEY TEACH YOU.

(11) “According to the terms of the Law which they teach you, and according to the verdict which they tell you, and you shall do;

YOU SHALL NOT TURN ASIDE FROM THE WORD WHICH THEY DECLARE TO YOU, TO THE RIGHT OR THE LEFT.

(12) “And the **MAN WHO ACTS PRESUMPTUOUSLY BY NOT LISTENING TO THE PRIEST WHO STANDS THERE TO SERVE THE LORD YOUR GOD, NOR TO THE JUDGE,**

THAT MAN SHALL DIE:

THUS YOU SHALL PURGE THE EVIL FROM ISRAEL.

When Jesus asked for someone without sin in the matter to cast the first stone, He was asking for the **TWO OR MORE eyewitnesses** to come forth. Apparently there were none present (or at least not two or more). Realizing they had all violated the Law in the manner that they had brought the woman to Jesus (as a Judge), His decision was the only “**Legal**” one possible. Obviously He knew whether or not she had sinned, when He told her to go and sin no more. However, she could not legally be convicted or condemned to death. So the charges had to be dropped. This is confirmed in John 8:11 when Jesus said: “**Neither do I condemn you;...**”.

The more one studies all of the factors surrounding this event the more ridiculous it becomes for anyone to think that Jesus, the Messiah, broke the Laws of God in this case. When in truth He was actually keeping even the most minute details of God’s Law. This can be seen again, by checking the Concordance and/or Interlinear as to the use of the Greek word translated as “**stone**” in verse 7. He was actually upholding the Laws found in the Mishna (the oral Law) concerning “**death by stoning**”. The “**legal**” requirements or manner, in which the written Law was to be carried out, was given in the Mishna when it comes to many details not found in the written Laws. One of these details required the FIRST STONE to be a large boulder, too large for one person to lift by himself or herself; making it necessary to have at least two or three witnesses in order for the FIRST STONE to even be lifted off the ground. This large rock was to be dropped on or thrown at, whoever had been convicted of a death penalty sin.

The word for stone used in John 8:5 by the accusers when it says, “**Now the Law of Moses commanded us to Stone such women;**” is the Greek word λιθοβολείσθαι meaning “to be stoned”. Its root word is λιθοβολίω or “**lithoboleo**” meaning “**casting stone**” which is a stone that can be held in someone’s hand. These were the stones that could be thrown with only one hand. But in verse 7, when Jesus replied, “**He who is without sin among you, let him be the first to throw a stone at her.**” The word that Jesus uses for stone here is λίθον or “**lithos**” which means a “**millstone**” or “**large stone**” far too large to be held in only one hand. It is the same word used for the corner stone of The Temple, as well as the stone covering the entrance to the tomb of Jesus (Yeshua). This shows that Jesus was calling for the two or more witnesses to step up and pick up the large stone or boulder, which was required to be used for the FIRST

STONE. Today some might say it was sort of a *put-up* or *shut-up* statement, knowing that if only one person had caught her in the act of Adultery, there was **not** enough evidence for a **legal DEATH PENALTY CONVICTION**.

When a Judge even today in our court system determines that there is insufficient evidence for a conviction; the person charged with the crime must be released. Many times a **RIGHTEOUS JUDGE** will indicate to the individual that they are aware of their guilt, but because there is insufficient evidence, the Law requires their release. In such cases, frequently the Judge will warn the defendant not to break the Law in the future, because the next time they may not be so lucky!

This appears to be exactly what Jesus did in verse 11, when Jesus told her to, “... **go your way. From now on sin no more.**”!

With a clearer understanding of the Laws of God concerning evidence and conviction, it is easy to see that the accusers were attempting to “**FRAME**” Jesus (... in order that they might have grounds for accusing Him. - John 8:6). If He had authorized her stoning, in the manner they sought, they could have accused Him of an illegal trial and conviction! And if Jesus had told them not to stone her, they would accuse Him for failing to keep the Law of God! His reply however destroyed their entire plot by turning their own conspiracy back upon their own heads.

Only when the Law is used properly can its justice truly prevail; the statement in 1st Timothy, chapter one, verse eight, is just as true today, as it was then “**We know that the Law is good, if one uses it properly.**” (NIV)

This is only one of many examples in the New Testament that requires a more in-depth knowledge of the Old Testament (Tanach) for properly understanding the Biblical background of God’s Word. Genesis to Malachi envelops and directs the entire New Testament. Who knows how many hundreds of other such examples there are in the New Testament? Most will absolutely require an in-depth foundational knowledge of the Old Testament (Tanach)? This is in order for the reader to accurately understand what was truly going on throughout the text of the New Testament! There is no way that Christians, or anyone else, can correctly understand and follow what was being said and done in the New Testament. Without **FIRST** knowing, understanding and applying the Old Testament (Tanach) as a reference source, or filter, it is necessary to clearly view the events that unfold within the pages of the New Testament! **SECONDARILY**, any additional pertinent Historical and Religious information and documentation, will give further enhancement to everyone’s Biblical understanding.

The preceding example hopefully has shown the rewards that come from understanding and accurately comprehending the original theology and the original intent of the New Testament. All of which is predicated on **FIRST** having, knowing and understanding the Old Testament (Tanach)!