

A TALK by B. COBBEY CRISLER

BOOK OF JOHN, A Walk with the Beloved Disciple

(from Transcription Notes with earlier permission by Janet Crisler)

Shall we search and look?

Remember the statement is made to Nicodemus by the Biblical authorities of the day that there is nothing that would lead one to believe that Galilee had anything to do with the Messiah, or the promised "anointed one."

Isaiah 9:1. Notice the fourth word from the end of the first verse. There's "Galilee." So what? We have to read more in context.

Isaiah 9:2 is very familiar especially to those who listen to Handel's music and his oratorio *The Messiah*. "The people that walked in darkness have seen a great light."

Notice in Isaiah 9:6, "Unto us a child is born, a son is given."

In Isaiah 9:7, "the throne of David is mentioned," an obvious portion of Scripture that the Jews had associated with the coming king, or anointed one.

There, right there, in Isaiah 9:1 is *Galilee*, and the specific tribal territories of Zebulon and Naphtali. One included Nazareth, the other included Capernaum. In following their invitation to "search and look," we might just have come up with Bethlehem mentioned in Micah, but also the possibility of Galilee.

JOHN 8: 1-11 ... "Go, and sin no more!"

Chapter 8 all the way up through Verse 11 was not originally located where we find it today in the original gospel of John. While some early manuscripts place it at the end of the manuscript, the earliest manuscripts that we have do not have the first eleven verses of Chapter 8, at least in its present location. However, that does not lead scholars to pronounce that this is not necessarily an authentic account of something that occurred. As a matter of fact, they feel it does bear the stamp of the kind of Johannine writings that one gets familiar with in visiting with the beloved disciple in the Scriptures.

John 8:2, "Jesus is right in the temple area."

John 8:3. Suddenly here is "a woman taken in adultery." One should at least

ask the question, where is the husband who would usually make the charge, and where is the fellow she was with? How come only the woman is here?

The event takes place in the area of the temple. If the stones suddenly started flying, both Jesus and the woman were there. Who did they really care about eliminating?

John 8:5. They face him with a rabbinical question. *"Moses said that this lady should be stoned. What do you say?"* This may have been prompted because so many of the people were saying, "Here is the prophet like Moses." So, here is what Moses said, what do you say? If he says something contrary to Moses, then they could go back and say, "See, he's not the prophet. He's disagreeing with Moses." It's the thin edge of a wedge to separate Jesus from prophecy in the minds of the people.

John 8:6. While they're all saying this, Jesus has disappeared from view, which would actually happen to those in the rear rows if they've encircled. You have to look around. Where did he go? He just disappeared. He's writing on the ground. A record about as evanescent as the material in which he's writing. Is that the permanent record of womanhood? It's a dust record. A dust record that can be dominated by the first foot that walks over it and decides to change it or trample it.

John 8:7, *"They keep asking him,"* because he's doing nothing but writing on the ground. This is a brilliant way to control a mob. It's a method that was successful. He has kept the mob from being an unthinking gang. He's kept them all as individuals because they're saying, "What's he doing? What's he doing?"

"So they continue asking." He says, *"He that is 'anamartetos', that is, above error, who never erred or who cannot err or sinned among you, let him first throw a stone."* He hasn't objected to Moses' sentence. He hasn't set himself apart. He simply returned the sentence to everyone's individual conscience and let it be

established in the mental courtrooms of those present. You can't have a mob scene when conscience is at work individually. That's what destroys a mob.

John 8:8, "*Again he stoops down, and writes on the ground,*" giving them a chance for it to work. It's an impersonal treatment of the situation to all concerned. No condemnation. No anything.

John 8:9. What happened? "*They filtered out and they began at the eldest.*" This is a significant start. The custom in the Sanhedrin, at least according to later records, was that after a decision of any major import was made, the youngest left first. The honor was for the eldest to be the last one you saw.

Not in this case. The eldest were the first you saw leaving. This is not surprising when you think that since they had been around longer, they likely had accumulated more sin. So, the eldest left first. "*The woman is left standing in the midst.*"

John 8:10. What is Jesus going to do? Is he for permissiveness? "*He said, Woman,*" again, "womanhood", "*Where are your accusers? No man hath condemned you?*"

John 8:11, "*I'm not in that business either. But,*" and you can imagine the authority that went behind this, "*go, and sin no more.*" Terminate that link to the flesh.

John 3:6, "*That which is born of the flesh is flesh; but that which is born of the Spirit is spirit.*"

In John 8:23, "*Jesus says, Ye are from beneath; I am from above*" He knows where he came from and where he is going. How many people could you stop at random on a street today, ask them that question, and get a straight answer? Where are you going and where did you come from? Those are basic questions.

James Reston wrote in *The New York Times* in his "*View of the Washington*