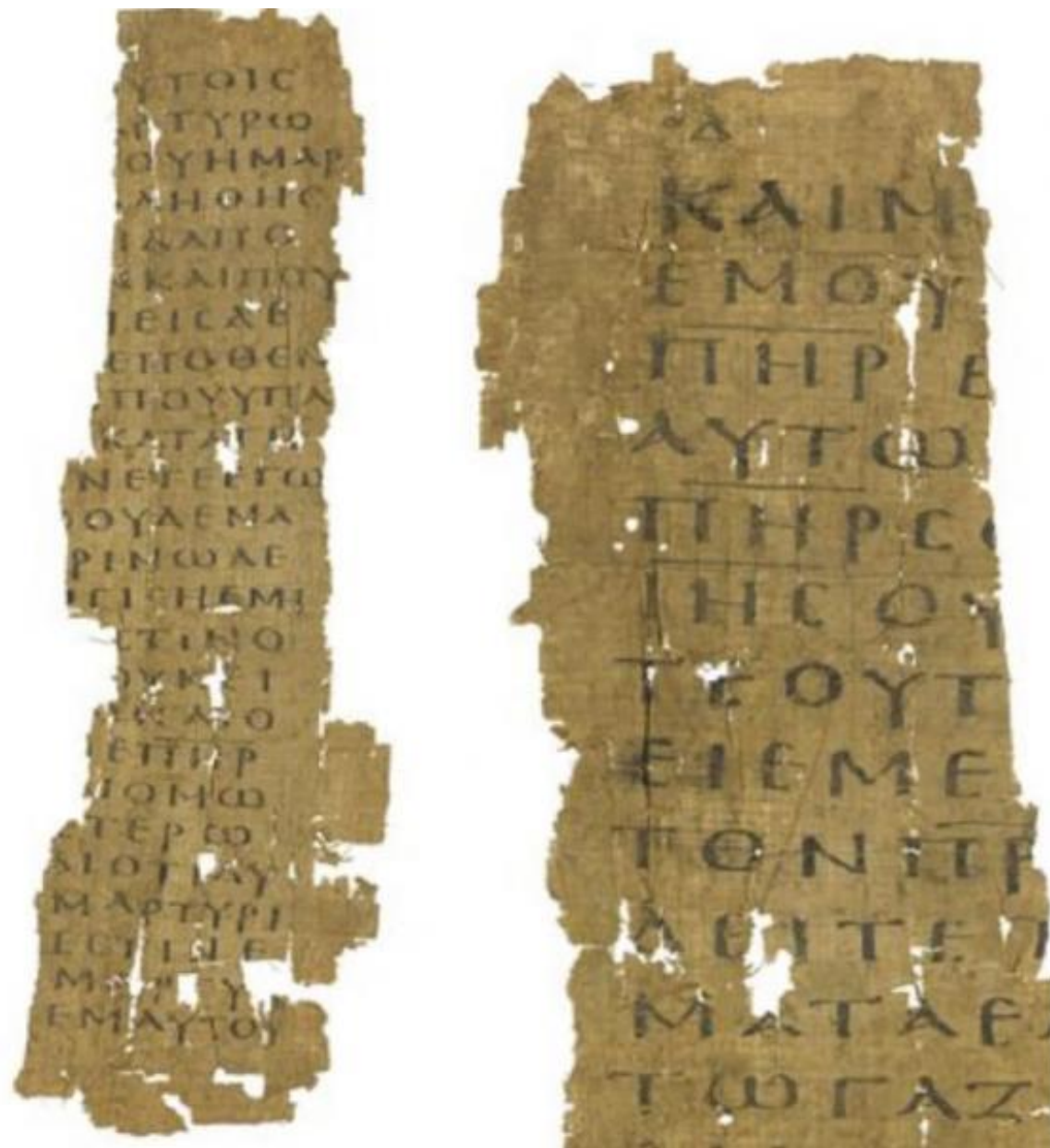


Gospel of John



Lecture 5 – Chs 8-9

John 7:53-8:11 – Jesus and the woman caught in adultery

- Earliest manuscripts do not have this passage. Of the few that do, some place it elsewhere, for example, after Luke 21:38.
- “Mount of Olives” – East of Jerusalem rising to about 2,700 ft., some 200 ft. higher than Mt. Zion.
- “Woman” – Not a harsh response, but acceptable in terms of the culture. See other usage in 19:26.
- This story is a great example of what happens when religion becomes ‘weaponized.’
- It calls into question the motivation of the religious leaders.

Lecture 5 – Chs 8-9

John 7:53-8:11 – Jesus and the woman caught in adultery

- The religious leaders appeal to the Law of Moses. What does it actually say? (Lev. 20:10; 24:14; Deut 13:9; 17:6-7; 19:15; 22:22-24)
 - She was either engaged or married.
 - Accusations of adultery needed at least 2 witnesses.
 - Where's the man??
 - The witnesses are the first to throw stones.

Lecture 5 – Chs 8-9

John 7:53-8:11 – Jesus and the woman caught in adultery

- They must have thought they had Jesus in a no-win scenario. They left Jesus with only two apparent options.
 - If Jesus sides with the Law, He will be discredited as well as initiate a riot.
 - If Jesus sides with the woman, He will be discredited as a law-breaker who defies Moses.
- We can only guess what Jesus wrote but consider...
 - Jesus must have responded to their interpretation of the Law.
 - In Exodus 31:19, the first set of tablets was inscribed by the finger of God.

Lecture 5 – Chs 8-9

John 7:53-8:11 – Jesus and the woman caught in adultery

- If we are to look at the Mishnah, and if this is done on a Sabbath, then writing was considered work on a Sabbath.
- One exception was writing in dust/sand was okay, because it left no lasting mark - the wind could easily erase it.
- A long standing interpretation is the quoting of Jeremiah 17:13.

O LORD, the hope of Israel,
all who turn away from you will be disgraced.
They will be buried in the dust of the earth,
for they have abandoned the LORD, the fountain of living water.

Lecture 5 – Chs 8-9

John 7:53-8:11 – Jesus and the woman caught in adultery

- In that culture, everyone would have looked to the older leaders to see how they would respond to Jesus' challenge and therefore would be the ones everyone would take their cue from.
- In verses 10-11 Jesus addresses the woman for the first time.
- He doesn't even ask her if she is guilty – only if there are others to condemn her.
- Her sin is presupposed by Jesus' final words of "Go now and leave your life of sin".
- A reminder of Jesus' right to forgive sin.

Lecture 5 – Chs 8-9

John 8:12-30 – The validity of Jesus' testimony

- The backdrop of 8:12 is the lighting of the candelabra in the Court of Women, and is the likely setting to the proclamation by Jesus that he is the Light of the world (8:12).
- It sets up a conflict between two alternatives, those in the light who come to Jesus and those who remain in darkness.
- “Light” – Next “I Am” statement. An expansion of the light motif introduced in the prologue. Parallel’s John’s “God is Light” of 1 John 1:5. Links the statement to “believe” in verse 24 and to “lifted up” in verse 28 (see 6:35; Exodus 3:14). It also serves as a metaphor for eternal life.

Lecture 5 – Chs 8-9

John 8:12-30 – The validity of Jesus' testimony

- The backdrop of 8:12 is the lighting of the candelabra in the Court of Women, and is the likely setting to the proclamation by Jesus that he is the Light of the world (8:12).
- It sets up a conflict between two alternatives, those in the light who come to Jesus and those who remain in darkness.
- “Light” – Next “I Am” statement. An expansion of the light motif introduced in the prologue. Parallel’s John’s “God is Light” of 1 John 1:5. Links the statement to “believe” in verse 24 and to “lifted up” in verse 28 (see 6:35; Exodus 3:14). It also serves as a metaphor for eternal life.

Lecture 5 – Chs 8-9

John 8:12-30 – The validity of Jesus' testimony

- This sets up the contrast in chapter 9 between the man born blind, who receives both physical and spiritual sight, and the Pharisees (9:13, 15, 16) who have physical sight but remain in spiritual darkness.
- “World” – One of John’s contrasts, i.e., “the world above from the world below.” One of the ways that John demonstrates the divine pre-existence of Jesus. Used some 78 times in John’s Gospel.
- Jesus is speaking openly in the Temple where the offerings are placed and close to the hall of the Sanhedrin, yet John stresses no one “arrested Jesus, because His time had not yet come.”

Lecture 5 – Chs 8-9

John 8:12-30 – The validity of Jesus' testimony

- Jesus has offered both living water (7:38) and the light of life (8:12), which stresses the sin that is central in John's Gospel – the sin of unbelief in Jesus.
- To refuse Jesus, is to refuse life itself.

Gospel of John



Relationship to Old
Testament

Contemporary
Application

Lecture 5 – Chs 8-9

John 8:31-41 – Children of Abraham

- “Believed” – The following words appear to demonstrate that their faith was not real (see vs. 33, 37). Others view this as Jesus addressing believers first but then the audience shifts in verse 33.
- Carson outlines this further - the "many" of verse 30 become "the Jews who believed in him" in 31, then slaves to sin in 34, indifferent to Jesus' word in 37, children of the devil in 44, liars in 55 and guilty of mob tactics and attempted murder in 59 (pg. 346).
- Jesus here introduces two important terms, "abide" (Greek: *meinete* -- continue, remain, abide) and "word" (Greek: *logo*).

Lecture 5 – Chs 8-9

John 8:31-41 – Children of Abraham

- “Truth” – Closely connected with Jesus (vs. 36) – truth that leads to salvation.
 - Truth in John’s Gospel is either the teachings of Jesus or Jesus Himself.
 - This is beyond intellectual and abstract, but personal.
 - It also is rooted in the concept of freedom, which becomes part of the argumentation in this passage.
- “Never been slaves to anyone” – a startling statement and clearly a lie in light of Israel’s history and its present condition.

Lecture 5 – Chs 8-9

John 8:31-41 – Children of Abraham

- “Free” – freedom from sin, not ignorance (vs. 36).
- Freedom does not reside in being descendants of Abraham, but in the Son whom the Father has sent.
- “Illegitimate” – Likely a form of slander aimed at Jesus.
- The paternity of the Jewish authorities lies in someone other than God.
- Note the misunderstandings at verses 19, 22, 25, 33, etc.

Lecture 5 – Chs 8-9

John 8:42-47 – Children of the Devil

- “Father” – A term used beyond simple genealogy. Jesus discounts any notion of a universal fatherhood of God. Underlying this is the concept of obedience. Our actions demonstrate to whom we claim as our father. This can also be seen in the words of Jesus in verse 47 that links “hearing” to obedience.
- “Can any of you prove me guilty of sin?” – A demonstration of Jesus’ sinlessness and clear conscience. The religious leaders were adept at keeping the precepts of the Law to the letter. They would have loved to exploit even the tiniest sin against Jesus. This would have been a bold challenge and is instructive to see that the Jews never answer the question.

Lecture 5 – Chs 8-9

John 8:48-59 – The claims of Jesus about Himself

- “Samaritan... demon possessed” – packed with cultural innuendo. (Other charges of being demon possessed appear in 7:20; and 10:20). The Jews despised the Samaritans because they were a mixed race. Perhaps in the context of the discussion of being descendants of Abraham the Jews were trying to accuse Jesus of an impure bloodline. Perhaps by calling Jesus a Samaritan is to accuse him of being heretical or of being insane.
- “My word” – The entire scope of Jesus’ message.

Lecture 5 – Chs 8-9

John 8:48-59 – The claims of Jesus about Himself

- “Greater than Abraham” – Reintroduces the “Father” argument from previous verses. Underlying this section is the “faith” of Abraham who looked forward and “saw” the Messianic day arrive versus the spiritual blindness of the Jews.
- “I Am” – Probably the most pronounced of the “I Am” statements in terms of a clear declaration of His eternality and oneness with the Father (a direct reference to Exodus 3:14).
- “Stone him” – Clearly seen as blasphemy by the Jews with stoning being the penalty (Lev 24:16).
- Also demonstrates they understood Jesus’ words as claims to deity.

Gospel of John

Relationship to Old
Testament

Contemporary
Application

Lecture 5 – Chs 8-9

John 9:1-12 – Jesus heals a man born blind

- Giving sight to the blind was something predicted of the Messiah, therefore this story has at its core, the fulfillment of Messianic expectations (see Isaiah 29:18; 35:5; 42:7; cf. Luke 4:18-19).
- “Who sinned...” – Another incident where the teaching of the rabbis affected the understanding of sin. They held that even babies could sin in the womb and that others suffered due to the sins of their parents. Jesus’ answer contradicts those beliefs as they pertain to this particular case.
- “I am the light of the world” – The blind man serves as an opportunity for Jesus to demonstrate the scope of His mission: to bring physical light to a blind man just as He brings spiritual light to the world.

Lecture 5 – Chs 8-9

John 9:1-12 – Jesus heals a man born blind

- “Spit... ground” – Some commentators argue that “spit” was believed to have medicinal quality and that this is actually a folk remedy. But in some respects, this mimics the creation story in that this is a creative healing not a restorative one. Jesus “created” sight from nothing, because this man never had sight to begin with.
- “Siloam” – Rock-cut pool that served as part of the water system developed by King Hezekiah (Nehemiah 3:15; Isa 8:6).
- Jesus' instructions to go wash in the pool may also allude to the story of Naaman and Elisha found in 2 Kings 5:9-14.
- The early church associated this healing with baptism.

Lecture 5 – Chs 8-9

John 9:13-34 – The Pharisees investigate the healing

- Verses 16-17 demonstrate the underlying dilemma the Jesus created for the Pharisees. Jesus was challenging long held conventions that were proving problematic for them.
- There is a progression in the story. The blind man progresses from thinking that Jesus was just a man (vs. 11), to a prophet (vs. 17), to someone having disciples (vs. 27), to someone who was from God (vs. 33), and lastly, someone to be worshipped (38).
- “He is of age...” – Passage demonstrates the parents fear at getting involved.

Lecture 5 – Chs 8-9

John 9:13-34 – The Pharisees investigate the healing

- “Put out of the Synagogue... Threw him out” – Commentators are divided if this was a form of excommunication though not clearly known how it was practiced in NT times. The Synagogue was the center of Jewish life and to be cut off from it had serious religious, social, and possibly financial consequences.
- For the Pharisees, the fact that this was a long standing condition made it unsuitable for healing on the Sabbath. Jesus, in their minds, could have waited a day.
- The Pharisees interrogate the man, and unsatisfied with his response, go to the parents who respond cautiously.

Lecture 5 – Chs 8-9

John 9:13-34 – The Pharisees investigate the healing

- The blind man refuses to be drawn into opinions about that which he does not know, and states with conviction that which he does know – that he was blind, and now he sees!
- The word ‘know’ is repeatedly used in the story which heightens the irony – the contrast between seeing and knowing.

Lecture 5 – Chs 8-9

John 9:35-41 – Spiritual blindness

- The crux of the chapter. Jesus does not impose belief or unbelief on either the blind man or the authorities. Neither does Jesus rob the Pharisees of their sight, but their blindness is due to their refusal to see.
- The principle of judgment runs throughout John's Gospel and here is raised again. This particular healing serves to demonstrate those who were really blind as opposed to who thought they were spiritually okay.
- They portrayed the blind man as a sinner, their evidence being his blindness. Now Jesus portrays them as sinners, the evidence being their refusal to see Jesus.

Gospel of John



Relationship to Old
Testament

Contemporary
Application