

I remembered a situation that was similar to the time that the Great Teacher was presented with the woman who was caught in adultery. I remember the great embarrassment for the woman, and in fact, for all of the group there. The man, it was interesting to note, was not brought to the gathering of self-appointed judges. He never made an appearance nor was he even mentioned. Likely it was felt that it would be easy to condemn the man, who might have taken advantage of the woman.

This was all a plot to trap Jesus and make him look bad in the eyes of His followers. He defused that situation in a way that made the accusers look bad instead. He simply asked that those without sin cast the first stone.

The difference in the other situation was the woman was the wife of a man who had committed adultery. Nonetheless, she was “caught” in a similar manner by the leaders of her congregation, and was brought into a similar circle of condemnation.

This woman’s husband had said he was sorry, in private and even in public, and the religious leaders of the community all stood behind him. They had even taken him in hand to encourage him; they began to groom him for leadership. After all, he did say that he was sorry! That was enough for them. They did not (or would not) recognize what lay behind all of the whitewash [ref].

But the woman was condemned in their eyes because she did not accept her husband back into the life that he had ruined (for adultery was just one manifestation of his unfaithfulness). And so she disengaged herself from the congregation until those leaders had been replaced. Fortunately, there were a few members who realized who the real victim was, and knew that the stones that had been cast at her had definitely been thrown in the wrong direction.