

Research: [Luke 22:1, 2 \(to ;\), 54–62](#)

Peter's Denial

1 Now the feast of unleavened bread drew nigh, which is called the Passover.

“Now the feast of unleavened bread drew nigh,.... Which lasted seven days; during which the Jews eat their bread without leaven, in commemoration of the haste in which they went out of Egypt; being such, that they had not time to leaven their dough, but took it with their kneading troughs along with them, as it was; and as figurative of the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth, with which the Gospel feast is to be kept; see Exodus 12:34.

Which is called the passover; because the Lord passed over the houses of the Israelites, when he slew all the firstborn in Egypt; now the time of this feast drew near, when the conspiracy was formed against the life of Christ: Matthew and Mark are more precise, and suggest, that it was two days before the passover” (Gill's Exposition).

2 And the chief priests and scribes sought how they might kill him;

“And the chief priests and scribes sought how they might kill him; for they feared the people. The determination, long maturing, had, during the last few days of public teaching, been come to on the part of the Sanhedrin. They had determined to put the dangerous public Teacher to death. The bitter hatred on the part of the Jewish rulers had been gradually growing in intensity during the two years and a half of the public ministry of Jesus of Nazareth. The raising of Lazarus seems to have finally decided the governing body with as little delay as possible to compass the Reformer's death. The temporary withdrawal of the Lord after the great miracle deferred their purpose for a season; after, however, a retirement for a few weeks, Jesus appeared again, shortly before the Passover, and taught publicly in the temple, at a season when Jerusalem was crowded with pilgrims arriving for the great feast. Never had his teaching excited such interest, never had it stirred up such burning opposition as at this juncture. This decided the Jewish rulers to carry out their design on the life of the Galilaeen Teacher with as little delay as possible.” (Pulpit Commentary).

54 Then took they him, and led him, and brought him into the high priest's house. And Peter followed afar off.

“*Then took they him*] Rather, seizing Him.

“*and led him*] with His hands bound, probably behind His back, [John 18:12](#).

“*into the high priest's house*] The actual High Priest was Joseph Caiaphas (another form of Kephias), son-in-law of Annas (see on [Luke 3:2](#)). The trial of our Lord by the Jews was in three phases—(1) before Annas ([John 18:12-18](#)); (2) before Caiaphas (here and [Matthew 26:59-68](#); [Mark 14:55-65](#)); (3) before the entire Sanhedrin at dawn ([Luke 22:66](#); [Matthew 27:1](#); [Mark 15:1](#)).” (Cambridge Bible).

55 And when they had kindled a fire in the midst of the hall, and were set down together, Peter sat down among them.

“ We know that the arrest in Gethsemane was followed by the flight of the eleven apostles. John and Peter, however, once out of reach of the armed band, seem in some way to have recovered from their first panic, and to have followed their Master and his guards into the city. Arrived at the high priest's house, John, who was known to the high priest, had no difficulty in procuring admission for himself and his companion. Peter's motive in pressing into what he knew for him was a locality full of peril, is given by St. Matthew ([Matthew 26:58](#)), "to see the end."

There was no doubt there was in the heart of the impulsive, loving man, sorrowful anxiety and deep sorrow for his dear Master's fate. But, alas! with the feverish sad expectation to see what he felt would be the end, there was no earnest prayer for guidance and help. The fire is mentioned because, generally speaking, the nights in the Holy Land about the Passover season are warm. The cold on this night appears to be spoken of as something unusual. **Peter sat down among them.** "St. John (it must be supposed) had passed on into the audience-chamber, so that St. Peter was alone. St. John, who remained closest to the Lord, was unmolested; St. Peter, who mingled with the indifferent crowd, fell" (Westcott). Luke 22:55” (Pulpit Commentary).

“*they had kindled a fire*] The spring nights at Jerusalem, which is 2610 feet above the level of the sea, are often cold.

in the midst of the hall] Rather, **of the court**.

sat down among them] i.e. among the servants of the High Priest— sat in the middle (*mesos*) of a group composed of the very men who had just been engaged more or less directly in the arrest of His Lord.

It was like the impetuosity of his character, but most unwise for one of his temperament. St John says (John 18:18) that ‘he stood,’ and perhaps we have here a touch of restlessness.”
(Cambridge Bible).

56But a certain maid beheld him as he sat by the fire, and earnestly looked upon him, and said, This man was also with him.

“*a certain maid*] Apparently the portress (John 18:17) who had been meanwhile relieved, and who, after a fixed gaze, recognized Peter as the man whom she had admitted. She therefore exclaimed, “This fellow *too* (as well as John) was with Him.” (Cambridge Bible).

57And he denied him, saying, Woman, I know him not.

“And he denied him, saying, woman, I know him not. Startled at the maid's positive assertion, and knowing not how to clear himself any other way, roundly, and at once, denied that Jesus was his master; or that he was a disciple of his; or that he knew any thing of him, or had any acquaintance with him: and thus he that had said he would die with him, rather than deny him, is frighten at a servant maid, and denies him upon the first attack upon him.” (Gill’s Exposition)

58And after a little while another saw him, and said, Thou art also of them. And Peter said, Man, I am not.

“...thou art also of them; of the disciples of Jesus of Nazareth; thou belongest to that company; thou art certainly one of his followers; and Peter said, man, I am not. This was after he had been out into the porch, and had mused upon it, and was come in again, but had not courage enough to withstand the temptation, and especially now, being attacked by a man; and so a second time denies that Christ was his master, or that he was a disciple of his.” ((Gill’s Exposition.)

59And about the space of one hour after another confidently affirmed, saying, Of a truth this fellow also was with him: for he is a Galilæan.

“For he is a Galilaean. The strong provincial dialect of the fisherman of the Lake of Galilee at once told these Jerusalem Jews, accustomed to the peculiar pronunciation of the Galilee pilgrims at the Passover Feast, that the man whom they suspected certainly came from the same province as Jesus the Accused” (Pulpit Commentary).

60And Peter said, Man, I know not what thou sayest. And immediately, while he yet spake, the cock crew.

“And Peter said, man, I know not what thou sayest,... Suggesting, that he was so far from being a follower of Jesus, or a disciple of his, and from having any personal acquaintance with him, that he did not know what he was talking of, or at least could not understand what he meant by this harangue, or by talking after this manner about him; and then began to curse and swear, and wish the most dreadful things to befall him, if he knew any thing of Jesus of Nazareth: and immediately while he yet spake: in this shocking manner, with his mouth full of oaths, curses, and imprecations:

the cock crew; the second time, [Mark 14:72](#).” (Gill’s Exposition.

61And the Lord turned, and looked upon Peter. And Peter remembered the word of the Lord, how he had said unto him, Before the cock crow, thou shalt deny me thrice.

“**And the Lord turned, and looked upon Peter.**—The glance which was thus the turning point of Peter’s life, is mentioned only by St. Luke. As he was sitting in the porch, our Lord must have looked on the disciple as He was being led from Annas to the more public trial before the Sanhedrin.” (Ellicott’s Commentary).

“**And the Lord turned, and looked upon Peter.** As he was passing from the interrogation before Caiaphas to be examined before the Sanhedrin assembled in solemn council, he heard his servant's well-known voice raised and accompanied with oaths and curses, assuring the by-standers he had no connection with and knew nothing of Jesus of Nazareth. Then, as he passed, the Master turned and looked on his old friend, that disciple who so lately had declared that even if all

others deserted the Lord, he never would! The glance of Jesus was full of the tenderest pity; it was not angry, only sorrowful; but it recalled Peter to his better, nobler self.” (Pulpit Commentary).

62And Peter went out, and wept bitterly.

“*and wept*] Not only *edakruse*, ‘shed tears,’ but *eklause*, ‘wept aloud;’ and, as St Mark says ([Mark 14:72](#)), *eklaie*, ‘he *continued* weeping.’ It was more than a mere burst of tears.

bitterly] St Mark says *epibalon*, which *may* mean, ‘when he thought thereon,’ or ‘flinging his mantle over his head.’” (Cambridge Bible).