

Luke 22:54-71: Biblical Reading and Reflections

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[0 : 0 0] Luke chapter 22 verses 54 to 71. Then they seized him and led him away, bringing him into the high priest's house, and Peter was following at a distance.

And when they had kindled a fire in the middle of the courtyard, and sat down together, Peter sat down among them. Then a servant girl, seeing him as he sat in the light, and looking closely at him, said, This man also was with him. But he denied it, saying, Woman, I do not know him.

And a little later someone else saw him, and said, You also are one of them. But Peter said, Man, I am not. And after an interval of about an hour, still another insisted, saying, Certainly this man also was with him, for he too is a Galilean.

But Peter said, Man, I do not know what you are talking about. And immediately, while he was still speaking, the rooster crowed. And the Lord turned, and looked at Peter.

And Peter remembered the saying of the Lord. How he had said to him, Before the rooster crows today, you will deny me three times. And he went out, and wept bitterly. Now the men who were holding Jesus in custody were mocking him as they beat him.

[1 : 0 9] They also blindfolded him, and kept asking him, Prophecy! Who is it that struck you? And they said many other things against him, blaspheming him. When day came, the assembly of the elders of the people gathered together, both chief priests and scribes.

And they led him away to their council, and they said, If you are the Christ, tell us. But he said to them, If I tell you, you will not believe. And if I ask you, you will not answer.

But from now on the Son of Man shall be seated at the right hand of the power of God. So they all said, Are you the Son of God then? And he said to them, You say that I am.

Then they said, What further testimony do we need? We have heard it ourselves from his own lips. Luke chapter 22 ends with Peter's denial and Jesus' trial. Peter's testing and denial is paralleled with and contrasts with Jesus' trial.

This isn't as pronounced in Luke as it is in some of the other Gospels, but it is still present. Both of the two are questioned, and one is faithful and the other unfaithful. And in the story of Peter's testing, there is a gradual escalation.

[2 : 1 8] First, he is challenged by one of the servant girls when he is sitting at the fire in the courtyard and she sees him in its light. She says that he was with Christ, but he denies it. Later, he is accused again, someone claiming that he was one of the followers of Jesus.

Finally, he is accused one more time by someone claiming that, as a Galilean, he was with Jesus. Note the way Jesus is seen as an outsider from the north. He is a Galilean prophet come down to Jerusalem.

He is an outsider. Peter denies it even more forcefully still, and he is tempted by the desire to fit in around the fire to avoid ostracization for the name of Jesus. We can face similar temptations to dissociate ourselves from Christ and his people in order to fit in around the fires of our society, not to be left out in the cold.

The cock then crows, and Jesus turns and looks at Peter, a detail recorded in this Gospel, but not others. Peter then remembers Jesus' saying, Jesus' prophecy concerning Peter is fulfilled at the very time that Jesus is marked and beaten as a false prophet.

Jesus has also prophetically predicted that he would be marked and insulted in such a manner in chapter 18 verses 32-33. Perhaps we could see some sort of parallel between Jesus and Samson.

[4 : 0 6] Samson is blinded, his eyes are removed, and the Philistines make mockery of him. Here Jesus has a blindfold put over him, and he's marked. However, just as Samson's greatest victory was won in the hour of his death, so Jesus' greatest victory will be won under similar circumstances.

