

Episode #2-20 – John 18 Part 3 - The Denials of Peter

I. The purpose of the gospel of John is to produce believers in the fact that Jesus is the Christ, the One anointed by God to be the Savior of the world, and that Jesus is the Son of God, God represented in human form.

II. We have come to the section of John that deals with the Lord's arrest and trials leading up to His death on the cross. In this section, we consider the denials of Peter as his bold claim that he would be willing to die rather than deny the Lord is proven false.

III. John 18:17-18. Peter's first denial.

A. V.17. This girl who is the porter clearly knows that John is one of His disciples, and she now accuses Peter of the same thing. "This Man," the phrase she uses, is disrespectful. Peter denies his discipleship. Compare to John, who boldly entered the high priest's house when he was known to be a disciple!

B. V.18. The crowd that arrested Him have mostly gone home, but these have remained here to see it through. Israel gets down to 40°F at night. John has moved on. It is not good to warm yourself at the enemy's fire, as Peter did!

IV. John 18:19-24. The Lord's trial before Annas.

A. V.19. Annas was the past high priest, but here called high priest, like when we refer to "President Reagan" even after his death. The disciples were not arrested with the Lord at His command, so they could not be questioned with Him. Annas wants to draw something bad out of Him by questioning.

B. V.20. He spoke openly to the "*kosmos*." His doctrine was not one of secret conspiracies. Annas did not need to ask this, since His teaching was known.

C. V.21. They could have asked His audience. Of course, Annas did not want the real answer. He just wanted to trap Him.

D. V.22. The officer acts like this was disrespectful. It was illegal to strike a prisoner while questioning him. Nothing about this trial was proper or legal.

E. V.23. Note: the Lord still acts like He is in charge. These men will stand before Him someday to answer for their actions here. Some have condemned Him for not "turning the other cheek," as He earlier commanded. That was a command for His disciples as they served Him. We must rightly divide the Scriptures!

F. V.24. Not "had" sent. His initial questioning was before Annas. The next trial was before Caiaphas and the Sanhedrin, not recorded in John, but in the other gospels.

V. John 18:25-27. Peter's second and third denials.

A. V.25. This questioning of Peter was led by a servant girl, as we find out from the other gospels. (See my website knowinggodintheword.org for a bonus audio explaining how Peter's denials in the various gospels fit together.) His brave words earlier are long forgotten now. Peter was not as strong as he thought he was!

B. V.26. Peter is now in the firelight. In the garden, he had been in torchlight. Since he was not in broad daylight, this meant he was hard to recognize.

C. V.27. Peter denies it, and the rooster crows. The Lord's words are fulfilled.

VI. John 18:28-40. The Lord's trial before Pilate.

A. V.28. Early=between 11:00 PM and midnight (their days started at sunset.) Things have moved fast! The Passover was sacrificed in the evening, but could be eaten any time before sunrise. A lamb was a lot of meat, and expensive. They probably planned

to make a second meal out of it before sunrise. If they were defiled, however, they couldn't be cleansed until the following evening, so the lamb would go to waste.

VII. Conclusion: When Peter claimed he was ready to die rather than abandon the Lord, he meant what he said. But Peter never imagined what actually took place! When the time came, he denied the Lord, just as the Lord predicted he would. Let us be careful that we do not rely on our own strength and devotion to follow the Lord, but remember that He is the One Who maintains us by His power. We need His strength and endurance in order to follow Him and believe.