

Matthew 26:31-46. Angst amid the glory.  
After singing Psalm 118, and while in the Mount of Olives Jesus the Christ warned them not to get too high and mighty. He told them—tonight is the night when all of you will fall away because of Me. Remember the words of the prophet Zechariah—

*I will strike the shepherd, and  
the flock will be scattered...*

But, after I have risen, I will meet you in Galilee for I will go ahead of you there.

Peter was not happy; he was insulted. Even if all they fall away because of you, not me! I'm the true believer, the faithful dude, the apostle's apostle.

Jesus was not impressed. Amen, Peter—this night, this very night, you will betray Me, disown Me, deny Me—three times—before the rooster crows in the morning. Three times.

Peter was even less happy—Even if I have to die with You, I will never desert, nor disown You. Like little choir members, the remainder of the group said likewise—we'll never leave You Yeshua.

They proceeded to the oil press (Gethsemane) where He told them to sit while He went to pray. Taking James, John & Peter with Him, sorrow and trouble showed. He confessed to the three...

*I am overwhelmed with sorrow, to the  
point of death—stay here and pray with  
Me, please.*

Moving farther away, He fell with His face to the ground—*Father, if it's possible, please let this obligation pass. Yet, not as I want, but as You want.*

## MATTHEW 26:31-46

Then Jesus told them, "This very night you will all fall away on account of me, for it is written:

" 'I will strike the shepherd, and the sheep of the flock will be scattered.' [Zechariah 13:7]

32But after I have risen, I will go ahead of you into Galilee."

33Peter replied, "Even if all fall away on account of you, I never will."

34"I tell you the truth," Jesus answered, "this very night, before the rooster crows, you will disown me three times."

35But Peter declared, "Even if I have to die with you, I will never disown you." And all the other disciples said the same.

36Then Jesus went with his disciples to a place called Gethsemane, and he said to them, "Sit here while I go over there and pray." 37He took Peter and the two sons of Zebedee along with him, and he began to be sorrowful and troubled. 38Then he said to them, "My soul is overwhelmed with sorrow to the point of death. Stay here and keep watch with me."

39Going a little farther, he fell with his face to the ground and prayed, "My Father, if it is possible, may this cup be taken from me. Yet not as I will, but as you will."

40Then he returned to his disciples and found them sleeping. "Could you men not keep watch with me for one hour?" he asked Peter. 41"Watch and pray so that you will not fall into temptation. The spirit is willing, but the body is weak."

42He went away a second time and prayed, "My Father, if it is not possible for this cup to be taken away unless I drink it, may your will be done."

43When he came back, he again found them sleeping, because their eyes were heavy. 44So he left them and went away once more and prayed the third time, saying the same thing.

45Then he returned to the disciples and said to them, "Are you still sleeping and resting? Look, the hour is near, and the Son of Man is betrayed into the hands of sinners.

46Rise, let us go! Here comes my betrayer!"

Returning to the three, He found them sleeping—Couldn't you men keep watch with Me, for one hour?, He asked Peter. Watch. Pray. Otherwise, you will fall into temptation. Remember, the spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak.

Returning to pray to the Father a second hour, He again evoked His submission—*My Father, if it is not possible for this cup to be taken away, unless I drink it, may Your will be done.*

When He came back after this second time, again He found them sleeping—their eyes were very heavy. So, He left them once more, again praying to the Father for relief, but acknowledging His submission. Finally returning, He returned to the sleeping disciples—*Are you still sleeping, still resting? Listen up, it's now time. The Son of Man is betrayed into the hands of sinners! Let's go—here comes the betrayer.*

- Q Why did Jesus the Christ tell them *in advance* that all of them would “fall away” because of Him?
  - Q Where were they supposed to go after the Christ was killed and resurrected? Why? What was the significance of this call to travel to Galilee?
  - Q Why did Peter disagree with the Creator of the universe about “falling away?”
  - Q Why did the Christ warn Peter *in advance* that Peter would disown Him, and three times no less? Why the rooster's crow?
  - Q Who else made this same pledge never to leave the Christ, and even die for Him?
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- Q Where did Jesus go to pray? Why? Why there? With whom did He go to pray? Why them?
  - Q When He returned the first time and found them sleeping, what was His warning? What about our flesh/our body makes our spirit weak?
  - Q Describe how Jesus the Christ prayed to His Father, Father God. So what?
  - Q What was His prayer to the Father each time? Why that prayer? What demonstrated the full humanity of Jesus the Christ? What demonstrated the full divinity of Jesus the Christ?
  - Q Why did Jesus stay to be captured rather than escaping the betrayer who was coming? He had escaped capture before (Luke 4:24-30)<sup>7</sup>; why not now?
  - Q Why is more useful to sleep than pray, than watch, than do what we've asked to do by the Lord God?

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<sup>7</sup>“I tell you the truth,” He [the Christ] continued, “no prophet is accepted in his hometown. <sup>25</sup>I assure you that there were many widows in Israel in Elijah's time, when the sky was shut for three and a half years and there was a severe famine throughout the land. <sup>26</sup>Yet Elijah was not sent to any of them, but to a widow in Zarephath in the region of Sidon. <sup>27</sup>And there were many in Israel with leprosy in the time of Elisha the prophet, yet not one of them was cleansed—only Naaman the Syrian.”

<sup>28</sup>All the people in the synagogue were furious when they heard this. <sup>29</sup>They got up, drove him out of the town [Nazareth], and took him to the brow of the hill on which the town was built, in order to throw him down the cliff. <sup>30</sup>But he walked right through the crowd and went on his way. Luke 4:24-30

- 26:30** *hymn.* The Passover fellowship was concluded with the second half of the Hallel Psalms (Ps 115-118).
- 26:31** *all fall away.* Not Peter only, but all the eleven (Judas had previously withdrawn, John 13:30). The meaning of the words "fall away" is seen in Peter's denial (vv. 69-75) and in the terrified flight of the other disciples (v. 56).
- 26:34** *before the rooster crows.* The reference may be to the third of the Roman watches into which the night was divided (see note on 14:25; see also Mk 13:35). Or, it may simply refer to early morning when the rooster crows.
- 26:36** *Gethsemane.* The name means "oil press," a place for squeezing the oil from olives (one of Jesus' favorite places; see Lk 22:39; Jn 18:2).
- 26:37** *Peter and the two sons of Zebedee.* The latter were James and John. These three disciples seem to have been especially close to Jesus. Among the foremost apostles (see Paul's comment in Galatians 2:9). Along with John's brother, James, they had been especially close to Jesus (Mk 9:2; Acts 13:3; Acts 14:33; Luke 22:8). Arrested together (Acts 4:3), they were also together in Samaria (Acts 8:14).
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- 26:47** *a large crowd armed with swords and clubs.* See note on Mk 14:43. *chief priests and the elders.* See notes on v. 3 and 24.
- 26:48** *the one I kiss.* See note on Lk 22:47.
- 26:49** *Rabbi.* Hebrew word for "(my) teacher."
- 26:51** *one of Jesus' companions.* Peter (see Jn 18:10). *servant of the high priest.* Malchus (see Jn 18:10).
- 26:53** *legions.* A Roman legion had 6,000 soldiers.
- 26:54** *Scriptures be fulfilled.* In view of v. 56 probably a reference to Zec 13:7.
- 26:57-27:26** For a summary of the two stages (religious and civil) of the trial of Jesus see note on Mk 14:53-15:15.
- 26:59** *Sanhedrin.* See note on Mk 14:55.
- 26:61** *I am able to destroy the temple of God.* Evidently an intentional distortion of Jesus' words (Jn 2:19).
- 26:63** *I charge you under oath.* Jesus refused to answer the question of v. 62 (see v. 63a). But when the high priest used this form, he was legally obliged to reply.
- 26:65** *tore his clothes.* Ordinarily the high priest was forbidden by law to do this (Lev 10:6; 21:10), but this was considered a highly unusual circumstance. The high priest interpreted Jesus' answer in v. 64 as blasphemy (see note on Mk 14:64).
- 26:67-68** Mark reports that they blindfolded Jesus (Mk 14:65), which explains the mocking command: "Prophecy . . . Who hit you?"
- 26:73** *your accent gives you away.* Peter had a decidedly Galilean accent that was conspicuous in Jerusalem.

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<sup>8</sup>Adapted, corrected, and revised by D. Thomas Porter from Compton's Interactive NIV © 1996.