

John 18:15

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And Simon Peter followed Jesus, and so did another disciple: that disciple was known unto the high priest, and went in with Jesus into the palace of the high priest.

Analysis

"And Simon Peter followed Jesus, and so did another disciple" (Ἔκολούθει δὲ τῷ Ἰησοῦ Σίμων Πέτρος καὶ ἄλλος μαθητής/Ἐκολουθεῖ de tō Iēsou Simōn Petros kai allos mathētēs)—the verb ἀκολουθέω (akoloutheō, "followed") is the standard term for discipleship. Despite fleeing (Matthew 26:56), Peter and another disciple rally and follow at a distance, attempting to see Jesus's fate. The imperfect tense ἤκολούθει (ēkolouthei) indicates continuous action—they kept following despite danger.

"That disciple was known unto the high priest" (ό μαθητὴς ἐκεῖνος ἦν γνωστὸς τῷ ἀρχιερεῖ/ho mathētēs ekeinos ēn gnōstos tō archierei)—this unnamed disciple (almost certainly John himself, given the Gospel's pattern of self-reference) had prior acquaintance with the high priestly household. The adjective γνωστός (gnōstos) means "known, acquainted with"—suggesting personal connections, possibly family or business ties. Some traditions suggest John's family supplied fish to the priestly household.

"And went in with Jesus into the palace of the high priest" (καὶ συνεισῆλθεν τῷ Ἰησοῦ εἰς τὴν αὐλὴν τοῦ ἀρχιεερέως/kai syneisēlthen tō Iēsou eis tēn aulēn tou archiereōs)—the compound verb συνεισέρχομαι (syneiserchomai, "enter together with") shows John gained entry immediately with Jesus. John's access allowed him to witness events Peter initially could not—providing eyewitness testimony for his Gospel.

Historical Context

High priestly residences in Jerusalem were substantial compounds with courtyards where servants and guards gathered. Only those with known connections or official business gained entry, especially during nighttime proceedings. John's acquaintance with the high priest (whether through family, business, or other connections) gave him privileged access that would prove crucial for Gospel testimony. The other disciples had scattered (Matthew 26:56), but Peter and John—the two often paired throughout the Gospels—remained close enough to follow. This showed genuine courage despite the danger, yet it also set the stage for Peter's denial.

Related Passages

Romans 1:17 — The righteous shall live by faith

Hebrews 11:1 — Definition of faith

1 John 4:8 — God is love

1 Corinthians 13:4 — Characteristics of love

Study Questions

1. What does Peter and John's decision to follow Jesus despite danger teach about courageous discipleship?
2. How did God's providence position John with connections to the high priest's household to serve as eyewitness?
3. What is the difference between following Jesus 'at a distance' versus intimate discipleship?

Interlinear Text

Ἐκολούθει δὲ τῷ Ἰησοῦ Σίμων Πέτρος καὶ ὁ
followed And G3588 Jesus Simon Peter and G3588
G190 G1161 G2424 G4613 G4074 G2532

ἄλλος μαθητὴς ὁ δὲ μαθητὴς ἐκεῖνος ἦν
so did another disciple G3588 And disciple that was
G243 G3101 G1161 G3101 G1565 G2258

γνωστὸς τῷ ἀρχιερέως καὶ συνεισῆλθεν τῷ Ἰησοῦ εἰς
known G3588 of the high priest and went in with G3588 Jesus into
G1110 G749 G2532 G4897 G2424 G1519

τὴν αὐλὴν τοῦ ἀρχιερέως
G3588 the palace G3588 of the high priest
G833 G749

Additional Cross-References

Mark 14:54 (References Peter): And Peter followed him afar off, even into the palace of the high priest: and he sat with the servants, and warmed himself at the fire.

Luke 22:54 (References Peter): Then took they him, and led him, and brought him into the high priest's house. And Peter followed afar off.

From KJV Study • kjvstudy.org