

Luke 22:54

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

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

Analysis

Then took they him, and led him, and brought him into the high priest's house. And Peter followed afar off. The arrest proceeds as Jesus predicted, and Peter's response begins his downfall. The phrase *sullabontes auton ἐγάγον* (συλλαβόντες αὐτὸν ἤγαγον, 'seizing him, they led') shows Jesus offering no resistance—He is led like the lamb to slaughter (Isaiah 53:7). The destination is the high priest's house, likely Caiaphas' residence where preliminary interrogation occurred before the formal Sanhedrin trial at dawn (v. 66). John 18:13 notes they took Him first to Annas, Caiaphas' father-in-law and former high priest who retained power.

Peter's response is tragic: *ho de Petros ἐκολουθει makrothen* (ο δὲ Πέτρος ἤκολούθει μακρόθεν, 'but Peter followed from afar'). Earlier he boldly declared readiness to go to prison and death (v. 33); now he follows *makrothen* (μακρόθεν, 'from a distance'). Physical distance reflects spiritual distance. The verb *akoloutheō* (ἀκολουθέω, 'follow') describes discipleship throughout the Gospels—to 'follow Jesus' means identification and commitment. Following 'afar off' is oxymoronic—partial discipleship that leads to complete denial.

Historical Context

The high priest's house was in the upper city of Jerusalem, an aristocratic area. Its courtyard configuration allowed Peter to enter and warm himself while Jesus was interrogated inside. Archaeological evidence suggests these wealthy homes had

central courtyards with surrounding rooms. The preliminary hearing at Annas' house was illegal under Jewish law, which prohibited nighttime trials. The religious leaders violated multiple legal procedures: nighttime trial, lack of proper witnesses, requiring self-incrimination, all on a feast day.

Related Passages

James 2:17 — Faith and works

Romans 1:17 — The righteous shall live by faith

Study Questions

1. What does Peter's following 'afar off' reveal about the danger of partial commitment?
2. How does Jesus' willing submission contrast with Peter's fearful distance?
3. What circumstances make you follow Jesus 'from afar' rather than closely?

Interlinear Text

Συλλαβόντες δὲ αὐτὸν ἤγαγον καὶ εἰσήγαγον αὐτὸν
took they And him and led him and brought him
G4815 G1161 G846 G71 G2532 G1521 G846

εἰς τὸν οἶκον τοῦ ἀρχιερέως· ὁ δὲ Πέτρος
into house the high priest's Peter
G3588 G3624 G3588 G749 G3588 G1161 G4074

ἠκολούθει μακρόθεν
followed afar off
G190 G3113