

Luke 22:55

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And when they had kindled a fire in the midst of the hall, and were set down together, Peter sat down among them.

Analysis

And when they had kindled a fire in the midst of the hall, and were set down together, Peter sat down among them. The scene sets Peter's denial. The phrase *periapsantōn pyr en mesō tēs aulēs kai synkathisantōn* (περιαψάντων πῦρ ἐν μέσῳ τῆς αὐλῆς καὶ συγκαθισάντων, 'having kindled fire in middle of courtyard and sitting together') describes a cold night—Passover was in early spring (March/April) when Jerusalem temperatures drop. The fire provided light and warmth, but for Peter it became a spotlight of shame. *Ekathēto ho Petros mesos autōn* (ἐκάθητο ὁ Πέτρος μέσος αὐτῶν, 'Peter sat in their midst') shows him surrounded by Jesus' enemies—servants, guards, arrest party members.

Peter's position is perilous. He wanted to know Jesus' fate but feared identification with Him. So he infiltrates enemy territory, sitting *mesos* (μέσος, 'in the midst')—surrounded, trapped. This physical encirclement mirrors spiritual entrapment. Rather than standing outside the door or leaving, Peter tries to blend in—the posture of compromise. The fire's light will expose him (v. 56), just as truth always exposes pretense.

Historical Context

The courtyard (*aulē*) was typical of wealthy Jerusalem homes—an open-air space with rooms surrounding it. Guards and servants gathered there while their superiors interrogated Jesus inside. John's Gospel notes that John, known to the high priest, gained entrance for Peter (John 18:15-16). Peter's Galilean accent

would make him conspicuous among Judean servants. The fire was likely a brazier or pit in the courtyard's center. Spring nights in Jerusalem can reach 40-50°F, making fire necessary.

Related Passages

Hebrews 11:1 — Definition of faith

James 2:17 — Faith and works

1 Corinthians 13:4 — Characteristics of love

John 15:13 — Greatest form of love

Study Questions

1. Why did Peter enter the enemy's courtyard rather than flee or stand outside?
2. What does 'sitting in their midst' reveal about the compromise between safety and solidarity?
3. How do Christians today sit 'among enemies' trying to hide their faith?

Interlinear Text

ἀψάντων	δὲ	πῦρ	ἐν	μέσῳ	τῆς	αὐλῆς	καὶ
when they had kindled	And	a fire	in	among	G3588	of the hall	and
G681	G1161	G4442	G1722	G3319		G833	G2532
συγκαθισάντων	αὐτῶν,	ἐκάθητο	ὁ	Πέτρος	ἐν	μέσῳ	
were set down together	them	sat down	G3588	Peter	in	among	
G4776	G846	G2521		G4074	G1722	G3319	
αὐτῶν,							
them							
G846							