

# Matthew 26:34

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Jesus said unto him, Verily I say unto thee, That this night, before the cock crow, thou shalt deny me thrice.

## Analysis

**This night, before the cock crow, thou shalt deny me thrice** (ἐν ταύτῃ τῇ νυκτὶ πρὸν ἀλέκτορα φωνῆσαι τρὶς ἀπαρνήσῃ με, en tautē tē nykti prin alektora phōnēsai tris aparnēsē me)—Jesus provides devastating specificity: **this night** (within hours), **before the cock crow** (typically 3-4 AM, the third watch), **thrice** (three separate denials). The verb apardeomai means 'to deny utterly, disown, renounce.'

Jesus's precision underscores divine foreknowledge and Peter's self-deception. The cock's crow would become Peter's conscience, driving him to **weep bitterly** (v. 75). Yet Christ already knows Peter's restoration (Luke 22:32, John 21:15-19). This foreknowledge doesn't cause Peter's denial but reveals Christ's omniscience and redemptive purpose.

## Historical Context

Roman timekeeping divided night into four watches; the third watch (midnight-3 AM) was called 'cockcrow' (Mark 13:35). Roosters crowing at dawn was common in Jerusalem despite being within city walls. Jesus's specific prediction—within hours, before sunrise, three times—made the prophecy unmistakably verifiable and unforgettable.

## Related Passages

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**Romans 1:17** — The righteous shall live by faith

**Hebrews 11:1** — Definition of faith

## Study Questions

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1. How does Jesus's specific foreknowledge of Peter's denial demonstrate both divine omniscience and personal care?
2. What does Christ's prediction-despite-certainty-of-restoration teach about God's view of your failures?

## Interlinear Text

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ἔφη αὐτῷ ὁ Ἰησοῦς Ἄμην λέγω σοι ὅτι ἐν  
said unto him Jesus Verily I say unto thee That this  
G5346 G846 G3588 G2424 G281 G3004 G4671 G3754 G1722

ταύτῃ τῇ νυκτὶ πρὶν ἀλέκτορα φωνῆσαι τρὶς  
G3778 G3588 night before the cock crow thrice  
G3571 G4250 G220 G5455 G5151

ἀπαρνήσῃ με  
thou shalt deny me  
G533 G3165

## Additional Cross-References

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**John 13:38** (References Jesus): Jesus answered him, Wilt thou lay down thy life for my sake? Verily, verily, I say unto thee, The cock shall not crow, till thou hast denied me thrice.

**Luke 22:34** (Parallel theme): And he said, I tell thee, Peter, the cock shall not crow this day, before that thou shalt thrice deny that thou knowest me.

**Matthew 26:75** (References Jesus): And Peter remembered the word of Jesus, which said unto him, Before the cock crow, thou shalt deny me thrice. And he went out, and wept bitterly.

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