

Matthew 26:69

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Now Peter sat without in the palace: and a damsel came unto him, saying, Thou also wast with Jesus of Galilee.

Analysis

Now Peter sat without in the palace: and a damsel came unto him, saying, Thou also wast with Jesus of Galilee (Ὁ δὲ Πέτρος ἐκάθητο ἔξω ἐν τῇ αὐλῇ· καὶ προσῆλθεν αὐτῷ μία παιδίσκη λέγουσα, Καὶ σὺ ἦσθα μετὰ Ἰησοῦ τοῦ Γαλιλαίου)—While Jesus endured trial inside, Peter sat (ἐκάθητο, imperfect—'was sitting') ἔξω ('outside, without') in the αὐλή (courtyard). A μία παιδίσκη ('a certain servant girl') approached, identifying Peter: Καὶ σὺ ἦσθα μετὰ Ἰησοῦ ('You also were with Jesus'). The καὶ σύ ('you also, even you') suggests she'd identified others or that Peter's Galilean accent betrayed him (v. 73). The phrase μετὰ Ἰησοῦ τοῦ Γαλιλαίου ('with Jesus of Galilee') identifies Jesus by origin—Galilee, viewed with contempt (John 7:52).

Peter's first test came from unexpected source—not chief priest or armed soldier but lowly servant girl. Often our failures occur not in dramatic moments but mundane ones, not before powerful opponents but casual observers. The girl's observation was accurate—Peter had been with Jesus. Now he must choose: confess association or deny it. The setting was hostile—enemies' courtyard, Jesus on trial, disciples scattered. Yet Jesus had warned Peter specifically (26:34), giving him advantage of preparation. Still, he failed.

Historical Context

The courtyard where Peter sat was probably torch-lit or fire-lit (John 18:18 mentions a charcoal fire). Servants and guards gathered there during the night

trial. Servant girls (παιδίσκη, young female slaves) had low social status but freedom to move and speak informally. Her question was probably innocent curiosity, not accusation, making Peter's vehement denial more cowardly. His Galilean accent was recognizable—Galileans pronounced certain Hebrew letters differently than Judeans, marking them as provincials (v. 73).

Related Passages

Psalms 19:1 — Heavens declare God's glory

Genesis 1:1 — Creation of heavens and earth

Study Questions

1. How does Peter's failure before a mere servant girl warn that your greatest spiritual failures may come in small, unexpected moments?
2. What enabled a lowly servant girl to recognize Peter's association with Jesus—and what makes your Christian identity visible to others?

Interlinear Text

Ὁ	δὲ	Πέτρος	ἔξω	ἐκάθητο	ἐν	τῇ	αὐλῇ.	Καὶ
G3588								
	Now	Peter	without	sat	in		the palace	also
	G1161	G4074	G1854	G2521	G1722		G833	G2532
προσῆλθεν	αὐτῷ	μία	παιδίσκη	λέγουσα	Καὶ	σὺ	ἦσθα	
came	unto him	G1520	damsel	saying	also	Thou	wast	
G4334	G846		G3814	G3004	G2532	G4771	G2258	
μετὰ	Ἰησοῦ	τοῦ	Γαλιλαίου					
with	Jesus	G3588	of Galilee					
G3326	G2424		G1057					

Additional Cross-References

Matthew 26:71 (References Jesus): And when he was gone out into the porch, another maid saw him, and said unto them that were there, This fellow was also with Jesus of Nazareth.

1 Kings 19:13 (Parallel theme): And it was so, when Elijah heard it, that he wrapped his face in his mantle, and went out, and stood in the entering in of the cave. And, behold, there came a voice unto him, and said, What doest thou here, Elijah?

Acts 5:37 (Parallel theme): After this man rose up Judas of Galilee in the days of the taxing, and drew away much people after him: he also perished; and all, even as many as obeyed him, were dispersed.

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