

Matthew 26:75

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

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.

Analysis

And Peter remembered the word of Jesus, which said unto him, Before the cock crow, thou shalt deny me thrice (καὶ ἔμνήσθη ὁ Πέτρος τοῦ ὀρήματος Ἰησοῦ εἰρηκότος ὅτι Πρὸ ἀλέκτορος φωνῆσαι τρὶς ἀπαρνήσῃ με)—The verb μιμνήσκομαι (mimnēskomai, 'to remember, to recall') shows the cock-crow triggered memory. Peter remembered τοῦ ὀρήματος (the word, saying) of Jesus—specifically His prediction of threefold denial. The phrase τρὶς ἀπαρνήσῃ με ('three times you will deny Me') exactly described what just occurred. Jesus's words proved true; Peter's confidence proved false. Memory brought conviction—recognizing sin is repentance's first step.

And he went out, and wept bitterly (καὶ ἐξελθὼν ἔξω ἔκλαυσεν πικρῶς)—Peter went out (ἐξέρχομαι, exited) ἔξω (outside), leaving the high priest's courtyard. He ἔκλαυσεν (wept—verb κλαίω, intense weeping, not mere tears) πικρῶς (bitterly, grievously—adverb from πικρός, 'bitter, sharp, severe'). These weren't tears of self-pity but godly sorrow producing repentance (2 Corinthians 7:10). Peter's bitter weeping contrasts with Judas's remorse (27:3-5)—both betrayed Christ; Peter's sorrow led to restoration (John 21:15-19); Judas's led to suicide. The difference: Peter remembered Jesus's words and wept; Judas remembered his wages and despaired.

Historical Context

Peter's weeping occurred around dawn Friday, hours before crucifixion. The cock-crow and Jesus's look (Luke 22:61) shattered Peter's self-confidence, preparing him for restoration. Forty days later, the risen Christ reinstated Peter threefold (John 21:15-19), one affirmation per denial. Peter's failure and restoration became testimony to grace—he later wrote about Christ's sufferings with intimate knowledge, having denied the suffering Savior yet experienced forgiving restoration. His epistles emphasize perseverance through suffering (1 Peter 1:6-7; 4:12-19), lessons learned through failure.

Related Passages

Romans 2:1 — Judging others

Matthew 25:31 — Final judgment

Genesis 1:1 — Creation of heavens and earth

Psalm 19:1 — Heavens declare God's glory

Study Questions

1. What's the difference between Judas's remorseful despair and Peter's repentant bitter weeping—and which characterizes your response to sin?
2. How does Peter's restoration after catastrophic failure encourage you to return to Christ after denying Him?

Interlinear Text

καὶ ἐμνήσθη τοῦ Πέτρος τοῦ ὁρόματος τοῦ Ἰησοῦ
And remembered which Peter which the word which of Jesus
G2532 G3415 G3588 G4074 G3588 G4487 G3588 G2424

εἰρηκότος αὐτῷ ὅτι Πρὶν ἀλέκτορα φωνῆσαι τρὶς
said unto him Before the cock crow thrice
G2046 G846 G3754 G4250 G220 G5455 G5151

ἀπαρνήσῃ με· καὶ ἐξελθὼν ἔξω ἔκλαυσεν πικρῶς
thou shalt deny me And and he went out wept bitterly
G533 G3165 G2532 G1831 G1854 G2799 G4090

Additional Cross-References

Matthew 26:34 (References Jesus): Jesus said unto him, Verily I say unto thee, That this night, before the cock crow, thou shalt deny me thrice.

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.

Galatians 6:1 (Parallel theme): Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such an one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted.