

The Night the Rock Cracked John 18:13-27

INTRO: In John 1:41-42, we have the account of Andrew bringing Peter to Jesus. Some folks don't believe in bringing people to Christ, but here is scriptural account of it being done. So it must be right. When Andrew brought Peter to Jesus and introduced them, Jesus looked at Peter and said: "Thou art Simon the son of Jona [or John]: thou shalt be called Cephas, which is by interpretation, a stone." The word for "beheld" in John 1:42 is the Greek word *emblepo* which means "to look at with the mind." When Jesus looked at Peter, He saw things that others could not see. He saw the character traits of loyalty, courage, strength, and boldness. Jesus saw things deep down in Peter's soul that others overlooked. I'm glad Jesus saw things in me that others couldn't see. Jesus gave Peter a name that would echo those traits: He named him Cephas meaning "rock or stone."

In John 6:66-69, Peter, in an hour of rock like strength, stood steadfastly by the Lord's side while others were leaving Jesus.

In John 13:33, Jesus tells the disciples that He will soon be leaving them; to this Peter boasts that he was willing to lay down his life for his Master (vss 36-37).

In John 13:38, we see that Peter's pride leads to a prediction. Jesus detected a hairline crack in the rock. We need to be careful that we do not fall into this same trap (I Cor 10:13, "Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall.").

I. VSS 13-14, CHRIST LED FROM THE GARDEN TO ANNAS

A. Vs 13, Jesus was bound (vs 12) and "led away" to Annas.

1. The two men mentioned here have the full responsibility for the kangaroo court procedures of the Jewish trial. An entire message could be given concerning the laws broken by these men in their effort to do away with Jesus.
2. Annas had been appointed high priest by the governor of Syria in AD 6. He was unfrocked by Velerius Gratus in AD 15.
 - a. Annas continued to run things as head of the Sadducees. Five sons, a grandson, and a son-in-law held the office of high priest at some time or the other.
 - b. He was about sixty years old at this time.
3. Caiaphas was high priest, but Annas was respected and

had influence as an experienced priest.

- B. Vs 14, Caiaphas, apparently, was the first man to make a motion that Christ be put to death (11:49-52).
 - 1. The reason for this motion was political. Caiaphas wanted to protect his position and the position of his cronies (11:50).
 - 2. Caiaphas, acting as judge, gives his verdict and sentence before the trial had begun.

II. VSS 15-18, PETER'S FIRST DENIAL (THE ROCK BEGINS TO CRACK)

- A. Vs 15, Simon Peter, the rock, followed Jesus, but not closely (Mt 26:58).
 - 1. The other disciple mentioned here, I believe, to be John, the writer of the Gospel.
 - 2. The high priest knew John. The Greek word for "known is *gnostos* meaning that John was more than just an acquaintance of Caiaphas.
 - a. John was a fisherman, and it is possible that he sold fish to the palace.
 - b. The servant at the gate, knowing John, let him in without question.
- B. Vs 16, John saw Peter looking lonely outside the gate. John goes to the girl at the gate and gains entrance for Peter.
 - 1. We need to learn from this that there are times we need to leave people where they are.
 - 2. Peter was about to get into hot water for sure.
- C. Vs 17, Once inside, the girl who kept the gate said to Peter, "Art not thou also one of this man's disciples?"
 - 1. The question of the girl was asked in the negative and with contempt. "You are not one of this man's disciples, are you?"
 - 2. Feeling attack able, conquerable, and beatable, Peter caves in and the rock begins to crack. Peter blurts out: "I am not."
- D. Vs 18, Note carefully the words. "Peter stood with them."
 - 1. "Peter stood with them." This is not the first time; we have seen these words. Just after Jesus had boldly proclaimed that He is the "I am" to the soldiers, John writes; "And Judas. . . stood with them" (18:5).

2. Peter was in the wrong place; he was with the wrong crowd. He was warming himself by the Devil's fire.
 - a. The mention of the charcoal fire indicates that John saw Peter.
 - b. Peter was surrounded by the wrong crowd, people hostile to our Lord. Remember, "he that is not with me is against me."
 - c. Some of you think you are tough. You think that you can play with sin and not get burned (Prov 6:24-29). If Cephas, the rock, cracked, who do you think you are? Some of you have caved in and are just denying it.
 - d. Peter proves that "the bigger they are the harder they fall."

III. VSS 19-23, CHRIST QUESTIONED AND SMITTEN

- A. Vs 19, It is generally agreed that this questioning was done by Annas (note vs 24).
 1. The first part of the question dealt with the disciples. Possibly Annas asked, "How many disciples are there? What were their plans? Were they militant? How organized are they? We notice here that the Lord chose to ignore this question, protecting His followers.
 2. Jesus answers the question about doctrine in verse 20.
- B. Vs 20, There was no secret about our Lord's teaching.
 1. The word "secret" in the Greek is *kruptos* from which we get our word crypto.
 2. Jesus did not use code. He spoke openly. He proclaimed that He is the Son of God.
- C. Vs 21, Jesus instructs Annas to ask those who had heard him. While Caiaphas and Annas were plotting in secret, Jesus was teaching openly.
- D. Vs 22, The man who struck Jesus was one of the temple police, a Jew.
 1. He didn't realize it, but he had struck his maker.
 2. If he never repented, one day he will stand before the great white throne, and be judged, and his action that day will make hell hotter for him.
 3. If he repented, then at death, he was welcomed home by Jesus. As long as he lived, he carried the hand that once

- slapped the face of God.
- E. Vs 223, What the officer did was unjustified. He had not been ordered to strike Jesus.
 - 1. If Jesus had spoken wrongly, this should have been proved legally.
 - 2. Because Jesus had answered rightly, the officer's action was blame worthy.
 - 3. The word for smitest is the Greek *dero* meaning "beat."
 - F. Vs 24, Annas had been unable to get any incriminating evidence, so he sends the bound Jesus to Caiaphas. This preliminary investigation had given time for the Sanhedrin to hurriedly assemble at the palace of the high priest.

IV. VS 25-27, PETER'S SECOND AND THIRD DENIAL (THE ROCK KEEPS CRACKING)

- A. Vs 25, Once again we are reminded that Peter is found standing in th wrong crowd.
 - 1. Peter was in the wrong crowd. It would have been good if Peter would have remembered the words of Psalm 1. Read it carefully; it may save you from the heartache Peter was about to suffer.
 - a. The Devil's fire seemed to offer comfort, but Peter was badly burned.
 - b. "Abstain from the appearance of evil."
 - 2. Peter said, "I am not." Peter flatly denies that he is one of our Lord's disciples. The rock continues to crack.
- B. Vs 26, Now a relative of Malchus, the high priest's servant from whom Peter had chopped an ear, eyes Peter and says: "I Know you, I saw you in the garden. You're the man with the sword." Matthew's account found in Matthew 26:73-74 shows how hard Peter fell. "Evil communications [companionship, communion with] corrupt good manners" (I Cor 15:33).
- C. Vs 27, The crow of the rooster was a terrible sound for Peter; it smote his soul with grief and despair (Mt 26:75).

CONCLUSION: Things we learn from Peter's denial:

- 1. When you're surrounded by wrong doers, doing wrong comes easy (dogs==fleas).

2. When you do wrong, get right. Be sorry for sin.
3. Peter got it right after all. He did not stay depressed. It is said that after his denial folks would crow as Peter passed by. Peter could have given up; instead, he stepped out of failure and attained spiritual victory.