

## LUKE 22:31-34 – Jesus Predicts Peter’s Denial

7/16/16 Sat Morn Prayer

Luke 22:31-34 *And the Lord said, "Simon, Simon! Indeed, Satan has asked for you, that he may sift you as wheat. [32] But I have prayed for you, that your faith should not fail; and when you have returned to Me, strengthen your brethren." [33] But he said to Him, "Lord, I am ready to go with You, both to prison and to death." [34] Then He said, "I tell you, Peter, the rooster shall not crow this day before you will deny three times that you know Me."*

**Context/Biblical Background** – Our Lord is conversing here with His disciples a short time before His crucifixion. In the tenderness of His heart, He almost thanks them for their faithful adherence to Him (Luk 22:28-30). And now comes a sudden transition, showing us the strong feeling at work at this time in our Lord’s breast. He thinks the next moment of the perils these men will have to pass through in their way to those thrones, and gives them abruptly a warning of one of them.

### Jesus Predicts Peter’s Denial:

*And the Lord said, "Simon, Simon! Indeed, Satan has asked for you,*

- The word “you” in Luk 22:31 is plural; Satan asked to have all the disciples so he might sift them like wheat. These men had been with Jesus in His trials (Luk 22:28), and **He would not forsake them in their trials**. This was **both a warning and an encouragement** to Peter and the other men, and our Lord’s prayers were answered. **Peter’s courage failed but not his faith; he was restored to fellowship with Christ and was greatly used to strengthen God’s people.**
- **Jesus was aware of a spiritual battle** behind the scenes. **Peter was no doubt ignorant** of the fact that **Satan has asked for you**. Apparently, **Satan wanted to do much more against Peter than the Lord would allow**. Satan could not do whatever he wanted against Peter, but **he had to ask God for permission**.
- Peter is particularly, and by name, spoken to, either because he might be a principal person in the debate and contention about superiority, mentioned in the context; or because he was chiefly to suffer in the following temptation of Satan; or because he was generally the mouth of the rest of the apostles; and he is addressed, not by the name of Peter, the name Christ gave him, when He first called him, signifying his future solidity, firmness, and steadfastness; because in this instance, he would not give any proof of it; **but by his former name, Simon, and which is repeated, partly to show the earnestness of Christ in the delivery of what follows, and partly to express His affectionate concern for him;**

*that he may sift you as wheat.*

- Satan **wanted to completely crush and defeat** Peter.
- Satan desires that in the sifting process no wheat shall remain, but that all (like Judas) will be blown away like chaff. Not to separate the chaff from the wheat, **but to make them look like all chaff**, by **covering the wheat of grace with the chaff of sin and corruption**; or to destroy the wheat, was it possible; or to toss them to and fro as wheat is in a sieve; that is, to afflict and distress them; see Amo 9:9 by scattering them both from Christ, and one another; by filling them with doubts about Jesus being the Messiah and Redeemer: and by frightening them with the fears of enemies and of death, which end he obtained; see Mat 26:56.

*[32] But I have prayed for you,*

- Satan did not completely crush Peter, but that had nothing to do with Peter himself. **It was because Jesus prayed for Peter**. He didn’t pray that Peter could escape the sifting of Satan. Satan has desired you. The Greek is, more literally, has asked for you. He **wants to sift you like wheat**. He wants **to put you through the grinder**. He wants **to pulverize you**. But I’ve prayed for you **that your faith would not fail**.
- It is both **wonderful and moving to remember that Jesus prays** for His people, protecting us from Satan (Hebrews 7:25, Revelation 12:10). Surely there are many times that **we would have perished, but Jesus prayed for us and protected us**.
- We, if we could have our way, would escape every bit of pain and suffering that comes along. And so often our prayers are for escape. None of us really like to suffer. None of us like going through trials. None of us like the testings. Because we are all of us so shortsighted. **We fail to realize that it is through the testings that we**

**grow.** Through the **testings, character is built.** That it is through suffering, **through pain that character is developed.**

- Jesus didn't pray that Peter would not be sifted. **He prayed that his faith wouldn't fail.** Not only does God use the sifting process or the trials and the tests **to develop our character but also to develop our confidence and faith in God, recognizing and realizing that God is able to help us through** any experience that we face. **That we might gain as I am going through suffering, I am comforted by God, I'm helped by God, I'm strengthened by God.** And thus, I learn firsthand of how God can minister to me in suffering.
- That **then enables me to minister to others who are suffering.** Who are going through the same things that I went through. Here **Peter was going to fail in courage. But not in faith.** Courage was **one of Peter's strong points.** He was a rugged, rough fisherman ready to do battle with anybody. Ready to step out in faith and that **place of his greatest personal strength is the place that Satan did attack him.** As Satan usually won't attack your weak place, **he'll attack your strong place because in your weak places, you know you have to trust the Lord.** In your **strong places, you're foolish enough to think that you can do it without the Lord's help.** And **so Satan often attacks us in our strongest place.** And he experienced failure but it gave him empathy and understanding for those who in their testing failed.
- **He was able then to minister as Paul, who said in 2Cor. 1:4 " who comforts us in all our tribulation, that we may be able to comfort those who are in any trouble, with the comfort with which we ourselves are comforted by God."** And the purpose for which God allowed me to go through some of these things is that He might comfort me in order that I might share that comfort with you.

*that your faith should not fail;*

- Peter's faith would falter but **not fail.** Jesus **did not see the temporary lapse that was to come as a failure of faith,** because **He knew that Peter would return to Him.**
- In the Christian life, **we may falter, but we must never fail.** If we **have denied Jesus** in some way, **then we must return to Him immediately.**

*and when you have returned to Me, strengthen your brethren."*

- And, **having returned, we must turn our focus towards helping others.** The one who returns after faltering isn't necessarily to be excluded or encouraged to become self-focused - but they should reach out and strengthen the brethren.

*[33] But he said to Him, "Lord, I am ready to go with You, both to prison and to death."*

- Peter did not consciously lie here; rather **he was unaware of both the spiritual reality and the spiritual battle that Jesus could see.** Peter merely looked to **how he felt at the moment, and at the moment he felt pretty brave.**
- **Relying on how you feel** at the moment **is not a stable foundation.** Peter felt brave at the moment, but would soon be intimidated before a humble servant girl, and deny to her that he even knew Jesus.

*[34] Then He said, "I tell you, Peter, the rooster shall not crow this day before you will deny three times that you know Me."*

- Jesus told Peter the truth about himself and the situation **not to discourage him, but to let him know there is a spiritual reality and a spiritual battle that he is unaware of, but that Jesus knew well.**
- Note the sense of the prophecy - Peter's 'triple denial will come so quickly that a cock will not even be able to crow twice.'"
- Remember it's evening. This evening Jesus is going to be arrested and taken to the house of Caiaphas. Before morning comes, before the daylight comes, before the rooster ever crows, **Peter will have denied that he knew the Lord three times.** The other gospels tell us **that Peter objected.** He said, Lord, even if they would kill me I would not deny you. **Confidence in himself.** Lord, I'm not a coward. **Beware of self-confidence.**
- Paul wrote, "When I am weak, then am I strong because His strength is made perfect in my weakness" (2 Cor. 12:9,10). Where I am weak and when I am weak, and I know it, I'm more prone to rely upon Him and as I rely upon Him, **then I have His strength that is imparted to me and I can stand.** In those places **where I rely upon myself, you at your best day in your best part of your life are not a match for Satan.** And whenever you think you are, you're doomed to have a disappointing experience of failure.
- **God allows failure. God allowed Peter's failure.** God **knew it was going to come.** Jesus was saying Peter, **you're going to deny Me three times that you know Me. Before the morning light comes, you're going to fail.**

## SUMMARY:

- Peter's courage failed but not his faith; he was restored to fellowship with Christ and was greatly used to strengthen God's people.
- Satan *wanted* to do much more against Peter than the Lord would allow. Satan could not do whatever he wanted against Peter, but he had to *ask* God for permission. Know that you will be tempted! Satan/workers of iniquity will have access to you.
- Satan did not completely crush Peter, but that had nothing to do with Peter himself. It was because Jesus prayed for Peter.
- It is wonderful and moving to remember that Jesus prays for His people, protecting us from Satan. Surely there are many times that we would have perished, but Jesus prayed for us and protected us.
- It is through the testings that we grow. Through the testings, character is built. That it is through suffering, through pain that character is developed. But be perfected through your trial by humbly submitting to our only hope-our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ!
- That then enables me to minister to others who are suffering.
- God allows failure. God allowed Peter's failure. God knew it was going to come. Not to think more highly of yourself than others! "Therefore let him who thinks he stands take heed lest he fall" (1Co\_10:12)
- In the Christian life, we may falter, but we must never fail. If we have denied Jesus in some way, then we must return to Him immediately.
- Peter was going to fail in courage, one of Peter's strong points. But not in faith.
- It was at the place of his greatest personal strength is the place that Satan did attack him. Satan usually attacks your strong place because in your weak places, you know you have to trust the Lord.
- He was able then to minister as Paul, who said in 2Cor. 1:4 "who comforts us in all our tribulation, that we may be able to comfort those who are in any trouble, with the comfort with which we ourselves are comforted"

### *I Need Thee Every Hour – Maranatha Music*

*I need thee every hour, most gracious Lord; no tender voice like thine can peace afford.*

*Refrain: I need thee, O I need thee; every hour I need thee; O bless me now, my Savior, I come to thee.*

*I need thee every hour; stay thou nearby; temptations lose their power when thou art nigh.  
(Refrain)*

*I need thee every hour, in joy or pain; come quickly and abide, or life is vain.  
(Refrain)*

*I need thee every hour; teach me thy will; and thy rich promises in me fulfill.  
(Refrain)*

### *Go to Dark Gethsemane*

*1. Go to dark Gethsemane, ye that feel the tempter's power; your Redeemer's conflict see, watch with him one bitter hour. Turn not from his griefs away; learn of Jesus Christ to pray.*

*2. See him at the judgment hall, beaten, bound, reviled, arraigned; O the wormwood and the gall! O the pangs his soul sustained! Shun not suffering, shame, or loss; learn of Christ to bear the cross.*

*3. Calvary's mournful mountain climb; there, adoring at his feet, mark that miracle of time, God's own sacrifice complete. "It is finished!" hear him cry; learn of Jesus Christ to die.*

*4. Early hasten to the tomb where they laid his breathless clay; all is solitude and gloom. Who has taken him away? Christ is risen! He meets our eyes; Savior, teach us so to rise.*

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