

International Bible Lessons Commentary

Mark 14:26-31, 66-72

New Revised Standard Version

International Bible Lessons

Sunday, March 20, 2016

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The [International Bible Lesson](#) (*Uniform Sunday School Lessons Series*) for **Sunday, March 20, 2016**, is from **Mark 14:26-31, 66-72**. **Questions for Discussion and Thinking Further** follow the verse-by-verse *International Bible Lesson Commentary*. **Study Hints for Discussion and Thinking Further** discusses *Questions for Discussion and Thinking Further* to help with class preparation and in conducting class discussion: these hints are available on the [International Bible Lessons Commentary](#) website along with the *International Bible Lesson* that you may want to read to your class as part of your Bible study. If you are a Bible student or teacher, you can discuss each week's commentary and lesson at the [International Bible Lesson Forum](#).

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Mark 14:26-31, 66-72

(Mark 14:26) When they had sung the hymn, they went out to the Mount of Olives.

During Jesus' Last Supper (the celebration of the Passover) with His disciples, Jesus made a New Covenant that He would create when He shed His blood on the cross. Jesus came to die, to suffer a substitutionary sacrificial death on the cross so our loving God could be just and merciful and forgive and cleanse and give the Holy Spirit and eternal life to all repentant believers who trusted in Jesus Christ as Son of God, Lord, and Savior. At that meal, Jesus foretold that Judas would betray Him.

(Mark 14:27) And Jesus said to them, "You will all become deserters; for it is written, 'I will strike the shepherd, and the sheep will be scattered.'

At the close of the Last Supper, they sang a hymn and went to the Mount of Olives to pray. Here, Jesus foretold to His disciples that all of His disciples would desert Him and flee. He knew the Scriptures, and He foretold what would happen based on the Scriptures (Jesus quoted Zechariah 13:7). Moreover, before He came to earth, through the Holy Spirit Jesus inspired the Old Testament writers to prophecy and describe both His first and second comings. Jesus came as the Good Shepherd and demonstrated those qualities during His ministry, and after His resurrection from the dead He would gather them again as a shepherd gathers his sheep.

(Mark 14:28) But after I am raised up, I will go before you to Galilee.”

Jesus’ disciples still did not accept or understand the teachings He had given them repeatedly about His suffering, death, and resurrection. Peter jumped to the defensive about the prediction all of the disciples would fall away; it is unlikely he paid any attention to Jesus’ prediction that He would rise again and travel to Galilee and see them there (something they would not do until after Jesus appeared to them in Jerusalem and by His appearances convince them that He had risen from the dead). He would see them at the Sea of Tiberius (also called the Sea of Galilee: see John 21).

(Mark 14:29) Peter said to him, “Even though all become deserters, I will not.”

Peter was the first disciple to proclaim Jesus as the Messiah, and he also tried to talk Jesus out of going to die, even rebuking Jesus (see Mark 8:27-33). Peter was continuing to set his mind on the things of man instead of on the things of God (Mark 8:33). He would set his mind on the things of God after the Day of Pentecost when he would preach the gospel of Jesus Christ boldly and many would be converted (Acts 2).

(Mark 14:30) Jesus said to him, “Truly I tell you, this day, this very night, before the cock crows twice, you will deny me three times.”

Jesus not only knew the Scriptures that He had inspired the Old Testament prophets to write before He was born, He also knew the future of and God’s plan for each person and especially demonstrated that through His relationship with His disciples. Jesus calmed the seas, and He easily made it possible for the rooster to crow at the right moment even when on trial before the High Priest.

(Mark 14:31) But he said vehemently, “Even though I must die with you, I will not deny you.” And all of them said the same.

Not to be outdone by Peter, all of the disciples insisted that rather than disown Jesus they would die with Him. They still had no concept that Jesus, as powerful as He was as the Son of God and Messiah (they had seen His miracles) would actually be arrested and killed without working a miracle to save himself and them. His arrest would come as a complete shock to them and they would flee in terror with shattered dreams.

(Mark 14:66) While Peter was below in the courtyard, one of the servant-girls of the high priest came by.

Judas betrayed Jesus with a kiss and then Jesus was arrested on the Mount of Olives. Peter and John followed at a distance as the arresting officers took Jesus to the High Priest for a mock trial. Peter was no doubt so shocked by events, even though he was forewarned, that he became afraid of a servant girl of the High Priest – who could report him to the High Priest as one of Jesus’ disciples.

(Mark 14:67) When she saw Peter warming himself, she stared at him and said, “You also were with Jesus, the man from Nazareth.”

The week of Passover, especially on and after Palm Sunday, the disciples would have been happy to be seen with Jesus, the one the crowd supposed was a conquering Messiah and future King over Israel. They would have basked in His shadow knowing He was the Messiah and thinking they would soon reign over Jerusalem with Him. In spite of all Jesus had taught them, their expectations of the future had not changed.

(Mark 14:68) But he denied it, saying, “I do not know or understand what you are talking about.” And he went out into the forecourt. Then the cock crowed.

Peter not only denied knowing Jesus, he lied when he said he did not know what the servant girl was talking about. Earlier, Peter had bravely used a sword to cut off the ear of a servant of the High Priest during Jesus’ arrest (see John 18:10-11). This servant could have told the story to all the High Priest’s servants and this girl who was also a servant of the High Priest might have been especially looking for Jesus’ followers at His trial. All of the High Priest’s servants may have been on the lookout especially for Peter, who the High Priest’s servant might have accurately described even from the dim torchlight at night. Peter denied knowing Jesus and moved toward the entry (which would make possible a quick exit from the courtyard into the dark night).

(Mark 14:69) And the servant-girl, on seeing him, began again to say to the bystanders, “This man is one of them.”

Through his speech and demeanor Peter may have revealed his fear and guilt at having been with Jesus and having committed a crime by attacking the High Priest’s servant. Peter first denied Jesus in a private conversation with the girl, but she no doubt wanted to prove she was right so she accused him before those standing around. Perhaps she felt one of them would be able to confirm her belief.

(Mark 14:70) But again he denied it. Then after a little while the bystanders again said to Peter, “Certainly you are one of them; for you are a Galilean.”

After a short while, those nearby confirmed the servant girl’s observation. Indeed, “surely” you are one of them. Peter’s Galilean accent confirmed that he was from the same region as Jesus, and any Galileans at the trial would be presumed to be one of Jesus’ followers.

(Mark 14:71) But he began to curse, and he swore an oath, “I do not know this man you are talking about.”

This time, Peter has become so fearful for his life that he even begins to deny Jesus and curse (we are not told if he cursed Jesus too). Peter swore to another lie that he does not know Jesus – even referring to his closest Friend as “this man you’re talking about.”

(Mark 14:72) At that moment the cock crowed for the second time. Then Peter remembered that Jesus had said to him, “Before the cock crows twice, you will deny me three times.” And he broke down and wept.

The rooster crowed at the exact moment Jesus foretold – also indicating that the dawn was near. No doubt the Holy Spirit, the One who would later fill Peter on the Day of Pentecost, brought to Peter’s mind and heart what Jesus had foretold. The Holy Spirit convicted Peter of his great sin, and Peter broke down and wept with remorse. Peter’s dramatic change on the Day of Pentecost is further evidence that Jesus indeed rose from the dead: the power of the Holy Spirit made Jesus’ followers into new creations, new people who testified about Jesus regardless of the consequences to themselves. Peter’s new creation also shows the depth of Jesus’ love and willingness to forgive the worst of sinners (as He would later forgive and make Saul into a new person — the Apostle Paul).

Questions for Discussion and Thinking Further

1. How did Jesus know all of His disciples would fall away?
2. Did Jesus go ahead of them into Galilee? If so, when?
3. How many times did Peter deny Jesus and what did Peter do after he denied Jesus the first time? What did Peter do after he denied Jesus the last time?
4. Who was the first person to claim Peter was one of Jesus’ followers?
5. What happened that made Peter quit denying that he knew Jesus?

Begin or close your class by reading the short weekly *International Bible Lesson*.
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