

Faith Is Possible After Failures

International Bible Lesson

Mark 14:26-31, 66-72

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“You will all fall away,’ Jesus told them, ‘for it is written: “I will strike the shepherd, and the sheep will be scattered” (Mark 14:27).

Jesus came into the world as the Messiah and He took on the role of the Good Shepherd. Jesus told His disciples, “I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep” (John 10:11). On His way to lay down His life on the cross, Jesus told His disciples that according to the Scriptures the shepherd would be struck down and the sheep would be scattered. He would die and they would fall away and disown Him. They all denied that they would disown Him, and especially Peter who declared that all the others might disown Jesus, but he never would. No matter how much Peter protested, the Scriptures would be fulfilled, and Jesus foretold Peter that he would deny Him three times before the rooster crowed twice, and it was so, exactly as Jesus told Peter. Jesus also told His disciples that after He rose from the dead that He would go before them into Galilee. However, they were so unbelieving they remained huddled in fear in Jerusalem until Jesus appeared to them and proved that He had risen from the dead. Later, exactly as Jesus foretold, He met them in Galilee by the Sea of Tiberius (also called the Sea of Galilee: see John 21); thus proving in another way that He who was crucified and buried had risen from the dead. Here, Jesus said three times to Peter, “Feed my sheep.” The sheep who fled when the Shepherd was struck became shepherds themselves, and flocks of Jesus’ sheep have spread around the world under the guidance of faithful shepherds.

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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?