

The Gospel of John 18:1-27

I Life's Process Through Death & Resurrection – Delivering Himself in Voluntary Boldness to be Processed.

- A. The Lord delivered Himself of His own accord to the process of death, as He had indicated in 10:17-18. He did it voluntarily and boldly. This means that He went into death willingly. In John 10 He told us that He would purposely give up His life for us. He is the Lord of life, and He is life. He has authority to die, and He has the authority to be resurrected. Of His own accord, He went into death and He came out of it....He is the Lord of life and also life itself. If He did not prefer to die, He had the authority to send death away. Although He was not forced or compelled to die, He was willing to die because He had come to impart Himself to us as life. He knew that it was only through death that He could release Himself into us as life. In fact, He had already said that He was the one grain of wheat that was to fall into the ground and die (12:24). If a grain of wheat is unwilling to die, how can it release its life to bring forth many grains? In John 18 and 19 we see clearly that the Lord Jesus was very willing to die.
- B. "I Am" is the name of Jehovah (so in vv. 6,8)....When the soldiers heard this name, they drew back and fell to the ground.
- C. While suffering betrayal at the hands of His false disciple and arrest by the soldiers, the Lord still took good care of His disciples. This reveals that He was at ease in passing through the process of death.

II Examined in His Dignity by Mankind-By the Jews According to God's Law in their Religion

- A. The Lord was the Lamb of God (1:29), and He was killed on the day of the Passover(v.28). As the Passover lamb was examined before it was killed (Exo.12:3-6), so He was examined by the whole of mankind, represented by the high priest of the Jews and the governor of the Romans, and proved to be without blemish (v.38b; 19:4,6).

We have a record of the experience both of the Lord Jesus and of Peter. These experiences were taking place at the same time. While the Lord Jesus was being judged by the Jewish leaders and the Roman governor is a strong sign that He was tested by the entire world. He was judged by the Jews according to Roman law. Everything that happened related to the crucifixion of Jesus was a fulfillment of either the types or the prophecies in the Old Testament.

The Lord Jesus was crucified on the Passover as the Passover lamb. According to the type, before the Passover lamb was killed, it had to be examined to determine whether or not it had any blemish. The examination of Christ by mankind was the fulfillment of this type. After Pilate examined Him, he declared, "I find no fault in Him" (18:38; 19:4,6). There was no blemish in this Passover lamb; He was fully qualified to be the lamb for God's people. We have pointed out that, as a fulfillment of the type of the Passover lamb, the Lord Jesus was crucified on the day of the Passover. He was arrested during the night. According to the Jewish calendar, a day begins not in the morning but in the evening of the day of Passover. This means that He ate the Passover at the beginning of the day of the Passover. Then He instituted His supper and went to Gethsemane to pray. Late in the night the Lord was arrested, brought to the court of the high priest, and judged. Then in the morning He was brought to Pilate. It was early in the morning that the Lord Jesus was sentenced, He was taken to Golgotha, and beginning at nine o'clock in the morning, He was crucified. With the Lord Jesus, of course, there was nothing deserving judgment. Peter, on the contrary, was exposed as being fully wrong.

While judging the Lord, both the high priest of the Jewish religion and the governor of the Roman Empire were judged by Him in His dignity.

The Lord was examined by the Jews according to the law of God in their religion (18:12-27). This examination was a very unpleasant thing. The Lord even suffered it in front of the denial of one of the closest disciples (18:17-18; 25-27). While He was being examined, Peter denied Him three times. Would you have been able to suffer this? If this had happened to us, we would certainly have rebuked Peter. But the Lord did not say a word.

While the high priest was examining and judging the Lord, the high priest was being judged by the Lord in His dignity (18:19-21). The Lord was fearless and spoke to the high priest in a very dignified way. While the Passover lamb was being examined, the examiner was being examined by Him, and the blemishes of the examiner were exposed.

We should not read this account merely as a story about Peter, for it reveals that it is impossible for our natural life to enter into the kingdom. Because we all are the same as Peter, we should not try to follow the pathway into the kingdom by our natural life. No matter what kind of mind or will we may have, we cannot succeed. The test will come that will fully expose us. Sooner or later, all of us on the pathway to the kingdom will face the same tests. Praise the Lord that there is still the way of repentance, weeping, and confessing that brings in the Lord's forgiveness and His further visitation. For the kingdom, we must have another life and be another person. Only after we have passed through all the tests and suffered all the defeats and failures will we realize our need for another life.

Praise the Lord for the strong contrast presented in this chapter! In Peter we see the black, and in the Lord Jesus we see the white. All the way from the garden to the cross, Peter and the other disciples were defeated. Only one man, Jesus, was victorious. Actually, He was not even arrested; He handed Himself over to those who came for Him. Thus, His death was not a matter of compulsion, but a voluntary fulfillment of the prophecies of the Old Testament concerning His crucifixion. Truly, only the life of Jesus is good for the kingdom.