

All Fall Down [Mark 14]
Draft by Steve Carr [www.houseofcarr.com/thread]

VERSES 27

²⁷ "You will all fall away," Jesus told them, "for it is written: "'I will strike the shepherd, and the sheep will be scattered.'

1. There are many saddening aspects to the crucifixion narrative in the Scriptures.
 - a. But perhaps the saddest aspect: the evaporation of Jesus' support system.
 - b. The quote from Zechariah 13 gives the explanation as to why this would happen.
 - c. The followers of Jesus were like sheep. Without shepherd, it was tough to stand.
 - d. And, soon, they'd have to stand alone.
2. Hone in on the first part of this verse for a further explanation. What is "FALL WAY?"
 - a. In context, it can connote a loss of faith, especially in the face of persecution.
 - b. And while these immediate followers would face the threat of persecution
 - c. The prophecy Jesus offers here isn't limited to this resurrection scene.
3. Shortly after the completion of the book of Mark, Christians would face persecution
 - a. The first wave began under Nero beginning in 64AD as "fire control"
 - b. Roman historian Tacitus wrote of the persecution

"Nero fastened the guilt and inflicted the most exquisite tortures on a class hated for their abominations, called Christians . . . In accordance [with Nero's commands], an arrest was first made of all who pleaded guilty; then, upon their information, an immense multitude was convicted, not as much of the crime of firing the city as of hatred against mankind. Mockery of every sort was added to their deaths. Covered with the skins of beasts, they were torn by dogs and perished, or were nailed to crosses, or were doomed to the flames and burnt, to serve as a nightly illumination, when daylight had expired."
 - c. Here, the point was clear: there will be times, when you are not a faithful follower.
 - 1) It happened to the disciples, it will happen to you.
 - 2) The reason here is not to be defeatist, but to be encouraging.
 - 3) There were "lesser followers" of Jesus who did much better of standing firm.

THIS SETS THE TABLE FOR THE FOLLOWING ENCOUNTERS . . .

VERSES 28-31

²⁸ But after I have risen, I will go ahead of you into Galilee." ²⁹ Peter declared, "Even if all fall away, I will not." ³⁰ "Truly I tell you," Jesus answered, "today—yes, tonight—before the rooster crows twice you yourself will disown me three times." ³¹ But Peter insisted emphatically, "Even if I have to die with you, I will never disown you." And all the others said the same.

1. Even in the midst of a despairing message, there is hope: JESUS will rise.
 - a. That, friends, is the celebration culminating in Easter mourning.
 - 1) **1 Thessalonians 4:13** "you will not grieve like people who have no hope."
 - b. Unfortunately, that aspect of the message was lost on Peter.
 - c. The young man sees it as a challenge of his manhood and he asserts it to Jesus.
 - d. Jesus response is poignant and specific: it will happen, and this is exactly how.
 - e. Peter rejects Jesus prediction, stating that "EVEN IF I HAVE TO DIE . . ."
 - 1) We know that later Peter is indeed martyred for his association with Jesus.
 - 2) But before his loyalty would be ultimately fulfilled, he would fall.
 - 3) We aren't all called to die, but our loyalty should be that intense.
2. While we always want to chastise Peter for his boldness, the others step up in verse 31.
 - a. Back in verse 27, Jesus noted that ALL will fall away; indiscriminant.
 - b. At some point, all will let Jesus down.

VERSES 32-36

³²They went to a place called Gethsemane, and Jesus said to his disciples, "Sit here while I pray." ³³He took Peter, James and John along with him, and he began to be deeply distressed and troubled. ³⁴"My soul is overwhelmed with sorrow to the point of death," he said to them. "Stay here and keep watch." ³⁵Going a little farther, he fell to the ground and prayed that if possible the hour might pass from him. ³⁶"Abba, Father," he said, "everything is possible for you. Take this cup from me. Yet not what I will, but what you will."

1. "Gethsemane" is located across the Kidron Valley from Jerusalem.
 - a. The name means "olive press." The olive industry was rather vibrant in Jesus' day.
 - b. The location was close to the temple, but would've provided some sort of solitude.
 - c. Throughout Jesus' ministry, he sought times of solitude.
2. Jesus knows that the time of his arrest is soon and he decides to focus on prayer.
 - a. Prayer was a vital part of both Jesus' life and his teachings.
3. He asks these three disciples to join him and to stay awake.
 - a. Could be seen as a lookout for Judas and the authorities.
 - b. But there's likely a much deeper message associated with this request.
 - 1) God's people would need to pray faithfully in the midst of persecution.
 - 2) In the midst of trying times, they'd need to "keep awake and pray," to survive.
4. Here, the prayer is unique. He asks God for the possibility of relief from his death mission.
 - c. First, this petition asking God to change his mind isn't unique
 - 1) Moses asked God to save after Golden Calf, Hezekiah when hearing he'd die
 - 2) Raymond Brown offers that such prayers are not manipulative.

"In such instances, the prayer is not one of rebellion but of confidence in God's love and justice. God will listen and will grant the request if it is reconcilable with overall Providence."
 - d. This illustrates THE HUMANITY OF CHRIST. He didn't have a death wish.

VERSES 37-49

³⁷Then he returned to his disciples and found them sleeping. "Simon," he said to Peter, "are you asleep? Couldn't you keep watch for one hour?" ³⁸Watch and pray so that you will not fall into temptation. The spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak." ³⁹Once more he went away and prayed the same thing. ⁴⁰When he came back, he again found them sleeping, because their eyes were heavy. They did not know what to say to him. ⁴¹Returning the third time, he said to them, "Are you still sleeping and resting? Enough! The hour has come. Look, the Son of Man is delivered into the hands of sinners. ⁴²Rise! Let us go! Here comes my betrayer!" ⁴³Just as he was speaking, Judas, one of the Twelve, appeared. With him was a crowd armed with swords and clubs, sent from the chief priests, the teachers of the law, and the elders. ⁴⁴Now the betrayer had arranged a signal with them: "The one I kiss is the man; arrest him and lead him away under guard." ⁴⁵Going at once to Jesus, Judas said, "Rabbi!" and kissed him. ⁴⁶The men seized Jesus and arrested him. ⁴⁷Then one of those standing near drew his sword and struck the servant of the high priest, cutting off his ear. ⁴⁸"Am I leading a rebellion," said Jesus, "that you have come out with swords and clubs to capture me?" ⁴⁹Every day I was with you, teaching in the temple courts, and you did not arrest me. But the Scriptures must be fulfilled." ⁵⁰Then everyone deserted him and fled.

1. Let me rewind to Mark 13, to a parable Jesus told that we skipped over.
 - a. At the end of the discussion on the end times, he discusses an estate owner.
 - b. Mark 13:33-37 ³³Be on guard! Be alert! You do not know when that time will come. ³⁴It's like a man going away: He leaves his house and puts his servants in charge, each with their assigned task, and tells the one at the door to keep watch. ³⁵"Therefore keep watch because you do not know when the owner of the house will come back—whether in the evening, or at midnight, or when the rooster crows, or at dawn. ³⁶If he comes suddenly, do not let him find you sleeping. ³⁷What I say to you, I say to everyone: 'Watch!'"
 - c. Just the day before, Jesus uttered this teaching to his followers.
 - 1) It's like when a teacher says, "this will likely be on the test."
 - 2) He charges them to watch and not sleep but they don't last an hour
2. Peter was the big talker right before they left, so Jesus addresses him.
 - a. Peter thought he would die for Jesus, but he couldn't last an hour.
3. What's crazy is that this happens two more times, but finally, Jesus is betrayed.
 - a. This text is all about spiritual alertness and preparedness.
 - b. Mark's message for the persecuted community is clear.
 - c. Spiritual preparation is essential when a crisis comes.
4. When the time comes, and he is to be betrayed, then Peter wakes up.

- a. Peter goes a little crazy, cutting off ears.
- b. Jesus declares that this would not be a violent revolution

VERSES 50-52

⁵⁰Then everyone deserted him and fled. ⁵¹A young man, wearing nothing but a linen garment, was following Jesus. When they seized him, ⁵²he fled naked, leaving his garment behind.

1. Who knew? There's a streaking incident in the Bible.
 - a. Linen was an expensive material and would only be worn on special occasions
 - b. Such garments were often occasionally worn for a burial.
 - c. Running away and leaving such an expensive item behind was noteworthy.
 - d. Illustrative of disciples: they left everything to follow him, but abandoned Jesus.
 - e. In the Scriptures, public nakedness is a reflection of shame.
 - 1) This is what the followers of Jesus who had abandoned him faced.
2. But a final question of the text this evening: who is this young man?
 - a. Interpreters have speculated concerning the identity of the young man
 - b. The most popular is that it was John Mark, author of this gospel.
 - 1) The book of Acts reveals his mother owned a house in Jerusalem (12:12)

CONCLUSION

1. Although it's speculative, I've always enjoyed this interpretation.
 - a. It's rather easy to criticize those who have fallen short.
 - b. The Olympics started this weekend and, part of the joy, is rooting AGAINST.
 - 1) I mean, who doesn't want to watch the French fail again, right?
 - c. It's not very likely that one wants to see themselves fail.
 - 1) If this naked man is truly Mark, than we have some self-effacement.
 - 2) Mark takes ownership of this failure, saying, "I did it too."
2. Verse 50 is the key to this text: Then everyone deserted him and fled.
 - a. Friends, there is a likelihood that you have already or will eventually fall.
 - b. Your allegiance to God will wane at a critical time and you will feel shame
 - c. While American Christians haven't dealt with this for awhile, they are now.
3. AM I READY TO STAND IN CRISIS?
4. Trust in the strength of God to keep us from falling.