

(Mark 14. 65), smote his face, and then asked him to make the smiter, thus mocking his claim to be regarded as a prophet. **Thou Christ.** They use the title in contempt, which they denied him as his right. (3) *Like these are people who make a jest of sacred things, or who think to annihilate Christianity with a sneer.*

**69. Now Peter.** At the supper table, only a few hours before, Jesus had forewarned Peter of his denial. See ver. 33-35. Having followed in the crowd of Christ's enemies, he was already losing the fervor of his fidelity. **But without in the palace.** The Rev. Ver. reads, "in the court," which is correct; for reference is to the open, paved place in the interior of an Oriental house. Peter had been admitted at the request of John, who was acquainted with the high-priest, and was sitting with others around a fire which had been kindled. John 18. 15, 16; Luke 22. 54. **damsel.** A young woman connected with the high priest's household, perhaps the porter at the door. John 18. 17. **Thou also wast with Jesus of Galilee.** Rev. Ver., "Jesus the Galilean." The words were probably spoken in a baiting tone, and would not have been followed by an arrest if Peter had boldly confessed his Master. John appears to have been in no danger. (4) *Ridicule is harder to face than abuse.*

**70. But he denied.** Each gospel relates three accusations and three denials; but probably not precisely the same; for in such circumstances many people were likely to participate and the gospels do not narrate all the events. **Before them all.** His reply was in a sense public, for it was in the presence of many witnesses. **I know not what thou sayest.** He did not exactly lie, but he tried to evade the question, which was a step toward an open, barefaced falsehood. (5) *First steps in deceit are always dangerous.*

**71. Gone out into the porch.** He withdrew from the circle around the fire, afraid of more accusations, and went into the vestibule which led toward the street. Mark mentions that while he was there the cock crew; but evidently it was not immediately connected in his mind with the Saviour's warning of the night before. Mark 14. 68. **Another maid saw him.** So in escaping from one accuser he falls into the power of another. **Said unto them that were there.** On this occasion both the vestibule and the court of the palace were crowded with people. **This fellow.** The word "fellow" is not in the original. It should be "this man," as in Rev. Ver. **With Jesus of Nazareth.** Again a woman's contempt and ridicule are too strong for an apostle, when he fails to seek strength from the Strong. Others reiterated the woman's statement, as we learn from various gospels. Peter had been seen many times beside his Master in the temple and in the streets of Jerusalem. (6) *Temptation which is not resisted is sure to be repeated.*

**72. And again he denied.** Now he spoke more pos-

#### HOME READINGS.

M. Peter's denial. Matt. 26. 58-68.  
Th. Peter's denial. Matt. 26. 69-75.  
W. Warning to Peter. Luke 22. 31-38.  
Th. Avoiding temptation. Ps. 1.  
F. Ungodly sorrow. Matt. 27. 3-10.  
S. Godly sorrow. 2 Cor. 7. 6-12.  
S. John's narrative. John 18. 12-27.

#### GOLDEN TEXT.

Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall. 1 Cor. 10. 12.

#### LESSON HYMNS.

No. 84, Dominion Hymnal.  
Come, let us, who in Christ believe,  
Our common Saviour praise.

No. 81, Dominion Hymnal.

"Almost persuaded" now to believe;  
"Almost persuaded" Christ to receive.

No. 85, Dominion Hymnal.

I am coming to the Cross;  
I am poor, and weak, and blind.

TIME.—30 A. D. The same night.

tively; for the step from a "white lie" to a black one is very easy. With an oath. That may have been the first oath of Peter the disciple, but it certainly was not the first of St. on the fisherman. If a had never sworn before he would not have sworn then. (7) *See how an old habit will assert itself in some unexpected moment.* (8) *The man who will swear will be quite apt to lie. I do not know the man.* Notice how open and bare-faced a falsehood follows the former evasion. (9) *He who hesitates to speak the truth openly will soon not hesitate to lie openly.*

**73. And after a while.** Peter was now standing where he could see, through an open row of columns, the stairs leading to the hall. His third denial took place just as his Saviour was being dragged down the stairs, to be led to Pilate's hall. See Luke 22. 61. **They speech bewrayeth there.** Nearly all the immediate disciples were natives of Galilee, the northern province of Palestine. It is said that the natives of Galilee lisped, pronouncing *ek* like *th*. "Man" in Hebrew is *ad*. Peter in his excitement perhaps said *th* for *ad*, in the declaration, "I know not the man." (10) *Speech betrays character as often as nationality.* (11) *Happy he whose speech betrays him to be a disciple of Christ!*—M. Henry.

**74. Then began he to curse and to swear.** From an oath of denial he went on to determined imprecations, calling down a curse upon himself if his words were not true, as is meant by the words to curse; and invoking God as his witness, the meaning of to swear. His conduct, just as that of many good men since, under sudden and terrible temptation, shows what a demon lurks in the soul of every man, and shows, too, how important it is that we should hold our passions constantly under control. *If I do not watch over ourselves, if we would not fall like Peter. The cock crew.* It had crows before, but the second shrill cry penetrated the dull mind of the fallen disciple as the first had not.

**75. And Peter remembered.** The words which had been spoken at the supper on the evening before when Peter was declaring that he would die with his Lord, but would never forsake him. The word of Jesus. The word showed that Christ foresaw all the events of that terrible night. He went out. From the palace of the high-priest into the darkness. Wept bitterly. His tears were not repentance, nor even penitence (which is different from repentance), but were the outward token of the Saviour's inner working. In a nature like Peter's, tear-lay near the surface; another would have repented as sincerely without a sob. His real repentance was shown by his after conduct. He did not forsake the fellowship of the disciples, but sought them out; ran earliest to the empty tomb, was ready to believe in his risen Lord, and boldly preached on the day of Pentecost. Said Martin Luther, "If I could paint a portrait of Peter, I would write on every hair of his head, *fortitudo of sins*."

PLACE.—Jerusalem. The high-priest's palace.

RULERS.—Same as before.

DOCTRINAL SUGGESTION.—Human weakness.

#### QUESTIONS FOR SENIOR STUDENTS.

##### 1. Denying.

What does ver. 67 show of the temper of the crowd in the high-priest's palace?

What would be the natural treatment which such a crowd would give to one of the followers of their victim?

What possible feelings may have been in Peter's heart?

What feeling could have brought him there?

Where was Peter when the first mild accoster him?

What trait of character appeared in Peter's first denial?

What probably caused him to start away?

What differences can you see between Peter's three denials?

##### 2. Rep-uting.

What happened in the midst of Peter's denials?

What made the servants so sure that Peter was a Galilean?

Had Peter done any thing that should make him especially anxious not to be known?

When Peter heard the cock crew what happened?

When had Jesus spoken this word?

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