

Daily Bread with Brother Hwa-Chi (Not reviewed by the speaker, for personal use only)

Luke 22:47-62

Brothers and sisters, peace be with you, this is Hwa-Chi. Thank the Lord, it's time to read the bible again. We continue to read Luke chapter 22. Today we read verses 47 to 62.

Verse 47: "And while He was still speaking, behold, a multitude; and he who was called Judas, one of the twelve, went before them and drew near to Jesus to kiss Him."

Judas was listed among the twelve disciples. He had followed Jesus for a period of time, and he also knew that often, after Jesus had eaten supper, He liked to go with the disciples to the Garden of Gethsemane. Therefore, during the Passover feast, after he had eaten the bread, he left and went to the Jewish council to find the chief priests, scribes, and Pharisees to come and arrest Jesus. They probably had arranged a signal from the beginning: the one whom Judas kissed was the person they were to arrest.

Verse 48: "But Jesus said to him, 'Judas, are you betraying the Son of Man with a kiss?'"

Jesus was completely clear about what Judas was doing. In the Garden of Gethsemane, He also prayed earnestly to God the Father: "if it is possible, let this cup pass from Me; nevertheless, not as I will, but as You will." After Jesus prayed in painful struggle, in the end He fully came into harmony with God the Father. He knew everything that would happen next, and He was also able to respond to it calmly and peacefully. When He said, "Judas, are you betraying the Son of Man with a kiss?" I very much believe that His tone was not severe, not angry, but gentle, full

of sympathy and condescension. It was just as He knew from the beginning that Judas would betray Him, and also knew that Judas would steal money, yet He still had Judas manage their money bag. It seems that Jesus still repeatedly hoped that He might touch Judas's conscience, and perhaps he could still turn back and repent from this road of self-destruction; this was Jesus' thought. But the disciples beside Jesus did not know at all, so their reaction was intense.

Verse 49: "When those around Him saw what was going to happen, they said to Him, 'Lord, shall we strike with the sword?'"

They truly did love their Teacher. Having been with their Teacher for such a period of time, when their Teacher was in trouble, they were all willing to step forward.

Verse 50: "And one of them struck the servant of the high priest and cut off his right ear."

The other Gospels tell us that the one who used the sword was Peter. Peter was brave. Earlier he had even said, "Lord, I am ready to go with You, both to prison and to death." When Jesus was in trouble, he was the first to come forward, took up the sword, and struck toward the other person's body. As a result, he cut off the right ear of the servant of the high priest, whose name was Malchus.

Verse 51: "But Jesus answered and said, 'Permit even this.'" And He touched his ear and healed him.

After prayer, Jesus was calm and peaceful. He was willing to accept all the arrangements of God the Father, and He was willing to give Himself up willingly. So He touched that man's ear and healed him. Judas's betrayal of the Lord was certainly detestable; Peter loved the Lord and stepped forward for Jesus, but this kind of love was in the flesh. Love in the flesh often causes trouble, and in the end,

Jesus still had to clean up the situation for him. Very ironically, the last miracle Jesus performed before facing death was to put back and heal Malchus's right ear after it had been cut off by Peter.

Actually, what happened to the disciples in the Garden of Gethsemane back then is still constantly being repeated today among God's children. How many times have we gone against the voice in our conscience, become a temporary Judas, and betrayed Jesus? Every time you do something you clearly know you should not do, yet you still go against your conscience and do it, is that not the same as Judas?

Thank the Lord, through Jesus' gentle question, the difference between us and Judas is that we turned back again, and we repented again. But how many times, in our love that is in the flesh, in our self-righteous love, especially in God's house and in the church life, do we insist on our own methods and insist on our own opinions? We think we are loving the brothers and sisters, or loving our children, but many times this kind of love brings harm. Yet Jesus still gently uses His healing hand to help us with all kinds of mistakes we have committed in love.

Verse 52: "Then Jesus said to the chief priests, captains of the temple, and the elders who had come to Him, 'Have you come out, as against a robber, with swords and clubs?'"

Actually, what Jesus said here was precisely to awaken them: He was about to fulfill Isaiah 53. He was to be numbered with the transgressors and crucified with robbers.

Verse 53: "When I was with you daily in the temple, you did not try to seize Me. But this is your hour, and the power of darkness."

After prayer, having drawn upon the power from heaven, He could respond very calmly and peacefully to everything that was coming. Toward these people who were intent on killing Him, and who at the same time were the upper-class figures

in Jewish society—the chief priests, captains of the temple, scribes, and Pharisees—He pointed out the murderous intention in their hearts, as well as their weakness and cowardice. He was in the temple every day, and they had plenty of opportunities to arrest Him, yet they chose this time. What time was it? The time when darkness was in power.

Verse 54: “Having arrested Him, they led Him and brought Him into the high priest’s house. But Peter followed at a distance.”

From the later record in the Gospel of John, we know that after Jesus was arrested, He was first sent to the house of Annas the high priest. At that time, Annas was the high priest in name but without actual authority, while the high priest recognized by the Romans was his son-in-law Caiaphas. Although Annas had a name without official power, in the Jewish council he was a heavyweight figure, and he also controlled all the buying and selling in the temple. Therefore, when Jesus cleansed the temple, he was the first one to suffer loss. After the crowd arrested Jesus, logically speaking, they should have sent Him to Caiaphas. But as a result, they first sent Him to the house of Annas, this high priest in name but without actual authority. Peter followed at a distance.

Verse 55: “Now when they had kindled a fire in the midst of the courtyard and sat down together, Peter sat among them.”

Around the time of the Passover, the land of Judea was actually still quite cold. Peter could not enter into the high priest’s house, so he stayed with the servants in the courtyard. Because it was cold outside, they kindled a fire outside, and Peter was with them warming himself by the fire.

Verse 56: “And a certain servant girl, seeing him as he sat by the fire, looked intently at him and said, ‘This man was also with Him.’”

Earlier, Jesus had prophesied that Peter would deny Him three times, but Peter had said, "Lord, I am ready to go with You, both to prison and to death." At this moment, he saw his Teacher being humiliated by people inside the high priest's house, while he himself was in the outer courtyard warming himself by the fire together with servants and servant girls. And at this time, one of the servant girls recognized him as someone who had been with Jesus.

Verses 57-59: "But he denied Him, saying, 'Woman, I do not know Him.' And after a little while another saw him and said, 'You also are of them.' But Peter said, 'Man, I am not!' Then after about an hour had passed, another confidently affirmed, saying, 'Surely this fellow also was with Him, for he is a Galilean.'"

At that time, Galileans spoke Aramaic, and they all had a very strong Galilean accent when they spoke. So as soon as Peter denied it and began to speak, he immediately gave himself away, and people could hear that he was also a Galilean.

Verses 60-62: "But Peter said, 'Man, I do not know what you are saying!' Immediately, while he was still speaking, the rooster crowed. And the Lord turned and looked at Peter. Then Peter remembered the word of the Lord, how He had said to him, 'Before the rooster crows, you will deny Me three times.' So Peter went out and wept bitterly."

Many times, when we read this passage about Peter denying the Lord three times, I often find it inconceivable. How could someone like Peter, so full of the flesh, so bold, and so brave, deny the Lord under just a few questions from a servant girl? Let us first not be too harsh in accusing Peter, but think about the condition in each one of us. Actually, we are all the same as Peter. When what happens is not as we imagined, not as we expected, this is often when our faith is weakest. During the time Peter was with Jesus, he saw Him perform many miracles: walking on the sea, calming the wind and the sea, raising the dead, making the blind see, and making the lame walk. After seeing so many miracles, how could he have imagined that his

Teacher would be so weak as to be arrested, insulted, and humiliated by others? For a moment, he could not come to himself.

After all, when the other disciples scattered and fled, he still could not let go of his Teacher. He followed at a distance. He truly did love Jesus. He wanted to know what they would do to Jesus. When there is a gap between what we expected and what actually happens, that is also when our faith is weakest. Jesus had already warned him beforehand. Therefore, when he fell into the situation of others saying that he was one of Jesus' followers, and he was over there strongly defending himself, he had no time to reflect.

Many times, when we are trying hard to defend ourselves, we cannot hear the small voice of God in our hearts. Right at that time, the rooster crowed. This rooster crow was a salvation to him. At the first crow: his mind stopped, and he kept looking into the house. Right at that moment, Jesus also turned around and looked at Peter, and their eyes met. Peter's eyes: fear and terror; Jesus' eyes: gentle, peaceful, and full of encouragement. Through His eyes, Jesus said to Peter: "Child, it is all right. I know all these things. I have also already told you about these things." When Peter saw Jesus' kind, steady, and encouraging eyes, and immediately remembered the words Jesus had spoken to him, he went out and wept bitterly.

The blood of Jesus Christ cleanses us from our sins, and our tears can wash away the feeling of guilt in our conscience. Jesus had told Peter beforehand: you will deny Me three times. In fact, this was a foreshadowing left in advance. When Peter truly did it, he knew that Jesus still loved him, and that Jesus forgave him. His tears included repentance over his own arrogance and his own ignorance, and they also included gratitude toward Jesus. Afterward, they also included his sense of indebtedness toward Jesus; he was sorrowful and in pain.

In the Garden of Gethsemane, before the event happened, Jesus was in extreme sorrow before God, prayed with loud cries, then drew upon the power from heaven, calmly faced every situation that was to come, and overcame in the situation; this is Jesus. But as for us, our experiences are mostly like Peter's. After we have failed, become weak, and fallen, we see Jesus' kind eyes. It seems as if He

is telling us: I know. It is all right. Continue to stand up. Continue to go forward. These tears of repentance contain so much indebtedness and so much gratitude. These tears of repentance help us once again to stand up and follow the Lord.

Let us pray together: Lord, thank You. You always remember us. You know every one of our weaknesses, and You know every one of our failures, but You still continue to be with us and continue to encourage us, leading us onward with Your gentle and kind eyes. Facing Your love, on the one hand, we feel unworthy; on the other hand, we also feel relieved. You are so forbearing that even in our great failures, we can still continue to stand up and continue to follow. Therefore, we offer You our complete worship and praise. Let thanksgiving become the banner in my living today. Thank You. I pray in the holy name of Jesus Christ.