

Peter and the Angelic Conflict

Last week we studied the doctrine of the Angelic Conflict taken from an interpretation of the Gap theory between Gen1:1 and 1:2.

The Gap theory teaches the fall of Satan between Gen.1:1 and 1:2. Isaiah supported the Gap theory in Isa.45:18 – “For thus says the Lord, who created the heavens (He is the God who formed the earth and made it, He established it and did not create it a waste place, but formed it to be inhabited), I am the Lord, and there is none else.”

How the Angelic Conflict attacked a spiritual mature believer named Peter by the following FIVE points.

1. **We will begin by studying a five point homiletical outline of the events surrounding Peter’s three denials as part of the Angelic Conflict.**

- **Setting** (26:57, 69) – Second Jewish trial before the high priest Caiaphas.
- **Scene** (26:69; Luke 22:55-56; John 18:15-18) - Caiaphas’ home courtyard fireplace during the middle of a cold night.
- **Seven quotes** (26:34, 69-75; Mark 14:22; John 18:10, 26-27) – Involved in Peter’s three denials.
- **Sorrow** (27:75; Luke 22:61-62) – Prophecy formula - 1 rooster, 2 crowings, and 3 denials.
- **Satan** (Luke 22:31-32) – Sifting in the Angelic conflict.

“Truly I say to you, that you yourself this very night, before the cock crows twice, shall three times deny Me.” (Mark 14:30) **1 rooster, 2 crowings, and 3 denials**

2. **Peter is experiencing Jesus’ doctrinal warning of Satan’s sifting test in the Angelic conflict:**

(Luke 22:31-32) “Simon, Simon, behold, Satan has demanded permission to sift you like wheat; but I have prayed for you, that your faith may not fail; and you, when once you have turned again, strengthen your brothers.” (Last Supper / same day).

Peter’s faith lapsed but did not fail. He got shot in the angelic conflict but it wasn’t fatal – “In addition to all, taking up the shield of faith with which you will be able to extinguish all the flaming missiles of the evil one.” (Eph.6:16)

This is the same Peter who earlier had vowed to die but never deny Jesus Christ – “But Peter answered and said to Him, ‘Even though all may fall away because of You, I will never fall away.’ Jesus said to him, ‘Truly I say to you that this night, before the cock crows, you shall deny Me three times.’ Peter said to Him, ‘Even if I have to die with You, I will not deny you.’ All the disciples said the same thing too.” (Matt.26:33-35)

Peter was sincere when he made this vow. But his sincerity couldn’t prevent his being sifted by Satan in the angelic conflict.

What could have prevented it?
Why is Peter going through it?
What did Jesus pray for Peter?

3. Jesus knew that Peter had rejected the truth of the doctrine of the Passion and had suppressed the warning of denial so He gave him a sign for the conscience to bring him back to the reality of truth.

[1 rooster, 2 crowings, and 3 denials].

Peter was in denial before his denial – “And Peter took Him aside and began to rebuke Him, saying, ‘God forbid it, Lord! This shall never happen to You.’” (Matt.16:21-23) [Passion]

Peter will deny because he was in denial – “Truly I say to you that this very night, before the cock crows, you shall deny Me three times.” (Matt.26:34) [denial]

When the rooster crowed the first time, he had a deaf ear. It didn’t register to Peter because he was pre-occupied with OMCD defense mechanism.

It took a second crowing and Jesus being led out of Caiaphas’ house and Jesus looking at Peter for Peter to come to his senses – “And the Lord turned and looked at Peter. And Peter remembered the word of the Lord, how He told him, ‘Before a cock crows today, you will deny Me three times.’” (Luke 22:61)

4. When Peter was put under maximum pressure, he reverted to OMCD core thinking and behaving rather than NMDV.

Peter reacted by fear and flight (OMCD) rather than faith and fight (NMDV) – “I have fought the good fight, I have finished the course, I have kept the faith.” (2 Tim.4:7; 1 Pet.5:6-10)

For example, in Peter’s second denial, he swore by an oath to God (horkos/ Matt.5:34-37) in order to confirm to others he was telling the truth when in fact he was lying (Matt.26:71). Jesus warned the disciples of using this as a form of evil.

Peter’s OMCD had a need to feel in control in order to find acceptance and significant by others much like Martha (Luke 10:38-42). Peter’s response to maximum stress has pushed him out of his pattern of control into fear and flight. He feels out of control and helpless and at the mercy of others who appear to be gaining control over his life. He doesn’t recognize that he is giving them this power.

Peter is so pre-occupied with self-survival performance that he missed the first crowing and probably would have missed the second if it had not been so dramatic (Luke 22:60-62).

5. His sense of failure and remorse so over-whelmed Peter that he wept bitterly.

This is also typical OMCD reaction to defeat and feeling of misery. In Peter’s mind, he was unable to perform to be rewarded, pleased, and accepted by Jesus.

Principle: It crushed Peter but it didn’t cure him nor did it change him.

For real change to occur, he must confess his sin and be willing to walk consistently by the filling ministry of the indwelling Holy Spirit (1 John 1:9; Gal.5:16, 22-23). Then Peter must begin a spiritual growth process of putting off OMCD (his will) and putting on NMDV (God’s will) by the faith cycle (Eph.4:22-24; Rom.12:2; 2 Cor.5:7).

“Simon, Simon, behold, Satan has demanded permission to sift you like wheat; but I have prayed for you, that your faith may not fail; and you, when once you have turned again, strengthen your brothers.”

**Isn’t it good to know that the Lord is praying for real change to occur in us
(Luke 22:31-32; Heb.7:25).**