

sheep being scattered.” And even though they will “**all**” fail the test, yet Jesus is confident that He will **gather** them all **together** after the awful events which scatter them. “**28 "But after I have been raised, I will go before you to Galilee."** Here again Jesus tells them of His **resurrection** but one wonders if they **realize** what is about to come upon the Lord on this very night. The Lord will face the **greatest trial** of His **earthly life** in the hours that follow, and His dearest friends will not be able to stand **with Him**, but He will face it **alone**. Though this be true, the **Good Shepherd** seeks to encourage them now with a **promise** meant to give them **hope** in the **dark days** that follow. They will indeed **fall away**, but Jesus will meet them again in their **hometown** on the shores of **Galilee**. Trials must come to all Christians, yet we always face them with the **sure promises** of the **Lord** to help us stand in the day of **testing**. Even when days become **dark** and all **hope seems lost**, yet our **Shepherd** will never leave us or forsake us, but yet will **gather** us together by His side. Now Peter and the others have a heart to stand with the Lord, but they will find the test to great. “**29 But Peter said to Him, "Even though all may fall away, yet I will not."** **30 And Jesus said to him, "Truly I say to you, that you yourself this very night, before a cock crows twice, shall three times deny Me."** **31 But Peter kept saying insistently, "Even if I have to die with You, I will not deny You!"** Peter’s resolve is commendable as he longs to stand by the Lord’s side and defend him even if “**all may fall away**.” But this **test** will prove too great and Peter will surely cower this night to a young servant girl. Knowing this terrible fate that will soon come upon Peter, **Jesus reassures** him that he will yet have an opportunity to “**strengthen your brothers**.” Jesus here gives **two** incredible **prophecies** to be fulfilled in the days that follow. **First**, that Peter will **deny** Jesus “**before a cock crows twice**,” and **second**, that Peter will again be restored and “**strengthen**” his brothers.

Luke 22:31-34 - 31 "Simon, Simon, behold, Satan has demanded permission to sift you like wheat; 32 but **I have prayed for you, that your faith may not fail; and you, when once you have turned again, strengthen your brothers.** " 33 And he said to Him, "Lord, with You I am ready to go both to prison and to death!" 34 And He said, "I say to you, Peter, the cock will not crow today until you have denied three times that you know Me." NASB

Indeed, both of **Jesus prophecies** here were **fulfilled** within a few short **weeks**. Take note here also that this **test** was not only the failure of Peter’s promise to stand by the Lord, but “**they all were saying the same thing, too**.” We commonly think of **Peter’s denial** of the Lord as He was so vocal about standing with the Lord. But let us see that in this **dark hour**, the disciples **all** had promised the **same** thing. Here is the contrast of **human weakness** and **divine grace** to uphold us. The faith of Christians may **fail** for an **hour**, but the Lord will uphold and restore us.

We will persevere, even though in our **weakness** and **trials** we may seem to **falter**. And these the Lord uses to **strengthen** and **refine us**, to purify our hearts from the **pride** of **self-reliance**, and to cleanse us with the graces of **faith** and **humility** as we must always **look to Him** in **trusting dependence** in the midst of our failure and trial.

Mark 14:32-41 - 32 And they came to a place named Gethsemane; and He said to His disciples, "Sit here until I have prayed." 33 And He took with Him Peter and James and John, and began to be very distressed and troubled. 34 And He said to them, "My soul is deeply grieved to the point of death; remain here and keep watch." 35 And He went a little beyond them, and fell to the ground, and began to pray that if it were possible, the hour might pass Him by. 36 And He was saying, "Abba! Father! All things are possible for Thee; remove this cup from Me; yet not what I will, but what Thou wilt." 37 And He came and found them sleeping, and said to Peter, "Simon, are you asleep? Could you not keep watch for one hour? 38 "Keep watching and praying, that you may not come into temptation; the spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak." 39 And again He went away and prayed, saying the same words. 40 And again He came and found them sleeping, for their eyes were very heavy; and they did not know what to answer Him. 41 And He came the third time, and said to them, "Are you still sleeping and taking your rest? It is enough; the hour has come; behold, the Son of Man is being betrayed into the hands of sinners. NASB

Now the scene has changed and we find ourselves **outside** the **city** after **dark**. Here **Jesus** will **struggle** greatly with the hours ahead knowing the things He will face. In this struggle of His **humanity**, Jesus will **seek** the **Father** in **prayer** and in great agony appeal to God to somehow deliver Him from the coming evil brutality of men, and yet worse, **separation** from the Father. **“32 And they came to a place named Gethsemane; and He said to His disciples, “Sit here until I have prayed.” 33 And He took with Him Peter and James and John.”** Jesus immediately goes to **prayer** as they enter the garden knowing that the **hour** of His **trial** is **upon Him**. He takes His three closest disciples, the inner three, to accompany Him to the place of **agony**. Now verse 33 says, **“and began to be very distressed and troubled.”** Here Jesus **humanity** is on display again on Mark’s Gospel. Even as **Jesus** showed the other **human characteristics** such as hunger, tiredness, and a range of emotions, even a lack of omniscience, here He is **“very distressed and troubled.”** Obviously, the Divine nature in Christ is not and cannot be **“distressed and troubled,”** but in very real and **human** terms, **Jesus the man** in His human nature is moved to be greatly distressed. **“34 And He said to them, “My soul is deeply grieved to the point of death; remain here and keep**