

THE GOSPEL OF JOHN 18B (10-27)

¹⁰Then Simon Peter, having a sword, drew it and smote the slave of the high priest, and cut off his ear, the right *one*. And the name of the slave was Malchos. ¹¹Then Jesus said to Peter, “Put your sword into the sheath; the cup which the Father has given to Me, shall I not drink it?”

Christ instructs them to buy swords yet not in order to arm themselves but foreshadowing the betrayal. The right ear is mentioned pointing out that he almost beheaded him...Christ, however, allowed no harm to ensue. For he healed him and demonstrated a great miracle. It was enough to indicate at once his forbearance and his power... (Chrys.)

The zeal here from Peter confirms his previous promise to walk with Jesus to the death...But the disciples still have not understood the meaning of the passion of the Messiah.” (Bishop Gerasimos, commentary on John)

Cyril of Alexandria: “For perfect virtue consists not in retaliation of like for like but is rather seen in perfect forbearance.”

¹²Then the cohort and the tribune and the officers of the Jews arrested Jesus and bound Him, ¹³and led Him away to Annas first; for he was *the* father-in-law of Caiaphas who was high priest that year. ¹⁴Now Caiaphas was the *one* who gave counsel to the Jews that “it is expedient for one man to perish for the people.”

Saint Chrysostom: “Why does the evangelist remind us of this prophecy? He is declaring that these things came to pass for our salvation. Such is the exceeding force of the truth, that even the enemies proclaimed these things beforehand.” [Hom. 83, P.G. 59:491 (col. 449).]

⁴⁹*But a certain one of them, Caiaphas, being high priest of that year, said to them, “Ye know nothing at all, ⁵⁰“nor consider that it is expedient for us that one man should die for the people, and not that the whole nation should perish.”*

⁵¹*But he said this not of himself; but being high priest that year, he prophesied that Jesus was about to die for the nation; ⁵²and not for the nation only, but that He also should gather together into one the children of God who have been scattered abroad. ⁵³Then from that day they took counsel together among themselves, in order that they might put Him to death. ⁵⁴Jesus therefore was no longer walking openly among the Jews... [Jn. 11:48-54]*

¹⁵And Simon Peter was following Jesus, and so *did* another disciple. And that disciple was known to the high priest, and entered together with Jesus into the court of the high priest. ¹⁶But Peter was standing at the door outside. Then the other disciple, who was known to the high priest, went out and spoke to the doorkeeper, and brought in Peter.

Chrysostom: “Who is that other disciple? It is the writer himself...Here also he mentions a deed greatly to his credit, that when all had run away, John followed. Therefore, John conceals himself and puts Peter before him. He was obliged to mention himself so that you might understand that he narrates more exactly than the rest what took place in the hall since he was inside.”

Fr. Behr: “The early writers (2nd C, Irenaeus, Polycarp) trace the celebration of Pascha to John himself. The disciples of John were the only ones to have an annual celebration of Pascha up to

the 2nd C on the 14th of Nissan, the day he was crucified. John founded a school of disciples. Eventually it is decided to celebrate Pascha on the Sunday following the 14th of Nissan. Polycarp, says that John was a “high priest” of the “Temple” in Jerusalem. The “temple” however, in the terms of the Gospel of John, is the Body of Christ. In this sense it is John who is standing at the Cross with Christ witnessing the offering of Christ. John is the “high-priest” of the Paschal mystery.

17Then the maidservant, the doorkeeper, said to Peter, “You also are *one* of this Man’s disciples, are you not?” That one said, “I am not.” 18And the slaves and the officers were standing and warming themselves, having made a fire of coals, for it was cold. And Peter was with them, standing and warming himself.

Chrysostom: “Peter was permitted to be the first to fall, in order that he might be less severe to sinners from the remembrance of his own fall...Peter, the teacher and master of the whole world, sinned, and he obtained pardon in order that judges might from there on out might have that rule to go by in dispensing pardon.”

19The high priest then questioned Jesus about His disciples and about His teaching. 20Jesus answered him, “I spoke openly to the world; I always taught in synagogue and in the temple, where the Jews always come together; and in secret I spoke nothing. 21“Why do you question Me? Question those who have heard what I spoke to them; behold, these know what I said.”

Bp. Gerasimos: The interrogation begins seeking a charge against him. This takes place before the meeting of the Sanhedrin.

Saint Chrysostom: “What then? Did He never speak in secret? Indeed, He was, but not as they were thinking, from fear, and to make conflicts, but if at any time His utterances were too lofty for the hearing of the many.”

22But after He said these things, one of the officers, who was standing by, gave Jesus a slap on the face with the palm of his hand, saying, “Thus You answer the high priest?” 23Jesus answered him, “If I spoke evilly, bear witness concerning the evil; but if well, why do you smite Me?” 24Annas sent Him bound to Caiaphas the high priest. 25Now Simon Peter was standing and warming himself. They said therefore to him, “Are you not also *one* of His disciples?” That one denied *it*, and said, “I am not.” 26One of the slaves of the high priest, being a kinsman of him whom Peter cut off the ear, said, “I saw you in the garden with Him, did I not?” 27Peter then denied again; and straightway a cock crowed.

Chrysostom: “...a servant hits him. It is not a trial they are carrying on but a conspiracy and a tyranny. Not knowing what else to do they send him to Caiaphas.”

Cyril of Alexandria: “Even the disciples were frail at first. But when they had received the Spirit of Almighty God, they cast aside their native weakness and by communion with Him obtained great boldness...For we are taught through this example not to slacken in God’s service by inconsiderately dwelling on our own infirmities. We are, rather to trust in Him who is able to make all of us strong, and we are to boast in God’s miraculous works and favor shown to us who were beyond hope.”