CHAPTER NINE

JESUS' APPEARANCE BEFORE THE JEWISH AUTHORITIES AND PETER'S DENIAL


Luke's and John's accounts of Jesus' appearance before the Jewish authorities agree in that neither constitutes a formal trial with witnesses called and a verdict handed down, whereas in Mark and Matthew this is the case. Further, as we'll see, there are signs that Luke agrees with John in seeing Annas as the primary Jewish dignitary present at the hearing. 1

1 Though in Luke and John, as in the other two gospels, the account of the hearing is closely connected with Peter's denial, there is only one slight parallel between Luke's and John's accounts of the latter. In Luke, Peter's second denial takes the form ἀνθρωπε, οὐκ εἴμι, and it is possible that this has influenced John in his phrasing of the first and second denials (both: οὐκ εἴμι); if so, his reason for following Luke here but not elsewhere in the passage is that Luke provided him with a phrase contrasting nicely with Jesus' twice-repeatedly ἐγώ εἶμι in John's arrest scene. However, it is also possible that the agreement here is purely accidental; the answer in Peter's mouth οὐκ εἴμι is a most natural one, and John, in the course of producing an account of the denial more stylized than those in the synoptic gospels (see for example the fact that the statements accusing Peter all take the form of questions addressed to him), may have hit upon it quite independently. Schniewind, op. cit., pp. 49 ff. (following H. J. Holtzmann, op. cit., p. 77) maintains that Luke and John for their accounts of the denial draw on related traditions. According to him, John, in whose account the denial is interrupted by the hearing, after which Jesus is led away to Caiaphas' palace, recounts directly what in Luke is less clearly narrated, or rather hinted at; Schniewind believes, that is to say, that the hour intermission mentioned in 22. 57 and Jesus' glance at Peter mentioned in 22. 61 presuppose that Jesus was led out of the palace and passed by Peter in doing so. The correspondence, however, which Schniewind maintains exists between the two accounts, does not stand the text of a close analysis of the texts. The hour mentioned in Luke occurs after the second denial, whereas the hearing in John occurs after the first; and διαστάσεως ὁσεὶ ὁρας μᾶς in v. 59 is Luke's creation which he brings instead of Mark's μετὰ μικρὸν because, after the μετὰ βραχύ in v. 58 with which Luke replaces Mk. 14. 68 b, μετὰ μικρὸν would constitute no buildup, which is what Luke, who is leading up to the climax of the third denial capped by the crowing cock and Jesus' glance, wants. Further, it is clear that Jesus' gaze in Luke is created by the evangelist in order to enhance the climax; it comes, moreover, after the third denial, whereas in John's account Jesus is led out of the palace after the first. Actually both Luke and John derive the rudiments of their denial accounts from Mark. For Mark this
However, the divergencies between Luke and John here, which we shall have to take into account in analyzing the similarities, are marked. Luke records that Jesus (followed by Peter) is led to the palace of the highpriest, 1 whereupon Peter’s denial is recorded in its entirety; then Jesus is mocked by his captors, led next morning before the Sanhedrin (called in v. 66 the πρεσβυτέριον), examined and sent to Pilate. In John Jesus is taken to Annas, whereupon Peter (gaining admission to the palace by means of “another disciple”) denies Jesus once; Jesus is then questioned by Caiaphas, 2 struck by one of his underlings and sent by Annas to Caiaphas who sends him on to Pilate — and Peter, remaining behind at Annas’, denies Jesus a second and third time. All this occurs at night in John’s account.

To understand the significance of the common Lucan-Johannine elements here, we must ascertain what the sources of both were at this point. Luke uses Mark in his account of the examination scene, 3 but departs from him as far as the order of the events is concerned as well as in the elements which he has in common with John. 4 John’s account as it stands is impossible. Why is Jesus taken to Annas’ palace if he is to be questioned by Caiaphas there, and why, if Caiaphas questioned him at Annas’, does Annas then send him to Caiaphas? Why is Jesus’ transferal to Caiaphas’ mentioned when absolutely nothing of what went on there is described? Further, how is the “other disciple” able to introduce Peter into Annas’ palace on the basis of his acquaintance with Caiaphas (for so v. 16 must be understood), and why does Peter, when Jesus is led to Caiaphas, remain behind at Annas’ palace? 5

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1 On who is meant, see below.
2 His identity as the highpriest referred to in vv. 16, 19 and 22, as the text stands, is assured by vv. 13 and 24.
3 Compare 22.67a, 69, 71 and Mk 14.61b, 62, 63 b. He probably also uses Mark for the mocking: see προφήτηρον in Mk. 14.65 and Lk. 22.64.
4 How cleverly Luke alters Mark is indicated by his use of Mark in v. 71 which, because of his omission of Mk. 14.55-60, no longer means, as in Mark, “Why do we need further witnesses?”, but “Why do we need any witnesses at all?”
5 Following Euthymius Zigabenus, Zahn and Plummer in their commentaries, ad loc., postulate that Annas and Caiaphas lived in different parts of the same palace, but there is no justification in the text whatever for this assumption. Since such a state of affairs is not what one would expect, it