

Year Of The Rooster

Admiral Zheng He of the Ming Dynasty in China was supposed to have introduced the Asiatic chickens to South America in his extensive maritime exploits of the 1420's.¹ Unlike the European rooster whose morning wakeup call is 'cock-a-doodle-doo', the Asiatic version is 'kik-kiri-kee'. Apart from rousing one from sleep, the call of the rooster can awaken one's conscience. Let me tell you an incident.²

A rooster once crowed. A man quietly went out into the night and wept bitterly. His name was Simon Peter. Why did an adult, a rough fisherman by profession, the recognised leader among a closely knit band of disciples of Jesus Christ, weep? There were at least three reasons.



Firstly, Simon had not believed the words of his Teacher, Jesus Christ. His Teacher had told him that before the rooster crowed, he would have denied Him three times. The holy book of the Jews, which is the same as the Old Testament of the Bible, foretold the coming of a Saviour who would save His people by offering up a perfect sacrifice on their behalf. Jesus Christ claimed that He was that promised Saviour, and that He would soon lay down His life to save many. If Simon believed such great truths, He should have believed the lesser truth that he would soon deny his Teacher.

Secondly, Simon realised that he was not as strong and capable as he thought himself to be. When Jesus Christ was arrested he was one of the first to flee. And when challenged, he had denied his Master three times. Jesus Christ had known of Simon's weakness. He had known of the weakness of the human race. All of us are weak in our bodies, our character, and our nature. Even the most successful man is full of failures and weaknesses. We have actually inherited a sinful nature, with all the adverse effects of sin, from the first couple on earth – namely, from Adam and Eve.³

Thirdly, Simon had disappointed a unique Person who should have been loved and trusted completely. Jesus Christ was actually the Son of God who had taken on perfect human nature. He had announced that soon He would die for the sin of His people. Simon had trusted Him, although he had not understood everything. Now, Simon had disappointed this unique Person by denying Him. Happily, Jesus Christ appeared to Simon after His death and resurrection. Simon's faith was restored. He was one of those for whom Christ died to save.⁴

The rooster crowed, and Simon Peter wept. We should be weeping, too. We have not wanted to hear the truth. We have thought ourselves so strong and capable, but many of us have faced severe setbacks and are unhappy. As the years roll by, we realise that life is so frail and fragile. We will soon pass away and face the judgement of God. But there is hope for us – in Jesus Christ alone. He is to be loved and trusted completely. He has said, "Come to Me, all you who labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For My yoke is easy and My burden is light."⁵

1. "1421: The year China Discovered the World", by Gavin Menzies, 2003 (Bantam Books).

2. Matt. 26:69-75. 3. Rom. 5:14-15; 4. John 21:15-19; 5. Matt. 11:28-30.