

Peter

Peter's original name was Symeon in Hebrew but, like many Jews, he adopted also Simon as a Greek name of similar sound.

His father's name was Jonah [Matthew 16:17]. **He was married [Mark 1:30] and in his missionary days his wife accompanied him, [1 Corinthians 9:5 – Cephas is Aramaic for Peter].**

Peter originated from Bethsaida, [John 1:44] but he had a home in Capernaum [Mark 1:21, 29-31]. Both places were at the lakeside where Peter worked as a fisherman, and in both places there would be abundant contact with Gentiles, [his brother's name Andrew was Greek].

Peter spoke Aramaic with a strong north country accent, [Mark 14:70] and maintained the piety and outlook of his people [Acts 10:14], **though not trained in the law, [Acts 4:13] literacy is not the question.**

It is very likely that Peter was affected by John the Baptist's preaching [Acts 1:22] and his brother Andrew being a disciple of John the Baptist, [John 1:35-40].

Peter's first introduction to Jesus Christ was by Andrew [John 1:41-42] makes Peter's response to the subsequent call by Jesus Christ more intelligible, [Mark 1:16-18].

Jesus Christ's call was a simple *"come follow me"* [Mark 1:17].

Jesus Christ's last words to Peter were *"you follow me"* [John 21:22].

Every step on the way between these two challenges, Peter never failed to follow Jesus Christ, even though he often stumbled.

When Jesus Christ entered Peter's life, this fisherman became a new person with new goals and new priorities.

The call to the intimate band of the twelve disciples followed soon after, [Mark 3:13-19].

It was as a disciple that Peter received his new title, the Aramaic *"Cephas"* meaning stone or pebble [John 1:42] usually appearing in the New Testament in the Greek form Petros.

There is nothing to suggest that the words of **Matthew 16:18** represents the first bestowal of the name, Petros.

[Please download and study the article on this website under the main heading of *'Bible Study'* with the title *"Who Do You Say I Am" – Matthew 16:15-19*.]

Peter was one of the first disciples called, and is always named first in the lists of the disciples.

Peter was also one of the three who formed an inner circle round Jesus Christ, [Mark 5:37; Mark 9:2; Mark 14:33, etc.]

Peter's impulsive devotion is frequently portrayed, [Matthew 14:28; Mark 14:29; Luke 5:8; John 21:7].

Peter also acted as spokesman for the twelve, [Matthew 15:15; Matthew 18:21; Mark 1:36-37; Mark 8:29; Mark 9:5; Mark 10:28; Mark 11:21; Luke 5:5; Luke 12:41].

Any satisfactory interpretation of Mark 9:1, the transfiguration, is intimately related to the disciples' confession which precedes it, [Mark 8:29].

This experience had a lasting impression on Peter, [1 Peter 5:1; 2 Peter 1:16], Peter personally received a visitation of the resurrection of Jesus Christ, [Luke 24:34; 1 Corinthians 15:5].

When Jesus Christ was choosing his band of disciples to work with Him to spread the message He had brought from God the Father, He was looking for real people who could be changed by His love for them.

Such a choice communicated to all other people that their acceptance by Him is available to anyone, even to those who often stumble and failed as Peter did.

We may wonder what Jesus Christ sees in us when He calls us to follow Him; Peter also wondered this at times, [Luke 5:8] but we know that Jesus Christ accepted Peter in spite of his failures.

Peter went on to do great things for God. Are you willing to keep following Jesus Christ even when you stumble or failed to follow His example perfectly?

More lessons we can learn from Peter's life –

Enthusiasm has to be backed up by faith, trust and understanding, or it fails.

God's faithfulness can compensate for our great unfaithfulness when we in human weakness fail.

It is better to be a faithful follower who fails at times than a person who fails to follow the example of Jesus Christ.