

=MAJOR CHARACTERS OF THE BIBLE=

Lesson 10

Peter

I. PETER'S EARLY LIFE.

1. His name by birth was Simon, which means "hearing."
2. He was brought up in his father's occupation, that of a fisherman.
3. He and his brother, Andrew, were partners of James and John, the sons of Zebedee. Review Matthew 4:18; Mark 1:16; Luke 5:3.
4. Peter was probably born in Bethsaida.
5. When he first became known in the Gospel, he was married and living in Capernaum in his own house, which must have been a rather large one. Read Matthew 8:14; Luke 4:38.
6. He was probably over thirty years of age when he was called to be a follower of Jesus Christ.

II. THE MINISTRY OF PETER.

1. He was brought to Jesus by his brother, Andrew. See John 1:41, 42.
2. His name was changed to Peter, which means "rock." Notice Matthew 16:16-18.
3. Peter received three separate calls from Jesus:
 - 1) To become His disciple. Study John 1:40, 41.
 - 2) To become His constant companion. Consider Matthew 4:19; Mark 1:17.
 - 3) To be His apostle. Read Matthew 10:2; Mark 3:14-16; Luke 6:13, 14.
4. He was the leader of the disciples of Jesus Christ.
5. He is always named first in the list of the apostles. Notice Matthew 10:2, Mark 3:16; Luke 6:14; Acts 1:13.
6. In the intimate group of the three favorite disciples, he is also always named first. Read Matthew 17:1; Mark 5:37; 9:2; 13:3; 14:33; Luke 8:51; Acts 1:13.
7. He was the spokesman of the apostles. He was the first to confess Jesus as the Son of God. See Matthew 16:16; Mark 8:29.
8. He and John were the first to visit the sepulchre. Peter was the first to enter it.
9. He performed the first Christian miracle.
10. It was Peter who reminded the assembled multitudes on the Day of Pentecost of the meaning of the occasion as prophesied in Joel. Read Acts 2:16.
11. It was Peter who preached the great sermon at Pentecost. Study Acts 2:14-38; Acts 10. He also preached to the Gentiles in the house of Cornelius.
12. Peter was one of the three who was taken to the Mount of Transfiguration.
13. He was granted a special appearance after the resurrection of Christ. Review I Corinthians 15:5.

III. PETER'S LATTER YEARS.

1. After the founding of the church and the establishment of Christianity, Peter is mentioned very little. To be sure, he was better as a "beginner" than he was as a "finisher." He was a tremendous leader of a new movement, rather than the continual leader of a growing movement. Hence, the events in his life are very rarely listed after the founding of the church.
2. He traveled about preaching the Gospel, accompanied by his wife. Read I Corinthians 9:5. It is thought that Peter and Paul were founders of the church at Rome and maybe suffered death in that city.
3. He glorified the Saviour by suffering a martyr's death. See John 21:19. Exactly what this death was, we do not know. It is generally believed that it was by crucifixion, as was Jesus' death. Tradition has it that he refused to be crucified in the same manner as Christ, not feeling worthy, but rather was crucified upside down as an act of humility. Perhaps old age had changed Peter in that he was not quite as brash and brazen as he used to be.