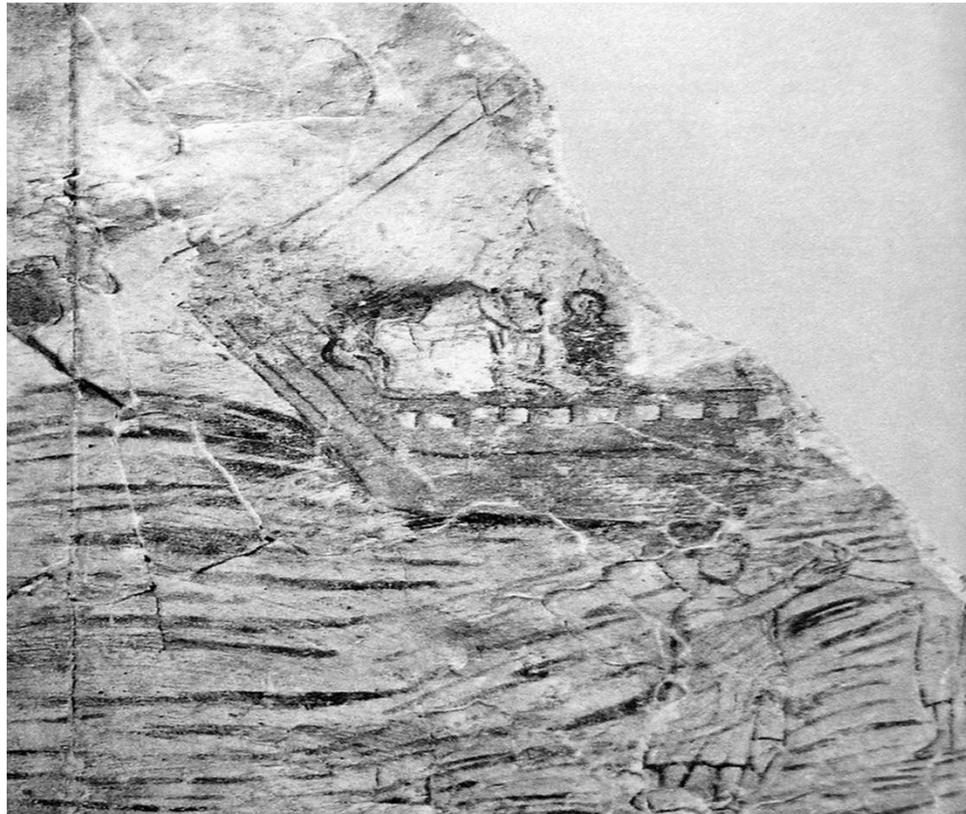


Simon Bar Jonah: The Historical Saint Peter

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Presented by: Jack Dalby



Who Is Peter?

Peter the Apostle was a well-known figure in early Christianity. Although there is no information on the life of Peter outside the Bible, in the Christian tradition, he is often depicted as the first on many occasions: the first to be called by Jesus, the first who recognized Jesus as 'the Christ', the first disciple to receive a post-resurrection appearance by Jesus; and retrospectively, the first pope of Rome. He is referred to as Simon Peter, Simeon, and Simon, son of Jonah. Paul often referred to him as Cephas, Aramaic for either 'crag' or 'stone', translated into the Latin '*Petrus*', Peter. – worldhistory.org

Our Sources



Problems With Our Sources

Any conventional quest for the “historical Peter” runs into the ground rather swiftly. There are of course a variety of relevant early Christian sources,...yet they remain remarkably vague or silent about many of the things we would like to know about this apostle’s origin, character, missionary career and death. Why would these sources show such a lack of interest in the fate of such a prominent apostle? – Markus Bockmuehl, *Simon Peter in Scripture and Memory*

The Letters Of Paul

- Undisputed: Romans, 1 Corinthians, 2 Corinthians, Galatians, Philippians, 1 Thessalonians, Philemon
- Deutero-Pauline Epistles: Ephesians, Colossians, 2 Thessalonians
- Pastoral Epistles: 1 Timothy, 2 Timothy, Titus

The Gospel Of Mark

- The Gospel of Mark is our earliest gospel.
- It was written around 65-70 CE.
- The authorship is unknown.
- Mark took oral and perhaps written stories of Jesus and created a narrative.
- Mark's message is to establish Jesus as the messiah sent from God to fulfill the Jewish scriptures.
- Jesus' followers struggle to grasp who he is.
- The “**messianic secret**” describes Jesus' desire to keep his identity secret.

Who Was Papias?

The earliest source of this tradition deals with only two early Christian Gospels, Mark and Matthew. This is an enigmatic source, an early Christian church Father named Papias, who wrote a five-volume work called Expositions of the Sayings of the Lord. Scholars have plausibly dated the work anywhere from 110-40 CE., forty to seventy years after the first Gospel. The work no longer survives. Everything we know about the work comes from quotations of it by later church fathers. In some of the quotations of the Expositions that survive, Papias states that he personally talked with Christians who had known a group of people he calls “the elders,” who had known some of the disciples, and that he has passed along information that he received from them. And so, in reading Papias, we have access to third or fourth-hand information: Papias tells us what one-time companions of people who knew disciples told him. – Bart Ehrman Blog, 6/1/13

Was “Mark” Peter’s Transcriber?

This is what the elder used to say, “when Mark was the interpreter [*Or: translator*] of Peter he wrote down accurately everything that he recalled of the Lord’s words and deeds – but not in order. For he neither heard the Lord nor accompanied him; but later, as I indicated, he accompanied Peter, who used to adapt his teachings for the needs at hand, not arranging, as it were, an orderly composition of the Lord’s sayings. And so Mark did nothing wrong by writing some of the matters as he remembered them. For he was intent on just one purpose: not to leave out anything that he heard or to include any falsehood among them.”

He goes on, then, to say about Matthew:

And so Matthew composed the sayings in the Hebrew tongue, and each one interpreted [*Or: translated*] them to the best of his ability. -

Eusebius, Church History, 3. 39

The Gospel Of Matthew

- The Gospel of Matthew was written around 80-85CE.
- The Gospel of Matthew is anonymous.
- Matthew copied/edited much of the Gospel of Mark.
- It contains additional stories from “Q” and “M.”
- He adds several important stories including Jesus’ genealogy, his birth and the Sermon on the Mount.
- Matthews main emphasis is the Jewishness of Jesus, the importance of following Jewish law and the fact that **Jesus is fulfilling Old Testament prophecy.**
- Ironically, Matthew also passionately attacks Jewish leaders.

The Gospel Of Luke

- The Gospel of Luke is believed to have been written after the Gospel of Matthew, around 85-90CE.
- Like Matthew and Mark, Luke is anonymous.
- It is a 2-volume set, with the Acts of the Apostles.
- Luke uses many of the stories found in Mark.
- It contains additional stories from “Q” and “L.”
- Luke presents different birth and genealogy stories.
- Luke presents the only childhood story of Jesus.
- Luke may have been a gentile.
- Luke’s emphasis is on how salvation moved from Jews to non-Jews. He portrays Jesus as a prophet.

The Gospel Of John

- The Gospel of John was written around 95 CE.
- Its authorship is unknown.
- Unlike his 1 year ministry in the synoptics, Jesus preaches for nearly 3 years in the Gospel of John.
- The gospel follows a similar plot line but uses different stories.
- It is thought that this gospel was written for Jews who believed Jesus was the messiah, but had been excluded from their local synagogue.
- Unlike the synoptics, Jesus is portrayed as divine, the pre-existent word of God.

Acts Of The Apostles

- Acts of the Apostles written circa 90-110 CE.
- The second part of the Gospel of Luke.
- Author unknown.
- Luke/Acts Constitutes 27.5% of NT.
- Tells of the founding of the Christian Church beginning with the ascension of Jesus.
- Peter and Saul/Paul are the heroes of Acts.
- One of its main themes is to normalize the admission of gentiles into a previously all Jewish Jesus cult.

Peter In The Letters Of Paul



Paul Meets Cephas

“Then after three years I did go up to Jerusalem to visit Cephas and stayed with him for fifteen days; but I did not see any other apostle except James the Lord’s brother. In what I am writing to you, before God, I do not lie!” – Galatians 1:18-20

Peter And The Corinthian Church

For it has been made clear to me by Chloe's people that there are quarrels among you, my brothers and sisters. What I mean is that each of you says, "I belong to Paul," or "I belong to Apollos," or "I belong to Cephas," or "I belong to Christ." Has Christ been divided? Was Paul crucified for you? Or were you baptized in the name of Paul? - 1 Corinthians 1:11-14

Paul's vs. The Apostles

Then after fourteen years I went up again to Jerusalem with Barnabas, taking Titus along with me. I went up because of a revelation and set before them...the gospel that I proclaim among the Gentiles, in order to make sure I was not running or had not run in vain. But even Titus, who was with me, was not forced to be circumcised, though he was a Greek. Yet because of false brothers secretly brought in—who slipped in to spy out our freedom that we have in Christ Jesus, so that they might bring us into slavery—to them we did not yield in submission even for a moment... And from those who seemed to be influential (what they were makes no difference to me; God shows no partiality)—those, I say,...added nothing to me. On the contrary, when they saw that I had been entrusted with the gospel to the uncircumcised, just as Peter had been entrusted with the gospel to the circumcised..., and when James and Cephas and John, the so-called pillars, perceived the grace that was given to me, they gave the right hand of fellowship to Barnabas and me, that we should go to the Gentiles and they to the circumcised. – Gal. 2:1-9

The Incident At Antioch

But when Cephas came to Antioch, I opposed him to his face, because he stood condemned. For before certain men came from James, he was eating with the Gentiles; but when they came he drew back and separated himself, fearing the circumcision party. And the rest of the Jews acted hypocritically along with him, so that even Barnabas was led astray by their hypocrisy. But when I saw that their conduct was not in step with the truth of the gospel, I said to Cephas before them all, “If you, though a Jew, live like a Gentile and not like a Jew, how can you force the Gentiles to live like Jews?” – Gal. 2:11-14

Peter In The Gospels



What Is An Apostle?

1 : (**Noun**) one sent on a mission: such as

a: one of an authoritative New Testament group sent out to preach the gospel and made up especially of Christ's 12 original disciples and Paul

b: the first prominent Christian missionary to a region or group –
merriam-webster.com

“So one of the men who have accompanied us during all the time that the Lord Jesus went in and out among us, beginning from the baptism of John until the day when he was taken up from us—one of these must become a witness with us to his resurrection.” So they proposed two, Joseph called Barsabbas, who was also known as Justus, and Matthias.”

– Acts 1:21-23

Who Were The Apostles?

He (Jesus) went up the mountain and called to him those whom he wanted, and they came to him. And he appointed twelve to be with him and to be sent out to preach and to have authority to cast out demons. So he appointed the twelve: Simon (to whom he gave the name Peter), James son of Zebedee and John the brother of James (to whom he gave the name Boanerges, that is, Sons of Thunder), and Andrew, and Philip, and Bartholomew, and Matthew, and Thomas, and James son of Alphaeus, and Thaddaeus, and Simon the Cananaean, and Judas Iscariot, who handed him over. –

Mark 3:13-19

The Life Of Peter

- Born in 1CE(?), likely younger than Jesus.
- Said to be from Bethsaida.
- Owned a home in Capernaum.
- Was a fisherman.
- Was married.
- Peter's mother-in-law lived in his house.
- Likely illiterate, but may have spoken some Greek.
- First/one of the first disciples called by Jesus.
- Leader of the 12 Apostles.
- Early leader/co-leader of Jerusalem church.
- Did missionary work, the "Apostle to the circumcised."
- Believed to have died a martyr's death, possibly in Rome.

Simon, Cephas Or Peter?

- 1) Original Aramaic name: Shimon or Simeon bar Jonah.
- 2) Remains Shimon in Greek translation.
- 3) Anglicized to Simon.
- 4) Jesus knows that Shimon's Aramaic nickname is "Cephas," which means "rock" in English. Jesus may have been the originator of the nickname.
- 5) Cephas (rock) translates to "Petra" in Greek.
- 6) Anglicized to Peter.
- 7) Simon Peter = Simon the Rock.

“I Will Make You Fishers Of People”



Jesus Calls Peter - Mark

“As Jesus passed along the Sea of Galilee, he saw Simon and his brother Andrew casting a net into the sea, for they were fishers. And Jesus said to them, “Follow me, and I will make you fishers of people.” And immediately they left their nets and followed him. – Mark 1:16-18

Jesus Calls Peter - Matthew

“As he walked by the Sea of Galilee, he saw two brothers, Simon, who is called Peter, and Andrew his brother, casting a net into the sea, for they were fishers. And he said to them, “Follow me, and I will make you fishers of people.” Immediately they left their nets and followed him.” - Matthew 4:18-22

Jesus Calls Peter - Luke

“Once while Jesus was standing beside the Lake of Gennesaret and the crowd was pressing in on him to hear the word of God, he saw two boats there at the shore of the lake; the fishermen had gotten out of them and were washing their nets. He got into one of the boats, the one belonging to Simon, and asked him to put out a little way from the shore. Then he sat down and taught the crowds from the boat. When he had finished speaking, he said to Simon, “Put out into the deep water and let down your nets for a catch.” Simon answered, “Master, we have worked all night long but have caught nothing. Yet if you say so, I will let down the nets.” When they had done this, they caught so many fish that their nets were beginning to burst. So they signaled their partners in the other boat to come and help them. And they came and filled both boats, so that they began to sink. But when Simon Peter saw it, he fell down at Jesus’s knees, saying, “Go away from me, Lord, for I am a sinful man!” For he and all who were with him were astounded at the catch of fish that they had taken, and so also were James and John, sons of Zebedee, who were partners with Simon. Then Jesus said to Simon, “Do not be afraid; from now on you will be catching people.” When they had brought their boats to shore, they left everything and followed him. - Luke 5:1-11

Jesus Calls Peter - John

“The next day John again was standing with two of his disciples, and as he watched Jesus walk by he exclaimed, “Look, here is the Lamb of God!” The two disciples heard him say this, and they followed Jesus. When Jesus turned and saw them following, he said to them, “What are you looking for?” They said to him, “Rabbi” (which translated means Teacher), “where are you staying?” He said to them, “Come and see.” They came and saw where he was staying, and they remained with him that day. It was about four o’clock in the afternoon. One of the two who heard John speak and followed him was Andrew, Simon Peter’s brother. He first found his brother Simon and said to him, “We have found the Messiah” (which is translated Anointed). He brought Simon to Jesus, who looked at him and said, “You are Simon son of John. You are to be called Cephas” (which is translated Peter).” - John 1:35-42

Peter's First Missionary Work

Then Jesus went around teaching from village to village. Calling the Twelve to him, he began to send them out two by two and gave them authority over impure spirits.

These were his instructions: “Take nothing for the journey except a staff—no bread, no bag, no money in your belts. Wear sandals but not an extra shirt. Whenever you enter a house, stay there until you leave that town. And if any place will not welcome you or listen to you, leave that place and shake the dust off your feet as a testimony against them.”

They went out and preached that people should repent. They drove out many demons and anointed many sick people with oil and healed them. – Mark 6:7-13

Peter Proclaims The Messiah: Mark

Jesus went on with his disciples to the villages of Caesarea Philippi, and on the way he asked his disciples, “Who do people say that I am?” And they answered him, “John the Baptist; and others, Elijah; and still others, one of the prophets.” He asked them, “But who do you say that I am?” Peter answered him, “You are the Messiah.” And he sternly ordered them not to tell anyone about him. – Mark 8:27-30

Peter Proclaims The Messiah: Matthew

Now when Jesus came into the district of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, “Who do people say that the Son of Man is?” And they said, “Some say John the Baptist but others Elijah and still others Jeremiah or one of the prophets.” He said to them, “But who do you say that I am?” Simon Peter answered, “You are the Messiah, the Son of the living God.” And Jesus answered him, “Blessed are you, Simon son of Jonah! For flesh and blood has not revealed this to you but my Father in heaven. And I tell you, you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of Hades will not prevail against it. I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven.” Then he sternly ordered the disciples not to tell anyone that he was the Messiah. - Matthew 16:13-20

Peter Proclaims The Messiah: Luke

Once when Jesus was praying alone, with only the disciples near him, he asked them, ‘Who do the crowds say that I am?’ They answered, ‘John the Baptist; but others, Elijah; and still others, that one of the ancient prophets has arisen.’ He said to them, ‘But who do you say that I am?’ Peter answered, ‘The Messiah of God.’

He sternly ordered and commanded them not to tell anyone...” – Luke 9:18-22

Get Behind Me Satan

Then he began to teach them that the Son of Man must undergo great suffering, and be rejected by the elders, the chief priests, and the scribes, and be killed, and after three days rise again. He said all this quite openly. And Peter took him aside and began to rebuke him. But turning and looking at his disciples, he rebuked Peter and said, 'Get behind me, Satan! For you are setting your mind not on divine things but on human things.' - Mark 8:31-33

Peter Meets Moses And Elijah

Six days later, Jesus took with him Peter and James and John and led them up a high mountain apart, by themselves. And he was transfigured before them, and his clothes became dazzling bright, such as no one on earth could brighten them. And there appeared to them Elijah with Moses, who were talking with Jesus. Then Peter said to Jesus, “Rabbi, it is good for us to be here; let us set up three tents: one for you, one for Moses, and one for Elijah.” He did not know what to say, for they were terrified. Then a cloud overshadowed them, and from the cloud there came a voice, “This is my Son, the Beloved; listen to him!” Suddenly when they looked around, they saw no one with them any more, but only Jesus.

As they were coming down the mountain, he ordered them to tell no one about what they had seen, until after the Son of Man had risen from the dead. – Mark 9:2-9

Peter Walks On Water...Almost

Immediately Jesus made the disciples get into the boat and go on ahead of him to the other side, while he dismissed the crowd...Later that night, he was there alone, and the boat was already a considerable distance from land, buffeted by the waves because the wind was against it. Shortly before dawn Jesus went out to them, walking on the lake. When the disciples saw him walking on the lake, they were terrified. "It's a ghost," they said, and cried out in fear. But Jesus immediately said to them: "Take courage! It is I. Don't be afraid." "Lord, if it's you," Peter replied, "tell me to come to you on the water." "Come," he said. Then Peter got down out of the boat, walked on the water and came toward Jesus. But when he saw the wind, he was afraid and, beginning to sink, cried out, "Lord, save me!" Immediately Jesus reached out his hand and caught him. "You of little faith," he said, "why did you doubt?" And when they climbed into the boat, the wind died down. Then those who were in the boat worshiped him, saying, "Truly you are the Son of God." – Matthew 14:22-33

Peter Swears Loyalty To Jesus

Peter said to him (Jesus), “Even though all fall away, I will not.” Jesus said to him, “Truly I tell you, this day, this very night, before the cock crows twice, you will deny me three times.” But he said vehemently, “Even though I must die with you, I will not deny you.” And all of them said the same. - Mark 14:29-31

Jesus And Peter At Gethsemane

They went to a place called Gethsemane, and he said to his disciples, “Sit here while I pray.” He took with him Peter and James and John and began to be distressed and agitated. And he said to them, “My soul is deeply grieved, even to death; remain here, and keep awake.” And going a little farther, he threw himself on the ground and prayed that, if it were possible, the hour might pass from him. He said, “Abba, Father, for you all things are possible; remove this cup from me, yet not what I want but what you want.” He came and found them sleeping, and he said to Peter, “Simon, are you asleep? Could you not keep awake one hour? Keep awake and pray that you may not come into the time of trial; the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak.” And again he went away and prayed, saying the same words. And once more he came and found them sleeping, for their eyes were very heavy, and they did not know what to say to him. He came a third time and said to them, “Are you still sleeping and taking your rest? Enough! The hour has come; the Son of Man is betrayed into the hands of sinners. Get up, let us be going. Look, my betrayer is at hand.” – Mark 14:32-42

Peter Defends Jesus

“Then Simon Peter, who had a sword, drew it, struck the high priest’s slave, and cut off his right ear. The slave’s name was Malchus. Jesus said to Peter, “Put your sword back into its sheath. Am I not to drink the cup that the Father has given me?” – John 18:10-11

Peter Denies Jesus: Mark

While Peter was below in the courtyard, one of the female servants of the high priest came by. When she saw Peter warming himself, she stared at him and said, “You also were with Jesus, the man from Nazareth.” But he denied it, saying, “I do not know or understand what you are talking about.” And he went out into the forecourt. Then the cock crowed. And the female servant, on seeing him, began again to say to the bystanders, “This man is one of them.” But again he denied it. Then after a little while the bystanders again said to Peter, “Certainly you are one of them, for you are a Galilean, and you talk like one.” But he began to curse, and he swore an oath, “I do not know this man you are talking about.” At that moment the cock crowed for the second time. Then Peter remembered that Jesus had said to him, “Before the cock crows twice, you will deny me three times.” And he broke down and wept. – Mark 14:66-72

Peter Denies Jesus: Matthew

Now Peter was sitting outside in the courtyard. A female servant came to him and said, “You also were with Jesus the Galilean.” But he denied it before all of them, saying, “I do not know what you are talking about.” When he went out to the porch, another female servant saw him, and she said to the bystanders, “This man was with Jesus the Nazarene.” Again he denied it with an oath, “I do not know the man.” After a little while the bystanders came up and said to Peter, “Certainly you are also one of them, for your accent betrays you.” Then he began to curse, and he swore an oath, “I do not know the man!” At that moment the cock crowed. Then Peter remembered what Jesus had said: “Before the cock crows, you will deny me three times.” And he went out and wept bitterly. – Matthew 26:69-75

Peter Denies Jesus: Luke

When they had kindled a fire in the middle of the courtyard and sat down together, Peter sat among them. Then a female servant, seeing him in the firelight, stared at him and said, “This man also was with him.” But he denied it, saying, “Woman, I do not know him.” A little later someone else, on seeing him, said, “You also are one of them.” But Peter said, “Man, I am not!” Then about an hour later still another kept insisting, “Surely this man also was with him, for he is a Galilean.” But Peter said, “Man, I do not know what you are talking about!” At that moment, while he was still speaking, the cock crowed. The Lord turned and looked at Peter. Then Peter remembered the word of the Lord, how he had said to him, “Before the cock crows today, you will deny me three times.” And he went out and wept bitterly. – Luke 22:56-62

Peter Denies Jesus: John

Simon Peter and another disciple followed Jesus. Since that disciple was known to the high priest, he went with Jesus into the courtyard of the high priest, but Peter was standing outside at the gate. So the other disciple, who was known to the high priest, went out, spoke to the woman who guarded the gate, and brought Peter in. The woman said to Peter, "You are not also one of this man's disciples, are you?" He said, "I am not." Now the slaves and the police had made a charcoal fire because it was cold, and they were standing around it and warming themselves. Peter also was standing with them and warming himself.

(Scene shifts to Pilate questioning Jesus, then returns to Peter)

Now Simon Peter was standing and warming himself. They asked him, "You are not also one of his disciples, are you?" He denied it and said, "I am not." One of the slaves of the high priest, a relative of the man whose ear Peter had cut off, asked, "Did I not see you in the garden with him?" Again Peter denied it, and at that moment the cock crowed.

Peter In The Book Of Acts



Luke: Acts Of The Apostles

“In the first book, Theophilus, I have dealt with all that Jesus began to do and teach, until the day when he was taken up, after he had given commands through the Holy Spirit to the apostles whom he had chosen. He presented himself alive to them after his suffering by many proofs, appearing to them during forty days and speaking about the kingdom of God.

And while staying with them he ordered them not to depart from Jerusalem...” - Acts 1: 1-4

Peter As A Leader

Peter undergoes a number of interesting changes vis-a'-vis the Gospels. As soon as the ascension occurs and the disciples are instructed to await the Spirit's arrival in Jerusalem (Gospel of Luke), Peter is immediately emphasized as the leading apostle. Throughout the first half of Acts, it appears that Peter is the main human protagonist – the pioneering missionary and chief public speaker, healer and prophetic overseer of church discipline. – Markus Bockmuehl, Simon Peter in Scripture and Memory

Peter Leads Judas Replacement Search

In those days Peter stood up among the brothers and sisters (together the crowd numbered about one hundred twenty persons) and said, “Brothers and sisters, the scripture had to be fulfilled, which the Holy Spirit through David foretold concerning Judas, who became a guide for those who arrested Jesus, for he was numbered among us and was allotted his share in this ministry.” ... “So one of the men who have accompanied us during all the time that the Lord Jesus went in and out among us, beginning from the baptism of John until the day when he was taken up from us—one of these must become a witness with us to his resurrection – Acts 1:15-22

Who Led The Jerusalem Church?

After a likely early period of dual leadership roles, and despite Church tradition, it is James, the brother of Jesus, not Peter, who was the leader of the Jerusalem church.

“The Acts of the Apostles provides evidence that James was an important figure in the Christian community of Jerusalem. When Peter must flee Jerusalem, he asks that James be informed.

In Paul’s letter to the Galatians, it is “certain men came from James” who warn Peter not to dine with Gentiles. Peter obeys, infuriating Paul.

And when the Christians of Antioch are concerned over whether Gentile Christians need be circumcised to be saved, it is James who plays a prominent role in the formulation of the Church council's decision. Indeed, after Peter and Paul have made their case, it is James who finally delivers what he calls his "judgment," and afterwards, all accept it. James, in other words, is shown in charge of the Jerusalem group, which conflicts with later claims of Peter's primacy there.” – Wikipedia, 6/14/13

Does Acts Record Peter's Speeches?

“And now, brothers and sisters, I know that you acted in ignorance, as did also your rulers. In this way God fulfilled what he had foretold through all the prophets, that his Messiah would suffer. Repent, therefore, and turn to God so that your sins may be wiped out, so that times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord and that he may send the Messiah appointed for you, that is, Jesus, who must remain in heaven until the time of universal restoration that God announced long ago through his holy prophets. Moses said, ‘The Lord your God will raise up for you from your own people a prophet like me. You must listen to whatever he tells you. And it will be that everyone who does not listen to that prophet will be utterly rooted out of the people.’ And all the prophets, as many as have spoken, from Samuel and those after him, also predicted these days. You are the descendants of the prophets and of the covenant that God gave to your ancestors, saying to Abraham, ‘And in your descendants all the families of the earth shall be blessed.’ – Acts 3:17-26

The Miracles Of Peter

- Now a man crippled from birth was being carried to the temple gate called Beautiful, where he was put every day to beg from those going into the temple courts. When he saw Peter and John about to enter, he asked them for money... Then Peter said, "Silver or gold I do not have, but what I have I give you. In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, walk." Taking him by the right hand, he helped him up, and instantly the man's feet and ankles became strong. – Acts 3:1-8
- More and more men and women believed in the Lord and were added to their number. As a result, people brought the sick into the streets and laid them on beds and mats so that at least Peter's shadow might fall on some of them as he passed by. Crowds gathered also from the towns around Jerusalem, bringing their sick and those tormented by evil spirits, and all of them were healed. – Acts 5:14-15
- There he found a man named Aeneas, a paralytic who had been bedridden for eight years. "Aeneas," Peter said to him, "Jesus Christ heals you. Get up and take care of your mat." Immediately Aeneas got up. – Acts 9:33-34
- Peter sent them all out of the room; then he got down on his knees and prayed. Turning toward the dead woman, he said, "Tabitha, get up." She opened her eyes, and seeing Peter she sat up. He took her by the hand and helped her to her feet. Then he called the believers and the widows and presented her to them alive. – Acts 9:40-41

Peter's Miraculous Escape

“It was about this time that King Herod arrested some who belonged to the church, intending to persecute them. He had James, the brother of John, put to death with the sword. When he saw that this met with approval among the Jews, he proceeded to seize Peter also. This happened during the Festival of Unleavened Bread. After arresting him, he put him in prison, handing him over to be guarded by four squads of four soldiers each. Herod intended to bring him out for public trial after the Passover. So Peter was kept in prison, but the church was earnestly praying to God for him. The night before Herod was to bring him to trial, Peter was sleeping between two soldiers, bound with two chains, and sentries stood guard at the entrance. Suddenly an angel of the Lord appeared and a light shone in the cell. He struck Peter on the side and woke him up. “Quick, get up!” he said, and the chains fell off Peter’s wrists. – Acts 12:1-7

Don't Hold Out On Peter

Now a man named Ananias, together with his wife Sapphira, also sold a piece of property. With his wife's full knowledge he kept back part of the money for himself, but brought the rest and put it at the apostles' feet.

Then Peter said, "Ananias, how is it that Satan has so filled your heart that you have lied to the Holy Spirit and have kept for yourself some of the money you received for the land?...What made you think of doing such a thing? You have not lied just to human beings but to God."

When Ananias heard this, he fell down and died.

...About three hours later his wife came in, Peter said to her, "How could you conspire to test the Spirit of the Lord? Listen! The feet of the men who buried your husband are at the door, and they will carry you out also."

At that moment she fell down at his feet and died. Then the young men came in and, finding her dead, carried her out and buried her beside her husband. Great fear seized the whole church and all who heard about these events. – Acts 5: 1-10

Peter Converts 3,000

Now when they heard this, they were cut to the heart and said to Peter and to the other apostles, ‘Brothers, what should we do?’ Peter said to them, ‘Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ so that your sins may be forgiven; and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. For the promise is for you, for your children, and for all who are far away, everyone whom the Lord our God calls to him.’ And he testified with many other arguments and exhorted them, saying, ‘Save yourselves from this corrupt generation.’ So those who welcomed his message were baptized, and that day about three thousand persons were added.” – Acts 2:37-41

Who Is Simon Magus?

Now a certain man named Simon had previously practiced magic in the city and amazed the people of Samaria, saying that he was someone great. All of them, from the least to the greatest, listened to him eagerly, saying, “This man is the power of God that is called Great.” And they listened eagerly to him because for a long time he had amazed them with his magic. But when they believed Philip, who was proclaiming the good news about the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women. Even Simon himself believed. After being baptized, he stayed constantly with Philip and was amazed when he saw the signs and great miracles that took place...Now when Simon saw that the Spirit was given through the laying on of the apostles’ hands, he offered them money, saying, “Give me also this power so that anyone on whom I lay my hands may receive the Holy Spirit.” But Peter said to him, “May your silver perish with you, because you thought you could obtain God’s gift with money! You have no part or share in this, for your heart is not right before God. Repent therefore of this wickedness of yours, and pray to the Lord that, if possible, the intent of your heart may be forgiven you. For I see that you are in the gall of bitterness and the chains of wickedness.” Simon answered, “Pray for me to the Lord, that nothing of what you have said may happen to me.” – Acts of the Apostles 8:9-24

1 Peter

The First Letter of Peter, addressed to persecuted Christians living in five regions of Asia Minor, exhorts the readers to emulate the suffering Christ in their distress, remembering that after his Passion and death Jesus rose from the dead and is now in glory. The Christians are urged to repay evil with goodness and to love one another and are cautioned to safeguard their reputation as good citizens of high morality, thereby removing all doubt about the injustice of their sufferings. The question of authorship has not been solved to the satisfaction of scholars. Whereas the fluent Greek style and certain historical references seem to argue against Petrine authorship, the description of a primitive church organization, for example, seems to indicate an early composition. –

Brittanica.com

2 Peter

The Second Letter of Peter is principally concerned with the Second Coming of Christ. The author attributes the apparent delay to God's patience in allowing time for universal redemption and notes that in the sight of God 1,000 years are like one day. The writer also warns against false teachers, whose conduct is as immoral as their words are deceptive. They, and those who follow them, says the writer, will be destroyed in a great conflagration that will precede "new heavens and a new earth in which righteousness dwells" (3:13). Though the author explicitly identifies himself as Peter, numerous textual difficulties created doubts as early as the 3rd century about the actual authorship, which have been reinforced by subsequent scholarship. – Brittanica.com

Did Peter Write 1&2 Peter?

“1 and 2 Peter were written in highly literate Greek by someone skilled in Greek composition. However, Acts 4:13 tells us that both Peter and fellow apostle, John, were both ‘agrammatoi’, a Greek word that means illiterate. This should not surprise us considering Peter’s peasant Galilean background. Could he have written both works? Possibly. But the odds are that both letters were written pseudonymously by unknown Christian authors. – Bart Ehrman Blog, 11/30/2018

Peter: Odds And Ends



Was Peter Married?

“As soon as they left the synagogue, they entered the house of Simon and Andrew, with James and John. Now Simon’s mother-in-law was in bed with a fever, and they told him about her at once. He came and took her by the hand and lifted her up. Then the fever left her, and she began to serve them.” – Mark 1:29-31

“This is my defense to those who would examine me. Do we not have the right to our food and drink? Do we not have the right to be accompanied by a believing wife, as do the other apostles and the brothers of the Lord and Cephas? – 1 Cor. 9:3-6

Peter And Family Values

Then Peter spoke up, “We have left everything to follow you!” “Truly I tell you,” Jesus replied, “no one who has left home or brothers or sisters or mother or father or children or fields for me and the gospel will fail to receive a hundred times as much in this present age: homes, brothers, sisters, mothers, children and fields—along with persecutions—and in the age to come eternal life. But many who are first will be last, and the last first.” – Mark 10:28-31

Peter: Missionary To The Jews

“On the contrary, they saw that I had been entrusted to preach the gospel to the uncircumcised, just as Peter had been to the circumcised. For the One who was at work in Peter’ apostleship to the circumcised was also at work in my apostleship to the Gentiles.” – Galatians 2:7-8

...Or Was It The Gentiles?

“...that I (Peter) should be the one through whom the gentiles would hear the message of the good news and become believers...” — Acts 15:7

Peter led the Twelve Apostles in extending the church “here and there among them all” (Acts 9:32). He went first to the Samaritans (Acts 8:4–17), “who received the Holy Spirit”; in Samaria he encountered the magician and faith healer Simon Magus. Then he went to Lydda, in the Plain of Sharon (Acts 9:32–35), where he healed the paralyzed Aeneas. Then, at the Mediterranean coastal town of Joppa (Acts 9:36–43), he effected the cure of Tabitha (Dorcas) in the name of Christ. — britannica.com

Was Peter The First Pope?

As it turns out, our earliest evidence for the existence of a church in Rome at all is one of Paul's letters, the letter to the Romans (written in the 50s CE). This letter presupposes a congregation made up predominantly, or exclusively, of Gentiles (Rom. 1:13). It does not appear, then, to have been a church established by Peter, missionary to the Jews. Moreover, at the end of the letter, Paul greets a large number of the members of the congregation by name. It is striking that he never mentions Peter, here or anywhere else in the letter. Interpreters are virtually unified, on these grounds, in thinking that when Paul wrote this letter in the mid 50s CE, Peter had not yet arrived in Rome. A later tradition found in the writings of the late-second-century church father Irenaeus, however, indicates that the church in Rome was "founded and organized by the two most glorious apostles, Peter and Paul" (Against Heresies 3, 3, 2). As I have just argued, this cannot have been the case – since in Paul's own letter to the Roman church, he indicates that he had never yet been there (Rom. 1:13) – Bart Ehrman Blog, 9/16/2018

Did Peter Die In Rome?

There is no solid evidence—textual or even archaeological—that Peter died in Rome. Starting around the end of the second century, Christian pilgrims went to see Peter’s *tropaion*. But a *tropaion* is not a tomb. The word itself is very unusual; sometimes translated as “trophy,” it means something like a war memorial or a cenotaph (i.e., an empty grave). It’s not the word used in the Roman Empire for a burial place. Yet this spot—which was originally in the middle of an ancient cemetery—was quickly understood as the place where Peter was buried. When it was excavated in the 1950s, archaeologists were shocked to find that there was no grave and no bones under the *tropaion*. Only later were some bones produced from that excavation, and it’s a fascinating story we talk about in *Finding Jesus*. Are these Peter’s bones? That appears to be a matter of faith. The official Vatican position, first stated in 1968, is that they *might* be. – Nicola Denzey Lewis, biblicalarcheology.org

Was Peter Ever In Rome?

Interestingly, the Bible says nothing about Peter ever traveling to Rome. When the gospels end, Peter is in Jerusalem. It's the same in the Book of Acts. The apostle Paul, in his letters, also talks about meeting Peter in the eastern Mediterranean. After Jesus' death, Paul says that Jesus' brother, James, and Peter are the co-leaders of the "church," or assembly, of Jesus-followers in Jerusalem. In short, there is no early textual evidence for Peter in Rome, so for some people, it's very hard to believe that he ever traveled there. Not only is it a very long way, according to the New Testament, Peter was a fisherman who was not very educated and who spoke only Aramaic; he was not the type of person that might travel widely across the Roman Empire to a large city where Latin and Greek were the dominant languages. The absence of connection between Peter and Rome in the New Testament, the lack of references to him in our earliest Roman Christian literature, and what we know of Peter's background and character all combine to make it questionable, though not impossible, that he ever went to Rome. – Nicola Denzey Lewis, biblicalarcheology.org

Other Cities With Claims To Peter

There were other cities outside of Rome that claimed a special connection with Peter. As we know from the letter's of Paul, the church of Jerusalem itself could certainly make some such claim. We also know of Peter's presence in the city of Antioch in Syria where he confronts Paul. Finally, we know of Peter's connection to the city of Corinth where Paul tells us of his congregations connection to Peter. – Bart Ehrman, *Peter, Paul and Mary Magdalene*

So, How/Where Did Peter Die?

The Bible does not tell us how Peter, nor most of the other Apostles died. Church tradition says that he was crucified by Nero...

- In the Gospel of John, Jesus hints at the death by which Peter would glorify God, saying: "when you are old you will stretch out your hands, and another will dress you and carry you where you do not want to go."
- I Clement (d. 99), in his *Letter to the Corinthians* (Chapter 5), written c. 80–98, speaks of Peter's martyrdom in the following terms: "Let us take the noble examples of our own generation. Through jealousy and envy the greatest and most just pillars of the Church were persecuted, and came even unto death. ...Peter, through unjust envy, endured not one or two but many labors, and at last, having delivered his testimony, departed unto the place of glory due to him."
- The apocryphal Acts of Peter (2nd cent.) is the source for the tradition about Peter being crucified head down.
- The death of Peter is attested to by Tertullian (c. 155 – c. 240) at the end of the 2nd century in his *Prescription Against Heretics*, noting that Peter endured a passion like his Lord's. In his work *Scorpiace 15*, he also speaks of Peter's crucifixion: "The budding faith Nero first made bloody in Rome. There Peter was girded by another, since he was bound to the cross."^[130]
- Origen (184–253) in his *Commentary on the Book of Genesis III*, quoted by Eusebius of Caesaria in his *Ecclesiastical History (III, 1)*, said: "Peter was crucified at Rome with his head downwards, as he himself had desired to suffer."

Where Is Peter Buried?

Most people know about Peter's traditional burial site at St. Peter's. But it turns out that there's a second site in Rome where pilgrims went for hundreds of years, which was known as the *Memoria Apostolorum* (the Memorial to the Apostles). It's off the Via Appia at the modern site of the Catacombs of San Sebastiano, and you can still go and visit it today, although the memorial itself is largely built over. What's amazing is that the site preserves around 600 graffiti scrawled by Christian pilgrims in the early Middle Ages, most of them prayers to Peter and Paul, the joint patron saints of Rome. It certainly looks like people believed that Peter was buried there, but excavators found no evidence of a tomb there, either! - Nicola Denzey Lewis, Bible History Daily

Peter's Final Words

The apostles and the elders met together to consider this matter. After there had been much debate, Peter stood up and said to them, “My brothers, you know that in the early days God made a choice among you, that I should be the one through whom the gentiles would hear the message of the good news and become believers. And God, who knows the human heart, testified to them by giving them the Holy Spirit, just as he did to us, and in cleansing their hearts by faith he has made no distinction between them and us. Now, therefore, why are you putting God to the test by placing on the neck of the disciples a yoke that neither our ancestors nor we have been able to bear? On the contrary, we believe that we will be saved through the grace of the Lord Jesus, just as they will.” – Acts 15:6-11

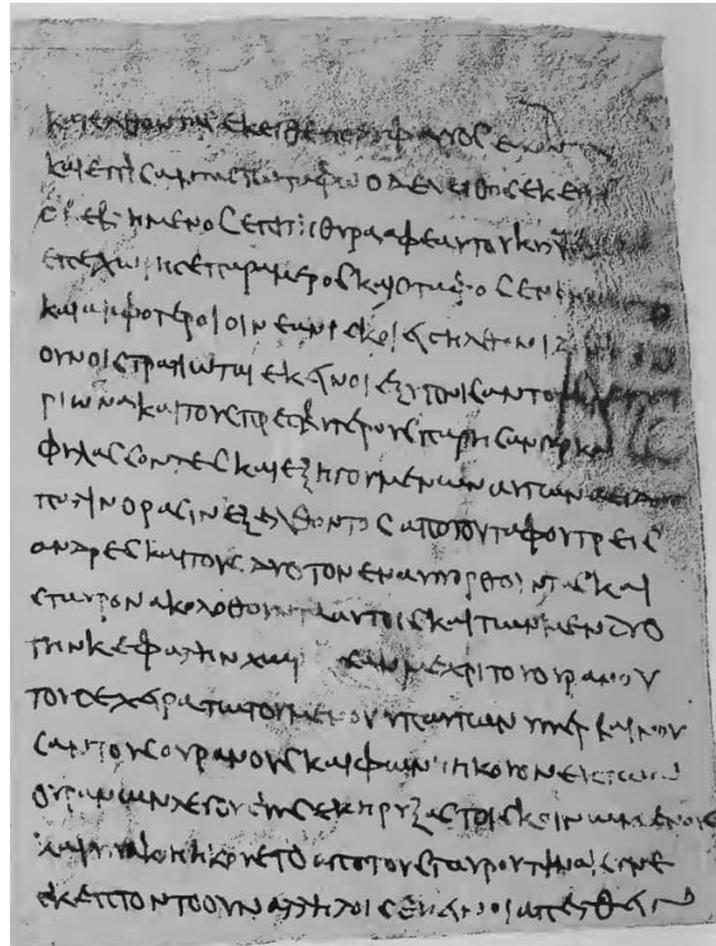
“Chief and Commander of the Heavenly Apostles”



The Apocryphal Peter



The Gospel Of Peter



The Gospel Of Peter: History

The Gospel of Peter is mentioned in the writings of ancient Christian leaders as early as 200 CE where Bishop Serapion of Antioch worried that it gave support to heretical Docetists.

Thought lost, a Greek excerpt from the Gospel of Peter was re-discovered in 1886 in a tomb near Akhmim, Egypt.

The Gospel Of Peter: Content

- Scholars believe the author of GOP based his gospel on the canonical gospels.
- GOP stresses the guilt of the Jews rather than Rome in the death of Jesus.
- GOP opens with Jesus on trial before Pilate who washes his hands of Jesus's guilt while the Jewish authorities refuse to do the same.
- One of the condemned robbers accuses the Jews of killing their own savior.

The Gospel Of Peter: Content

- After witnessing the resurrection, Pilate's soldiers report the event to Pilate who declares that Jesus is God's Son and that others are responsible for his death.
- GOP stresses the divinity of Jesus.
- GOP has Jesus cry out on the cross, "My strength, O my strength, you have forsaken me."
- GOP has our ONLY description of the resurrection.

The Gospel Of Peter: Content

- Soldiers on guard at the tomb witness two young men descend from above, roll away the stone blocking the tomb and enter.
- The soldiers see three men emerge from the tomb, two supporting the other.
- A cross follows behind them.
- The head of the one being supported went up above the sky.
- A voice from the sky asks, “Have you preached to those who are asleep?”
- The cross replies, “Yes.”

The Acts Of Peter



Jesus Asks Peter: “Quo Vadis”

The Acts of Peter is one of the five ancient apocryphal Acts that relate the missionary activities of the apostles beyond the canonical account. The primary focus of this narrative is a wonder working contest between Peter and the magician Simon set in the city of Rome. Through a variety of miracles...Peter demonstrates his (and by extension early Christianity's) legitimacy. The final chapters relate how Peter's teaching prompted wives and concubines associated with imperial figures to reject conjugal relations, causing these men to seek fatal retaliation. Peter's attempt to flee is abandoned upon his encounter with a vision of Jesus in the famous “Quo Vadis” scene where Jesus claims he is going to Rome to be crucified again. Upon his return Peter is arrested and sentenced to death by crucifixion. He is crucified upside down at his own request and delivers a lengthy discourse prior to his death. This original text is commonly held to be composed in the later portion of the 2nd century. The narrative was influential on much subsequent ancient Petrine literature. - oxfordbibliographies.com

Peter The Ascetic

Unlike what we find in the New Testament, in the Acts of Peter, we find Simon proclaiming a gospel of asceticism, the declaration that to be a true follower of Christ, one must abstain from all bodily pleasures, especially the pleasure of sex. It is this preaching – according to the Acts of Peter – that leads to Peter’s martyrdom. Apparently the prefect of Rome, Agrippa, becomes angry when his concubines come to agree with Peter’s teachings and abstain from relations with Agrippa, who is not amused. – Bart Ehrman, Peter, Paul and Mary Magdalene

Peter And The Smoked Tuna

But Peter turned round and saw a smoked tunny-fish hanging in a window; and he took it and said to the people, "If you now see this swimming in the water like a fish, will you be able to believe in him whom I preach?" And they all said with one accord, "Indeed, we will believe you!" Now there was a fish-pond nearby; so he said, "In thy name, Jesus Christ, in which they still fail to believe" [he said to the tunny] "in the presence of all these be alive and swim like a fish!" And he threw the tunny into the pond, and it came alive and began to swim. And the people saw the fish swimming; and he made it do so not merely for that hour, or it might have been called a delusion, but he made it go on swimming, so that it attracted crowds from all sides and showed that the tunny had become a live fish; so much so that some of the people threw in bread for it, and it ate it all up. And when they saw this, a great number followed him and believed in the Lord. - Acts of Peter 5

Peter And A Talking Dog

The Apostle Peter comes to Rome to confront an enemy of the faith, an arch-heretic, Simon Magus, who is ruining the Christian believers by doing spectacular miracles to prove his false teachings are true. Peter is determined to show that his own miracles are better, and that his gospel message is therefore more correct. On arrival he learns that the nefarious Simon is staying in the home of a respected church leader named Marcellus. Peter is physically barred from entering but he is not to be deterred. He sees a large dog tied to a chain nearby; he sets it free and endows it with a human voice. The dog enters the house to tell Simon Magus that Peter is waiting for him outside and is not in a conciliatory mood. Returning to Peter, the dog gives Simon's reply: This will be a showdown. The animal then breaths his last and dies. Bart Ehrman Blog, 10/24/18

Peter Battles Simon Magus

At a climactic point later in the narrative comes a miracle contest. Simon and Peter are brought together in the arena before all the people of Rome. The chief prefect sets the rules of engagement. The greatest miracle wins. A slave is sent in. Simon is to kill the slave (supernaturally); Peter is to revive him. Simon complies by speaking a word in the slave's ear, and he drops down dead. But Peter can do better than that. Informing everyone present that God "is doing many signs and miracles through me to turn you from your sins," he (Peter) takes the slave by the hand and raises him from the dead. Then comes the expected response: "When the multitude saw this they cried, 'There is only one God, the God of Peter!'" – Bart Ehrman Blog, 10/24/18

Did Peter Have A Daughter?

The Acts of Peter, like so many of these apocryphal texts about the apostles, is a riveting read that contains Harry Potter-style battle between Peter and a flying magician called Simon. One of the strangest parts of the tale, however, is when Peter heals and then paralyzes his own daughter.

The story begins with Peter healing people brought to him by the crowd. One of the bystanders asks Peter why—given that he has dedicated so much time to curing the sick—he has not helped his “virgin daughter (Petronilla), who has grown up beautiful and believed in the name of God” and “is quite paralyzed on one side, and lies there stretched out in the corner helpless.”

Peter smiles and responds that it is clear to God why her body is unwell, but that in order to demonstrate God’s power he would heal her. To the amazement of the crowd he instructs his daughter to get up and walk around, which she does, before instructing her to “Return to your place, sit down there and be helpless again, for it is expedient for me and you.” – The Acts of Peter; The Daily Beast 9/1/19

The Apocryphal Peter: Gospel Of Thomas

Simon Peter said to him, "Let Mary leave us, for women are not worthy of life." Jesus said, "I myself shall lead her in order to make her male, so that she too may become a living spirit resembling you males. For every woman who will make herself male will enter the kingdom of heaven." – Gos. Thom. 114

The Apocryphal Peter: Gospel Of Thomas

Jesus said to his disciples, "Compare me to something and tell me what I resemble." Simon Peter said to him, "A just angel is what you resemble." Matthew said to him, "An intelligent philosopher is what you resemble." Thomas said to him, "Teacher, my mouth utterly will not let me say what you resemble." Jesus said, "I am not your teacher, for you have drunk and become intoxicated from the bubbling wellspring that I have personally measured out. And he took him, withdrew, and said three words to him. Now, when Thomas came to his companions they asked him, "What did Jesus say to you?" Thomas said to them, "If I say to you one of the sayings that he said to me, you will take stones and stone me, and fire will come out of the stones and burn you up." – Gospel of Thomas: 13

The Apocryphal Peter: Gospel Of Mary

Peter said to Mary, "Sister, we know that the Savior loved you more than the rest of women. Tell us the words of the Savior which you remember - which you know (but we do not, nor have we heard them." Mary answered and said, "What is hidden from you I will proclaim to you." And she began to speak to them these words: "I," she said, "I saw the Lord in a vision and I said to him, 'Lord, I saw you today in a vision.' He answered and said to me, 'Blessed are you that you did not waver at the sight of me. For where the mind is, there is the treasure.'..." When Mary had said this, she fell silent, since it was to this point that the Savior had spoken with her. But Andrew answered and said to the brethren, "Say what you (wish to) say about what she has said. I at least do not believe that the Savior said this. For certainly these teachings are strange ideas." Peter answered and spoke concerning these same things. He questioned them about the Savior: "Did He really speak with a woman without our knowledge (and) not openly? Are we to turn about and all listen to her? Did He prefer her to us?"

Then Mary wept and said to Peter, "My brother Peter, what do you think? Do you think that I thought this up myself in my heart, or that I am lying about the Savior? Levi answered and said to Peter, "Peter, you have always been hot - tempered. Now I see you contending against the woman like the adversaries. But if the Savior made her worthy, who are you indeed to reject her? Surely the Savior knows her very well. That is why He loved her more than us. – Gospel Of Mary

Conclusion

- In many ways, we know more about the personality and character of Peter than we do about Jesus.
- Peter is consistently acknowledged as the spokesman for the Apostles.
- Our earliest sources portray Peter as devoted to Jesus, but also as a flawed human being.
- Peter undergoes a dramatic transformation in the Book of Acts.
- Peter is an early Church leader.
- Peter's lack of education raises the question of how much missionary work he could do outside of Aramaic speaking circles.
- Always challenging, Peter's association with Rome is difficult to validate historically due to a lack of any reference in our oldest sources.
- Where and how Peter died is an open question, though Rome is certainly a possibility.
- The legend of Peter continued to grow long after his death.

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