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PERSONAL ANCESTRAL FILE®
Personal Ancestral File® is a genealogical software package produced by the Church for IBM-compatible, Macintosh, and Apple personal computers that enables users to organize, store, and search genealogical information; contribute genealogies to ANCESTRAL FILE™; and match and merge information from other genealogical data bases with their own files.

The package consists of three major programs: Family Records, Research Data Filer, and Genealogical Information Exchange. The Family Records program enables users to assemble pedigrees; group families together, showing relationships between family members for each generation; search pedigree lines; add, modify, and delete information about individuals; and display information on the screen and print it on genealogical forms. Research Data Filer helps users manage original research, including searching, sorting, and printing information by event, place, date, name of person, or relationship to others. Genealogical Information Exchange enables users to send Family Records data to another Personal Ancestral File user, prepare diskette submissions of names for LDS temple ordinance processing or contribution to Ancestral File, and copy data from one diskette to another.

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PETER
Simon bar-Jona, later known as Cephas or Peter, became the senior and chief apostle of Jesus Christ. He was evidently the presiding officer over the ancient Church after Christ’s death. In the present dispensation, as a resurrected being, he restored apostolic authority to the Prophet Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery.

The New Testament contains more information about Peter than about any of the other apostles. This provides some indication of his ministry, his character, and his relationship to the Savior. In contrast to the sometimes impetuous younger Peter portrayed in the Gospels, the apostle’s later ministry and epistles bespeak a mature leader of patient faith whose sincere concern is for the spiritual well-being of the flock that Jesus entrusted to him (John 21:15–17). Differences persist, however, in the portraits of Peter derived from the various biblical accounts, and these are extrapolated in scholarly analyses of the role and theology of Peter. Recourse to later Christian writings from the second and third centuries reveals other views about Peter’s position in the pristine Church. It cannot be presumed, therefore, that all that is written about him is clearly factual.

Originally from Bethsaida, a small fishing port somewhere on the north shore of the Sea of Galilee, Peter resided in the town of Capernaum with his wife and mother-in-law at the time of his apostolic call. Peter’s given name was Simon and his patronymic, bar-Jona, identifies him as the son of Jonah (Matt. 16:7). The name Simon (Simon) and that of his brother Andrew (Andrew) are derived from the Greek renditions of their names. Living in a region where, in addition to the native Aramaic, Greek was widely used as a language of business and trade, Peter may have been conversant with the tongue in which his scriptural writings were later penned. Although Peter was a fisherman by occupation, and despite the description of Peter and John by the elders of the Sanhedrin as being "without learning" (Acts 4:13), the Galilean apostles were literate men, probably without normal rabbinical training but with broad general understanding and capability.

Peter was among the first of Jesus’ disciples. To him, then called Simon, was extended a special call, marked by the reception of a new name, which in Jewish tradition denoted the conferring of a special divine mission" (Winter, p. 5). John
describes Christ’s bestowal upon Simon bar-Jona of the title “Cephas, which is by interpretation, A stone” (John 1:42). The Aramaic *kepha* and its Greek equivalent, *petros*, are common nouns and prior to that time were unused as proper names. A dispute of long duration continues among Catholic and Protestant scholars (Winter, pp. 6–25; Horsley, pp. 29–41) concerning the definition of *petros*, “a rock or stone,” and *petra*, “a large mass of rock,” as these words pertain to Peter’s name and its connection to Christ’s wordplay “Thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church” (Matt. 16:18). LDS doctrine holds that revelation was the rock denoted by Jesus and that Peter’s call to become the prophet to lead the early Church is here foretold. Relevant to this passage, Joseph Smith applied the term “seer” to define *cephas* (JST John 1:42), and Bruce R. McConkie (pp. 133, 380–83) relates this to the seership, or power of continuing revelation, which he further connects to the keys of the kingdom (Matt. 16:19) bestowed on Peter, the chief apostle, upon the MOUNT OF TRANSFIGURATION, an account of which immediately follows in Matt. 17:1–13.

Peter’s primacy in the ancient Church derived from apostolic authority. His first place among the twelve apostles is clear in a number of contexts: all New Testament lists of the apostles mention Peter first; the phrase “Peter and they that are with him” describes the apostles (e.g., Luke 8:45); and Peter acts as their spokesman in posing questions to Jesus (e.g., Luke 12:41). Miracles, teaching incidents, and special events (e.g., Matt. 14:25–31; Mark 14:26–42; Luke 5:1–10) center around Peter alone or on him as the key apostle involved (Muren, p. 150). After the trial of Jesus before Caiaphas, Peter stayed nearby in the dark and the cold. Although during Jesus’ trial he denied certain allegations about association or affiliations with the disciples, and acquaintance with Jesus, Peter was the first apostle to whom the resurrected Christ appeared (Luke 24:33–35; 1 Cor. 15:5).

Peter’s leading position is perceived by Latter-day Saints as one of presidency. Two LDS Church Presidents have likened Peter’s office to that of the President of the QUORUM OF THE TWELVE APOSTLES (McKay, p. 20; Kimball).

The apostles JAMES and JOHN occupied a position second to that of Peter. Together these three were privileged to attend Jesus on three most sacred occasions: at Jesus’ raising of Jairus’ daughter from the dead (Mark 5:35–43), at his glorification on the Mount of Transfiguration (Matt. 17:1–13; Mark 9:2–9), and at his suffering in the garden of Gethsemane (Mark 14:26–42). Latter-day Saints attribute the presence of Peter, James, and John on these occasions to the priesthood office that they held among the apostles. Joseph Smith taught that the Savior, Moses, and Elias, when transfigured before them, gave the keys of the MELCHIZEDEK PRIESTHOOD to Peter, James, and John (TPJS, p. 158; see MOUNT OF TRANSFIGURATION).

Through this authority, Peter, James, and John directed the Church in the name of Jesus Christ after his death. Peter presided over the selection of a new apostle to replace Judas (Acts 1:15–26) and over the ministry on the Day of Pentecost (Acts 2). Peter confronted the Sanhedrin, performed miracles, and preached the gospel of Christ (Acts 3–4). In many of these activities John was Peter’s companion, but Peter took the lead. Through important revelations pertaining to the extension of the gospel to the Gentiles (Acts 10), Peter’s calling as prophet, seer, and revelator is evident (Muren, pp. 150–52). Although modern revelation provides much clarification of information in this regard, Peter’s role of presiding over Church councils and directing the general apostolic effort is patentably demonstrable through examination of the New Testament and other early Christian sources (Brown, pp. 9–16, 1973).

Because of his ancient office, it was Peter who, with the assistance of James and John, was commissioned to restore apostolic authority to a new gospel dispensation and to endow Joseph Smith with the same priesthood keys that Christ had given to Peter, thereby reauthorizing the performance of the ordinances of salvation by the authority of the priesthood (see MELCHIZEDEK PRIESTHOOD: RESTORATION OF).

Peter’s two epistles in the New Testament contain an abundance of inspired and inspiring teachings and exhortations. Throughout 1 and 2 Peter, concern is expressed for the salvation and sanctification of the flock, reminding the faithful that this can be obtained only through knowledge of Jesus Christ and performance of the ordinances of the priesthood (cf. TPJS, pp. 297, 303–305; Muren, pp. 153–56). Peter also provides information about the salvation of the dead (1 Pet. 3:18–22; 4:6), and he exhorts all members of the Church to be holy, to feed the flock, to be humble, and to secure salvation through making their calling and
election sure (1 Pet. 4–5; 2 Pet. 1). A final concern is expressed for the spiritual welfare of the Church, which Peter warns will soon experience the teaching of false doctrines that will threaten individual salvation (2 Pet. 2–3). Of these epistles Joseph Smith remarked, "Peter penned the most sublime language of any of the apostles" (TPJS, p. 301).

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**JOHN FRANKLIN HALL**

**PHILOSOPHY**

Philosophy (the "love of wisdom") originated in the Western world in ancient Greece. The attempt to find wisdom by ancient thinkers such as Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle led them also to investigate the world (nature), the unseen world (metaphysics), and how we know (epistemology). Wonder about nature through progressively refined epistemological procedures led through the centuries to modern scientific methods. As philosophers developed standards for accurate description and generalization, new sciences were born and detached themselves from philosophy: the first was physics, and the latest is linguistics. But the basic problems of epistemology, metaphysics, and ethics (including aesthetics and the philosophy of religion) dominate present philosophy as much as they did in ancient times. Although the solutions are more varied now, the basic issues remain the same.

Latter-day scriptures do not present a philosophical system, but they do contain answers to many classic philosophical issues. These scriptures preclude ex nihilo creation, idealism (immaterialism), a chance theory of causation, and absolute determinism. They affirm the eternality and agency of the individual person, the necessary existence of evil apart from God, a nonrelativistic good (righteousness), and the doctrine that all mortals are the offspring and heirs of God. God is affirmed as a perfected physical being who governs all things in pure love and who continues to communicate with his children on earth by personal revelation.

Observers of the LDS position have ascribed philosophical labels and tendencies to it, but that position usually will not fit neatly into the stock answers. It is empirical, yet rational; pragmatic, yet idealistic; oriented toward eternity, yet emphasizing the importance of the here and now. Affinities are found with the Cartesian certainty of personal existence, the positivist insistence on sensory evidence, the Enlightenment emphasis on elimination of paradox, and the postmodern respect for the "other." The ultimate standard for all being, truth, and good is Christ himself.

Contemporary analytic and existential movements in philosophy have had little impact on LDS thought, not because it is not aware of them, but because it has different answers to the questions they pose. The knowledge of God is established through careful experimentation with God’s promises, which results in tangible consequences, culminating in the possibility of seeing God face to face. Existential angst is recognized and met by personal guidance from God to establish a path to righteousness and fulfillment, the general features of which each person must follow, but with individual parameters. The relativism of situational ethics is answered in spiritual assurance and power to do those things that are eternally worthwhile. Mind-body dualism is answered by the material nature of spirit (more refined matter) (D&C 131:7).

Answers to the questions How may I know? What is the seen world? What is the unseen world? and How shall I be wise? are all answered personally for every fully participating Latter-day Saint. The equivalent of epistemology in an LDS frame is the ordinances, focusing on the ordinance of prayer. Through the ordinances and in connection with other epistemologies come all of the light and knowledge sufficient to live a spiritually successful life. Questions about the natural world are answered by one’s culture as corrected by personal revelation. One must have some guidance on questions of metaphysics, and such is found in holy scripture and confirmed to each individual through