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COMMENTARY

COMMENTARY ON  
2 PETER

*by Adam Clarke.*

*“Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without  
which no man shall see the Lord” Heb 12:14*

Spreading Scriptural Holiness to the World

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# A COMMENTARY AND CRITICAL NOTES

ON THE

# HOLY BIBLE

## OLD AND NEW TESTAMENTS

DESIGNED AS A HELP TO A BETTER UNDERSTANDING  
OF THE SACRED WRITINGS

**BY ADAM CLARKE, LL.D., F.S.A., &c.**

A NEW EDITION, WITH THE  
AUTHOR'S FINAL CORRECTIONS

**For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope.—Rom. 15:4.**

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## INTRODUCTION TO THE SECOND EPISTLE OF PETER.

As the preface to the preceding epistle embraces the question of the authenticity of both epistles, and also considers several matters common to both, I need not take up the subject here afresh; but simply consider those matters which are peculiar to the epistle before me, and which have not been examined in the foregoing preface.

“This epistle, as appears from <sup><G1001></sup> **2 Peter 3:1**, (says *Michaelis*,) was written to the same communities as the first epistle; and the author gives us thus to understand, that he was the person who wrote the first epistle; that is, the Apostle Peter. He calls himself likewise, <sup><G1010></sup> **2 Peter 1:1**, **συμεων πετρος, δοσλος και αποστολος ιησου χριστου**, *Symeon Peter, a servant and apostle of Jesus Christ*; and <sup><G1016></sup> **2 Peter 1:16-18** says that he was present at the transfiguration of Christ on the mount. The notion therefore entertained by Grotius, that this epistle was written by a bishop of Jerusalem of the name of Simeon, is absolutely inadmissible; and we have no other alternative than this: either it was written by the apostle St. Peter, or it is a forgery in his name.

“The ancients entertained very great doubts whether St. Peter was really the author. Eusebius, in his chapter where he speaks of the books of the New Testament in general, reckons it among the **αντιλεγόμενα**, those *not canonical*. He says that tradition does not reckon, as a part of the New Testament, the second epistle ascribed to Peter; but that, as in the opinion of most men, it is useful, it is therefore much read. Origen had said, long before, that Peter had left behind him one epistle universally received, and perhaps a second, though doubts are entertained about it.

“The old Syriac version, though it contains the Epistle of St. James, which Eusebius likewise reckons among the **αντιλεγόμενα**, does not contain the Second Epistle of St. Peter. Now it cannot be said that the other books of the New Testament were translated into Syriac before St. Peter’s second epistle was written; for St. Paul’s Second Epistle to Timothy was written certainly as late, and yet is contained in this very version. And if an epistle, addressed only to an individual, was known to the Syriac translator, it may be thought that a circular epistle addressed to communities dispersed in

several countries in Asia, would hardly have escaped his notice. The circumstance, therefore, that the old Syriac translator did not translate the Second Epistle of St. Peter as well as the first, may be used as an argument against its antiquity, and of course against its authenticity.

“It appears then that, if the authenticity of this epistle were determined by external evidence, it would have less in its favour than it would have against it. But, on the other hand, the internal evidence is greatly in its favour; and indeed so much so, that the epistle gains in this respect more than it loses in the former. Wetstein, indeed, says that since the ancients themselves were in doubt, the moderns cannot expect to arrive at certainty, because we cannot obtain more information on the subject in the eighteenth, than ecclesiastical writers were able to obtain in the third and fourth, centuries. Now this is perfectly true as far as relates to historical knowledge, or to the testimony of others in regard to the matter of fact, whether St. Peter was the author or not. But when this question is to be decided by an examination of the epistle itself, it is surely possible that the critical skill and penetration of the moderns may discover in it proofs of its having been written by St. Peter, though these proofs escaped the notice of the ancients. After a diligent comparison of the First Epistle of St. Peter with that which is ascribed to him as his second, the agreement between them appears to me to be such, that, if the second was not written by St. Peter as well as the first, the person who forged it not only possessed the power of imitation in a very unusual degree, but understood likewise the design of the first epistle, with which the ancients do not appear to have been acquainted. Now, if this be true, the supposition that the second epistle was not written by St. Peter himself, involves a contradiction. Nor is incredible that a pious impostor of the first or second century should have imitated St. Peter so successfully as to betray no marks of a forgery; for the spurious productions of those ages, which were sent into the world in the name of the apostles, are for the most part very unhappy imitations, and discover very evident marks that they were not written by the persons to whom they were ascribed. Other productions of this kind betray their origin by the poverty of their materials, or by the circumstance that, instead of containing original thoughts, they are nothing more than a rhapsody of sentiments collected from various parts of the Bible, and put together without plan or order.

“This charge cannot possibly be laid to the Second Epistle of Peter, which is so far from containing materials derived from other parts of the Bible,

that the third chapter exhibits the discussion of a totally new subject. Its resemblance to the Epistle of Jude will hardly be urged as an argument against it; for no doubt can be made that the Second Epistle of St. Peter was, in respect to the Epistle of St. Jude, the original, and not the copy. Lastly, it is extremely difficult, even for a man of the greatest talents, to forge a writing in the name of another, without sometimes inserting what the pretended author either would not or could not have said; and support the imposture in so complete a manner as to militate, in not a single instance, either against his character or against the age in which he lived. Now, in the Second Epistle of St. Peter, though it has been a subject of examination full seventeen hundred years, nothing has hitherto been discovered which is unsuitable either to the apostle or the apostolic age. Objections, indeed, have been made on account of its style; but the style of the second epistle, when compared with that of the first, warrants rather the conclusion that both were written by the same person. We have no reason, therefore, to believe that the Second Epistle of St. Peter is spurious, especially as it is difficult to comprehend what motive could have induced a Christian, whether orthodox or heretic, to attempt the fabrication of such an epistle, and then falsely ascribe it to St. Peter.

“Having shown that the supposition that this epistle is spurious is without foundation, I have, in the next place, to show that there are positive grounds for believing it to be genuine. The arguments in favour of its genuineness are of two kinds, being founded on the similarity of the two epistles, either in respect to their *materials*, or in respect to their *style*. The arguments of the former kind are as follow:—

“The design of the first epistle was to assure the uncircumcised Christians that they stood in the grace of God. Now it was not generally known that this was the design of it; and therefore we cannot suppose that any person whose object was to forge an epistle in St. Peter’s name should have observed it. But the design of the second epistle was certainly the same as that of the first, as appears from the address, <sup><G1010></sup>**2 Peter 1:1: τοις ισοτιμον ημιν λαχουσι πισθιν εν δικαιοσυνη του θεου.** *To them who have obtained like precious faith with us, through the righteousness of God.* If we explain **ημιν**, as denoting ‘us apostles,’ the address will imply what was wholly unnecessary, since no one could doubt that the faith of other Christians might be as good as the faith of the apostles; and it will sound likewise rather haughty and assuming; but if we explain **ημιν** as denoting ‘us who were born Jews,’ and consider that the second epistle, as

well as the first, was directed to persons who were born heathens, the address becomes clear and consistent: **δικαιοσύνη του θεου**, will then signify the impartiality of God in estimating the faith of native heathens as highly as the faith of native Jews, which St. Peter has extolled in other places. We shall likewise be able to explain <sup><G10108></sup>**2 Peter 1:8-10**, which appears to contain the tautology that those who are diligent in good works are not idle; whereas, if this epistle be explained from the design of the first, we shall perceive the meaning of the passage to be this, that they who are diligent in good works need not fear the reproach that they observe not the Levitical law, since their good works, which are the fruit of their religious knowledge, will be the means of making their calling and election sure. (See the note on this place.)

“The deluge, which is not a common subject in the apostolic epistles, is mentioned both in <sup><G10101></sup>**1 Peter 3:20**, and in <sup><G10105></sup>**2 Peter 2:5**; and in both places the circumstance is noted, that eight persons only were saved; though in neither place does the subject require that the number should be particularly specified. Now it is true that St. Peter was not the only apostle who knew how many persons were saved in the ark; but he only, who by habit had acquired a familiarity with the subject, would ascertain the precise number, where his argument did not depend upon it. The author of the first epistle had read St. Paul’s Epistle to the Romans; and the author of the second epistle speaks in express terms, <sup><G10105></sup>**2 Peter 3:15, 16**, of the epistles of St. Paul. Now, no other writer of the New Testament has quoted from the New Testament; consequently, we have in these epistles a criterion from which we may judge that they were written by the same author.

“Before I consider the arguments which are derived from the *style* of these epistles, I must observe that several commentators have on the contrary contended that the style is very different; and hence have inferred that they were written by different authors; but it is extremely difficult to form from a single epistle so complete a judgment of the author’s style and manner as to enable us to pronounce with certainty that he was *not* the author of another epistle ascribed to him. The style of the same writer is not always the same at every period of his life, especially when he composes not in his native, but in a foreign, language.

“From what has been said in the course of this section, it appears that even the second chapter of the second epistle has some resemblance both in style

and contents to the first epistle. This is to be particularly noted, because even the advocates for the second epistle have in general granted that the style of this chapter is not the usual style of St. Peter. Bishop Sherlock, for instance, acknowledges it; nor, though I contend that there is some similarity, as in <sup><61015></sup>**2 Peter 2:5-7**, will I assert that there is no difference. But it will not therefore follow that the whole epistle was not written by St. Peter: and if it is allowable to draw a conclusion from one or two passages, it will be no other than this, that the second chapter is spurious, because the style of it is said to be as different from the first and third chapters as it is from the first epistle. This conclusion, however, no one will draw who has examined the connection of the whole epistle; in fact the difference in question is rather of a negative kind; for though I am unable to discover any remarkable *agreement* in style between the first epistle and the second chapter of the second epistle, I do not perceive any remarkable *difference*. This second chapter has indeed several words which are unusual in other parts of the New Testament, but the same may be said of the first epistle: and some of the expressions which to us appear extraordinary were borrowed perhaps from the Gnostics, whose doctrines are here confuted; for it is not unusual in combatting the opinions of a particular sect to adopt their peculiar terms. Thus in <sup><61017></sup>**2 Peter 2:17**, the Gnostics are called ‘clouds, agitated by a tempest;’ and we know that the Manicheans, who had many doctrines in common with the Gnostics, taught that there were five good and five bad elements, and that one of the latter was called ‘tempest.’ In like manner they frequently speak of darkness under the name of ζοφος, which occurs more than once in this chapter. The Epistle of St. Jude has a still greater number of unusual figurative expressions; and it is not impossible that these also were borrowed from the Gnostics. The Second Epistle of St. Peter must have been written only a short time before his death; for he says, <sup><61014></sup>**2 Peter 1:14**, ‘shortly I must put off this my tabernacle, even as our Lord Jesus Christ hath showed me.’ St. Peter here alludes to his conversation with Christ after the resurrection, recorded in <sup><62118></sup>**John 21:18-22**, where Christ had foretold his death in the following manner: ‘When thou shalt be old thou shalt stretch forth thy hands, and another shall gird thee and carry thee whither thou wouldest not.’ Hence St. Peter might very easily conclude that he would not survive the coming of Christ to judge Jerusalem. But Christ has declared that Jerusalem would be destroyed before one generation passed away. St. Peter, therefore, after a lapse of thirty years, that is, in the year 64, necessarily considered his death as an event not far distant. As to the design of this epistle, it appears

that St. Peter wrote against certain persons who, though members of the Church, denied the doctrine of a general judgment and a dissolution of the world. They inferred that this event, because it had been long delayed, would never take place; to which objection St. Peter replies by saying, That one day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day: that the Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is long-suffering, not willing that any man should perish, but that all should come to repentance. Farther, St. Peter argues, that as the earth has already undergone a great revolution at the deluge, another revolution equally great is not incredible; and that since the former event was at the time when it happened as unexpected as the latter will be, we ought to believe in God's declaration, that the world will one day be totally destroyed. This destruction, St. Peter says, will be effected, not by water, as at the deluge, but by fire. 'The elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also, and the works that are therein, shall be burned up.' Now, a general conflagration will be more easily admitted by those who are unacquainted with the state of the earth, than a universal deluge; for though it may be difficult to comprehend whence a sufficient quantity of water could be brought to cover the whole earth, yet no one can deny that the bowels of the earth abound with inflammable matter, and that fiery eruptions may spread themselves throughout the surface of the globe. (See the notes on <sup><61C8D></sup>**2 Peter 3:9-11.**)

"It must be observed that St. Peter's appeal to the deluge in the time of Noah implies that the adversaries whom he combats admitted that the Mosaic account of it was true, since it would have been useless to have argued from a fact which they denied. This must be kept in view, because it will assist us in determining who these adversaries were.

"St. Peter describes these false teachers, <sup><61C210></sup>**2 Peter 2:10-12**, as *calumniators of the angels*; which the apostle highly censures, even though the calumny should be directed against the fallen angels, since some respect is due to their former greatness and power. St. Peter says, 'angels themselves, which are greater in power and might, bring not railing accusation against them before the Lord; but these as natural brute beasts, made to be taken and destroyed, speak evil of the things which they understand not.' Here we have a description of these false teachers, which points them out more distinctly than any of the preceding accounts, and shows they were *Gnostics*. For the *ecclesiastical* history furnishes many examples of improper adoration paid to the angels. I know of no sect



which calumniated them, except that of the Gnostics. Now the Gnostics *calumniated the angels* by their doctrine in respect to the creation of the world. They raised certain angels to the rank of creators; but described the creation as very imperfect, and the authors of it as wicked and rebellious against the supreme Being.

“Having thus shown that St. Peter in his second epistle combats the opinion of a *Gnostic* sect, I will now venture to go a step farther, and attempt to determine the *name* which the orthodox gave to this particular sect in the first century. St. Peter describes them, <sup><610215></sup>**2 Peter 2:15**, as *following the way of Balaam*, that is, as following the *religious doctrine of Balaam*. The doctrine of Balaam, as St. John says, <sup><610214></sup>**Revelation 2:14**, was *to eat things sacrificed to idols, and to commit fornication*. And since *Nicolaus*, in Greek, has the same meaning as *Balaam* in Hebrew, the followers of Balaam are called by St. John, <sup><610215></sup>**Revelation 2:15**, *Nicolaitans*. Now it is well known that the Nicolaitans were *a sect of the Gnostics*; and therefore it was probable that this was the sect against which St. Peter wrote. To this opinion it has been objected, that if St. Peter had meant the *Nicolaitans*, he would have called them, not *followers of Balaam*, but by their proper name, *Nicolaitans*; first, because in general proper names are retained and not translated; and, secondly, because in the present instance, no one before *Cocceius* observed the analogy between the *Hebrew* word *Balaam* and the *Greek* word *Nicolaus*. But neither of these reasons are true. For to say nothing of the general custom which once prevailed among the literati of Germany, of translating their names into Greek or Latin; I could produce examples of such translations amongst the Jews, of which it will be sufficient to mention that which occurs in <sup><4006></sup>**Acts 9:36**. And the derivation of the *Nicolaitans* from *Balaam* must have been long known, at least in Asia; for in the Arabic version published by

*Erpenius*, we find an instance of it in <sup><61006></sup>**Revelation 2:6**, where **τα εργα των νικολαιτων** is rendered [Arabic] that is ‘works of the Shuaibites.’ Now the Arabic word [Arabic] (*Shuaib*) is equivalent to the Hebrew *Balaam*. *Shuaib* is mentioned in the *Koran* (Surat vii. 86; xxvi. 176, and in other places) as the prophet of the *Midianites*. Some suppose that by *Shuaib* is meant *Jethro*; but in my opinion no other person is meant but *Balaam*, who was sent for by the *Midianites* as well as by the *Moabites*. At least I cannot comprehend how the *Nicolaitans*, or any other heretics, could be considered as *followers of Jethro*. The Arabic verb [Arabic] *shaaba*, signifies *he destroyed*, and the noun [Arabic] *shaabon*, the *people*.

It is not improbable, therefore, that the Arabs adopted the word [Arabic] *shuaib*, as corresponding to the Hebrew word  $\mu[\text{I b}]$  *Balaam*, which is compounded of  $[\text{I b}]$  *bala*, *he swallowed up or destroyed*, and  $\mu[\text{ am}]$ , *the people*. So  $\nu\text{IKO}\lambda\alpha\omicron\varsigma$ , *Nicolas*, is from  $\nu\text{IK}\alpha\omega$ , *to overcome*, and  $\lambda\alpha\omicron\varsigma$ , *the people*.”-See *Michaelis’s Introduction*.

I shall not attempt to dispute the propriety of these derivations and etymologies; but I must make one remark on the Shuaibites. In general, the Arabic writers say that *Shuaib* was Jethro, the father-in-law of Moses, and that God had sent him, according to the Koran, to preach pure morality to the Midianites; but I do not remember to have met with a sect of idolaters or heretics called *Shuaibites*. In both the places of the Koran mentioned above, *Shuaib* is spoken of with respect. But the conjecture that *Shuaib* and *Balaam* are the same is exceedingly probable; and this makes the etymology the more likely.

We may safely conclude from all the evidence before us, 1. That St. Peter, the apostle, was the author of this, as well as of the other, epistle. 2. That it was written to the same persons. 3. That they were in a state of persecution, and had also to contend with Gnostics or other heretics in the Church. 4. That it was written a short time after the first epistle, and not long before St. Peter’s martyrdom; but the precise year cannot be ascertained.

## **THE SECOND GENERAL EPISTLE OF PETER.**

### *Chronological Notes relative to this Epistle.*

- Year of the Constantinopolitan era of the world, or that used by the Byzantine historians, and other eastern writers, 5568.
- Year of the Alexandrian era of the world, 5562.
- Year of the Antiochian era of the world, 5552.
- Year of the world, according to Archbishop Usher, 4064.
- Year of the world, according to Eusebius, in his Chronicon, 4288.
- Year of the minor Jewish era of the world, or that in common use, 3820.
- Year of the Greater Rabbinical era of the world, 4419.
- Year from the Flood, according to Archbishop Usher, and the English Bible, 2408.
- Year of the Cali yuga, or Indian era of the Deluge, 3162.
- Year of the era of Iphitus, or since the first commencement of the Olympic games, 1000.
- Year of the era of Nahonassar, king of Babylon, 809.
- Year of the CCIXth Olympiad, 4.
- Year from the building of Rome, according to Fabius Pictor, 807.
- Year from the building of Rome, according to Frontinus, 811.
- Year from the building of Rome, according to the Fasti Capitolini, 812.
- Year from the building of Rome, according to Varro, which was that most generally used, 813.
- Year of the era of the Seleucidæ, 372.
- Year of the Cæsarean era of Antioch, 108.
- Year of the Julian era, 105.
- Year of the Spanish era, 98.
- Year from the birth of Jesus Christ, according to Archbishop Usher, 64.
- Year of the vulgar era of Christ's nativity, 60.
- Year of Claudius Felix, governor of the Jews, 8.
- Year of Vologesus, king of the Parthians, 11.
- Jesus, high priest of the Jews, 1.

- Year of the Dionysian period, or Easter Cycle, 61.
- Year of the Grecian Cycle of nineteen years, or Common Golden Number, 4; or the second after the first embolismic.
- Year of the Jewish Cycle of nineteen years, 1; or two years before the first embolismic.
- Year of the Solar Cycle, 13.
- Dominical Letter, it being the Bissextile, or Leap Year, FE.
- Day of the Jewish Passover, the second of April, which happened in this year on the fourth day after the Jewish Sabbath.
- Easter Sunday, the sixth of April.
- Epact, or age of the moon on the 22d of March, (the day of the earliest Easter Sunday possible,) 3.
- Epact, according to the present mode of computation, or the moon's age on New Year's day, or the Calends of January, 11.
- Monthly Epacts, or age of the moon on the Calends of each month respectively, (beginning with January,) 11, 13, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 19, 19, 21, 21.
- Number of Direction, or the number of days from the twenty-first of March to the Jewish Passover, 12.
- Year of the reign of Caius Tiberius Claudius Nero Cæsar, the fifth Roman monarch, computing from Octavianus, or Augustus Cæsar, properly the first Roman emperor, 7.
- Roman Consuls, the Emperor Nero Augustus, the fourth time, and Cossus Cornelius Lentulus.

## CHAPTER 1.

*The apostolical address, and the persons to whom the epistle was sent described by the state into which God had called, and in which he had placed, them, 1-4. What graces they should possess in order to be fruitful in the knowledge of God, 5-8. The miserable state of those who either have not these graces, or have fallen from them, 9. Believers should give diligence to make their calling and election sure, 10, 11. The apostle's intimations of his speedy dissolution, and his wish to confirm and establish those Churches*

*in the true faith, 12-15. The certainty of the Gospel, and the convincing evidence which the apostle had of its truth from being present at the transfiguration, by which the word of prophecy was made more sure, 16-19. How the prophecies came, and their nature, 20, 21.*

## NOTES ON CHAP. 1.

**Verse 1. Simon Peter]** *Symeon*, **συμεων**, is the reading of almost all the versions, and of all the most important MSS. And this is the more remarkable, as the surname of Peter occurs upwards of seventy times in the New Testament, and is invariably read **σιμων**, *Simon*, except here, and in ~~44514~~ **Acts 15:14**, where James gives him the name of *Symeon*. Of all the versions, only the *Armenian* and *Vulgate* have *Simon*. But the *edit. princ.*, and several of my own MSS. of the *Vulgate*, write *Symon*; and *Wiclif* has *Symont*.

**A servant]** Employed in his Master's work.

**And an apostle]** Commissioned immediately by Jesus Christ himself to preach to the Gentiles, and to write these epistles for the edification of the Church. As the writer was an *apostle*, the epistle is therefore necessarily *canonical*. All the MSS. agree in the title *apostle*; and of the *versions*, only the *Syriac* omits it.

**Precious faith]** **ισοτιμον πιστιν**. *Valuable faith*; faith worth a great price, and faith which cost a great price. The word *precious* is used in the *low* religious phraseology for *dear*, *comfortable*, *delightful*, &c.; but how much is the dignity of the subject let down by expressions and meanings more proper for the nursery than for the noble science of salvation! It is necessary however to state, that the word *precious* literally signifies *valuable*, of *great price*, *costly*; and was not used in that *low* sense in which it is now employed when our translation was made. That *faith* must be of infinite value, the grace of which Christ purchased by his blood; and it must be of infinite value also when it is the very instrument by which the soul is saved unto eternal life.

**With us]** God having given to *you*-believing *Gentiles*, the same faith and salvation which he had given to *us*-believing *Jews*.

**Through the righteousness of God]** Through his *method* of bringing a lost world, both Jews and Gentiles, to salvation by Jesus Christ; through his gracious impartiality, providing for Gentiles as well as Jews. See the notes on ~~4512b~~ **Romans 3:21-26.**

**Of God and our Saviour Jesus Christ]** This is not a proper translation of the original **του θεου ημων και σωτηρος ιησου χριστου**, which is literally, *Of our God and Saviour Jesus Christ*; and this reading, which is indicated in the *margin*, should have been received into the text; and it is an absolute proof that St. Peter calls Jesus Christ GOD, even in the properest sense of the word, with the *article* prefixed. It is no evidence against this doctrine that one MS. of little authority, and the *Syriac* and two *Arabic* versions have **κυριου**, *Lord*, instead of **θεου**, *God*, as all other MSS. and versions agree in the other reading, as well as the fathers. See in *Griesbach*.

**Verse 2. Grace]** God's favour; *peace*-the effects of that favour in the communication of spiritual and temporal blessings.

**Through the knowledge of God]** **εν επιγνωσει.** *By the acknowledging of God, and of Jesus our Lord.* For those who acknowledge him in all their ways, he will direct their steps. Those who know Christ; and do not acknowledge him before men, can get no multiplication of grace and peace.

**Verse 3. As his Divine power]** His power, which no power can resist, because it is *Divine*-that which properly belongs to the infinite Godhead.

**Hath given unto us]** **δεδωρημενης.** *Hath endowed us with the gifts*; or, *hath gifted us*, as Dr. *Macknight* translates it, who observes that it refers to the gifts which the Holy Spirit communicated to the apostles, to enable them to bring men to *life* and *godliness*; which were, 1. A complete knowledge of the doctrines of the Gospel. 2. Power to preach and defend their doctrines in suitable language, which their adversaries were not able to gainsay or resist. 3. Wisdom to direct them how to behave in all cases, *where* and *when* to labour; and the *matter* suitable to all different cases, and every variety of persons. 4. Miraculous powers, so that on all proper and necessary occasions they could work miracles for the confirmation of their doctrines and mission.

By *life* and *godliness* we may understand, 1. a *godly life*; or, 2. eternal life as the end, and *godliness* the way to it; or, 3. what was essentially

necessary for the *present life*, food, raiment, &c., and what was requisite for the life to come. As they were in a suffering state, and most probably many of them *strangers* in those places, one can scarcely say that they had *all things that pertained to life*; and yet so had God worked in their behalf, that none of them perished, either through lack of food or raiment. And as to what was *necessary for godliness*, they had that from the *Gospel ministry*, which it appears was still continued among them, and the *gifts of the Holy Spirit* which were not withdrawn; and what was farther necessary in the way of personal caution, comfort, and instruction, was supplied by means of these *two epistles*.

**That hath called us to glory and virtue]** To *virtue* or *courage* as the *means*; and *glory*-the kingdom of heaven, as the *end*. This is the way in which these words are commonly understood, and this sense is plain enough, but the construction is harsh. Others have translated **δια δοξης και αρετης**, by *his glorious benignity*, a Hebraism for **δια της ενδοξου αρετης**. and read the whole verse thus: *God by his own power hath bestowed on us every thing necessary for a happy life and godliness, having called us to the knowledge of himself, by his own infinite goodness.* It is certain that the word **αρετη**, which we translate *virtue* or *courage*, is used, **1 Peter 2:9**, to express the *perfection* of the Divine nature: *That ye may show forth τας αρετας, the virtues or PERFECTIONS, of him who hath called you from darkness into his marvellous light.*

But there is a various reading here which is of considerable importance, and which, from the authorities by which it is supported, appears to be genuine: **του καλεσαντος ημας ιδια δοξη και αρετη**, through the knowledge of him who hath called us *by his own glory and power, or by his own glorious power*. This is the reading of AC, several others; and, in effect, of the *Coptic, Armenian, Syriac, Æthiopic, Vulgate, Cyril, Cassiodorus, &c.*

**Verse 4. Whereby are given unto us]** By his own glorious power he hath *freely given unto us exceeding great and invaluable promises*. The Jews were distinguished in a very particular manner by the *promises* which they received from God; the promises to Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Moses, and the prophets. God promised to be their God; to protect, support, and save them; to give them what was emphatically called the promised land; and to cause the Messiah to spring from their race. St. Peter intimates to these *Gentiles* that God had also given unto them exceeding great promises;

indeed all that he had given to the Jews, the mere settlement in the promised land excepted; and this also he had given in all its *spiritual* meaning and force. And besides **τα μεγαιστα επαγγελματα**, these superlatively great promises, which distinguished the Mosaic dispensation, he had given them **τα τιμια επαγγελματα**; the *valuable* promises, those which came through the great *price*; enrolment with the Church of God, redemption in and through the blood of the cross, the continual indwelling influence of the Holy Ghost, the resurrection of the body, and eternal rest at the right hand of God. It was of considerable consequence to the comfort of the Gentiles that these promises were made to *them*, and that salvation was not exclusively of the Jews.

**That by these ye might be partakers]** The object of all God's promises and dispensations was to bring fallen man back to the *image of God*, which he had lost. This, indeed, is the sum and substance of the religion of Christ. We have partaken of an *earthly, sensual, and devilish* nature; the design of God by Christ is to remove this, and to make us *partakers of the Divine nature*; and save us from all the *corruption* in principle and fact *which is in the world*; the source of which is *lust*, **επιθυμια**, irregular, unreasonable, in ordinate, and impure desire; desire to have, to do, and to be, what God has prohibited, and what would be ruinous and destructive to us were the desire to be granted.

*Lust*, or irregular, impure desire, is the *source* whence all the corruption which is in the world springs. Lust conceives and brings forth sin; sin is finished or brought into act, and then brings forth death. This destructive principle is to be rooted out; and love to God and man is to be implanted in its place. This is every Christian's privilege; God has promised to purify our hearts by faith; and that as sin hath reigned unto death, even so shall grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life; that here we are to be delivered out of the hands of all our enemies, and have even "the thoughts of our hearts so cleansed by the inspiration of God's Holy Spirit, that we shall perfectly love him, and worthily magnify his holy name."

This blessing may be expected by those who are continually *escaping*, **αποφυγοντες**, *flying from*, the corruption that is in the world and in themselves. God purifies no heart in which sin is *indulged*. Get pardon through the blood of the Lamb; feel your need of being purified in heart; seek that with all your soul; plead the exceeding great and invaluable promises that refer to this point; abhor your inward self; abstain from every



appearance of evil; flee from self and sin to God; and the very God of peace will sanctify you through body, soul, and spirit, make you burning and shining lights here below, (a proof that he can save to the uttermost ail that come to him by Christ,) and afterwards, having guided you by his counsel through life, will receive you into his eternal glory.

**Verse 5. And beside this]** Notwithstanding what God hath done for you, in order that ye may not receive the grace of God in vain;

**Giving all diligence]** *Furnishing all earnestness and activity*: the original is very emphatic.

**Add to your faith]** *επιχορηγησατε*. *Lead up hand in hand*; alluding, as most think, to the *chorus* in the Grecian dance, who danced with joined hands. See Clarke's note on this word, "~~επιχορηγησατε~~ 2 Corinthians 9:10".

*Your faith*-That faith in Jesus by which ye have been led to embrace the whole Gospel, and by which ye have the evidence of things unseen.

**Virtue]** *αρετην*. *Courage or fortitude*, to enable you to profess the faith before men, in these times of persecution.

**Knowledge]** True wisdom, by which your faith will be increased, and your courage directed, and preserved from degenerating into *rashness*.

**Verse 6. Temperance]** A proper and limited use of all earthly enjoyments, keeping every sense under proper restraints, and never permitting the animal part to subjugate the rational.

**Patience]** Bearing all trials and difficulties with an even mind, enduring in all, and persevering through all.

**Godliness]** Piety towards God; a deep, reverential, religious fear; not only worshipping God with every becoming *outward* act, but adoring, loving, and magnifying him in the heart: a disposition indispensably necessary to salvation, but exceedingly rare among professors.

**Verse 7. Brotherly kindness]** *φιλαδελφιαν*. *Love of the brotherhood*-the strongest attachment to Christ's flock; feeling each as a member of your own body.

**Charity]** *αγαπην*. *Love* to the whole human race, even to your persecutors: love to God and the brethren they had; love to all *mankind* they must also have. True religion is neither selfish nor insulated; where the

love of God is, bigotry cannot exist. Narrow, selfish people, and people of a party, who scarcely have any hope of the salvation of those who do not believe as they believe, and who do not follow with them, have scarcely any religion, though in their own apprehension none is so truly orthodox or religious as themselves.

After *αγαπην*, *love*, one MS. adds these words, *εν δε τη αγαπη την παρακλησιν*, *and to this love consolation*; but this is an idle and useless addition.

**Verse 8. For if these things be in you and abound]** If ye possess all these graces, and they increase and abound in your souls, *they will make-show*, you to be neither *αργους*, *idle*, nor *ακαρπους*, *unfruitful*, in the acknowledgment of our Lord Jesus Christ. The common translation is here very unhappy: *barren* and *unfruitful* certainly convey the same ideas; but *idle* or *inactive*, which is the proper sense of *αργους*, takes away this tautology, and restores the sense. The graces already mentioned by the apostle are in themselves active principles; he who was possessed of them, and had them *abounding* in him, could not be *inactive*; and he who is not inactive in the way of life must be *fruitful*. I may add, that he who is thus active, and consequently fruitful, will ever be ready at all hazard to acknowledge his Lord and Saviour, by whom he has been brought into this state of salvation.

**Verse 9. But he that lacketh these things]** He, whether Jew or Gentile, who professes to have FAITH in God, and has not added to that FAITH *fortitude, knowledge, temperance, patience, godliness, brotherly kindness, and universal love*; is *blind*-his understanding is darkened, *and cannot see afar off*, *μυωπαζων*, *shutting his eyes against the light, winking*, not able to look truth in the face, nor to behold that God whom he once knew was reconciled to him: and thus it appears he is *wilfully blind*, and *hath forgotten that he was purged from his old sins*-has at last, through his nonimprovement of the grace which he received from God, his faith ceasing to work by love, lost the evidence of things not seen; for, having grieved the Holy Spirit by not showing forth the virtues of him who called him into his marvellous light, he has lost the testimony of his sonship; and then, darkness and hardness having taken place of *light* and *filial confidence*, he first calls all his former experience into doubt, and questions whether he has not put enthusiasm in the place of religion. By these means his darkness and hardness increase, his memory becomes indistinct and

confused, till at length he forgets the work of God on his soul, next denies it, and at last asserts that the knowledge of salvation, by the remission of sins, is impossible, and that no man can be saved from sin in this life.

Indeed, some go so far as to deny the Lord that bought them; to renounce Jesus Christ as having made atonement for them; and finish their career of apostasy by utterly denying his Godhead. Many cases of this kind have I known; and they are all the consequence of believers not continuing to be workers together with God, after they had experienced his pardoning love.

Reader, see that the light that is in thee become not darkness; for if it do, *how great a darkness!*

**Verse 10. Wherefore]** Seeing the danger of apostasy, and the fearful end of them who obey not the Gospel, and thus receive the grace of God in vain; *give all diligence*, **σπουδασατε**, hasten, be deeply careful, labour with the most intense purpose of soul.

**To make your calling]** From deep Gentile darkness into the marvellous light of the Gospel.

**And election]** Your being *chosen*, in consequence of obeying the heavenly *calling*, to be the people and Church of God. Instead of **κλησιν**, *calling*, the *Codex Alexandrinus* has **παρακλησιν**, *consolation*.

**Sure]** **βεβαιαν**. *Firm, solid*. For your calling to believe the Gospel, and your *election* to be members of the Church of Christ, will be ultimately unprofitable to you, unless you hold fast what you have received by adding to your faith virtue, knowledge, temperance, &c.

**For if ye do these things]** If ye be careful and diligent to work out your own salvation, through the grace which ye have already received from God; *ye shall never fall*, **ου μη πταισητε ποτε**, *ye shall at no time stumble or fall*; as the Jews have done, and lost their election, <sup><51111></sup>**Romans 11:11**, where the same word is used, and as apostates do, and lose their peace and salvation. We find, therefore, that they who *do not* these things *shall fall*; and thus we see that there is nothing absolute and unconditional in their *election*. There is an addition here in some MSS. and versions which should not pass unnoticed: the *Codex Alexandrinus*, nine others, with the *Syriac*, Erpen's *Arabic*, *Coptic*, *Æthiopic*, *Armenian*, later *Syriac* with an asterisk, the *Vulgate*, and *Bede*, have **ινα δια των καλων (υμων) εργαων**, THAT BY (*your*) GOOD WORKS *ye may make your calling*

*and election firm.* This clause is found in the edition of *Colinaeus*, Paris, 1534, and has been probably omitted by more recent editors on the supposition that the edition does not make a very *orthodox* sense. But on this ground there need be no alarm, for it does not state that the good works thus required merit either the *calling* and *election*, or the *eternal glory*, of God. He who does not by good works *confirm* his *calling* and *election*, will soon have *neither*; and although no good works ever did purchase or ever can purchase the kingdom of God, yet no soul can ever scripturally expect to see God who has them not. *I was hungry, and ye gave me no meat; thirsty, and ye gave me no drink: go, ye cursed. I was hungry, and ye gave me meat; &c., &c.; come, ye blessed.*

**Verse 11. For so an entrance shall be ministered]** If ye *give diligence*; and do *not fall*, an abundant, free, honourable, and triumphant entrance shall be ministered to you into the everlasting kingdom. There seems to be here an allusion to the *triumphs* granted by the Romans to their generals who had distinguished themselves by putting an end to a war, or doing some signal military service to the state. (See the whole account of this military pageant in **Clarke's note on "<sup>47214</sup>2 Corinthians 2:14".) "Ye shall have a triumph, in consequence of having conquered your foes, and led captivity captive."**

Instead of *everlasting kingdom*, **αιωνιον βασιλειαν**, two MSS. have **επουρανιον**, *heavenly kingdom*; and several MSS. omit the word **και σωτηρος**, and *Saviour*.

**Verse 12. Wherefore I will not be negligent]** He had already written *one* epistle, this is the *second*; and probably he meditated more should he be spared. He plainly saw that there was no way of entering into eternal life but that which he described from the 5th to the 10th verse; {<sup>61016</sup>**2 Peter 1:5-10**} and although they knew and were established in the present truth, yet he saw it necessary to bring these things frequently to their recollection.

**Verse 13. As long as I am in this tabernacle]** By *tabernacle* we are to understand his *body*; and hence several of the versions have **σωματι**, *body*, instead of **σκηνωματι**, *tabernacle*. Peter's mode of speaking is very remarkable: as long as I AM in this *tabernacle*, so then the *body* was not *Peter*, but *Peter* dwelt in that *body*. Is not this a proof that St. Peter believed his soul to be very distinct from his body? As a man's house is the place where he dwells, so the body is the house where the soul dwells.

**Verse 14. Knowing that shortly I must put off]** St. Peter plainly refers to the conversation between our Lord and himself, related <sup><εβ18></sup> **John 21:18, 19.** And it is likely that he had now a particular intimation that he was *shortly* to seal the truth with his blood. But as our Lord told him that his death would take place when he should be *old*, being aged now he might on this ground fairly suppose that his departure was at hand.

**Verse 15. Moreover, I will endeavour]** And is not this endeavour seen in these two epistles? By leaving these among them, even after his decease, they had *these things always in remembrance.*

**After my decease]** **μετα την εμην εξοδον.** *After my going out*, i.e. of his *tabernacle*. The real Peter was not open to the eye, nor palpable to the touch; he was concealed in that *tabernacle* vulgarly supposed to be *Peter*. There is a thought very similar to this in the last conversation of Socrates with his friends. As this great man was about to drink the poison to which he was condemned by the Athenian judges, his friend CRITO said, “But how would you be buried?—SOCRATES: Just as you please, *if you can but catch me*, and I do not elude your pursuit. Then, gently smiling, he said: I cannot persuade Crito, **ως εγω ειμι ουτος ο σωκρατης ο νυνι διαλεγομενος**, that I AM *that Socrates who now converses with you*; but he thinks that I am he, **ον οψεται ολιγον υστερον νεκρον, και ερωτα πως εδι με θαπτειν**, *whom he shall shortly see dead*; and he asks how I would be buried? I have asserted that, after I have drunk the poison, *I should no longer remain with you, but shall depart to certain felicities of the blessed.*” PLATONIS *Phaedo*, Oper., vol. i, edit. Bipont., p 260.

**Verse 16. Cunningly devised fables]** **σεσοφισμενοις μυθοις.** I think, with Macknight and others, from the apostle’s using **εποπται**, *eye witnesses*, or rather *beholders*, in the end of the verse, it is probable that he means those *cunningly* devised *fables* among the heathens, concerning the *appearance of their gods on earth in human form*. And to gain the greater credit to these fables, the priests and statesmen instituted what they called the *mysteries* of the gods, in which the fabulous appearance of the gods was represented in mystic *shows*. But one particular show none but the fully initiated were permitted to *behold*; hence they were entitled **εποπται**, *beholders*. This show was probably some resplendent image of the god, imitating life, which, by its *glory*, dazzled the eyes of the beholders, while their ears were ravished by hymns sung in its praise; to this it was natural enough for St. Peter to allude, when speaking about the transfiguration of

Christ. Here the indescribably resplendent majesty of the great God was *manifested*, as far as it could be, in conjunction with that human body in which the fulness of the Divinity dwelt. *And we*, says the apostle, *were* **εποπται**, *beholders*, **της εκεινου μεγαλειοτητος**, *of his own majesty*. Here was no *trick*, no feigned show; we saw him in his glory whom thousands saw before and afterwards; and we have made known to you the *power and coming*, **παρουσιαν**, the appearance and presence, of our Lord Jesus; and we call you to feel the exceeding greatness of this power in your conversion, and the glory of this appearance in his revelation by the power of his Spirit to your souls. These things we have witnessed, and these things ye have experienced: and therefore we can confidently say that neither you nor we have followed cunningly devised fables, but that blessed Gospel which is the power of God to the salvation of every one that believes.

**Verse 17. For he received honour and glory]** In his transfiguration our Lord received from the Father honour in the voice or declaration which said, This is my Son, the beloved One, in whom I have delighted. And he received glory, when, penetrated with, and involved in, that excellent glory, the fashion of his countenance was altered, for his face did shine as the sun, and his raiment was white and glistening, exceeding white like snow; which most glorious and preternatural appearance was a confirmation of the supernatural voice, as the voice was of this preternatural appearance: and thus his Messiahship was attested in the most complete and convincing manner.

**Verse 18. And this voice-we heard]** That is, himself, James, and John heard it, and saw this glory; for these only were the **εποπται**, beholders, on the holy mount. It is worthy of remark that our blessed Lord, who came to give a new law to mankind, appeared on this holy mount with splendour and great glory, as God did when he came on the holy mount, Sinai, to give the old law to Moses. And when the voice came from the excellent glory, This is my Son, the beloved One, in whom I have delighted; hear him: the authority of the old law was taken away. Neither Moses nor Elijah, the law nor the prophets, must tabernacle among men, as teaching the whole way of salvation, and affording the means of eternal life; these things they had pointed out, but these things they did not contain; yet the fulfilment of their types and predictions rendered their declarations more firm and incontestable. See below.

**Verse 19.** We have also a more sure word of prophecy] **εχομεν βεβαιοτερον τον προφητικον λογον.** We have the prophetic doctrine more firm or more confirmed; for in this sense the word **βεβαιωω** is used in several places in the New Testament. See **<40106>1 Corinthians 1:6:** Even as the testimony of Christ **εβεβαιωθη**, was CONFIRMED, among you. **<40121>2 Corinthians 1:21:** Now he which stablisheth us, **ο δε βεβαιων ημας**, who CONFIRMETH US. **<51017>Colossians 2:7:** Rooted and built up in him, and established in the faith, **βεβαιουμενοι**, CONFIRMED in the faith. **<8018>Hebrews 2:3:** How shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation **ητις εβεβαιωτη**, which was CONFIRMED to us. **<38016>Hebrews 6:16:** And an oath, **εις βεβαιωσιν**, for CONFIRMATION. This is the literal sense of the passage in question; and this sense removes that ambiguity from the text which has given rise to so many different interpretations. Taken according to the common translation, it seems to say that prophecy is a surer evidence of Divine revelation than miracles; and so it has been understood. The meaning of the apostle appears to be this: The law and the prophets have spoken concerning Jesus Christ, and Isaiah has particularly pointed him out in these words: Behold my servant whom I uphold, my CHOSEN IN WHOM MY SOUL DELIGHTETH; I have put my Spirit upon him, and he shall bring forth judgment to the Gentiles; to open the blind eyes, to bring out the prisoners from the prison, and THEM THAT SIT IN DARKNESS out of the prison house, **<23011>Isaiah 42:1, 7.** Now both at his baptism, **<40817>Matthew 3:17**, and at his transfiguration, Jesus Christ was declared to be this chosen person, God's only Son, the beloved One in WHOM HE DELIGHTED. The voice, therefore, from heaven, and the miraculous transfiguration of his person, have confirmed the prophetic doctrine concerning him. And to this doctrine, thus confirmed, ye do well to take heed; for it is that light that shines in the dark place-in the Gentile world, as well as among the Jews; giving light to them that sit in darkness, and bringing the prisoners out of the prison house: and this ye must continue to do till the day of his second, last, and most glorious appearing to judge the world comes; and the day star, **φωσφορος**, this light-bringer, arise in your hearts-manifest himself to your eternal consolation. Or perhaps the latter clause of the verse might be thus understood: The prophecies concerning Jesus, which have been so signally confirmed to us on the holy mount, have always been as a light shining in a dark place, from the time of their delivery to the time in which the bright day of Gospel light and salvation dawned forth, and the Son of righteousness has arisen in our souls, with healing in his rays. And to this all who waited for Christ's appearing have taken heed. The word

φωσφορος, phosphorus, generally signified the planet Venus, when she is the morning star; and thus she is called in most European nations.

**Verse 20. Knowing this first]** Considering this as a first principle, that no prophecy of the Scripture, whether that referred to above, or any other, is of any private interpretation-proceeds from the prophet's own knowledge or invention, or was the offspring of calculation or conjecture. The word **επιλυσις** signifies also impetus, impulse; and probably this is the best sense here; not by the mere private impulse of his own mind.

**Verse 21. For the prophecy came not in old time]** That is, in any former time, by the will of man-by a man's own searching, conjecture, or calculation; but holy men of God-persons separated from the world, and devoted to God's service, spake, moved by the Holy Ghost. So far were they from inventing these prophetic declarations concerning Christ, or any future event, that they were **φερομενοι**, carried away, out of themselves and out of the whole region, as it were, of human knowledge and conjecture, by the Holy Ghost, who, without their knowing any thing of the matter, dictated to them what to speak, and what to write; and so far above their knowledge were the words of the prophecy, that they did not even know the intent of those words, but searched what, or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify, when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow. See **1 Peter 1:11**, **1 Peter 1:11, 12**, and the notes there.

1. As the writer of this epistle asserts that he was on the holy mount with Christ when he was transfigured, he must be either *Peter, James, or John*, for there was no other person present on that occasion except *Moses and Elijah*, in their glorious bodies. The epistle was never attributed to *James* nor *John*; but the uninterrupted current, where its Divine inspiration was granted, gave it to *Peter alone*. See the *preface*.

2. It is not unfrequent for the writers of the New Testament to draw a comparison between the Mosaic and Christian dispensations; and the comparison generally shows that, *glorious* as the former was, it had no glory in comparison of the glory that excelleth. St. Peter seems to touch here on the same point; the Mosaic dispensation, with all the light of prophecy by which it was illustrated, was only as a *lamp shining in a dark place*. There is a propriety and delicacy in this image that are not generally noticed: a lamp in the dark gives but a very small portion of light, and only to those who are *very near to it*; yet it always gives light enough to make



*itself visible*, even at a *great distance*; though it enlightens not the space between it and the beholder, it is still literally the *lamp shining in a dark place*. Such was the Mosaic dispensation; it gave a little light to the Jews, but shone not to the Gentile world, any farther than to make itself *visible*. This is compared with the Gospel under the emblem of *daybreak*, and the *rising of the sun*. When the sun is even eighteen degrees below the horizon *daybreak* commences, as the rays of light begin then to diffuse themselves in our atmosphere, by which they are reflected upon the earth. By this means a whole *hemisphere* is enlightened, though but in a partial degree; yet this increasing every moment, as the sun approaches the horizon, prepares for the full manifestation of his resplendent orb: so the ministry of John Baptist, and the initiatory ministry of Christ himself, prepared the primitive believers for his full manifestation on the day of pentecost and afterwards. Here the sun rose in his strength, bringing light, heat, and life to all the inhabitants of the earth. So far, then, as a *lantern* carried in a *dark night* differs from and is inferior to the beneficial effects of *daybreak*, and the *full light* and *heat of a meridian sun*; so far was the Mosaic dispensation, in its beneficial effects, inferior to the Christian dispensation.

3. Perhaps there is scarcely any point of view in which we can consider *prophecy* which is so satisfactory and conclusive as that which is here stated; that is, far from *inventing* the subject of their own predictions, the ancient prophets did not even *know* the meaning of what themselves wrote. They were *carried beyond themselves* by the influence of the *Divine Spirit*, and after ages were alone to discover the object of the prophecy; and the fulfilment was to be the absolute proof that the prediction was of God, and that it was of no *private invention*-no *discovery* made by *human sagacity* and *wisdom*, but by the especial revelation of the all-wise God. This is sufficiently evident in all the prophecies which have been already fulfilled, and will be equally so in those yet to be fulfilled; the events will point out the prophecy, and the prophecy will be seen to be fulfilled in that event.

## II PETER

### CHAPTER 2.

*False teachers foretold, who shall bring in destructive doctrines and shall pervert many, but at last be destroyed by the judgments of God, 1-3. Instances of God's judgments in the rebellious angels, 4. In the antediluvians, 5. In the cities of Sodom and Gomorrha, 6-8. The Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly, as well as to punish the ungodly, 9. The character of those seducing teachers and their disciples; they are unclean, presumptuous, speak evil of dignities, adulterous, covetous, and cursed, 10-14. Have forsaken the right way, copy the conduct of Balaam, speak great swelling words, and pervert those who had escaped from error, 15-19. The miserable state of those who, having escaped the corruption that is in the world, have turned back like the dog to his vomit, and the washed swine to her wallowing in the mire, 20-22.*

#### NOTES ON CHAP. 2.

**Verse 1. But there were false prophets]** There were not only holy men of God among the Jews, who prophesied by Divine inspiration, but there were also false prophets, whose prophecies were from their own imagination, and perverted many.

**As there shall be false teachers among you]** At a very early period of the Christian Church many heresies sprung up; but the chief were those of the Ebionites, Cerinthians, Nicolaitans, Menandrians, and Gnostics, of whom many strange things have been spoken by the primitive fathers, and of whose opinions it is difficult to form any satisfactory view. They were, no doubt, bad enough, and their opponents in general have doubtless made them worse. By what name those were called of whom the apostle here speaks, we cannot tell. They were probably some sort of apostate Jews, or those called the Nicolaitans. See the *preface*.

**Damnableness]** *αἰρεσεις ἀπωλείας*. Heresies of destruction; such as, if followed, would lead a man to perdition. And these *παρεισάξουσιν*, they will *bring in privately-cunningly*, without making

much noise, and as covertly as possible. It would be better to translate *destructive heresies* than *damnable*.

**Denying the Lord that bought them]** It is not certain whether God the Father be intended here, or our Lord Jesus Christ; for God is said to have *purchased* the Israelites, <sup><121516></sup>**Exodus 15:16**, and to be the *Father that had bought them*, <sup><16316></sup>**Deuteronomy 32:6**, and the words may refer to these or such like passages; or they may point out Jesus Christ, who had *bought them with his blood*; and the *heresies*, or *dangerous opinions*, may mean such as opposed the Divinity of our Lord, or his meritorious and sacrificial death, or such opinions as bring upon those who hold them swift destruction. It seems, however, more natural to understand the Lord that bought them as applying to *Christ*, than otherwise; and if so, this is another proof, among many, 1. That none can be saved but by Jesus Christ. Z. That through their own wickedness some may perish for whom Christ died.

**Verse 2. Many shall follow]** WILL follow, because determined to gratify their sinful propensities.

**Pernicious ways]** ταις αρωλειαις. *Their destructions*; i.e. the *heresies of destruction*, or *destructive opinions*, mentioned above. But instead of αρωλειαις, *destructions*, ασελγειαις, *lasciviousnesses* or *uncleannesses*, is the reading of ABC, and upwards of *sixty others*, most of which are among the most ancient, correct, and authentic. This is the reading also of both the *Syriac*, all the *Arabic*, the *Coptic*, *Æthiopic*, *Armenian*, *Slavonic*, *Vulgate*, *Chrysostom*, *Theophylact*, *Æcumenius*, and *Jerome*. A very few, and those of little repute, have the word in the text.

The word *lasciviousnesses* is undoubtedly the true reading, and this points out what the nature of the heresies was: it was a sort of Antinomianism; they pampered and indulged the lusts of the flesh; and, if the Nicolaitans are meant, it is very applicable to them, for they taught the community of wives, &c. Griesbach has received this reading into the text.

**By reason of whom]** These were persons who professed *Christianity*; and because they were called Christians, and followed such abominable practices, the *way of truth*-the Christian religion, βλασφημηθησεται, was *blasphemed*. Had they called themselves by any name but that of *Christ*, his religion would not have suffered.

**Verse 3. And through covetousness]** That they might get money to spend upon their lusts, *with feigned words*, **πλαστοις λογοις**, with *counterfeit tales, false narrations*, of pretended facts, *lying miracles, fabulous legends*. “In this single sentence,” says Dr. Macknight, “there is a clear prediction of the iniquitous practices of those great merchants of souls, the Romish clergy, who have rated all crimes, even the most atrocious, at a fixed price; so that if their doctrine be true, whoever pays the price may commit the crime without hazarding his salvation.” How the popish Church has made merchandise of souls, needs no particular explanation here. It was this abominable doctrine that showed to some, then in that Church, the absolute necessity of a reformation.

**Whose judgment now of a long time]** From the beginning God has condemned sin, and inflicted suitable punishments on transgressors; and has promised in his word, from the earliest ages, to pour out his indignation on the wicked. The punishment, therefore, *so long ago predicted*, shall fall on these impure and incorrigible sinners; and the *condemnation* which is denounced against them *slumbers not*-it is alert, it is on its way, it is hurrying on, and must soon overtake them.

**Verse 4. For if God spared not the angels]** The angels were originally placed in a state of probation; some having fallen and some having stood proves this. How long that probation was to last to them, and what was the particular *test* of their fidelity, we know not; nor indeed do we know what was their *sin*; nor *when* nor *how* they fell. St. Jude says *they kept not their first estate, but left their own habitation*; which seems to indicate that they got *discontented* with their lot, and aspired to higher honours, or perhaps to celestial domination. The tradition of their fall is in all countries and in all religions, but the accounts given are various and contradictory; and no wonder, for we have no direct revelation on the subject. *They kept not their first estate, and they sinned*, is the sum of what we know on the subject; and here curiosity and conjecture are useless.

**But cast them down to hell, and delivered them into chains of darkness]** **αλλα σειραις ζοφου ταρταρωσας παρεδωκεν εις κρισιν τετηρημενους** *But with chains of darkness confining them in Tartarus, delivered them over to be kept to judgment; or, sinking them into Tartarus, delivered them over into custody for punishment, to chains of darkness.* *Chains of darkness* is a highly poetic expression. Darkness binds them on

all hands; and so dense and strong is this darkness that it cannot be broken through; they cannot deliver themselves, nor be delivered by others.

As the word *Tartarus* is found nowhere else in the *New Testament*, nor does it appear in the *Septuagint*, we must have recourse to the Greek writers for its meaning. Mr. *Parkhurst*, under the word **ταρταρω**, has made some good collections from those writers, which I here subjoin.

“The Scholiast on *ÆSCHYLUS*, *Eumen.*, says: *Pindar* relates that *Apollo* overcame the *Python* by force; wherefore the earth endeavoured **ταρταρωσαι**, to cast him into *Tartarus*. *Tzetzes* uses the same word, **ταρταρω**, for casting or sending into *Tartarus*; and the compound verb **καταταρταρουν**, is found in *Apollodorus*; in *Didymus*’ Scholia on *Homer*; in *Phurnutus*, Deuteronomy Nat, Deor., p. 11, edit. *Gale*; and in the book **περι ποταμων**, which is extant among the works of *Plutarch*. And those whom *Apollodorus* styles **καταταρταρωθεντας**, he in the same breath calls **ριφθεντας εις ταρταρον**, cast into *Tartarus*. Thus the learned *Windet*, in *Pole*’s Synopsis. We may then, I think, safely assert that **ταρταρωσας**, in St. Peter, means not, as *Mede* (*Works*, fol., p. 23) interprets it, to adjudge to, but to cast into, *Tartarus*; **ριπτειν εις ταρταρον**, as in *Homer*, cited below. And in order to know what was the precise intention of the apostle by this expression, we must inquire what is the accurate import of the term **ταρταρος**. Now, it appears from a passage of *Lucian*, that by **ταρταρος** was meant, in a physical sense, the bounds or verge of this material system; for, addressing himself to **ερωσ**, *Cupid* or *Love*, he says: **συ γαρ εξ αφανους και κεχυμενης αμορφιας το παν εμορφωσας, κ. τ. λ.** ‘Thou formedst the universe from its confused and chaotic state; and, after separating and dispersing the circumfused chaos, in which, as in one common sepulchre, the whole world lay buried, thou drovest it to the confines or recesses of outer *Tartarus*—

*‘Where iron gates and bars of solid brass  
Keep it in durance irrefrangible,  
And its return prohibit.’*

“The ancient Greeks appear to have received, by tradition, an account of the punishment of the ‘fallen angels,’ and of bad men after death; and their poets did, in conformity I presume with that account, make *Tartarus* the place where the giants who rebelled against *Jupiter*, and the souls of the wicked, were confined. ‘Here,’ saith *Hesiod*, *Theogon.*, lin. 720, 1, ‘the rebellious *Titans* were bound in penal chains.’

τοσσον ενερθύπο γης, οσον ουρανος εστάπο γαιης.  
 ισον γαρ τάπο γης ες TAPTAPON ηεροεντα.

*‘As far beneath the earth as earth from heaven;  
 For such the distance thence to Tartarus.’*

Which description will very well agree with the proper sense of Tartarus, if we take the earth for the centre of the material system, and reckon from our zenith, or the extremity of the heavens that is over our heads. But as the Greeks imagined the earth to be of a boundless depth, so it must not be dissembled that their poets speak of *Tartarus* as *a vast pit or gulf in the bowels of it*. Thus Hesiod in the same poem, lin. 119, calls it—

TAPTAPA τήεροεντα μυχω χθονος ευρυοδειης.

*‘Black Tartarus, within earth’s spacious womb.’*

“And Homer, *Iliad* viii., lin. 13, &c., introduces Jupiter threatening any of the gods who should presume to assist either the Greeks or the Trojans, that he should either come back wounded to heaven, or be sent to *Tartarus*.

η μιν ελων ριψω ες TAPTAPON ηερεντα,  
 τηλε μαλ, ηχι βαθιστον υπο χθονος εστι βεπεθρον,  
 ενθα σιδηρειαι τε πυλαι, και χαλκεος ουδος,  
 τοσσον ενερθαΐδεω, οσον ονρανος εστάπο γαιης.

*‘Or far, O far, from steep Olympus thrown,  
 Low in the deep Tartarean gulf shall groan.  
 That gulf which iron gates and brazen ground  
 Within the earth inexorably bound;  
 As deep beneath th’ infernal centre hurl’d,  
 As from that centre to the ethereal world.’*

POPE.

‘Where, according to Homer’s description, *Iliad* viii., lin. 480, 1,—

----- ουταύγης υπεριονος ηελιοιο  
 τερποντ, ουτάνεμοισι. βαθυς δε τε TAPTAPOΣ αμοις.

*‘No sun e’er gilds the gloomy horrors there,  
 No cheerful gales refresh the lazy air,  
 But murky Tartarus extends around.’*

POPE.

“Or, in the language of the old Latin poet, (cited by Cicero, Tuscul., lib. i. cap. 15.)

*Ubi rigida constat crassa caligo inferum.*

“On the whole, then, **ταρταρουν**, in St. Peter, is the same as **ριπτειν ες ταρταρον**, *to throw into Tartarus*, in Homer, only rectifying the poet’s mistake of *Tartarus* being in the bowels of the earth, and recurring to the original sense of that word above explained, which when applied to *spirits* must be interpreted *spiritually*; and thus **ταρταρωσας** will import that God cast the apostate angels out of his presence *into that ζοφος του σκοτους*, *blackness of darkness*, (<sup><610217></sup>**2 Peter 2:17**; <sup><610113></sup>**Jude 1:13**.) where they will be for ever banished *from the light of his countenance*, and from the *beatifying influence of the ever blessed Three*, as truly as a person plunged into the *torpid boundary of this created system* would be from the *light of the sun* and the *benign operations of the material heavens*.”

By *chains of darkness* we are to understand a *place of darkness and wretchedness*, from which it is *impossible for them to escape*.

**Verse 5. Spared not the old world]** The apostle’s argument is this: If God spared not the rebellious angels, nor the sinful antediluvians, nor the cities of Sodom and Gomorrha, he will not spare those wicked teachers who corrupt the pure doctrines of Christianity.

**Saved Noah the eighth]** Some think that the words should be translated, *Noah the eighth preacher of righteousness*; but it seems most evident, from <sup><61030></sup>**1 Peter 3:20**, that *eight persons* are here meant, which were the whole that were saved in the ark, *viz.* Shem, Ham, Japhet, and their three wives, six; Noah’s wife seven; and Noah himself the *eighth*. The form of expression, **ογδοον μωε**, *Noah the eighth*, i.e. Noah and *seven* more, is most common in the Greek language. So in APPIAN, *Bell. Pun.*, p. 12, **τριτος δε ποτε εν σπηλαιω κρυπτομενος ελαθε**, *sometimes he the third* (i.e. he with two others) *lay hid in a cave*. ANDOCIDES, *Orat. iv.* p. 295: **αιρεθεις επι τουτω δεκατος αυτος**, *he himself the tenth* (i.e. he and nine others) *were chosen to this*. See a number of other examples in *Kypke*.

**World of the ungodly]** A whole race *without God*-without any pure *worship* or rational religion.

**Verse 6. The cities of Sodom and Gomorrha]** See the notes on Gen. 19, for an account of the sin and punishment of these cities.

**Making them an ensample]** These three words, *υποδειγμα*, *παραδειγμα*, and *δειγμα*, are used to express the same idea; though the former may signify an *example to be shunned*, the second an *example to be followed*, and the third a *simple exhibition*. But these differences are not always observed.

**Verse 7. Vexed with the filthy conversation]** *καταπονουμενον υπο της των αθεσμων εν ασελγεια αναστροφης*. *Being exceedingly pained with the unclean conduct of those lawless persons*. What this was, see in the history, Gen. 19., and the notes there.

**Verse 8. That righteous man dwelling among them]** Lot, after his departure from Abraham, A. M. 2086, lived at Sodom till A. M. 2107, a space of about twenty years; and, as he had a *righteous soul*, he must have been *tormented* with the abominations of that people *from day to day*.

The word *εβασανιζεν*, *tormented*, is not less emphatic than the word *καταπονουμενον*, *grievously pained*, in the preceding verse, and shows what this man must have felt in dwelling so long among a people so abandoned.

**Verse 9. The Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly]** The preservation and deliverance of Lot gave the apostle occasion to remark, that God knew as well to *save* as to *destroy*; and that his *goodness* led him as forcibly to save righteous Lot, as his *justice* did to destroy the rebellious in the instances already adduced. And the design of the apostle in producing these examples is to show to the people to whom he was writing that, although God would destroy those false teachers, yet he would powerfully save his faithful servants from their contagion and from their destruction. We should carefully observe, 1. That the godly man is not to be preserved *from* temptation. 2. That he will be preserved *in* temptation. 3. That he will be delivered *out* of it.

**Verse 10. But chiefly them that walk]** That is, God will in the most signal manner punish them that walk after the flesh- addict themselves to sodomitical practices, and the *lust of pollution*; probably alluding to those most abominable practices where men abuse themselves and abuse one another.



**Despise government.]** They brave the power and authority of the civil magistrate, practising their abominations so as to keep out of the reach of the letter of the law; and they *speak evil of dignities*-they blaspheme civil government, they abhor the restraints laid upon men by the laws, and would wish all governments destroyed that they might live as they list.

**Presumptuous** are they] **τολμηται.** They are bold and daring, headstrong, regardless of fear.

**Self-willed]** **αυθαδεις.** Self-sufficient; presuming on themselves; following their own opinions, which no authority can induce them to relinquish.

**Are not afraid to speak evil of dignities.]** They are lawless and disobedient, spurn all human authority, and speak contemptuously of all legal and civil jurisdiction. Those in general despise governments, and speak evil of dignities, who wish to be under no control, that they may act as freebooters in the community.

**Verse 11. Whereas angels, &c.]** This is a difficult verse, but the meaning seems to be this: The holy angels, who are represented as bringing an account of the actions of the fallen angels before the Lord in judgment, simply state the facts without exaggeration, and without permitting any thing of a bitter, reviling, or railing spirit, to enter into their accusations. See **Zecariah 3:1**, and ~~cf. Jude 1:9~~ **Jude 1:9**; to the former of which St. Peter evidently alludes. But these persons, not only speak of the actions of men which they conceive to be wrong, but do it with untrue colourings, and the greatest malevolence. Michael, the archangel, treated a damned spirit with courtesy; he only said, *The Lord rebuke thee, Satan!* but these treat the rulers of God's appointment with disrespect and calumny.

**Before the Lord.]** **παρα κυριω** is wanting in a number of MSS. and most of the *versions*.

**Verse 12. But these, as natural brute beasts]** **ὡς αλογα ζωα φυσικα.** *As those natural animals void of reason*, following only the gross instinct of nature, being governed neither by reason nor religion.

**Made to be taken and destroyed]** Intended to be taken with nets and gins, and then destroyed, because of their fierce and destructive nature; so these false teachers and insurgents must be treated; first incarcerated, and then brought to judgment, that they may have the reward of their doings.

And thus, by *blaspheming what they do not understand*, they at last *perish in their own corruption*; i.e. their corrupt doctrines and vicious practices.

**Verse 13. They that count it pleasure to riot in the day time.]** Most sinners, in order to practise their abominable pleasures, seek the secrecy of the night; but these, bidding defiance to all decorum, decency, and shame, take the open day, and thus proclaim their impurities to the sun.

**Spots-and blemishes]** They are a disgrace to the Christian name.

**Sporting themselves]** Forming opinions which give license to sin, and then acting on those opinions; and thus rioting in their own deceits.

**With their own deceivings]** *εν ταις απαταις*. But instead of this, AB, and almost all the versions and several of the fathers, have *εν ταις αγαπαις*, *in your love feasts*, which is probably the true reading.

**While they feast with you]** It appears they held a kind of communion with the Church, and attended sacred festivals, which they desecrated with their own unhallowed opinions and conduct.

**Verse 14. Having eyes full of adultery]** *μοιχαλιδος*. *Of an adulteress*; being ever bent on the gratification of their sensual desires, so that they are represented as having *an adulteress constantly before their eyes*, and that their eyes can take in no other object but *her*. But instead of *μοιχαλιδος* of an *adulteress*, the *Codex Alexandrinus*, three others, with the *Coptic*, *Vulgate*, and one copy of the *Itala*, together with several of the *fathers*, have *μοιχαλιας*, *of adultery*.

**Cannot cease from sin]** *Which cease not from sin*; they might cease from sin, but they do not; they love and practise it. Instead of *ακαταπαυστους*, *which cannot cease*, several MSS. and versions have *ακαταπαυστου*, and this requires the place to be read, *Having eyes full of adultery and incessant sin*. The images of sinful acts were continually floating before their disordered and impure fancy. This figure of speech is very common in the Greek writers; and *Kypke* gives many instances of it, which indeed carry the image too far to be here translated.

**Beguiling unstable souls]** The metaphor is taken from adulterers seducing unwary, inexperienced, and light, trifling women; so do those false teachers seduce those who are not established in righteousness.

**Exercised with covetous practices]** The metaphor is taken from the *agonistæ* in the Grecian games, who exercised themselves in those feats, such as *wrestling, boxing, running, &c.*, in which they proposed to contend in the public games. These persons had their hearts schooled in nefarious practices; they had *exercised themselves* till they were perfectly *expert* in all the arts of seduction, overreaching, and every kind of fraud.

**Cursed children]** Such not only live under God's curse here, but they are heirs to it hereafter.

**Verse 15. Which have forsaken the right way]** As Balaam did, who, although God showed him the right way, took one contrary to it, preferring the reward offered him by Balak to the approbation and blessing of God.

**The way of Balaam]** Is the *counsel* of Balaam. He counselled the Moabites to give their most beautiful young women to the Israelitish youth, that they might be enticed by them to commit *idolatry*. See Clarke's notes on "<sup>-0235</sup>Numbers 22:5", &c., and "<sup>-0231</sup>Numbers 23:1", &c.

The son of **Bosor]** Instead of  $\beta\omicron\sigma\omicron\mu$ , BOSOR two ancient MSS. and some of the versions have  $\beta\epsilon\omicron\mu$ , *Beor*, to accommodate the word to the Hebrew text and the Septuagint. The difference in this name seems to have arisen from mistaking one letter for another in the Hebrew name,  $\text{rw}[\text{b}$  *Beor*, for  $\text{rwxb}$  *Betsor* or *Bosor*; *tsaddi*  $\times$  and *ain*  $[\text{ ]$ , which are very like each other, being interchanged.

**Verse 16. The dumb ass, speaking with man's voice]** See Clarke's note on "<sup>-0228</sup>Numbers 22:28".

**The madness of the prophet.]** Is not this a reference to the speech of the ass, as represented in the Targums of Jonathan ben Uzziel and Jerusalem? "Wo to thee, Balaam, thou sinner, thou madman: there is no wisdom found in thee." These words contain nearly the same expressions as those in St. Peter.

**Verse 17. These are wells without water]** Persons who, by their profession, should furnish *the water of life* to souls athirst for salvation; but they have not this water; they are *teachers* without *ability* to *instruct*; they are *sowers*, and have no *seed* in their basket. Nothing is more cheering in the deserts of the east than to meet with a *well of water*; and nothing more

distressing, when parched with thirst, than to meet with a well that contains no water.

**Clouds that are carried with a tempest]** In a time of great *drought*, to see *clouds* beginning to cover the face of the heavens raises the expectation of rain; but to see these *carried off* by a sudden *tempest* is a dreary disappointment. These false teachers were equally as unprofitable as the empty well, or the light, dissipated cloud.

**To whom the mist of darkness is reserved]** That is, an eternal separation from the presence of God, and the glory of his power. They shall be thrust into *outer darkness*, <sup><40812></sup>**Matthew 8:12**; into the utmost degrees of misery and despair. False and corrupt teachers will be sent into the lowest hell; and be “the most downcast, underfoot vassals of perdition.”

It is scarcely necessary to notice a various reading here, which, though very different in sound, is nearly the same in sense. Instead of **νεφελαι**, *clouds*, which is the common reading, **και ομιχλαι**, *and mists*, or perhaps more properly *thick darkness*, from **ομου**, *together*, and **αχλυσ**, *darkness*, is the reading in ABC, sixteen others, Erpen’s *Arabic*, later *Syriac*, *Coptic*, *Æthiopic*, and *Vulgate*, and several of the *fathers*. This reading Griesbach has admitted into the text.

**Verse 18. They speak great swelling words of vanity]** The word **υπερογκα** signifies things of great magnitude, grand, superb, sublime; it sometimes signifies *inflated*, *tumid*, *bombastic*. These false teachers spoke of great and high things, and no doubt promised their disciples the greatest privileges, as they themselves pretended to a high degree of illumination; but they were all false and vain, though they tickled the fancy and excited the desires of the flesh; and indeed this appears to have been their object. And hence some think that the impure sect of the Nicolaitans is meant. See the *preface*.

**Those that were clean escaped]** Those who, through hearing the doctrines of the Gospel, had been converted, were perverted by those false teachers.

**Verse 19. While they promise them liberty]** Either to live in the highest degrees of spiritual good, or a freedom from the Roman yoke; or from the yoke of the law, or what they might term needless restraints. Their own

conduct showed the falsity of their system; for they were slaves to every disgraceful lust.

**For of whom a man is overcome]** This is an allusion to the ancient custom of selling for slaves those whom they had conquered and captivated in war. The ancient law was, that a man might either kill him whom he overcame in battle, or *keep him* for a slave. These were called *servi*, slaves, from the verb *servare*, to *keep* or *preserve*. And they were also called *mancipia*, from *manu capiuntur*, they are taken captive by the hand of their enemy. Thus the person who is overcome by his lusts is represented as being the slave of those lusts. See <sup><48616></sup>**Romans 6:16**, and the note there.

**Verse 20. The pollutions of the world]** *Sin* in general, and particularly superstition, idolatry, and lasciviousness. These are called **μιασματα**, *miasmata*, things that *infect*, *pollute*, and *defile*. The word was anciently used, and is in use at the present day, to express those noxious particles of effluvia proceeding from persons infected with contagious and dangerous diseases; or from dead and corrupt bodies, stagnant and putrid waters, marshes &c., by which the sound and healthy may be infected and destroyed.

The world is here represented as one large, putrid marsh, or corrupt body, sending off its destructive *miasmata* everywhere and in every direction, so that none can escape its contagion, and none can be healed of the great epidemic disease of sin, but by the mighty power and skill of God. St. Augustine has improved on this image: “The whole world,” says he, “is one great diseased man, lying extended from east to west, and from north to south; and to heal this great sick man, the almighty Physician descended from heaven.” Now, it is by the *knowledge of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ*, as says St. Peter, that we *escape* the destructive influence of these contagious *miasmata*. But if, *after having been* healed, and *escaped* the death to which we were exposed, we get *again entangled*, **εμπλακέντες**, *enfolded*, *enveloped* with them; then *the latter end will be worse than the beginning*: forasmuch as we shall have sinned against more light, and the soul, by its conversion to God, having had all its powers and faculties greatly improved, is now, being repolluted, more capable of iniquity than before, and can bear more expressively the image of the earthly.

**Verse 21. For it had been better for them not to have known]** For the reasons assigned above; because they have sinned against more mercy, are capable of more sin, and are liable to greater punishment.

**The holy commandment]** The whole religion of Christ is contained in this one commandment, “Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, with all thy soul, with all thy mind, and with all thy strength; and thy neighbour as thyself.” He who obeys this great commandment, and this by the grace of Christ is possible to every man, is saved from sinning either against his God or against his neighbour. Nothing less than this does the religion of Christ require.

**Verse 22. According to the true proverb]** This seems to be a reference to <sup>אבסל</sup>**Proverbs 26:11: I aq I avb bl kk kekeleb shab al keo; as the dog returneth to his vomit, so a fool repeateth his folly.** In substance this proverb is found among the rabbins; so Midrash Ruth, in Sohar Chadash, fol. 62: *Orpah is returned to her mire, Ruth persevered in spirit;* and again, Ibid. fol. 64: “Orpah, which is **tymhbh vxn nephesh habbehemith**, the bestial soul, is returned to her mire.”

The Greeks have something like it; so *Arrian*, Dissert. Epict. l. iv. c. 11, says: **απελθε και χοιρω διαλεγου, ινεν βορβορω μη κυλιηται**, “Go and reason with the swine, lest he be rolled in the mire.” This is called a *true proverb*: for it is a *fact* that a dog will eat up his own vomit; and the swine, howsoever carefully washed, will again wallow in the mire. As applied here it is very expressive: the poor sinner, having heard the Gospel of Christ, was led to *loathe* and *reject* his sin; and, on his application to God for mercy, was *washed* from his unrighteousness. But he is here represented as *taking up again* what he had before *rejected*, and *defiling* himself in that from which he had been *cleansed*.

Here is a sad proof of the possibility of falling from grace, and from very high degrees of it too. These had *escaped from the contagion that was in the world*; they had had true repentance, and *cast up* “their soursweet morsel of sin;” they had been *washed* from all their filthiness, and this must have been through the blood of the Lamb; yet, after all, they went back, got *entangled* with their old sins, *swallowed down* their formerly *rejected* lusts, and rewallowed in the mire of corruption. It is no wonder that God should say, *the latter end is worse with them than the beginning*: reason and nature say it *must* be so; and Divine justice says it *ought* to be so; and the person himself must confess that it is *right* that it *should* be so. But how dreadful is this state! How dangerous when the person has abandoned himself to his old sins! Yet it is not said that it is impossible for him to return to his Maker; though his case be deplorable, it is not utterly

hopeless; the leper may yet be made clean, and the dead may be raised. Reader, is thy backsliding a grief and burden to thee? Then thou art not far from the kingdom of God; believe on the Lord Jesus, and thou shalt be saved.

## II PETER

### CHAPTER 3.

*The apostle shows his design in writing this and the preceding epistle, 1, 2. Describes the nature of the heresies which should take place in the last times, 3-8. A thousand years with the Lord are but as a day, 9. He will come and judge the world as he has promised, and the heavens and the earth shall be burnt up, 10. How those should live who expect these things, 11, 12. Of the new heavens and the new earth, and the necessity of being prepared for this great change, 13, 14. Concerning some difficult things in St. Paul 's epistles, 15, 16. We must watch against the error of the wicked, grow in grace, and give all glory to God, 17, 18.*

#### NOTES ON CHAP. 3.

**Verse 1. This second epistle]** In order to guard them against the seductions of false teachers, he calls to their remembrance the doctrine of the ancient prophets, and the commands or instructions of the apostles, all founded on the same basis.

He possibly refers to the prophecies of *Enoch*, as mentioned by *Jude*, <sup><6014></sup>**Jude 1:14, 15**; of *David*, <sup><49010></sup>**Psalm 1:1**, &c.; and of *Daniel*, <sup><7120></sup>**Daniel 12:2**, relative to the coming of our Lord to judgment: and he brings in the instructions of the apostles of Christ, by which they were directed how to prepare to meet their God.

**Verse 3. Knowing this first]** Considering this in an *especial* manner, that those prophets predicted the coming of false teachers: and their being now in the Church proved how clearly they were known to God, and showed the Christians at Pontus the necessity of having no intercourse or connection with them.

**There shall come-scoffers]** Persons who shall endeavour to turn all religion into ridicule, as this is the most likely way to depreciate truth in the sight of the giddy multitude. The scoffers, having no solid argument to produce against revelation, endeavour to make a scaramouch of some parts; and then affect to laugh at it, and get superficial thinkers to laugh with them.



**Walking after their own lusts]** Here is the true *source* of all infidelity. The Gospel of Jesus is *pure* and *holy*, and requires a *holy heart* and *holy life*. They wish to follow their own *lusts*, and consequently cannot brook the restraints of the Gospel: therefore they labour to prove that it is not true, that they may get rid of its injunctions, and at last succeed in persuading themselves that it is a forgery; and then throw the reins on the neck of their evil propensities. Thus their opposition to revealed truth began and ended in their own lusts.

There is a remarkable *addition* here in almost every MS. and *version* of note: *There shall come in the last days*, IN MOCKERY, *εν επιαιγμονη*, *scoffers walking after their own lusts*. This is the reading of ABC, eleven others, both the *Syriac*, all the *Arabic*, *Coptic*, *Æthiopic*, *Vulgate*, and several of the *fathers*. They come *in mockery*; this is their *spirit* and *temper*; they have no desire to find out *truth*; they take up the Bible merely with the design of *turning it into ridicule*. This reading Griesbach has received into the text.

**The last days]** Probably refer to the conclusion of the Jewish polity, which was then at hand.

**Verse 4. Where is the promise of his coming?]** Perhaps the false teachers here referred to were such as believed in the *eternity of the world*: the prophets and the apostles had foretold its destruction, and they took it for granted, if this were true, that the terrestrial machine would have begun long ago to have shown some symptoms of decay; but they found that since the patriarchs died all things remained as they were from the foundation of the world; that is, men were propagated by natural generation, one was born and another died, and the course of nature continued regular in the seasons, succession of day and night, generation and corruption of animals and vegetables, &c.; for they did not consider the power of the Almighty, by which the whole can be annihilated in a moment, as well as created. As, therefore, they saw none of these changes, they presumed that there *would be none*, and they intimated that there *never had been any*. The apostle combats this notion in the following verse.

**Verse 5. For this they willingly are ignorant of]** They shut their eyes against the light, and refuse all evidence; what does not answer their purpose *they will not know*. And the apostle refers to a *fact* that militates against their hypothesis, with which they refused to acquaint themselves;

and their ignorance he attributes to their unwillingness to learn the true state of the case.

**By the word of God the heavens were of old]** I shall set down the Greek text of this extremely difficult clause: **ουπανοι ησαν εκπαλαι, και γη εξ υδατος και διυδατος συνεστωσα, τω του θεου λογω.** translated thus by Mr. *Wakefield*: “A heaven and an earth formed out of water, and by means of water, by the appointment of God, had continued from old time.” By Dr. *Macknight* thus; “The heavens were anciently, and the earth of water: and through water the earth consists by the word of God.” By *Kypke* thus: “The heavens were of old, and the earth, which is framed, by the word of God, from the waters, and between the waters.” However we take the words, they seem to refer to the origin of the earth. It was the opinion of the remotest antiquity that the earth was formed out of *water*, or a primitive moisture which they termed **υλη**, *hule*, a *first matter* or *nutriment* for all things; but *Thales* pointedly taught **αρχην δε των πανθως υδωρ ειναι**, *that all things derive their existence from water*, and this very nearly expresses the sentiment of Peter, and nearly in his own terms too. But is this doctrine true? It must be owned that it appears to be the doctrine of Moses: *In the beginning*, says he, *God made the heavens and the earth; and the earth was without form and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep.* Now, these *heavens* and *earth* which God made in the beginning, and which he says were at first *formless* and *empty*, and which he calls the *deep*, are in the very next verse called *waters*; from which it is evident that Moses teaches that the earth was made out of some *fluid substance*, to which the name of *water* is properly given. And that the earth was at first in a *fluid mass* is most evident from its *form*; it is not *round*, as has been demonstrated by measuring some *degrees* near the north *pole*, and under the *equator*; the result of which proved that the figure of the earth was that of an *oblate spheroid*, a figure nearly resembling that of an *orange*. And this is the form that any *soft* or elastic body would assume if whirled rapidly round a centre, as the earth is around its axis. The measurement to which I have referred shows the earth to be *flatted* at the *poles*, and *raised* at the *equator*. And by this measurement it was demonstrated that the diameter of the earth at the *equator* was *greater* by about twenty-five miles than at the *poles*.

Now, considering the earth to be thus formed **εξ υδατος**, *of water*, we have next to consider what the apostle means by **δι υδατος**, variously translated by *out of*, *by means of*, and *between, the water*.

*Standing out of the water* gives no sense, and should be abandoned. If we translate *between the waters*, it will bear some resemblance to <sup><010106></sup>Genesis 1:6, 7: *And God said, Let there be a firmament in the midst of, Ἐωτβ bethoch, between, the waters; and let it divide the waters from the waters: and God divided the waters which were under the firmament from the waters which were above the firmament; then it may refer to the whole of the atmosphere, with which the earth is everywhere surrounded, and which contains all the vapours which belong to our globe, and without which we could neither have animal nor vegetative life. Thus then the earth, or terraqueous globe, which was originally formed out of water, subsists by water; and by means of that very water, the water compacted with the earth-the fountains of the great deep, and the waters in the atmosphere-the windows of heaven, <sup><010711></sup>Genesis 7:11, the antediluvian earth was destroyed, as St. Peter states in the next verse: the terraqueous globe, which was formed originally of water or a fluid substance, the chaos or first matter, and which was suspended in the heavens-the atmosphere, enveloped with water, by means of which water it was preserved; yet, because of the wickedness of its inhabitants, was destroyed by those very same waters out of which it was originally made, and by which it subsisted.*

**Verse 7. But the heavens and the earth, which are now]** The present earth and its atmosphere, which are liable to the same destruction, because the same *means* still exist, (for there is still *water* enough to drown the earth, and there is *iniquity* enough to induce God to destroy it and its inhabitants,) are nevertheless *kept in store*, τεθησαυρισμενοι, *treasured up*, kept in God's storehouse, to be destroyed, not by *water*, but by *fire* at the day of judgment.

From all this it appears that those *mockers* affected to be ignorant of the *Mosaic account* of the formation of the earth, and of its destruction by the waters of the deluge; and indeed this is implied in their stating that *all things continued as they were from the creation*. But St. Peter calls them back to the *Mosaic account*, to prove that this was false; for the earth, &c., which were then formed, had perished by the *flood*; and that the present earth, &c., which were formed out of the preceding, should, at the day of judgment, perish by the *fire* of God's wrath.

**Verse 8. Be not ignorant]** Though *they* are wilfully ignorant, neglect not *ye* the means of instruction.

**One day is with the Lord as a thousand years]** That is: All time is as nothing before him, because in the *presence* as in the *nature* of God all is *eternity*; therefore nothing is *long*, nothing *short*, before him; no *lapse* of ages impairs his purposes, nor need he *wait* to find convenience to execute those purposes. And when the *longest period* of time has passed by, it is but as a *moment* or indivisible *point* in comparison of *eternity*. This thought is well expressed by PLUTARCH, *Consol. ad Apoll.*: “If we compare the time of life with eternity, we shall find no difference between *long* and *short*. τα γαρ χιλια, και τα μυρια ετη, στιγμη τις εστιν αοριστος, μαλλον δε μοριον τι βραχυτατον στιγμης. for a *thousand* or *ten thousand years* are but a certain *indefinite point*, or rather the *smallest part of a point*.” The words of the apostle seem to be a quotation from ~~19904~~ **Psalm 90:4**.

**Verse 9. The Lord is not slack]** They probably in their *mocking* said, “Either God had made no such promise to judge the world, destroy the earth, and send ungodly men to perdition; or if he had, he had forgotten to fulfil it, or had not convenient time or leisure.” To some such *mocking* the apostle seems to refer: and he immediately shows the reason why deserved punishment is not inflicted on a guilty world.

**But is long-suffering]** It is not *slackness*, *remissness*, nor want of due *displacence* at sin, that induced God to prolong the respite of ungodly men; but his long-suffering, his *unwillingness* that any should perish: and therefore he spared them, that they might have additional offers of grace, and *be led to repentance*-to deplore their sins, implore God’s mercy, and find redemption through the blood of the Lamb.

As God is *not willing that any should perish*, and as he is *willing that all should come to repentance*, consequently he has never devised nor decreed the damnation of any man, nor has he rendered it impossible for any soul to be saved, either by *necessitating* him to do evil, that he might die for it, or *refusing him the means* of recovery, without which he could not be saved.

**Verse 10. The day of the Lord will come]** See ~~4043~~ **Matthew 24:43**, to which the apostle seems to allude.

**The heavens shall pass away with a great noise]** As the *heavens* mean here, and in the passages above, the whole *atmosphere*, in which all the terrestrial vapours are lodged; and as *water* itself is composed of two gases, eighty-five parts *in weight* of oxygen, and fifteen of hydrogen, or

two parts *in volume* of the latter, and one of the former; (for if these quantities be put together, and several electric sparks passed through them, a chemical union takes place, and water is the product; and, *vice versa*, if the galvanic spark be made to pass through water, a portion of the fluid is immediately decomposed into its two constituent gases, oxygen and hydrogen;) and as the *electric* or *ethereal fire* is that which, in all likelihood, God will use in the general conflagration; the noise occasioned by the application of this fire to such an immense *congeries* of *aqueous* particles as float in the atmosphere, must be terrible in the extreme. Put a drop of water on an anvil, place over it a piece of iron red hot, strike the iron with a hammer on the part above the drop of water, and the report will be as loud as a musket; when, then, the whole strength of those opposite agents is brought together into a state of conflict, the *noise*, the *thunderings*, the *innumerable explosions*, (till every particle of water on the earth and in the atmosphere is, by the action of the fire, reduced into its component gaseous parts,) will be *frequent, loud, confounding, and terrific*, beyond every comprehension but that of God himself.

**The elements shalt melt with fervent heat]** When the *fire* has conquered and decomposed the *water*, the elements, **στοιχεῖα**, the *hydrogen* and *oxygen* airs or gases, (the former of which is most highly inflammable, and the latter an eminent supporter of all combustion,) will occupy *distinct* regions of the atmosphere, the hydrogen by its very great levity ascending to the top, while the oxygen from its superior specific gravity will keep *upon* or *near* the surface of the earth; and thus, if different substances be once ignited, the fire, which is supported in this case, not only by the oxygen which is one of the constituents of atmospheric air, but also by a great additional quantity of oxygen obtained from the decomposition of all aqueous vapours, will rapidly seize on all other substances, on all terrestrial particles, and the whole frame of nature will be necessarily torn in pieces, and *thus the earth and its works be burned up*.

**Verse 11. All these things shall be dissolved]** They will all be *separated*, all *decomposed*; but none of them *destroyed*. And as they are the original matter out of which God formed the terraqueous globe, consequently they may enter again into the *composition* of a *new system*; and therefore the apostle says, <sup>61013</sup>**2 Peter 3:13: we look for new heavens and a new earth**—the others being *decomposed*, a new system is to be formed out of their materials. There is a wonderful philosophic propriety in the words of the apostle in describing this most awful event.

**What manner of persons ought ye to be]** Some put the note of interrogation at the end of this clause, and join the remaining part with the 12th verse, { <sup><61312></sup>**2 Peter 3:12** } thus: *Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be? By holy conversation and godliness, expecting and earnestly desiring the coming of the day of God, &c.* Only those who walk in holiness, who live a godly and useful life, can contemplate this most awful time with joy.

The word **σπευδοντας**, which we translate *hasting unto*, should be tendered *earnestly desiring*, or *wishing for*; which is a frequent meaning of the word in the best Greek writers.

**Verse 12. The heavens being on fire]** See Clarke on “**2Pe 3:10**”. It was an ancient opinion among the heathens that the earth should be burnt up with fire; so OVID, *Met.*, lib. i. v. 256.

*Esse quoque in fatis reminiscitur, adfore tempus,  
Quo mare, quo tellus, correptaque regia cœli  
Ardeat; et mundi moles operosa laboret.*

*“Remembering in the fates a time when fire  
Should to the battlements of heaven aspire,  
And all his blazing world above should burn,  
And all the inferior globe to cinders turn.”*

DRYDEN.

*Minucius Felix* tells us, xxxiv. 2, that it was a common opinion of the Stoics that, the moisture of the earth being consumed, the whole world would catch fire. The *Epicureans* held the same sentiment; and indeed it appears in various authors, which proves that a tradition of this kind has pretty generally prevailed in the world. But it is remarkable that none have fancied that it will be destroyed by *water*. The tradition, founded on the declaration of God, was against this; therefore it was not received.

**Verse 13. We, according to his promise, look for new heavens]** The promise to which it is supposed the apostle alludes, is found <sup><23617></sup>**Isaiah 65:17**: *Behold, I create new heavens and a new earth; and the former shall not be remembered, nor come into mind*; and <sup><23622></sup>**Isaiah 66:22**: *For as the new heavens and the new earth which I will make shall remain before me, saith the Lord, so shall your seed, &c.* Now, although these may be interpreted of the *glory of the Gospel dispensation*, yet, if St. Peter refer to them, they must have a more *extended* meaning.

It does appear, from these promises, that the apostle says here, and what is said <sup><6217></sup>**Revelation 21:27; 22:14, 15**, that the present earth, though destined to be burned up, will not be *destroyed*, but be *renewed and refined, purged* from all *moral and natural imperfection*, and made the endless abode of blessed spirits. But this state is certainly to be expected *after the day of judgment*; for on this the apostle is very express, who says the conflagration and renovation are to take place at *the judgment of the great day*; see <sup><6187></sup>**2 Peter 3:7, 8, 10, 12**. That such an event *may* take place is very *possible*; and, from the terms used by St. Peter, is very *probable*. And, indeed, it is more *reasonable and philosophical* to conclude that the earth shall be *refined and restored*, than finally *destroyed*. But this has nothing to do with what some call the *millennium state*; as this shall take place when *time*, with the present state and order of things, shall be no more.

**Verse 14. Seeing that ye look for such things]** As ye profess that such a state of things shall take place, and have the expectation of enjoying the blessedness of it, *be diligent* in the use of every means and influence of grace, *that ye may be found of him*-the Lord Jesus, the Judge of quick and dead, *without spot*-any contagion of sin in your souls, *and blameless*-being not only *holy and innocent*, but *useful* in your lives.

**Verse 15. And account that the long-suffering of our Lord]** Conclude that God's long-suffering with the world is a proof that he designs men to be saved; *even as our beloved brother Paul*. "This epistle being written to those to whom the *first epistle* was sent, the persons to whom the Apostle Paul wrote concerning the *long-suffering* of God were the Jewish and Gentile Christians in Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia. Accordingly, we know he wrote to the *Ephesians*, (<sup><4118></sup>**Ephesians 2:3-5**), to the *Colossians*, (<sup><5102></sup>**Colossians 1:21**), and to *Timothy*, (<sup><5102></sup>**1 Timothy 2:3, 4**), things which imply that God's bearing with sinners is intended for their salvation. The persons to whom Peter's epistles were sent were, for the most part, Paul's converts."-*Macknight*.

**According to the wisdom given unto him]** That is, according to the measure of the Divine inspiration, by which he was qualified for the Divine work, and by which he was so capable of entering into the deep things of God. It is worthy of remark that Paul's epistles are ranked among the *Scriptures*; a term applied to those writings which are divinely inspired, and to those only.

**Verse 16.** As also in all his epistles, speaking in them of these things] Paul, in all his epistles, says Dr. *Macknight*, has spoken of the things written by Peter in this letter. For example, he has spoken of *Christ's coming to judgment*; <sup><31813></sup>1 Thessalonians 3:13; 4:14-18; <sup><3007></sup>2 Thessalonians 1:7-10; <sup><51213></sup>Titus 2:13. And of the *resurrection of the dead*, <sup><6152></sup>1 Corinthians 15:22; <sup><1031></sup>Philippians 3:20, 21. And of the *burning of the earth*; <sup><3008></sup>2 Thessalonians 1:8. And of the *heavenly country*; <sup><7001></sup>2 Corinthians 5:1-10. And of the *introduction of the righteous into that country*; <sup><3047></sup>1 Thessalonians 4:17; <sup><3049></sup>Hebrews 4:9; 12:14, 18, 24. And of the *judgment of all mankind by Christ*; <sup><51410></sup>Romans 14:10.

**In which are some things hard to be understood]** δυσνοητα τινα. That is, if we retain the common reading εν οις, *in or among which things*, viz., what he says of the day of judgment, the resurrection of the body &c., &c., there are some things difficult to be comprehended, and from which a wrong or false meaning may be taken. But if we take the reading of AB, twelve others, with both the *Syriac*, all the *Arabic*, and *Theophylact*, εν αις, the meaning is more general, as εν αις must refer to επιστολαις, *epistles*, for this would intimate that there were difficulties in all the epistles of St. Paul; and indeed in what ancient writings are there not difficulties? But the papists say that the decision of all matters relative to the faith is not to be expected from the Scriptures on this very account, but must be received from the Church; *i.e.* the Popish or Romish Church. But what evidence have we that that Church can infallibly solve any of those difficulties? We have none! And till we have an express, unequivocal revelation from heaven that an unerring spirit is given to that Church, I say, for example, to the present Church of Rome, with the pope called *Pius VII.* at its head, we are not to receive its pretensions. Any Church may pretend the same, or any number of equally learned men as there are of *cardinals* and *pope* in the conclave; and, after all, it would be but the opinion of so many men, to which no absolute certainty or infallibility could be attached.

This verse is also made a pretext to deprive the common people of reading the word of God; because the *unlearned* and *unstable* have sometimes *wrested this word to their own destruction*: but if it be human learning, and stability in any system of doctrine, that qualifies men to judge of these difficult things, then we can find many thousands, even in Europe, that have as much learning and stability as the whole college of cardinals, and perhaps ten thousand times more; for that conclave was never very



reputable for the learning of its members: and to other learned bodies we may, with as much propriety, look up as infallible guides, as to this *conclave*.

Besides, as it is only the *unlearned* and the *unestablished* (that is, young Christian converts) that are in danger of wresting such portions; the *learned*, that is, the *experienced* and the *established* in the knowledge and life of God, are in no such danger; and to such we may safely go for information: and these abound everywhere, especially in *Protestant* countries; and by the labours of learned and pious men on the sacred writings there is not one difficulty relative to the things which concern our salvation left unexplained. If the members of the Romish Church have not these advantages, let them go to those who have them; and if their teachers are afraid to trust them to the instruction of the Protestants, then let them who pretend to have *infallibly* written their exposition of these *difficult* places, also put them, with a wholesome text in the vulgar language, into the hands of their people, and then the appeal will not lie to *Rome*, but to the *Bible*, and those interpretations will be considered according to their worth, being weighed with other scriptures, and the expositions of equally learned and equally *infallible* men.

We find, lastly, that those who wrest such portions, are those who wrest the *other scriptures* to their destruction; therefore they are no patterns, nor can such form any precedent for withholding the Scriptures from the common people, most of whom, instead of wresting them to their *destruction*, would become *wise unto salvation* by reading them. We may defy the Romish Church to adduce a single instance of any soul that was perverted, destroyed, or damned, by reading of the Bible; and the insinuation that they may is blasphemous. I may just add that the verb **στρεβλω**, which the apostle uses here, signifies to *distort*, to *put to the rack*, to *torture*, to *overstretch* and *dislocate the limbs*; and hence the persons here intended are those who proceed according to no fair plan of interpretation, but *force unnatural* and *sophistical meanings* on the word of God: a practice which the common simple Christian is in no danger of following. I could illustrate this by a multitude of interpretations from popish writers.

**Verse 17. Seeing ye know-before]** Seeing that by prophets and apostles you have been thus forewarned, *beware*, **φυλασσεσθε**, *keep watch*, be on *your guard*; cleave to God and the word of his grace, *lest ye be led away*

from the truth delivered by the prophets and apostles, *by the error of the wicked, αθεσμων, of the lawless-* those who wrest the Scriptures to make them countenance their lusts, exorbitant exactions, and lawless practices.

**Fall from your own steadfastness.]** From that faith in Christ which has put you in possession of that *grace* which *establishes the heart*.

**Verse 18. But grow in grace]** Increase in the image and favour of God; every grace and Divine influence which ye have received is a seed, a heavenly seed, which, if it be watered with the dew of heaven from above, will endlessly increase and multiply itself. He who continues to *believe, love, and obey*, will grow in grace, and continually increase in the knowledge of Jesus Christ, as his sacrifice, sanctifier, counsellor, preserver, and final Saviour. The life of a Christian is a *growth*; he is at first *born of God*, and is a *little child*; becomes a *young man*, and a *father* in Christ. Every *father* was once an *infant*; and had he not *grown*, he would have never been a *man*. Those who content themselves with the grace they received when *converted to God*, are, at best, in a continual state of *infancy*: but we find, in the order of nature, that the *infant* that does not grow, and grow daily, too, is sickly and soon dies; so, in the order of grace, those who do not *grow up* into Jesus Christ are sickly, and will soon die, die to all sense and influence of heavenly things.

There are many who boast of the grace of their conversion; persons who were never more than *babes*, and have long since lost even that grace, because they did not *grow* in it. Let him that readeth understand.

**To him.]** The Lord Jesus, *be glory*-all honour and excellency attributed, *both now*-in this present state, *and for ever*, εις ημεραν αιωνος, *to the day of eternity*-that in which death, and misery, and trial, and darkness, and change, and time itself, are to the righteous for ever at an end: it is *eternity*; and this eternity is one unalterable, interminable, unclouded, and unchangeable DAY!

**Amen.]** So let it be! and so it shall be! Though this word is wanting in some reputable MSS., get it should be retained, as it has here more than usual authority in its support.

*Subscriptions* to this epistle in the VERSIONS:

The end of the Second Epistle of Peter the apostle.-SYRIAC.

The Second Epistle of Peter the apostle is ended.-SYRIAC PHILOXENIAN.

Nothing in the printed Vulgate.

The end of the epistles of blessed Peter the apostle, the rock of the faith.-ARABIC.

The Second Epistle of Peter is ended; and glory be to God for ever and ever!-ÆTHIOPIC.

Nothing in the COPTIC.

The end of the Second catholic Epistle of St. Peter.- COMPLUTENSIAN POLYGLOT.

The end of the Second Epistle of St. Peter.-BIB. LAT., edit. antiq.

*Subscriptions* in the MANUSCRIPTS;

Of the second of Peter.-CODEX ALEXANDRIUS, and CODEX VATICANUS.

Of the catholic epistle of Peter.-CODEX EPHREM.

The Second Epistle of the holy Apostle Peter.-Other MSS.

WE have now passed over all the canonical writings of Peter that are extant; and it is worthy of remark that, in no place of the two epistles already examined, nor in any of this apostle's sayings in any other parts of the sacred writings do we find any of the *peculiar* tenets of the Romish Church: not one word of *his* or the *pope's supremacy*; not one word of those who affect to be his *successors*; nothing of the *infallibility* claimed by those pretended successors; nothing of *purgatory, penances, pilgrimages, auricular confession, power of the keys, indulgences, extreme unction, masses, and prayers for the dead*; and not one word on the most essential doctrine of the Romish Church, *transubstantiation*. Now, as all these things have been considered by themselves most essential to the being of that Church; is it not strange that *he*, from whom they profess to derive all their power, authority, and influence, in spiritual and secular matters, should have said nothing of these most necessary things? Is it not a proof that they are all *false and forged*; that the holy apostle knew nothing of them; that they are *no part* of the doctrine of God; and, although they *distinguish* the *Church of Rome*, do not belong to the *Church of Christ*? It is no wonder that the rulers of this Church endeavour to keep the *Scriptures* from the common people; for, were they permitted

to consult these, the imposture would be detected, and the solemn, destructive cheat at once exposed.