

2 Peter

INTRODUCTION TO II PETER

Though there was, among the ancients, a doubt concerning the authority of this epistle, which is first mentioned by Origen {a}, and afterwards by Eusebius {b} and Jerom {c}, yet it prevailed not among the churches, nor hindered the diligent reading and use of it, together with other Scriptures; it appearing to be useful and profitable, as Eusebius declares; and in process of time this doubt was entirely removed, and it was universally received by fathers and councils into the canon of the Scriptures, where it is justly retained, it having plain signatures of its divine original. Nor is there anything in it unworthy of so great an apostle, whose name it bears; but the whole of it is agreeable to the analogy of faith, to the rest of the sacred writings, particularly to the epistle of Jude, between which, and the second chapter of this, there is a great likeness. The only reason of the doubt of the genuineness of this epistle, and whether it was written by the Apostle Peter, is the difference of its style from the former; but the Holy Ghost, the dictator of the sacred writings, is not limited to a man's natural style, but could vary it as he pleased: besides, a man's style is not the same at different times, and when writing on different subjects; add to which, that this objection can only regard the second chapter, for the first and third agree with the former epistle. And some have thought that the second chapter is an extract out of some ancient Hebrew book, describing the characters of the old false prophets; which book Peter and Jude having before them, took the characters of the old prophets, and, under divine direction, applied them to the false teachers of the present age; and if so it is not to be wondered at that the style of the epistle should differ from the former, and even from itself in this part. But that it was written by the Apostle Peter, not only the inscription shows, which, if false, would indeed discredit the genuineness of the book, but the account that is given of the writer of it, as one that was with Christ at his transfiguration, **2 Peter 1:16**. Now there were only the three following disciples there, Peter, John, and, James. The last of these had been dead some time when this epistle was written, and it was never ascribed by any to the Apostle John, and therefore it remains that Peter must be the writer of it. As for Simeon, bishop of Jerusalem, that succeeded James, whom Grotius would suggest as the author of it, the character does not agree with him; he was not with Christ on the holy mount, nor heard the voice from heaven, asserting the sonship of Christ, and the divine complacency in him: moreover, this epistle is called a "second epistle", **2 Peter 3:1** and supposes a first, and manifestly refers to the former epistle of Peter's, about which there never was any doubt, as the authors before mentioned observe. It was written by the apostle in his old age, when upon the decline of life, just as he was about to put off his tabernacle, **2 Peter 1:13** a little before his martyrdom, in the year 68, though Dr. Lightfoot places it in 66; and it is sent to the same persons as his first, namely, to the believing Jews scattered throughout several parts of Asia, he being the minister of the circumcision; see **1 Peter 1:1** compared with **2 Peter 3:1**. The scope and design of it are, to put them upon a concern for a larger increase of grace and spiritual knowledge; to confirm and establish them in the present truth of the Gospel; to warn them against false teachers, which he largely describes; and he puts them in mind of the dissolution of all things, and of what will precede and follow it; from whence he draws several useful hints and inferences.

{a} Apud Euseb. Eccl. Hist. l. 6. c. 25. {b} Ib. l. 3. c. 3. 25. {c} Catalog Script. Eccles. sect. 2.

[[@2 Peter 1]]

Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION TO II PETER 1

In this chapter, after the inscription and salutation, the apostle takes notice of gifts of grace bestowed; and exhorts to the exercise of holiness and good works; and gives the reasons why he was so pressing to them; and endeavours to establish the saints in the Gospel that had been preached among them. In the inscription, the writer of the epistle describes himself by his names, the one given him by his parents, the other by his Lord and master, and by his character and office; and the persons to whom he writes are described as having faith, and that of the same kind with the apostles, and which they obtained through the righteousness of Christ, **2 Peter 1:1**. The salutation is the same with that in the former epistle, only here is added a wish for an increase of divine knowledge, **2 Peter 1:2** and which might be expected, since, by the power of living grace, everything necessary to a spiritual and godly life had been given them in the effectual calling, through the knowledge of Christ; even exceeding great and precious promises, whereby they partook of the divine nature, and escaped the vices which prevailed in the world, **2 Peter 1:3** upon which he exhorts not to rest where they were, but to go on in the exercise of grace, and performance of duties, many of which he enumerates, **2 Peter 1:5** to enforce which he adds several arguments, as that through an abounding in these things they would appear not to have a superficial and speculative knowledge of Christ, **2 Peter 1:8** or otherwise it would be evident that they were blind and ignorant, and in an unrenewed state, **2 Peter 1:9** whereas by these things they would make their calling and election sure and manifest to men, and would never fall totally and finally, and in the issue have an abundant entrance into the everlasting kingdom of Christ, **2 Peter 1:10** and then he gives the reasons of his conduct, why he so much urged a regard to these things, and put them in mind of them; namely, the usefulness of them for their establishment, the duty of his office, which required it, the short time he had to live, and the profitableness of such exhortations to them, after his decease, **2 Peter 1:12** and in order to establish them in the truths of the Gospel, and particularly in that which concerns the coming of Christ in power and glory, on which he enlarges in the latter part of this epistle; he observes, that this was not a cunningly devised fable, but was what he and others were eyewitnesses of, even of that which was an emblem and pledge of it; namely, the transfiguration of Christ on the mount, when they saw the glory he received from God his Father, and heard the voice from heaven which declared him to be his well beloved Son, **2 Peter 1:16**, and besides, they had a surer proof of the certainty of his coming; namely, the prophecies concerning it, which should be regarded and given heed to, being as a lamp to direct in the present state of darkness and imperfection, until the illustrious day of Christ's coming appears, **2 Peter 1:19** and the rather this should be attended to, since no scriptural prophecy is an invention and device of men; nor was it formerly given out at the pleasure of men, but by saints, who were influenced and moved unto it by the Holy Ghost, **2 Peter 1:20**.

[[@2 Peter 1:1]]Ver. [[1 >> Bible:2 Peter 1:1]]. *Simon Peter, a servant, and an apostle of Jesus Christ*,.... The writer of this epistle is described first by his names, Simon Peter; the first of these was the name by which he was called from his infancy by his parents, and by which he was known when Christ called him to be a disciple and follower of him, and is the same with Simeon; and so it is read in most copies; see **Ac 15:14** a name common with the Jews; the latter is what was given him by Christ at his conversion, **Joh 1:4**, and answers to Cephas in the Syriac language; and both signify a rock or stone, because he was built upon

Christ, the rock and foundation, and chief corner stone, and with a view to his future solidity, firmness, and constancy: and he is next described by his character as a servant, not of sin, nor Satan, nor man, but Jesus Christ, whose servant he was, not only by creation, but by redemption and grace; and not merely a servant of his, in common with other believers, but in a ministerial way, as a preacher of the Gospel, which this phrase sometimes designs. The use of it shows the apostle's humility, his sense of obligation to Christ, and acknowledgment of him as his Lord, and that he esteemed it an honour to stand in such a relation to him: but to distinguish him from a common servant of Christ, and an ordinary minister of the word, it is added, "an apostle of Jesus Christ": one that was immediately sent by Christ, had his commission and doctrine directly from him, and a power of working miracles, in confirmation of his mission and ministry being divine, and an authority at large to go everywhere and preach the Gospel, plant churches, and put them in due order, and place proper persons over them. This is said to give weight and authority to his epistle: and further, in this inscription of the epistle, the persons are described to whom it is written, as follows,

to them that have obtained like precious faith with us; they were believers in Christ, who had a faith of the right kind; not a faith of doing miracles, which was not common to all, nor was it saving; nor an historical faith, or a mere assent to truths, nor a temporary one, or a bare profession of faith; but that faith which is the faith of God's elect, the gift of his grace, and the operation of his power; which sees the Son, goes to him, ventures on him, trusts in him, lives upon him, and works by love to him. This is said to be "precious", as it is in its own nature, being a rich and enriching grace, of more worth and value than gold that perisheth, or than thousands of gold and silver; it is not to be equalled by, nor purchased with the riches of the whole world; it is precious in its object, it being conversant with the precious person, precious blood, and precious righteousness and sacrifice of Christ, and is that grace which makes Christ, and all that is his, precious to souls; it is precious in its acts and usefulness; it is that grace by which men go to God and Christ, receive from them, and give all glory to them, and without which it is not possible to please God: to which add the durableness of it; it is an abiding grace, and will never fail, when the most precious things in nature do: and it is "like precious" with that the apostles had; for there is but one faith, and which is called a common faith, even common to all the elect; and which is the same in all, not as to degrees, for in some it is strong, and in others weak; or as to the actings of it, which are not in all alike, nor in the same persons at all times; in some it is only a seeing of the Son, his glory, fulness, and suitableness, and longing for views of an interest in him; in others a reliance on him, and trusting in him; and in others a holy confidence, and full assurance of being his: but then it is alike with respect to its nature, as it is the substance of things hoped for, and the evidence of things not seen; and as it works by love to Christ and his people; it springs from the same cause, the love and favour of God, and has the same object, Jesus Christ, and is followed with the salvation; for though it is but as a grain of mustard seed, yet, being genuine, the person that has it shall certainly be saved: wherefore, for the comfort and encouragement of these scattered believers, the apostle assures them, that their faith was the same as their brethren that dwelt at Jerusalem and in Judea, who believed in Christ, and even with them that were the apostles of Christ; and this he says they had obtained, not by their own merits or industry, but by the grace of God; for faith is not of a man's self, it is the gift of God, and the produce of his grace and power. Some have rendered it, "obtained by lot"; not by chance, but by the all wise, good, and powerful providence of God, ordering, directing, assigning, and giving this grace unto them. And which came to them

through the righteousness of God, and our Saviour Jesus Christ; or "of our God, and Saviour Jesus Christ", as the Vulgate Latin and Ethiopic versions read; that is, of Christ Jesus, who is our God and Saviour: so that here is a testimony of the deity of Christ, as well as of

his character as a Saviour, who is an able and a willing one, a full, complete, suitable, and only Saviour: and the reason why he is so is because he is truly and properly "God"; and why he is so to us, because he is "our" God: wherefore by "righteousness" here, cannot be meant the goodness and mercy of God, as some think, though faith undoubtedly comes through that; nor the faithfulness of God making good his purpose and promise of giving faith to his elect, as others think: but the righteousness of Christ, which is not the righteousness of a creature, but of God; that is wrought out by one that is God, as well as man, and so answerable to all the purposes for which it is brought in. Now faith comes "in", or "with" this righteousness, as the phrase may be rendered; when the Spirit of God reveals and brings near this righteousness to a poor sensible sinner, he at the same time works faith in him to look to it, lay hold upon it, and plead it as his justifying righteousness with God: or it comes "through" it; hence it appears that faith and righteousness are two distinct things; and that faith is not a man's righteousness before God, for it comes to him through it; as also that righteousness is before faith, or otherwise faith could not come by it; and, moreover, is the cause and reason of it; faith has no causal influence upon righteousness, but righteousness has upon faith: the reason why a man has a justifying righteousness is not because he has faith; but the reason why he has faith given him is because he has a justifying righteousness provided for him, and imputed to him.

[[@2 Peter 1:2]]Ver. [[2 >> Bible:2 Peter 1:2]]. ***Grace and peace be multiplied unto you***,.... By a multiplication of grace may be meant a larger discovery of the love and favour of God; which though it admits of no degrees in itself, being never more or less in God's heart, yet, as to the manifestations of it, it is different, and capable of being increased, and drawn out to a greater length; or else an increase of the internal graces of the Spirit of God, as to the actings and exercise of them; or a larger measure of the gifts of the Spirit, for greater usefulness among them; or a clearer view, and a more enlarged knowledge of the Gospel of the grace of God, and the truths of it; and indeed, the word grace may take in all these senses: and by a multiplication of peace, which the apostle in this salutation also wishes for, may be designed an affluence of all kind of prosperity, temporal, and spiritual, external and internal; and more especially an increase of spiritual peace, a fulness of joy and peace in believing, arising from a sense of free justification by Christ's righteousness, and full pardon and atonement by his blood and sacrifice:

through the knowledge of God, and of Jesus our Lord; which is to be understood, not of a natural, but of a spiritual and evangelical knowledge; of a knowledge of God, not as the God of nature and providence, but as the God of all grace, as in Christ, and a covenant God in him, and of the person, offices, and grace of Christ; and which designs true faith in him, by which means larger discoveries of the grace of God are made, and a greater enjoyment of spiritual peace is had: or it may be rendered, "with the knowledge of God", &c. and the sense then is, that the apostle prays, as for a multiplication of grace and peace, so along with it, an increase of spiritual and evangelical knowledge; which in the best is imperfect, but may be increased by the blessing of God on those means which he has appointed for that end, such as the word and ordinances. The Syriac version renders this clause, "through the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ", leaving out the word "God", and the copulative "and", and adding the word "Christ"; and the Ethiopic version reads, "in the knowledge of our God, Christ Jesus our Lord", without any distinction. After the inscription and salutation begins the epistle, with an account of various special favours bestowed upon these persons; and are mentioned by the apostle to encourage his faith and theirs, in expectation of enjoying what he here wishes unto them, since already such great and good things had been bestowed upon them.

[[@2 Peter 1:3]]Ver. [[3 >> Bible:2 Peter 1:3]]. *According as his divine power*,.... Meaning either the power of God the Father, to whom belong eternal power and Godhead; and he is sometimes called by the name of power itself; see Mt 26:64 being all powerful and mighty; or rather the power of Christ, since he is the next and immediate antecedent to this relative; and who, as he has the fulness of the Godhead in him, is almighty, and can do all things; and is "El-shaddai", God all-sufficient, and can communicate all things whatsoever he pleases, and does, as follows: for he

hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness; referring not so much to a temporal life, though he gives that and preserves it, and furnishes with all the mercies and comforts of it; and which come to us, from him, in a covenant way, as his left hand blessings, and in great love; but rather a spiritual life, which he is the author and maintainer of, all the joys, pleasures, blessings, and supports of it, being given by him; as also eternal life, for that, and everything appertaining to it, are from him; he gives a meetness for it, which is his own grace, and a right unto it, which is his own righteousness; and he has power to give that itself to as many as the Father has given him, and he does give it to them; and likewise all things belonging to "godliness", or internal religion; and which is the means of eternal life, and leads on to it, and is connected with it, and has the promise both of this life, and of that which is to come; and everything relating to it, or is in it, or it consists of, is from Christ: the internal graces of the Spirit, as faith, hope, and love, which, when in exercise, are the principal parts of powerful godliness, are the gifts of Christ, are received out of his fulness, and of which he is the author and finisher; and he is the donor of all the fresh supplies of grace to maintain the inward power of religion, and to assist in the external exercise of it; all which things are given

through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue. The call here spoken of is not a bare outward call, by the ministry of the word, but an internal, special, and powerful one, which springs from the grace, and is according to the purpose of God, and is inseparably connected with justification and glorification; and is either of God the Father, who, as the God of all grace, calls to eternal glory by Christ; or rather of Christ himself, who calls by his Spirit and grace; and hence the saints are sometimes styled, the called of Jesus Christ, **Romans 1:6** what they are called unto by him is, "glory and virtue"; by the former may be meant, the glorious state of the saints in the other world, and so answers to "life", eternal life, in the preceding clause; and by the latter, grace, and the spiritual blessings of grace here, and which answers to "godliness" in the said clause; for the saints are called both to grace and glory, and to the one, in order to the other. Some render it, "by glory and virtue"; and some copies, as the Alexandrian and others, and so the Vulgate Latin version, read, "by his own glory and virtue"; that is, by his glorious power, which makes the call as effectual, and is as illustrious a specimen of the glory of his power, as was the call of Lazarus out of the grave; unless the Gospel should rather be intended by glory and virtue, which is glorious in itself, and the power of God unto salvation, and is the means by which persons are called to the communion of Christ, and the obtaining of his glory: so then this phrase, "him that hath called us to glory and virtue", is a periphrasis of Christ, through a "knowledge" of whom, and which is not notional and speculative, but spiritual, experimental, fiducial, and practical, or along with such knowledge all the above things are given; for as God, in giving Christ, gives all things along with him, so the Spirit of Christ, which is a spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of him, when he makes him known in the glory of his person, grace, and righteousness, also makes known the several things which are freely given of God and Christ: and this is what, among other things, makes the knowledge of Christ preferable to all other knowledge, or anything else.

[[@2 Peter 1:4]]Ver. [[4 >> Bible:2 Peter 1:4]]. **Whereby are given unto us**,.... Or "by which", that is, glory and virtue; by the glorious power of Christ, or by the glorious and powerful Gospel of Christ; and so the Arabic version renders it, "by both of which"; or "by whom", as the Vulgate Latin version reads; that is, by Christ; for as in him are all the promises of God, so they are at his dispose, and by him are given unto the saints:

exceeding great and precious promises; meaning the promises of the new and everlasting covenant, of which Christ is the Mediator, surety, and messenger; and which are "exceeding great", if we consider the author of them, who is the great God of heaven and earth, and who was under no obligation to make promises of anything to his creatures; and therefore must arise from great grace and favour, of which they are largely expressive, and are like himself; are such as become his greatness and goodness, and are confirmed by his oath, and made good by his power and faithfulness: and they are also great, as to the nature and matter of them; they are better promises than those of the covenant of works; they are not merely temporal ones, nor are they conditional and legal; but as they relate to things spiritual and eternal, to grace here and glory hereafter, so they are absolute, free, and unconditional, and are irreversible and unchangeable; and they answer great ends and purposes, the glory of God, and the everlasting good and happiness of his people; and therefore must be "precious", of more value and worth than thousands of gold and silver, and to be rejoiced at more than at the finding of a great spoil, being every way suited to the cases of God's people, and which never fail. The end of giving them is,

that by these you might be partakers of the divine nature; not essentially, or of the essence of God, so as to be deified, this is impossible, for the nature, perfections, and glory of God, are incommunicable to creatures; nor, hypostatically and personally, so as the human nature of Christ, in union with the Son of God, is a partaker of the divine nature in him; but by way of resemblance and likeness, the new man or principle of grace, being formed in the heart in regeneration, after the image of God, and bearing a likeness to the image of his Son, and this is styled, Christ formed in the heart, into which image and likeness the saints are more and more changed, from glory to glory, through the application of the Gospel, and the promises of it, by which they have such sights of Christ as do transform them, and assimilate them to him; and which resemblance will be perfected hereafter, when they shall be entirely like him, and see him as he is:

having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust; not the corruption and depravity of nature, which is never escaped by any, nor got rid of so long as the saints are in the world; but the corrupt manners of the world, or those corruptions and vices which, are prevalent in the world, and under the power and dominion of which the world lies; and particularly the sins of uncleanness, adultery, incest, sodomy, and such like filthy and unnatural lusts, which abounded in the world, and among some that called themselves Christians, and especially the followers of Simon Magus. Now the Gospel, and the precious promises, being graciously bestowed and powerfully applied, have an influence on purity of heart and conversation, and teach men to deny ungodliness and worldly lusts, and to live soberly, righteously, and godly; such are the powerful effects of Gospel promises, under divine influence, as to make men inwardly partakers of the divine nature, and outwardly to abstain from and avoid the prevailing corruptions and vices of the times.

[[@2 Peter 1:5]]Ver. [[5 >> Bible:2 Peter 1:5]]. *And besides this, giving all diligence*,.... "Or upon this", as the Syriac and Arabic versions read, bestow all your labour, diligence, and care; namely, on what follows, and that from the consideration of what goes before; for nothing can more strongly animate, and engage to the diligent exercise of grace and discharge of duty, than a consideration of the high favours, and free grace gifts of God, and the exceeding great and precious promises of his Gospel:

add to your faith virtue; or "with your faith", so the Arabic version renders it, and the like, in the following clauses. They had faith, even like precious faith with the apostles, not of themselves, but by the gift of God, and which is the first and principal grace; it leads the van, or rather the "chorus", as the word rendered "add" signifies; and though it is in itself imperfect, has many things lacking in it, yet it cannot be added to, or increased by men; ministers may be a means of perfecting what is lacking in it, and of the furtherance and joy of it, but it is the Lord only that can increase it, or add unto it in that sense, and which is not the meaning here: but the sense is, that as it is the basis and foundation of all good works, it should not stand alone, there ought to be virtue, or good works along with it, by which it may be perfected, not essentially, but evidentially, or might appear to be true and genuine; for by virtue may be either meant some particular virtue, as justice towards men, to which both the grace and doctrine of faith direct; and indeed pretensions to faith in Christ, where there is not common justice done to men, are of little account; or, as others think, beneficence to men; and so the Ethiopic version renders it, "proceed to bounty by your faith"; and faith does work by love and kindness to fellow creatures and Christians; but this seems rather designed by brotherly kindness and charity, in **2 Peter 1:7** or boldness, courage, constancy, and fortitude, which ought to go along with faith. Where there is true faith in Christ, there should be a holy boldness to profess it, and constancy in it, and courage to fight the good fight of faith, and firmness of mind to stand fast in it, notwithstanding all difficulties and discouragements; or virtue in general here meant, not mere moral, but Christian virtues, which are the fruits of the Spirit of God, and of his grace; and differ from the other, in that they spring from the grace of God, are done in faith, by the assistance of the Spirit of Christ, and by strength received from him, and in love to him, and with a view to the glory of God; whereas moral virtues, as exercised by a mere moral man, spring from nature, and are performed by the mere strength of it, and are destitute of faith, and so but "splendida peccata", splendid sins, and proceed from self-love, from sinister ends, and with selfish views:

and to virtue, knowledge; not of Christ, mentioned **2 Peter 1:8** and which is included in faith, for there can be no true faith in Christ, were there not knowledge of him; but of the will of God, which it is necessary men should be acquainted with, in order to perform it; or else though they may seem zealous of good works, their zeal will not be according to knowledge; they ought to know what are virtues or good works in God's account, and what are the nature and use of them, lest they should mistake and misapply them; or of the Scriptures of truth, and of the mysteries of the Gospel, which should be diligently searched, for the increase and improvement of knowledge in divine things, and which has a considerable influence on a just, sober, and godly living; or by knowledge may be meant prudence and wisdom, in ordering the external conversation aright towards those that are without, and in showing good works out of it, to others, by way of example, and for the evidence of the truth of things, with meekness of wisdom.

[[@2 Peter 1:6]]Ver. [[6 >> Bible:2 Peter 1:6]]. *And to knowledge, temperance*,.... Avoiding all excess in eating and drinking, and all impure and unclean lusts; for it signifies nothing

what a man knows, or professes to know, if his life is a scene of intemperance and debauchery: this seems to be levelled against the followers of Simon Magus, who ascertained salvation to knowledge, though the life was ever so impure, Moreover, this may include abstinence, not only from hurtful lusts, but from the use of things indifferent, when the peace and comfort of a weak brother are endangered; for then to knowledge must be added love, otherwise that knowledge will not be right, at least not rightly used; see **1 Corinthians 8:1**,

and to temperance, patience; which is necessary to the running of the Christian race, which is attended with many difficulties and exercises; and under affliction from the hand of God, that there be no murmuring nor repining; and under reproaches and persecutions from men, that they faint not, and are not discouraged by them; and in the expectation of the heavenly glory: this is proper to be superadded to the former, because there may be intemperance in passion, as well as in the use of the creatures; a man may be inebriated with wrath and anger, and overcome with impatience, as well as with wine and strong drink:

and to patience, godliness; either internal, which is distinguished from bodily exercise, or outward worship, and lies in the inward and powerful exercise of grace, as faith, hope, love, fear, &c. and the Syriac version here renders it, "the fear of God": or rather external, and intends the whole worship of God, as prayer, praise, hearing of the word, and attendance on all ordinances.

[[@2 Peter 1:7]]Ver. [[7 >> Bible:2 Peter 1:7]]. **And to godliness, brotherly kindness**,.... Without which, godliness, or external worship, or a profession of religion, is a vain show; for this is both the evidence of regeneration, and of the truth and power of real godliness; and also the beauty, comfort, and security of Christian society and worship, and without which they cannot be maintained with peace, profit, and honour:

and to brotherly kindness, charity: or "love"; that is, to all men, enemies, as well as to the household of faith; and to God and Christ, to his house, worship, ordinances, people and truths. Charity is more extensive in its objects and acts than brotherly kindness or love. As faith leads the van, charity brings up the rear, and is the greatest of all.

[[@2 Peter 1:8]]Ver. [[8 >> Bible:2 Peter 1:8]]. **For if these things be in you**,.... Are wrought in you by the Spirit of God, and exercised and performed by his assistance, who works in his people both to will and do:

and abound; increase in their acts and exercises by the frequent performance of them: they make you; both by way of influence and evidence,

[that ye shall] neither [be] barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. There is a knowledge of Christ which is barren and fruitless; and those that have it are so in their conversations, and it will be of no avail to them another day: and this is a mere notional and speculative knowledge, such as is not attended with any inward experience and application of Christ to themselves, or any fruits of righteousness in their lives, and is a bare theory of things relating to his person, offices, and works; but there is a knowledge of him that is spiritual and experimental, by which a soul not only approves of Christ, but places its trust and confidence in him, and appropriates him to himself, and practically observes his commands and ordinances in the faith of him; and in love to him he performs the above duties, and exercises the above graces; from whence it appears, that he is neither barren nor

unfruitful himself in the profession of his knowledge of Christ; "or in the acknowledgment of him", as it may be rendered; nor is that a vain, empty, and useless thing: he is not like the barren fig tree, or the earth that bears briars and thorns, and is nigh to cursing and burning, but like a tree planted by a river of water, and is green, flourishing, and fruitful. This is used as an argument to enforce the foregoing exhortation, to add to, that is, to exercise and perform the above graces and duties, in conjunction with each other.

[[@2 Peter 1:9]]Ver. [[9 >> Bible:2 Peter 1:9]]. ***But he that lacketh these things***,.... Or in, and with whom, they are not; that is, these virtues, as the Arabic version reads, as faith, virtue, knowledge, temperance, patience, godliness, brotherly kindness, and charity; where the principles of those things are not, and they are not exercised and performed, such an one

is blind: let him boast ever so much of his light and knowledge, and value himself upon it, and expect to be saved by it, let him live as he will; for he has no true knowledge of God, as in Christ, as the God of all grace, as his covenant God and Father; nor does he know what it is to have communion with him in Christ; he only professes to know him in words, while in works he denies him; nor has he any right knowledge of Christ, only notional and general, not spiritual, experimental, particular, and practical; he does not see the Son, so as truly to believe in him; he has no true sight of his beauty, suitableness, and fulness, and of him for himself; nor any experience of the work of the Spirit of God upon his heart, whom he neither receives, sees, nor knows spiritually, any more than the world itself does; nor does he see the plague of his own heart, the corruptions of his nature, and the exceeding sinfulness of sin; nor has he any true spiritual light into the Gospel, and the doctrines of it, only a form of godliness, without the power of it: and therefore, whatever natural understanding of things he has, he is spiritually blind,

and cannot see afar off: at least, not the good land that is afar off, the kingdom of heaven; the invisible glories of the other world; things that are not seen, which are eternal, which one that has true faith has a glimpse and sight of; nor Christ, who is in heaven at the right hand of God, and the things of Christ, his blood, righteousness, and sacrifice, carried within the vail; nor even what is within himself, the sins of his heart, the pollution of his nature, and the evil that dwells there; he sees not that he is poor, and wretched, and miserable, but fancies himself to be rich, and in need of nothing; he sees nothing but outward things, the things of time and sense, worldly and earthly things, which are near him, and all around him, which he minds, on which his heart is set, and he pursues with rigour. The Vulgate Latin version renders it, "trying with the hand", as blind men do, feeling and groping to find the way; see Ac 17:27,

and hath forgotten that he was purged from his old sins; not by baptism, from the sins committed before it, for that does not purge from any sins, old or new, but that which it leads the faith of believers to, for pardon and cleansing, even the blood of Christ; but this also, and purification by it, is not meant here, though generally interpreters give this as the sense, and understanding it of the sin of ingratitude in such a person, who had received so great a benefit by Christ, and was unmindful of it; since it cannot be thought that one so described as above should ever have had his conscience purged by the blood of Christ from his old sins, or those before conversion, unless it be by profession; and then the sense is, that he has forgotten that he once professed to have been purged from all his sins by Christ; which, if he had, would have made him zealous of good works, and put him upon glorifying Christ both in body and spirit. The Ethiopic version renders it, "and he hath forgot to purge himself from old sins"; which he would have been concerned for, had he had a true and spiritual knowledge of

Christ, and his Gospel, and an application of the exceeding great and precious promises of it, or had been made a partaker of the divine nature through them; see **2 Corinthians 7:1**, but the words are better rendered agreeably to the original text, "and hath forgotten the purification of his old, or former sins"; or "sins of old"; as they are rendered by the Vulgate Latin, Syriac, and Arabic versions; that is, he does not consider, nor think of it, that he was a sinner of old, a sinner in Adam, that he was conceived and shapen in sin, and went astray, and was called a transgressor from the womb; he does not think that he stands in any need of being purged from former sins; and is entirely unmindful of, and neglects, the purification of them by the blood of Christ.

[[@2 Peter 1:10]]Ver. [[10 >> Bible:2 Peter 1:10]]. *Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence*,.... To exercise the afore mentioned graces, and to perform the above duties, since this is the way

to make your calling and election sure; by calling is not meant a call to any office in the church, nor an external call, either by the voice of nature, or by the ministry of the word; but an internal and effectual call by special grace, to grace here, and glory hereafter; instead of "calling", the Alexandrian copy reads, "comfort": and by "election" is meant, not a national, nor church election, but a particular and personal one, since scattered saints, and particular believers, are here written to, and each called upon to be diligent to make their own, and not another's, calling and election sure; nor is a choice of persons to an office designed, seeing the apostle writes not to officers of churches in particular, but to believers in common; nor a separation of persons from the world by the effectual calling, since these two are both mentioned here, and as distinct from each other, and to be made sure; but an election of particular persons to eternal life and salvation is here intended, which is an eternal act of God, arises from his free grace and favour, and is according to his sovereign will and pleasure; and is absolute, and independent of any condition, foreseen, or required in men, as faith, holiness, and good works; all which are fruits and effects, and not causes and conditions of electing grace. These may be made "sure", not in themselves, or with respect to God, for in this sense they cannot be made surer than they are: effectual calling is according to the purpose of God, which cannot be frustrated, and is, without repentance, irreversible, and irrevocable, and is inseparably connected with eternal glory; and election stands not upon the foot of works, but upon the free grace of God, which cannot be made void, and upon the will of God, which cannot be resisted; and is also closely connected with glorification; see **Romans 8:30** nor are those to be made sure by saints, with respect to themselves; for though they may sometimes be at a loss about them, and may have some scruples and doubts in their minds concerning their interest in them, and an assurance of their being both called and chosen, may be after all attained unto by them; yet this is not their work, but it is the work of the Spirit of God, to certify and make sure unto them, or assure them of their calling and election of God: but the sense is, that diligence is to be used by the saints, to make their calling and election sure to others; not their election by their calling only, which is to themselves; for both are to be made sure, and that to others, and by some third thing; either to their fellow Christians, which they may do by giving them an account of the work of God upon their souls, joined with a testimony of their good lives and conversations; or rather to the world "by good works", as the Vulgate Latin version and two copies of Beza's read; or "by your good works", as the Alexandrian copy and the Syriac and Ethiopic versions read; or by the exercise of the graces, and the discharge of the duties before mentioned, whereby the men of the world may be certified and assured, by the best evidence the saints are capable of giving to them, or they of

receiving, that they are the called and chosen of God, they profess themselves to be; and which is a reason why those things should be done: and another follows,

for if ye do these things, ye shall never fall; or "sin", as the Vulgate Latin and Arabic versions render it; not that they should never fall at all, or in any sense, for in many things we all offend or fall; or should ever commit any act of sin, or fall into sin, for there is no man that lives, and sins not; or that they should not fall from a degree of the lively exercise of grace, or from a degree of steadfastness in the doctrine of faith, but that they should never sin the sin against the Holy Ghost, or fall totally and finally; for though they fall, they should rise again by faith and repentance, through the grace and power of Christ, who is able to keep them from falling: and besides, while they were exercising those graces, and doing those duties, they should not fall; for these are the means of final perseverance, and therefore the rather to be regarded. Another argument, strengthening the exhortation, follows:

[[@2 Peter 1:11]]Ver. [[11 >> Bible:2 Peter 1:11]]. ***For so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly***,.... An abundant supply of grace and strength shall be freely afforded, to carry you through all the duties and trials of life; and when that shall be ended, an admission will be granted

into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ; meaning, not the Gospel dispensation, or the spiritual kingdom of Christ, which is not of this world, but lies among his people, who are called out of it, in whom he reigns by his Spirit and, grace, according to laws of his own enacting; nor his personal kingdom on earth with his saints, which will last only a thousand years, and not be for ever; but the kingdom of heaven, or the ultimate glory, which will be everlasting; and is called a kingdom, to denote the glory and excellency of that state; and an everlasting one, because it will never end; and the kingdom of Christ, because it is in his possession, for his people; it is prepared by him, and he will introduce them into it, when they shall be for ever with him, and reign with him for ever and ever. Some copies read, "the heavenly kingdom". There is an entrance of separate souls into this kingdom at death; and which may be said to be ministered "abundantly" to them, or "richly" as the word signifies, when they depart out of this world with joy and comfort; triumphing over death, and the grave, in a full view by faith of their interest in the love of God, the grace of Christ, and the glories of another world; and there is an entrance into it at judgment, and which will be abundantly, when all the saints together, in their souls and bodies, shall be introduced by Christ into the full joy of their Lord. As the saints enter the kingdom through many tribulations, the gate is strait, and the way is narrow, and they are scarcely saved, and many of them so as only by fire; but when the abundant grace given unto them by the way to heaven, the great consolation many enjoy in their last moments, and especially the free and full admission of them, both at death and at judgment, to eternal happiness, are considered, the entrance ministered may be said to be abundantly; or, as the Arabic version renders it, "with a breadth"; the entrance is large and broad.

[[@2 Peter 1:12]]Ver. [[12 >> Bible:2 Peter 1:12]]. ***Wherefore I will not be negligent***,.... The apostle having made use of proper arguments to excite the saints he writes to regard the exhortation he had given, to the diligent exercise of grace, and discharge of duty, proceeds to give the reasons of his own conduct, why he gave such an exhortation to them, and pressed it, and continued to do so, and determined for the future to go on with it, as particularly the usefulness and profitableness of it; and therefore, seeing it would be attended with so many

advantages before mentioned, he was resolved that he would not be careless, nor omit any opportunity that should offer:

to put you always in remembrance of these things; of the exercise of the above graces, and the performance of the above duties, which saints are too apt to forget, and therefore should be reminded of; and it is the duty and business of the ministers of the word frequently to inculcate those things:

though ye know them, and be established in the present truth; for those that know the most, know but in part; and may have their knowledge increased; and those that are the most established in the truths of the Gospel, may be confirmed yet more and more. This the apostle mentions as an apology for himself, and to prevent an objection that might be made, as if he had suggested that they were ignorant and unstable; or which might insinuate that there was no necessity of such frequent putting in remembrance; since they were both knowing and stable: by "the present truth" may be meant, either the whole scheme of the Gospel, which was now come by Christ, in opposition to the exhibition of it under the former dispensation, by promise and type; and it being so called, shows that it is always now, and new; that there will be no alteration in it, nor addition to it, it being like the author of it, the same yesterday, today, and for ever, and will not give place to another scheme of things; or else the particular truth of the coming of Christ, either to take vengeance on the Jewish nation, or to judge the world in righteousness, and introduce his own people into the new heavens, and new earth, **2 Peter 3:1**.

[[@2 Peter 1:13]]Ver. [[13 >> Bible:2 Peter 1:13]]. *Yea, I think it meet*,.... Or "just". This is the apostle's other reason for his conduct, taken from the duty of his place and office; judging it to be what became him as an apostle and elder, and the minister of the circumcision, and was what was due to God and Christ, whom he served, and the souls of men under his care:

as long as I am in this tabernacle: or "body", as the Syriac and Ethiopic versions render it, and so some copies; for the body is as a tabernacle for the soul to dwell in, pitched for a time, and, ere long, to be taken down; See Gill on "**2 Corinthians 5:1**",

to stir you up; to the lively exercise of grace, and constant performance of duty: by putting you in remembrance: of the said things; for saints are apt to be forgetful of their duty, and backward to it, and sluggish and slothful in it.

[[@2 Peter 1:14]]Ver. [[14 >> Bible:2 Peter 1:14]]. *Knowing that shortly I must put off this my tabernacle*,.... Which is another reason why the apostle was so pressing in this case, and so much urged the exhortation, and was so diligent in reminding the saints of it, and stirring them to observe it, because he knew he had but a little time to live, and which therefore he was willing to improve for their good. He sets forth his death in a very easy and familiar way, it being not at all terrible and distressing to him; it was but like the putting off of a garment, or unpinning of a tabernacle, or a removing from a tent to a palace. Saints are pilgrims here, they dwell in tents or tabernacles, at death they remove to their own country, and Father's house. Death is not a destruction of man, an annihilation of him, neither of his soul nor body: the soul is not mortal, it dies not with the body; it only removes from this world to another, from a cottage to a kingdom; and the body though it dies, it is not reduced to nothing, it is

only like a tabernacle put off, or taken down, which will be put together again in better order than now it is.

Even as our Lord Jesus hath showed me; by some special revelation lately made to him; or by some strong impulse upon his mind; just as the Apostle Paul knew that the time of his departure was at hand, **2 Timothy 4:7** or this may have respect to the words of Christ to Peter, above thirty years before, in Joh 21:18, which both signified what kind of death he should die, and when it should be; namely, when he was old, as now he was.

[[@2 Peter 1:15]]Ver. [[15 >> Bible:2 Peter 1:15]]. ***Moreover, I will endeavour,***.... He signifies, that he should not only use all diligence to stir them up to, and put them in remembrance of the necessary duties of their calling while he was alive, but should make it his study to concert some measures, and take some steps,

that you may be able after my decease: or Exodus, meaning his going out of this world by death, in allusion to the Israelites going out of Egypt, and marching for Canaan's land; this world being, like Egypt, a place of wickedness, misery, and bondage; as heaven, like Canaan, a place and state of rest and happiness.

To have these things always in remembrance; by which they might be always put in mind of them, or by recurring to which they might have their memories refreshed; and what he means is, to leave these exhortations and admonitions in writing, which they might read, and be of use to them when he was dead and gone; and indeed by this, and his former epistle, though being dead, he yet speaketh.

[[@2 Peter 1:16]]Ver. [[16 >> Bible:2 Peter 1:16]]. ***For we have not followed cunningly devised fables,***.... Such as Jewish fables, cautioned against **Tit 1:14** which their traditionary and oral law, their Talmud, and other writings, mention; as concerning the temporal kingdom of the Messiah, the sumptuous feast, and carnal pleasures and entertainments, of that state, with many other things; some of which indeed are not very cunningly put together, but weak enough: or Gentile fables concerning the theogony and exploits of their deities; and which may be meant by fables and endless genealogies in **1 Timothy 1:4**, and especially reference may be had to the metamorphoses of their gods, and their fables relating to them, devised by Ovid, and others, since the apostle is about to speak of the metamorphosis, or transfiguration of Christ; and also other fables with which their poets and histories abound; and likewise the prophecies of the Sibyls, and the oracles at Delphos, and elsewhere: or the fabulous accounts of the followers of Simon Magus concerning God, angels, the creation of the world, and the several Aeones; or the more artful composures of the false teachers, set off with all the cunning, sophistry, wit, and eloquence they were masters of. Now in order to set forth the nature, excellency, and certainty of the doctrine the apostle taught, especially that part of it which respected the coming of Christ; and to show that it was worth his while to put them in mind of it, and theirs to remember it; he observes, that he and his fellow apostles did not proceed in their account of it on such a foundation, but upon an evidence which they had received, both with their eyes and ears, and also on a word of prophecy surer than that:

when we made known unto you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ; not his first coming, though that, and the benefits arising from it, were the subject of their ministry; and that was attended with divine power, which appeared in the incarnation of Christ itself,

which was owing to the power of the Highest; and was seen in his doctrine and ministry, which were with great authority; and in the miracles which he wrought, which proved him to have power equal with God, his Father; and in the work of redemption, which he came about and finished; in doing which he made an end of sin, and saved his people from it, redeemed them from the curse of the law, overcame the world, destroyed Satan, and abolished death; and especially in his resurrection from the dead, when he was declared to be the Son of God with power: but notwithstanding his first coming was in great humility, in much meanness and imbecility, he grew up as a tender plant, and was encompassed with infirmities, and at last was crucified through weakness. This therefore was to be understood of an after coming of his, which the apostle had wrote of, and made known in his former epistle, **1 Peter 1:7** and which he puts them in mind of in this, **2 Peter 3:1**, nor is the word parousia, used of any other coming of Christ, and this will be with power; and it designs his more near coming to take vengeance on the Jewish nation, and deliver his people from the afflictions and persecution they laboured under, and which was with great power; see Mt **14:3**, or more remote, namely, at the last day, when there will be a great display of power in raising the dead, gathering all nations before him, separating them one from another, passing the final sentence on each, and executing the same in the utter destruction of the wicked, and the complete glorification of the saints.

But were eyewitnesses of his majesty; meaning, not of the glory of his divine nature by faith, and with the eyes of their understanding, while others only considered him as a mere man; nor of the miracles he wrought, in which there was a display of his glory and majesty, of all which the apostles were eyewitnesses; but of that glory and greatness which were upon him, when he was transfigured on the mount before them; then his face was as the sun, and such a glory on his whole body, that it darted through his clothes, and made them glitter like light, and as white as snow, and so as no fuller on earth could whiten them; at which time also Moses and Elijah appeared in glorious forms: and now this was a prelude and pledge of his power and coming, of his kingdom coming with power, and of his coming in his own, and his Father's glory, and in the glory of the holy angels. This was a proof that notwithstanding his meanness in his incarnate state, yet he was glorified, and would be glorified again; and this was a confirmation of it to the apostles, and might be to others: see Mt **16:27**.

[[@2 Peter 1:17]]Ver. [[17 >> Bible:2 Peter 1:17]]. ***For he received from God the Father honour and glory***,.... Not as an inferior from a superior, for he was equal in glory with the Father, and was, and is, the brightness of his Father's glory; nor essentially, having the same glory as his Father, and to which nothing can be added; but declaratively, God the Father testifying of his glory, declaring the honour that belonged to him, as the Son of God, at the same time that an external glory was put on him, and received by him, as the son of man:

when there came such a voice to him from the excellent glory; from the bright cloud which overshadowed Jesus, Moses, and Elijah and was a symbol of the glory and presence of God, as the cloud in the tabernacle and temple were, Ex **40:35**, or from heaven, the habitation of the holiness and glory of God, and where he displays the glory of his being and perfections; or from himself, who is the God and Father of glory, and is glorious in himself, in all his attributes and works. So dwbk, "glory", with the Cabalistic Jews, signifies the Shechinah, or divine presence {d}; and every number in the Cabalistic tree is called by the name of "glory"; the second number, which is "wisdom", is called "the first glory"; and the third number, "understanding", is called

Nwyle dwbk, "the supreme", or "chief glory" {e}: so the first path, which is the supreme crown, is sometimes called the first glory, as the Father is here the most excellent glory; and the second path, which is the understanding enlightening, the second glory {f}. And this voice was not that at his baptism; for though that was from heaven, and from God the Father, and expressed the same words as here; yet it was not on a mount, nor from a cloud, nor was it heard by the apostles, who, as yet, were not with Christ, nor called by him; nor that of which mention is made in Joh 12:28, for though that also was from God the Father, and from heaven, and which declaratively gave honour and glory to Christ, yet did not express the words here mentioned; but that voice which came from the cloud, when Christ was transfigured on the mount, and which was heard by his three disciples, Peter, James, and John, when the following words were articulately pronounced, "this is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased": See Gill on "Mt 17:5". The Vulgate Latin version adds here, as there, "hear ye him".

{d} Guido. Dictionar. Syr. Chald. p. 92. {e} Lex. Cabalist. p. 464. {f} Sepher Jetzirah, p. 1. 4.

[[@2 Peter 1:18]]Ver. [[18 >> Bible:2 Peter 1:18]]. ***And this voice, which came from heaven, we heard***,.... Peter, who wrote this epistle, and James and John, the favourite disciples of Christ; and who were a sufficient number to bear witness of what they then saw and heard:

when we were with him; and saw his glory, and the glory of Moses and Elias, and were so delighted with his company, and theirs, and with communion with him, that Peter, in the name of the rest, desired to stay there:

in the holy mount; the Ethiopic version reads, "in the mountain of his sanctuary"; and so Grotius understands it of Mount Moriah, on which the temple was built, called the holy hill, and the holy hill of Zion; and supposes that this voice was heard in the temple, and that it refers to Joh 12:28, but without any foundation; for the mount on which Christ was transfigured is here meant; and which was either, as is generally said, Tabor, a mountain in Galilee; or it may be Lebanon, which was near Caesarea Philippi, in the parts of which Christ then was: and it is called "holy", from his presence or transfiguration on it, who is the Holy One; just as the land on which Moses was, and the city and temple of Jerusalem, and Mount Sion, and Sinai, are called "holy", from the presence of the holy God there, **Ex 3:5**. Now such a declaration of the honour and glory of Christ, as the Son of God, being made by God the Father, in a voice from heaven, which the apostles heard with their ears, at the same time that they saw with their eyes his human body glorified in an amazing manner, was to them a confirming evidence that he would come again in power and glory; and upon this evidence they declared, and made known to the saints, the power and coming of Christ; though not on this evidence only, but also upon the more sure word of prophecy, which entirely agrees with it.

[[@2 Peter 1:19]]Ver. [[19 >> Bible:2 Peter 1:19]]. ***We have also a more sure word of prophecy***,.... Though this word of prophecy is generally understood of the writings and prophecies of the Old Testament concerning Christ, yet different ways are taken to fix the comparison: some think the sense is, that they are more sure than the cunningly devised fables, **2 Peter 1:16** but as these have no certainty nor authority in them, but are entirely to be rejected, the apostle would never put the sacred writings in comparison with them: and it is

most clear, that the comparison lies between this word of prophecy, and the testimony of the apostles, who were eye and ear witnesses of the majesty and glory of Christ; but how prophecy should be a surer evidence of Christ, and the Gospel, than such a testimony, is difficult to understand; and is a sense which all agree to reject, by different methods: some think that a comparative is used for a positive, and that the meaning is, that besides the testimony of the apostles, prophecy is a very sure evidence; and this is countenanced by the Syriac version, which renders it, "and we have also a firm", or "true word of prophecy"; to which the Arabic agrees, "and we have a word of prophecy very true": others choose to retain the comparison, and which indeed ought not to be thrown out; but these are divided about it; some are of opinion that it is to be understood of the Jews to whom the apostle writes, and he himself was one, and the sense to be this; not that prophecy in itself was surer than an apostolical testimony, but that it was surer to the Jews, and more valid with them, who had been trained up in, and long used to the prophetic writings; and who had a greater esteem for the prophets of the Old Testament than for the apostles of the New; but it is scarcely credible that the apostle, who had been an eye and ear witness in the holy mount, would put himself in among them, and say, "we have", &c. for whatever prophecy was to them, it could not be surer to him than what he had seen with his eyes, and heard with his ears. Others suppose that the meaning is, that prophecy was "now" surer to the Christians than it was "before", it being confirmed and established by facts and events, and also by miracles, and even by the attestation of this voice heard on the mount, and by the majesty of Christ seen there; but if this had been the sense of the apostle, he would have used these words, "now" and "before"; and besides, this puts the comparison quite out of its place, which manifestly stands between former prophecy, and the present testimony of the apostles: but the truth of the matter is, that this word of prophecy is not to be understood of the prophetic writings of the Old Testament; for though these are the word of God, and do testify of Christ, and are to be taken heed, and attended to, as proofs and evidence of Gospel truths, and are a light to direct and guide in matters both of faith and practice, yet they are not the only light, and are far from being the clearest, and what are only to be attended to; for the Gospel that came by Christ, and is preached by his apostles, and is contained in the writings of the New Testament, is a much clearer light, and at least equally to be attended to: nor are the prophecies of the Old Testament, which particularly relate to Christ, designed; there are many of this kind, which, put together, may very well be called the word of prophecy, and which were to the Jews a light in a dark place, until Christ came in the flesh; and though they are to be attended to, and compared with facts, to show the truth of the divine revelation, yet they are not a surer evidence, nor so sure an evidence, as the evangelical testimony is, which is of facts, and these supported by miracles; for now the dayspring from on high hath visited us, and Christ, the bright and morning star, has appeared: but the word of prophecy, concerning Christ's second coming, is here intended, whether it lies in the words of the prophets of the Old Testament, as in **Psalms 96:13** or in the words of Christ, **Mt 16:27**, which latter is most likely. The Ethiopic version understands this of some particular prophecy, and as if the words were a citation of some prophet, rendering the words thus, "and we have a voice more ancient than this of a prophet, saying, ye do well who take heed", &c. Sir Isaac Newton is of opinion, that the apostle refers to the book of the Revelation of St. John, which would not be unlikely, could it be proved that it was then written. Now this prophecy or prediction, concerning Christ's coming again with power and great glory, was a surer evidence of it than what the apostles saw with their eyes, and heard with their ears upon the mount; nothing was surer to them, nor could anything make it surer to them, that he was honoured and glorified, than what they saw and heard: but then this did not so certainly prove that he would hereafter be glorified, or come again in glory. What they saw and heard was a presumptive proof that it "might" be so, and was a confirming pledge and evidence to them that so it "would" be, and was a glorious

representation of it; but Christ's prophecy or prediction, that so it "should" be, more strongly ascertained it, since he said it, to whom all things were known from the beginning, and whose counsel shall stand, and not one word of his shall ever fail.

Whereunto ye do well, that ye take heed as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day star arise in your hearts. The prophecy concerning Christ's second coming is as "as a light"; it is a revelation of that which was in the dark, lay hid as a secret and mystery in the heart of God; and which could not be known by men, had it not been foretold by God; and it is made as prophecy in all other cases is, by throwing light, as to this affair, into the mind of him, or them, to whom it is revealed; and is a light to them to whom it is delivered, and which they should attend unto, as to a lamp or torch to guide and direct them; though in some sense it is but a feeble one, and is as a light "that shineth in a dark place"; meaning not the world, which is a place of darkness, ignorance, and error; nor merely the state of the saints in general in this life, who, at most and best, see but through a glass darkly; but has a particular respect to the darkness which attends the saints, concerning the second coming of Christ, and which will especially attend them a little before that time. Prophecy holds out clearly that Christ will come again; that he will come in great glory, in his Father's, and in his own, and in the glory of his angels, and with great power, to raise the dead, and judge mankind; and though it gives hints, that, upon this, the saints shall be with Christ in the air, on earth, and in heaven; and that there will be new heavens, and a new earth; and that the saints shall reign here with Christ a thousand years, after which the Gog and Magog army will attack them without success; yet these are not so clear, as for saints to be agreed in the sense of them; and much more are they in the dark about the time of his coming. Now prophecy is the surest evidence and best light the saints have concerning this matter, "until the day dawn"; not the Gospel day, so much spoken of by the prophets, that had dawned already; rather a more clear knowledge of Christ, and Gospel truths, which will be in the spiritual kingdom and reign of Christ hereafter; or else the latter day glory, at the personal coming of Christ, when the light of the moon shall be as that of the sun, and that of the sun shall be sevenfold as the light of seven days; yea, when there will be no need of sun or moon, but Christ shall be come, and be the light of his people; see Isa 30:26 after which will follow the everlasting day of glory, when all darkness will be gone, and saints shall see face to face, and know as they are known:

and the day star arise in your hearts; or "the sun", as the Syriac version renders it; not Christ, the morning star, the dayspring from on high, and the sun of righteousness, who was already risen upon them; nor the grace of God implanted in their hearts, by which they were already called out of darkness, and made light in the Lord; but as the day star is the bringer of light, as the word used signifies, or the forerunner of the day, so it here intends the immediate signs and forerunners of the coming of Christ; which when observed in their hearts, and by their understandings, as being come to pass, they may lift up their heads with joy, because their redemption draws near, Lu 21:28 and so the Ethiopic here renders it, "and redemption, arise for you in your hearts". Now till this time the sure word of prophecy concerning Christ's second coming is to be "taken heed unto", as a lamp, light, and torch, to direct us to it, to encourage us to love it, long for it, and hasten to it: and in so doing we shall "do well"; it will be well for the glory of God and Christ, this being setting our seals to them as true; and well for ourselves to keep up our faith, hope, and expectation of it, unmoved.

[[@2 Peter 1:20]]Ver. [[20 >> Bible:2 Peter 1:20]]. ***Knowing this first***,.... Especially, and in the first place, this is to be known, observed, and considered;

that no prophecy of the Scripture, that is contained in Scripture, be it what it will,

is of any private interpretation: not that this is levelled against the right of private judgment of Scripture; or to be understood as if a private believer had not a right of reading, searching, examining, and judging, and interpreting the Scriptures himself, by virtue of the unction which teacheth all things; and who, as a spiritual man, judgeth all things; otherwise, why are such commended as doing well, by taking heed to prophecy, in the preceding verse, and this given as a reason to encourage them to it? the words may be rendered, "of one's own interpretation"; that is, such as a natural man forms of himself, by the mere force of natural parts and wisdom, without the assistance of the Spirit of God; and which is done without comparing spiritual things with spiritual; and which is not agreeably to the Scripture, to the analogy of faith, and mind of Christ; though rather this phrase should be rendered, "no prophecy of the Scripture is of a man's own impulse", invention, or composition; is not human, but purely divine: and this sense carries in it a reason why the sure word of prophecy, concerning the second coming of Christ, should be taken heed to, and made use of as a light, till he does come; because as no Scripture prophecy, so not that, is a contrivance of man's, his own project and device, and what his own spirit prompts and impels him to, but what is made by the dictates and impulse of the Spirit of God; for whatever may be said of human predictions, or the false prophecies of lying men, who deliver them out how and when they please, nothing of this kind can be said of any Scripture prophecy, nor of this concerning the second coming of Christ; and this sense the following words require.

[[@2 Peter 1:21]]Ver. [[21 >> Bible:2 Peter 1:21]]. *For the prophecy*,.... The whole Scripture, all the prophetic writings; so the Jews call the Scriptures hawbnh, "the prophecy" {g}, by way of eminence, and from the subject matter of the sacred word:

came not in old time by the will of man; was not brought into the world at first, or in any period of time, as and when man would, according to his pleasure, and as he thought fit: neither Moses, nor David, nor Isaiah, nor Jeremiah, nor Ezekiel, nor Daniel, nor any other of the prophets, prophesied when they pleased, but when it was the will of God they should; they were stirred up to prophesy, not by any human impulse, but by a divine influence: with this agrees what R. Sangari says,

"that the speech of the prophets, when the Holy Spirit clothed them, in all their words was directed by a divine influence, and the prophet could not speak in the choice of his own words,"

or according to his will:

but holy men of God; such as he sanctified by his Spirit, and separated from the rest of men to such peculiar service; and whom he employed as public ministers of his word: for so this phrase "men", or "man of God", often signifies, **1Sa 2:27**

spake, as they were moved by the Holy Ghost; who illuminated their minds, gave them a knowledge of divine things, and a foresight of future ones; dictated to them what they should say or write; and moved upon them strongly, and by a secret and powerful impulse stirred them up to deliver what they did, in the name and fear of God: which shows the authority of the Scriptures, that they are the word of God, and not of men; and as such should be attended to, and received with all affection and reverence; and that the Spirit is the best interpreter of

them, who first dictated them; and that they are to be the rule of our faith and practice; nor are we to expect any other, until the second coming of Christ.

{g} R. Eliahu in Adderet apud Trigland. de Sect Karaeorum, c. 10. p. 153.

[[@2 Peter 2]]

Chapter 2

INTRODUCTION TO II PETER 2

This chapter contains a description of false teachers, that were then in Christian churches, as there had been false prophets among the Jews; and they are described by the doctrines, which they privily introduced; in general, damnable heresies; in particular, denying the Lord that bought them; and by their success, having many followers of them in their pernicious ways; and by the sad effects following hereupon; with respect to the way of truth, that was blasphemed; with respect to their hearers, they, through the covetousness of these false teachers, were made merchandise of; and with respect to themselves, swift and sure destruction would be brought upon them, **2 Peter 2:1**, which is illustrated and confirmed by the instances of punishment in the angels, the men of the old world, and the inhabitants of Sodom and Gomorrah, **2 Peter 2:4** and whereas, in these instances, notice is taken of the deliverance of some righteous persons, as Noah and Lot, when wicked men were destroyed; the apostle draws this conclusion from the whole, that the Lord knows both how to deliver the saints out of afflictions, and to reserve wicked men until the day of judgment, then to be punished, **2 Peter 2:9**, especially such shall be then punished, who are described by their impure course of life, their contempt of civil government, and their presumption and selfwill, **2 Peter 1:10** which sins of theirs are aggravated by the different conduct of angels, superior to them; and by their being like brute beasts, as ignorant as they, and even below them; whose punishment will be to perish in their corruption, as the just reward of their unrighteousness, since they are open in sin, take pleasure in it, and sport themselves with it, and are spots and blemishes in Christian societies, **2 Peter 2:11** and these, who are no other than the false teachers before spoken of, are further described by their adulterous eyes, which cannot cease from sin; by their beguiling unstable souls; by the covetous practices their hearts were exercised with; by their just desert, cursed children; by the course they steer, forsaking the right way, going astray from it, and following the way of Balaam in his covetousness, and other wicked practices, for which he was reprov'd by his ass; and by various metaphors, which express the emptiness of these persons, and which also point at their destruction, and describe their boasts and brags, and the influence they have, through their lasciviousness and uncleanness, on some persons, who have been outwardly reformed, **2 Peter 2:14** and this they obtain over them in a very stupid and senseless way, by promising them liberty, when through being overcome by them, and drawn into sin, they were brought into bondage, and become servants of corruption; and so their case is worse than it was before their reformation, and profession of religion; and better it would have been not to have had the knowledge they had, than after it to turn from the paths of truth and holiness, which is illustrated by a true Scripture proverb, which expresses the filthy nature of sin, the character of these men, and their irrecoverable state and condition, **2 Peter 2:19**.

[[@2 Peter 2:1]]Ver. [[1 >> Bible:2 Peter 2:1]]. *But there were false prophets also among the people*,.... As well as holy men of God, who gave out prophecies, by the inspiration and

impulse of the Holy Spirit; that is, among the people of the Jews, God's professing people, whose God was the Lord, and who had chosen them to be a special and peculiar people, above all people of the earth; and had distinguished them by his favours from all others: among these, though the Syriac version reads "in the world", there were false prophets, who ran, and were not sent; and who prophesied, and the Lord spake not to them: of these there were many in Jeremiah's time, and in the times of Ezekiel; and in Ahab's time, besides the four hundred and fifty prophets of Baal, slain by Elijah, there were four hundred that called themselves the prophets of the Lord; among whom went forth a lying spirit, encouraging Ahab to go up to Ramoth Gilead, promising him prosperity and success; Zedekiah the son of Chenaanah, with whom Micaiah, the true prophet, had much contention, was at the head of them; and such there were among that people in all ages, until the times of Christ, and in his likewise; see **Mt 7:15** now from these, by an easy transition, the apostle proceeds to another part of his design in this epistle, to describe the characters of false teachers under the present dispensation, that saints may beware, and avoid their pernicious principles and practices:

even as there shall be false teachers among you; which need not to be wondered at, or stumble any, it being no new or strange thing, but what was always more or less the case of the people of God. This is a prophecy of what should be, and agrees with the prediction of our Lord, **Mt 24:11** and which regards not only the times immediately following, in which it had a remarkable fulfilment, for false teachers now began to arise, and appeared in great numbers in the age succeeding the apostles, but to all periods of time from hence, to the second coming of Christ; and these were to spring from, and be among such that bore the Christian name, and so regards not Mahometans and Deists; and it is to be observed, that the phrase is varied in this clause, and these are called not "prophets" but "teachers": because as prophecy was more peculiar to the former dispensation, so is teaching to the present:

who privily shall bring in damnable heresies: errors in the fundamental doctrines of the Gospel; such as relate to a trinity of persons in the Godhead; and to the person of Christ, to his proper deity, distinct personality, eternal sonship, and real humanity; and to his office as Mediator, rejecting him as the true Messiah, and as the only Saviour of sinners; denying his sacrifice and satisfaction, and the imputation of his righteousness; and to the Holy Spirit, his deity, personality, and divine influences and operations: these are "damnable", or "destructive", or "heresies of destruction"; which lead to eternal destruction both those that introduce and propagate them, and those that embrace and profess them; for they remove, or attempt to remove, the foundation of eternal life and happiness: the manner in which these are usually introduced is "privily"; at unawares, secretly, under a disguise, and gradually, by little and little, and not at once, and openly; and which is the constant character and practice of such men, who lie in wait to deceive, creep into churches at unawares, and into houses privately; and insinuate their principles under specious pretences and appearances of truth, using the hidden things of dishonesty, walking in craftiness, handling the word of God deceitfully, and colouring things with false glosses and feigned words: and even denying the Lord that bought them; not the Lord Jesus Christ, but God the Father; for the word *kurios* is not here used, which always is where Christ is spoken of as the Lord, but despoth; and which is expressive of the power which masters have over their servants {}, and which God has over all mankind; and wherever this word is elsewhere used, it is spoken of God the Father, whenever applied to a divine person, as in **Lu 2:29** and especially this appears to be the sense, from the parallel text in **Jude 1:4** where the Lord God denied by those men is manifestly distinguished from our Lord Jesus Christ, and by whom these persons are said to be bought: the meaning is not that they were redeemed by the blood of Christ, for Christ is not intended; and besides, whenever redemption by Christ is spoken of, the price is usually mentioned, or some circumstance or another which fully determines the sense; see

Ac 20:28 whereas here is not the least hint of anything of this kind: add to this, that such who are redeemed by Christ are the elect of God only, the people of Christ, his sheep and friends, and church, and who are never left to deny him so as to perish eternally; for could such be lost, or deceive, or be deceived finally and totally by damnable heresies, and bring on themselves swift destruction, Christ's purchase would be in vain, and the ransom price be paid for nought; but the word "bought" regards temporal mercies and deliverance, which these men enjoyed, and is used as an aggravation of their sin in denying the Lord; both by words, delivering out such tenets as are derogatory to the glory of the divine perfections, and which deny one or other of them, and of his purposes, providence, promises, and truths; and by works, turning the doctrine of the grace of God into lasciviousness, being disobedient and reprobate to every good work; that they should act this part against the Lord who had made them, and upheld them in their beings and took care of them in his providence, and had followed them with goodness and mercy all the days of their lives; just as Moses aggravates the ingratitude of the Jews in **Deuteronomy 32:6** from whence this phrase is borrowed, and to which it manifestly refers: "do ye thus requite the Lord, O foolish people and unwise! is not he thy Father that hath bought thee? hath he not made thee, and established thee?" nor is this the only place the apostle refers to in this chapter, see **2 Peter 2:12** compared with

Deuteronomy 32:5 and it is to be observed, that the persons he writes to were Jews, who were called the people the Lord had redeemed and purchased, Ex 15:13 and so were the first false teachers that rose up among them; and therefore this phrase is very applicable to them:

and bring upon themselves swift destruction; either in this life, being suddenly cut off in the midst of their days, and by the immediate hand of God, as Arius and other heretics have been; or eternal damnation in the other, which their tenets lead unto, and which will swiftly come upon them when they are promising themselves peace and safety.

{i} Vid. Ammonium peri omoiwn, in voce despothy.

[[@2 Peter 2:2]]Ver. [[2 >> Bible:2 Peter 2:2]]. *And many shall follow their pernicious ways*,.... Their principles and their practices, which lead to destruction, The Complutensian edition, the Alexandrian copy, and six copies of Beza's, and others, read "their lasciviousnesses"; and so the Vulgate Latin version renders it, "their luxuries"; and all the Oriental versions seem to have read in like manner. The Syriac version renders it, "their impurity"; and the Arabic version, "their unchastities"; and the Ethiopic version, "their lust"; and which seems to have respect to the impure conversation of the followers of Simon Magus, the Nicolaitans, the Gnostics, Carpocratians, and others, who indulged themselves in all unnatural lusts and uncleanness; and generally, when men make shipwreck of faith, they also do of a good conscience, and become immoral in their conversations; and yet, as destructive as their principles, and as dishonourable and scandalous as their practices be, many were, and are their followers; so it was foretold by Christ, Mt 24:11, and so it has been, Re 13:3. The road both of error and wickedness is a broad one, in which many walk; and a multitude is no proof of the truth of a church or of the principles of men, nor to be followed:

by reason of whom the way of truth shall be evil spoken of; that is, either Christ, who is truth itself, and the true way to eternal life and happiness; or the Gospel, the word of truth, which holds forth Christ the truth, and points to him, and every other truth, and nothing but truth; or the Christian religion, which is the true way, in opposition to all sects and heresies; and is what should be blasphemed and spoken against, either by these men or their followers; for the phrase may be rendered, "by whom", as it is in the Vulgate Latin version, and the

meaning be, that they should, in a blasphemous way, speak and write against Christ and his truths, reproach and revile them, and in a virulent manner oppose them, and trample them under foot: "or for the sake of them", as other versions read; and as we do; "by reason of them"; they should be the occasion, by their impure lives, of the name of Christ, and his doctrines, being blasphemed by profane and irreligious men; see **Romans 2:24**. The Alexandrian copy, and one of Stephens's, read "the glory of truth"; and so the Ethiopic version, "the glory of his truth".

[[@2 Peter 2:3]]Ver. [[3 >> Bible:2 Peter 2:3]]. **And through covetousness**;.... Which is generally a prevailing vice among false teachers, they having no other end in view than themselves; either to gain popular applause and vain glory, which they are always covetous of; or to amass riches to themselves, after which they have an insatiable desire:

shall they with feigned words; made words, words of their own devising, and not which the Holy Ghost teacheth; whereby they cover themselves, and privily introduce their pernicious principles; and therefore new words and phrases are always to be suspected and guarded against, especially in articles of moment and importance: or with flattering words and fair speeches, great swelling words of vanity, having men's persons in admiration, because of worldly advantage; and in this way they gain their point:

make merchandise of you; deal with the souls of men, as merchants do with their goods, carry them to market and sell them; so false teachers deal with the souls of their followers, draw them, and sell them to Satan, and they themselves pay for it; see **Zec 11:5** but in the issue, and that in a short time, they will be no gainers by such practices:

whose judgment now of a long time lingereth not: that is, their condemnation, which God in righteousness has determined, "from the creation of the world", as the Ethiopic version reads, or from all eternity, see **Jude 1:4**, to bring them into, for their vile principles and practices, is not retarded and delayed; it does not linger and stay behind, or slacken its pace; it will not tarry, it will come upon them at the appointed time:

and their damnation slumbereth not; an avenging God, who has appointed them to damnation for their sins, slumbers not; the justice of God is not asleep, nor careless and negligent, but is awake, and watches over them, to bring the evil upon them they have deserved, and is in reserve for them, and will hasten to perform it; the determined destruction does not lie dormant, but in a little time will be stirred up, and fall with dreadful weight on such sinners, as may be concluded from the following awful instances.

[[@2 Peter 2:4]]Ver. [[4 >> Bible:2 Peter 2:4]]. **For if God spared not the angels that sinned**..... By whom are meant the devil and his angels; who are spirits created by God and as such were good; their first estate which they left was pure and holy, as well as high and honourable; they, were at first in the truth, though they abode not in it; they were once among the morning stars and sons of God, and were angels of light; their numbers are many, and therefore are here expressed in the plural number, "angels", though it cannot be said how large; a legion of them was in one man; one at first might be in the rebellion, and draw a large number with him into it, at least was at the head of it, who is called Beelzebub, the prince of devils: what their first sin was, and the occasion of it, is not easy to say; it is generally thought to be pride, affecting a likeness to, or an equality with God; since this was what man

was tempted to by them, and by which he fell, as they are thought to do; and because this is the sin of such who fall into the condemnation of the devil; **1 Timothy 3:6** and is the sin, that goes before a fall in common; as it did before the fall of man, so it might before the fall of angels, **Proverbs 16:18**. The passage in **Joh 8:44** seems most clearly of any to express their sin, which was "not abiding in the truth"; in the truth of the Gospel, particularly the great truth of the salvation of men, by the incarnate Son of God; and which they could by no means brook and which might spring from pride, they not bearing the thought that the human nature should be exalted above theirs; hence the Jews, in opposing Christ as the Messiah and Saviour, are said to be of their father the devil, and to do his lusts; and Judas that betrayed him, and fell from his apostleship, and the truth, is called a devil; and the heresies of men, respecting the person and office of Christ, are styled doctrines of devils; and men that have professed this truth, and afterwards deny it, are represented in the same irrecoverable and desperate case with devils, and must expect the same punishment, **Joh 8:44**, and also it may be observed on the contrary, that the good angels that stand, greatly love, value, esteem, and pry into the truths of the Gospel; particularly the scheme of man's salvation, by the incarnation, obedience, sufferings, and death of Christ: now these

God spared not; or "had no mercy on", as the Arabic version renders it; he did not forgive their sin, nor provide a Saviour for them; but directly, and at once, notwithstanding the dignity and excellency of their nature, in strict justice, and awful severity, without any mercy, inflicted due punishment on them; wherefore it cannot be thought that false teachers, who, as they, abide not in the truth, but deny and oppose it, should escape the vengeance of God:

but cast them down to hell; they were hurled out of heaven, from whence they fell as lightning, into the "lowest", or inferior places, as the Syriac version renders it; either into the air, as in **Eph 2:2** or into the earth; as in **Re 12:9** or into the deep, the abyss, the bottomless pit, where they are detained, as in a prison, **Lu 8:31** though for certain reasons, and at certain times, are suffered to come forth, and rove about in this earth, and in the air: and these, when removed from their ancient seats in heaven, were not merely bid to go away, as the wicked will at the day of judgment; or were "drove" out, as Adam was from the garden of Eden; but "cast down"; with great power, indignation, wrath, and contempt, never to be raised and restored again:

[and] delivered [them] into chains of darkness: leaving them under the guilt of sin, which is the power of darkness, and in black despair; shutting them up in unbelief, impenitence, and hardness of mind; being holden with the cords of their sins, and in the most dreadful state of bondage and captivity to their lusts, in just judgment on them; and in the most miserable and uncomfortable condition, being driven from the realms of light, deprived of the face and presence of God, in the utmost horror and trembling, and fearful looking for of judgment, and fiery indignation to consume them; and in utter darkness, without the least glimmering of light, joy, peace, and comfort; and where there is nothing but weeping, wailing, and gnashing of teeth; and being also under the restraints of the power and providence of God, and not able to stir or move, or do anything without divine permission; and being likewise, by the everlasting, unalterable, and inscrutable purposes and decrees of God, appointed to everlasting wrath and destruction; by which they are consigned and bound over to it, and held fast, that they cannot escape it:

to be reserved unto judgment: to the day of judgment, to the last and general judgment; the judgment of torment, as the Syriac version here calls it; the words may be rendered, "and delivered them to be kept at judgment, in chains of darkness"; when they will be in full torment, which they are not yet in; and then they will be cast into the lake of fire prepared for

them, and be everlastingly shut up in the prison of hell from whence they will never more be suffered to go out; till which time they are indeed under restraints, and are held in by Christ, who has the power of binding and loosing them at pleasure; and who then, as the Judge of men and devils, will bring them forth, and pass and execute sentence on them. The Jews give an account of the dejection, fall, and punishment of the angels, in a manner pretty much like this of Peter's, whom they speak of under different names; so of the serpent that deceived Adam and Eve, whom they call Samael, and because of that sin of his, they say {k} that the Lord

"cast down Samael and his company from the place of their holiness, out of heaven;"

and of Aza and Azael, angels, who, they say, sinned by lusting after the daughters of men, they frequently affirm, that God cast them down from their holiness {l}, and that he attl Nwl lypa, "cast them down below in chains" {m}; and that God cast them down from their holiness from above; and when they descended, they were rolled in the air--and he brought them to the mountains of darkness, which are called the mountains of the east, and bound them "in chains" of iron, and the chains were sunk into the midst of the great deep {n}: and elsewhere they say {o}, that God cast them down from their holy degree, out of heaven--from their holy place out of heaven--and bound them in "chains" of iron, in the mountains of "darkness".

{k} Sepher Bahir in Zohar in Gen. fol. 27. 3. {l} Zohar in Gen. fol. 25. 3. {m} lb. fol. 32. 3. {n} Midrash Ruth in Zohar in Gen. fol. 45. 1. 2. vid. fol. 77. 3. {o} Zohar in Numb. fol. 84. 1. vid. Tzeror Hammor, fol. 6. 4. & 9. 4. & Raziel, fol. 14. 2. & 18. 2.

[[@2 Peter 2:5]]Ver. [[5 >> Bible:2 Peter 2:5]]. *And spared not the old world*,.... In distinction from the present world, that now is; which was, as it were, formed anew out of that which was destroyed by the deluge. The Vulgate Latin version renders it, "the original world"; and the Ethiopic version, "the first world"; it designs the ancient inhabitants of the world, as it was from the beginning, before the flood; who, being wicked, were not spared by God, but had just punishment inflicted on them:

but saved Noah the eighth person; not the eighth from Adam, as Enoch is said to be the seventh from him, **Jude 1:14** for he was the tenth; nor is it to be read with the following clause, "the eighth preacher of righteousness"; but he was the eighth person, or one of the eight persons, saved from the flood; see **1 Peter 3:20** hence the Ethiopic version, rather as a paraphrase than a version, renders it, "but caused to remain seven souls with Noah; whom he saved"; Hottinger {p} and Dr. Hammond {q} observe, from the Arabic writers, that the mountain on which the ark rested, and a town near it, were called Themenim; that is, "the eight", from the number of persons then and there saved:

a preacher of righteousness; of the righteousness of God, in all his ways and works, and in case he should destroy the world by a flood, as he had threatened; and of civil and moral righteousness among men, both by words, during the building of the ark, and by works, by his own example, in his righteous life and conversation; and of the righteousness of faith, or of Christ, by which he was justified and of which he was an heir, Heb 11:7, the Jews {r} say that Noah was a prophet; and they represent him also, as a preacher, and even tell us the very words he used in his exhortations to the old world {s}, saying,

"be ye turned from your evil ways and works, lest the waters of the flood come upon you, and cut off all the seed of the children of men:"

but though Noah, a preacher of righteousness, was saved, false teachers cannot expect to escape divine vengeance; who only are transformed as ministers of righteousness, but in truth are ministers of unrighteousness; opposers of the righteousness of Christ, and live unrighteous lives and conversations, and so their end will be according to their works:

bringing in the flood upon the world of the ungodly; or "the ungodly of the world", as aera yevr "the ungodly of the earth" {t}; see

Psalms 75:8 though here it indeed means a whole world of wicked men, all but a very few, which were destroyed by the flood. This expresses both the wickedness of the men of that generation, the imagination of the thoughts of whose heart were evil continually; and whose lives were filled up with uncleanness, violence, rapine, oppression, injustice, and corruption, of all sorts; and likewise the large numbers of them, there was a whole world of them; and yet this did not secure them from the wrath of God, but served to stir it up the more; wherefore false teachers and their followers must not build upon their numbers, or hope to be screened from just punishment on that account; since a world of ungodly men were, for their wickedness, at once swept away, with a flood of God's bringing upon them; causing that very useful and serviceable element of water to be the means of their destruction; for this was not a casual thing, which came of itself, or by chance, but was of God himself, who broke up the fountains of the great deep, and opened the windows of heaven, and destroyed at once all mankind, men, women, and children, and every living creature, excepting what were with Noah in the ark: and since they were persons of such a character as here described, it is not to be thought their punishment is ended here; it is the general notion of the Jews {u}, that

"the generation of the flood shall have no part in the world to come, nor shall they stand in judgment."

{p} Smegma Orientale, p. 251, 252. {q} In loc. {r} Aben Ezra in Gen. viii. 21. {s} Pirke Eliezer, c. 22. {t} Targum in Psal. xlv. 8. {u} Misna Sanhedrin, c. 11. sect. 3. Vajikra Rabba, sect. 4. fol. 149. 1. Yalkut Simeoni, par. 2. fol. 89. 2.

[[@2 Peter 2:6]]Ver. [[6 >> Bible:2 Peter 2:6]]. *And turning the cities of Sodom and Gomorrha into ashes*,.... By raining brimstone and fire upon them from heaven, **Genesis 19:24** which soon reduced them to ashes, with Admah and Zeboiim, **Deuteronomy 29:25**, cities delightfully situated, which were as the garden of God, and the land of Egypt, together with the inhabitants of them; and after they had received a signal mercy, in being rescued by Abraham from the kings who had carried them captive; and though Abraham, the friend of God, interceded for them, and righteous Lot dwelt among them. The first of these cities is in the Hebrew language called Sedom; Philo the Jew {w} calls it Sodoma, as in **Romans 9:29** and in the Septuagint on **Genesis 13:10** here it is said to be a city, and Josephus {x} always calls it the city of the Sodomites, but in Mt 10:15 we read of the land of Sodom; and so Philo {y} the Jew speaks of cwra, the region or country of the Sodomites; here the word is of the plural number, as in Mt 10:15 as it is also in the Septuagint in **Genesis 10:19** and in Philo the Jew {z}, and so is Gomorrah in some copies of this, place, as in Mt 10:15. Solinus, the historian, gives an account of these cities, in agreement with this;

"a good way off of Jerusalem (he says {a}) is opened a sorrowful gulf, which the black ground, "in cinerem soluta", "reduced to ashes", shows it to be touched by heaven; there were two towns, or cities, the one called Sodom, and the other Gomorrah; where an apple is produced, which, although it has an appearance of ripeness, cannot be eaten; for the outward skin that encompasses it only contains a sort of soot, or embers within, which, ever so lightly squeezed, evaporates into smoke and dust;"

and so the author of the book of Wisdom 10:7 speaking of the five cities, on which fire fell, says,

"of whose wickedness, even to this day, the waste land that smoketh is a testimony; and plants bearing fruit, that never come to ripeness."

Philo the Jew {b} says, that

"there are showed to this day in Syria monuments of this unspeakable destruction that happened; as ruins, ashes, sulphur, smoke, and a weak flame, breaking forth as of a fire burning:"

condemned [them] with an overthrow; by this sad "catastrophe" God condemned the sins of those men of Sodom and Gomorrah, and condemned their persons to everlasting damnation; of which their temporal punishment was an emblem and figure; see **Jude 1:7**, the word "overthrow" is generally used when this destruction is spoken of, **Deuteronomy 29:23** and therefore retained by the apostle here:

making them ensamples unto those who after should live ungodly; in the commission of any sins, and be open, bold, and impudent in them, and declare them as they did; and especially that should live in the commission of the same sins, those unnatural lusts and uncleannesses, which to this day go by the name of "sodomy", and "sodomitical" practices; now the punishment of the inhabitants of these cities was an ensample to such wicked conduct, showing what they must expect, and was a representation of those everlasting burnings, which such sinners, as a righteous retaliation for their burning lusts, shall be cast into. The Jews say {c} the same of the men of Sodom and Gomorrah as of the old world;

"the men of Sodom have no part in the world to come, as is said **Genesis 13:13** "but the men of Sodom were wicked, and sinners before the Lord exceedingly"; wicked in this world, and sinners in the world to come;"

See Gill on "Jude 1:7".

{w} **Deuteronomy** Temulentia, p. 272. {x} Antiqu. l. 1. c. 8. sect. 3. c. 11. sect. 3. {y} **Deuteronomy** Abrahamo, p. 381. {z} **Deuteronomy** Temulentia, p. 272. {a} Polyhistor. c. 48. {b} **Deuteronomy** Vifa Mosis, l. 2. p. 662. {c} Misn. Sanhedrin, c. 11. sect. 3. Vajikra Rabba, sect. 4. fol. 149. 1.

[[@2 Peter 2:7]]Ver. [[7 >> Bible:2 Peter 2:7]]. **And delivered just Lot**,.... Who was a just man, being justified by the righteousness of Christ imputed to him; and having the new man formed in him, which is created in righteousness and true holiness; and living soberly, righteously, and godly, though not without sin: for there is not a just man that lives and sinneth not; this righteous man was delivered from the burning of Sodom by the means of angels, **Genesis 19:16**. The Jews are very injurious to this good man's character, and give a

very different one of him from this of the apostle's; they call him a wicked man, a perfect wicked man, as wicked as the inhabitants of Sodom {d}; and say, that because they abounded in sin, therefore Lot chose to dwell among them {e}; and affirm {f}, that all the time he was with Abraham, God did not join himself to him, and did not commune with Abraham on his account; but, when he was separated from him, did; they call him the evil imagination, and the old serpent that was accursed, and cursed Lot {g}; but Philo the Jew {h} speaks better of him, and says that he did not embrace and delight in the iniquities of the inhabitants, though he did not arrive to the perfection of wisdom; and the author of the book of Wisdom calls him the "righteous man",

"When the ungodly perished, she delivered the righteous man, who fled from the fire which fell down upon the five cities." (Wisdom 10:6)

as the apostle does here; and very truly, since it follows:

vexed with the filthy conversation of the wicked; the inhabitants of Sodom, who had no regard to the laws of God or man, or to the law and light of nature; but as worse than brute beasts, lived daily in the commission of unnatural lusts; and therefore their conversation is rightly said to be filthy, and was a grievous burden to righteous Lot: for to a good man, not only his own sins, but the sins of others, whether professors or profane, are a burden, and make him groan under them, being grievously fatigued with them, as this good man was, and weary of life because of them, as Rebekah was, through the daughters of Heth.

{d} Tzeror Hammot, fol. 14. 4. & 16. 4. & 20. 2. {e} Jarchi in Gen. xiii. 10. {f} Zohar in Gen. fol. 57. 2. Jarchi in Gen. xiii. 13. {g} Zohar in Gen. fol. 56. 1, 2. Tzeror Hammor, fol. 7. 3. & 14. 3. & 20. 2. Bereshit Rabba, sect. 44. fol. 39. 1. {h} **Deuteronomy** Vita Mosis, l. 2. p. 662.

[[@2 Peter 2:8]]Ver. [[8 >> Bible:2 Peter 2:8]]. *For that righteous man dwelling among them*,.... Which is sometimes the lot of good men, to their great sorrow and grief, **Psalms** 120:5. Upon mentioning those words in **Genesis** 13:12 "and pitched his tent towards Sodom", but the men of Sodom were wicked, &c. says R. Eleazar {i};

"he is a righteous man that dwells between two wicked men, and does not learn their works;"

and such an one was Lot, whatever they are elsewhere pleased to say of him: "in seeing and hearing"; the Vulgate Latin version reads this in connection with the word "righteous", thus, "in seeing and hearing he was righteous": he could not bear to see their filthy actions, and hear their obscene language, but turned away from them, and shut his eyes, and stopped his ears, by which he appears to be a righteous and good man; though rather this belongs to what follows, seeing their wicked practices, and hearing their filthy talk:

vexed his righteous soul from, day today with their unlawful deeds; either "they vexed" him, as the Vulgate Latin and Ethiopic versions read; or rather "he vexed" himself; he fretted and teased himself, and became exceeding uneasy, and was put upon a rack and tortured, as the word signifies, continually, with their wicked actions; see

Psalms 119:158.

{i} T. Bab. Yoma, fol. 38. 2.

[[@2 Peter 2:9]]Ver. [[9 >> Bible:2 Peter 2:9]]. ***The Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly***,.... That "fear him", as the Syriac version renders it; or that "rightly worship", as the Arabic; such as Noah and Lot, men that know God in Christ spiritually and experimentally; that believe in him, love him, fear him, worship him in spirit and truth, and live soberly, righteously, and godly. This verse is a conclusion from the preceding instances and examples, respecting both the mercy and justice of God; the mercy of God in delivering the godly and righteous "out of temptations"; by which are meant, not the temptations of Satan to sin, distrust, and despondency, though the Lord knows how, and is both able and willing to, and does deliver them from them; but afflictions and tribulations, such as Noah and Lot were exposed to; and which are so called, because they try the graces, particularly the faith and patience of the godly; and to deliver from these is the Lord's work: he grants his presence in them; he supports under them; he sanctifies them to them, and in his own time delivers out of them; for he knows how, and by what means, and when to do it, and is both able and willing: he has determined to do it, for the nature, measure, and duration of afflictions are fixed by him, and in his providence he does do it, as the instances before given prove.

And to reserve the unjust unto the day of judgment to be punished. This is that part of the conclusion from the above premises, respecting the justice of God; and by "the unjust" are designed, persons without a righteousness, and that are full of all unrighteousness, and take pleasure in it, and live unrighteous lives, committing acts of injustice, both with respect to God and men; and the Lord, that has reserved the fallen angels in chains of darkness unto judgment, knows how to reserve "in prison", as the Arabic version renders it, the souls of those in hell, and their bodies in the grave "unto the day of judgment"; of the last and general judgment, when Christ shall judge both quick and dead, and bring every secret thing to light, which that day shall declare, God has appointed to judge the world in; in order "to be punished" in soul and body, with everlasting and complete destruction, which, as yet, is not. This phrase, "the day of judgment", is used in Judith and is a Jewish one.

"Woe to the nations that rise up against my kindred! the Lord Almighty will take vengeance of them in the day of judgment, in putting fire and worms in their flesh; and they shall feel them, and weep for ever." (Judith 16:17)

[[@2 Peter 2:10]]Ver. [[10 >> Bible:2 Peter 2:10]]. ***But chiefly them that walk after the flesh***,.... Not merely after the dictates of corrupt nature, as all men, and even God's elect do, in a state of unregeneracy; but "after strange flesh", as **Jude 1:7** expresses it, after the flesh of men:

in the lust of uncleanness; not of fornication and adultery, but of sodomy, and sodomitical practices; sins exceeding great, not only contrary to the law and light of nature, but dishonourable to human nature; and are what prevail where idolatry, infidelity, errors, and heresies do; and which, as they are sins of the deepest dye, deserve the greater damnation, and are chiefly and more especially punished by God with great severity:

and despise government: of parents, to whom these proud boasters and blasphemers are generally disobedient; and of masters, pretending it to be contrary to their Christian liberty; and of magistrates on the same account, and as being a restraint upon their lusts; which is to despise the ordinance of God, his representatives, and to introduce anarchy and confusion, and to open a door to all manner of sin; and also the government of Christ, as head of the church, and King of Zion, whom they will not have to reign over them, and therefore reject his laws, and submit not to his ordinances; and likewise the government of the world itself by

God; and so the Ethiopic version renders it, "despise their Creator"; denying his omniscience and his providence, giving out that he neither sees, observes, and takes notice of what is done in the world; nor does he himself do either good or evil, or concern himself about what is done by men.

Presumptuous [are they]; bold and daring, not fearing to speak against men of the most exalted character on earth, and against God himself in heaven; see **Psalm 73:8**.

Selfwilled; pleased with themselves, and their own conceits, their dogmas and opinions, with their high sense and profound judgment; and being obstinate in their sentiments, and resolutely bent to retain and defend them.

They are not afraid to speak evil of dignities; or "glories"; of the apostles, who were set in the first place in the church, and were the glory of Christ, **1 Corinthians 12:28**; or of angels, styled thrones, dominions, principalities, and powers; or rather of civil magistrates, set in high places, and to whom glory and honour are due; which to do is contrary to the law of God, and of dangerous consequence, **Ex 22:28**.

[[@2 Peter 2:11]]Ver. [[11 >> Bible:2 Peter 2:11]]. ***Whereas angels, which are greater in power and might,***.... Which is not to be understood of evil angels, or devils; for, besides that they are greatly weakened and impaired by their fall, they are the accusers of men, and railers and slanderers of the best and greatest of men, and the origin of all the blasphemies that are vented against God or men; but of good angels, who excel in strength, who are not only guardians to particular men, and encamp about the saints, but preside over provinces and kingdoms, for which their power and might do abundantly qualify them; and in which they are greater, that is, not than the devils, or than the false teachers, though both are true, but than dominions and dignities, than kings, princes, and civil magistrates: and yet these

bring not railing accusation against them before the Lord; either "against themselves", as the Arabic version and one of Beza's copies read; against one another, against those of their own species, that are in a higher or lower class or office than themselves; and therefore men ought not to despise magistracy, or the higher powers that are over them: or else against the fallen angels, the devils, as should seem from **Jude 1:9**, or rather against civil magistrates, kings, and princes of this world, who, though so much below them, they vouchsafe to take under their care, and protect them, even Heathen princes, **Da 10:20**; and though there may be oftentimes many things unbecoming in them, yet they do not accuse them, or rail against them before the Lord; and even when, by his orders, they inflict punishment on their persons, as on Sennacherib, and Herod, and others, yet they do not speak evil of their office; and therefore, since angels, who are so much above men, even above the most dignified among them, behave in this manner, it must be an aggravation of the sin of these persons, who are so much below them, to speak evil of them.

[[@2 Peter 2:12]]Ver. [[12 >> Bible:2 Peter 2:12]]. ***But these, as natural brute beasts,***.... So far are these men from acting like the angels, that they are sunk below their own species, and are like beasts, and become brutish in their knowledge and behaviour; are like the horse and the mule, without understanding, act as if they were without reason; yea, are more stupid and senseless than the ox, or the ass, which know their owner, and their crib; and even in those things which they might, and do know by the light of nature, they corrupt themselves; and

being given up to judicial blindness, and a reprobate mind, call good evil, and evil good, and do things that are not convenient, and which even brute beasts do not; and like as they are guided by an instinct in nature, to do what they do, so these men are led and influenced by the force and power of corrupt nature in them, to commit all manner of wickedness: and like them are

made to be taken and destroyed; or, as it may be rendered, "to take and destroy"; as beasts and birds of prey, such as lions, tigers, wolves, bears, vultures, hawks, &c. to which abusers of themselves with mankind, ravishers of women, extortioners, oppressors, thieves, robbers, and plunderers of men's properties, may be compared: or "to be taken and destroyed"; that is, they are made or appointed to be taken in the net and snare of Satan, are vessels of wrath fitted for destruction, and are afore ordained to condemnation and ruin: and this being their case, they

speak evil of the things they understand not; either of angels, of whose nature, office, and dignity, they are ignorant; and blaspheme them, by either ascribing too much to them, as the creation of the world, and divine worship, as were by some ancient heretics; or by speaking such things of them as were below them, and unworthy of them; or of civil magistrates, not knowing the nature and end of magistracy and civil government, and therefore spoke evil of them, when they ought to pray, and be thankful for them, and live peaceable and quiet lives under them; or of the ministers of the word, whose usefulness for the conversion of sinners and edification of saints were not known, at least not acknowledged by these men; hence they were traduced, and went through ill report among them, being as unknown by them; or of the Scriptures of truth, which heretical men do not truly know and understand, but wrest to their own destruction, or deny; and of the Gospel and the mysteries of it, which are things not seen, known, and understood by carnal men, and therefore are blasphemed, reviled, and reproached by them:

and shall utterly perish in their own corruption: of which they are servants, **2 Peter 2:19**, in their moral corruption, in their filthy and unnatural lusts, which are the cause of their everlasting perdition and destruction, to which they are righteously appointed of God.

[[@2 Peter 2:13]]Ver. [[13 >> Bible:2 Peter 2:13]]. ***And shall receive the reward of unrighteousness***,.... Due punishment, both in body and soul, for all their injustice to God and men; which will be a just recompense of reward they shall receive at the righteous judgment of God, who will render to every man according to his works: the justice of which appears by what follows,

[as] they that count it pleasure to riot in the daytime; who place all their satisfaction and happiness in sensual delight, in rioting and drunkenness, in chambering and wantonness, day after day; putting away the evil day far from them, supposing that tomorrow will be as this day, and that there will be no future judgment nor state; and therefore do not take the night for their revels, as other sinners do, but being without all shame, declare their sin as Sodom, and hide it not:

spots [they are], and blemishes; which defile themselves, their minds and consciences, their souls and bodies, with sin, and defile others by their evil communications, and bring dishonour and disgrace upon the ways, doctrines, and interest of Christ:

sporting themselves with their own deceivings; with their sins and lusts, by which they deceive themselves and others, it being a sport to them to commit sin; and in which they take great pleasure and pastime, and not only delight in their own sins, but in those of others, and in them that do them. Some versions, as the Vulgate Latin and Arabic, instead of *apataiv*, "deceivings", read *agapaiv*, love feasts, as in **Jude 1:12**, and so the Alexandrian copy; in which they behaved in a very scandalous manner, indulging themselves in luxury and intemperance: to which agrees what follows,

while they feast with you; at the above feasts, or at the Lord's table, or at their own houses, which shows that they were of them, and among them, as in **2 Peter 2:1**; and carries in it a tacit reproof for the continuance of them, when they were become so bad in their principles, and so scandalous in their lives.

[[@2 Peter 2:14]]Ver. [[14 >> Bible:2 Peter 2:14]]. *Having eyes full of adultery*,.... For the seventh command is not only violated by unclean actions, and obscene words, but also by unchaste looks: and so the Jews explain {k} that precept,

""thou shalt not commit adultery", Ex 20:14; you shall not go after your hearts, nor after "your eyes"; says R. Levi, the heart and the "eye" are sin's two brokers."

Hence we read {l} of *wynyeb Pawn*, "one that commits adultery with his eyes"; See Gill on "Mt 5:28"; compare

Job 31:1. Some read the words, "having eyes full of the adulteress": that is, having a lewd and infamous woman always in mind and sight, continually looking at her and lusting after her:

and that cannot cease from sin: which may be understood either of these wicked men, who are like the troubled sea, that cannot rest, but are continually casting up the mire and dirt of sin out of their polluted heart; who live and walk in sin, and are always committing it, their conversation being nothing else but one continued series of sinning; nor can they do otherwise, since they are slaves to their lusts, and are carried away with the force and power of them: or of their eyes, which were always rolling after unlawful objects; their eyes and their hearts were only, and always, for their lust, as the prophet says of others, that they were but for their covetousness, Jer 22:17; a sin also which reigned in these men:

beguiling unstable souls: such as were unsteady in their principles, and unstable in their ways; were like children tossed to and fro with every wind of doctrine, not being rooted in Christ, nor established in the faith; these, as the serpent beguiled Eve, they corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ; imposed false doctrines on them, and deceived them by false glosses and outward appearances; and by fair words and good speeches, and by their wanton looks and carnal lusts, they allured them into the sin of adultery; or ensnared them, drew them into the net and snare of Satan, and so they were taken and led captive.

An heart they have exercised with covetous practices; an immoderate love of money, a covetous desire after it, is the root of all evil, the bane of religion, and source of heresy, and is a vice which has always prevailed among false teachers; and the character here given well agrees with Simon Magus, the father of heresies, and his followers: hence care is always taken to insert, among, the characters and qualifications of Gospel ministers, that they be not greedy of filthy lucre, **1 Timothy 3:3**; this iniquity, when it is a reigning one, and is become an habit, as it was in the persons here described, for it had its seat in their heart, they were

habituated to it, and continually exercised it in a multitude of instances and wicked practices, is insatiable and damnable:

cursed children; or "children of the curse"; which may be understood either actively, children that do curse, as children of disobedience are such as commit acts of disobedience; so these were cursing children, who, though their mouths might not be full of cursing and bitterness, as openly profane sinners be, yet they inwardly, and from their hearts, cursed the true followers of Christ, and their principles; or passively, cursed children who were under the curse of the law, and from which there was no redemption for them, but at the last day will have the awful sentence pronounced on them, Go, ye cursed, into everlasting fire.

{k} T. Hieros. Beracot, fol. 3. 3. {l} Vajikra Rabba, sect. 23. fol. 165. 1. Vid. A. Gell. Noct. Attic. l. 3. c. 5.

[[@2 Peter 2:15]]Ver. [[15 >> Bible:2 Peter 2:15]]. ***Which have forsaken the right way***,.... The right way of the Lord, the way of truth, the Gospel of truth; or Christ, who is the way, the truth, and the life; the true way to eternal life, and which is the right way to eternal happiness; the way of life, righteousness, and salvation by Christ, the Christian faith, and the doctrine of it, which they once professed, but now relinquished:

and are gone astray; from the right way, the way of truth and holiness, into the paths of error and profaneness:

following the way of Balaam [the son] of Bosor; which Jude calls his error, **Jude 1:11**, and is the path of covetousness, uncleanness, and idolatry, sins which he was either guilty of himself, or taught, advised, and seduced others to; see **Re 2:14**. The Vulgate Latin version reads "Balaam [out of] Bosor", taking "Bosor" for the name of a place, of which "Balaam" was; but not "Bosor", but "Pethor", was the place of Balaam's residence, Nu 22:5. The Arabic and Ethiopic versions supply, as we do, "the son of Bosor"; and the Syriac version reads, "the son of Beor", as in Nu 22:5; for Beor and "Bosor" are the same names; the "sheva" being pronounced by "o", as it is by "oa" in "Boanerges", and the "ain" by "s". Moreover, the letters u and e are sometimes used for one another, as in Nau and Nae, Ura and era, and so e and v, especially in the Chaldean dialect; and Peter now being at Babylon in Chaldea, see **1 Peter 5:13**; it is no wonder that he so pronounced.

Who loved the wages of unrighteousness: which were the rewards of divination, Nu 22:7; which were brought him for his divining or soothsaying, and may well be called unrighteous wages, since it was for doing unrighteous things, or things in an unrighteous manner; and these he loved, desired, and greedily coveted, and fain would he have taken Balak's gold and silver, and have cursed Israel, but was restrained by the Lord: he showed a good will to it, in going along with the messengers, and in building altars, and offering sacrifice in one place after another, in which there was a great resemblance between him and the men here spoken of.

[[@2 Peter 2:16]]Ver. [[16 >> Bible:2 Peter 2:16]]. ***But was rebuked for his iniquity***,.... Which was not merely going along with the messengers of Balak, for he had leave from the Lord so to do, Nu 22:20; but going along with them with a desire to curse Israel, when it was the will of God he should go and bless them, in order to get Balak's money; so that his

governing iniquity was covetousness, which led him to other sins; and for this he was rebuked by the angel, Nu 22:32, as well as reproved by his ass, Nu 22:28: for

the dumb ass, as it was naturally so, the ass on which he rode,

speaking with man's voice; which was supernatural and miraculous, for it was God that opened the mouth of the ass: the mouth of that ass is said, by the Jews {m}, to be one of the ten things created between the two evenings on the sixth day of the creation; that is, as the gloss on it says, concerning which it was decreed, that its mouth should be opened to speak what this ass said; and the occasion of it may be seen in Nu 22:22. Lactantius {n} observes, that there are two stars in the constellation of Cancer, which the Greeks call the "asses"; and which, the poets feign, are those that carried Liberus over a river, when he could not pass it; to one of which he gave this for a reward, "ut humana voce loqueretur", "that it should speak with man's voice"; a fable, no doubt, hatched from the sacred history, and said in imitation of this ass. Which

forbad the madness of the prophet: and so Balaam, though a diviner and soothsayer, is called by the Jewish writers {o}; who, they say, was first a prophet, and then a soothsayer, from whom Jerom {p} seems to have received the tradition; who says, that he was first a holy man, and a prophet of God, and afterwards, through disobedience, and a desire of gifts, was called a diviner; for his eyes were opened, and he saw the vision of the Almighty; and the Spirit of God came upon him, and he prophesied many things concerning Israel, and the Messiah, and others, Nu 24:4. His madness lay in going with the messengers of Balak, Nu 22:21, in order to curse Israel, contrary to the will of God, Nu 22:12; and it is madness in any to oppose God in his counsels, purposes, providences, and precepts; and every sin, which is an act of hostility against God, has madness in it; and this of Balaam's was forbid by his ass, and he was convinced of it. Very appropriately is mention made of this dumb ass, when the persons here spoken of were as natural brute beasts, and worse than them, **2 Peter 2:12**.

{m} Pirke Abot, c. 5. sect. 6. & Jarchi in ib. Sepher Cosri, par. 2. p. 254. {n} **Deuteronomy** falsa Religione, l. 1. c. 21. {o} Pesikta, Ilmedenu & Gerundensis apud Drus in loc. T. Bab Sanhedrin fol. 106. 1. Aben Ezra in Numb. xxxii. 28. {p} Tradition. Heb. in Genes. fol. 69. D.

[[@2 Peter 2:17]]Ver. [[17 >> Bible:2 Peter 2:17]]. *These are wells without water*,.... Which look large and deep, promise much, and have nothing in them; so these men looked like angels of light, transformed themselves as ministers of righteousness, had a form of godliness, and boasted of their great knowledge; promised great advantages to their followers, but were like deceitful brooks, or dry wells, and so disappointed those that came to them, and attended on them; having nothing but the filth and slime of error and iniquity, being destitute both of the grace of God, comparable to water, and of the truth of heavenly doctrine, which is like the rain that fills the wells, pools, and fountains.

Clouds that are carried with a tempest; these false teachers may be compared to clouds for their number, for many antichrists and false prophets soon came into the world; and for their sudden rise in the churches, into which they crept privily and unawares; and because of the general darkness they spread, for when errors and heresies prevail it is a dark and cloudy day with the churches, a day of gloominess and darkness, of thick darkness, a day of trouble, rebuke, and blasphemy; and because of the height of them, especially light clouds, as these are compared to, who are high in their own conceits and imaginations, and think, and give out themselves to be some great persons; and also because of their sudden destruction, which

lingers and slumbers not, but comes upon them in a moment, and their glory passes away like the morning cloud: and these may be said to be as clouds "carried with a tempest": of their own lusts and passions, by which they are governed, and are led, and carried away with the force of them, and have no power to resist them, being under the dominion of them, and captives to them; and of Satan's temptations, who works effectually in them, with all power, signs, and lying wonders, and with all deceivableness of unrighteousness, and being taken in his snare, are led captive by him at his will: Jude says, "carried about of winds", **Jude 1:12**, with every wind of false doctrine, like meteors in the air; are never at a point, always unsteady and unsettled, and ready to embrace every new and upstart notion:

to whom the mist of darkness is reserved for ever; the nature of their punishment is expressed by "darkness", the blackest darkness, the mist of darkness, and which Jude calls blackness of darkness, the same with utter darkness; and which signifies a most forlorn and uncomfortable condition, and is a righteous judgment, and just retaliation upon them who studied to darken counsel by words without knowledge; and the certainty of their punishment is signified by its being "reserved", even as the happiness of the saints, and the safety and sureness of it are represented by an inheritance reserved in heaven: and as God has his treasures, magazines, and stores of grace and mercy, felicity and glory, for his people; so he has his wrath and vengeance reserved, laid up in store with him, and sealed up among his treasures, which he will surely bring forth in his own time: and the duration of this punishment is "for ever"; it is a worm that never dies, a fire that is never quenched, **Isa 66:24** **Mark 9:44**; it is everlasting fire and burnings, the smoke of which ascends for ever and ever.

[[@2 Peter 2:18]]Ver. [[18 >> Bible:2 Peter 2:18]]. *For when they speak great swelling [words] of vanity*,.... Marvellous things against the God of gods, great things and blasphemies against God, his name, his tabernacle, and his saints; see **Da 11:36**; or against men, dominions, and dignities, **2 Peter 2:10**; or it may design their self-applauses and vain glorying in themselves, and their empty boast of knowledge and learning; and also express the windiness of their doctrines, and the bombast style, and high flown strains of rhetoric in which they were delivered; as likewise the flattering titles they bestowed on men for the sake of their own worldly interest and advantage; see **Jude 1:16** and hereby

they allure, through the lusts of the flesh, [through much] wantonness, those that were clean escaped from them who live in error: that is, from those who lived in the error of Heathenism or Judaism, from whom, and which, they were clean escaped; or truly, really, and entirely delivered, being fully convinced of the falsity thereof, and of the truth of the Christian religion; though some copies, as the Alexandrian, and two of Beza's, and two of Stephens's, read, not

ontwv, "truly", but oligwv, "a little"; and the Vulgate Latin version renders it, "a very little"; to which agrees the Complutensian edition; and the Syriac version renders it "in a few words", or "almost"; and according to the Ethiopic version, "a few persons" are designed; but be they more or less, and truly, or but a little, and for a little while, or almost, escaped from their former errors, in which they were brought up, and lived; yet by the carnal lusts and liberties, lasciviousness and wantonness, which these false teachers indulged, they were allured, ensnared, and drawn by them into their wicked principles and practices.

[[@2 Peter 2:19]]Ver. [[19 >> Bible:2 Peter 2:19]]. ***While they promise them liberty***,.... Not Christian liberty, which lies in a freedom from sin, its dominion, guilt, and condemnation, and in serving God with liberty, cheerfulness, and without fear; but a sinful carnal liberty, a liberty from the law of God, from obedience to it as a rule of walk and conversation, and from the laws of men, from subjection to the civil magistrate, and from servitude to masters, and obedience to parents; a liberty to lay aside and neglect the ordinances of the Gospel at pleasure, and to live in all manner of sin and wickedness; a liberty which is contrary to the nature, will, and work of Christ, to his Spirit, and to the principle of grace in the heart, and to the Gospel, and to the conduct and conversation of real saints. Now this was the snare by which the false teachers beguiled unstable souls; liberty being what is greatly desirable to men, and is suited to their carnal lusts and interests: but a vain promise was this, when

they themselves are the servants of corruption; of sin, which has corrupted all mankind in soul and body; and particularly the lust of uncleanness, which these men walked in, and by which they not only corrupted themselves, but the good manners of others also; and which tended and led them both to ruin and destruction, signified by the pit of corruption: and yet these very preachers, that promised liberty to others, were the servants of sin; they were under the power and government of sin. They were not only born so, and were homeborn slaves to sin, but they sold themselves to work wickedness; voluntarily and with delight, they served divers lusts and pleasures, and were slaves and drudges thereunto; as likewise to Satan, whose lusts they would do, and by whom they were led captive; so that their condition was mean, base, and deplorable, and therefore could never make good their promise, or give that which they had not themselves: and which is confirmed by the following reasoning,

for of whom a man is overcome, of the same is he brought in bondage: as this is a certain point in war, that when one man is conquered by another, he is no longer a free man, but the other's prisoner and captive, and is in a state of servitude and bondage; so it is when a man is overcome by sin, which must be understood not of a partial victory or conquest, for a good man may be surprised by sin, and overtaken in a fault, and be overcome and carried captive by it for a time, as was the apostle, see **Romans 7:23**; and yet not be a servant of corruption, or properly in a state of bondage to it; but this is to be understood of a total and complete victory, when a man is wholly under the dominion of sin, it reigns in his mortal body, and he obeys it in the lusts of it, and yields his members instruments of unrighteousness; such a man is neither a free man himself, nor can he much less promise and give liberty to others.

[[@2 Peter 2:20]]Ver. [[20 >> Bible:2 Peter 2:20]]. ***For if after they have escaped the pollutions of the world***,.... The sins of it, the governing vices of it, which the men of the world are addicted to, and immersed in; for the whole world lies in wickedness, and which are of a defiling nature: the phrase is Rabbinical; it is said {q},

"he that studies not in the law in this world, but is defiled amle ypwjnb, "with the pollutions of the world", what is written of him? and they took him, and cast him without:"

these, men may escape, abstain from, and outwardly reform, with respect unto, and yet be destitute of the grace of God; so that this can be no instance of the final and total apostasy of real saints; for the house may be swept and garnished with an external reformation; persons may be outwardly righteous before men, have a form of godliness and a name to live, and yet be dead in trespasses and sins; all which they may have

through the knowledge of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. The Vulgate Latin, and all the Oriental versions, read, our Lord, and the latter leave out, "and Saviour"; by which "knowledge" is meant, not a spiritual experimental knowledge of Christ, for that is eternal life, the beginning, pledge, and earnest of it; but a notional knowledge of Christ, or a profession of knowledge of him, for it may be rendered "acknowledgment"; or rather the Gospel of Christ, which, being only notionally received, may have such an effect on men, as outwardly to reform their lives, at least in some instances, and for a while, in whose hearts it has no place. Now if, after all this knowledge and reformation,

they are again entangled therein; in the pollutions of the world, in worldly lusts, which are as gins, pits and snares:

and overcome; by them, so as to be laden with them, and led away, and entirely governed and influenced by them:

the latter end, or state,

is worse with them than the beginning; see Mt 12:45. Their beginning, or first estate, was that in which they were born, a state of darkness, ignorance, and sin, and in which they were brought up, and was either the state of Judaism, or of Gentilism; their next estate was an outward deliverance and escape from the error of the one, or of the other, and an embracing and professing the truth of the Christian religion, joined with a becoming external conversation; and this their last estate was an apostasy from the truth of the Gospel they had professed, a reception of error and heresy, and a relapse into sin and immorality, which made their case worse than it was at first; for, generally, such persons are more extravagant in sinning; are like raging waves of the sea, foaming out their own shame; and are seldom, or ever, recovered; and by their light, knowledge, and profession, their punishment will be more aggravated, and become intolerable.

{q} Zohar in Gen. fol. 104. 3. Vid. Bechinot Olam, p. 178.

[[@2 Peter 2:21]]Ver. [[21 >> Bible:2 Peter 2:21]]. *For it had been better for them*,.... Not that ignorance is good, or to be excused; but it would have been a lesser evil, and not so much aggravated:

not to have known the way of righteousness; the same with "the way of truth", **2 Peter 2:2**, and "the right way", **2 Peter 2:15**, the Gospel, which points out the way and method of a sinner's justification before God, which is not by the works of the law, but by the righteousness of Christ imputed to them, and received by faith; and which teaches men to live soberly, righteously, and godly; and a large, notional, though not an experimental knowledge, these apostates had of the word and doctrine of righteousness, and indeed of the whole of the Christian religion, which may truly go by this name:

than after they have known [it]; owned, embraced, and professed it:

to turn: the Vulgate Latin version, and some copies, as the Alexandrian and others, add, to that which is behind; to their former lusts, or errors, or worse, which they had turned their backs upon externally:

from the holy commandment delivered unto them; by the commandment is meant the Gospel also, see **2 Peter 3:2**; called holy, because of its nature and influence, and in

opposition to the pollutions of the world; and which is the faith once delivered, **Jude 1:3**, and which they received, as delivered to them; and, particularly, the ordinances of it, which they once submitted to, kept, and observed, as they were delivered to them, but now relinquished, or corrupted: wherefore, it would have been better for them to have been in their former ignorance, either in Judaism, or in Gentilism, since proportionate to a man's light is his guilt, and so his punishment, see **Romans 2:12**.

[[@2 Peter 2:22]]Ver. [[22 >> Bible:2 Peter 2:22]]. *But it is happened unto them, according to the true proverb*,.... Which is true, both in fact and in the application of it, and which lies in the Scriptures of truth, at least the first part of it, **Proverbs 26:11**.

The dog [is] turned to his own vomit again, and the sow that was washed to her wallowing in the mire; which expresses the filthy nature of sin, signified by vomit, mire, and dirt, than which nothing is more abominable and defiling; and also the just characters of these apostates, who are filly compared to dogs and swine and likewise their irreclaimable and irrecoverable state and condition, it being impossible they should be otherwise, unless their natures were changed and altered. In the Hebrew language, a "sow" is called ryzx, from the root rzx, which signifies to "return", because that creature, as soon as it is out of the mire and dirt, and is washed from its filthiness, naturally returns to it again: so such apostates return to what they were before, to their former principles and practices: in this manner the Jews explain the proverb,

"Tobiah returns to Tobiah, as it is said, **Proverbs 26:11**; as a dog returneth to his vomit {r}."

{r} Vajikra Rabba, sect. 16. fol. 158. 4.

[[@2 Peter 3]]

Chapter 3

INTRODUCTION TO 2 PETER 3

In this chapter the apostle makes mention of the end and design of his writing this second epistle; foretells that there would be scoffers at the coming of Christ in the last days; describes the coming of Christ and the burning of the world; and closes with the use saints should make of these things. The end of his writing both this and the former epistle was to put the persons he writes unto in mind of the doctrines and ordinances of the Gospel, delivered by the prophets and apostles, **2 Peter 3:1**; and then, agreeably to what the prophets had said, he predicts that there would be scoffers in the last day; who are described by their sinful course of life, and by their words, what they would say concerning the coming of Christ, and their reasoning about it, **2 Peter 3:3**; which arose from their ignorance of the creation of the heavens and the earth, and of the situation of them; and is refuted by showing that things have not remained as they were from the creation; that the earth standing in and out of the water, as it was capable of being overflowed with a flood, so it perished by one; and that the present heavens and earth are reserved and prepared for a general burning at the day of judgment, in which wicked men will be destroyed, **2 Peter 3:5**; but let these men scoff as they will, the length of time since the promise of Christ's coming was made should be no objection with the saints to the performance of it; since the longest term of time is nothing with God, however considerable it may be with men, **2 Peter 3:8**; besides, the reason of the

coming of Christ being deferred, is not owing to any dilatoriness in the performance of the promise, but to the long suffering of God towards his elect, being unwilling that anyone of them should be lost, but that all should be brought to repentance, **2 Peter 3:9**; but as for the coming of Christ, that is certain, and will be sudden; at which time will be the general conflagration, which is described in a very awful manner, **2 Peter 3:10**; and the use to be made of such a tremendous dispensation by the saints is to live a holy and godly conversation, **2 Peter 3:11**; to be eagerly looking for the coming of Christ, **2 Peter 3:12**, and to expect, according to his promise, new heavens and a new earth, in which will dwell righteous persons, **2 Peter 3:13**; and to be diligent to be found in peace at that day, **2 Peter 3:14**; and to account the long suffering of God salvation; and the whole of this account, and the use of it, is strengthened by the testimony of the Apostle Paul, of whom, and of his epistles, a character is given, **2 Peter 3:15**; and the epistle is concluded with some cautions and exhortations to the saints, to beware lest they should be carried away with the errors of wicked men, and so fall from any degree of steadfastness in the faith; and to be concerned for a growth in grace, and in the knowledge of Christ Jesus, to whom glory is to be ascribed for ever and ever, **2 Peter 3:17**.

[[@2 Peter 3:1]]Ver. [[1 >> Bible:2 Peter 3:1]]. ***This second epistle, beloved, I now write unto you***,.... This is a transition to another part of the epistle; for the apostle having largely described false teachers, the secret enemies of the Christian religion under a profession of it, passes on to take notice of the more open adversaries and profane scoffers of it; and from their ridicule of the doctrine of Christ's second coming, he proceeds to treat of that, and of the destruction of the world, and the future happiness of the saints: he calls this epistle his "second epistle", because he had written another before to the same persons; and that the author of this epistle was an apostle, is evident from **2 Peter 3:2**; and which, compared with **2 Peter 1:18** shows him to be the Apostle Peter, whose name it bears, and who was an eyewitness to the transfiguration of Christ on the mount, Mt 17:1: he addresses these saints here, as also in **2 Peter 3:8**, under the character of "beloved"; because they were the beloved of God, being chosen by him according to his foreknowledge, and regenerated by him, according to his abundant mercy; and were openly his people, and had obtained mercy from him, and like precious faith with the apostles; and were also the beloved of Christ, being redeemed by him, not with gold and silver, but with his precious blood; for whom he suffered, and who were partakers of his sufferings, and the benefits arising from them, and who had all things given them by him, pertaining to life and godliness, and exceeding great and precious promises; and were likewise beloved by the apostle, though strangers, and not merely as Jews, or because they were his countrymen, but because they were the elect of God, the redeemed of Christ, and who were sanctified by the Spirit, and had the same kind of faith he himself had. The Syriac and Arabic versions read, "my beloved"; and the Ethiopic version, "my brethren": his end in writing both this and the former epistle follows;

in [both] which I stir up your pure minds by way of remembrance; that this was his view both in this and the former epistle, appears from **1 Peter 1:13**; he calls their minds pure; not that they were so naturally, for the minds and consciences of men are universally defiled with sin; nor are the minds of all men pure who seem to be so in their own eyes, or appear so to others; nor can any man, by his own power or works, make himself pure from sin; only the blood of Christ purges and cleanses from it; and a pure mind is a mind sprinkled with that blood, and which receives the truth as it is in Jesus, in the power and purity of it, and that holds the mystery of the faith in a pure conscience. Some versions, as the Vulgate Latin and Arabic, render the word "sincere", as it is in **Php 1:10**; and may design the sincerity of their

hearts in the worship of God, in the doctrines of Christ, and to one another, and of the grace of the Spirit of God in them; as that their faith was unfeigned, their hope without hypocrisy, and their love without dissimulation, and their repentance real and genuine; but yet they needed to be stirred up by way of remembrance, both of the truth of the Gospel, and the duties of religion; for saints are apt to be forgetful of the word, both of its doctrines and its exhortations; and it is the business of the ministers of the word to put them in mind of them, either by preaching or by writing; and which shows the necessity and usefulness of the standing ministry of the Gospel: the particulars he put them in mind of next follow.

[[@2 Peter 3:2]]Ver. [[2 >> Bible:2 Peter 3:2]]. *That ye may be mindful*,.... This is an explanation of the above mentioned end of his writing this and the other epistle; which was, that those saints might be mindful of two things more especially:

of the words which were spoken before by the holy prophets; that is, the prophets of the Old Testament, who were holy men of God, and therefore their words are to be regarded, and retained in memory; the Gospel itself was spoken by them, and so was Christ, and the things relating to his person and offices, and to his incarnation, sufferings, and death, and the glory that should follow; and indeed the apostles said no other than what they did, only more clearly and expressly; and particularly many things, were said by them concerning the second coming of Christ to judge the world, and destroy it, and to prepare new heavens and a new earth for his people, which is what the apostle has chiefly in view; see **Jude 1:14**;

and of the commandment of us the apostles of the Lord and Saviour; that is, Jesus Christ, as **Jude 1:17** expresses it, and the Ethiopic version adds here; and which likewise, and also the Syriac version, and some ancient copies, read, "our Lord and Saviour", and omit the us before the apostles; by whom are meant the twelve apostles of Christ, of which Peter was one, and therefore says, "us the apostles"; though the Vulgate Latin and Arabic versions, and the Complutensian edition, read "your apostles", and so the Alexandrian copy; but the former is the received reading: now "the commandment" of these intends either the Gospel in general, so called because it was the commandment of our Lord to his apostles to preach it; and therefore the word "commandment", in the original, stands between "us the apostles", and "the Lord and Saviour", as being the commandment of the one to the other; unless it can be thought any regard is had to the new commandment of love, or that of faith, inculcated both by Christ and his apostles; Joh 13:34; or rather, particularly the instructions, directions, and predictions of the apostles concerning the second coming of Christ, and what should go before it, as appears from the following words, and the parallel place in **Jude 1:17**, the words of the prophets and apostles being here put together, show the agreement there is between them, and what regard is to be had to each of them, and to anything and every thing in which they agree.

[[@2 Peter 3:3]]Ver. [[3 >> Bible:2 Peter 3:3]]. *Knowing this first*,.... In the first place, principally, and chiefly, and which might easily be known and observed from the writings of the apostles and prophets; see **1 Timothy 4:1**;

that there shall come in the last days scoffers, or "mockers"; such as would make a mock at sin, make light of it, plead for it, openly commit it, and glory in it; and scoff at all religion, as the prejudice of education, as an engine of state, a piece of civil policy to keep subjects in awe, as cant, enthusiasm, and madness, as a gloomy melancholy thing, depriving men of true

pleasure; and throw out their flouts and jeers at those that are the most religious, for the just, upright man, is commonly by such laughed to scorn, and those that depart from evil make themselves a prey; and particularly at the ministers of the word, for a man that has scarcely so much common sense as to preserve him from the character of an idiot, thinks himself a wit of the age, if he can at any rate break a jest upon a Gospel minister: nor do the Scriptures of truth escape the banter and burlesque of these scoffers; the doctrines of it being foolishness to them, and the commands and ordinances in it being grievous and intolerable to them; yea, to such lengths do those proceed, as to scoff at God himself; at his persons, purposes, providences, and promises; at Jehovah the Father, as the God of nature and providence, and especially as the God and Father of Christ, and of all grace in him; at Jehovah the Son, at his person, as being the Son of God, and truly God, at his office, as Mediator, and at his blood, righteousness, and sacrifice, which they trample under foot; and at Jehovah the Spirit, whom they do despite unto, as the spirit of grace, deriding his operations in regeneration and sanctification, as dream and delusion; and, most of all, things to come are the object of their scorn and derision; as the second coming of Christ, the resurrection of the dead, a future judgment, the torments of hell, and the joys of heaven; all which they represent as the trifles and juggles of designing men: such as these, according to the prophets and apostles, were to come in "the last days"; either in the days of the Messiah, in the Gospel dispensation, the times between the first and second coming of Christ; for it is a rule with the Jews {s}, that wherever the last days are mentioned, the days of the Messiah are intended; see **Heb 1:1**; when the prophets foretold such scoffers should come; or in the last days of the Jewish state, both civil and religious, called "the ends of the world", **1 Corinthians 10:11**; a little before the destruction of Jerusalem, when iniquity greatly abounded, **Mt 24:11**; or "in the last of the days"; as the words may be rendered; and so answer to

Mymyh tyrxab, in **Isa 2:2**, and may regard the latter part of the last times; the times of the apostles were the last days, **1Jo 2:18**; they began then, and will continue to Christ's second coming; when some time before that, it will be a remarkable age for scoffers and scorers; and we have lived to see an innumerable company of them, and these predictions fulfilled; from whence it may be concluded, that the coming of Christ is at hand: these scoffers are further described as

walking after their own lusts; either after the carnal reasonings of their minds, admitting of nothing but what they can comprehend by reason, making that the rule, test, and standard of all their principles, and so cast away the law of the Lord, and despise the word of the Holy One of Israel; or rather, after their sinful and fleshly lusts, making them their guides and governors, and giving up themselves entirely to them, to obey and fulfil them; the phrase denotes a continued series of sinning, a progress in it, a desire after it, and pleasure in it, and an obstinate persisting in it; scoffers at religion and revelation are generally libertines; and such as sit in the seat of the scornful, are in the counsel of the ungodly, and way of sinners, **Psalms 1:1**.

{s} Kimchi in Isa. ii. 2.

[[@2 Peter 3:4]]Ver. [[4 >> Bible:2 Peter 3:4]]. *And saying, Where is the promise of his coming?....* That is, of the coming of the Lord and Saviour, **2 Peter 3:2**; the object of their scorn and derision, and whom they name not, through contempt; and the meaning is, what is become of the promise of his coming? where the accomplishment of it? The prophets foretold he would come; he himself said he would come again, **Joh 14:3**; the angels, at his ascension,

declared he would come from heaven in like manner as he went up, **Ac 1:11**; and all his apostles gave out that he would appear a second time to judge both quick and dead, **Ac 10:42** **1 Peter 4:5**, and that his coming was at hand, **Php 4:5**; but where is the fulfilment of all this? he is not come, nor is there any sign or likelihood of it:

for since the fathers fell asleep; or "died": which is the language of the Scriptures, and here sneered at by these men, who believe them so fast asleep as never to be awaked or raised more; and by "the fathers" they mean the first inhabitants of the world, as Adam, Abel, Seth, &c. and all the patriarchs and prophets in all ages; the Ethiopic version renders it, "our first fathers":

all things continue as [they were] from the beginning of the creation; reasoning from the settled order of things, the constant revolution of the sun, moon, and stars, the permanency of the earth, and the succession of the inhabitants of it, to the future continuance of things, without any alteration; and consequently, that Christ would not come, as was promised, to raise the dead, judge mankind destroy the world, and set up a new state of things: the fallacy of which reasoning is exposed by the apostle in the following words.

[[@2 Peter 3:5]]Ver. [[5 >> Bible:2 Peter 3:5]]. *For this they willingly are ignorant of*,.... Namely, what follows; for as these men were such as had professed Christianity, and had the advantage of revelation, and had the opportunity of reading the Scriptures, they might have known that the heavens and the earth were from the beginning; and that they were made by the word of God; and that the earth was originally in such a position and situation as to be overflowed with a flood, and that it did perish by a general inundation; and that the present heavens and earth are kept and reserved for a general burning; and it might be discerned in nature, that there are preparations making for an universal conflagration; but all this they chose not to know, and affected ignorance of: particularly

that by the word of God the heavens were of old: not only in the times of Noah, but "from the beginning"; as the Ethiopic version reads, and which agrees with the account in **Genesis 1:1**; by "the heavens" may be meant both the third heaven, and the starry heavens, and the airy heavens, with all their created inhabitants; and especially the latter, since these were concerned in, and affected with the general deluge; and these were in the beginning of time, out of nothing brought into being, and so were not eternal, and might be destroyed again, or at least undergo a change, even though they were of old, and of long duration: for it was "by the word of God" that they at first existed, and were so long preserved in being; either by the commanding word of God, by his powerful voice, his almighty fiat, who said, Let it be done, and it was done, and who commanded beings to rise up out of nothing, and they did, and stood fast; and so the Arabic version renders it, "by the command of God"; or by his eternal Logos, the essential Word of God, the second Person in the Trinity, who is often in Scripture called the Word, and the Word of God, and, as some think, by the Apostle Peter, **1 Peter 1:23**, and certain it is that the creation of all things is frequently ascribed to him; see **Joh 1:16**; wherefore by the same Word they might be dissolved, and made to pass away, as they will:

and the earth standing out of the water and in the water; that is, "by the Word of God"; for this phrase, in the original text, is placed after this clause, and last of all; and refers not only to the being of the heavens of old, but to the rise, standing, and subsistence of the earth, which is here particularly described for the sake of the deluge, the apostle afterwards mentions: and it is said to be "standing out of the water", or "consisting out of it"; it consists

of it as a part; the globe of the earth is terraqueous, partly land and partly water; and even the dry land itself has its rise and spring out of water; the first matter that was created is called the deep, and waters in which darkness was, and upon which the Spirit of God moved, **Genesis 1:2**; agreeably to which Thales the Milesian asserted {t}, that water was the principle of all things; and the Ethiopic version here renders the words thus, "and the Word of God created also the earth out of water, and confirmed it": the account the Jews give of the first formation of the world is this {u};

"at first the world was Mymb Mym, "water in water"; what is the sense (of that passage **Genesis 1:2**;) "and the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters?" he returned, and made it snow; he casteth forth his ice like morsels, **Psalms 147:17**; he returned and made it earth; "for to the snow he saith, Be thou earth", **Job 37:6**, and the earth stood upon the waters; "to him that stretched out the earth above the waters", **Psalms 136:6**;"

however, certain it is, that the earth was first covered with water, when at the word, and by the command of God, the waters fled and hasted away, and were gathered into one place, and the dry land rose up and appeared; and then it was that it "stood out of the water"; see **Genesis 1:9**; moreover, the earth consists, or is kept and held together by water; there is a general humidity or moisture that runs through it, by which it is compacted together, or otherwise it would resolve into dust, and by which it is fit for the production, increase, and preservation of vegetables and other things, which it otherwise would not be: and it is also said to stand "in the water", or by the water; upon it, according to **Psalms 24:2**; or rather in the midst of it, there being waters above the firmament or expanse; in the airy heavens, in the clouds all around the earth, called the windows of heaven; and water below the firmament or expanse, in the earth itself; besides the great sea, a large body of waters is in the midst of the earth, in the very bowels of it, which feed rivers, and form springs, fountains and wells, called "the fountains of the great deep", **Genesis 7:11**; and in this position and situation was the earth of old, and so was prepared in nature for a general deluge, and yet was preserved firm and stable by the word of God, for a long series of time; so the Arabic version renders it, "and the earth out of the water, and in the water, stood stable, by the command of God"; but when it was his pleasure, he brought the flood on the world of the ungodly, of which an account follows.

{t} Vid. Laert. l. i. in Vit. Thaletis. {u} T. Hieros. Chagiga, fol. 77. 1.

[[@2 Peter 3:6]]Ver. [[6 >> Bible:2 Peter 3:6]]. *Whereby the world that then was*,.... The old world, as it is called in **2 Peter 2:5**; and as the Ethiopic version here renders it; the world before the flood, that had stood from the creation 1656 years:

being overflowed with water; by the windows of heaven being opened, and the waters over the earth poured down upon it; and by the fountains of the great deep being broken up in it; thus by these waters from above and below, a general inundation was brought upon it; for that the deluge was universal is clear from hence, and from the account by Moses; for as the earth was filled with violence, and all flesh had corrupted its way, God threatened a general destruction, and which was brought by a flood, which overflowed the whole earth; for all the hills that were under the whole heaven were covered with it, and everything that had life in the dry land died, and every living substance was destroyed that was upon the face of the ground; see **Genesis 6:11**; and hence it follows, that hereby the then world

perished; not as to the substance of it, whatever alteration there might be in its form and position; but as to the inhabitants of it; for all creatures, men and cattle, and the creeping things, and fowls of the heaven, were destroyed, excepting Noah and his wife, and his three sons and their wives, and the creatures that were with him in the ark; see **Genesis 7:23**; and by this instance the apostle shows the falsehood of the above assertion, that all things continued as they were from the beginning of the creation; for the earth was covered with water first, and which, by the command of God, was removed, and, after a long series of time, was brought on it again, and by it drowned; and from whence it also appears, that this sort of reasoning used by those scoffers is very fallacious; for though the heavens and the earth may continue for a long time, as they did before the flood, in the same form and situation, it does not follow from thence that they always will, for the contrary is evident from what follows.

[[@2 Peter 3:7]]Ver. [[7 >> Bible:2 Peter 3:7]]. *But the heavens and the earth which are now*,.... In being, in distinction from, and opposition to the heavens that were of old, and the earth standing in and out of the water, and the world that then was when the waters of the flood overflowed it:

by the same word are kept in store; that is, by the word of God, as in **2 Peter 3:5**; and the Syriac, Arabic, and Ethiopic versions read, "by his word"; by the same word that the heavens and the earth were made of old, or in the beginning, are they kept, preserved, and upheld in their being; or "are treasured up"; the heavens and the earth are a rich treasure, they are full of the riches God, as the God of nature and providence; and they are kept with care, as a treasure is, not to be touched or meddled with at present, but must continue in the same position and use; or they are laid up in the stores, and scaled up among the treasures of divine wrath and vengeance, and will be brought out another day, and made use of, to the destruction of the ungodly inhabitants of the world, and to aggravate and increase their misery and ruin: for it is further said of them, that they are

reserved unto fire; for though the world is, and has been preserved a long time without any visible alteration in it, yet it will not be always so preserved: and though it is, and will be kept from being drowned by water again, through the promise and power of God, yet it is kept and reserved for a general conflagration; see **2 Peter 3:10**. And as the old world was put into a natural situation, so as to be drowned by water, there are now preparations making in nature, in the present world, for the burning of it; witness the fiery meteors, blazing stars, and burning comets in the heavens, and the subterraneous fires in the bowels of the earth, which in some places have already broke out: there are now many volcanos, burning mountains and islands, particularly in Sicily, Italy, and the parts adjacent, the seat of the beast, and where it is very likely the universal conflagration will begin, as Aetna, Vesuvius, Strombilo, and other volcanos; and even in our own island we have some symptoms and appearances of these fires under ground, as fiery eruptions in some places, and the hot waters at the Bath, and elsewhere, show; from all which it is plain that the heavens and earth, that now are, are not as they always were, and will be, but are reserved and prepared for burning; and that things are ripening apace, as men's sins also are, for the general conflagration. Josephus {w} relates, that Adam foretold that there would be a destruction of all things, once by the force of fire, and once by the power and multitude of water; and it is certain the Jews had knowledge of the destruction of the earth by fire, as by water: they say {x},

"that when the law was given to Israel, his (God's) voice went from one end of the world to the other, and trembling laid hold on all the nations of the world in their temples, and they said a song, as it is said, **Psalm 29:9**, "and in his temple doth everyone speak of his glory": all of them gathered together to wicked Balaam, and said to him, what is the voice of the multitude which we hear, perhaps a flood is coming upon the world? he said unto them, "the Lord sitteth upon the flood, yea, the Lord sitteth King for ever", **Psalm 29:10**. Thus hath the Lord sworn, that he will not bring a flood upon the world; they replied to him, a flood of water he will not bring, but

va lv lwbm, "a flood of fire" he will bring, as it is said, Isa **66:16**, "for by fire will the Lord plead",

or judge: and hence they speak {y} of the wicked being judged with two sorts of, judgments, by water, and by fire: and, according to our apostle, the heavens and earth are kept and reserved to fire,

against the day of judgment, and perdition of ungodly men; the time when God will judge the world is fixed, though it is not known; and it is called a "day", because of the evidence and light in which things will appear, and the quick dispatch of business in it; and the "judgment" spoken of is the future judgment, and which is certain, and will be universal, righteous, and eternal, and when wicked and ungodly men will be punished with everlasting destruction: the bodies of those that will be alive at the general conflagration will be burnt in it, though not annihilated, and will be raised again, and both soul and body will be destroyed in hell.

{w} Antiqu. Jud. l. 1. c. 2. sect. 3. {x} T. Bab. Zebachim, fol. 116. 1. {y} Zohar in Gen. fol. 50. 4. & 51. 1.

[[@2 Peter 3:8]]Ver. [[8 >> Bible:2 Peter 3:8]]. ***But, beloved, be not ignorant of this one thing***,.... Here the apostle addresses the saints he writes unto, and for whom he had a tender affection and regard, and for whose welfare he was concerned, lest they should be stumbled at the length of time since the promise of the coming of Christ was given, and which these scoffers object; and therefore he would have them know, observe, and consider this one thing, which might be of great use to them to make their minds easy, and keep up their faith and expectation of the coming of Christ:

that one day [is], with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day; referring either to **Psalm 90:4**; or to a common saying among the Jews, founded on the same passage, Mynv Pla hb "qh

lv wmw, "the day of the holy blessed God is a thousand years" {z}; suggesting, that though between thirty and forty years had elapsed since the promise was given out that Christ would come again, and should even a thousand, or two thousand years more, run off, before the coming of Christ, yet this should be no objection to the accomplishment of the promise; for though such a number of years is very considerable among men, ye not "with God", as the Arabic and Ethiopic versions read, with whom a thousand years, and even eternity itself, is but as a day, Isa **43:13**. Unless this phrase should be thought to refer, as it is by some, to the day of judgment, and be expressive of the duration of that: it is certain that the Jews interpreted days of millenniums, and reckoned millenniums by days, and used this phrase in confirmation of it. Thus they say {a},

"in the time to come, which is in the last days, on the sixth day, which is the sixth millennium, when the Messiah comes, for the day of the holy blessed God is a thousand years."

And a little after,

""the Lord hath created a new thing in the earth, a woman shall compass a man". This is in the time of the Messiah which is in the sixth day."

And elsewhere {b},

"the sixth degree is called the sixth day, the day of the holy blessed God is a thousand years. And in that day the King Messiah shall come, and it shall be called the feast of gathering, for the holy blessed God will gather in it the captivity of his people."

So they call the sabbath, or seventh day, the seventh millennium, and interpret {c}

""the song for the sabbath day", **Psalm 92:1** title, for the seventh millennium, for one day of the holy blessed God is a thousand years."

To which agrees the tradition of Elias, which runs thus {d};

"it is the tradition of the house of Elias, that the world shall be six thousand years, two thousand years void (of the law), two thousand years the law, and two thousand years the days of the Messiah;"

for they suppose that the six days of the creation were expressive of the six thousand years in which the world will stand; and that the seventh day prefigures the last millennium, in which will be the day of judgment, and the world to come; for

"the six days of the creation (they say {e}) is a sign or intimation of these things: on the sixth day man was created; and on the seventh his work was finished; so the kings of the nations of the world (continue) five millenniums, answering to the five days, in which were created the fowls, and the creeping things of the waters, and other things; and the enjoyment of their kingdom is a little in the sixth, answerable to the creation of the beasts, and living creatures created at this time in the beginning of it; and the kingdom of the house of David is in the sixth millennium, answerable to the creation of man, who knew his Creator, and ruled over them all; and in the end of that millennium will be the day of judgment, answerable to man, who was judged in the end of it; and the seventh is the sabbath, and it is the beginning of the world to come."

{z} Bereshit Rabba, sect. 8. fol. 7. 3. Vajikra Rabba, sect. 19. fol. 160. 2. Bemidbar Rabba, sect. 14. fol. 216. 1. Shirhashirim Rabba, fol. 20. 1. Zohar in Exod. fol. 60. 1. Tzeror Hammor, fol. 157. 1. & Nishmet Chayim Orat. 1. c. 5. fol. 12. 1. {a} Zohar in Gen. fol. 13. 4. {b} Ib. fol. 16. 1. {c} Bartenora in Misn. Tamid, c. 7. sect. 4. {d} T. Bab. Sanhedrin, fol. 97. 1. & Avoda Zara, fol. 9. 1. {e} Ceseph Misna in Maimon. Hilchot Teshuva, c. 9. sect. 2.

[[@2 Peter 3:9]]Ver. [[9 >> Bible:2 Peter 3:9]]. ***The Lord is not slack concerning his promise***,.... The Syriac version reads in the plural, "his promises", any of his promises; though the words seem rather to regard the particular promise of Christ's coming, either to take vengeance on the Jewish nation, of which coming there was a promise made, and is often referred to by Christ, and his apostles; see **Mark 9:1**

Heb 10:37; and it now being upwards of thirty years since it was given out, some men began to charge God with slackness and dilatoriness; whereas the true reason of the delay of it was, that there might be time for the gathering in of his elect among them by his angels, or apostles and ministers, sent into the several parts of Judea, that so none of them might perish, but be brought to faith and repentance; and thus as the time of Christ's coming was prolonged more than was thought it would, so when the days of afflictions were come, they were shortened also for these elect's sake: or this promise regards the second coming of Christ, to judge the quick and dead at the last day, of which the former was a prelude, presage, and pledge; that Christ would come again, and appear a second time in person, was promised by himself, and often spoken of by his apostles; and many of the primitive Christians thought it would be very soon, and which might be occasioned by the hints that were given of his coming in the other sense. Now this being deferred longer than was expected, the scoffers or mockers take upon them to charge the Lord with slackness in the fulfilment of his promise:

as some men count slackness; as if he had either changed his purpose, or had prolonged it beyond the appointed time, or was unmindful of his promise, and would never fulfil it; whereas he is in one mind, and none can turn him, nor will he delay the fulfilment of his promise beyond the set time; he has fixed a day for his coming, in which he will judge the world in righteousness, and he will keep it: he is not dilatory,

but is longsuffering to us-ward: not to all the individuals of human nature, for the persons intended by us are manifestly distinguished from "some men" in the text, and from scoffers, mocking at the promise of Christ's coming, in the context, **2 Peter 3:3**; and are expressly called beloved, **2 Peter 3:1**; and God's longsuffering towards them is their salvation, **2 Peter 3:15**, nor is it true of all men, that God is not willing that any of them should perish, and that everyone of them should come to repentance, since many of them do perish in their sins, and do not come to repentance, which would not be the case, if his determining will was otherwise; besides, a society or company of men are designed, to which the apostle himself belonged, and of which he was a part; and who are described, in his epistles, as the elect of God, called out of darkness, into marvellous light, and having obtained like precious faith with the apostles; and must be understood either of God's elect among the Jews, for Peter was a Jew, and they were Jews he wrote to; and then the sense is, that the delay of Christ's coming is not owing to any slackness in him, but to his longsuffering to his elect among the Jews, being unwilling that any of that number among them should perish, but that all of them repent of their sins, and believe in him; and therefore he waits till their conversion is over, when a nation shall be born at once, and they that have pierced him look on him and mourn, and so all Israel shall be saved; or rather of the elect in general, whether among Jews or Gentiles, upon whom the Lord waits to be gracious, and whose longsuffering issues in their conversion and salvation. And upon account of these the Lord stays his coming till their number is complete in the effectual calling; and for their sakes he is longsuffering to others, and bears with a wicked world, with the idolatry, superstition, heresy, profaneness, and impiety, with which it abounds; but when the last man that belongs to that number is called, he will quickly descend in flames of fire, and burn the world, and the wicked in it, and take his chosen ones to himself. The Alexandrian copy reads, "for you", or your sakes; and so the Vulgate Latin, Syriac, and Ethiopic versions. A passage somewhat like to this is met with in a book of the Jews {f}, esteemed by them very ancient.

"God prolongs or defers his anger with men; and one day, which is a thousand years, is fixed, besides the seventy years he delivered to David the king.--And he does not judge man by his evil works which he continually does, for if so, the world would not stand; but the holy

blessed God defers his anger with the righteous, and the wicked, that they may return, by perfect repentance, and be established in this world, and in the world to come."

And it is an observation of theirs {g}, that when God is said to be "longsuffering", it is not written Pa Kra, but Mypa Kra, intimating, that he is longsuffering both to the righteous and the wicked; but then he bears with the latter, for the sake of the former: compare with this passage **Re 6:9**;

not willing that any should perish; not any of the us, whom he has loved with an everlasting love, whom he has chosen in his Son, and given to him, and for whom he has died, and who are brought to believe in him. These, though they were lost in Adam, did not perish; and though in their own apprehensions, when awakened and convinced, are ready to perish; and though their peace, joy, and comfort, may perish for a while, and they may fear a final and total perishing; yet they shall never perish as others do, or be punished with everlasting destruction: and that this is the will of God, appears by his choice of them to salvation; by the provisions of grace for them in an everlasting covenant; by the security of their persons in the hands of Christ; by sending his Son to obtain salvation for them, and his Spirit to apply it to them; and by his keeping them by his power, through faith, unto salvation.

But that all should come to repentance; not legal, but evangelical, without which all must perish; and which all God's elect stand in need of, as well as others, being equally sinners; and which they cannot come to of themselves, and therefore he not only calls them to it, in his word, and by his spirit and grace, but bestows it upon them; he has exalted Christ at his own right hand, to give it to them; and repentance is a grant from him, a free gift of his grace; and the Spirit is sent down into their hearts to work it in them, to take away the stony heart, and give an heart of flesh; without which, whatever time and space may be given, or means afforded, even the most awful judgments, the greatest mercies, and the most powerful ministry, will be of no avail.

{f} Zohar in Gen. fol. 83. 3. {g} T. Hieros, Taanioth, fol. 65. 2. T. Bab. Bava Kama, fol. 50. 2.

[[@2 Peter 3:10]]Ver. [[10 >> Bible:2 Peter 3:10]]. ***But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night***,.... That is, the Lord will come in that day, which he has fixed, according to his promise, than which nothing is more certain; and he will come as a thief in the night: he will come "in the night", which may be literally understood; for as his first coming was in the night; see **Lu 2:8**; so perhaps his second coming may be in the night season; or figuratively, when it will be a time of great darkness; when there will be little faith in the earth, and both the wise and foolish virgins will be slumbering and sleeping; when it will be a season of great security, as it was in the days of Noah, and at the time of the burning of Sodom and Gomorrah. The Vulgate Latin, Syriac, and Ethiopic versions, leave out the phrase, "in the night": and the Alexandrian copy uses the emphatic article, "in the night": and he will come, "as a thief", in the dark, indiscernibly; it will not be known what hour he will come; he will come suddenly, at an unawares, when he is not expected, to the great surprise of men, and especially of the scoffers; when the following awful things will be done:

in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise; not the third heaven, the seat of angels and glorified saints, and even of God himself; but the starry and airy heavens, which shall pass away, not as to their matter and substance, but as to some of their accidents and qualities, and the present use of them; and that with a great noise, like that of a violent storm, or tempest; though the Ethiopic version renders it, "without a noise"; and which is more

agreeable to his coming as a thief, which is not with noise, but in as still a manner as possible; and some learned men observe, that the word signifies swiftly, as well as with a noise; and, accordingly, the Syriac version renders it "suddenly"; and the Arabic version "presently", immediately; that is, as soon as Christ shall come, immediately, at once, from his face shall the earth and heavens flee away, as John in a vision saw, Re 20:11;

and the elements shall melt with fervent heat: not what are commonly called the four elements, earth, air, fire, and water, the first principles of all things: the ancient philosophers distinguished between principles and elements; principles, they say {h}, are neither generated, nor corrupted; τα τε στοιχεια κατα την εκपुरωσιν

φειρεςται, "but the elements will be corrupted, or destroyed by the conflagration"; which exactly agrees with what the apostle here says: by the elements seem to be meant the host of heaven, being distinguished from the heavens, as the works of the earth are distinguished from the earth in the next clause; and design the firmament, or expanse, with the sun, moon, and stars in it, which will be purged and purified by this liquefaction by fire;

the earth also will be purged and purified from everything that is noxious, hurtful, unnecessary, and disagreeable; though the matter and substance of it will continue:

and the works that are therein shall be burnt up; all the works of nature, wicked men, cattle, trees, &c. and all the works of men, cities, towns, houses, furniture, utensils, instruments of arts of all sorts, will be burnt by a material fire, breaking out of the earth and descending from heaven, for which the present heavens and earth are reserved: this general conflagration was not only known to the Jews, but to the Heathens, to the poets, and Platonist and Stoic philosophers, who frequently {i} speak of it in plain terms. Some are of opinion that these words refer to the destruction of Jerusalem; and so the passing away of the heavens may design the removal of their church state and ordinances, Heb 12:26, and the melting of the elements the ceasing of the ceremonial law, called the elements of the world, Ga 4:3, and the burning of the earth the destruction of the land of Judea, expressed in such a manner in Deuteronomy 29:23, and particularly of the temple, and the curious works in that, which were all burnt up and destroyed by fire, though Titus endeavoured to prevent it, but could not {k}: which sense may be included, inasmuch as there was a promise of Christ's coming to destroy the Jewish nation, and was expected; and which destruction was a prelude of the destruction of the world, and is sometimes expressed in such like language as that is; but then this must not take place, to the exclusion of the other sense: and whereas this sense makes the words to be taken partly in a figurative, and partly in a literal way; and seeing the heavens and the earth are in the context only literally taken, the former sense is to be preferred; and to which best agrees the following use to be made of these things.

{h} Diog. Laert. l. 7. in Vita Zenonis. {i} Vid. Diog. Laert. ib. & l. 9. in Vita Heraclit. & Hesych. de Philos. p. 36. Arrian. Epict. l. 3. c. 13. Phurut. de Natura Deorum, p. 39. Ovid. Metamorph. fab. 7. Min. Felix, p. 37. & Justin. Martyr. Apol. 2. p. 66. {k} Vid. Joseph. de Bello Jud. l. 3. c. 9, 10. & l. 7. c. 14, 16.

[[@2 Peter 3:11]]Ver. [[11 >> Bible:2 Peter 3:11]]. **[Seeing] then [that] all these things shall be dissolved**,.... By fire; the heaven with all its host, sun, moon, and stars, clouds, meteors, and fowls of the air; the earth, and all that is upon it, whether of nature, or art; and, since nothing is more certain than such a dissolution of all things,

what manner [of persons] ought ye to be in [all] holy conversation and godliness? not as the scoffers and profane sinners, who put away this evil day far from them, but as men, who have their loins girt, and their lights burning, waiting for their Lord's coming; being continually in the exercise of grace, and in the discharge of their religious duties, watching, praying, hearing, reading; living soberly, righteously, and godly; guarding against intemperance and worldly mindedness, and every worldly and hurtful lust.

[[@2 Peter 3:12]]Ver. [[12 >> Bible:2 Peter 3:12]]. *Looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God*,.... The same with the day of the Lord, **2 Peter 3:10**, and so the Vulgate Latin and Arabic versions here read; and it intends the day of Christ's second coming to judgment, and so is a proof of the deity of Christ; and is called "the day of God", in distinction from man's day, or human judgment, **1 Corinthians 4:3**, which is often fallacious; whereas the judgment of God is according to truth; and because in that day Christ will appear most clearly to be truly and properly God, by the manifest display of his omniscience, omnipotence, and other glorious perfections of his; and because it will be, as the day of God is, a thousand years; and also the day in which God will finish all his works, as on the seventh day the works of creation, on this the works of Providence; when all his purposes, promises, and threatenings, relating to the final state of all persons and things, will be fulfilled, and every work be brought to light, and into judgment, and everything will stand in a clear light; for the day will declare it, either respecting God, or men; and there will be a display, as of his grace and mercy, to his church and people; for it will be the day of his open espousals to them, and of the gladness of his heart; so of his wrath and anger towards the wicked: for this great and dreadful day of the Lord shall burn like an oven, and destroy the wicked, root and branch: and it will be the day of Christ's glorious appearing, and of his kingdom, in which he will reign, before his ancients, gloriously; and when it is ended, God, Father, Son and Spirit, will be all in all: now "the coming" of this day saints should be "looking for" by faith; believing that it certainly will come, since the patriarchs, prophets, Christ himself, the angels of heaven, and the apostles of the Lamb, have all declared and asserted the coming of this day; and they should look for it, and love it, as with the strongest affection for it, and most vehement desire of it, since they will then appear with Christ in glory; and they should look out, and keep looking out for it, as what will be quickly; and though it is not as soon as they desire and expect, yet should still look wistly for it, and with patience and cheerfulness wait for it: yea, they should be "hasting unto" it, or "hastening" it; for though the day is fixed for the coming of Christ, nor can it be altered, as his coming will not be longer, it cannot be sooner, yet it becomes the saints to pray earnestly for it, that it may be quickly, and for the accomplishment of all things that go before it, prepare for it, and lead unto it; such as the conversion of the Jews, and the bringing in of the fulness of the Gentiles; and by putting him in mind of, and pleading with him, his promises concerning these things, and giving him no rest till they are accomplished; there seems to be some reference to the prayers of the Jews for the Messiah's coming, which they desire may be hryhmb, "in haste"; which will show that they are in haste for the coming of this day; and all which things God will hasten, though it will be in his own time: and moreover, saints should be hasting to it by their readiness for it, having their loins girt, and their lights burning, and their lamps trimmed, and they waiting for their Lord's coming, and going forth in acts of faith and love, and in the duties of religion, to meet him, and not slumber and sleep:

wherein; in which day, as in **2 Peter 3:10**; or by which; by which coming of Christ, or of the day of God,

the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat; at whose coming and presence, and from whose face the heavens and earth shall flee away, just as the earth shook, and the heavens dropped, and Sinai itself moved, when God appeared upon it; see Re 20:11. This is a repetition of what is said in **2 Peter 3:10**, exciting attention to the exhortation given.

[[@2 Peter 3:13]]Ver. [[13 >> Bible:2 Peter 3:13]]. *Nevertheless we, according to his promise*,.... Or promises, as the Alexandrian copy, and the Vulgate Latin version; namely those in Isa 65:17;

look for new heavens and a new earth; not figuratively, the world to come in distinction from the Jewish world or state; a new church state, the Gospel dispensation, with new ordinances, as baptism and the Lord's supper, all legal ceremonies and ordinances being gone, and everything new; for these things had taken place already, and were not looked for as future: but these phrases are to be understood literally, as the heavens and the earth are in every passage in the context, **2 Peter 3:5**; and designs not new heavens and earth for substance, but for qualities; the heavens and elements being melted and dissolved, and so purged and purified by fire, and the earth and its works being burnt up with it, and so cleared of everything noxious, needless, and disagreeable, new heavens and a new earth will appear, refined and purged from everything which the curse brought thereon for man's sin: and such heavens and earth the saints look for by faith and hope, and earnest expectation, and with desire and pleasure; and therefore are not distressed, as they have no reason to be, with the burning of the present heavens and earth, as awful as these things will be; and they expect them not upon their own fancies and imaginations, or the vain conjectures and cunningly devised fables of men, but according to the promises of God recorded in the above passages, and in which they may be confirmed by the words of Christ, and by the vision of John, Re 20:1. The Alexandrian copy reads, "and his promises"; as if it respected other promises the saints looked for besides the new heavens and earth; namely, the resurrection of the dead, eternal life, the incorruptible inheritance, the ultimate glory and happiness:

wherein dwelleth righteousness; meaning not the heavenly felicity, called sometimes the crown of righteousness, and the hope of righteousness, to which righteousness gives a right, and where it will be perfect, for the apostle is not speaking of the ultimate glory of the saints; nor the righteousness of Christ, as dwelling in the saints, as if the sense was this, we in whom righteousness dwells, look for new heavens and a new earth; for though the righteousness of Christ is unto and upon them that believe, yet it is not in them; it is in Christ, and dwells in him, and not in them; it is not inherent in them, but imputed to them: by "righteousness" is meant righteous men; such as are so not in and of themselves, or by the deeds of the law, or by works of righteousness done by them, but who are made righteous by the obedience of Christ, and are righteousness itself in him; see Jer 33:16; now these, and these only, will be the inhabitants of the new heavens and the new earth; there will be no unrighteous persons there, as in the present world, which lies in wickedness, and is full of wicked men; and they will be stocked with inhabitants after this manner; all the elect will now be gathered in, and Christ, when he comes, will bring all his saints with him from heaven, and will raise their bodies, and reunite them to their souls; and those that are alive will be caught up to meet the Lord in the air, and will make up together the general assembly and church of the firstborn, whose names are written in heaven; and whereas, upon the coming of Christ, the present heavens and earth will be burnt or purified by fire, and so made new and fit for the spirits of just men made perfect, who being again embodied, will fill the face of them, and shall inherit

the earth, and reign with Christ on it for a thousand years, during which time there will not be a wicked man in them; for the wicked that will be alive at Christ's coming will be burnt with the earth, and the wicked dead shall not rise till the thousand years are ended, and who being raised, will, together with the devils, make the Gog and Magog army; wherefore none but righteous persons can look for these new heavens and earth, for to these only are they promised, and such only shall dwell in them; so the Targum on

Jer 23:23 paraphrases the words,

"I God have created the world from the beginning, saith the Lord, I God will "renew the world for the righteous":

and this will be, the Jews say, for the space of a thousand years;

"it is a tradition (they say {l}) of the house of Elias, that the righteous, whom the holy blessed God will raise from the dead shall not return to their dust, as is said, **Isa 4:3**, and it shall come to pass, &c. as the Holy One continues for ever, so they shall continue for ever; and if you should say those years (some editions read, "those thousand years", and so the gloss upon the place) in which the holy blessed God "renews the world": as it is said **Isa 2:11**, and the Lord alone; &c. what shall they do? the holy blessed God will make them wings as eagles, and they shall fly upon the face of the waters."

and this renovation of the heavens and the earth, they say, will be in the seventh millennium;

"in the seventh thousand year (they assert {m}) there will be found new heavens and a new earth,"

which agree with these words of Peter.

{l} T. Bab. Sanhedrin, fol. 92. 1, 2. Ed. Coch. p. 317. {m} Zohar in Gen. fol. 35. 3.

[[@2 Peter 3:14]]Ver. [[14 >> Bible:2 Peter 3:14]]. ***Wherefore, beloved, seeing ye look for these things***,.... For the burning of the heavens and the earth, for the coming of Christ, and for the new heavens and new earth,

be diligent that ye may be found of him; Christ, or autw, "in him", as in **Php 3:9**; for such as are in Christ will have an undoubted right to the new heavens and the new earth, and will certainly dwell in them, because they will be found not in their own righteousness, but in the righteousness of Christ: or "before him", as the Arabic version renders it; before him the Judge of all, at whose tribunal they must stand; but being clothed with his righteousness, and so without spot and blemish, they will not be ashamed before him: or "by him"; Christ first finds his in redemption, and next in the effectual calling, and last of all at his coming, when all the elect will be looked up, gathered in, and presented first to himself, and then to his Father, complete and perfect, not one wanting: and thus to be found in him, and before him, and by him, should be the concern of all that look for the glorious things here spoken of, and particularly that they be found in the following situation and circumstances: in peace; interested in that peace Christ has made by the blood of his cross; for such as are reconciled to God by his death, shall be saved by his life, and live with him in the new heavens and new earth, and for ever in the ultimate glory; and in enjoying that peace of conscience which he himself gives, and which flows from his blood, righteousness, and atonement; so that the day

of his coming by death, or at judgment, will not be terrifying to them, but they will look for these things with great delight and satisfaction: or

in peace one with another; for peace makers and keepers are called the children of God, and so heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; or in happiness and glory, expressed by peace, which is the end of the righteous man, which he enters into at death, and will rest in to all eternity:

without spot and blemish; no man is so in himself, sanctification is imperfect, and many are the slips and falls of the saints, though their desire is to be harmless and inoffensive, and to give no just occasion for blame or scandal; but the saints are so in Christ Jesus, being washed in his blood, and clothed with his righteousness, and will be found so by him when he comes again, when he will present them to himself a glorious church, without spot or wrinkle, and also before the presence of his Father's glory, as faultless, with exceeding joy; and so will they be fit and meet to be the inhabitants of the new heavens and new earth, and reign with him therein, and be with him to all eternity.

[[@2 Peter 3:15]]Ver. [[15 >> Bible:2 Peter 3:15]]. *And account [that] the longsuffering of our Lord*,.... Not his longsuffering towards the wicked, and his forbearance with them, for that is not the means of, nor the way to, nor does it issue in, their salvation, but in their sorer punishment and greater damnation, see **Romans 2:4**; but towards the elect, as in **2 Peter 3:9**; whom he bears much and long with before conversion, while in their sins, and in a state of unregeneracy, and waits to be gracious to them, as he is in their calling, and to make known and apply his great salvation to them; and as with particular persons, so with the whole body of them, till they are all gathered in, and even with the world for their sakes; and particularly the Lord's longsuffering here intends the deferring of his coming, or his seeming slackness in the performance of his promise: the reason of which is,

salvation: the salvation of all his chosen ones, and in that it issues; he waits, he stays, that none of them might perish, but that they might be all brought to faith and repentance, and so be saved: wherefore the apostle would have the saints consider it in this light, and not imagine and conclude, with the scoffing infidels, that he is slack and dilatory, and will not come, but that his view in it is the salvation of all his people, which by this means is brought about: in confirmation of which, and other things he had delivered, he produces the testimony of the Apostle Paul;

even as our beloved brother Paul also; he calls him a "brother", both on account of his being a believer in Christ, one that belonged to the same family with him, and was of the household of faith, born of the same Father, and related to the same Redeemer, the firstborn among many brethren, and likewise on account of his being a fellow apostle; for though he was not one of the twelve apostles, but his call and mission were later than theirs, yet Peter does not disdain to put him among them, and upon an equal foot with them, nor was he a whit behind the chief of them: he styles him a "beloved" brother; expressing his affection for him, which the relation between them called for, and which he bore to him, notwithstanding his public opposition to him, and sharp reproof of him, **Ga 2:11**, and perhaps loved him the more for it; see **Psalms 141:5**; and he makes mention of him, and that under these characters, partly to show their agreement and consent in doctrine; and partly to recommend him to the Jews, to whom he writes, who had, upon report of his doctrine and ministry, entertained an ill, at least a mean opinion, of him; as also to set us an example to speak well of one another, both as ministers and private believers:

according to the wisdom given unto him, hath written unto you; meaning not all his epistles, as being written for the general good of all the saints, as well as for those particular churches or men to whom they were sent; for what Peter speaks of is what was particularly written to them, and is distinguished in **2 Peter 3:16** from the rest of Paul's epistles; nor does he intend the epistle of Paul to the Romans, for the longsuffering of God spoken of in that, as in **Romans 2:4**, is his longsuffering to the wicked, which issues in their destruction, and not his longsuffering to his elect, which is salvation, as here; but he seems manifestly to have in view the epistle to the Hebrews, for Peter wrote both his first and second epistles to Jews; wherefore, since none of Paul's epistles but that were written particularly to them, it should seem that that is designed, and serves to confirm his being the author of it; in which he writes to the Hebrews concerning the coming of Christ, and of the deferring of it a little while, and of the need they had of patience to wait for it, **Heb 10:36**; and in it also are some things difficult to be understood concerning Melchizedek, the old and new covenant, the removing of the Aaronic priesthood, and the abrogation of the whole ceremonial law, &c. things not easily received by that nation; and the whole is written with great wisdom, respecting the person and office of Christ, the nature of his priesthood, and the glory of the Gospel dispensation; and in a most admirable manner is the whole Mosaic economy laid open and explained: he was indeed a wise master builder, and whatever he wrote was "according to wisdom"; not fleshly wisdom, the wisdom of this world, nor with enticing words of men's wisdom, but according to the divine wisdom, under the influence of the spirit of wisdom and revelation; for he had not this of himself naturally, nor did he learn it at Gamaliel's feet, but it was what was "given to him"; it came from above, from God, who gives it liberally; and as he himself always owned it to be a free grace gift of God bestowed on him, and that all his light and knowledge were by the revelation of Christ, so Peter ascribes it to the same, that God might have all the glory, and all boasting in man be stopped.

[[@2 Peter 3:16]]Ver. [[16 >> Bible:2 Peter 3:16]]. *As also in all [his] epistles*,.... From whence it appears, that the Apostle Paul had, by this time, wrote several of his epistles, if not all of them; and they were all written according to the same wisdom, and under the influence of the same spirit, as his epistle to the Hebrews:

speaking in them of those things; of the same things, Peter had been speaking of, of the coming of Christ, as that he should appear a second time to them that look for him, and would come as a thief in the night, and that the fashion, scheme, and form of this world should pass away, and that saints should look and wait for his coming, and love it: something of this kind is said in all his epistles; see **Heb 9:28**; and also of mockers, scoffers, seducers, and wicked men that would arise in the last days; see **1 Timothy 4:1**,

in which are some things hard to be understood. The phrase, "in which", refers either to the epistles, or the things spoken in them. The Alexandrian manuscript, and three of Robert Stephens's copies, read εν αις, "in which" epistles, but the generality of copies read

εν οις, "in", or "among which things", spoken of in them, concerning the subject here treated of, the coming of Christ; as the time of Christ's coming, which is sometimes represented by the apostle, as if it would be while he was living; and the manner of his coming in person with all his saints, and his mighty angels, with a shout, the voice of the archangel, and trumpet of God, things not easily understood; and the destruction of antichrist at his coming, which will be with the breath of his mouth, and the brightness of his coming; as also the resurrection of the dead, of the saints that will rise first, and that with spiritual bodies; and likewise the

change of the living saints, and the rapture both of living and raised saints together, in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air; and the standing of them before the judgment seat of Christ, and the account that everyone must give to him, **1Th 4:15**

1 Corinthians 15:44;

which they that are unlearned; untaught of God, who have never learned of the Father, nor have learned Christ, nor have that anointing which teacheth all things; who, though they may have been in the schools of men, were never in the school of Christ; and though they have been ever learning, yet will never come to the knowledge of the truth; for men may have a large share of human literature, and yet be unlearned men in the sense of the apostle; and very often it is, that such wrest and pervert the Scriptures to the ruin of themselves, and others:

and unstable; unsettled in their principles, who are like children tossed to and fro with every wind of doctrine; the root of the matter is not in them; nor are they rooted and built up in Christ, and so are not established in the faith; they are not upon the foundation Christ, nor do they build upon, and abide by the sure word of God, or form their notions according to it, but according to their own carnal reasonings, and fleshly lusts; and so

wrest the word of God, distort it from its true sense and meaning, and make it speak that which it never designed; dealing with it as innocent persons are sometimes used, put upon a rack, and tortured, and so forced to speak what is contrary to their knowledge and consciences; and so were the words of the Apostle Paul wrested by ill designing men, as about the doctrines of grace and works, so concerning the coming of Christ; see **Romans 3:8**;

as [they do] also the other Scriptures; the writings of Moses, and the prophets of the Old Testament, the Gospels, the Acts of the Apostles, and the other epistles of the apostles of the New Testament: and which is eventually

unto their own destruction; for by so doing they either add unto, or detract from the Scriptures, and so bring the curse of God upon them; and they give into doctrines of devils, and into heresies, which are damnable, and bring upon themselves swift destruction, which lingers not, and slumbers not. Now from hence it does not follow, that the Scriptures are not to be read by the common people; for not all the parts of Scripture, and all things in it, are hard to be understood, there are many things very plain and easy, even everything respecting eternal salvation; there is milk for babes, as well as meat for strong men: besides, not the Scriptures in general, but Paul's epistles only, are here spoken of, and not all of them, or anyone whole epistle among them, only some things in them, and these not impossible, only difficult to be understood; and which is no reason why they should be laid aside, but rather why they should be read with greater application and diligence, and be followed with fervent prayer, and frequent meditation; and though unlearned and unstable men may wrest them to their perdition, those that are taught of God, though otherwise illiterate, may read them to great profit and advantage.

[[@2 Peter 3:17]]Ver. [[17 >> Bible:2 Peter 3:17]]. *Ye therefore, beloved, seeing ye know [these things] before*,.... As that there will be such mockers and scoffers in the last days, and such unlearned and unstable men that will deprave the Scriptures, and wrest them in such a miserable manner:

beware lest ye also, being led away with the error of the wicked; from the simplicity of the Gospel, along with such wicked men, that wax worse and worse, deceivers and being

deceived, by giving into any of their errors which respect the grace of God, or the person and offices of Christ, or particularly his second coming; be upon the watch and guard against them, having previous notice of them, for they lie in wait to deceive: lest ye

fall from your own steadfastness; which was proper to them, and which, by the grace of God, they had, and retained, both in the faith of Christ and doctrine of the Gospel; for though the saints can never finally and totally fall into sin, or from the truth, yet they may fall from their steadfastness, both as to the exercise of the grace of faith, and as to their profession of the doctrine of faith; and to be fluctuating, hesitating, and doubting in either respect, must be very uncomfortable and dishonourable.

[[@2 Peter 3:18]]Ver. [[18 >> Bible:2 Peter 3:18]]. *But grow in grace*,.... In the gifts of grace, which, under a divine blessing, may be increased by using them: gifts neglected decrease, but stirred up and used, are improved and increase. And though men are to be thankful for their gifts, and be contented with them, yet they may lawfully desire more, and in the use of means seek an increase of them, which may be a means of preserving themselves, and others, from the error of the wicked. Moreover, by "grace" may be meant internal grace. The work of grace is gradual; it is like a grain of mustard seed, or like seed cast into the earth, which springs up, it is not known how, first the blade, then the ear, then the full corn in the ear; saints are first babes, and from children they grow to young men, and from young men to fathers. There is such a thing as growth in grace, in this sense; every grace, as to its act and exercise, is capable of growing and increasing; faith may grow exceedingly, hope abound, love increase, and patience have its perfect work, and saints may grow more humble, holy, and self-denying: this is indeed God's work, to cause them to grow, and it is owing to his grace; yet saint, should show a concern for this, and make use of means which God owns and blesses for this purpose, such as prayer, attending on the word, and looking over the promises of God, for an increase of faith; recollecting past experiences, and looking to the death and resurrection of Christ for the encouragement of hope, and to the love of God and Christ, for the stirring up of love to both, and to the saints; considering the sufferings of Christ, the desert of sin, and the glories of another world, to promote patience and self-denial, and the pattern of Christ, to excite to humility; though "grace" may also intend the Gospel, the knowledge of which is imperfect, and may be increased in the use of means, and which is a special preservative against error, a growth in which saints should be concerned for:

and [in] the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ; of his person, office, and grace, than which nothing is more valuable, and is to be preferred to everything; it is the principal thing in grace, and is the beginning and pledge of eternal life, and will issue in it; for an increase of which, and a growth in it, the word and ordinances are designed; and nothing can be a greater security against error than an experimental growing knowledge of Christ. The Syriac version adds, "and of God the Father"; and so some copies read:

to him [be] glory, both now, and for ever; or "to the day of eternity"; that is, to Christ, who is truly God, or otherwise such a doxology would not belong to him, be ascribed the glory of deity, of all divine perfections; the glory of all his offices and work as Mediator; the glory of man's salvation; and the glory of all that grace, and the growth of it, together with the knowledge of himself, which saints have from him; and that both in this world, and that which is to come.

Amen; so be it.