

# THE ARGUMENT OF BOTH THE EPISTLES OF S. PETER, THE FIRST, AND THE SECOND.

Of S. Peter we read at large both in the Ghospels, and in the Actes of the Apostles: and namely, that Christ designed him, and also made him his Vicar (as S. Matthew for that cause in the Catalogue of the Apostles calleth him *Primus, the first*, and al antiquitie, *Princeps Apostolorum, the Prince of the Apostles*) and that he accordingly executed that office after Christes departure, planting the Church first among the Iewes in Hierusalem and in al that country and coasts about, as Christ also himself before had preached to the Iewes alone.

But preaching at length to the Gentils also, according to Christes commision (*Mat. 28. v. 19.*) and being now come to Rome, the head citie of the Gentils, from thence he writeth this Epistle to his Christian Iewes, hauing care of them in his absence, no lesse then when he was present: and not to the Iewes that were at home (belike because they had S. Iames, or his Successour S. Simon Cleophæ, resident with them) but to them that were dispersed in Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, and Bythnia.

And that he writeth it from Rome, himself signifieth saying: *The Church that is in Babylon saluteth you.*  
<sup>a)</sup>Where by Babylon he meaneth Rome, as al antiquitie doth interpret him: not that he so calleth the Church of Rome, but the Heathen state of the Romane Empire, which then, and 300. yeares after, vnto the conuersion of Constantinus the Emperour, did persecute the elect Church of Rome, in so-much that the first 33. Bishops thereof vnto S. Siluester, were al Martyrs.

For the matter whereof he writeth, himself doth signifie it in these words: *This loe the second Epistle I write to you, my Dearest, in which (Epistles) I stirre*

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<sup>a</sup> See the *Annotation 1. Pet. 5. v. 13.*

*vp by admonition, your sincere mind that you may be mindful of those words &c.* So he faith there of both together. And againe of the first to the same purpose, in *1. Pet. 5.* another place: *I haue briefly written, beseeching and testifying that this is the true grace of God, wherein you stand.* For there were at that time certaine Seducers (as <sup>a</sup>S. Auguft. also hath told vs) who went about to teach *Only faith*, as though good workes were not necessarie, nor meritorious. There were also great persecutions, to compel them with terrour to denie Christ & al his religion. He therefore exhorteth them accordingly, neither for persecution, neither by seduction to forsake it: though in the first, his exhortation is more principally against persecution: and in the second more principally against seduction. The first Epistle is noted to be very like to S. Pauls epistle to the Ephesians, in words also, and so thicke of Scriptures, as though he spake nothing els.

The time when the first was written, is vncertaine: the second was written a litle before his death, as is gathered by his words in the same. *c. 1. v. 14.*

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<sup>a</sup> See the *Annotation vpon S. Iames epistle c. 2. v. 21.*