

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 Apoftles: and namely, that Chrifft defigned him, and alfo made him his Vicar (as S. Matthew
c. 10. v. 2. for that caufe in the Catalogue of the Apoftles calleth him *Primus, the firft*, and al antiquitie, *Princeps Apoftolorum, the Prince of the Apoftles*) and that he accordingly executed that office after Chriftes departure, planting the Church firft among the Iewes in Hierufalem and in al that country and coasts about, as Chrifft alfo himfelf before had preached to the Iewes alone.

But preaching at length to the Gentils alfo, according to Chriftes commiffion (*Mat. 28. v. 19.*) and being now come to Rome, the head citie of the Gentils, from thence he writeth this Epiftle to his Chrifitian Iewes, hauing care of them in his abfence, no leffe then when he was prefent: and not to the Iewes that were at home (belike becaufe they had S. Iames, or his Succeffour S. Simon Cleophæ, refident with them) but to them that were difperfed in Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, and Bythnia.
1. Pet. 1.

And that he writeth it from Rome, himfelf fignifieth faying: *The Church that is in Babylon faluteth you.*
1. Pet. 5. ^a)Where by Babylon he meaneth Rome, as al antiquitie doth interpret him: not that he fo calleth the Church of Rome, but the Heathen ftate of the Romane Empire, which then, and 300. yeares after, vnto the conuerfion of Conftantinus the Emperour, did perfecute the elect Church of Rome, in fo-much that the firft 33. Bishops thereof vnto S. Siluefter, were al Martyrs.

For the matter whereof he writeth, himfelf doth fignifie it in thefe words: *This loe the fecond Epiftle I write to you, my Deareft, in which (Epiftles) I ftirre vp by admonition, your fincere mind that you may be mindful of thofe words &c.* So he faith there of both together. And againe of the firft to the fame purpofe, in
1. Pet. 5. another place: *I haue breefly written, befeeching and*

^a See the *Annotation 1. Pet. 5. v. 13.*

testifying that this is the true grace of God, wherein you stand. For there were at that time certaine Seducers (as ^aS. Auguft. also hath told vs) who went about to teach *Only faith*, as though good workes were not neceffarie, nor meritorious. There were also great perfecutions, to compel them with terrour to denie Chrifit & al his religion. He therefore exhorteth them accordingly, neither for perfecution, neither by seduction to forfake it: though in the first, his exhortation is more principally againft perfecution: and in the second more principally againft 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.*

^a See the *Annotation vpon S. Iames epistle c. 2. v. 21.*