

THE SECOND EPISTLE OF THE APOSTLE PETER.

The Object of the Divine Promises.

- 1 **S**IMON PETER, a servant and apostle of Jesus Christ, to those equally honoured with us to share a faith in righteousness from our God and Saviour Jesus Christ;
- 2 May blessing and peace be abundant to you, with knowledge of God, and of Jesus our Lord.
- 3 Seeing that His Divine power has presented to us everything for the purpose of life and piety, through the knowledge of Him who called us to
- 4 His own majesty and virtue; through which He has endowed us with the greatest and most honourable promises; so that through these you might become participators of a Divine nature, having escaped from that corruption which exists in the world
- 5 owing to depraved desire. Therefore, for this reason, use every effort, having enlisted, to drill yourselves by the faith in virtue, and by the virtue in intelligence; and by the intelligence in self-restraint; and by the self-restraint in obedience; and by the
- 7 obedience in piety; and by the piety in brotherly kindness; and by the brotherly kindness in love. For if you possess and progress in these, you will neither be dilatory nor ineffective when reviewed by our Lord Jesus
- 9 Christ. For whoever is not disciplined in these, is blind, short-sighted, choosing to forget the pruning he has received from his old errors.
- 10 Consequently, brothers, earnestly work to make your calling and enrolment sure: for having done these things, you will never at any time
- 11 falter; for thus you will be fully equipped for your march into the eternal Kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

Reiterated Admonitions.

- 12 I will in consequence be careful at all times to remind you about these things, although you are instructed and stand firm in the revealed truth.
- 13 Yet I consider it right, as long as I am in this little tent, to arouse you

into a remembrance; knowing that 14 the striking of my tent is near, as our Lord Jesus Christ disclosed to me. Therefore, I will also endeavour to 15 have each one of you, after my departure, to be made to remember these matters.

Because we were not following 16 cunningly-devised fables when we informed you of the power and revelation of our Lord Jesus Christ; but, on the contrary, we were eye-witnesses of His grandeur. For having received 17 from God His Father honour and splendour, a Voice was sent to Him from the Supreme Majesty, declaring, "This is My Son, My Beloved, in Whom I have delighted!" And we 18 heard this Voice coming from heaven when we were with Him upon the holy hill. And we possess in this 19 prophetic message a firm support, to which you will do well to pay attention, as to a lamp shining in a gloomy place, until the day dawns, and the Morning Star arises in your hearts; recognising, in the first place, that 20 no prophecy of Scripture is of a single meaning. For prophecy was 21 never a result of human design; on the contrary, men spoke under the influence of a Holy Spirit sent from God.

The Certain Doom of the Wicked.

But false prophets also came among 2 the people, just as there will be false teachers among yourselves, who will shuffle in destructive errors, even denying the Master who bought them, bringing speedy destruction upon themselves. Many also will follow 2 them in their debaucheries, on account of whom the Way of the truth will be defamed; and in greed they 3 will trade upon you with a fine flow of delusive reasons. Their conviction, long recorded, will not be deferred; and their destruction will not be postponed. For if God did not 4 spare sinning angels, but remitted them to chains of blackness of darkness, to await judgment; and did not 5

spare the ancient world—but pre-
 served Noah, the eighth man, a
 herald of righteousness—crushing a
 world of the wicked by a downrush
 6 from above; and overwhelmed the
 cities of Sodom and Gomorrah by
 ashes of fire, leaving them as a warn-
 7 ing to future iniquity; and rescued
 righteous Lot, who was agonized by
 the conduct of those men of un-
 8 bridled profligacy—for that righteous
 man, by seeing and hearing when
 living among them, had his blameless
 soul tortured from day to day by
 9 reason of their lawless doings: but
 the Lord knows how to rescue the
 pious from trial; but He keeps the
 wicked for a day of judicial punish-
 10 ment, but especially those who seek
 after sensuality, in a rage for pollution
 despising restraint. Audacious, self-
 willed, they are not even afraid to
 11 libel glories; whereas angels, who
 excel in might and power, do not
 bring a railing indictment against
 12 them. But these, like unreasoning
 animals produced naturally for cap-
 ture and destruction, abusing what
 they do not understand, will also be
 destroyed in their own corruptions,
 13 receiving the due reward of their
 profligacy. These delight to revel in
 the luxury which lasts but a day—
 spots and blemishes, luxuriating in
 their deceits, while they share your
 14 hospitality. They have eyes full of
 adultery, and unrestrained sin; allur-
 ing unsteady souls, they have a heart
 practised in greed; they are wander-
 ing children of a curse; having left
 15 the straight path, following in the
 way of Balaam, the son of Bosor, who
 16 loved the wages of wickedness: but
 he was convicted by his own mis-
 deeds; a speechless animal speaking
 with a human voice, restrained the
 17 madness of the prophet. These are
 waterless wells; tempest-tossed fogs;
 for whom the gloom of darkness is
 18 reserved. For they speak inflated
 with folly, seducing into profligate
 desires—their former error—those
 who were almost escaping from
 19 them; promising them liberty,
 while they are themselves the slaves
 of corruption. For by whoever a
 man is overpowered, he must slave to
 20 him. If, however, having escaped
 from the defilements of the world
 through the comprehension of the
 Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, they
 are again recaptured, then their last

condition has become worse than the
 first. For it would have been better 21
 for them never to have comprehended
 the path of righteousness, than,
 having known it, to turn back from
 the holy command delivered to them.
 It has come to this, as the true 22
 proverb describes them:

A DOG RETURNS TO HIS OWN VOMIT;¹

and a washed pig to its wallowing in the mire.

The Irreversible Word of God.

Now then, friends, I have written 3
 this second letter to you, in which I
 stir you up to remember with clear
 intelligence to be mindful of the state- 2
 ments previously uttered by the holy
 prophets, and of your apostles, of the
 commands of the Lord and Saviour.
 You should first recognise this, that 3
 during the latter times deceivers will
 come with deception, gratifying their
 own passions, and asking, "Where is 4
 the promise of His appearing? for
 since the forefathers went to sleep,
 everything continues the same from
 the beginning of the creation." For 5
 they willingly suffer to be hid from
 them this reason, that by the inten-
 tion of God the skies existed from of
 old, and the earth with water above
 and water below, arranged for the
 purpose of God, by means of which 6
 the then existing world perished, by
 the water having rushed down. But 7
 the present earth and skies are
 treasured up by His intention, re-
 served for fire at a period of judgment
 and destruction of wicked men.

But do not allow this one fact to 8
 escape you, friends, that with the
 Lord a single day is as a thousand
 years, and a thousand years as a
 single day. The Lord does not delay 9
 His promise, as some regard delay-
 ing; but extends His patience to-
 wards you, desiring that none should
 be lost, but that all should come to a
 change of mind. But the day of the 10
 Lord will approach like a thief, when
 the skies will pass away with a
 crash, and their constituents will be
 dissolved by heat; while the earth
 and what is upon it will be re-
 organized.² All having to be thus 11
 dissolved, what ought you to be like
 in regard to pure conduct and piety,

¹ Prov. xxvi. 11.

² Some of the old MSS. read, "will be made-known," "burnt up," "laid bare."

12 expecting and hastening on the appearance of the Day of God!—during which the burning skies will be dissolved, and their constituents melted
 13 by heat; yet according to His promise, we look for new skies and a new earth, in which righteousness will dwell.
 14 Consequently, friends, seeing that you are expecting these, be in earnest to be found in peace by Him, spotless
 15 and blameless; and you will secure the enduring salvation from our Lord. As also our dear brother Paul, according to the wisdom granted to him,
 16 has written to you; as, indeed, in

many letters he has spoken about these subjects—in which are some things difficult to understand, which the ignorant and the fickle distort, as also they do the other scriptures to their own destruction.

You therefore, friends, knowing 17 this beforehand, be on your guard; lest, being misled by the error of the lawless, you fall away from your own standard. But progress in goodness 18 and knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. With Him is the rectification both now and in eternal life. Amen.

THE SECOND EPISTLE OF THE APOSTLE JOHN.¹

1 **T**HE old man to the Chosen Lady and her children, whom I love in truth—and not myself alone, but also all those who recognise the truth—for the sake of the truth which dwells in us, and will exist with us in eternity: Where will be with us blessing, mercy, peace with God the Father, and with Jesus Christ the Son of the Father, in truth and love.
 4 I was greatly delighted at having found some of your children walking in truth, as fully as we received instruction from the Father. And now
 5 I beg of you, Princess, not as if writing a new command to you, but that which we possessed from the beginning—that we should love one another.
 6 And this is love—that we should conduct ourselves according to His commands. That is the command which you learnt from the first, so
 7 that you should walk by it. Because many misleaders have gone out into

the world, some not acknowledging Jesus Christ to have come bodily. This is the misleader and the antagonist of Christ.

Take care of yourselves, so that you 8 may not lose what we are working out, but may receive a perfect reward. Whoever assumes the lead among 9 you, and continues not in the teaching of the Messiah, possesses not God. Whoever continues in that teaching, he possesses both the Father and the Son. If any one comes to you, and 10 does not bring this doctrine, neither admit him to your house nor wish him success; for whoever wishes him 11 success, himself participates in his wicked doings.

Having a great deal to communicate 12 to you, I have decided to do so not by paper and ink; but I hope to come to you, and speak by word of mouth, so that your pleasure may be complete.

The children of your chosen sister 13 sends you regards.

¹ NOTE.—For the First Epistle of St. John, see the end of his Gospel, where I have restored it to its proper place, it being really the Concluding Address of that Evangelist to his readers.—F. F.