

S E R M O N

On II CORINTH. V. 6.

OCCASIONED BY THE DEATH

O F

JOHN OGILVIE, D. D.

ASSISTANT MINISTER OF TRINITY CHURCH, NEW-YORK.

By CHARLES INGLIS, A. M.

Cum ergo Christum videre, gaudere est,---quæ cæcitas est amare
Pressuras & lachrymas mundi?----Considerandum est---et identidem
cogitandum, renunciaffe nos mundo; et tanquam hospites et peregrinos
isthic interim degere. Amplectamur diem, qui assignat singulos
domicilio suo; qui nos istinc ereptos, et laqueis secularibus exsolutos
paradiso restituit, et regno cœlesti,

Cyprianus De Mortalitate.

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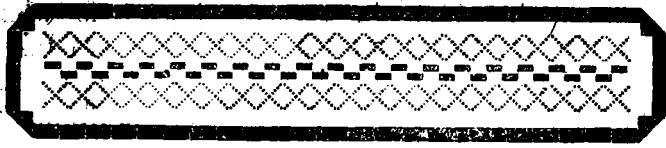
M,DCC,LXXIV.

me reminds in complying with its Calls.—
 May the Truths here delivered be attend
 with the desired Effect to each Reader; a
 may the Virtues of this excellent Clergyman
 a few only of which are here delineated,
 an Incentive to others to tread in his Ste
 and imitate his Example.

NEW-YORK,
 Decemb. 10, 1774.

E R R A T A.

PAGE 6, Lines 26, 27, 28---for---and this partly with Design
 counteract the insidious Endeavours of some false Teachers,
 endeavourd, to alienate,---read---and this partly to counteract
 insidious Design of some false Teachers, who endeavourd to alienat
 PAGE 11, Line 26, for flumbering, read flumbering.



II CORINTH. V. 6.

Therefore we are always confident; knowing that whilst we are at Home in the Body, we are absent from the Lord.



IN the World ye shall have Tribulation"---was one of the last Declarations of our blessed Saviour to his Apostles. He foresaw the Trials that awaited them---that neither the Innocence of Life which distinguished them, nor the Purity and salutary Tendency of the Doctrines they taught, could defend them from Obloquy and Persecution. Of this he warned them, that they might be prepared for those afflicting Events. He assured them that the World would "hate and persecute them---" yea, the Time would come that whosoever killed "them would think he did God Service."

THESE Predictions were all literally verified. The Apostles and other primitive Christians suffered whatever could be inflicted by unbounded Malice and Virulence. They were loaded with opprobrious Calumnies; the sanguinary Decrees of the abandoned Jews and idolatrous Heathens were executed against them with the most savage and unrelenting Cruelty, as the *Acts of the Apostles* and other ecclesiastical Records amply testify. To be a Christian was then the same as to be an Object

of implacable Hatred; accordingly, those who embraced the Religion of Jesus, prepared to take up the Cross---to resign all earthly Prospects and Enjoyments---even Life itself, for the Testimony of their divine Master.

UNDER these oppressive Circumstances, Christianity must have been totally overwhelmed, had not the Hand of God been stretched out to support it; not only by the Miracles which he enabled the Apostles and other Believers to work daily, but also by the extraordinary Effusions of his Spirit which were poured out on the meek Followers of the Redeemer. During three tedious Centuries it struggled against all the Opposition it could receive from the united Efforts of the Powers of this World, leagued with those of Darkness, and combined to crush it. Against these it only opposed the Patience, Sufferings, and unblemished Conduct of its Professors: Nor can any Thing be a more irrefragable Proof of its divine Original, than that it surmounted those Difficulties---rose triumphant over them, till in the Beginning of the fourth Century, it ascended the imperial Throne of Rome†.

ST. PAUL in this Epistle pathetically represents the Sufferings to which Christians were exposed, especially the Preachers of the Gospel; and this partly with Design to counteract the insidious Endeavours of some false Teachers, who endeavoured to alienate the Corinthians from him, and the Truths of the Gospel. He also mentions the Support and divine Aid with which those Sufferings were tempered. “ We are troubled on every Side, “ says he, but not distressed; we are perplexed, “ but

† CONSTANTINE the *Great* began to reign Ann. Dom. 306.

“ but not in Despair ; persecuted, but not forsaken ; cast down, but not destroyed ; always bearing about in the Body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the Life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our Body †.”

HE then proceeds to lay before the Corinthians the great Advantages arising from Afflictions, to animate them in their Christian Course, and reconcile them to those Pressures. “ We faint not, says he ; but tho’ our outward Man perish, yet the inward Man is renewed Day by Day. For our light Affliction, which is but for a Moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal Weight of Glory.*”

THE greatest Sufferings here will soon have an End. Compared to Eternity, their Duration is but as a Moment. A State of endless Glory succeeds, which will more than compensate for them. This bright Prospect beyond the Precincts of Mortality outweighs all the Christian’s Trials, however severe. A Ray of cheering Light and Hope is hence darted on him, which dispels his Gloom, raises him from Despondency, and invigorates his Resolution. With this Reflection he may sit down, not only resigned, but even joyful under the keenest Afflictions.

In the Chapter from which my Text is taken, the Apostle pursues the same Point, tho’ placed in a different View. He tells the Corinthians, that supposing even the worst---suppose his Persecutors were carried so far by their malignant Rage as to put the Christian to Death ; he would only change

an

† II Corinth. iv. 8---10.

* V. 16, 17.

an earthly for an heavenly Habitation. “ For we
 “ know that if our earthly House of this Taber-
 “ nacle were dissolved, we have a Building of God,
 “ an House not made with Hands, eternal in the
 “ Heavens. For in this we groan earnestly, de-
 “ siring to be cloathed upon with our House
 “ which is from Heaven†.”

OUR Saviour informed his Apostles, that in his Father's House were many Mansions to receive them, and all his Followers* ; St. Paul had told the Corinthians in a former Epistle that the Souls of the Faithful would finally be clothed with spiritual and immortal Bodies || : To both these he seems to allude in these Words, and thence deduces an Argument of Consolation. Our Bodies are frail, and continually verging to decay---they are transient, like occasional, temporary Tabernacles, not permanent Abodes. Christians are burdened, whilst in them, with various Calamities ; they groan under this oppressive Weight, earnestly desiring and fighting for those everlasting Habitations prepared for them in Heaven, where all their Evils will be removed. Therefore Death need not be dreaded by the Christian, since it would only dissolve this
 fleeting

† Chap. v. 1, 2. There is some Obscurity in the Connection of the second, third and fourth Verses, chiefly owing to the figurative Terms used by the Apostle. Several eminent Commentators imagine he hints at an Opinion then prevalent among Christians, that our Saviour would come to Judgment before that Generation passed away, by which the Faithful, who were then alive, would be exempted from dying, and only *changed*, to prepare them for Glory ; and it is supposed St. Paul here wishes, if it were possible, and the Will of God were such, that this might be the Case with himself. The chief Difficulty is in V. 3. By *cloathed-- and not found naked*, some understand being alive, and not dead or divested of the Body at Christ's coming ; others, the Graces in general of the Gospel which adorn sincere Christians. The Reader who desires to examine the Passage further may consult MILL, WALL'S *Critical Notes*, LOCKE, WHITBY and DODDRIDGE, on the Place.

* John xiv. 2.

|| I Corinth. xv. 44, 54.

fleeting Tabernacle, and place him in his heavenly, unchanging Abode.

To impress these important Truths more deeply on the Minds of the Corinthians, the Apostle tells them, that God himself was the Author of this whole Œconomy. From Motives of Love he had wisely subjected them to Trials, the more effectually to secure their Salvation. By his Grace, operating in their Hearts, he raised them to those sublime Views, and Desires after Immortality. His Spirit had wrought this Temper in them, and was a Pledge and Earnest of their future Glory. Nothing can be more conducive to fortify a Christian against Afflictions, Sufferings and Death, than what is urged to this Purpose, at V. 5. “Now he that hath wrought,” or prepared and framed, “us for the self-same Thing, is God, who hath also given unto us the Earnest of the Spirit.”

THE Consequence of these Particulars, and the Effects produced by them in the Apostle and other sincere Christians, we have in my Text, which immediately follows---“Therefore we are always confident; knowing that whilst we are at Home in the Body, we are absent from the Lord.”

We are always confident---that is, undismayed at Sufferings or Death, and undaunted in the Discharge of each Christian Duty.

KNOWING that whilst we are at Home in the Body---that is, whilst we sojourn in the Body; for the Apostle refers to what he had said before, and wants to shew that the Body is not our proper House

House, but only a temporary Tent or Tabernacle
---whilst in it, we are Pilgrims and Sojourners.

WE are absent from the Lord---we are detained from his blessed Presence, and from the Happiness resulting from it and the Enjoyment of him.

WE may perceive an evident Opposition is here made between our Continuance in the Body, and the Enjoyment of God. Whilst present with the one, we are absent from the other. This Consideration was still more animating than those before mentioned. The former indeed might reconcile Christians to Trials, and support them under the Approaches of Death; but this Reflection---that our Stay in the Body, detains us from the Presence of the Lord---that when we leave it, we go immediately to God---this Reflection, I say, makes Death even desirable. Accordingly, St. Paul in the next Verse but one declares, that in his own Choice he preferred a Departure from the Body that he might be with God. “ We are confident, I say, and willing “ rather to be absent from the Body, and to be “ present with the Lord.”

It was necessary to elucidate the Context in this Manner that we might fully know the Scope of the Apostle’s Argument, and the Force of his Reasoning. Thus explained, my Text affords an ample Field for Meditation---abundant Matter for the most useful Reflections. Permit me to select a few for your Consideration.

FIRST. From this Passage we learn a most important Truth---a Truth which too many are apt to forget---that this Earth is not our Home.
We

We are only Sojourners and Pilgrims here-----
 Travellers to that Place where God has prepared
 everlasting Habitations for those who love him.

THO' every Page in the Book of God---tho'
 Reason and daily Experience inculcate this Lesson,
 trumpeting it aloud in our Ears ; yet how many
 are deaf to the Admonition ! How many who will
 not listen or regard it !

SEE the Children of this World in the different
 Walks of human Life---immerfed in Pleasure---
 plunged in Business---goaded on by Ambition, or
 some other restless Passion : How distant from their
 Thoughts is the fleeting State of Man's Existence
 here ! That his Life is a Vapour, which soon va-
 nisheth away ! That here he hath no continuing
 City ; and that he should therefore seek for one
 to come !

THESE Reflections find no Admittance in their
 Bosoms. They are placed here in a State of Trial
 ---their Happiness for ever depends on the Im-
 provement they make of this short Span of Life
 ---every Step they take shortens their Distance
 from the Grave---Numbers around them are daily
 crowding into it, and many of these snatched off
 by sudden unexpected Deaths : Yet they are secure
 and flumbering ! They are hanging on the Verge
 of an awful Eternity, yet no vigorous Effort is
 made to prepare for it ! They seem to think this
 Earth the only Stage of Existence ; and they act
 as if they were to remain on it for ever !

NOT so the pious, prudent Christian. He knows
 that Man who is born of a Woman, is of few
 Days

Days and full of Trouble---that he cometh up as a Flower, and is cut down---that he fleeth as a Shadow, and continueth not. Sensible of the Shortness and Uncertainty of Life, that his Time is short, and his Work great; the conscientious Christian carefully improves his Time, and prepares for Eternity. To be at Peace with God, thro' the Redeemer--to regulate each Part of his Conduct by the Will of Heaven---to be purged from Sin, and sanctified by the Influences of the Holy Spirit ---to have the divine Image planted in his Bosom, the Life of God springing up, and growing to Maturity within him: Is his supream Ambition and Desire---his daily, earnest Endeavour. He is therefore confident and undaunted in doing his Duty; knowing that his Continuance here is uncertain, and that whilst he sojourns in the Body, he is absent from the Lord.

SECONDLY. This Text affords the truest Consolation under the various Pressures and Calamities we meet with here.

If we cast our Eyes along the rude, tempestuous Coast of this World, we see a ghastly Wreck of human Happiness. No Age or Sex, no State or Station, is exempt from a Share in the general Ruin. Not to mention the imaginary Evils with which poor Mortals swell the Catalogue of their Sorrows, many are the real Woes which imbitter Life; and every Heart possessed of Benevolence and Sensibility, whilst it partakes of the common Lot of Humanity, must feel tenderly for the Miseries of others.

How

How often are the most flattering Prospects destroyed by some disastrous Accident ; like early Blossoms and the blooming Growth of Spring by some malignant Blast ! See the wide-spread Ravages of Death, Disease and Poverty, around this habitable Globe---the various Shapes in which Affliction assaults the Children of Men !

Does Charity weep over the melancholy Scene ? ---The Apostle in the Passages we have been considering wipes off her Tears, and ministers Comfort to all who suffer ; especially to the faithful Servant of God. His Affliction which is but for a Moment, will work out for him a far more exceeding and eternal Weight of Glory. He knows that if his earthly House of this Tabernacle were dissolved, he has a Building of God, an House not made with Hands, eternal in the Heavens. He knows that whilst he is detained in the Body, he is absent from the Lord ; but that the Moment of Dissolution brings him to the Bosom of his God. He is therefore chearful and undismayed under Sufferings, sensible of the happy Effects resulting from them, when sanctified. As Silver is tried and purified in the Fire, so is he in the Furnace of Affliction, and shines with brighter Lustre. For Trials are salutary Means, thro' divine Grace, of preparing us for Glory---of fitting us for our heavenly Habitation, when we put off these frail Tabernacles : They flow from infinite Love, from un-erring Wisdom, and are designed for our truest Good.

THIRDLY. This Text furnishes a sovereign Remedy against the Fears of Death ; and indeed this seems to have been the principal Object which the Apostle had in View.

DEATH is the Separation of Soul and Body from each other ; when the one returns to Dust, and the other launches into Eternity, and returns to God who gave it. The Terror of Death arises chiefly from its Consequences ; and hence Sin is said to “ be the Sting of Death*,” because Death consigns the impenitent Sinner to everlasting Misery.

BUT to the sincere Christian, Death is disarmed of his Sting and of his Terrors. The grim Tyrant may either make his slow, deliberate Approaches, and rack the Body with Anguish, or suddenly lay this earthly Tabernacle in Ruins ; yet the Christian has a Building of God, an House not made with Hands, eternal in the Heavens. To this Death admits him---conveys him from a State of Imperfection and Trial, to a State of Glory, where he shall be present with the Lord : So that he may use St. Paul’s triumphant Exclamation---“ O Death, “ where is thy Sting ? O Grave, where is thy “ Victory ?---Thanks be to God who giveth us the “ Victory thro’ our Lord Jesus Christ†.”

THEREFORE, altho’ Death may be the King of Terrors to the Vicious and Impenitent ; yet, according to this reviving Truth, he is a Messenger of Peace to the pious Christian---a kind Deliverer “ from the Bondage of Corruption into the glorious Liberty of the Children of God†.”

FOURTHLY. The Passage now before us fully evinces the Falseness of that gloomy Opinion ---that the human Soul is in a State of Sleep or Insensibility from Death till the Resurrection.

THIS

* I Corinth. xv. 56.

† Rom. viii. 21.

¶ I Corinth. xv. 55, 57.

THIS Notion is diametrically opposite, not only to St. Paul's express Words here, but to the whole Scope and Design of his Reasoning. He is laying several consolatory Truths before the Corinthians to support them under Trials and Persecution. One of these, which had a peculiar Tendency to animate their Resolution, was, That altho' their Persecutors should proceed to such Violence as even to put them to Death, this Event would ease them of all their Troubles, and bring them immediately to God.

AGREEABLY to this, he tells them---“ We are
 “ always confident, knowing that whilst we are at
 “ Home in the Body, we are absent from the
 “ Lord ;” and again---“ We are confident, I say,
 “ and willing rather to be absent from the Body, and
 “ to be present with the Lord.” Now can any
 Thing be more evident than that these Words convey this Meaning---That when the Soul, or thinking Part of us, is separated from the Body by Death, it is present with God---is admitted to the blissful Enjoyment of him? The same Word which is used to signify the Soul's Presence with the Body before Death, is also used to signify its Presence with the Lord after Death. As before Death, it was present, and had a vital Union with the Body, and was in a State of Life, Activity and Suffering : So after Death, it was to be present, and have a spiritual Union, with God, and was to be in a State of Life, Activity and Happiness. Could this be true, if the Soul, after Death, were in a State of Insensibility ? With what Truth or Propriety could it be said, in that Case, that it would be present with the Lord ? Would it be one Jot more present with him after than before Death ? Would it
 it

it be so much ? No. During Life, the pious Soul holds a pleasing Intercourse with God---is sanctified by his Spirit, and it walks by Faith : The Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Love of God, and Fellowship of the Holy Ghost, are its Portion. But according to this Scheme, the Soul would be so far from enjoying even this Intercourse and Fellowship with the Almighty, that it would be as insensible, as far from any Enjoyment of him, as the trodden Clay !

ON this Principle, how poor and cold an Argument of Consolation had it been to the Corinthians to tell them, after all their Sufferings for Jesus, whom they loved, and earnestly wished to enjoy---That at Death their Souls would be in a State of Sleep and Torpor, insensible of him as their Bodies whilst mouldering into Dust, and as destitute of his Presence ! Evidently this is altogether contrary to St. Paul's Design and Meaning, which was to assure the Corinthians that after Death, not only their Sufferings would be ended, but that they would actually be blest with the Presence and Enjoyment of God, in a sensible State of Life and Activity. And supposing it true that the Soul sleeps after Death, the Apostle's Assertion would not only be delusive and false, but his Argument would be as consolatory to the most abandoned and profligate Sinner, as to the devoutest Christian ; for according to this Doctrine, both would be equally insensible and free from Suffering.

THIS is not the only Place where this Point is touched on in the New Testament ; there are several others in which the Notion of the Soul's
 Insensibility

Insensibility after Death is refuted. St. Paul tells the Philippians---“ I am in a Strait betwixt two, “ having a Desire to depart, and to be with Christ ; “ which is far better. Nevertheless to abide in “ the Flesh is more needful for you*”. *To be with Christ*, must necessarily mean a sensible State of Happiness in his Presence. The Words---*far better*---are very emphatical in the Original ; they signify---*better beyond all Expression* ; for the Apostle here, as elsewhere frequently, seems to labour for Expressions fully to convey the Greatness of his Ideas, and Intensity of his Affections. But how could any of this be true, if St. Paul after Death sunk into a State of Sleep and Insensibility ? He would, in that Case, be no more with Christ, than if he had totally ceased to exist : Nor would it be far better for him to depart ; because during Life, he had the Consolations of our Saviour’s Spirit to cheer and support him, and was always rejoicing in a Consciousness of his Smiles and Favour.

OUR blessed Lord himself frequently throws Light on this Subject. Thus when he quotes the Words spoken by the Almighty to Moses---“ I “ am the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob †,”--- he infers, “ He is not a God of the Dead, but of “ the living ; for all live unto him §.” This is a direct Assertion that the Souls of these Patriarchs were not asleep or insensible, when these Words were spoken out of the burning Bush, but alive, and enjoying Happiness in the Presence of God †.

Our

* Philip. i. 23, 24. † Exod. iii. 6 § Luke xx. 38.

† Abraham died in the Year of the Julian Period, 2893. God spoke to Moses in the Desert near Horeb in the Year 3323 of the same Period ; so that 430 Years had elapsed from the Death of Abraham till the Time when this Declaration was made, which according to our Saviour’s Interpretation, pronounced Abraham to be then existing and alive to God. See Archbishop USHER’s *Annals* in the above Years of the Julian Period.

Our Saviour is here reasoning with the Sadducees, who denied the Resurrection on this Principle, which was the chief Foundation of their Error--- That the Soul was annihilated and ceased to exist at Death. Our Lord entirely refuted their false Principle from this Instance; and in such a Manner as wholly overturns the Soul-sleeping Scheme also.

WHEN OUR Saviour tells the penitent Thief on the Cross---“ To Day shalt thou be with me in “ Paradise*” --- it manifestly shews that the Soul of this Person after Death would not be asleep and insensible, but alive, and in a State of Happiness. I pass over, to avoid Prolixity, the Parable of the rich Man and Lazarus, with several other Places of the New Testament, which evince the same Matter.

A STATE of Sleep or Insensibility is, in Truth, utterly inconsistent with the clearest Ideas that we have of the human Soul; for being an immaterial Substance, on that very Account, Consciousness, Life and Perception are essential to its Nature. It is created with an innate Power of Motion or Activity, which its Separation from the Body cannot possibly deprive it of; Nor can any Thing be more absurd in itself, or contrary to the Principles of sound Philosophy, than to suppose, that the Activity of a spiritual, immaterial Substance, such as the Soul is, should depend on its Union with inert Matter, such as our Bodies are||.

SCRIPTURE

* Luke xxiii. 43.

|| He that would see this Semi-pagan Notion of the Soul's Sleep or Insensibility after Death refuted at large on Principles of sound Philosophy and just Reasoning, may consult an excellent Treatise, entitled ---*An Enquiry into the Nature of the human Soul*; particularly Vol. I. Section IV.

SCRIPTURE indeed by a well known Metaphor, frequently expresses Death by Sleep; but this every where refers to the Body, and not to the Soul. Thus when St. Paul says---“ David after “ he had served his Generation by the Will of “ God, fell on Sleep, and was laid unto his Fa- “ thers, and saw Corruption†---” and Daniel when he tell us---“ Many who sleep in the Dust of the “ Earth shall awake, some to everlasting Life, “ and some to Shame and everlasting Contempt||”-- : In these Instances, I say, the Expressions *seeing Corruption*, and *sleeping in the Dust of the Earth*, plainly determine the Sense of the inspired Authors ---they cannot possibly be true of the Soul, but of the Body only.

IN the same Sense are to be understood similar Expressions in the Psalms and Book of Job, which are usually alledged to countenance the Sleep of the Soul---such as these---“ Man lieth down, and “ riseth not till the Heavens be no more; they “ shall not awake, nor be raised out of their “ sleep‡”---“ In Death there is no Remembrance “ of thee; in the Grave, who shall give thee “ Thanks §?---The Dead praise not the Lord, “ neither any that go down into Silence¶.”

It is well known that the Psalms and Book of Job are written in a Poetical Style, the Genius of which, especially of the oriental, is highly figurative; and to expect philosophical Precision in such Compositions, is contrary to Reason and every Rule of sober Interpretation. This is not said, however, to evade the Force of any Thing contained

† Acts xiii. 36. || Daniel xii 2. ‡ Job xiv. 12.
§ Psalm vi. 5. ¶ Psalm cxv. 17.

tained in these Passages that may be thought to favour the Sleep of the Soul ; for there is internal Evidence enough in the Words to shew they respect the Body only---thus *Man's lying down and rising---giving Thanks in the Grave*, can have no Reference to the Soul, but to the Body.

BESIDES, it is Matter of Fact that the ancient Jews were taught in their own Scriptures to believe in a State of Retribution, of Rewards and Punishments, immediately after Death, which, with Respect to them, is a sufficient Confutation of this idle Dream. I shall produce but one Passage to shew this. " Then," that is at Death, " shall the Dust " return to the Earth as it was ; and the Spirit " shall return to God who gave it†." The Words are Solomon's, and inform us how the two component Parts of Man are disposed of when separated from each other. The Body returns to Dust, according to the original Sentence pronounced on it after the Fall ; but the Soul returns to God, to be judged by him according to what it hath done in the Body, whether Good or Evil, and have its Portion accordingly either of Happiness or Misery. This is the plain Meaning of the Words ; and in this Sense both Jewish and Christian Interpreters unanimously agree*. But to proceed----

LASTLY.

† Eccles. xii. 7.

* Thus the *Targum* or *Chaldee Paraphrast* explains this Verse. The following is a literal Translation of it—*And thy Flesh which was taken out of the Dust shall return to the Earth, as it was formerly ; and the Spirit of thy Soul shall return, that it may stand in Judgment before the Lord who gave it to thee.* *Targum* on Eccles. xii. 7. in Bishop WALTON's *Polyglott Bible*. The Sentiments of the latter Jews are collected by WINDET, *De vitâ sanctorum Statu*. Sect. vii, ix. They believed that Souls after Death went immediately into a State of Happiness or Misery ; for the Sect of the Sadducees was almost extinguished

at

LASTLY. This Text is most consolatory to those who have lost pious Friends, and of whose Salvation they have a well-grounded Hope. For surely we should not lament those that are happy--- who are freed from the Miseries of this World, and entered into Glory. If their Peace was made with God, if they were fit for his Presence, how much better is it for them to go into that blessed Presence, than to remain in this Scene of Sorrow--- this Vale of Tears ?

THEIR Conflicts and Trials are now over--- their Grievs and Pains are ended---all Tears are wiped from their Eyes---Sin or Temptation will no more assault them, nor will they any more offend their God. They look back with Transport to the troubled Ocean from which they have escaped ; delivered from all its Storms and Tempests, and safely arrived in the Haven of everlasting Rest. They live with God, with the holy Lamb who redeemed them by his Blood. They see him Face to Face, without any intervening Cloud. They bask in his Smiles, and drink in Life, Joy and Immortality at the original Fountain !

D

I AM

at the Destruction of Jerusalem. We hear little of them after that Period. The modern Jews utterly renounce their Errors. That the Jews, antecedently to Solomon, were Strangers to the Doctrine of the Soul's Sleep or Insensibility after Death, is evident from many Incidents in their History, and Passages in their Scriptures. I shall mention one Particular only to this Purpose, which was their consulting the dead on different Emergencies, particularly to learn future Events, and is what we call *Necromancy*. This most detestable and impious Practice is prohibited under the severest Penalties by the Law of Moses. Levit. xix. 26. xx. 27. Deuter. xviii. 10, 11. Yet we find that Saul in his Extremity, and when deserted by God, had Recourse to it, and consulted Samuel. 1 Sam. xxviii.---Can we suppose the Jews would attempt to consult the dead, if they thought they were insensible and lifeless? Does not this infamous Practice clearly evince that the Jews believed departed Souls were not only alive and sensible, but that they were endued with superior Knowledge, even with that of future Events? For why else would they consult them ?

I AM fully sensible there is no Anguish more poignant than what arises from the Loss of a dear and pious Relative. The tender Love we bear to such is the Cause of our Grief; but if we reflect as we ought, that very Love should in some Measure reconcile us to the Loss, since our Friends are infinite Gainers. We lament ourselves, and not them. For certainly it is far better for them to depart, and be with Christ in Happiness and Glory, than to continue in this State of Suffering and Trial. Wherefore, you that have lost a pious Relative, comfort yourself with this salutary Truth---that your Friend, the Object of your Affection and Grief, is now present with the Lord. Let this assuage your Anguish---let it be as Balm to your wounded Spirit; and grieve not that a Saint is added to Heaven, tho' torn from your Bosom.

THIS Subject, and these Reflections were suggested to me by the Death of a late worthy and excellent Person, well known to each of you by his Labours of Piety and Benevolence---I mean the Reverend Dr. OGILVIE, whose Death is an Affliction to you, and a general Loss to the Church of God.

NINE Years have I lived with him in perfect Harmony and Friendship. Much was he endeared to me by his many amiable Qualities; by a Union of Affections and Principles, and by our joint Endeavours in the Ministry of the Gospel, in that close Connection, which, from our respective Stations, necessarily subsisted between us†. To mention

† GREGORY THAUMATURGUS has a fine Sentiment in his Panegyric Oration to ORIGEN. He is mentioning the Friendship of David and Jonathan, which he compares to his own with ORIGEN; and in setting forth the Ardour of it on his Part, he declares it cannot be extinguished,

tion him therefore in this Place, which now, alas ! must know him no more, is not only a Debt of Friendship which I owe to his Memory, and is expected from me ; but it may also be of Service to you to lay some Parts of his Character before you, and remind you of your Duty in Consequence of having enjoyed the Benefit of his Ministry so many Years.

HE was born in this City : and many of you know, that he remembered his Creator in the Days of his Youth. Even at that Period, he had deep Impressions of Religion, and strove to turn others to Righteousness ; which also seemed to be the principal Object of his whole Life afterwards.

HE devoted himself early to the Service of the Altar ; and his first Station after he entered into Holy Orders was such as suited his glowing Zeal to promote the Honour of God, and the Salvation of Souls*. I may say that he was placed on the farthest Limit of the Messiah's Kingdom ; for all beyond it was one dark and dismal Gloom, unenlightened by any Ray from the Sun of Righteousness. Here he faithfully laboured, and with Success, to add the Heathen to his Master's Inheritance, and the uttermost Parts of the Earth to his Possession.

THOSE

extinguished, but will subsist after this Life is ended. " This David," says he, meaning ORIGEN, " hath bound up my Soul in such necessary Fetters of Love, hath so tied me to him, that if I would even try to disengage myself, I could not effect it. No—altho' we depart out of this World, our Affection, which is founded on the divine Principles of Scripture, cannot die—it must remain for ever." GREG. THAUM. *Orat. Paneg. in ORIG. apud ORIG. Opp. Vol. iv. inter Opera ad ORIG. spectantia. p. 65. Edit. DE LA RUE. 1759.*

* He was appointed Missionary to Albany and the Mohawk Indians in the Year 1750, by the Society for Propagation of the Gospel in foreign Parts.

THOSE Qualifications, which enable a Person to shine and be useful in the sacred Ministry, were possessed by him in an eminent Degree. His Person was tall and graceful---his Aspect sweet and commanding---his Voice excellent---his Elocution easy and pleasing---his Imagination lively---his Memory retentive, and his Judgment solid. His Temper was even, unclouded, and such as scarcely any Accident could ruffle. His Heart was humane, tender and benevolent---burning with Zeal for the Good of others. Piety to God is the Source of every other Virtue, and *His* was lively and active. It was a sacred Flame, kindled from above, which ever glowed with a pure, regular, and unabating Warmth. It was fervent, tho' not violent---gentle, tho' not languid. He deeply felt the Power of Religion; and this prompted him constantly to hold up the Lamp of heavenly Truth to others, that they might rejoice in its Light, and experience the same salutary Effects from its Influence which he himself had experienced.

WITH what unwearied Assiduity he attended the Duties of his Function, you all know. To the Discharge of those, he devoted his whole Time. Like the first Heralds of the blessed Gospel---Daily in the Temple of God, and in every House he ceased not to teach and preach Jesus Christ ¶. Indeed I may apply to him what St. Paul says of himself to the Thessalonians---“ Ye are Witnesses, “ and God also, how holily and justly, and un- “ blameably *he* behaved himself among you : As “ you know how *he* exhorted, and comforted, and “ charged every one of you, as a Father doth his “ Children, that ye might walk worthy of God, “ who hath called you to his Kingdom and Glory §.”

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¶ ACTS v. 42.

§ I Thess. ii. 10---12.

THE Number of those who resorted to him for Advice, was very great ; and few were capable of giving better on every Occasion. He knew how to comfort the Afflicted, to confirm the Wavering, to instruct the Ignorant, to cheer the Desponding, to strengthen the Weak, and check the Self-opinionated and Forward. The perplexing Occurrences of human Life are frequent. Many of them are such, that the Mind, even after Deliberation and weighing Circumstances, is at a Loss to determine which Procedure is best. In such Cases, where a judicious Friend is most necessary, he had a Penetration that was quick in discerning on what Side the greatest Evidence laid ; and in this Respect he has been of singular Service to many.

In him the poor and needy always found a generous Benefactor. He had that sympathetic Tendernefs for the Distresses of others, which the Religion of Jesus inculcates. Often has he cheered the gloomy Retreats of Want, by relieving the Indigent ; and caused the Orphan's and the Widow's Heart to sing with Joy.

How diligent was he in seeking the Children of Affliction ! In dispelling the Horrors of a Sick-Bed, where perhaps the pale Victim of Disease groaned under the complicated Pains of Mind and Body, and languished also under the Miseries of Indigence ! Clergymen often find it necessary to relieve the bodily as well as spiritual Wants of the Sick ; and on those Occasions both were liberally supplied by our worthy, departed Friend. Frequently has he furnished the Sick with Sustenance, and then revived his drooping Heart with divine Truth. Thro' his pious Aid and Instruction, a Gleam of Joy has lighted

lighted up the Countenance of the relenting Penitent. Nay, the Soul that was just taking its Flight into Eternity, has been, thro' his ministring and affectionate Care, raised from Despondency, and inspired with Vigour and heavenly Hope.

THE Time would fail me to trace this excellent Man thro' the various Scenes of Life, and the different Characters he sustained with so much Dignity and Lustre. His Conduct and Manners were regulated by the calm Dictates of Benevolence, Piety and Prudence; and were so happily tempered, that even those who were no warm Friends to Religion, revered him. The Consequence was such as might naturally be expected---few Clergymen have been so extensively useful---few so much beloved and esteemed, as Dr. OGILVIE.

THE concluding Scene of his Life was suitable to the former Part of it---such, in my Estimation, as would be desirable to every faithful Minister of Jesus Christ; for he was about his Master's Business, when the awful Messenger came to summon him into Eternity. In the House of God, after devoutly addressing his heavenly Father in the excellent Evening Service of our Church, he took his Text, to proclaim from thence the glad Tidings of Salvation and redeeming Love---to display the Faithfulness, Justice and Mercy of the Supream---the stedfast Reliance of the humble, believing Soul upon Him---(for all this is implied in the Text ¶ he chose---:) After this, I say, and whilst the unfinished Sentence yet hung upon his Tongue---his Master called him! Called him to leave this
Scene

¶ His Text was from Psalm xcii. 15---*To shew that the Lord is upright, he is my Rock, and there is no Unrighteousness in him.*

Scene of Sorrow and of Trouble, to be present with himself*.

To mark the Dispensations of Providence with a careful Eye---to apply and improve them so that we may advance in the Christian Life; is our indispensable Duty. Whilst therefore we contemplate this dark Dispensation with reverential Awe and Submission---whilst our Hearts bleed under this afflicting Loss---for you have lost in him a faithful Guide and Instructor---I have lost a sincere Friend: Let us endeavour to draw some Thing beneficial from it. We have here an awakening Instance of our Mortality---of the Uncertainty of human Life. In the Midst of Life, we are in Death---exposed each Moment to his Assault, and liable to be torn from every Thing here. Should not this route us from Security and Slumber? Should it not put us on enquiring how we are prepared for such a Change,

* On Friday, Nov. 18, he went to Church in seemingly good Health, to Lecture in the Afternoon, which was his constant Practice on Fridays. He read Prayers as usual, and baptised a Child; he gave out his Text, but before he could proceed further with his Lecture than to repeat a Sentence or two, he sunk in the Reading Desk, and was deprived of Speech, by a Stroke of an Apoplexy. Under the Effects of this fatal Disorder he languished for some Days; tho' he recovered sufficiently to settle his temporal Affairs---those of a spiritual and more important Nature he had provided for by a well-spent Life. During this Interval, a great Part of which was spent in Prayer and devout Ejaculations, he shewed the most resigned Patience and Submission to the Will of Heaven---such indeed as could flow only from real, unaffected Piety, and the firmest Reliance on the adorable Mediator. Altho' the Symptoms of his Disorder were sometimes flattering, yet it finally baffled every Effort of human Skill, and the Power of Medicine; for early on Saturday Morning, Nov. 26, 1774, without a Struggle or a Groan, he expired, in the FIFTY-FIRST Year of his Age. By his last Will, he bequeathed £. 300 to the *Charity School* in this City; £. 100 to *King's College*, and £. 100 to the *Corporation for the Relief of the Widows and Children of Clergymen in Communion with the Church of England in America*; hereby exhibiting an Instance of that Benevolence---that uniform Attention to the Happiness and Welfare of Mankind, which regulated each Step of his Conduct thro' Life.

Change, and to meet our God? Must we not follow those who are daily dropping into the Grave around us? Have they not marked out the Path which we are speedily to tread? Why then should we not listen to these Admonitions, and comply with their Design?---O let us beware of being overtaken, unprepared, by divine Justice, after so many merciful Warnings to the contrary!

WITH Respect to our worthy Brother, however necessary it might be for us that he should continue here; yet certainly it was far better for him to depart---to be absent from the Body, and to be present with the Lord. Indulgent Heaven gives such Friends, such eminent Persons, to bless the present Scene; it resumes and takes them away to prepare us for another World. Their Instructions serve to enlighten our Minds, and teach us how to live; their Example also, in their last Moments, teacheth us how to die. Such Instances of triumphant Faith in the Hour of Death, are consolatory to all who are anxious about their Salvation. They manifestly shew that God is still present with his sincere and faithful Servants---ready to succour and to own them in their last Conflicts. The Death of a real Christian is one of the most instructive Lessons to his Brethren. Whilst it animates their Hope, it also kindles their Zeal, and is a Spur to their Diligence in working out their Salvation with Fear and Trembling. Whatever Trials or Afflictions may be their Portion thro' Life, yet here they learn that Deliverance awaits them---that the Hour of Dissolution which sheds Terror and Dismay on the Guilty, to whatever Height of envied Distinction they have been exalted, brings Peace and Consolation to them; whilst

.. whilst Heaven, with all its Glory, opens to their enraptured Minds.

REASON and Conscience must tell us, that we are accountable to God for the Use we make of the Advantages and Blessings he now bestows upon us. Revelation coincides with the Dictates of Conscience on this Head, and assures us---“ That unto whomsoever much is given, of him shall much be required*.” The Instructions we receive, the Time we enjoy them, our Opportunities and Motives for Improvement, will all be taken into the divine Account. “ Behold,” says the Master of the Vineyard, “ these THREE YEARS I come seeking Fruit on this Fig Tree, and find none ; cut it down, why cumbereth it the Ground † ?”

You will readily grant that it was a singular Advantage and Blessing to have enjoyed the Ministry of our departed Friend ; and that not only THREE, but TEN Years‡. What Fruit then have you brought forth worthy of such a Blessing ? Examine your Hearts, whether you have been duly thankful for it, and have improved it to the Honour of God, and your own Salvation ? Or whether you have not deserved the Removal of this burning and shining Light, because you would not be illuminated by his Doctrine, nor warmed by his Zeal ?

WHILST he was with you, I know you loved him much ; and that you now cherish his Memory
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* Luke xii. 48.

† Luke xiii. 7.

‡ Dr. OGILVIE was elected one of the Assistant Ministers of Trinity Church in the Autumn of 1764, and he immediately settled here ; the Author had been chosen into the same Office prior to him, but did not move to New-York till December 1765.

with affectionate Tendernefs. He is often in your Thoughts; and Esteem mingled with Grief are inseparably joined with the Remembrance of him. The most effectual Way to shew your Regard and testify your Affection for him now, is to follow the Instructions, the Exhortations which he so often, and so earnestly delivered to you. Need I tell you that this is also your Duty? Be assured it is; and such a Duty that the Neglect of it will be attended with this melancholly Consequence---He who wished and laboured so faithfully for your Salvation, will be a dreadful Witness against you at the last Day! The fervent Prayers he offered in your Behalf---the Christian Example he set before you---the Instructions, the Reproofs, the Exhortations you received from him---, Will all rise in Judgment against you, and be your severe Accusers.

O THAT you may be wise---that you may understand and lay these Things to Heart, and consider your latter End, while the accepted Time and Day of Salvation are with you. Awake to Righteousness; and so live with Christ here, that to die may be Gain. Go on earnestly and undaunted in your Christian Duty; so that when you depart, and are absent from the Body, you may be present with the Lord in the bright Regions of unfading Felicity.

That this may be the Case, and final Portion of each of you, God of his infinite Mercy grant, for the Sake and Merits of Jesus Christ; to whom, &c.

F I N I S.

