

4
The Passages in MOSES and the PROPHETS, which
are *expressive of Eternal Life*, illustrated in

A
S E R M O N

PREACHED at the

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4
EPISCOPAL VISITATION

at DERBY, *August 7, 1755.*

BEFORE THE

RIGHT REVEREND and HONOURABLE

The Lord Bishop of *Lichfield and Coventry.*

BY

MATTHEW PILKINGTON, LL. B.

Prebendary of *Lichfield.*

L O N D O N,

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M D C C L V I.

T O T H E

R I G H T R E V E R E N D a n d H O N O U R A B L E

F R E D E R I C K,

L O R D B I S H O P

O F

L I C H F I E L D a n d C O V E N T R Y.

M Y L O R D,

IT was a great Satisfaction to me to find that the following Discourse met with the Approbation of Your Lordship, and the Clergy it was delivered before.

A 2

I was

I was willing to lay before such an Audience, the Result of my Enquiries into the true Meaning of several Expressions, in the Writings of *Moses* and the Prophets; (which, I apprehended, gave a proper Sanction to the Law, by declaring that God's just Judgment would be manifested, by due Rewards and Punishments, in a Future State:) Being diffident of my own Opinion, when, in any Respect, contrary to that which is generally received.

The Compass of a Discourse of this Nature would not permit me to introduce many parallel Passages, which might more fully have shewn the Grounds of my Opinion.

But, as your Lordship is pleased to think that the Subject was treated in such a Manner, as not to be unworthy the Notice of the Publick, I do, not
unwillingly,

DEDICATION. v

unwillingly, subject my Enquiries to the Examination of Others; Since the great Esteem I have long had of your Lordship's Judgment, makes me strongly flatter my self that they may be useful.

I am,

My LORD,

YOUR LORDSHIP'S

Most Dutiful, Obliged, and

Obedient humble Servant,

MATTHEW PILKINGTON.

JOHN V. 39.

Search the Scriptures, for in them ye think ye have Eternal Life.

THE Duty of searching the Scriptures,—of meditating thereupon Day and Night,—of laying up the Word of God in our Hearts,—of inclining our Ears unto Wisdom, and applying our Hearts to Understanding; are very frequently inculcated and enforced upon us, both by *Moses* and the Prophets, in the Old Testament; and by our Saviour and his Apostles, in the New. But, I shall not presume to recommend the Discharge of any Duties to this Audience.

The Subject of my Discourse here shall be the latter Part of this short Sentence, *In the Scriptures Ye think Ye have Eternal Life.* From which Words it is evident, either,— That the *Jews* in general had the Knowledge of a future State, and the Hopes of Eternal
B
Life;

Life ; or, That our Saviour greatly misrepresented their Sentiments.

To those who believe, That Jesus was the Son of God, in Union with the Father ;— That, to this End He was born, and for this Cause came He into the World, that he might bear Witness unto the Truth ; the latter may appear as an impious Suggestion.

But Experience hath informed us, That it hath fallen out rather to the Furtherance of the Gospel, that the Things therein contained have been spoken against : and, That every Attempt to discredit it, hath only given Occasion to the farther Illustration of its Truth. Consequently, it may be useful to suppose every Article of Faith, and every Word in the Gospel, to be liable to Cavil and Contradiction : And, fairly to state the Questions, Whether, the one be necessary to Salvation ? And, the other true ?—For Faith must be founded upon Reason ; and Reason must be convinced by Arguments.

Supposing, therefore, that any one should undertake to maintain—*That our Saviour here misrepresented the Sentiments of the Jews.* As I am persuaded of the contrary, and we are called upon to be always ready to give an Answer to every Man that asketh us a Reason of
the

the Faith and Hope that is in us, with Meekness and Fear; I shall take this Occasion of laying before *You* the Grounds of my Opinion, and attempt to prove,

I. That the *Jews* in general had the Knowledge of a Future State, and the Hopes of Eternal Life. And,

II. That this Knowledge, and these Hopes, were conveyed unto them by the Revelation of God, given by *Moses*, and the Prophets.

When our Saviour, spake these Words to the *Jews*, He was vindicating himself against their Cavils at his healing on the Sabbath Day; and declaring that He acted in Concert with the Father, He took Occasion to tell them, that He was working with the Father for their Benefit, that they might not come into *Condemnation*, but pass from Death unto *Life*. He spoke of a *future State* without Reserve, and (as far as we can learn) without giving Offence: From whence it should appear— That this was already an Article of their Faith, founded upon the Scriptures, which they allowed to be of Divine Authority; For,

Whenever he advanced any Doctrine, that did not appear to be entirely consistent with those Scriptures, they were very ready to murmur, and be offended at him :—Thus, when he said, “ My Flesh is Meat indeed, “ and my Blood is Drink indeed, and I am the “ living Bread, which came down from Hea- “ ven;” Many of his Disciples immediately replied, “ This is an hard Saying, who can “ hear it?” And, from that Time, many of them went back, and walked no more with him, (*John* vi. 47, 66.) Again,

When he was conversing with *Nicodemus*, and spoke of the Necessity of Regeneration, that Ruler questioned the Truth of his Doctrine: But when He said, that “ God so “ loved the World, that he gave his only be- “ gotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him “ should not perish, but have *everlasting Life*,” he made no Objection: The Scriptures, that Master of *Israel* was conversant in, spake plainly of a *Messiah*, and of *Eternal Life*. But the Doctrine of Regeneration had not been so clearly revealed; and where they thought they had Room for Objections, they were ready to make them: But,

When *Jesus* was telling his Disciples, “ That “ the Son of Man should come in his Glory, “ to

“ to judge all Nations: That He should set
 “ the Sheep on his Right-Hand, and the
 “ Goats on his Left: That the one should go
 “ away into *Everlasting Punishment*, and the
 “ other into *Life Eternal* ;” we are not in-
 formed that they were either offended or sur-
 prized. (See *Matth.* xxv. 31, &c.)

When Multitudes of the *Jews* were gathered about him from all Parts of the Nation, and He took the Opportunity of preaching to them, from the Mount; He spake “ of the King-
 “ dom of Heaven: of a Reward they might
 “ hope for there; He advised them, there to
 “ lay up Treasures, such as would not be cor-
 “ ruptible: and He told them, that Sin and
 “ Wickedness might subject them to Hell
 “ Fire.” (See *Matth.* v, vi, vii.) Yet we have no Account that any Part of his Doctrine was then objected to.

When He was speaking the Parable of the rich Man and *Lazarus*, He represented *Abraham* as the Person in whose Bosom his pious Descendants might find Eternal Rest.—He represented *Abraham* as inexorable to the Entreaties of the rich Man, when he besought him to send *Lazarus* to his five Brethren, that he might testify unto them, lest they also should come into that Place of Torment.—He repre-
 sented

sented *Abraham*, as giving a sufficient Reason for his Refusal, by saying unto him, “ They “ have *Moses* and the Prophets, let them hear “ them ;” plainly intimating, that *Moses* and the Prophets had not only delivered the Doctrine of a future State, and mentioned the Rewards and Punishments that Men would meet with there ; but, that they had also given proper and sufficient Directions how they might obtain the one, and escape the other.— Nay, He represented *Abraham* as farther declaring, “ that, if they were not persuaded of “ these Things by *Moses* and the Prophets, “ neither would they be persuaded though “ one rose from Dead.” Yet we hear of no Objections made to these things. (See *Luke* xvi. 19, &c.)

Objections, indeed, were not to be expected from any orthodox *Jews* ; for such took frequent Occasions to tell *Jesus*, that they were already fully convinced of the Certainty of a *Future State*, and of *Eternal Life*.—We are informed, that a certain Lawyer said unto him, “ What shall I do to inherit Eternal Life ?” and, that our Saviour, without Hesitation, told him, that he must take heed to observe those things that were written in the Law ; “ Thou shalt love the Lord thy God, with all
“ thine

“ thine Heart, and with all thy Soul, and
 “ with all thy Strength, and with all thy
 “ Mind: and thy Neighbour as thyself.”
 —These were the express Words of the
 Law of *Moses*. And the Lord added,
 “ This do, and thou shalt *live*.” And though
 this Lawyer came *to tempt him, i. e.* to try
 whether He would advance any thing contrary
 to their settled Tenets and Opinions, He
 made no Reply to the Answer he received;
 only to ask, Who he must account his Neigh-
 bour? Which gave Occasion to the Parable of
 the Good *Samaritan*. (See *Luke* x. 25—37.)
 Again,

We are informed, that, in a public Place,
 a certain Ruler asked him, saying, “ Good
 “ Master, what good thing shall I do, that
 “ I may inherit *Eternal Life*?”—And, that
 he, also, received an Answer of the like Im-
 port; “ If thou wouldst enter into *Life*, keep
 “ the Commandments:” And when he en-
 quired *Which*, the Lord recited to him the
 moral Precepts delivered from *Mount Sinai*.
 — And, this appears to have given the Ru-
 ler great Satisfaction; as being entirely agree-
 able to those Sentiments he had always enter-
 tained. (See *Matth.* xix. 16. *Mark* x. 17.
Luke xviii. 18.)

These

These Proofs must amount to almost a Demonstration, that the *Jews* in general had the Knowledge of a future State, and the Hopes of Eternal Life. Many more, of the like Sort, will occur to those who are conversant in the Scriptures: therefore, I shall only farther observe, in Confirmation of this Truth, that, the Sentiments of the *Saducees* being mentioned as contrary to those of the rest of the People; and *Josephus's* telling us, “ that that Sect consisted but of a small Number of Men; though they were Men of very considerable Rank and Dignity;” (*Ant. Lib. xviii. c. 2.*) and our Saviour's confuting their Tenets, so much to the Satisfaction of the Multitude, that they were amazed at the Force of his Arguments; must put this Matter beyond any reasonable Doubt.

Every fatal Error that Men can fall into, must be occasioned, either, by their not knowing, or not searching, or not regarding, the Scriptures. This, our Saviour told the *Saducees*, was the Occasion of their Error: and, if any fall into the like, it must arise from a like Cause, an Ignorance in, or a Neglect of, or a Disregard for, those sacred Writings: For, by duly searching the Scriptures given by *Moses* and the Prophets, we may
 2 find

find many Passages that appear strongly to confirm my

III^d Proposition, that the *Jews* had the *Knowledge of a Future State, and the Hopes of Eternal Life, from the Revelation of God, given by Moses and the Prophets.*

It is from such Passages that I conclude— That, a Future State was sufficiently revealed to, and believed by, the *Jews*: — That, departed Souls were known to be still subsisting in another State: — That, the Places of their Abode were often spoken of: And, — That the Rewards or Punishments, they might expect to receive there, were made the great Sanctions of the Law of *Moses*.

I am persuaded, that the Knowledge of a Future State was clearly expressed in that pious Ejaculation of *Balaam*, (*Numb. xxiii. 10.*) “ Let me die the Death of the Righteous, and “ let my *Future State* be like his.” For, So I think the Word אַחֲרִית ACHARITH was understood by the *Jews*, and ought to have been translated by us. And, of this I am persuaded, — Not only, because that Word is derived from אָחַר ACHAR, which generally signifies *afterwards*; — Not only, because, according to our Version, there is such a need-

less and unmeaning Tautology as is scarcely to be met with in the *Hebrew Writings*—Not only, because thus the Sentiment is elevated, to express the utmost Desires of one who was well assured of a Future State, and hoped for the Reward of the Righteous;—But also, because this Word appears to have been used, and to have been understood, in that Sense, in several other Passages of Scripture.

In the last Song of *Moses*, God is represented as graciously lamenting the Perverseness of his People, and expressing himself in these Words, “Oh! that they were wise; that they
“ would understand this; that they would con-
“ sider their (אחרית ACHARITH,) their *Here-*
“ *after*, or their *Future State*.” (*Deut.* xxxii. 29.)

Solomon evidently used the Word in this Sense when he exhorted, and enforced his Exhortation, in this Manner, “Let not thine
“ Heart envy Sinners, but be thou in the Fear
“ of the Lord all the Day long: for certainly
“ there is an אחרית ACHARITH, and thine
“ Expectation shall not fail.” (*Prov.* xxiii. 17.)
It must surely be improper to render this,
“ For certainly there is *an End*, and thine
“ Expectation

“ Expectation shall not fail :” unless *End* be supposed to allude to *an Hereafter*—and, tho’ this same Word is rendered *Reward* a few Verses after, where we read, “ When thou
 “ hast found the Knowledge of Wisdom,
 “ then there shall be a *Reward*, and thine
 “ Expectation shall not be cut off.” (*Prov.* xxiv. 14.) yet no one, conversant in the Hebrew Language, can admit that אחרית ACHARITH, ever means *Reward*; unless so far as a Reward is implied in the Happiness expected in an after Life.

I might produce several other Texts, where this Word plainly alludes to an *Hereafter*: (*Deut.* viii. 16. *Psal.* xxxvii. 37, 38. *Prov.* v. 11. *Isa.* xli. 22.) but I will not here, unnecessarily, multiply Quotations of the like Sort; because, from the Circumstances mentioned in other Passages, relating to a Future State, there will arise so great a Variety of Proofs, That it was known to, and believed by, the *Jews*, in all Ages from the Time of the Delivery of the Law by *Moses*. For

A Future State is not only thus expressed in general; but, the departed Souls, and the Places of their Abode, are also frequently mentioned: The One by the Word שְׁאוֹל SHE-

OL, and the Other by that of רפאים RE-PHAIM. The Hebrew שְׁאוֹל SHEOL, is exactly correspondent to what we call *Hell*; the Place where the rich Man is said to have lift up his Eyes, being in Torments, (*Luke* xvi. 23.) And the Inhabitants of that dreadful Place are called רפאים REPHAIM— And, perhaps it may be justly observed, That the Words and Phrases in the *Hebrew* Writings, are used with as great, if not with greater, Propriety and Precision, than those of any other Language whatsoever. And now,

If in these Terms, the departed Souls, and the Place of their Abode are frequently mentioned in the *Hebrew* Writings; and, if they were rightly understood by the *Jews*, in general; then had the *Jews*, from the Revelation given by *Moses* and the Prophets, a sufficient Knowledge of a Future State:— And, these two Words are so frequently, and so plainly, used to express these Things, that I shall only have Occasion to produce a few, out of the many, Passages, where their true Sense could scarcely be mistaken; since, in some of these, such particular Circumstances are mentioned, as plainly point out the appropriated Meaning of the Words.

In

In the *Song of Moses*, before mentioned, God declareth how severely he would punish those who provoked him to Anger with their Vanities, saying, “ A Fire is kindled in mine
 “ Anger, that shall not only consume the Earth
 “ with her Increase, and set on Fire the Foun-
 “ dations of the Mountains, but shall also burn
 “ unto the lowest *Hell*.” שְׁאוֹל SHEOL,) *Deut.*
 xxxii. 22. The Psalmist tells us, That, “ the
 “ Wicked shall be turned into *Hell*, and all
 “ the People that forget God.” (*Pf.* ix. 17.)
 The wise Man, That “ the Path of Life is
 “ upwards to the Wise, that he may depart
 “ from *Hell* beneath.” (*Prov.* xv. 24.) And
 by the Prophet *Isaiab.* we find it written,
 “ Because my People have no Knowledge,—
 “ therefore *Hell* hath enlarged it self without
 “ Measure; and their Glory, and their Mul-
 “ titude, and their Pomp, shall descend into
 “ it.” (*Isa.* v. 14.) The Sense of these Passa-
 ges is evident: And though the Word שְׁאוֹל
 SHEOL may sometimes, not improperly be
 rendered *The Grave*, or *The Pit*; yet, gene-
 rally, where it is so translated, it weakens the
 Force of the Sentiment intended to be con-
 veyed by the inspired Penman; (*Numb.* xvi.
 30, 33. *1 Sam.* ii. 6. *Job* xvii. 16. *Pf.* xxx.

3. *Prov.* xxiii. 14. *Isa.* xiv. 11. *Ezek.* xxxi. 17. *Hab.* ii. 5.)

This will very clearly appear, from a brief Examination of some of those Passages where the רפאים REPHAIM are mentioned; which Word appears to me to be expressive of those unhappy departed Souls which are the Inhabitants of שְׁאוֹל SHEOL; though it is not considered in that View by any of the Translators, ancient or modern.—In our Version the Word is rendered *The Dead*, and sometimes *Giants*, in Conformity to the *Septuagint*. (See, *Deut.* ii. 20. iii. 11, 13. *Josh.* xii. 4. *Job.* xxvi. 5. *Prov.* ix. 18. *Isa.* xxvi. 14, 19.)

The Psalmist introduces the Word thus, “Wilt thou shew Wonders unto *the Dead*,
 “ מֵתִים METHIM; or shall the רפאים RE-
 “ PHAIM, arise and praise thee.” *Pf.* lxxxviii. 10. Here, I apprehend, the Word מֵתִים refers to the deceased Bodies, and רפאים REPHAIM, to the departed Souls. Thus,

When *Solomon* is cautioning the unguarded Youth to beware of the Wiles of the strange Woman, he tells him, “That her House in-
 “ clineth unto Death, and her Paths unto the
 “ רפאים REPHAIM;” declaring, that, if
 4 he

he was seduced, he would be in Danger of destroying both Body and Soul. And, to confirm this to be his Meaning, he adds, "None that go unto her return again, neither take they hold of the Paths of *Life*." (*Prov.* ii. 18, 19.)

Upon another Occasion he saith, "That the Man who wandereth out of the Way of Understanding shall remain in the Congregation of the רֵפְאִים REPHAIM." (*Prov.* xxi. 16.) Here, if we render this Word *The Dead*, (as it is in our Version, in all these Passages referred to,) the Threat loseth its Force: For, all Men, whether they wander out of the Way of Understanding or no, must remain in the Congregation of the Dead. But, only those unhappy Men, who neglect the true Wisdom, will remain in the Congregation of wretched and miserable Souls. And this so fully ascertains the Meaning of the Word רֵפְאִים REPHAIM, that I shall only produce one other Instance of the Use of it in this Sense; though there are several more. (See *Job* xxvi. 5. *Prov.* ix. 18. *Isa.* xxvi. 14, 19.)

When the Prophet *Isaiab* is describing the great and judicial Fall of the haughty and oppressive

oppressive King of *Babylon*, in all the Sublimity and Propriety of Language, he expresses himself thus; “ How art thou fallen from Heaven, Oh! *Lucifer*, Son of the Morning! “ The lowest שְׁאוֹל SHEOL is moved for thee, “ to meet thee at thy coming; it rouseth up “ the רִפְּאִים REPHAIM for thee, all the “ Tyrants of the Earth: it raiseth up from “ their Thrones all the Kings of the Nations: “ And these shall answer, and say unto thee, “ Art thou also become weak, as we? Art “ thou become like unto us? thy Pomp is “ brought down unto *Hell*; One Sort of “ Worm is spread under thee, and another “ covers thee.” (*Isa.* xiv. 4, &c.) The whole Description is lively and pathetic; but I will not trespass on your Time with any Remarks, but what relate immediately to the present Subject.

The former Tyrants, and oppressive Kings of Nations are here called רִפְּאִים REPHAIM; they are represented as Inhabitants of שְׁאוֹל SHEOL, such as were fallen from Heaven; that is, such as were not admitted into the happy Region of departed Souls, which, in Opposition to שְׁאוֹל SHEOL, is called שָׁמַיִם SHAMIM, or *Heaven*: for thus saith the Psalmist

Pfalmist, “ Whither shall I go from thy
 “ Spirit ; or whither shall I flee from thy Pre-
 “ fence ? If I climb up into *Heaven* thou art
 “ there ; or, if I go down into *Hell*, behold
 “ thou art there also.” (*Pf.* cxxxix. 8.) And
 in the same Manner, the Prophet *Amos*
 speaks of these two Places, “ Though they
 “ dig into *Hell*, thence shall mine Hand take
 “ them ; and, though they climb up to *Hea-*
 “ *ven*, thence will I bring them down.”
 (Ch. ix. 2.) That Heaven and Hell are, in
 these Senses, very frequently spoken of in the
 New Testament, I should think it unnecessary
 here to mention, except it was to observe,
 That when they were so spoken of, they ap-
 pear to have been readily and fully understood
 by the *Jews* ; who, we find, from searching
 their own Scriptures, had the Knowledge of a
 Future State, and of the separate Repositories
 of departed Souls. And the Reason why this
 Knowledge was thus conveyed unto them, ap-
 pears to be, because

The Rewards and Punishments that would
 await Men in the after Life, were intended to
 be, and were made, the great Sanction of the
 Law delivered unto them by *Moses*.

Tho’ temporal and national Blessings were
 frequently promised to that People, provided

D they

they kept themselves free from a general Corruption ; (See *Deut.* xxviii.) yet, with respect to Individuals, the Threatnings, to them, if they transgressed, related to the Future Life : for,

The Sentence denounced against the Violators of the Law, in many Cases, was, *That Soul shall be cut off from among his People.* This Phrase hath been too generally understood to mean, That such a One should either *be excommunicat'd out of the Jewish Church,* or, *be put to Death for his Offence.*—But the Denunciation is of a much higher Import : as will appear from an Examination of some of those Passages where God thus threatens the Transgressors of his Law.

A due Observation of the Sabbath we find enjoined, in these Words, “ Ye shall keep
 “ the Sabbath, for it is holy (*or sanctified*)
 “ unto you : Every one that polluteth it shall
 “ surely *be put to Death* : Moreover, whoso-
 “ ever doth any Work thereon, *that Soul shall*
 “ *be cut off from among his People.*” (*Exod.* xxxi. 14.) Here appears to have been a double Sanction given to this Law ; and God’s People to have been guarded against a Transgression, by the Fear of both temporal and eternal Punishment.

This

This latter Sentence is passed in the Law of *Moses*, against those who eat of the holy Things, being unclean; (*Lev. vii. 20.*) against those who eat of the Fat of the Sacrifices, or any manner of Blood, (*vii. 25, 27. xvii. 14.*) against those who eat any Part of the Sacrifices on the third Day after they were slain; (*xix. 8.*) against those who were guilty of incestuous or unclean Mixtures (*xviii. 29. xx. 18.*) against those who kept not the Passover, and the Day of Atonement; (*xxiii. 29. and Numb. ix. 13.*) against those who made any Composition in Imitation of the holy anointing Oyl (*Exod. xxx. 33, 38.*) against those who gave of their Seed unto *Molech* (*Lev. xx. 3*) and against those who went a whoring after Wizards, or such as had familiar Spirits, (*xx. 6.*) And,

In several Places, where this Denunciation is pronounced, it is attended with such other Words as clearly ascertain the Meaning of the Phrase: For, it is said, “ Whosoever eateth
 “ any Manner of Blood, *I will even set my*
 “ *Face against that Man, and I will cut him off*
 “ *from among his People.*” (*Levit. xvii. 10.*)
 And in the very same Manner God threatens those who gave of their Seed unto *Molech*, or

went after Wizards, or such as had familiar Spirits. (xx. 3, 6.) Of those who eat of the Sacrifices, on the third Day after they were slain; and of those who kept not the Passover, it is said, *They shall bear their Sin and their Iniquity.* (xix. 8. Numb. ix. 13.) And, of him who eat of the holy Things, being unclean, *That Soul shall be cut off from my People,* (Lev. xxii. 3.)

Several of the Transgressions, thus threatened, were such, as there was no Atonement provided for by the Law: And, several of them were such, as might be secretly committed, and never come within the Cognizance of the Magistrates.

If a Man had sinned through Ignorance, the Priest was to make an Atonement for him, that his Sin might be forgiven him: But, the same Law saith, “The Soul that doth ought
“presumptuously, the same reproacheth THE
“LORD, and, *That Soul shall be cut off from
“among his People:* Because he hath despised the Word of THE LORD, and hath broken his
“Commandment, *that Soul shall be utterly cut
“off, his Iniquity shall be upon him.*” (Numb. xv. 27—31.) And, now,

If this was the known Meaning of the Phrase, *That Soul shall be cut off from his People:*

ple: If it was understood to be equivalent to, *He shall bear his Sin and his Iniquity; And, I will set my Face against that Man; and he shall be cut off from my Presence: And, if, to be cut off from his People, and, to be cut off from the Presence of God,* was understood to mean, That the Man should be deprived of the Happiness of God's Presence in the future State; Then was there a Motive of Obedience urged upon every Man's Conscience; Then were the Sanctions of the *Jewish Law*, as well as the *Christian*, the Terrors of the Lord; Then the Crime would appear to be the same, and the same Punishment be expected, whether these Things were done secretly, or whether they were done before all *Israel*, and before the Sun. And,

In what other Sense they could reasonably understand this Phrase, I cannot apprehend. To every Phrase no doubt but they affixt some particular Ideas: They must therefore understand this in some particular Sense; and likewise that Other, which appears to me to express the Future Happiness of the Righteous, *They shall be gathered unto their People.* It is said of *Abraham*, of *Isaac*, and of *Jacob*; of *Moses*, of *Aaron*, and of *Ishmael*; That They
were

were gathered unto their People. (See Gen. xxv. 8, 17. xxxv. 29. xlix. 33. Numb. xxvi. 13. Deut. xxxii. 50.) There must appear to be something peculiar in applying this Expression to these six Persons only: Five of them were Men eminently distinguished, to whom God had shewed very particular Marks of his Favour, and to whom he had given the most gracious Promises: And of *Ishmael*, He had said unto *Abraham*, “Behold I have
“ blessed him.” (Gen. xvii. 20.)

I shall only produce one Passage where these Words are made use of, in order to shew in what Manner they are commonly introduced: “*Isaac* gave up the Ghost, and died, and was
“ gathered unto his People, being old, and
“ full of Days, and his Sons *Esau* and *Jacob*
“ buried him.” (Gen. xxxv. 29.) If these Expressions have different Meanings, *Giving up the Ghost* may mean, the Departure of the Soul, Breath or Spirit; *Dying*, the Body being deprived of Life, Sense, and Motion; and *being gathered unto his People*, the Conveyance of the Soul to the blessed Region of the Souls of the Righteous; or, in other Words, being carried by the Angels into *Abraham's Bosom*, And,

That

That this Phrase was well known by those who used the *Hebrew* Language, to convey this Meaning, in all Ages, appears by its being so concisely alluded to by *Job* in these Words, “The rich Man shall die; but he shall not *be gathered* (xxvii. 19.) Where לֹא יִסָּפֵד לֹא JEASEPH, *He shall not be gathered*, is plainly intended to convey the whole Meaning of the well known Phrase, *He shall not be gathered unto his People*. In the same Manner as כָּרַת JECARETH, *He shall be cut off*, is, without any Addition, used to express the full Sense of that other Phrase, *He shall be cut off from his People*. (*Lev.* xvii. 14. xx. 5. *Numb.* xv. 31.) And,

If the *Jews* understood the Words and Phrases I have laid before you, to convey the Ideas I have here affixed to them; then truly and properly might our Saviour say unto them, *Search the Scriptures, for in them ye think ye have Eternal Life* — Then might he justly say to the *Saducees*, “Ye do err, not
 “ knowing the Scriptures: for, that the
 “ Dead are raised, even *Moses* shewed: Have
 “ ye not read, in the Book of *Moses*, how
 “ God spake unto him, saying, I am the
 “ God of *Abraham*, and the God of *Isaac*,
 “ and

“and the God of *Jacob*; (*who were said to have been gathered unto their People*) “God is
 “not the God of the Dead, but the God of
 “the Living, for all live unto him: Ye
 “therefore do greatly err.” But,

If this was the general Faith and Knowledge of the *Jews*, it might be justly expected that the Psalmist would not have omitted to urge the Rewards and Punishments in the Future State, as Motives to Obedience:— Neither does he: For, if he affixt the same Ideas to those *Hebrew* Words, which we properly render *Heaven* and *Hell*, *Salvation* and *Destruction*, as we do to these *English* Ones; which I am persuaded he did: (See *Pf.* xvi. 10. xxiv. 5. xxv. 5. xxvii. 9. xxxv. 8, 9. xlix. 15. li. 14. lv. 23. lxii. 7. lxix. 34. lxxiii. 18. lxxix. 9. lxxxv. 7. lxxxix. 2. 48. xci. 1. ciii. 4. cxxxix. 8.) Then, without trespassing on your Time with any more Quotations, I may leave it to your present Reflections, and to your future Enquiries, how frequently, how plainly, and how fully, these are spoken of by him, and urged as Motives of Obedience.

And, to conclude, If these Things be so as I have here represented them, Thanks be to
 that

that God, by whose Grace we obtain a true Knowledge of his Word; by the true Knowledge of whose Word we get true Understanding; and to whom, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, be all Glory, Honour, Thanksgiving, Love, and faithful Service, both now and for evermore. Amen.

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