

Prince of life, though not in disproving his doctrine or quelling their own animosities and fears; and their combination only shows how inefficient was the professed faith of the one sect, and how virulent the hatred of all to Him, who by his own resurrection converted the machinations of his enemies into the means of their discomfiture.

This need not surprise us. With all our advantages, the fullest information, indubitable evidence, improved means of testing it, and the absence of any ground of opposition, our conceptions of the future life are not more clear, our convictions of its truth not more firm or influential. How very few form any thing more than a vague apprehension of continued existence after death, a prolongation of consciousness and enjoyment. The vast majority dare not look immortality in the face. They will not venture to enquire into their own notions of it, or to ask what are the declarations of sound reason and of pure revelation in its behalf. They are cowards before the very object which they profess to desire, and fear to hold more intimate fellowship with it, lest its character or their title to possess it may change as it draws more near. It cannot however be possessed without submitting to the embraces of death, and his aspect is too fearful to allow them to think of obtaining it at such a price. What then is the future state? What is immortality? and what is its league with death and corruption? Death is merely the dissolution of the soul and the body, a divorce between the natural form and invisible spirit, and surely our ideas of these are so full of a contrariety between them, that such a separation might seem far less improbable than their union. When death has taken place, when the spirit departs, the body becomes insensible and inert, puts on its mortality, incapable of action, motion or feeling. It might have continued thus lifeless, but incorruptible; its organization perfect, its hues unfading; but it becomes livid putrid, and dissolves. Its parts unloosed mingle with their kindred dust. It says "to corruption thou art my father; to the worm thou art my mother and my sister." Corruption then is the consequent of mortality, which is itself the offspring of death—that severs body and soul, matter and spirit. But may not the spirit too suffer similar change? No. It hath not flesh and bones, is not material, therefore cannot be dissolved. It is incorruptible, neither can it die. It is simple in its essence; it hath no further connexion to break up, no other mate from which to part. Whatever may be the power of its author to destroy it, the soul is already immortal. It will for ever live, and think, and feel, the conscious seat