

bring with him. For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord, shall not prevent them which are asleep. For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel and with the trump of God; and the dead in Christ shall rise first." Here the apostle, in speaking of the Lord coming down from heaven to raise the dead, says he is bringing with him them which sleep in Jesus. It cannot be the bodies of them which sleep in Jesus, for they have returned to dust. And the Lord is said to be now descending, &c., and the dead in Christ shall rise first,—not have risen,—but shall rise; yet he is bringing with him them which sleep in Jesus. Then these which God brings with him when he comes to raise the dead which are in the Lord, are the souls, the conscious, spiritual natures, which have been living unto God in the invisible world as the representatives of the bodies now to be raised from the dead. How beautifully and clearly this Scripture coincides with the illustration given of the resurrection, by the apostle in the metaphor of the grain, in the life principle remaining as the identity, which God brings with him when he comes to raise their bodies from their long sleep of death, when he giveth to every soul his own body.

Again, Paul, still speaking of the sleeping saints, says, "For God hath not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ: who died for us, that whether we wake or sleep, we should live together with him." 1 Thess. v. 9, 10. Thus showing that those which die in the Lord, and sleep in Jesus, still live together with him in the invisible world. Again, Eph. iii. 14, 15, "For this cause I bow my knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, of whom the whole family in heaven and earth are named." Who is this family in heaven and on earth? It is evidently the redeemed family—the purchase of the Saviour's blood—who are God's adopted children, "heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ." And that part of the family on earth are those who are walking by faith, pressing forward to the