

kiah, may turn their face to the wall and pray. Of all places in a dwelling, none is regarded with such interest by surviving friends, as the spot where the pious met with God. Never do they draw that curtain, or open that closet door, but a kneeling parent rises to their view.

But what are the exercises of pious retirement? The contemplation of the works of nature is a delightful employment for a solitary hour. If it is in the morning that we are alone, the freshness of the air, the beauty of the dawn, the cheering voice of the birds, and all nature starting into activity and gladness, exhibit to us the care of that paternal providence, which, by the regular succession of darkness and repose, and light and industry, preserves the faculties, and the pleasures of exertion, and counts not the humblest plants, nor the most solitary scene, unworthy of its reviving influence. If, like Isaac, we go out to the field at the evening tide, we behold in the glory of the setting sun, the various tints of the western sky, and the placid smile of the face of nature, the milder features of the character of Jehovah. The moon walking in her brightness, and the stars which sparkle in the firmament above us, proclaim the majesty of the *Creator*, and the insignificance of man. The eighth Psalm was probably composed while David was surveying the firmament by night: and the genius of poetry, and the spirit of devotion, breathe in every line. What a contrast do the simplicity and beauty of the Psalmist's strains present to the pomp and labour of other descriptions of the same objects. It was not his design to display his own talent, or to gratify a curious fancy, by revelations of other systems, but to teach the lessons of gratitude and dependance to man. During the night watches, the howling of the winds, the descent of the rain, and the raging of the storm, reminds us of the terrors of the Lord, shew us how grateful we should be for the habitation that shelters, and the bed that comforts us, and awakening our pity for the unsheltered traveller, or the struggling seaman, raise to the Father of all *the prayer*, that he would preserve and comfort them.

Reading is another exercise for pious

solitude. In this age when books are so multiplied, it is prudent to select the best, and to be guided in this, not by the arts of the interested, or by the praises of the fanciful, but by the opinion of the sober-minded. There is one book which should have our chief attention in such scenes, and which claims our unlimited confidence and perpetual delight. Reading the Bible in the morning, will fit us for the various scenes of the day, by its counsels, its warnings, its consolations. Often do we find by what occurs during the day, that the portion read in the morning was a word in season. And in the evening, we should peruse it by ourselves also. If we are thus employed before we retire to rest, our thoughts will be occupied with the things of God, while we slumber. Such appears to have been the impression produced by the perusal of the small part of the word existing in his days on the mind of David before he retired to rest, that he felt himself constrained to rise at midnight to give thanks unto God because of his righteous judgments.

Meditation is another exercise for pious solitude. Oh, how love I thy law, it is my meditation all the day! Such was the exercise of the Psalmist; and, it appears that in his busiest hours, thoughts on divine subjects arose in his mind, and were always welcome there. But it is in retirement that we can view them more steadily and fully. In the morning, let us meditate on the day-spring from on high, and the blessing it has brought to us; on the means of doing good during the day, that we may improve them; on the difficulties we have to pass through, that we may walk surely; and on the duties demanded of us, that none of them may be omitted, or done carelessly. How many are the affecting thoughts of Jehovah's care of us during the dark and defenceless period of slumber, which the morning suggests and calls us to ponder. Let these be cherished and followed out into all the returns which they claim, and all the hopes they encourage. At the return of night, let us meditate on the conduct of providence to us during the day that is past. Has God furnished our table, supported us amidst the turmoil and toils of business, and prospered us in the labour of our hands, blessed us with cheer-