

"Wherefore, beloved seeing that we look for such things,"

11, let us in the next place consider the use we may derive from the devout consideration of them.

1st.—The knowledge of a rest prepared for those "which die in the Lord" may serve to reconcile us to the loss of our dearest friends. We know that in this world we are at best but as pilgrims,—we know that here we cannot always abide,—we know that when we die we return to meet our God by whom we were sent into this world of trial,—we know that to those who have proved faithful, and who love God, to die is far better, why then should we be so grieved, why should we mourn bitterly for those who depart in the Lord? We say that it is natural to lament heavily the loss of a beloved friend. It is natural indeed, but it is so because we are not what we ought to be. It is so, because we regard our own happiness more than that of our lamented friend. Excessive sorrow is occasioned by selfishness of heart,—by an absorbing sense of the present loss we have ourselves sustained. Hence our Lord, when comforting his disciples under their grief at the prospect of his cruel death, said unto them, "If ye loved me, ye would rejoice because I said unto you I go to my father, for my father is greater than I;"—as though he had said the glory that I shall possess with my Father is so much greater than what I now enjoy that if you loved me in a proper manner, instead of weeping at the prospect of my departure, ye would rejoice because I said I go to my father. If therefore the love we bear our friends were properly directed,—if it were unmixed with selfish feelings, we would always mingle joy with mourning whenever it pleases God "to deliver them out of the miseries of the present world" by taking them to himself to enrol them among his saints for ever more.

2d.—Again, the prospect of a rest prepared for Christians beyond the grave may serve to stimulate us to perseverance in well doing, and to enable us to bear with fortitude the labors, pains and miseries of life. We need not be discouraged with the difficulties of our present state. For what though we are now in weariness, and painfulness, in hunger and thirst, in cold and nakedness, we know that they cannot last forever, and though "weeping may endure for a night yet joy cometh in the morning." "The sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us." The hope of honor, the hope of enjoyment, the hope of a comfortable provision for old age, enables a man to bear with cheerfulness the hardships & privations of life, even though he is sensible that there