

port of an immense expression like this, "the end of all things." The death of a human creature, believer or unbeliever, is only one thing in itself; in many a case not relatively a large thing, however important to the individual, and therefore has no pretension to be taken as the grand expository fact, which, like a key, will unlock the full meaning of our phrase. Indeed, it is remarkable how small a part death in itself plays in the Scriptures. At any rate it occupies, relatively, a very small place. Not in the whole Bible do we find a phrase like that which so often occurs in our modern religious teaching—"It is a solemn thing to die." Somehow, death did not seem to strike the sacred writers in that way; although none of them, perhaps, would have questioned the truth of the statement if it had been set before them. Knowing its importance, and feeling its solemnity, the fact remains that they did not represent it and speak of it in our way. The mere article of dying, for instance, is nothing to them. They never mention it. They seem to have a calm, lofty disregard of it; as though they would by their silence say, "Death? That does not matter--the how, the when, the where. It is but falling asleep once again; the waking to be somewhere else. Be solicitous chiefly about living well. Care not for the dying. God will care for that." Accordingly, we have not in all the Bible a single death-bed scene in the modern sense of that phrase. We have in the Old Testament the patriarchs, when they feel the sands of life sinking low, gathering their sons about them and their children,

and instruction as to their duty. But they say little about themselves and little is said about them by the sacred historian. "He died and was gathered to his people," is all that is said of one and another, and another--the teaching of such silence being, "They died as they lived." That is the only true and safe teaching. The idea of living in one way, keeping in view and in reserve, as it were, the possibility of dying in another, hardly seems to have struck them. There is a solemn and almost attractive beauty in those calm, majestic, unselfish scenes in which some of the Old Testament saints passed away from this life, with none of the trouble and the weeping, and the heart-breaking sorrow which come so often to poor mortals who live on the lower plains of life, in their partings from each other at death. Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob have taught the world many great lessons, but none more perfectly, although with so little ostentation, than how to die. Nor is there any change perceptible when we pass into New Testament times. Who can tell us where, or when, or how the apostles died? In a general way we know the end of one or two of the twelve, and that is all. The very first death recorded of a believer in Christ after the Ascension has something of the pathos and grandeur of his own. In the midst of a shower of stones dashed from malignant hands, Stephen kneels down in prayer, and--oh, wonder!--"falls asleep." Paul is "ready to be offered," and that is all we know. Peter, *somewhere*, "stretches forth his hands, and is bound by another, and carried whi-