

III. We notice, thirdly, from the words of our text, the peaceful termination of a good man's life: "For David, after he had served his own generation, by the will of God, fell on sleep." Sleep is an expression often used in Scripture in reference to the death of believers; not because the soul, as some have supposed, falls then into a state of insensibility or unconsciousness, and continues in that condition till the Resurrection: for we have, in Scripture, sufficient grounds for believing that the soul of the believer, immediately after death, enters upon the enjoyment of a state of blessedness. In the Parable of the rich man and Lazarus, Christ represents both as being in a state of consciousness after death—the one in a state of comfort, the other in a state of suffering.—"But Abraham said, Son, remember that thou in thy lifetime receivedst thy good things, and likewise Lazarus evil things; but now he is comforted and thou art tormented." [Luke XVI. 25.] "To-day," said our Saviour to the thief on the cross, "To-day shalt thou be with me in Paradise." [Luke XXIII. 43.] The Apostle Paul, harassed with the care of all the Churches, and suffering from persecution, yet burning with intense desire to propagate the kingdom of his beloved Master upon the earth, and to instruct and comfort believers, tells the Philippians that he was "in a strait betwixt two, having a desire to depart, and to be with Christ, which is far better;" [Phil. I. 23.] and he speaks of being absent from the body as being present with the Lord. [2 Cor. V. 8.]