

**A DISCOURSE ON DEATH;  
WITH APPLICATIONS OF  
CHRISTIAN DOCTRINE, PP.  
2-194**

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A Discourse on Death; With Applications of Christian Doctrine, pp. 2-194 by Henry Stebbing

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**HENRY STEBBING**

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BY THE

REV. HENRY STEBBING, M. A.



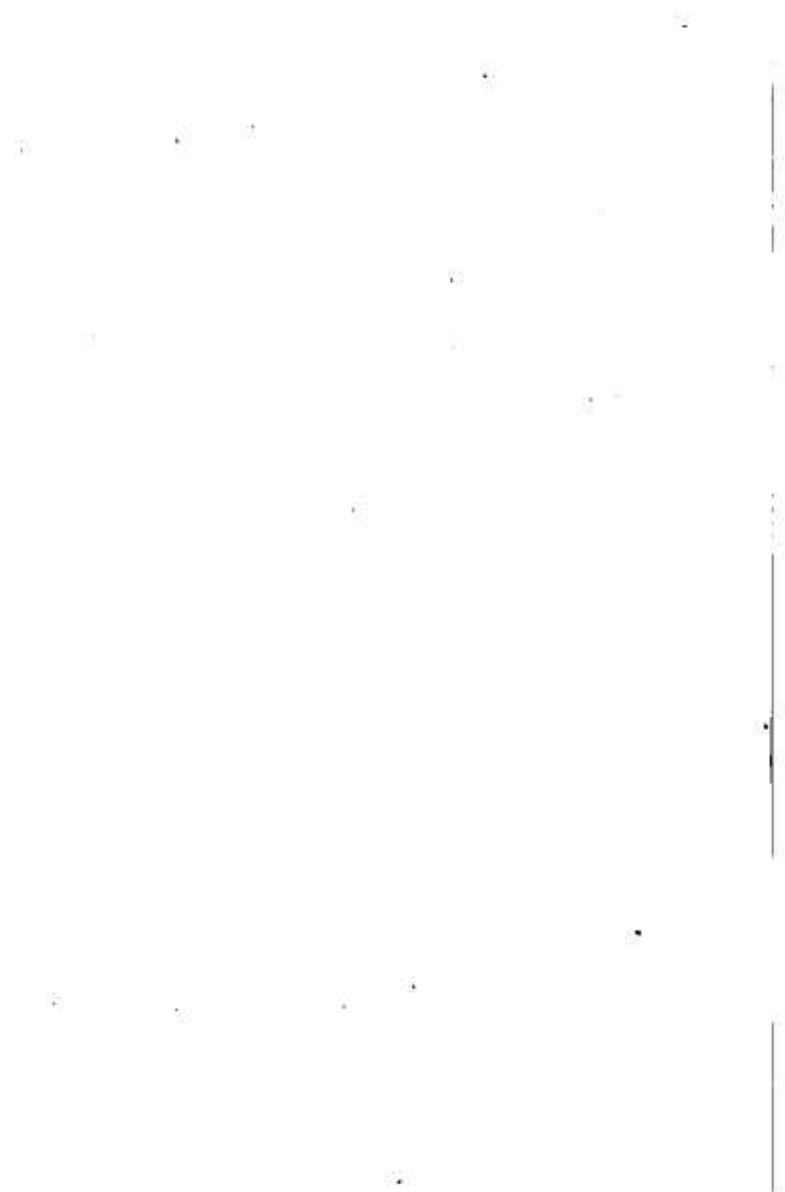
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To the Memory  
OF  
HIS FATHER,  
THIS DISCOURSE IS DEDICATED,  
AS A  
MEMORIAL  
OF THE  
AUTHOR'S FILIAL LOVE AND REVERENCE.





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A small portion of the following DISCOURSE was prefixed to the edition of "Baxter's Dying Thoughts," in the "SACRED CLASSICS;" and the commendations which were kindly bestowed upon the part which thus appeared, have encouraged the Author to publish the Treatise entire.

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the very hope of the most desperate is not that death may be escaped, but that he is eternal; and all that either the young, the careless, or the dissipated can do, is to think of him as seldom as they can. No man, therefore, will deny that whatever can be said of death is applicable to himself. The bell which he hears tolled may never toll for him; there may be no friend or children left to lament him; he may not have to lie through long and anxious days, looking for the coming of the expected terror: but he knows he must die: he knows that in whatever quarter of the world he abides—whatever may be his circumstances—however strong his present hold of life—however unlike the prey of death he looks—that it is his doom, beyond reverse, to die. But if it be thus certain that death is the common lot of all—the great result of life—it must surely be the part of a rational creature like man to inquire, what is death? and having answered this question, to consider what kind of preparation should be made for his approach, and by what considerations his terrors are most likely to be diminished. These inquiries I take for the subject of the present Discourse, and may the Almighty Spirit of the Lord so assist both the reader and me, that our hearts may gain wisdom in this matter; and that, having laid the foundation of sober thought, we may, in our subsequent reflections, be enabled to rise gradually to the contem-

plation of those mysteries by which death himself shall be conquered, and the grave deprived of its strength.

What then is death? We will consider it first in its simplest and most obvious character; that is as the contrary of animal life. To breathe, to move, to communicate with the outward world, to receive impressions from the various objects it contains, is to live; to cease to breathe, to move, to manifest any consciousness of outward things, is to die. Now, if we suppose for the moment that we have no other principle of life but this of the animal, its destruction is the termination of our being; and when we cease to breathe, the plan and measure of our existence are complete. But if death were really the termination of existence, would it thence follow that no thought is necessary to prepare for meeting it? I think not; and for these reasons:—Every creature that exists, has its being for some particular end; and a conscious, rational being, is superior to those of all other classes, because he has the ability of discerning several of the purposes of his existence, and the relation in which he stands to the world at large. But since death completes the measurement of life—since it terminates the course in which the manifold objects and purposes of rational existence are to be accomplished, it is manifestly the duty of every man to take care that it catches him not unprepared; that