

“sed be the Lord God of Israel, which sent thee this day to meet me; and blessed be thy advice.”

CAUTION V.

THE fifth and last danger I shall warn you of, is your contempt and slighting of death. Ah! how little a matter do many of you, at least in words, make of it? It seems you have light reverential fear of this king of terrors, not only that you speak slightly of it, but also because you make no more preparations for it, and are no more sensible of your preservations and deliverances from it. Indeed the heathen philosophers did many of them profess a contempt of death upon the account of wisdom and fortitude; and they were accounted the bravest men that most despised and slighted it: But, alas, poor souls! they saw not their enemy against whom they fought, but skirmished with their eyes shut; they saw indeed its pale face, but not its sting and dart. There is also a lawful contempt of death. We freely grant that in two cases a believer may contemn it. *First*, When it is propounded to them a temptation on purpose to scare them from Christ and duty, then they should slight it; as Rev. xii. 11. “They loved not their lives unto the death.” *Secondly*, When the natural evil of death is set in competition with the enjoyment of God in glory, then a believer should despise it, as Christ is said to do, Heb. xii. 2. though his was a shameful death. But upon all other accounts and considerations, it is the height of stupidity and security to despise it.

Now, to the end that you might have right thoughts and apprehensions of death, which may put you upon serious preparation for it; and that whenever your turn comes to conflict with this king of terrors, under whose hand the Pompeys, Cæsars, and Alexanders of the world, who have been the terrors of nations, have bowed down themselves; I say, that when your turn and time comes, as the Lord only knows how soon it may be, you may escape the stroke of its dart and sting, and taste no other bitterness in death, than the natural evil of it: To this end I have drawn the following questions and answers, which, if you please, may be called *The Seaman's Catechism*. And, oh! that you might not dare to launch forth into the deeps, until you have seriously interrogated and examined your hearts upon those particulars. Oh! that you would resolve, before you go forth, to withdraw yourselves a while from all clamours and distractions, and calmly and seriously catechise your own selves in this manner.

Quest. 1. What may the issue of this voyage be?

Ans. Death, Prov. xxvii. 1. “Boast not thyself of to-morrow, for thou knowest not what a day may bring forth.” Jam. iv. 13, 14. “Go to now, ye that say, To-day, or to-morrow, we will go into such a city, and continue there a year, and buy and sell, and get gain: whereas you know not what shall be on the morrow: for what is your life? It is even a vapour that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away.”

Quest. 2. What is death?

Ans. Death is a separation of soul and body until the resurrection, 2 Cor. v. 1. "We know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle be dissolved." Job xiv. 10, 11, 12. Read the words.

Quest. 3. Is death to be despised and slighted if it be so?

Ans. O no! it is one of the most weighty and serious things that ever a creature went about: so dreadful doth it appear to some, that the fear of it subjects them to bondage all their lives, Heb. ii. 15. "And to deliver them who, through fear of death, were all their life-time subject to bondage." And in scripture it is called, *The king of terrors*, Job xviii. 14. Or the black prince, as some translate. Never had any prince such a title before. To some it hath been so terrible, that none might mention its name before them.

Quest. 4. What makes it so terrible and affrighting to men?

Ans. Several things concur to make it terrible to the most of men; as, *first*, Its harbingers and antecedents, which are strong pains, conflicts, and agonies. *Secondly*, Its office and work it comes about, which is to transfer us into the other world. Hence, Rev. vi. 8. it is set forth by a *pale horse*: an horse for its use and office to carry you away from hence into the upper, or lower region of eternity; and a pale horse, for its ghastliness and terror. *Thirdly*, But above all, it is terrible in regard of its consequence; for it is the door of eternity, the parting point betwixt the present world and that to come; the utmost line and boundary of all temporal things. Hence, Heb. ix. 27. "It is appointed unto men once to die; but after this the judgment." Rev. vi. 8. "And I looked, and behold, a pale horse, and his name that sat on him was Death, and hell followed him." Ah! it makes a sudden and strange alteration upon men's conditions, to be plucked out of house, and from among friends and honours, and so many delights, and hurried in a moment into the land of darkness, to be clothed with flames, and drink the pure wrath of the Almighty for ever. This is it that makes it terrible.

Quest. 5. If death be so weighty a matter, am I prepared to die?

Ans. I doubt not; I am afraid I want many things that are necessary to a due preparation for it.

Quest. 6. What are those things wherein a due preparation for death consisteth?

Ans. Many things are necessary. *First*, Special and saving union with Jesus Christ. This is that which disarms it of its sting: "O death, where is thy sting? Thanks be to God who hath given [us] the victory, through [our] Lord Jesus Christ," 1 Cor. xv. 55, 57. So John xi. 26. "Whosoever [liveth,] and [believeth] in me shall never die." Whosoever liveth, i. e. is quickened with a new spiritual life and principle, and so puts forth the principal act of that life, viz. faith, he shall never die, i. e. eternally. This hornet, death, shall never leave its sting in his sides. *Secondly*, To entertain

death comfortably, the evidence and knowledge of this union is necessary, 2 Cor. v. 1. "For [we know,] that if our earthly house of "this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God," &c. And then he cannot only be content, but groan to be unclothed, ver. 2. A mistake in the former will cost me my soul; and a mistake here will lose me my peace and comfort. *Thirdly*, In order to this evidence it is necessary that I keep a good conscience in all things both towards God and man, 2 Cor. i. 12. "This is our rejoicing, "even the testimony of our conscience, that in simplicity and godly "sincerity, not in fleshly wisdom, but by the grace of God, we have "had our conversation in the world." This good conscience respects all and every part of our work and duty to be done, and all and every sin to be renounced and denied: so that he that is early united unto Christ by faith, hath the clear evidence of that union; and the evidence fairly gathered from the testimony of a good conscience, witnessing his faithfulness, as to all duties to be done, and sins to be avoided, he is fit to die; death can do him no harm; but, alas! these things are not to be found in me.

Quest. 7. But what if I die without such a preparation as this is? What will the consequence of that be?

Ans. Very terrible, even the separation of my soul and body from the Lord to all eternity; John iii. 36. "He that believeth on "the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son, "shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him." *He shall not see life*; there is the privative part of his misery, separation from the blessed God. *And the [wrath,]* mark it, not anger, but wrath, not the wrath of man, but of [God,] at whose rebukes the mountains skip like frightened men, and the hills tremble: the wrath of God not only flashes out upon him, as a transient flash of lightning, but [*abideth,*] dwells, sticks fast; there is no power in the world can loose the soul from it. [*Upon him,*] not the body only, nor the soul only, but on [*him,*] (*i. e.*) the whole person, the whole man. Here is the principal positive part of that man's misery.

Quest. 8. Can I bear this misery?

Ans. No: my heart cannot endure, nor my hands be strong, when God shall have to do with me upon this account. I cannot bear his wrath; angels could not bear it; it hath sunk them into the depths of misery. Those that feel but a few sparks of it in their consciences here, are even distracted by it, Psalm lxxxviii. 15. Christ himself had never borne up under it, had it not been supported by the infinite power of the divine nature, Isa. xliii. 1. "Behold my Servant whom I uphold." How then shall I live, when God doth this? what will be done in the dry tree? Oh! there is no abiding of it, it is insufferable! "The sinners in Zion are afraid: trembling "surprizeth the hypocrite: who among us shall dwell with the de- "vouring fire? Who can endure the everlasting burning?" Isa. xxxiii. 14.

Quest. 9. If it cannot be borne, is there any way to prevent it?

Ans. Yes, there is hope in Israel concerning this thing. And herein I am in better case than the damned; I have the [*may be's*] of mercy, and they have not. Oh! what would they give for a possibility of salvation? Isa. i. 16, 17, 18. "Wash ye, make you clean, put away the evil of your doings from before mine eyes; cease to do evil, learn to do well," &c. "Come now, let us reason together: and though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as snow." Isa. lv. 7. "Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon." Though my disease be dangerous, it is not desperate, it doth not scorn a remedy. Oh! there is balm in Gilead, and a physician there. There is yet a possibility, not only of recovering my primitive glory, but to be set in a better case than ever Adam was.

Quest. 10. How may that be?

Ans. By going to the Lord Jesus Christ, Rom. viii. 1. "There is therefore now no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus." Rom. viii. 33, 34. "Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth, Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea, rather, that is risen again."

Quest. 11. But what is it to go to Christ?

Ans. To go to Christ, is to * embrace him in his † person and † offices, and to rest § entirely and closely upon him for || pardon of sin, and ** eternal life: being deeply †† sensible of the want and worth of him. John i. 12. "To as many as [received] him, he gave power to become the sons of God, even to as many as believed on his name." John iii. 36. "He that believeth [on the Son] hath life." 1 Cor. i. 30. "And of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption." Acts iv. 12. "Neither is there salvation in any other," &c. Acts xiii. 39. "And by him all that believe are [justified from all things,] from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses." Isa. xlv. 22. "Look unto me and be ye saved." Acts ii. 37. "Now when they heard this they were pricked to the heart," &c.

Quest. 12. But will Christ receive me, if I go to him?

Ans. Yes, yes; he is more ready to receive thee, than thou art to come to him; Luke xv. 20. "And he arose, and came to his father: but, when he was yet a great way off, his father saw him, and had compassion on him, and ran, and fell on his neck, and kissed him." The son doth but go, the father ran; if he had but received him into the house, it had been much; but he fell on his

* John i. 12. † John iii. 36. † 1 Cor. i. 30. § Acts iv. 12.
 || Acts xiii. 39. ** Isa. xlv. 22. †† Acts ii. 37.

neck, and kissed him. He bespeaks him, much after that rate he expressed himself to returning Ephraim: "My bowels are troubled for him; I will surely have mercy on him," Jer. xxxi. 20. There is not the least parenthesis in all the pages of free-grace, to exclude a soul that is sincerely willing to come to Christ.

Quest. 13. But how may it appear that he is willing to receive me?

Ans. Make trial of him thyself. If thou didst but know his heart to poor sinners, you would not question it. Believe what he saith in the gospel; there thou shalt find that he is a willing Saviour; for therein thou hast, first, his most serious invitations, Mat. xi. 28. "Come unto me, ye that are weary and heavy laden." Isa. lv. 1. "Ho! every one that thirsteth come ye to the waters." These serious invitations are, secondly, backed and confirmed with an oath, Ezek. xxxv. 11. "As I live, I desire not the death of a sinner." Thirdly, Amplified with pathetic wishes, sighs and groans, Luke xix. 42. "Oh! that thou hadst known, even thou, at least, in this thy day." Fourthly, Yea, delivered unto them in undissembled tears, Mat. xxiii. 37, 38. "He wept over it, and said, O Jerusalem, Jerusalem!" Fifthly, Nay, he hath shed not only tears, but blood, to convince thee of his willingness. View him in his dying posture upon the cross, stretching out his dying arms to gather thee, hanging down his blessed head to kiss thee; every one of his wounds was a mouth opened to convince thee of the abundant willingness of Christ to receive thee.

Quest. 14. But my sins are dyed in grain: I am a sinner of the blackest hue: will he receive and pardon such an one?

Ans. Yea, soul, if thou be willing to commit thyself to him: Isa. i. 18. "Come now, let us reason together; though your sins be as scarlet, I will make them as snow; though they be red like crimson, I will make them as wool."

Quest. 15. This is comfortable news; but may I not delay my closing with him for a while, and yet not hazard my eternal happiness, seeing I resolve to come to him at last?

Ans. No; there must be no delays in this case: Psal. cxix. 60. "I made haste, and delayed not to keep thy commandments."

Quest. 16. Why may I not defer it, at least for a little while?

Ans. For many weighty reasons this work can bear no delays. First, The offers of grace are made to the present time, Heb. iii. 15. "Whilst it is said to-day, harden not your hearts." There may be a few more days of God's patience, but that is unknown to thee. 2. Your life is immediate uncertain; how many thousands are gone into eternity since the last night? If you can say to sickness when it comes, Go, and come again another time, it were somewhat. 3. Sin is not a thing to be dallied with. Oh, who would be willing to lie down one night under the guilt of all his sins? 4. Delays increase the difficulty of conversion; sin still roots itself deeper; habits

are the more strengthened, and the heart still more hardened. 5. There be thousands now in hell, that perished through delays; their consciences often urged and pressed hard upon them, and many resolutions they had, as thou hast now; but they were never perfected by answerable executions, and so they perished. 6. Thy way of sinning now is desperate; for every moment thou art acting against clear light and conviction; and that is a dreadful way of sinning. 7. There can be no solid reason for one hour's delay; for thou canst not be happy too soon; and be sure of it, if ever thou come to taste of the sweetness of a Christian life, nothing will more pierce and grieve thee than this, that thou enjoyedst it no sooner.

Quest. 17. Oh, but the pleasures of sin engage me to it; how shall I break these cords and snares?

Answ. That snare may be broken by considering solemnly these five things. 1. That to take pleasure in sin, is an argument of a most deplorable and wretched state of soul. What a poisonous nature doth it argue in a toad, that is sucking in nothing but poison and filth where-ever it crawls! O what an heart hast thou! Hast thou nothing to find pleasure in but that which makes the Spirit of Christ sad, and the hearts of saints ake and groan, which digged hell, and let in endless miseries upon the world? 2. Think that the misery it involves thee in is infinitely beyond the delights it tempts thee by: it doth but delight the sensual part, and that but with a brutish pleasure, but will torment thy immortal soul, and that for ever. The pleasure will quickly go off, but the sting will remain behind. "I tasted but a little honey on the top of my rod, (said "Jonathan) and I must die," 1 Sam. xiv. 43. 3. Nay, that is not all; but the Lord proportions wrath according to the pleasures souls have had in sin, Rev. xviii. 7. "How much she hath lived deliciously, "so much torment and sorrow give unto her." 4. What dost thou pay, or at least pawn for this pleasure? Thy soul, thy precious soul is laid to stake for it; and, in effect, thus thou sayest when thou deferrest the closing with Christ upon the account of enjoying the pleasures of sin a little longer: Here, devil, take my soul into thy possession and power: if I repent, I will have it again; if not, it is thine for ever. O dear-bought pleasures!

What is the world? A great exchange of ware,
Wherein all sorts and sexes cheapning are;
The flesh the devil sit and cry—what lack ye?
When most they fawn, they most intend to rack ye.
The wares are cups of joy and beds of pleasure;
There's godly choice, down weight, and flowing measure.
A soul's the price, but they give time to pay,
Upon the death-bed, or the dying-day.
Hard is the bargain, and unjust the measure,
When as the price so much out-lasts the pleasure.

QUARLES.

Lastly, It is thy gross mistake to think thou shalt be bereaved of all delights and pleasures by coming under the government of Christ: for one of those things in which his kingdom consists, is joy in the Holy Ghost, Rom. xiv. 17. Indeed it allows no sinful pleasures to the subjects of it, nor do they need it; but from the day thou closest in with Christ, all thy pure, real, and eternal pleasures and delights begin to bear date. When the prodigal was returned to his father, then, saith the text, "They began to be merry," Luke xv. 24. See Acts viii. 5, 6. No, soul, thou shalt want no joy, for the scripture saith, "They shall be abundantly satisfied with the fatness of thy house, and thou shalt make them drink of the river of thy pleasures; for with thee is the fountain of life," &c. Psal. xxxvi. 8, 9.

Quest. 18. But how shall I be able to undergo the severities of religion? There are difficult duties to be done, and an heavy cross to be taken up; these be the things that daunt me.

Ans. If pain and suffering daunt thee, how is it thou art not more out of love with sin than with religion? For it is most certain, that the sufferings for Christ are nothing to hell, the just reward and certain issue of sin; the pains of mortification are nothing to the pains of damnation: there is no comparison betwixt suffering for Christ, and suffering from Christ; Matth. v. 29. "If thy right hand or eye offend thee, cut it off, and pluck it out; it is profitable for thee that one member suffer, than that the whole body be cast into hell." Secondly, Thou seest the worst, but not the best of Christ. There be joys and comforts in those difficult duties and sufferings, that thou seest not; Col. i. 24. "Who now rejoice in my sufferings." Jam. i. 2. "My brethren, count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations," &c. Thirdly, Great shall be thy assistance from Christ, Phil. iv. 13. "I can do all things through him that strengthens me" "The Spirit helps our infirmities," takes the other end of the burden, Rom. viii. 26. What meanest thou to stand upon such terms, when it is heaven or hell, eternal life or death that lie before thee?

Quest. 19. But to what purpose will my endeavours to come to Christ be, unless I be elected? All will be to no purpose.

Ans. True; If thou be not elected, thou canst not obtain him, or happiness by him: but yet that is no discouragement to strive: for in thy unconverted state, thy election or non-election is a secret to thee: the only way to make it sure is by striving and giving all diligence in the way of duty, 2 Pet. i. 10. And if you ponder the text well, you will find, that election is not only made sure in the way of diligence and striving, but calling is put before it, and lies in order to it: first secure thy effectual calling, and then thine election.

Quest. 20. But I have no strength of my own to come to Christ by: and is it not absurd to urge me upon impossibilities in order to my salvation?

Answer. First, Certainly you are most absurd in pleading and pretending your impotence against your duty; for you do think you have a power to come to Christ, else how do you quiet your conscience with promises and resolves of conversion hereafter? Secondly, Though it be true, that no saving act can be done without the concurrence of special grace; yet this is as true, that thy inability to do what is above thy power, doth not excuse thee from doing what is in thy power to do. Canst thou not forbear, at least, many external acts of sin? And canst thou not perform, at least, the external acts of duty? Oh! if thou canst not come to Christ, yet, as the blind man, lie in the way of Christ: do what thou canst do, and confess and bewail thy impotency, that thou canst do no more. Canst thou not take thy soul aside in secret, and thus bemoan it; my poor soul! what wilt thou do? O what will become of thee, thou art christless, covenantless, hopeless, and, which is most sad, senseless and bowelless? oh! thou canst not bear the infinite wrath of the eternal God, whose Almighty power will be set on work to torment such as thou art; and yet thou takest no course to prevent it! Thou seest the busy diligence of all others, and how the kingdom of heaven suffers violence by them: and art not thou as deeply engaged to look to thy own happiness as any in the world? Will hell be more tolerable to thee than others? O what a composition of stupidity and sloth art thou: Thou livest after such a rate, as if there were neither fire in hell to torment thee, nor glory in heaven to reward thee. If God and Christ, heaven and hell, were but dreams and fables, thou couldst not be less affected with them. Ah, my soul! my soul! my precious soul! Is it easy to perish? Wilt thou die as a fool dieth? O that men would but do this if they can do no more!

And now, soul, you see what death that is you have made so light of; and what is the only way that we poor sons of death have to escape its sting. You have here seen the vanity of all your pleas and pretences against conversion, and the way to Christ prepared and cast up for you. Now sirs, I beg you, in the name of God that made you, and as if I made this request upon my bended knees to you, that you will now, without any more delays, yield yourselves to the Lord. Soul, I beseech thee, haste thee into thy chamber, shut thy door, and bespeak the Lord after some such manner as this before thou darest to launch out into the deeps again.

O dreadful and glorious Majesty! thou hast bowels of mercy, as well as beams of glory: I have heard the sounding of these bowels for me this day. Lord, I have now heard a representation of the grim and ghastly face of death: ah, I have now seen it as the king of terrors, as the door of eternity, as the parting point where sinners take their eternal farewell of all their delights: I have seen this black prince mounted on his pale horse, and hell following him: I have been convinced this day, that if he should come and fetch away my soul in that condition it is, hell would follow him indeed.

Lord, I have now heard of the Prince of life also, in whose bleeding side death hath left and lost its envenomed sting; so that though it may kill, yet it cannot hurt any of his members. To this glorious Redeemer I have now been invited; all my pretences against him have been confuted, and my soul, in his name, assured of welcome, if I come unto him, and cast myself upon him. And now, Lord, I come, I come, upon thy call and invitation; I am unfeignedly willing to avouch thee this day to be my God, and to take thee for my portion. Lord Jesus! I come unto thee; thy clay, thy creature moves towards the Fountain of pity: look hitherto, behold a spectacle of misery. Bowels of mercy, hear! behold my naked soul, not a rag of righteousness to cover it; behold my starving soul, not a bit of bread for it to eat: ah! it has fed upon wind and vanity hitherto. Behold my wounded soul bleeding at thy foot; every part, head and heart, will and affections, all wounded by sin. O thou compassionate Samaritan! turn aside, and pour thy sovereign blood into these bleeding wounds, which, like so many opened mouths, plead for pity. Behold a returning, submitting rebel, willing to lay down the weapons of unrighteousness, and to come upon the knee for a pardon. Oh, I am weary of the service of sin, I can endure it no longer! Lord Jesus, thou wast anointed to preach glad tidings to the meek, and to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound; come now, and knock off those fetters of unbelief: O set my soul at liberty that it may praise thee! For so many years Satan hath cruelly tyrannized over me. O that this might be the acceptable year of the Lord, and the day of the salvation of my God! Lord, thou wast lifted up to draw men unto thee; and indeed thou art a drawing Saviour, a lovely Jesus! I have hitherto slighted thee, but it was because I did not know thee: mine eyes have been held by unbelief, when thou wast opened in the gospel; but now I see thee as the chiefest of ten thousands. Thou art the glory of heaven, the glory of earth, the glory of Sion; and, oh! that thou wouldst be the glory of my soul! I confess I am not worthy thou shouldst look upon me; I may much rather expect to be trampled under the feet of justice, than to be embraced in thine arms of mercy: and that thou shouldst rather shed my polluted blood, than sprinkle thine own upon me. But, Lord, what profit is there in my blood? Wilt thou pursue a dried leaf; Shall it ever be said that the merciful King of heaven hanged up a poor soul that put the rope about his own neck, and so came self-condemningly to him for mercy! O, my Lord, I am willing to submit to any terms, be they never so hard and ungrateful to the flesh: I am sure whatever I shall suffer in thy service cannot be like to what I have suffered, or am like to suffer by sin; henceforth be thou my Lord and Master; thy service is perfect freedom; be thou my priest and prophet, my wisdom and righteousness. I resign up myself unto thee; my poor soul with all its faculties, my body with all its members, to be living instruments

of thy glory. Let *holiness to the Lord* be now written upon them all, let my tongue henceforth plead for thee, my hands be lifted up unto thy testimonies, my feet walk in thy ways: O let all my affections, as willing servants, wait upon thee, and be active for thee. Whatever I am, let me be for thee; whatever I have, let it be thine; whatever I can do, let me do for thee; whatever I can suffer, let me suffer for thee. O that I might say, before I go hence, my beloved is mine, and I am his! O that what I have begged on earth might be ratified in heaven! my spirit within me, saith, *Amen*. Lord Jesus, say thou, *Amen*.



THE

SEAMAN'S COMPANION :

Wherein the Mysteries of Providence, relating to SEAMEN, are opened; their Sins and Dangers discovered; their Duties pressed, and their several Troubles and Burdens relieved.

In six practicable and suitable SERMONS.



To all Masters, Mariners, and Seamen; especially such as belong to the Port of Dartmouth, and the Parts adjacent.

SIRS,

YOUR ready acceptance of my former labours for you, hath encouraged this second and last endeavour of mine this way to serve you. I have for many years been convinced of the great use and need you have of the following discourses: But the motives that quickened me to their publication at this time, were especially these two:

First, The hand of the Lord hath gone forth with terror against you; this winter many of your companions are gone down to the bottom. Such a doleful account of shipwrecks from every coast, and such sad lamentations as have been heard in almost every maritime town, cannot but deeply affect every heart with sorrow and compassion, and hath engaged me in this service for the remnant that is left.

Secondly, The seasonable and prudent care his Majesty hath at this time manifested for the regulation and preservation of your Newland trade, and encouragement of your honest industry therein, hath also provoked me to hasten this design, for the regulation of your lives and manners, without which all external means will signify but little to your true prosperity.

This little manual contains the sum of your duty in the several parts