The Heavenly Footman

by John Bunyan

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Note: The 8th Chapter of Joshua is referenced in the phrase: "It is taken from that xxth of Joshua", Page 16

[Illustration: Ink drawing of two travellers following a Holy Crown]

THE

HEAVENLY FOOTMAN

OR

A DESCRIPTION OF THE MAN THAT GETS TO HEAVEN:

WITH DIRECTIONS

HOW TO RUN SO AS TO OBTAIN.

BY

JOHN BUNYAN.

"So run, that ye may obtain."—1 Cor. IX. 24.

[Illustration: The spine of the printed edition]

THE AUTHOR'S EPISTLE TO ALL SLOTHFUL AND CARELESS PEOPLE.

Friends,

Solomon saith, that "the desire of the slothful killeth him;" and if so, what will slothfulness itself do to those that entertain it? The proverb is, "He that sleepeth in harvest is a son that causeth shame:" and this I dare be bold to say, no greater shame can befall a man, than to see that he hath fooled away his soul, and sinned away

eternal life. And I am sure this is the next way to do it; namely, to be slothful; slothful, I say, in the work of salvation. The vineyard of the slothful man, in reference to the things of this life, is not fuller of briars, nettles, and stinking weeds, than he that is slothful for heaven, hath his heart full of heart-choking and soul-damning sin.

Slothfulness hath these two evils: first, to neglect the time in which it should be getting heaven; and by that means doth, in the second place, bring in untimely repentance. I will warrant you, that he who should lose his soul in this world through slothfulness, will have no cause to be glad thereat, when he comes to hell. Slothfulness is usually accompanied with carelessness; and carelessness is for the most part begotten by senselessness; and senselessness doth again put fresh strength into slothfulness; and by this means the soul is left remediless. Slothfulness shutteth out Christ; slothfulness shameth the soul.

Slothfulness is condemned even by the feeblest of all the creatures. "Go to the ant, thou sluggard, consider her ways and be wise." "The sluggard will not plow, by reason of the cold;" that is, he will not break up the fallow ground of his heart, because there must be some pains taken by him that will do it; "therefore he shall beg in harvest;" that is, when the saints of God shall have their glorious heaven and happiness given to them; but the sluggard "shall have nothing;" that is, be never the better for his crying for mercy; according to that in Matthew xxv. 10-12.

If you would know a sluggard in the things of heaven, compare him with one that is slothful in the things of this world. As 1. He that is slothful is loath to set about the work he should follow; so is he that is slothful for heaven. 2. He that is slothful, is one that is willing to make delays: so is he that is slothful for heaven. 3. He that is a sluggard, any small matter that cometh in between, he will make it a sufficient excuse to keep him off from plying his work; so it is also with him that is slothful for heaven. 4. He that is slothful doeth his work by the halves: and so it is with him

that is slothful for heaven. He may almost, but he shall never altogether, obtain perfection of deliverance from hell; he may almost, but he shall never (without he mend) be altogether a saint. 5. They that are slothful do usually lose the season in which things are to be done: and thus it is also with them that are slothful for heaven; they miss the seasons of grace. And therefore, 6. They that are slothful have seldom, or never, good fruit; so also it will be with the soul-sluggard. 7. They that are slothful, are chid for the same: so also will Christ deal with those that are not active for him. 'Thou wicked and slothful servant! out of thine own mouth will I judge thee. Thou saidst I was thus, and thus; wherefore then gavest thou not my money to the bank? &c. Take the unprofitable servant, and cast him into utter darkness, where there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.'

What shall I say? 1. Time runs; and will ye be slothful? 2. Much of your lives are past; and will you be slothful? 3. Your souls are worth a thousand worlds; and will ye be slothful? 4. The day of death and judgment is at the door; and will ye be slothful? 5. The curse of God hangs over your heads; and will you be slothful? 6. Besides, the devils are earnest, laborious, and seek by all means every day, by every sin, to keep you out of heaven, and hinder you of salvation; and will you be slothful? 7. Also, your neighbors are diligent for things that will perish; and will you be slothful for things that will endure for ever? 8. Would you be willing to be damned for slothfulness? 9. Would you be willing the angels of God should neglect to fetch your souls away to heaven, when you lie a dying, and the devils stand by ready to scramble for them? 10. Was Christ slothful in the work of your redemption? 11. Are his ministers slothful in tendering this unto you? 12. And lastly, If all this will not move, I tell you God will not be slothful or negligent to damn you, (their damnation slumbereth not, 2 Pet. ii. 3;) nor will the devils neglect to fetch thee, nor hell neglect to shut its mouth upon thee.

Sluggard! art thou asleep still? Art thou resolved to sleep the sleep of death? Will neither tidings from heaven nor hell awake thee? Wilt thou say still, yet a little sleep,

a little slumber, and a little folding of the arms to sleep? Wilt thou yet turn thyself in thy sloth, as the door is turned upon the hinges? O that I was one that was skilful in lamentation, and had but a yearning heart towards thee, how would I pity thee! how would I bemoan thee! O that I could with Jeremiah let my eyes run down with rivers of water for thee! Poor soul, lost soul, dying soul, what a hard heart have I that I cannot mourn for thee! If thou shouldst lose but a limb, a child, or a friend, it would not be so much; but poor man, it is THY SOUL! If it was to lie in hell but for a day, but for a year, nay, ten thousand years, it would (in comparison) be nothing; but O it is FOR EVER! What a soul-amazing word will that be, which saith, "Depart from me, ye cursed, into EVERLASTING FIRE!" &c.

Objection. 'But if I should set in, and run as you would have me, then I must run from all my friends; for none of them are running that way.'

Answer. And if thou dost, thou wilt run into the bosom of Christ, and of God; and then what harm will that do thee?

Objection. 'But if I run this way, then I must run from all my sins.'

Answer. That is true indeed; yet if thou dost not, thou wilt run into hell fire.

Objection. 'But if I run this way, then I shall be hated, and lose the love of my friends and relations, and of those that I expect benefit from, or have reliance on, and I shall be mocked of all my neighbors.'

Answer. And if thou dost not, thou art sure to lose the love and favor of God and Christ, the benefits of heaven and glory, and be mocked of God for thy folly. "I will laugh at your calamity, and mock when your fear cometh." If thou wouldst not be hated and mocked then, take heed thou by thy folly dost not procure the displeasure and mockings of the great God; for his mocks and hatred will be terrible, because they will fall upon thee in terrible times, even when tribulation and anguish take hold on thee; which will be when death and judgment come, when all the men in the earth, and all the angels in heaven cannot help thee.

Objection. 'But surely I may begin this time enough, a year or two hence; may I not?'

Answer. First, Hast thou any lease of thy life? Did ever God tell thee thou shalt live half a year, or two months longer? Nay, it may be, thou mayst not live so long. And therefore, Secondly, Wilt thou be so sottish and unwise, as to venture thy soul upon a little uncertain time? Thirdly, Dost thou know whether the day of grace will last a week longer or no? For the day of grace is past with some before their life is ended; and if it should be so with thee, wouldst thou not say, 'O that I had begun to run before the day of grace had been past, and the gates of heaven shut against me!' But, Fourthly, If thou shouldst see any of thy neighbors neglect the making sure of either house or land to themselves, if they had it proffered to them, saying, 'Time enough hereafter,'—when the time is uncertain; and besides, they do not know whether ever it will be proffered to them again, or no: I say, wouldst thou not call them fools? And if so, then dost thou think that thou art a wise man to let thy immortal soul hang over hell by a thread of uncertain time, which may soon be cut asunder by death?

But to speak plainly, all these are the words of a slothful spirit. Arise, man! be slothful no longer: set foot, and heart, and all, into the way of God, and run. The crown is at the end of the race.

Farewell. I wish our souls may meet with comfort at the journey's end.

JOHN BUNYAN.

CHAPTER I.

HEAVEN MUST BE RUN FOR.

SO RUN, THAT YE MAY OBTAIN.—1 Corinthians ix. 24.

Heaven and happiness is that which every one desireth, insomuch that wicked Balaam could say, "Let me die the death of the righteous, and let my last end be like

his!" Yet for all this, there are but very few that do obtain that ever-to-be-desired glory, insomuch that many eminent professors drop short of a welcome from God into this pleasant place. The apostle, therefore, because he did desire the salvation of the souls of the Corinthians to whom he writes this epistle, layeth them down in these words, such counsel, as if taken, would be for their help and advantage.

First, not to be wicked, and sit still, and wish for heaven; but to run for it. Secondly, Not to content themselves with every kind of running; but, saith he, "So run, that ye may obtain."

As if he should say, 'Some, because they would not lose their souls, begin to run betimes; they run apace, they run with patience, they run the right way; do you so run. Some run from both father and mother, friends and companions, and this, that they may have the crown: do you so run. Some run through temptations, afflictions, good report, evil report, that they may win the pearl: do you so run. "So run, that ye may obtain."'

These words are taken from men's running for a wager. A very apt similitude to set before the eyes of the saints of the Lord. "Know you not that they which run in a race, run all, but one receiveth the prize? So run, that ye may obtain." That is, 'Do not only run, but be sure you win as well as run;' "so run, that ye may obtain."

I shall not need to make any great ado in opening the words at this time, but shall rather lay down one doctrine that I do find in them; and in prosecuting that, I shall show you, in some measure, the scope of the words.

The doctrine is this; THEY THAT WILL HAVE HEAVEN, MUST RUN FOR IT.

I say, that they that will have heaven, must run for it. I beseech you to heed it well. "Know ye not that they which run in a race, run all, but one receiveth the prize?" So run ye. The prize is heaven; and if you will have it, you must run for it. You have another scripture for this in the 12th of the Hebrews: "Wherefore, seeing we also," saith the apostle, "are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay

aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us." "And let us run," saith he. Again, saith Paul, "I so run, not as uncertainly; so fight I, not as one that beateth the air."

But before I go any farther, let me explain the Nature and Reasons of this Running.

As to its NATURE, this running is called,

1. Fleeing. Observe, that this running, is not an ordinary, or any sort of running; but it is to be understood of the swiftest sort of running; and therefore in the 6th of the Hebrews, it is called a fleeing. "That we might have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold on the hope set before us." Mark, "Who have fled." It is taken from that xxth of Joshua, concerning the man that was to flee to the city of refuge, when the avenger of blood was hard at his heels, to take vengeance on him for the offence he had committed. Therefore it is a running or fleeing for one's life; a running with all might and main, as we use to say. So run.

2. Pressing. This running in another place is called a pressing. "I press toward the mark;" (Phil. iii.;) which signifieth that they that will have heaven, must not stick at any difficulties they meet with; but press, crowd, and thrust through all, that may stand between heaven and their souls. So run.

3. Continuing. This running is called in another place, a continuing in the way of life. "If ye continue in the faith, grounded and settled, and be not moved away from the hope of the gospel." Not to run a little now and then, by fits and starts; or half-way; or almost thither; but to run for my life, to run through all difficulties, and to continue therein to the end of the race, which must be to the end of my life. "So run, that ye may obtain." And the REASONS for this point are these:

1. Because every one that runneth doth not obtain the prize. There be many that do run, yea, and run far too, who yet miss the crown that standeth at the end of the race. You know that all that run in a race do not obtain the victory; they all run, but one wins. And so it is here; it is not every one that runneth, nor every one that seeketh,

nor every one that striveth for the mastery, that hath it. "Though a man do strive for the mastery," saith Paul, "yet he is not crowned, unless he strive lawfully;" that is, unless he so run, and so strive, as to have God's approbation.

What! do you think that every heavy heeled professor will have heaven? What! every lazy one? Every wanton and foolish professor, that will be stopped by any thing; kept back by any thing; that scarce runneth so fast heavenward as a snail creepeth on the ground? Nay, there are some professors that do not go on so fast in the way of God as a snail doth go on the wall; and yet these think that heaven and happiness is for them. But stay; there are many more that run than there be that obtain; therefore, he that will have heaven must run for it!

2. Because you know that though men do run, yet, if they do not overcome, or win, as well as run, what will they be the better for the running. They will get nothing. You know the man that runneth, doth do it that he may win the prize; but if he doth not obtain it, he doth lose his labor, spend his pains and time, and that to no purpose. I say, he getteth nothing. And ah! how many such runners will there be found in the day of judgment? Even multitudes—multitudes that have run, yea, run so far as to come to heaven's gates, are not able to get any further; but there stand knocking, when it is too late, crying, Lord, Lord; when they have nothing but rebukes for their pains. 'Depart from me; you come not in here; you come too late; you ran too lazy; the door is shut!' "When once the master of the house is risen up," saith Christ, "and hath shut to the door, and ye begin to stand without, and to knock at the door, saying, Lord, Lord, open unto us; he shall answer and say unto you, I know you not, depart," &c. O sad will the state of those be that run and miss. Therefore if you will have heaven you must run for it; and "so run, that ye may obtain."

3. Because the way is long, (I speak metaphorically,) and there is many a dirty step, many a high hill, much work to do; a wicked heart, world, and devil to overcome. I say there are many steps to be taken by those that intend to be saved, by running, or

walking, in the steps of that faith of our father Abraham. Out of Egypt thou must go through the Red Sea; thou must run a long and tedious journey, through the vast howling wilderness, before thou come to the land of promise.

4. They that will go to heaven must run for it; because, as the way is so long, so the time in which they are to get to the end of it is very uncertain. The time present is the only time; thou hast no more time allotted thee than that thou now enjoyest. "Boast not thyself of to-morrow, for thou knowest not what a day may bring forth." Do not say, 'I have time enough to get to heaven seven years hence;' for I tell thee, the bell may toll for thee, before seven days more be ended. When death comes, away thou must go, whether thou art provided or not. And therefore look to it; make no delays; it is not good dallying with things of so great concernment as the salvation or damnation of thy soul. You know he that hath a great way to go in a little time, and less, by half, than he thinks of, had need to run for it.

5. They that will have heaven must run for it; because the devil, the law, sin, death, and hell, follow them. There is never a poor soul that is going to heaven, but the devil, the law, sin, death, and hell, make after that soul. "Your adversary, the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour." And I will assure you the devil is nimble; he can run apace, he is light of foot; he hath overtaken many, he hath turned up their heels and hath given them an everlasting fall. Also the law, that can shoot a great way: have a care to keep out of the reach of those great guns, the ten commandments. Hell also hath a wide mouth; it can stretch itself farther than you are aware of. And as the angel said to Lot: "Take heed, look not behind thee, neither stay thou in all the plain," that is, any where between this and heaven, "lest thou be consumed;" so say I to thee. Take heed, tarry not, lest either the devil, hell, death, or the fearful curses of the law of God, do overtake thee, and throw thee down in the midst of thy sins, so as never to rise and recover again. If this were well considered, then thou, as well as I, would say, they that will have heaven must run for it.

6. They that will go to heaven must run for it; because perchance the gates of heaven may shut shortly. Sometimes sinners have not heaven-gates open to them so long as they suppose; and if they be once shut against a man, they are so heavy, that all the men in the world, or all the angels in heaven, are not able to open them. "I shut, and no man can open," saith Christ. And how if thou shouldst come but one quarter of an hour too late? I tell thee it will cost thee an eternity to bewail thy misery in! Francis Spira can tell thee what it is to stay till the gates of mercy be quite shut; or to run so lazily, that they be shut before thou get within them. What! to be shut out! What! out of heaven! Sinner, rather than lose it, run for it; yea, and "so run that thou mayst obtain."

7. Lastly, Because if thou lose, thou losest all. Thou losest soul, God, Christ, heaven, ease, peace, &c. Besides, thou layest thyself open to all the shame, contempt, and reproach, that either God, Christ, saints, the world, sin, the devil, and all, can lay upon thee. As Christ saith of the foolish builder, so will I say of thee, if thou be such a one who runs and misseth; I say, even all that go by will begin to mock at thee, saying, This man began to run well, but was not able to finish. But more of this anon.

CHAPTER II.

DIRECTIONS FOR THIS HEAVENLY COURSE.

Question. "But how should a poor soul do, so to run?" For this very thing is that which afflicteth me sore, (as you say,) to think that I may run and yet fall short. Methinks to fall short at last, Oh! it fears me greatly! Pray, tell me, therefore, how I should run.'

Answer. That thou mayst indeed be satisfied in this particular, consider these following things.

THE FIRST DIRECTION.—If thou wouldst so run as to obtain the kingdom of heaven, then be sure that thou get into the way that leadeth thither. For it is a vain thing to think that ever thou shalt have the prize, though thou runnest ever so fast, unless thou art in the way that leads to it. Set the case that there should be a man in London that was to run to York for a wager; now, though he run ever so swiftly, yet if he run full south, he might run himself out of breath, and be never the nearer the prize, but rather the farther off. Just so is it here. It is not simply the runner, nor yet the hasty runner, that winneth the crown, unless he be in the way that leadeth thereto. I have observed, (that little time which I have been a professor,) that there is a great running to and fro, some this way, and some that way; yet it is to be feared most of them are out of the way; and then, though they run as swift as the eagle can fly, they are benefited nothing at all.

Here is one runs a Quaking, another a Ranting. One again runs after the Baptism, and another after the Independency. Here is one for Free-will, and another for Presbytery. And yet possibly most, of all these sects, run quite the wrong way; and yet every one is for his life, his soul, either for heaven or hell!

If thou now say, Which is the way? I tell thee it is CHRIST, the Son of Mary, the Son of God. Jesus saith, "I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh to the Father but by me." So then thy business is, (if thou wouldst have salvation,) to see if Christ be thine, with all his benefits; whether he hath covered thee with his righteousness; whether he hath showed thee that thy sins are washed away with his heart-blood; whether thou art planted into him, and whether thou have faith in him, so as to make a life out of him, and to conform thee to him; that is, such faith as to conclude that thou art righteous, because Christ is thy righteousness; and so constrained to walk with him as the joy of thy heart, because he saved thy soul. And for the Lord's sake, take heed, and do not deceive thyself, and think thou art in the way upon too slight grounds; for if thou miss of the way, thou wilt miss of the prize; and if thou miss of that, I am sure thou wilt lose thy soul, even that soul which is

worth more than the whole world.

But I have treated more largely on this in my book of the Two Covenants, and therefore shall pass it now. Only I beseech thee to have a care of thy soul. And that thou mayst so do, take this counsel. Mistrust thy own strength, and throw it away. Down on thy knees in prayer to the Lord, for the Spirit of truth; search his word for direction; flee seducers' company; keep company with the soundest Christians, that have most experience of Christ; and be sure thou have a care of Quakers, Ranters, Freewillers; also do not have too much company with some Anabaptists, though I go under that name myself.

I tell thee this is such a serious matter, and I fear thou wilt so little regard it, that the thoughts of the worth of the thing, and of thy too light regarding it, doth even make my heart ache whilst I am writing to thee. The Lord teach thee the way by his Spirit, and then I am sure thou wilt know it. So run.

Only, by the way, let me bid thee have a care of two things, and so I shall pass to the next thing. 1. Have a care of relying on the outward obedience to any of God's commands, or thinking thyself ever the better in the sight of God for that. 2. Take heed of fetching peace for thy soul from any inherent righteousness. But, if thou canst, believe that as thou art a sinner, so thou art justified freely by the love of God, through the redemption that is in Christ; and that God, for Christ's sake, hath forgiven thee, not because he saw any thing done, or to be done, in or by thee, to move him thereunto to do it. Because this is the right way. The Lord put thee into it, and keep thee in it!

THE SECOND DIRECTION.—As thou shouldst get into the way, so thou shouldst also be much in studying and musing on the way. You know men that would be expert in any thing, are usually much in studying of that thing; and so likewise is it with those that quickly grow expert in any thing. This therefore thou shouldst do.

Let thy study be much exercised about Christ, who is the way; what he is, what he

hath done, and why he is what he is, and why he hath done what is done; as why he took upon him the form of a servant, why he was made in the likeness of men; why he cried; why he died; why he bare the sins of the world; why he was made sin, and why he was made righteousness; why he is in heaven in the nature of man, and what he doth there. Be much in musing and considering of these things. Be thinking also, enough for thy warning, of those places which thou must not come near; but leave, some on this hand, and some on that hand; as it is with those that travel into other countries. They must leave such a gate on this hand, and such a bush on that hand, and go by such a place, where standeth such a thing. Thus therefore you must do. Avoid such things as are expressly forbidden in the word of God. "Withdraw thy foot far from her, and come not nigh the door of her house; for her steps take hold of hell, going down to the chambers of death." And so of every thing that is not in the way; have a care of it that thou go not by it; come not near it; have nothing to do with it. So run.

THE THIRD DIRECTION.—Not only thus, but, in the next place, thou must strip thyself of those things that may hang upon thee, to the hindering of thee in the way to the kingdom of heaven: as covetousness, pride, lust, or whatever else thy heart may be inclining unto, which may hinder thee in this heavenly race. Men that run for a wager, (if they intend to win as well as run,) do not use to encumber themselves, or carry those things about them that may be a hindrance to them in their running. "Every man that striveth for the mastery is temperate in all things." That is, he layeth aside every thing that would be any wise a disadvantage to him; as saith the apostle, "Let us lay aside every weight, and the sin that doth so easily beset us; and let us run with patience the race that is set before us."

It is but a vain thing to talk of going to heaven, if thou let thy heart be encumbered with those things that would hinder. Would you not say that such a man would be in danger of losing, though he run, if he fill his pockets with stones, hang heavy garments on his shoulders, and great lumpish shoes on his feet? So it is here. Thou

talkest of going to heaven, and yet fillest thy pockets with stones; that is, fillest thy heart with this world; lettest that hang on thy shoulders with its profits and pleasures. Alas, alas! thou art widely mistaken. If thou intendest to win, thou must strip, thou must lay aside every weight, thou must be temperate in all things. Thou must so run.

THE FOURTH DIRECTION.—Beware of by-paths. Take heed thou dost not turn into those lanes which lead out of the way. There are crooked paths, paths in which men go astray, paths that lead to death and damnation; but take heed of all those. Some of them are dangerous because of practice, some because of opinion; but mind them not. Mind the path before thee; look right before thee; turn neither to the right hand nor to the left, but let thine eyes look right on, even right before thee. "Ponder the path of thy feet, and let all thy ways be established." "Turn not to the right hand nor to the left. Remove thy foot from evil." This counsel being not so seriously taken as given, is the reason of that starting from opinion to opinion, reeling this way and that way, out of this lane into that lane, and so missing the way to the kingdom.

Though the way to heaven be but one, yet there are many crooked lanes and by-paths shoot down upon it, as I may say. And again, notwithstanding the kingdom of heaven be the biggest city, yet usually those by-paths are most beaten, most travellers go those ways; and therefore the way to heaven is hard to be found, and as hard to be kept in, by reason of these. Yet nevertheless, it is in this case as it was with the harlot of Jericho. She had one scarlet thread tied in her window, by which her house was known; so it is here. The scarlet stream of Christ's blood runs throughout the way to the kingdom of heaven. Therefore mind that: see if thou do find the besprinkling of the blood of Christ in the way; and if thou do, be of good cheer; thou art in the right way.

But have a care thou beguile not thyself with a fancy; for then thou mayst light into any lane or way. But that thou mayst not be mistaken, consider, though it seem ever

so pleasant, yet if thou do not find that in the very middle of the road there is written with the heart blood of Christ, that he came into the world to save sinners, and that we are justified, though we are ungodly, shun that way. For this it is which the apostle meaneth when he saith, we have "boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way which he hath consecrated for us through the vail, that is to say, his flesh." How easy a matter is it in this our day, for the devil to be too cunning for poor souls, by calling his by-paths the way to the kingdom! If such an opinion or fancy be but cried up by one or more, this inscription being set upon it by the devil, "This is the way of God," how speedily, greedily, and by heaps, do poor simple souls, throw away themselves upon it; especially if it be daubed over with a few external acts of morality, if so good! But this is because men do not know painted by-paths from the plain way to the kingdom of heaven. They have not yet learned the true Christ, and what his righteousness is; neither have they a sense of their own insufficiency; but are bold, proud, presumptuous, self-conceited. And therefore, take

THE FIFTH DIRECTION.—Do not thou be too much in looking too high in thy journey heavenwards. You know men that run a race do not use to stare and gaze this way and that; neither do they use to cast up their eyes too high; lest haply, through their too much gazing with their eyes after other things, they in the mean time stumble, and catch a fall. The very same case is this; if thou gaze and stare after every opinion and way that comes into the world, also if thou be prying overmuch in God's secret decrees, or let thy heart too much entertain questions about some nice, foolish curiosities, thou mayst stumble and fall; as many hundreds in England have done, both in Ranting and Quakery, to their eternal overthrow, without the marvellous operation of God's grace be suddenly stretched forth to bring them back again.

Take heed therefore. Follow not that proud, lofty spirit, that, devil-like, cannot be content with his own station. David was of an excellent spirit, where he saith, "Lord,

my heart is not haughty, nor mine eyes lofty: neither do I exercise myself in great matters, or in things too high for me. Surely I have behaved and quieted myself, as a child that is weaned of his mother: my soul is even as a weaned child." Do thou so run.

THE SIXTH DIRECTION.—Take heed that you have not an ear open to every one that calleth after you, as you are in your journey. Men that run, you know, if any do call after them, saying, 'I would speak with you,' or, 'Go not too fast, and you shall have my company with you,'—if they run for some great matter, they use to say, 'Alas! I cannot stay, I am in haste; pray, talk not to me now; neither can I stay for you; I am running for a wager: if I win, I am made; if I lose, I am undone; and therefore hinder me not.' Thus wise are men, when they run for corruptible things; and thus shouldst thou do. And thou hast more cause to do so than they, forasmuch as they run but for things that last not, but thou for an incorruptible glory. I give thee notice of this betimes, knowing that thou shalt have enough call after thee, even the devil, sin, this world, vain company, pleasures, profits, esteem among men, ease, pomp, pride, together with an innumerable company of such companions; one crying, 'Stay for me;' the other saying, 'Do not leave me behind;' a third saying, 'And take me along with you.' 'What! will you go,' saith the devil, 'without your sins, pleasures and profits? Are you so hasty? Can you not stay and take these along with you? Will you leave your friends and companions behind you? Can you not do as your neighbors do—carry the world, sin, lust, pleasure, profit, esteem among men, along with you?'—Have a care thou do not let thine ear now be open to the tempting, enticing, alluring, and soul-entangling flatteries of such sink-souls as these are. "My son," saith Solomon, "if sinners entice thee, consent thou not."

You know what it cost the young man whom Solomon speaks of, (in the 7th of Proverbs,) that was enticed by a harlot. With her much fair speech she won him, and caused him to yield; with the flattering of her lips she forced him, till he went after her, as an ox to the slaughter, as a fool to the correction of the stocks; even so far till

the dart struck through his liver, and he knew not that it was for his life. "Hearken unto me, now, therefore," saith he, "O ye children, and attend to the words of my mouth: let not thine heart decline to her ways, go not astray in her paths; for she hath cast down many wounded; yea, many strong men have been slain (that is, kept out of heaven) by her. Her house is the way to hell, going down to the chambers of death." Soul, take this counsel, and say, 'Satan, sin, lust, pleasure, profit, pride, friends, companions, and every thing else,—let me alone, stand off, come not nigh me; for I am running for heaven, for my soul, for God, for Christ—from hell and everlasting damnation! If I win, I win all; and if I lose, I lose all! Let me alone for I will not hear.' So run.

THE SEVENTH DIRECTION.—In the next place, be not daunted, though thou meetest with ever so many discouragements in thy journey thither. That man that is resolved for heaven, if Satan cannot win him by flatteries, he will endeavor to weaken him by discouragements, saying, 'Thou art a sinner,' 'thou hast broken God's law,' 'thou art not elected,' 'thou comest too late,' 'the day of grace is past,' 'God doth not care for thee,' 'thy heart is naught,' 'thou art lazy,' with a hundred other discouraging suggestions. And thus it was with David, where he saith, "I had fainted, unless I had believed to see the goodness of the Lord, in the land of the living." As if he should say, 'The devil did so rage, and my heart was so base, that had I judged according to my own sense and feeling, I had been absolutely distracted. But I trusted to Christ in the promise, and looked that God would be as good as his promise, in having mercy upon me, an unworthy sinner; and this is that which encouraged me, and kept me from fainting.'

And thus must thou do when Satan, or the law, or thy conscience, do go about to dishearten thee, either by the greatness of thy sins, the wickedness of thy heart, the tediousness of the way, the loss of outward enjoyments, the hatred that thou wilt procure from the world or the like; then thou must encourage thyself with the freeness of the promises, the tender-heartedness of Christ, the merits of his blood,

the freeness of his invitations to come in, the greatness of the sin of others that have been pardoned; and that the same God, through the same Christ, holdeth forth the same grace as free as ever. If these be not thy meditations, thou wilt draw very heavily in the way to heaven if thou do not give up all for lost, and so knock off from following any farther. Therefore, I say, take heart in thy journey, and say to them that seek thy destruction, "Rejoice not against me, O mine enemy: when I fall, I shall arise; when I sit in darkness, the Lord shall be a light unto me."

THE EIGHTH DIRECTION.—Take heed of being offended at the cross that thou must go by, before thou come to heaven. You must understand (as I have already touched) that there is no man that goeth to heaven but he must go by the cross. The cross is the standing way-mark, by which all they that go to glory must pass.

"We must through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God." "Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution." If thou art in thy way to the kingdom, my life for thine, thou wilt come at the cross shortly. The Lord grant thou dost not shrink at it, so as to turn thee back again. "If any man will come after me," saith Christ, "let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me." The Cross! it stands, and hath stood, from the beginning, as a way-mark to the kingdom of heaven. You know if one ask you the way to such and such a place, you, for the better direction, do not only say, 'this is the way,' but then also say, 'You must go by such a gate, by such a stile, such a bush, tree, bridge,' or such like. Why, so it is here. Art thou enquiring the way to heaven? Why, I tell thee, CHRIST IS THE WAY; into him thou must get, even into his righteousness, to be justified. And if thou art in him, thou wilt presently see the cross. Thou must go close by it; thou must touch it; nay thou must take it up, or else thou wilt quickly go out of the way that leads to heaven, and turn up some of those crooked lanes that lead down to the chambers of death.

Now thou mayst know the cross by these six things: 1. It is known in the doctrine of

justification. 2. In the doctrine of mortification. 3. In the doctrine of perseverance. 4. In self-denial. 5. In patience. 6. In communion with poor saints.

1. In the doctrine of justification there is a great deal of the cross. In that, a man is forced to suffer the destruction of his own righteousness for the righteousness of another. This is no easy matter for a man to do. I assure you it stretcheth every vein in his heart, before he will be brought to yield to it. What! for a man to deny, reject, abhor, and throw away all his prayers, tears, alms, keeping of sabbaths, hearing, reading with the rest, in the point of justification, and to count them accursed; and to be willing, in the very midst of the sense of his sins, to throw himself wholly upon the righteousness and obedience of another man, abhorring his own, counting it as a deadly sin, as the open breach of the law! I say, to do this indeed and in truth, is the biggest piece of the cross; and therefore Paul calleth this very thing a suffering; where he saith, "And I have suffered the loss of all things," (which principally was his righteousness,) "that I might win Christ, and be found in him, not having (but rejecting) my own righteousness." That is the first.

2. In the doctrine of mortification is also much of the cross. Is it nothing for a man to lay hands on his vile opinions, on his vile sins, on his bosom sins, on his beloved, pleasant, darling sins, that stick as close to him as the flesh sticks to the bones? What! to lose all these brave things that my eyes behold, for that which I never saw with my eyes? What! to lose my pride, my covetousness, my vain company, sports, and pleasures, and the rest? I tell you this is no easy matter; if it were, what need of all those prayers, sighs, watchings? What need we be so backward to it? Nay, do you not see, that some men before they will set about this work, will even venture the loss of their souls, heaven, God, Christ, and all? What mean else all those delays and put-offs, saying, 'Stay a little longer; I am loath to leave my sins while I am so young, and in health?' Again, what is the reason else that others do it so by the halves, coldly, and seldom; notwithstanding they are convinced over and over, and over, nay, and also promise to amend; and yet all is in vain? I will assure you, to cut

off right hands, and pluck out right eyes, is no pleasure to the flesh.

3. The doctrine of perseverance is also cross to the flesh; which is not only to begin, but to hold out; not only to bid fair, and to say, 'Would I had heaven,' but so to know Christ, to put on Christ, and walk with Christ, as to come to heaven. Indeed it is no great matter to begin to look for heaven; to begin to seek the Lord; to begin to shun sin. Oh! but it is a very great matter to continue with God's approbation! "My servant Caleb," saith God, "because he had another spirit with him, and hath followed me fully," (followed me always: he hath continually followed me,) "him will I bring into the land." Almost all the many thousands of the children of Israel in their generation, fell short of perseverance when they walked from Egypt towards the land of Canaan. Indeed they went to work at first pretty willingly; but they were very short-winded, they were quickly out of breath, and in their hearts they turned back again into Egypt.

It is an easy matter for a man to run hard for a spurt, for a furlong, for a mile or two. Oh! but to hold out for a hundred, for a thousand, for ten thousand miles! That man that doth this, must look to meet with cross, pain, and wearisomeness to the flesh; especially if as he goeth he meeteth with briars and quagmires and other encumbrances, that make his journey so much the more painful.

Nay, do you not see with your eyes daily, that perseverance is a very great part of the cross? Why else do men so soon grow weary? I could point out many, that after they have followed the ways of God about a twelvemonth, others it may be two, three, or four (some more, and some less) years, have been beat out of wind,—they have taken up their lodging and rest before they have got half-way to heaven, some in this, some in that sin; and have secretly, nay, sometimes openly said, that the way is too strait, the race too long, the religion too holy and they cannot hold out—'I can go no farther.'

And so likewise of the other three, namely, patience, self-denial, communion and

communication with and to the poor saints: how hard are these things? It is an easy matter to deny another man, but it is not so easy a matter to deny one's self; to deny myself out of love to God, to his gospel, to his saints, of this advantage and of that gain; nay, of that which otherwise I might lawfully do, were it not for offending them. That scripture is but seldom read, and seldomer put in practice, which saith, "I will eat no flesh while the world standeth, if it make my brother to offend." Again, "We then that are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak, and not to please ourselves."

But how froward, how hasty, how peevish, and self-resolved are the generality of professors at this day! Alas! how little considering the poor, unless it be to say, Be thou warmed and filled! But to give, is a seldom work! also especially to give to any poor. I tell you all these things are cross to flesh and blood; and that man that hath a watchful eye over the flesh, and also some considerable measure of strength against it, shall find his heart in these things like unto a starting horse, that is rid without a curbing bridle, ready to start at every thing that is offensive to him; yea, and ready to run away too, do what the rider can.

It is the cross which keepeth back those that are kept from heaven. I am persuaded, were it not for the cross, where we have one professor we should have twenty; but this cross!—that is it which spoileth all.

Some men, as I said before, when they come at the cross can go no farther; but back again to their sins they must go. Others stumble at it, and break their necks. Others again when they see the cross is approaching, turn aside to the left hand, or to the right hand, and so think to get to heaven another way. But they will be deceived. "For all that will live godly in Christ Jesus, shall," mark it, "shall suffer persecution." There are but few when they come at the cross, cry, 'Welcome cross!' as some of the martyrs did to the stake they were burned at.

Therefore, if thou meet with the cross in thy journey, in what manner soever it be, be

not daunted and say, Alas! what shall I do now? But rather take courage, knowing that by the cross is the way to the kingdom. Can a man believe in Christ, and not be hated by the devil? Can he make a profession of this Christ, and that sweetly, and convincingly, and the children of Satan hold their tongue? Can darkness agree with light? Or the devil endure that Christ Jesus should be honored both by faith and a heavenly conversation, and let that soul alone at quiet? Did you never read that the Dragon persecuted the woman? and that Christ saith, "In the world ye shall have tribulation."

THE NINTH DIRECTION.—Beg of God that he would do these two things for thee: First, enlighten thine understanding: and secondly, inflame thy will. If these two be but effectually done, there is no fear but what thou wilt go safe to heaven.

One of the great reasons why men and women do so little regard the other world, is, because they see so little of it. And the reason why they see so little of it, is, because they have their understanding darkened. And therefore, saith Paul, Do not you, believers walk as do other Gentiles, even "in the vanity of their minds; having their understandings darkened; being alienated from the life of God, through the ignorance (or foolishness) that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart." Walk not as those; run not with them. Alas! poor souls, they have their understandings darkened, their hearts blinded, and that is the reason they have such undervaluing thoughts of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the salvation of their souls. For when men do come to see the things of another world, what a God, what a Christ, what a heaven, and what an eternal glory there is to be enjoyed; also when they see that it is possible for them to have a share in it; I tell you it will make them run through thick and thin to enjoy it. Moses, having a sight of this, because his understanding was enlightened, feared not the wrath of the king, but chose rather to suffer afflictions with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season. He refused to be called the son of the king's daughter; accounting it wonderful riches to be accounted worthy so much as to suffer for Christ, with the

poor, despised saints; and that was because he saw him who is invisible, and had respect unto the recompense of reward. And this is that which the apostle usually prayeth for in his epistles for the saints, namely, That they might know what is the hope of God's calling, and the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints; and that they might be able to comprehend with all saints, what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height, and know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge.

Pray therefore that God would enlighten thy understanding. That will be a very great help unto thee. It will make thee endure many a hard brunt for Christ; as Paul saith, "After you were illuminated, ye endured a great fight of afflictions." You "took joyfully the spoiling of your goods, knowing in yourselves that ye have in heaven a better and an enduring substance." If there be ever such a rare jewel lying just in a man's way, yet if he see it not he will rather trample upon it than stoop for it, and it is because he sees it not. Why, so it is here; though heaven be worth ever so much, and thou hast ever so much need of it, yet if thou see it not, that is, have not thy understanding opened or enlightened to see, thou wilt not regard at all. Therefore cry to the Lord for enlightening grace, and say, 'Lord, open my blind eyes; Lord, take the veil off my dark heart; show me the things of the other world, and let me see the sweetness, glory, and excellency of them, for Christ's sake.' This is the first thing. The second is,

THE TENTH DIRECTION.—Cry to God that he would inflame thy will also with the things of the other world. For when a man's will is fully set to do such or such a thing, then it must be a very hard matter that shall hinder that man from bringing about his end. When Paul's will was set resolvedly to go up to Jerusalem, (though it was signified to him before, what he should there suffer,) he was not daunted at all. Nay, saith he, "I am ready (or willing) not only to be bound, but also to die at Jerusalem for the name of the Lord Jesus." His will was inflamed by love to Christ; and therefore, all the persuasions that could be used wrought nothing at all.

Your self-willed people, nobody knows what to do with them. We use to say of such, 'He will have his own will do all that you can.' Indeed to have such a will for heaven, is an admirable advantage to a man that undertaketh a race hither. A man that is resolved, and hath his will fixed, saith, 'I will do my best to advantage myself; I will do my worst to hinder my enemies; I will not give out as long as I can stand; I will have it, or I will lose my life.' So Job, "Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him." So Jacob, "I will not let thee go, except thou bless me." 'I will, I will, I will!' O this blessed inflamed will for heaven! What is like it? If a man be willing, then any argument shall be matter of encouragement; but if unwilling, then any argument shall give discouragement. This is seen both in saints and sinners; in them that are the children of God, and also those that are the children of the devil. As,

1. The saints of old, being willing and resolved for heaven, what could stop them? Could fire and faggot, sword or halter, stinking dungeons, whips, bears, bulls, lions, cruel rackings, stoning, starving, nakedness? In all these things they were more than conquerors, through him that loved them; who had also made them willing in the day of his power.

2. See again, on the other side, the children of the devil, because they are not willing, how many shifts and starting holes they will have. 'I have married a wife;' 'I have a farm;' 'I shall offend my landlord;' 'I shall offend my master;' 'I shall lose my trading;' 'I shall lose my pride, my pleasures;' 'I shall be mocked and scoffed,—therefore I dare not come.'—'I,' saith another, 'will stay till I am older, till my children are out, till I am got a little afore-hand in the world; till I have done this, and that, and the other business.' But alas! the thing is, they are not willing; for were they but soundly willing, these, and a thousand such as these, would hold them no faster than the cords held Samson when he broke them like burnt flax.

I tell you the will is all; that is one of the chief things which turns the wheel either backwards or forwards; and God knoweth that full well, and so likewise doth the

devil; and therefore they both endeavor very much to strengthen the will of their servants. God is for making his a willing people to serve him; and the devil doth what he can to possess the will and affection of those that are his with love to sin. And therefore when Christ comes close to the matter, indeed, saith he, "Ye will not come to me." "How often would I have gathered you as a hen doth her chickens; but ye would not." The devil had possessed their wills and so long he was sure enough of them.

O therefore cry hard to God to inflame thy will for heaven and Christ. Thy will, I say, if that be rightly set for heaven, thou wilt not be beat off with discouragements; and this was the reason that when Jacob wrestled with the angel, though he lost a limb as it were; (for the hollow of his thigh was put out of joint as he wrestled with him;) yet, saith he, "I will not" mark, "I WILL NOT LET THEE GO, EXCEPT THOU BLESS ME." Get thy will tipt with the heavenly grace, and resolution against all discouragements, and then thou goest full speed for heaven; but if thou falter in thy will, and be not sound there, thou wilt run hobbling and halting all the way thou runnest, and also to be sure thou wilt fall short at last. The Lord give thee a will and courage.

Thus have I done with directing thee how to run to the kingdom. Be sure thou keep in memory what I have said unto thee lest thou lose thy way. But because I would have thee think of them, take all in short in this little bit of paper. 1. Get into the way. 2. Then study on it. 3. Then strip, and lay aside every thing that would hinder. 4. Beware of by-paths. 5. Cry hard to God for an enlightened heart, and a willing mind;—and God give thee a prosperous journey!

CHAPTER III.

MOTIVES TO PURSUE THIS HEAVENLY COURSE.

Yet before I do quite take my leave of thee, let me give thee a few motives to take along with thee. It may be they will be as good as a pair of spurs to prick on thy lumpish heart in this rich journey.

THE FIRST MOTIVE.—Consider there is no way but this: thou must either win or lose. If thou winnest, then heaven, God, Christ, glory, ease, peace, life, yea, life eternal, is thine; thou shalt be made equal to the angels in heaven; thou shalt sorrow no more, sigh no more, feel no more pain; thou shalt be out of the reach of sin, hell, death, the devil, the grave, and whatever else may endeavor thy hurt. But contrariwise, and if thou lose, then thy loss is heaven, glory, God, Christ, ease, peace, and whatever else tendeth to make eternity comfortable to the saints; besides, thou procurest eternal death, sorrow, pain, blackness and darkness, fellowship with devils, together with the everlasting damnation of thy own soul.

THE SECOND MOTIVE.—Consider that this devil, this hell, death and damnation, follow after thee as hard as they can drive, and have their commission so to do by the law, against which thou hast sinned; and therefore, for the Lord's sake, make haste!

THE THIRD MOTIVE.—If they seize upon thee before thou get to the city of Refuge, they will put an everlasting stop to thy journey. This also cries, Run for it!

THE FOURTH MOTIVE.—Know also, that now heaven's gates, the heart of Christ, with his arms, are wide open to receive thee. O methinks that this consideration, that the devil followeth after to destroy, and that Christ standeth open-armed to receive, should make thee reach out and fly with all haste and speed! And therefore,

THE FIFTH MOTIVE.—Keep thine eye upon the prize. Be sure that thy eyes be continually upon the profit thou art like to get.

The reason why men are so apt to faint in their race for heaven, lieth chiefly in either of these two things: They do not seriously consider the worth of the prize; or else if they do, they are afraid it is too good for them. But most lose heaven for want of

considering the prize and the worth of it. And therefore, that thou mayst not do the like,

1. Keep thine eye much upon the excellency, the sweetness, the beauty, the comfort, the peace, that is to be had there by those that win the prize. This was that which made the apostle run through any thing!—good report, evil report, persecution, affliction, hunger, nakedness, peril by sea, and peril by land, bonds and imprisonments. Also it made others endure to be stoned, sawn asunder, to have their eyes bored out with augers, their bodies broiled on gridirons, their tongues cut out of their mouths, to be boiled in cauldrons, thrown to the wild beasts, burned at the stake, whipped at posts, and a thousand other fearful torments; "while they looked not at the things which are seen," (as the things of this world,) "but at the things which are not seen: for the things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal." O this word, ETERNAL! it was that made them so firm, that when they might have had deliverance, they would not accept it, for they knew that in the world to come they should have a better resurrection.

2. And do not let the thoughts of the rareness of the place make thee say in thy heart, 'This is too good for me;' for I tell thee, heaven is prepared for whosoever will accept of it, and they shall be entertained with hearty good welcome. Consider therefore, that as bad as thou have got thither. Thither, went scrubbed beggarly Lazarus, &c. Nay, it is prepared for the poor. "Hearken, my beloved brethren," saith James; that is, take notice of it, "Hath not God chosen the poor of this world, rich in faith, and heirs of the kingdom?" Therefore, take heart, and run, man.

THE SIXTH MOTIVE.—Think much of them that are gone before. First, How really they go into the kingdom. Secondly, How safe they are in the arms of Jesus. Would they be here again for a thousand worlds? Or if they were, would they be afraid that God would not make them welcome? Thirdly, What would they judge of thee, if they knew thy heart began to fail thee in thy journey, or thy sins began to

allure thee, and to persuade thee to stop thy race? Would they not call thee a thousand fools, and say, 'O that he did but see what we see, feel what we feel, and taste of the dainties that we taste of! Oh! if he were one quarter of an hour to behold, to see, to feel, to taste, and enjoy but the thousandth part of what we enjoy, what would he do? what would he suffer? what would he leave undone? Would he favor sin? Would he love this world below? Would he be afraid of friends, or shrink at the most fearful threatenings that the greatest tyrants could invent to give him?' Nay, those who have had but a sight of these things by faith, when they have been as far off from them as heaven from earth, yet they have been able to say with a comfortable and merry heart, as the bird that sings in the spring, that this and more shall not stop them from running to heaven.

Sometimes, when my base heart hath been inclining to this world, and to loiter in my journey towards heaven, the very consideration of the glorious saints and angels in heaven; what they enjoy, and what low thoughts they have of the things of this world together; how they would befool me if they did but know that my heart was drawing back, hath caused me to rush forward, to disdain these poor, low, empty, beggarly things, and to say to my soul, 'Come, soul, let us not be weary; let us see what this heaven is; let us even venture all for it, and try if that will quit the cost. Surely Abraham, David, Paul, and the rest of the saints of God, were as wise as any are now, and yet they lost all for this glorious kingdom. O therefore, throw away sinful lusts, follow after righteousness, love the Lord Jesus, devote thyself to his fear;—I'll warrant thee he will give thee a goodly recompense.' Reader, what sayest thou to this? Art thou resolved to follow me? Nay, resolve, if thou canst, to get before me. So run, that ye may obtain.

THE SEVENTH MOTIVE.—To encourage thee a little farther, Set to the work, and when thou hast run thyself down weary, then the Lord Jesus will take thee up, and carry thee. Is not this enough to make any poor soul begin his race? Thou perhaps criest, 'Oh! but I am feeble,' 'I am lame, &c.' Well, but Christ hath a bosom:

consider, therefore, that when thou hast run thyself down weary, he will put thee in his bosom. "He shall gather the lambs with his arms, and carry them in his bosom; and shall gently lead those that are with young." This is the way that fathers take to encourage their children; saying, Run, sweet babe, until thou art weary, and then I will take thee up and carry thee. "He will gather his lambs with his arms, and carry them in his bosom." When they are weary, they shall ride!

THE EIGHTH MOTIVE.—Or else he will convey new strength from heaven into thy soul, which will be as well. "The youths shall faint and be weary, and the young men shall utterly fall. But they that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength: they shall mount up with wings like eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; and they shall walk, and not faint." What shall I say besides, that hath not already been said? Thou shalt have good and easy lodging, good and wholesome diet, the bosom of Christ to lie in, the joys of heaven to feed on. Shall I speak of the satisfaction and of the duration of all these? Verily to describe them to the height is a work too hard for me to do.

CHAPTER IV.

APPLICATION OF THE POINT

Thus you see I have here spoken something, though but little. Now I shall come to make some use and application of what hath been said, and so conclude.

THE FIRST USE.—You see here, that he that will go to heaven must run for it; yea, and not only run, but "so run;" that is, as I have said, run earnestly, run continually, strip off every thing that would hinder in his race with the rest. Well then do you so run.

1. And now let us examine a little. Art thou got into the right way? Art thou in Christ's righteousness? Do not say, 'Yes,' in thy heart, when, in truth, there is no

such matter. It is a dangerous thing, you know, for a man to think he is in the right way, when he is in the wrong. It is the next way for him to lose his way; and not only so, but if he run for heaven, as thou sayest thou dost, even to lose that too. Oh! this is the misery of most men, to persuade themselves that they run right, when they have never one foot in the way! The Lord give thee understanding here, or else thou art undone for ever.

Prithee, soul, search when was it thou turned out of thy sins and righteousness, into the righteousness of Jesus Christ. I say, dost thou see thyself in him? and is he more precious to thee than the whole world? Is thy mind always musing on him? and also to be walking with him? Dost thou count his company more precious than the whole world? Dost thou count all things but poor, lifeless, empty, vain things, without communion with him? Doth his company sweeten all things; and his absence embitter all things? Soul, I beseech thee be serious, and lay it to heart, and do not take things of such weighty concernment as the salvation or damnation of thy soul, without good ground.

2. Art thou unladen of the things of this world, as pride, pleasures, profits, lusts, vanities? What! dost thou think to run fast enough, with the world, thy sins, and lusts, in thy heart? I tell thee, soul, they that have laid all aside, every weight, every sin, and are got into the nimblest posture, they find work enough to run; so to run as to hold out.

To run through all that opposition, all the jostles, all the rubs, over all the stumbling blocks, over all the snares, from all the entanglements that the devil, sin, the world, and their own hearts, lay before them; I tell thee, if thou art going heavenward, thou wilt find it no small or easy matter. Art thou therefore discharged and unladen of these things? Never talk of going to heaven if thou art not. It is to be feared thou wilt be found among the many that "will seek to enter in, and shall not be able."

THE SECOND USE.—If so, then in the next place, What will become of them that

are grown weary before they are got half way thither? Why, man, it is he that holdeth out to the end that must be saved; it is he that overcometh that shall inherit all things; it is not every one that begins. Agrippa gave a fair step for a sudden: he steps almost into the body of Christ in less than half an hour. "Thou," saith he to Paul, "hast almost persuaded me to be a Christian." Ah! but it was but almost; and so he had as good have been never a whit; he stept fair indeed, but yet he stopt short; he was hot while he was at it, but he was quickly out of wind. O this but "almost!" I tell you this but "almost," lost him his soul.

Methinks I have seen sometimes how these poor wretches that get but almost to heaven, how fearfully their "almost," and their "but almost," will torment them in hell; when they shall cry out in bitterness of their souls, saying, 'Almost a Christian! I was almost got into the kingdom, almost out of the hands of the devil, almost out of my sins, almost from under the curse of God; almost, and that was all; almost, but not altogether. Oh! that I should be almost to heaven, and should not go quite through!' Friend, it is a sad thing to sit down before we are in heaven, and to grow weary before we come to the place of rest; and if it should be thy case, I am sure thou dost not so run as to obtain. But again,

THE THIRD USE.—In the next place, What then will become of them that some time since were running post-haste to heaven, (insomuch that they seemed to outstrip many,) but now are running as fast back again? Do you think those ever come thither? What! to run back again, back again to sin, to the world, to the devil, back again to the lusts of the flesh? Oh! "It had been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than after they have known it, to turn" (to turn back again) "from the holy commandment." Those men shall not only be damned for sin, but for professing to all the world that sin is better than Christ. For the man that runs back again, doth as good as say, 'I have tried Christ, and I have tried sin, and I do not find so much profit in Christ as in sin.' I say, this man declareth this, even by his running back again. Oh, sad! What a doom they will have, who were almost at

heaven-gates, and then run back again! "If any draw back," saith Christ, "my soul shall have no pleasure in him." Again, "No man having put his hand to the plough," (that is, set forward in ways of God,) "and looking back, (turning back again,) is fit for the kingdom of heaven." And if not fit for the kingdom of heaven, then for certain he must needs be fit for the fire of hell. And therefore, saith the apostle, those that bring forth these apostatizing fruits, as briers and thorns, are rejected, being nigh unto cursing; whose end is to be burned.

Oh! there is never another Christ to save them, by bleeding and dying for them! And if they shall not escape that neglect, then how shall they escape, that reject and turn their back upon so great a salvation? And if the righteous, that is, they that run for it, will find work enough to get to heaven, then where will the ungodly backsliding sinner appear? Oh! if Judas the traitor, or Francis Spira the backslider, were but now alive in the world, to whisper these men in the ear a little, and tell them what it hath cost their souls for backsliding, surely it would stick by them, and make them afraid of running back again, so long as they had one day to live in this world!

THE FOURTH USE.—So again, fourthly, How like to those men's sufferings will those be, that have all this while sat still, and have not so much as set one foot forward to the kingdom of heaven! Surely he that backslideth, and he that sitteth still in sin, are both of one mind; the one will not stir, because he loveth his sins, and the things of this world; the other runs back again, because he loveth his sins, and the things of this world. Is it not one and the same thing? They are all one here, and shall not one and the same hell hold them hereafter? He is an ungodly one that never looked after Christ, and he is an ungodly one that did once look after him, and then ran quite back again: and therefore that word must certainly drop out of the mouth of Christ against them both, "Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels."

THE FIFTH USE.—Again, here you may see, in the next place, that if they that will

have heaven, must run for it; then this calls aloud to those who began but a while since to run, I say, for them to mend their pace if they intend to win. You know that they which come hindmost, had need run fastest. Friend, I tell thee, that, there be those that have run ten years to thy one, nay, twenty to five, and yet if thou talk with them, sometimes they will say, they doubt but they shall come late enough. How then will it be with thee? Look to it therefore that thou delay no time, not an hour's time, but part speedily with all, with every thing that is a hindrance to thee in thy journey, and run; yea, and so run that thou mayst obtain!

THE SIXTH USE.—Again, sixthly, You that are old professors, take you heed that the young striplings of Jesus, that began to strip but the other day, do not outrun you, so as to have that scripture fulfilled on you, "The first shall be last, and the last first:" which will be a shame to you, and a credit for them. What! for a young soldier to be more courageous than he that hath been used to wars! To you that are hindermost, I say, strive to outrun them that are before you; and to you that are foremost, I say, hold your ground, and keep before them in faith and love, if possible. For indeed, that is the right running, for one to strive to outrun another; even for the hindermost to endeavor to overtake the foremost; and he that is before should be sure to lay out himself to keep his ground, even to the very utmost. But then,

THE SEVENTH USE.—Again, How basely do they behave themselves, how unlike they are to win, that think it enough to keep company with the hindmost! There are some men that profess themselves such as run for heaven as well as any; yet if there be but any lazy, slothful, cold, half-hearted professors in the country, they will be sure to take example by them. They think, if they can but keep pace with them they shall do fair; but these do not consider that the hindmost lose the prize. You may know it if you will, that it cost the foolish virgins dear for their coming too late. "They that were ready, went in with him: and the door was shut. Afterward," mark "afterward came the other (the foolish) virgins, saying, Lord, Lord, open to us. But he answered and said, Depart, I know you not." 'Depart, lazy professors! slothful

professors!'

Oh! methinks the word of God is so plain for the overthrow of your lazy professors, that it is to be wondered men do not take more notice of it. How was Lot's wife served for running lazily, and for giving but one look behind her, after the things she left in Sodom? How was Esau served for staying too long before he came for the blessing? And how were they served that are mentioned in the 13th of Luke, for staying till the door was shut? Also the foolish virgins. A heavy after-groan will they give that have thus stayed too long! It turned Lot's wife into a pillar of salt; it made Esau weep with an exceeding loud and bitter cry; it made Judas hang himself: yea, and it will make thee curse the day in which thou wast born, if thou miss of the kingdom, as thou wilt certainly do, if this be thy course. But,

THE EIGHTH USE.—Again, How, and if thou by thy lazy running should'st not only destroy thyself, but also thereby be the cause of the damnation of some others? For thou, being a professor, thou must think that others will take notice of thee; and because thou art but a poor, cold, lazy runner, and one that seeks to drive the world and pleasure along with thee; why, thereby others will think of doing so too. 'Nay,' say they, 'why may not we, as well as he? He is a professor, and yet he seeks for pleasures, riches, profits; he loveth vain company, and he is so and so, and professeth that he is going for heaven; yea, and he saith also he doth not fear but he shall have entertainment; let us therefore keep pace with him, we shall fare no worse than he!' O how fearful a thing will it be, if thou shalt be instrumental to the ruin of others by thy halting in the way of righteousness! Look to it, thou wilt have strength little enough to appear before God, to give an account of the loss of thy own soul; thou needest not to have to give an account for others, why thou didst stop them from entering in. How wilt thou answer that saying, 'You would not enter in yourselves, and them that would, you hindered?' For that saying will be eminently fulfilled on them that through their own idleness do keep themselves out of heaven, and by giving others the same example, hinder them also.

THE NINTH USE.—Therefore, now to speak a word to both of you, and so I shall conclude.

1. I beseech you, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that none of you do run so lazily in the way to heaven as to hinder either yourselves or others. I know that even he who runs laziest, if he should see a man running for a temporal life, who should so much neglect his own well-being in this world, as to venture, when he is running for his life, to pick up, here and there, a lock of wool that hangeth by the wayside, or to step, now and then, aside out of the way to gather up a straw or two, or any rotten stick; I say, if he should do this when he is running for his life, thou wouldst condemn him. And dost thou not condemn thyself that dost the very same in effect? nay worse; that loiterest in thy race, notwithstanding thy soul, heaven, glory, and all is at stake? Have a care, have a care, poor wretched sinner; have a care!

2. If yet there shall be any that, notwithstanding this advice, will still be flagging and loitering in the way to the kingdom of glory, be thou so wise as not to take example by them. Learn of no man farther than he followeth Christ. But look unto Jesus, who is not only the author and finisher of faith, but who did, for the joy that was set before him, endure the cross, despise the shame, and is now set down at the right hand of God. I say, look to no man to learn of him, any farther than he followeth Christ. "Be ye followers of me," saith Paul, "even as I am of Christ." Though he was an eminent man, yet his exhortation was, that none should follow him any farther than he followed Christ.

PROVOCATION.—Now that you may be provoked to run with the foremost, take notice of this. When Lot and his wife were running from cursed Sodom to the mountains, to save their lives, it is said, that his wife looked back from behind him, and she became a pillar of salt. And yet you see that neither her practice, nor the judgment of God that fell upon her for the same, would cause Lot to look behind him. I have sometimes wondered at Lot in this particular. His wife looked behind

her and died immediately; but let what would become of her, Lot would not so much as look behind him to see her. We do not read that he did so much as once look where she was, or what was become of her. His heart was indeed upon his journey, and well it might be. There was the mountain before him, and the fire and brimstone behind him! His life lay at stake, and he had lost it if he had but looked behind him. Do thou so run: and in thy race remember Lot's wife, and remember her doom; and remember for what that doom did overtake her; and remember that God made her an example for all lazy runners, to the end of the world; and take heed thou fall not after the same example! But if this will not provoke thee,

Consider thus, 1. Thy soul, is thy own soul, that is either to be saved or lost. Thou shalt not lose my soul by thy laziness; it is thy own soul, thy own ease, thy own peace, thy own advantage or disadvantage. If it were my own that thou art desired to be good unto, methinks reason should move thee somewhat to pity it. But alas! it is thy own; thy own soul! "What shall it profit a man if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?" God's people wish well to the soul of others, and wilt not thou wish well to thy own? And if this will not provoke thee, then,

Think again, 2. If thou lose thy soul, it is thou also that must bear the blame. It made Cain stark mad to consider that he had not looked to his brother Abel's soul. How much more will it perplex thee, to think, that thou hadst not a care of thy own? And if this will not provoke thee to bestir thyself,

Think again, 3. That if thou wilt not run, the people of God are resolved to deal with thee even as Lot dealt with his wife; that is, leave thee behind them. It may be thou hast a father, mother, brother, &c, going post haste to heaven. Wouldst thou be willing to be left behind them? Surely no.

Again, 4. Will it not be a dishonor to thee to see the very boys and girls in the country, to have more wit than thyself? It may be the servants of some men, as the horsekeeper, ploughman, scullion, &c, are more looking after heaven than their

masters. I am apt to think sometimes, that more servants than masters, that more tenants than landlords, will inherit the kingdom of heaven. But is not this a shame for them that are such? I am persuaded you scorn that your servants should say that they are wiser than you in the things of the world; and yet I am bold to say, that many of them are wiser than you in the things of the world to come, which are of greater concernment.

EXPOSTULATION.—Well then, sinner, what sayest thou? Where is thy heart? Wilt thou run? Art thou resolved to strip? Or art thou not? Think quickly, man! It is no dallying in this matter. Confer not with flesh and blood. Look up to heaven, and see how thou likest it; also to hell, (of which thou mayst understand something in my book, called Sighs from Hell, or, The Groans of a Lost Soul, which I wish thee to read seriously over,[A]) and accordingly devote thyself. If thou dost not know the way, inquire at the word of God; if thou wantest company, cry for God's Spirit; if thou wantest encouragement, entertain the promises. But be sure thou begin betimes; get into the way, run apace, and hold out to the end; and the Lord give thee a prosperous journey!

FAREWELL.

THE END.

[A] This book will be found in the volume of Bunyan's AWAKENING WORKS, published by this Society.

*** END OF THE PROJECT GUTENBERG EBOOK THE HEAVENLY FOOTMAN; OR, A DESCRIPTION OF THE MAN THAT GETS TO HEAVEN ***

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