

Death's Duel

by

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1630



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John Donne - The Last Sermon

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DEATH'S DUEL

**OR, A CONSOLATION TO THE SOULE, AGAINST THE DYING
LIFE, AND LIVING DEATH OF THE BODY**

Delivered in a Sermon at White-Hall, before the Kings Majesty, in the beginning of Lent [Feb. 25], 1630, Being his last Sermon, and called by Majesties household The Doctors Owne Funerall Sermon

TO THE READER

[Preface to the **1st** edition (1632) by Richard Redmer, the publisher.]

This Sermon was, by Sacred Authoritie, stiled the Authors owne funeral Sermon. Most fitly: whether wee respect the time, or the matter. It was preached not many dayes before his death; as if, having done this, there remained nothing for him to doe, but to die: And the matter is, of Death; the occasion and subject of all funerall Sermons. It hath beene observed of this Reverent Man, That his Faculty in Preaching continually encreased: and, That as hee exceeded others at first; so, at last hee exceeded himselfe. This is his last Sermon; I will not say, it is therefore his best; because, all his were excellent. Yet thus much: A dying Mans words, if they concerne our selves, doe usually make the deepest impression, as being spoken most feelingly, and with least affectation. Now, whom doth it not concerne to learn, both the danger, and benefit of death? Death is every mans enemy, and intends hurt to all; though to many, hee be occasion of greatest goods. This enemy wee must all combate dying; whom hee living did almost conquer; having discovered the utmost of his power, the utmost of his cruelties May wee make such use of this and other the like preparatives. That neither death, whensoever it shall come, may seeme terrible; nor life tedious, how long soever it shall last. R.

DEATH'S DUEL

PSALME 68. VERS. 20. *In finè. And unto God the (LORD) belong the issues of death. i.e. From death.*

BUILDINGS Stand by the benefit of their *foundations* that susteine and *support* them, and of their *butteresses* that comprehend and *embrace* them, and of their *contignations* that knit and unite them: The *foundations* suffer them not to *sinke*, the *butteresses* suffer them not to *swerve*, and the *contignation* and knitting suffers them not to cleave; The body of our building is in the former part of this verse: It is this; hee that *is our God* is the *God of salvation; ad salutes*, of salvations, in the plurall, so it is in the originall; the *God* that gives us spirituall and temporall salvation too. But of this *building, the foundation, the butteresses, the contignations* are in this part of the *verse*, which constitutes *our text*, and in the three divers *acceptations* of the words amongst our expositors. *Unto God the Lord belong the issues from death. For first the foundation* of this *building*, (that our *God* is the *God of all salvations*) is laid in this; That unto this *God the Lord belong the issues of death*, that is, it is in his power to give us an *issue* and deliverance, even then when wee are brought to the jawes and teeth of death, and to the lippes of that whirlpoole, the grave. And so in this *acceptation*, this *exitus mortis*, this *issue of death* is *liberatio à morte, a deliverance from death*, and this is the most obvious and Most ordinary *acceptation* of these words, and that upon which our *translation* laies hold, *The issues from death*. And then *secondly* the *butteresses* that comprehend and settle this building, That hee that is *our God*, is the *God of all salvations*, are thus raised; *Unto God the Lord belong the issues of death*, that is, the disposition and *manner of our death*: what kinde of *issue* and *transmigration* wee shall have out of this world, whether prepared or sudden, whether violent or naturall, whether in our perfect senses or shaken and disordered by sicknes; there is no condemnation to bee argued out of that, no judgement to bee made upon that, for howsoever they dye, *precious in his sight is the death of his saints*, and with him are *the issues of death, the wayes* of our departing out of this life are in his *hands*. And so in this *sense* of the words, *this exitus mortis, the issue of death*, is *liberatio in morte, A deliverance in death*; Not that *God will deliver us* from dying, but that hee will *have a care* of us in the *houre of death*, of what kinde soever our passage be. And in this *sense* and *acceptation* of the words, the naturall frame and contexture doth well and pregnantly administer unto us; And then *lastly* the *contignation* and knitting of this building, that hee that is *our God* is the *God of all salvations*, consists in this, *Unto this God the Lord belong the issues of death*, that is, that this *God the Lord* having united and knit *both natures in one*, and being *God*, having also *come* into this world, in our *flesh*, he could have no other meanes to save us, he could have no other *issue* out of this world, nor *returne* to his former glory, but by *death*; And so in this sense, this *exitus mortis*, this *issue of death*, is *liberatio per mortem, a deliverance by death*, by the death of this *God our Lord Christ Jesus*. And this is Saint *Augustines* *acceptation* of the words, and those many and great persons that have adhered to him. In all these three lines then, we shall looke upon these words; *First*, as the *God of power*, the *Almighty Father* rescues his servants from the jawes of death: *And then* as the *God of mercy*, the glorious Sonne rescued us, by taking upon himselfe *this issue of death*: *And then* betweene these two, as the *God of comfort*, the *holy Ghost* rescues us from all discomfort by his blessed impressions before hand, that what manner of death soever be ordeined for us, yet this *exitus mortis* shall bee *introitus in vitam*, our *issue in death* shall be an *entrance into everlasting life*. And these three considerations, our deliverance *à morte, in morte, per mortem, from death, in death, and by death*, will abundantly doe all the offices of the *foundations*, of the *butteresses*, of the *contignation* of this our building; That he that is our *God*, is the *God of all salvations, because unto this God the Lord belong the issues of death*.

First, then, we consider this *exitus mortis*, to bee *liberatio à morte*, that with *God the Lord* are the *issues of death*, and therefore in all our deaths, and deadly calamities of this life, wee may justly *hope* of a good *issue* from him. And all our *periods and transitions* in this life, are so many passages *from death to death*; our very *birth* and entrance into this life, is *exitus à morte, an issue from death*, for in our mothers

wombe wee are *dead so*, as that wee doe *not know wee* live, not so much as wee doe in our *sleepe*, neither is there any *grave* so close, or so *putrid a prison*, as the *wombe* would be unto us, if we stayed in it *beyond* our time, or dyed there *before* our time. In the grave *the wormes* doe not kill us, wee *breed* and feed, and then kill those wormes which wee our selves produc'd. In the *wombe* the dead child kills the *Mother* that conceived it, and is a *murtherer*, nay a *parricide*, even after it is dead. And if wee bee not dead so in the *wombe*, so as that being dead wee kill her that gave us our first life, our life of *vegetation*. yet wee are dead so, as *Davids Idols* are dead. In the *wombe* wee have *eyes and see not, eares and heare not*; There in the *wombe* wee are fitted for *workes of darkness* all the while deprived of light: And there in the *wombe* wee are taught *cruelty*, by being *fed with blood*, and may be *damned*, though we be *never borne*. Of our very making in the *wombe*, *David sayes, I am wonderfully and fearefully made*, and, *Such knowledge is too excellent for me*, for even that is *the Lords doing*, and it is *wonderfull in our eyes*; *Ipse fecit nos*, it is *hee that hath made us*, and *not wee our selves* nor our parents neither; *Thy hands have made me and fashioned me round about*, saith *Job*, and (as the *originall word is*) *thou hast taken paines about me*, and yet, sayes he, *thou doest destroy me*. Though I bee the *Master-peece* of the greatest *Master* (man is so), yet if thou doe no more forme, if thou leave me where thou madest mee, destruction will follow. The *wombe* which should be the *house of life*, becomes *death* it selfe, if *God* leave us there. That which *God* threatens so often, the *shutting of the womb*, is not so heavy, nor so discomfortable a *curse* in the *first*, as in the *latter* shutting, nor in the shutting of *barrenness* as in the shutting of *weakenes*, when *children are come to the birth*, and there is not *strength to bring forth*.

It is the *exaltation of misery*, to fall from a *neare hope of happiness* And in that vehement imprecation, the *Prophet* expresses the highest of *Gods* anger, *give them ô Lord, what wilt thou give them?* give them a *miscarrying wombe*. Therefore as soone as wee are men, (that is, *inanimated*, quickened in the *womb*) thogh we cannot our selves, our parents have reason to say in our behalf, *wretched man that he is, who shall deliver him from this body of death?* for even the *wombe* is a *body of death*, if there bee no deliverer. It must be he that said to *Jeremy*, *Before I formed thee I knew thee, and before thou camest out of the wombe I sanctified thee*. Wee are not sure that there was no kinde of shippe nor boate to fish in, nor to passe by, till *God* prescribed *Noah* that absolute form of the *Arke*. That word which the *holy Ghost* by *Moses* useth for the *Arke*, is common to all kinde of *boates*, *Thebah*, and is the same word that *Moses* useth for the *boate* that he was *exposed in*, That *his mother layed him in an arke of bulrushes*. But we are sure that *Eve* had no *Midwife* when she was *delivered of Cain* therefore shee might well say, *possedi virum à Domino, I have gotten a man from the Lord*, wholly, entirely from the *Lord*; It is the *Lord* that *enabled* me to *conceive*, *The Lord that infus'd a quickening soule* into that conception, the *Lord* that *brought into the world* that which himself *had quickened*, without all this might *Eve* say, *My body had bene but the house of death, and Domini Domini sunt exitus mortis, to God the Lord belong the issues of death*.

But then this *exitus a morte*, is but *introitus in mortem* this *issue*, this deliverance from *that death*, the death of the *wombe*, is an *entrance*, a delivering over to *another death*, the manifold deaths of this world. Wee have a winding sheete in our Mothers *wombe*, which growes with us from our conception, and wee come into the world, wound up in that *winding sheet*, for wee come to *seeke a grave*; And as prisoners discharged of actions may lie for fees, so when the *wombe* hath discharged us, yet we are bound to it by *cordes* of flesh by such a *string*, as that wee cannot goe thence, nor stay there; wee celebrate our owne funeralls with cries, even at our birth; as though our *threescore and ten years life* were spent in our mothers labour, and our circle made up in the first point thereof, we begge our *Baptisme*, with another *Sacrament*, with *teares*; And we come into a world that lasts many ages, but wee last not; *in domo Patris*, says our *Saviour*, speaking of *heaven*, *multæ mansiones, there are many mansions*, divers and durable, so that if a man cannot possesse a *martyrs* house, (he hath shed no blood for *Christ*) yet hee may have a

Confessors, he hath bene ready to glorifie *God* in the *shedding of his blood*. And if a woman cannot possesse a *virgins house* (she hath embrac'd the *holy state of marriage*) yet she may have a *matrons house*, she hath brought forth and brought up *children in the feare of God*. *In domo patris, in my fathers house*, in heaven there *are many mansions*; but here upon earth the *sonne of man hath not where to lay his head*, sayes he himselfe. *Nonne terram dedit filiis hominum?* how then hath *God given this earth* to the *sonnes of men?* hee hath given them *earth* for their *materialls* to bee made of earth, and hee hath given them *earth* for their grave and sepulture, to *returne* and resolve to *earth*, but not for their *possession*: *Here wee have no continuing citty*, nay no *cottage* that continues, nay no persons, no bodies that continue. Whatsoever moved *Saint Jerome* to call the journies of the *Israelites, in the wilderness* mansions; The word (the word is *Nasang*) signifies but a *journey*, but a peregrination. Even the *Israel of God* hath no mansions; but journies, pilgrimages in this life. By that measure did *Jacob* measure his life to *Pharoah*; the dayes of the *years of my pilgrimage*. And though the *Apostle* would not say *morimur*, that, whilst wee *are in the body* wee *are dead*, yet hee sayes, *Peregrinamur*, whilst wee are *in the body*, wee are but in a *pilgrimage*, and wee are *absent from the Lord*; hee might have said *dead*, for this whole world is but an *universall church-yard, but one common grave*, and the life and motion that the greatest persons have in it, is but as the shaking of buried bodies in the grave, by an *earth-quake*. That which we call life, is but *Hebdomada mortium*, a *weeke of deaths*, seaven dayes, seaven periods of our life spent in dying, *a dying seaven times over*; and there is an end. *Our birth dies in infancy*, and our *infancy* dies in *youth*, and *youth* and the rest die in *age*, and *age* also dies, and *determines all*. Nor doe all these, youth out of infancy, or age out of youth arise so, as a *Phoenix* out of the *ashes* of another *Phoeix* formerly dead, but as a *waspe* or a *serpent* out of a *caryon*, or as a *Snake* out of *dung*. *Our youth is worse than our infancy*, and our *age worse than our youth*. *Our youth is hungry and thirsty*, after those *sinnes*, which our *infancy knew not*; And our age is *sory* and *angry*, that it *cannot pursue* those *sinnes* which our *youth did*; and besides, al the way, so many deaths, that is, so many deadly calamities accompany every condition, and every period of this life, as that death it selfe would bee an ease to them that suffer them: Upon this sense doth *Job* wish that *God had not given him an issue* from the *first death*, from the *wombe*, *Wherefore hast thou brought me forth out of the wombe? O that I had given up the Ghost, and no eye scene me! I should have beene as though I had not beene*. And not only the impatient *Israelites* in their murmuring (*would to God wee had died by the hand of the Lord in the land of Egypt*) but *Elijah* himselfe, when he fled from *Jesabell*, and went for his life, as that text sayes, under the *Juniper tree*, requested that *hee might die*, and said, *it is enough now, O Lord, take away my life*. So *Jonah* justifies his impatience, nay his anger towards God himselfe. *Now ô Lord take, I beseech thee, my life from mee, for it is better to die than to live*. And when *God* asked him, *doest thou well to be angry for this*, he replies, *I doe well to be angry, even unto death*. How much worse a death than death, is this life, which so good men would so often change for death! But if my case bee as *Saint Paules* case, *quotidiè morior*, that *I die dayly*, that something heavier than death falls upon me every day; If my case be *Dauids* case, *tota die mortificamur*; all the day long wee are killed, that not onely every day, but every houre of the day some thing heavier than death falls upon me, though that bee true of me, *Conceptus in peccatis, I was shapen in iniquity, and in sinne did my mother conceive me*, (there I dyed one death), though that be true of me (*Natus filius iræ*) I was borne not onely the child of sinne, but the *child of wrath*, of the wrath of *God* for sinne, which is a heavier death; Yet *Domini Domini sunt exitus mortis*, with *God the Lord are the issues of death*, and after a *Job*, and a *Joseph*, and a *Jeremie*, and a *Daniel*, I cannot doubt of a deliverance. And if no other deliverance conduce more to his glory and my good, yet he hath the *keys of death*, and hee can let me out at that dore, that is, deliver me from the manifold deaths of this world, the *omni die* and the *tota die*, the *every days death* and *every houres death*, by that *one death*, the *finall dissolution* of body and soule, the end of all. But then is that the end of all? Is that dissolution of body and soule, the last death that the body shall suffer? (for of spirituall death wee speake not now) It is

not. Though this be *exitus a morte*, It is *introittis in mortem*; though it bee an *issue from* the manifold *deaths* of this world, yet it is an *entrance* into the *death of corruption and putrefaction* and *vermiculation* and *incineration*, and dispersion in and from the *grave*, in which every dead man dies over againe. It was a *prerogative* peculiar to *Christ*, not to die this death, *not to see corruption*: what gave him this privilege? Not *Josephs* great proportion of *gummes and spices*, that might have preserved his body from corruption and *incineration* longer than he needed it, longer than *three dayes*, but would not have done it for ever: what preserved him then? did his exemption and *freedome from originall sinne* preserve him from this corruption and *incineration*? 'tis true that original sinne hath induced this corruption and *incineration* upon us; If wee had not sinned in *Adam*, *mortality had not put on immortality*, (as the *Apostle* speakes) nor, *corruption had not put on incorruption*, but we had had our *transmigration* from this to the other world, without any *mortality*, any *corruption at all*. But yet since *Christ* took *sinne* upon him, so farre as made him *mortall*, he had it so farre too, as might have made him see this corruption and *incineration*, though he had no *originall sinne* in himself; what preserv'd him then? Did the *hypostaticall union* of both *natures*, *God* and *Man*, preserve him from this corruption and *incineration*? 'tis true that this was a most powerfull *embalming*, to be embalmd with the *divine nature* it selfe, to bee embalmd with *eternity*, was able to preserve him from corruption and *incineration* for ever. And he was embalmd so, embalmd with the *divine nature* it selfe, even in his *body* as well as in his *soule*; for the *Godhead*, the *divine nature* did not depart, but remained still *united* to his dead *body* in the *grave*; But yet for al this powerful *embalming*, *this hypostaticall union* of both natures, we see *Christ* did *die*; and for all this *union* which made him *God* and *Man*, hee became no man (for the *union* of the *body* and *soule* makes the man, and hee whose soule and body are separated by *death* as long as that state lasts is properly no man.) And therefore as in him the dissolution of *body* and *soule* was no *dissolution* of the *hypostaticall union*; so is there nothing that constraines us to say, that though the *flesh of Christ* had *seene corruption and incineration* in the *grave*, this had bene any *dissolution* of the *hypostaticall union*, for the *divine nature*, the *Godhead* might have remained with all the *Elements and principles of Christs body*, as well as it did with the two *constitutive* parts of his *person*, his *body* and his *soul*. This *incorruption* then was not in *Josephs gummes and spices*, nor was it in *Christs innocency*, and *exemption from originall sin*, nor was it (that is, it is not necessary to say it was) in the *hypostaticall union*. But this *incorruptibleness* of his *flesh* is most conveniently plac'd in that, *Non dabis, thou wilt not suffer thy holy one to see corruption*. Wee looke no further for *causes or reasons* in the *mysteries of religion*, but to the will and pleasure of *God*: *Christ* himselfe limited his *inquisition* in that *ita est, even so Father, for so it seemeth good in thy sight*. *Christs body* did *not see corruption*, therefore, because *God had decreed* it shold not. The humble *Soule* (and onely the humble *Soule* is the religious *Soule*) rests himselfe upon *Gods* purposes and the decrees of *God*, which he hath declared and manifested not such as are *conceived* and imagined in our selves, though upon some probability, some *veresimilitude*. So in our present case *Peter* proceeds in his *Sermon at Jerusalem*, and so *Paul* in his at, *Antiock*. They preached *Christ* to have *bene risen* without seeing *corruption* not onely because *God had decreed* it, but because he had *manifested that decree* in his *Prophet*. Therefore doth Saint *Paul* cite by speciall number the *second Psalme* for that *decree*; And therefore both Saint *Peter* and *S. Paul* cite for it that place in the *16. Psalme*, for when *God* declares his *decree* and purpose in the expresse words of his *Prophet*, or when he declares it in the reall execution tion of the decree, then he makes it ours, then he manifests it to us. An therefore as the *Mysteries* of our *Religion*, are not the *objects* of our *reason*, but by *faith* we rest on *Gods decree* and purpose, (It is so ô *God*, because it is *thy will*, it should be so) so *Gods decrees* are ever to be considered in the *manifestation* thereof. All *manifestation* is either in the *word of God*, or in the *execution* of the decree; And when these two concur and meete, it is the strongest *demonstration* that can bee: when therefore I finde those *markes* of *adoption* and *spiritual filiation*, which are delivered in the *word of God* to be upon me, when I finde that reall *execution of his good purpose* upon

me, as that *actually* I doe live under the *obedience*, and under the *conditions* which are *evidences of adoption and spiritual filiation*; Then so long as I see these *markes* and live so; I may safely comfort my selfe in a *holy certitude* and a *modest infallibility* of my *adoption*. *Christ* determines himself in that, the purpose of *God* was manifest to him: *S. Peter* and *S. Paul* determine themselves in those two wayes of knowing the *purpose of God*, the *word of God* before, the *execution of the decree* in the *fulnes of time*. It was *prophecyed before*, say they, and it is *performed now*, *Christ is risen* without seeing corruption. Now this which is so singularly peculiar to him, that *his flesh should not see corruption*, at his *second coming*, his coming to *Judgement*, shall extend to all that are then alive, their flesh shall not *see corruption*, because as th' *Apostle* sayes, and sayes as *a secret, as a mystery*; *Behold I shew you a mistery, we shall not all sleepe*, (that is, not continue in the state of the dead in the grave), *but wee shall all be changed in an instant*, we shall have a *dissolution*, and in the *same instant a redintegration, a recompacting of body and soul*, and that shall be truely a death and truely a resurrection, but no sleeping in corruption; But for us that die now and sleepe in the state of the dead, we must al passe this *posthume death*, this *death after death*, nay this death after buriall, this *dissolution after dissolution*, this *death of corruption and putrefaction*, of *vermiculation and Incineration*, of *dissolution and dispersion* in and *from the grave*, when these bodies that have beene the *children of royall parents*, and the *parents of royall children*, must say with *Job*, *Corruption thou art my father*, and to the *Worme thou art my mother and my sister*. *Miserable riddle*, when the *same worme* must bee *my mother, and my sister, and my selfe*. *Miserable incest*, when I must bee *married to my mother and my sister*, and bee both *father and mother to my owne mother and sister*, *beget and beare that worme* which is all that *miserable penury*; when my *mouth* shall be filled *with dust*, and the *worme shall feed, and feed sweetely* upon me, when the *ambitious man* shall have *no satisfaction, if the poorest alive tread upon him*, nor the *poorest* receive any *contentment* in being made *equall to Princes*, for they *shall bee equall but in dust*. One dyeth at his full strength, being wholly at ease and in quiet, and another dies in the *bitternes of his soul*, and never *eates with pleasure*, but they lye downe *alike in the dust*, and the *worme covers them*; In *Job* and in *Esay*, it *covers them and is spred under them*, the worme is spred *under thee*, and the worme *covers thee*, There's the *Mats and the Carpets that lie under*, and there's the *State and the Canapye, that hangs over the greatest of the sons of men*; Even those bodies that were *the temples of the holy Ghost*, come to this *dilapidation*, to ruine, to rubbidge, to dust, even the *Israel of the Lord*, and *Jacob* himselfe hath no other specification, no other denomination, but that *vermis Jacob, thou worme of Jacob*. Truely the consideration of this *posthume death*, this death after buriall, that after *God*, (with whom are the *issues of death*) hath delivered me from the *death of the wombe*, by bringing mee into the *world*, and from the manifold *deaths of the world*, by laying me in the *grave*, I must die againe in an *Incineration* of this *flesh*, and in a dispersion of that dust. That that *Monarch*, who spred over many nations alive, must in his dust lie in a corner of that *sheete of lead*, and there, but so long as that lead will laste, and that privat and *retir'd man*, that thought himselfe his owne for ever, and never came forth, must in his dust of the grave bee published, and (such are the *revolutions of the graves*) bee mingled with the dust of every high way, and of every dunghill, and swallowed in every puddle and pond: This is the most inglorious and contemptible *vilification*, the most deadly and peremptory *nullification* of man, that wee can consider; God seemes to have caried the declaration of his *power* to a great height, when hee sets the *Prophet Ezechiel* in the *valley of drye bones*, and says, *Sonne of man can these bones live?* as though it had bene impossible, and yet they did; The *Lord layed Sinewes upon them, and flesh, and breathed into them, and they did live*: But in that case there were *bones* to bee *seene*, something visible, of which it might be said, can this thing live? But in this death of *incineration*, and dispersion of dust, wee see *nothing* that wee call *that mans*; If we say, can this dust live? perchance it *cannot*, it may bee the meere *dust* of the earth, which never did live, never shall. It may be the dust of that mans worme, which did live, but shall no more. It may bee the dust of *another* man, that concernes not him of whom it is askt. This death of *incineration*

and dispersion, is, to naturall *reason*, the most *irrecoverable death* of all, and yet *Domini Domini sunt exitus mortis, unto God the Lord belong the issues of death*, and by *recompacting this dust* into the same body, and *reanimating the same body with the same soule*, hee shall in a blessed and glorious *resurrection* give mee such an *issue from this death*, as shal never passe into any other death, but establish me into a life that shall last as long as the *Lord of life* himself.

And so have you that that belongs to the first *acceptation* of these words, (*unto God the Lord belong the issues of death*) That though from the *wombe* to the *grave* and in the *grave* it selfe wee passe from *death to death*, yet, as *Daniel* speakes, the *Lord our God is able to deliver us, and hee will deliver us*.

And so wee passe unto our *second accommodation* of these words (*unto God the Lord belong the issues of death*) That it *belongs to God, and not to man to passe a judgement* upon us at our death, or to conclude a dereliction on *Gods* part upon the manner thereof.

Those *indications* which the *Physitians* receive, and those *presagitions* which they give for *death or recovery* in the *patient*, they receive and they give out of the grounds and the *rules of their art*: But we have no such rule or art to give a *presagition of spirituall death* and damnation upon any such *indication* as wee see in any *dying man*; wee see often enough to be sorry, but not to despaire; wee may bee deceived both wayes; wee use to comfort our selfe in the death of a *friend*, if it be testified that he went away like a *Lambe*, that is, without any *reluctation*. But, *God knowes*, that [he] may bee accompanied with a *dangerous damp* and *stupefaction, and insensibility* of his *present state*. Our blessed *Saviour suffered coluctations with death*, and a *sadnes even in his soule to death*, and an *agony* even to a *bloody sweate* in his body, and *expostulations with God, and exclamations* upon the *cross*. He was a *devout man*, who said upon his death bed, or dead turfe (for hee was an *Heremit*) *septuaginta annis Domino servivisti, et mori times? hast thou served a good Master threescore and ten yeares, and now art thou loath to goe into his presence? yet I-lilarion* was loath; *Barlaam* was a *devout man* (an *Heremit* too) that said that day hee died. *Cogita te hodie ccepisse servire Domino, et hodie finiturum. Consider this to be the first days service that ever thou didst thy Master*, to glorifie him in a *Christianly* and a *constant death*, and if thy *first day be thy last day too, how soone dost thou come to receive thy wages? yet Barlaawt* could have beene content to have staid longer for it: Make no *ill conclusions* upon any mans *loatknes to die*, for the *mercies of God worke momentarily* in minutes, and many times *insensibly to bystanders* or any other than the party departing. And then upon violent *deaths* inflicted, as upon malefactors, *Christ* himselfe hath forbidden us by his owne death to make any *ill conclusion*; for his owne death had those impressions in it; He was *reputed*, he was *executed* as a *malefactor*, and no doubt many of them who concurred to his death, did beleve him to bee so; Of *sudden death* there are scarce examples to be found in the *scriptures upon good men, for death in bataille* cannot be called *sudden death*; But *God governes not by examples, but by rules*, and therefore make no *ill conclusion upon sudden death* nor upon *distempers* neither, though perchance accompanied with some *words of diffidence* and distrust in the *mercies of God: The tree lies as it falles* its true, but it is not the last *stroake that fells the tree*, nor the *last word nor gaspe that qualifies the soule*. Stil pray wee for a *peaceable life* against *violent death*, and for time of *repentance* against *sudden death*, and for *sober and ntodest assurance* against *distemperd and diffident death*, but never make *ill conclusions* upon persons overtaken with such deaths; *Domini Domini sunt exitus mortis, to God the Lord belong the issues of death*. And he received *Sampson*, who went out of this world in such a *nianiter* (consider it actively, consider it *passively* in his *oume death*, and in those whom he *slew* with himself e) as was subject to interpretation hard enough. Yet the *holy Ghost* hath moved *S. Paul* to celebrate *Sampson* in his *great Catalogue*, and so doth all the *Church: Our criticall day* is not the *very day* of our *death*: but the whole course of our life. I thanke him that *prayeres* for me when the *Bell tolles*, but I thank him much more that *Catechises mee, or preaches to mee, or instructs mee how to live. Fac hoc et vives, there's my securities* the mouth of the *Lord hath said it, doe this and thou shalt live: But though I doe it, yet I shall die too,*

die a bodily, a naturall death. But *God* never mentions, never seems to consider that death, the bodily, the naturall death. *God* doth not say, live well and thou shalt die well. that is, an easie, a quiet death But live *well here*, and thou shalt live *well for ever*. As the first part of a sentence peeces wel with the last, and never respects, never hearkens after the *parenthesis* that cor.,ies betweene, so doth a *good life* here flowe into an *eternall life*, without any consideration, what *manner of death* wee dye: But whether the *gate of my prison* be opened with an *oyld key* (by a gentle and *preparing sicknes*), or the gate bee *hewen downe* by a *violent death*, or the gate bee *burnt dowve* by a *raging and frantique feaver*, a *gate into heaven I shall have, for from the Lord is the cause of my life*, and with *God the Lord* are the *issues of death*. And further wee cary not this *second acceptation* of the words, as this *issue of death is liberatio in morte*, *Gods care* that the *soiile be safe*, what *agonies* soever the *body suffers* in the *houre of death*. But passe to our *third part* and last part; as this *issue of death is liberatio per mortem*, a *deliverance by the death* of another, by the death of *Christ*. *Sufferentiam Job audiisti, et vidisti finem Domini*, sayes *Saint James 5. i i*. *You have heard of the patience of Job*, says he, All this while you have done that, for in every man, calamitous, miserable man, a *Job* speaks; Now *see the end of the Lord*, saith that *Apostle*, which is not that end that the *Lord* propos'd to himselfe (*salvation to us*) nor the end which he proposes to us (*conformitie to him*) but *see the end of the Lord*, sayes he, The end, that the *Lord himselfe came to*, *Death* and a painefull and a shamefull death. But why did he die? and why die so? *Quia Domini Domini sunt exitus mortis* (as *Saint Augustine* interpreting this *text* answers that question) because to *this God our Lord belong'd the issues of death*. *Quid apertius diceretur?* sayes bee there, what can bee more obvious, more manifest than this sense of these words. In the former part of this verse, it is said; *He that is our God, is the God of salvation, Deus salvos faciendi*, so bee reads it, the *God* that must save us. Who can that be, sayes he, but *Jesus? for therefore that name was given him*, because he was to *save us*. And to this *Jesus*, sayes he, this *Saviour, belong the issues of death; Nec oportuit eum de hac vita alios exitus habere quam mortis*. Being come into this life in our mortal nature, *He could not goe out of it any other way but by death*. *Ideo dictum*, sayes he, *therefore it is said, To God the Lord belong the issues of death; ut ostenderetur moriendo nos salvos facturum*, to skew that his way to save us was to die. And from this *text* doth *Saint Isodore* prove, that *Christ was truely Man*, (which as many *sects of heretiques* denied, as that he was *truely God*) because to him, though he were *Dominus Dominus* (as the text doubles it) *God the Lord*, yet to him, to *God the Lord* belong'd the *issues of death*, *oportuit eum pati* more can not be said, than *Christ* himselfe sayes of himselfe; *These things Christ ought to suffer*, bee had no other way but by death: So then *this part* of our *Sermon* must needes be a *passion Sermon*; since all his life was a *continuall passion*, all our *Lent* may well bee a *continuall good Friday*. *Christs* painefull life tooke off none of the paines of his death, bee felt not the lesse then for having felt so much before. Nor will any thing that shall be said before, lessen, but rather enlarge the devotion, to that which shall be said of his passion at the time of due *solemnization thereof*. *Christ* bled not a droppe the lesse at the last, for having bled at his *Circumcision* before, nor wil you shed a teare the lesse then, if you shed some now. And therefore bee now content to consider with mee how to *this God the Lord* belong'd the *issues of death*. That *God, this Lord, the Lord of life could die*, is a strange contemplation; That the *red Sea* could bee drie, That the *Sun could stand still*, that an *Oven* could be *seaven times heat and not burne*, That *Lions* could be *hungy%*, and *not bite*, is strange, *miraculously strange, but supermiraculous that God could die*; but that *God would die* is an *exaltation* of that. But even of that also it is a *superexaltation*, that *God shold die, must die, and non exitus* (said *S. Augustine*), *God the Lord had no issue but by death*, and *oportuit pati*, (*says Christ* himself), all this *Christ* ought to suffer, was bound to suffer; *Deus ultionum Deus* says *David*, *God is the God of revenges*, he wold not passe over the *sinne of man* unrevenged, unpunished. But then *Deus ultionum libera egit* (*sayes that place*) *The God of revenges workes freely, he punishes, he spares whome he will*. And wold he not spare himselfe? he would not: *Dilectio fortis ut mors, love is strong as death*, stronger, it drew in death that

naturally is not welcom. *Si possibile, says Christ, if it be possible, let this Cup passe*, when his love expressed in a former decree with his Father had made it impossible. Many waters quench not love, Christ tried many; He was Baptized out of his love, and his love determined not there. He mingled blood with water in his agony and that determined not his love; hee wept pure blood, all his blood at all his eyes, at all his pores, in his flagellation and thornes (to the Lord our God belong'd the issues of blood) and these expressed, but these did not quench his love. Hee would not spare, nay he could not spare himselfe. There was nothing more free, more voluntary, more spontaneous than the death of Christ. 'Tis true, *libere egit, he died voluntarily*, but yet when we consider the contract that had passed betweene his Father and him, there was an oportuit, a kind of necessity upon him. All this Christ ought to suffer. And when shall we date this obligation, this oportuit, this necessity? when shall wee say that begun? Certainly this decree by which Christ was to suffer all this, was an eternall decree, and was there any thing before that, that was eternall? Infinite love, eternall love; be pleased to follow, this home, and to consider it seriously, that what liberty soever wee can conceive in Christ, to die or not to die, this necessity of dying, this decree is as eternall as that liberty; and yet how small a matter made bee of this necessity and this dying? His Father calls it but a bruise, and but a bruising of his heele (the serpent shall bruise his heele) and yet that was that, the serpent should practise and compasse his death. Himselfe calls it but a Baptisme, as though he were to bee the better for it. I have a Baptisme to be Baptized with, and he was in paine till it was accomplished, and yet this Baptisme was his death. The holy Ghost calls it Joy (for the Joy which was set before him hee indured the Crosse) which was not a joy of his reward after his passion, but a joy that filled him even in the midst of those torments, and arose from him; when Christ calls his Calicem, a Cuppe, and no worse (can ye drink of my Cuppe) he speakes not odiously, not with detestation of it: Indeed it was a Cup, *salus mundo, a health to all the world*. And *quid retribuam, says David, what shall I render to the Lord?* answeere you with David, *accipiam Calicem, I will take the Cup of salvation*, take it, that Cup is salvation, his passion, if not into your present imitation, yet into your present contemplation. And behold how that Lord that was God, yet could die, would die, must die, for your salvation. That Moses and Elias talkt with Christ in the transfiguration, both Saint Mathew and Saint Marke tell us, but what they talkt of onely S. Luke, *Dicebant excessum ejus, says he, they talkt of his decease, of his death which was to be accomplished at Jerusalem*, The word is of his Exodus, the very word of our text, *exitus, his issue by death*. Moses who in his Exodus had prefigured this issue of our Lord, and in passing Israel out of Egypt through the red Sea, had foretold in that actuall prophesier Christ passing of mankind through the sea of his blood. And Elias, whose Exodus and issue out of this world was a figure of Christs ascension, had no doubt a great satisfaction in talking with our blessed Lord *de excessu ejus, of the full consummation of all this in his death*, which was to bee accomplished at Jerusalem. Our meditation of his death should be more viscerall and affect us more because it is of a thing already done. The ancient Romans had a certain tendernes and detestation of the name of death, they could not name death, no, not in their wills. There they could not say *Si mori contigerit, but si quid humanitus contingat*, not if, or when I die, but when the course of nature is accomplished upon me. To us that speake daily of the death of Christ, (he was crucified, dead and buried) can the memory or the mention of our owne death bee irkesome or bitter? There are in these latter times amongst us, that name death freely enough, and the death of God, but in blasphemous oathes and execrations. Miserable men, who shall therefore bee said never to have named Jesus, because they have named him too often. And therefore heare Jesus say, *Nescivi vos, I never knew you*, because they made themselves too familiar with him. Moses and Elias talkt with Christ of his death, only, in a holy and joyfull sense of the benefit which they and all the world were to receive by that. Discourses of Religion should not be out of curiosity, but to edification. And then they talkt with Christ of his death at that time, when he was in the greatest height of glory that ever he admitted in this world, that is, his transfiguration. And wee are afraid to speake to the great men of this world of their death, but nourish in them

a vaine imagination of immortality, and immutability. *But bonum est nobis esse hic* (as Saint Peter said there) *It is good to dwell here*, in this consideration of his death, and therefore *transferre* wee our *tabernacle* (our devotions) through some of those *steps* which God the Lord made to his *issue of death* that day. Take in the *whole day* from the *houre* that Christ received the *passeeover* upon Thursday, unto the *houre* in which hee *died the next day*. Make this present day *that day* in thy devotion, and consider what *hee did*, and remember what *you have done*. Before hee *instituted and celebrated the Sacrament*, (which was *after the eating of the passeeover*) hee proceeded to that *act of humility*, to wash his *disciples feete*, even Peters, who for a *while resisted* him; In thy *preparation* to the holy and blessed Sacrament, hast thou with a sincere *humility* sought a *reconciliation* with all the *world*, even with those that have been *averse* from it, and *refused that reconciliation* from thee? If so and not else thou hast spent that *first part* of his *last day*, in a *conformity* with him. After the Sacrament hee, spent the time till night in *prayer*, in *preaching*, in *Psalmes*; Hast thou considered that a *worthy receaving* of the Sacrament consists in a *continuation of holiness* after, as wel as in a *preparation* before? If so, thou hast therein also *conformed* thy selfe to him, so Christ spent his time till night; At *night hee went into the garden to pray*, and he prayed *prolixius* he spent *much time*, in *prayer*. How much? Because it is literally expressed, that *he prayed there three severall times*, and that *returning to his Disciples* after his *first prayer*, and *finding them asleepe* said, *could ye not watch with me one houre*, it is collected that he *spent three houres in prayer*. I dare scarce aske thee *whither thou wentest*, or how thou *disposedst of thy self*, when it grew *darke* and after *last night*: If that time were spent in a *holy recommendation* of thy selfe to God, and a *submission of thy will* to his, It was spent in a *conformity* to him In that time and in those *prayers was his agony and bloody sweat*. I will *hope* that thou didst *pray*, but not *every ordinary and customary prayer*, but *prayer actually* accompanied with *shedding of teares*, and *dispositively* in a readines to *shed blood for his glory in necessary cases*, puts thee into a *conformity* with him; About midnight he was *taken and bound with a kisse*. Art thou not *too conformable* to him in that? Is not that *too literally, too exactly thy case?* at *midnight* to have *bene taken and bound with a kisse?* from thence he was *caried back to Jerusalem*, first to *Annas*, then to *Caiphas*, and (as late as it was) then hee was *examined and buffeted*, and *delivered over* to the custody of those *officers*, from whome he received all those *irrisions, and violences, the covering of his face, the spitting upon his face, the blasphemies of words, and the smartnes of blowes* which that *Gospell* mentions. In which compasse fell that *Gallicinium, that crowing of the Cock* which called up Peter to his *repentance*. How thou passedst all that time last night thou knowest. If thou didst any thing that needed *Peters teares*, and hast *not shed them*, let me be thy *Cock*, doe it now, Now thy *Master* (in the unworthiest of his servants) *lookes back upon thee*, doe it now; *Betimes*, in the morning, so soone as it was day, the *Jewes held a counsell* in the high *Priests hall*, and *agreed upon their evidence* against him, and then caried him to *Pilate*, who was to be his *Judge*; diddest thou *accuse* thy selfe when thou *wakedst this morning*, and wast thou content even with *false accusations* (that is) rather to *suspect actions* to have beene sin, which were not, than to *smother and justify* such as were *truly sins?* then thou spentst that *houre in conformity* to him: Pilate found *no evidence against him*, and therefore to ease himselfe, and to passe a *complement* upon *Herod, Tetrarch of Galilee*, who was at that time at *Jerusalem* (because Christ being a *Galilean* was of *Herods jurisdiction*) *Pilat sent him to Herod*, and rather as a madman than a *malefactor*, *Herod* remaunded him (*with scornes*) to *Pilat* to proceed against him; And this was about *eight of the clock*. Hast thou been content to come to this *Inquisition*, this examination, this agitation, this cribration, this pursuit of thy *conscience*, to *sift* it, to follow it from the *sinnes* of thy *youth* to thy *present sinnes*, from the *sinnes* of thy *bed*, to the *sinnes* of thy *boorde*, and from the *substance* to the *circumstance* of thy *sinnes?* That's *time spent* like thy *Saviours*. *Pilat* wold have *saved Christ*, by using the *priviledge of the day* in his behalfe, because that day *one prisoner was to be delivered*, but they *choose Barrabas*. Hee wold have *saved him from death*, by *satisfying their fury*, with *inflicting other torments* upon him, *scourging and crowning with*

thornes, and loading him with many scornfull and ignominious contumelies; But they regarded him not, they pressed a crucifying. Hast thou gone about to redeeme thy sinne, by fasting, by Almes, by disciplines and mortifications, in way of satisfaction to the Justice of God? that will not serve, that's not the right way, wee presse an utter Crucifying of that sinne that governes thee; and that conformes thee to Christ. Towards noone Pilat gave judgement, and they made such hast to execution, as that by noone hee was upon the Crosse. There now hangs that sacred Body upon the Crosse, rebaptized in his owne teares and sweat and embalmed in his owne blood alive. There are those bowells of compassion, which are so conspicuous, so manifested, as that you may see them through his wounds. There those glorious eyes grew faint in their light: so as the Sun ashamed to survive them, departed with his light too. And then that Sonne of God, who was never from us, and yet had now come a new way unto us in assuming our nature, delivers that soule (which was never out of his Fathers hands) by a new way, a voluntary emission of it into his Fathers hands; For though to this God our Lord, belong'd these issues of death, so that considered in his owne contract, he must necessarily die, yet at no breach or battery, which they had made upon his sacred Body, issued his soule, but emisit, hee gave up the Ghost, and as God breathed a soule into the first Adam, so this second Adam breathed his soule into God, into the hands of God. There wee leave you in that blessed dependancy, to hang upon him that hangs upon the Crosse, there bath in his teares, there suck at his woundes, and lie downe in peace in his grave, till hee vouchsafe you a resurrection, and an ascension into that Kingdome, which hee hath purchas'd for you, with the inestimable price of his incorruptible blood. Amen.

