

him worth a melting and trying every morning, yea, every moment. It is certain that great prosperity and worldly glory are no sure tokens of God's love, Prov. i. 32, Ps. lxxiii. 5, Eccles. ix. 1, 2; and it is certain that great troubles and afflictions are no sure marks of God's hatred; and yet many poor Christians, when the waters of affliction rise high, and are ready to overflow them, oh how apt are they to conclude that God hates them, and will revenge himself upon them, and that they have nothing of God or Christ, or the Spirit, or grace in them! Or, 5, when the Spirit, the Comforter, stands afar off, Lam. i. 16, and withholds those special influences, without which, in a common ordinary way, a Christian cannot divinely, candidly, clearly and impartially transact with God in order to his own peace, comfort and settlement. Or, 6, when either a Christian's evidences are not at hand, or else they are so soiled, darkened, blotted and obscured, as that he is not able to read them. Or 7, when a Christian is extremely oppressed with melancholy. Melancholy is a dark and dusky humour, which disturbs both soul and body, and the cure of it belongs rather to the physician than to the divine. It is a most pestilent humour where it abounds; one calls it *balneum diaboli*, the devil's bath; it is a humour that unfits a man for all sorts of services, but especially those that concern his soul, his spiritual estate, his everlasting condition.¹ The melancholy person tries the physician, grieves the minister, wounds relations, and makes sport for the devil. There are five sorts of persons that the devil makes his ass to ride in triumph upon, viz., the ignorant person, the unbelieving person, the proud person, the hypocritical person, and the melancholy person. Melancholy is a disease that works strange passions, strange imaginations, and strange conclusions. It unmans a man, it makes a man call good evil, and evil good; sweet bitter, and bitter sweet; light darkness, and darkness light. The distemper of the body oftentimes causeth distemper of soul, for the soul followeth the temper of the body. A melancholy spirit is a dumb spirit; you can get nothing out of him; and a deaf spirit, you can get nothing into him.² Now of all the evil spirits we read of in the Gospel, the dumb and the deaf were the worst. Darkness, sadness, solitariness, heaviness, mourning, &c., are the only sweet, desirable, and delightful companions of melancholy persons. Melancholy makes every sweet bitter, and every bitter seven times more bitter. The melancholy person is marvellously prone to bid sleep farewell, and joy farewell, and meat farewell, and friends farewell, and ordinances farewell, and duties farewell, and promises farewell, and ministers farewell, and his calling farewell, and it is well if he be not even ready to bid God farewell too. Melancholy persons are like idols, that have eyes but see not, and tongues but speak not, and ears but hear not. Melancholy turns truths into fables, and fables into truths; it turns fancies

¹ Ps. lxxxviii; Job xxxiii. 10. It is an old saying, that *Melancholia est vehiculum dæmonum*. In the German proverb, Luther says it goes for current, *Caput melancholicum diaboli balneum*, the melancholy head is the devil's bathing place.

² Mat. ix. 28, 29. It is no more wonder to see a melancholy man doubt and question his spiritual condition, than it is to see a child cry when he is beaten, or to hear a sick man groan, or to hear a drowning man call out for a boat. You may silence a melancholy man, when you are not able to comfort him. Whilst Nebuchadnezzar was under the power of a deep melancholy, he could not tell whether he was a man or a beast. Melancholy is the mother of fears, doubts, disputes, and discomforts.