6.5: Chapter 9- Of their voyage, and how they passed the sea; and of their safe arrival at Cape Cod


Of their voyage, & how they passed ye sea, and of their safe arrivall at Cape Codd.

Sept: 6. These troubls being blowne over, and now all being compacte together in one shipe, they put to sea againe with a prosperus winde, which continued divorce days together, which was some encouragmente unto them; yet according to ye usuall maner many were afflicted with sea-sicknes. And I may not omite hear a spetiall worke of Gods providence. Ther was a proud & very profane yonge man, one of ye sea-men, of a lustie, able body, which made him the more hauty; he would allway be contemning ye poore people in their sicknes, & cursing them dayly with greēous execrations, and did not let to tell them, that he hoped to help to cast halfe of them over board before they came to their jurneys end, and to make mery with what they had; and if he were by any gently reproved, he would curse and swear most bitterly. But it plased God before they came halfe seas over, to smite this yong man with a greevous disease, of which he dyed in a desperate maner, and so was him selfe ye first was throwne overbord. Thus his curses light on his owne head; and it was an astonishmente to all his fellows, for they noted it to be ye just hand of God upon him.

After they had injoyed faire winds and weather for a season, they were incountred many times with crosse winds, and mette with many feirce stormes, with which ye shipe was shroudly shaken, and her upper works made very leakie; and one of the maine beames in ye midd ships was bowed & craked, which put them in some feare that ye shipe could not be able to performe ye voyag. So some of ye cheefe of ye company, perceiveing ye mariners to feare ye suffisiencie of ye
ship, as appeared by their mutterings, they entred into serious consulltation with ye m'r & other officers of ye ship, to consider in time of ye danger; and rather to returne then to cast them selves into a Home[92]desperate & inevitable peril. And truly ther was great distraction & differance of opinion amongst ye mariners them selves; faine would they doe what could be done for their wages sake, (being now halfe the seas over,) and on ye other hand they were loath to hazard their lives too desperately. But in examening of all opinions, the m'r & others affirmed they knew ye ship to be stronge & firme under water; and for the buckling of ye maine beame, ther was a great iron scrue ye passengers brought out of Holland, which would raise ye beame into his place; ye which being done, the carpenter & m'r affirmed that with a post put under it, set firme in ye lower deck, & otherways bounde, he would make it sufficienete. And as for ye decks & uper workes they would calke them as well as they could, and though with ye workeing of ye ship they [46] would not longe keepe stanch, yet ther would otherwise be no great danger, if they did not overpress her with sails. So they confiicted them selves to ye will of God, & resolved to proseede. In sundrie of these stormes the winds were so seare, & ye seas so high, as they could not beare a knote of saile, but were forced to hull, for diverce days togethier. And in one of them, as they thus lay at hull, in a mighty storne, a lustie yonge man (called John Howland) coming upon some occasion above ye gratings, was, with a seele of the shipe throwne into [ye] sea; but it pleased God ye he caught hould of ye top-saile Home[93]halliards, which hunge over board, & rane out at length; yet he held his hould (though he was sundrie fadomes under water) till he was hald up by ye brime of ye water, and then with a boat hooke & other means got into ye shipe againe, & his life saved; and though he was something ill with it, yet he lived many years after, and became a profitable member both in church & corinne wealth. In all this viage ther died but one of ye passengers, which was William Butten, a youth, servant to Samuell Fuller, when they drew near ye coast. But to omit other things, (that I may be breefe,) after longe beating at sea they fell with that land which is called Cape Cod; the which being made & certainly knowne to be it, they were not a litle joyfull. After some deliberation had amongst them selves & with ye ship, they tacked aboute and resolved to stande for ye southward (ye wind & weather being faire) to finde some place aboute Hudsons river for their habitation. But after they had sailed ye course aboute halfe ye day, they fell amongst deangerous shoulds and roring breakers, and they were so farr intangled ther with as they conceived them selves in great danger; & ye wind shrinking upon them withall, they resolved to bear up againe for the Cape, and thought them selves happy to get out of those dangers before night overtooke them, as by Gods providence they did. And ye next day they gott into ye Cape-harbor when they ridd in Home[94]saftie. A word or too by ye way of this cape; it was thus first named by Capten Gosnole & his company, Home[AF] Anno: 1602, and after by Capten Smith was caled Cape James; but it retains ye former name amongst seamen. Also ye pointe which first shewed those dangerous shoulds unto them, they called Pointe Care, & Tuckers Terrour; but ye French & Dutch to this day call it Malabarr, by reason of those perilous shoulds, and ye losses they have suffered ther.

Being thus arived in a good harbor and brought safe to land, they fell upon their knees & blessed ye God of heaven, who had brought them over ye vast & furious ocean, and delivered them from all ye periles & miseries therof, againe to set their feete on ye firme and stable earth, their proper elemente. And no marvell if they were thus joyfull, seeing wise Seneca was so affected with sailing a few miles on ye coast of his owne Italy; as he affirmed,Home[AG] that he had rather remaine twentye years on his way by land, then pass by sea to any place in a short time; so tedious & dreadfull was ye same unto him.
But hear I cannot but stay and make a pause, and stand half amased at this poore peoples presente condition; and so I think will the reader too, when he well considers [47] ye same. Being thus passed ye vast ocean, and a sea of troubles before in their preparation (as may be remembred by ye which wente Home[95]before), they had now no freinds to wellcome them, nor inns to entertaine or refresh their weatherbeaten bodys, no houses or much less townes to repaire too, to seeke for succoure. It is recorded in scripture [Home[AH] as a mercie to ye apostle & his shipwraked company, ye the barbarians shewed them no smale kindnes in refreshing them, but these savage barbarians, when they mette with them (as after will appeare) were readier to fill their sids full of arrows then otherwise. And for ye season it was winter, and they that know ye winters of ye cuntrie know them to be sharp & violent, & Subjecte to cruel & feirce stormes, deangerous to travill to known places, much more to serch an unknown coast. Besids, what could they see but a hidious & desolate wildernes, full of wild beasts & wildl men? and what multitudes ther might be of them they knew not. Nether could they, as it were, goe up to ye tope of Pisgah, to vew from this wildernes a more goody cuntrie to feed their hops; for which way soever they turnd their eys (save upward to ye heavens) they could have little solace or content in respecte of any outward objects. For surffer being done, all things stand upon them with a wetherbeaten face; and ye whole countrie, full of woods & thickets, represented a wild & savage heiw. If they looked behind them, ther was ye mighty ocean which they had passed, and was now as a Home[96]maine barr & goulfe to seperate them from all ye civill parts of ye world. If it be said they had a ship to succour them, it is trew; but what heard they daly from ye m. & company? but ye with speede they should looke out a place with their shallop, wher they would be at some near distance; for ye season was shuch as he would not stirr from thence till a safe harbor was discovered by them wher they would be, and he might goe without danger; and that victells consumed apace, but he must & would keepe sufficient for them selves & their returne. Yea, it was muttered by some, that if they gott not a place in time, they would turne them & their goods ashore & leave them. Let it also be considred what weake hopes of supply & succoure they left behinde them, ye might bear up their minds in this sade condition and trialls they were under; and they could not but be very smale. It is true, indeed, ye affections & love of their brethren at Leyden was cordiall & entire towards them, but they had litle power to help them, or them selves; and how ye case stode betweene them & ye marchants at their coming away, hath allready been declared. What could now sustaine them but the spirite of God & his grace? May not & ought not the children of these fathers rightly say: Our fathers were Englishmen which came over this great Ocean, and were ready to perish in this wildernes; [Home[AI] but they cried unto ye Lord, and he heard their voyce, and looked on their adversitie, &c. Let them therfore praise ye Lord, because he is good, & his mercies endure for ever. [Home[AJ] Yea, let them which have been redeemed of ye Lord, shew how he hath delivered them from ye hand of ye oppressour. When they wandered in ye deserte wildernes out of ye way, and found no citie to dwell in, both hungrie, & thirstie, their sowle was overwhelmed in them. Let them confess before ye Lord his loving kindnes, and his wonderfull works before ye sons of men.