

*Twilight and evening bell,*

*And after that the dark!*

*And may there be no sadness of farewell,*

*When I embark;*

In the third stanza, the poet depicts a transition from dusk to darkness. Twilight signifies the sunset, and the evening bell signals the approaching night. Since the start of the poem, the time has changed from evening to night. The evening represents the age of the writer while the approaching darkness signifies his death. In line three, he wishes that there would be no sadness during his departure. The poet has embraced his doom without any regrets; therefore, he does not want to be miserable when his time to leave comes. The sadness of farewell also signifies the grief of other people when a human being dies. The poet does not want his family and close ones to be wretched due to his death. He desires to travel to the new realm with a calm and tranquil mind. The word ‘embark’ is used as a metaphor here. It literally means setting to sail, however, in the context of the poem, it suggests the journey of the speaker from the land of the living towards life after death.

*For tho' from out our bourne of Time and Place*

*The flood may bear me far,*

*I hope to see my Pilot face to face*

*When I have crost the bar.*

The poet refers to this world with the phrase, “bourne of Time and Place”. The word bourne literally refers to a boundary or a domain. This world is limited in time and space. The speaker acknowledges that the flood in the ocean will take him away from the physical world that is transient. He wishes to meet the Pilot once he crosses the sandbar. The flood mentioned by the poet represents the faith of the speaker. He hopes that his great faith in God will help him to cross the bar bravely and help him to reach his final destination. He hopes to meet the Pilot once he crosses the bar. The notion that God is the pilot of everyone’s life is a major theme in Christian belief. Therefore, it can be surmised

that by Pilot, he means God. It must be noticed that he seems certain about the inevitability of death, therefore, he uses 'When I have' to refer to death. However, he uses 'hope to see', when he refers to God. It seems that he might be unsure about his meeting with God but his conviction regarding death is strong.

### **Analysis of the Poem:**

**Theme of Death and Acceptance:**

Tennyson's poem reflects a serene acceptance of death. Unlike many poets who portray death as frightening or tragic, Tennyson uses the imagery of a ship calmly setting sail, emphasizing that death is a natural part of life's journey. The speaker doesn't fear death; instead, he views it as a return "home" and a chance to meet God ("the Pilot") face to face. This illustrates a deep sense of spiritual faith and resignation.

**Structure and Meter:** The poem consists of four quatrains, with a rhyme scheme of ABAB in each stanza. The steady rhythm and rhyme create a sense of calm, much like the smooth tide that the speaker desires. The gentle, flowing lines mirror the tranquil passage from life to death, reinforcing the poem's meditative tone.

**Imagery:** Tennyson's use of natural imagery, particularly related to the sea, is central to the poem. The "sunset" and "evening star" signal the end of the day, paralleling the end of life. The "tide" and "boundless deep" represent the pull of the afterlife, while the "Pilot" stands for a higher power guiding the speaker safely across the metaphorical bar into death.

**Metaphor of the Bar:** The bar in the poem symbolizes the threshold between life and death. Just as a ship crosses a sandbar when leaving a harbor for the open sea, the speaker anticipates crossing the bar when departing from life. The bar is both a literal barrier and a figurative one, representing the unknown that lies beyond life's end.

**Tone:** The tone of "Crossing the Bar" is peaceful, reflective, and accepting. There's no fear in the speaker's voice—only calm assurance. The repetition of "may there be no" suggests the speaker's earnest wish for a smooth, untroubled passage from life to death. This peaceful tone reflects Tennyson's own hope for a gentle end.

**Religious Undertones:** Tennyson's faith is clear in the final stanza, where he expresses a desire to meet his "Pilot." The Pilot is widely interpreted as God, and this direct connection between the poet's journey across the bar and his expectation of seeing God underscores the Christian belief in an afterlife and divine guidance.