Robinson Crusoe (part one)

http://www.novelguide.com/robinson-crusoe/summaries/as-my-new-patron

"I was born." through ".the Sequel of this Story" (pp. 4-15)  
Crusoe narrates his early life, from his birth in York in 1632 through his first adventures at sea. Although his father intended that his third and youngest son study the law, Crusoe desired adventures away from home: "I would be satisfied with nothing but going to Sea." His father attempts to dissuade him from this plan, pointing out that Crusoe now enjoys all the advantages of a life in the middle class; and that, should his efforts at sea meet with failure, his family will not be able to help him. While his father's pleading's touches Crusoe, in a few weeks he resolves to run away. After a year, he does so. At Hull, on September 1, 1651, Crusoe boards a ship at Hull bound for London. He promptly experiences his first storm at sea; it is virtually nothing but an inconvenience to the more experienced sailors, but for Crusoe, it proves a nightmare. It tempts him to return home to his father. Once the weather calms, however, and travel continues uneventfully for a few days-and not to mention with the influence of a bowl of sailors' punch-Crusoe forgets all such plans: "I entirely forgot the Vows and Promises that I made in my Distress."  
A little more than a week later, however, while anchored at Yarmouth Roads, the ship experiences a truly terrible storm, one that convinces even the ship's master that all hands shall be lost. Crusoe helps the crew pump water out of the hold; he is startled when the masters fires the ship's gun as a distress signal, and faints in a swoon. When he comes to, he finds the storm still raging, and the ship about to founder (to sink). The crew evacuates in a smaller boat, and sees their ship go down. Quartered safe ashore, Crusoe again considers returning home-"But my ill fate push'd me on now with an Obstinacy that nothing could resist," not even the master's warning that Crusoe should never again go to sea.

Crusoe journeys to London, where he boards a ship bound for "Guinea" (an obsolete term for Africa's western coast). He befriends the captain, who gives him free passage and who teaches him some of the sailors' arts-mathematics, navigation, and the like-during the journey. The voyage is successful, even though Crusoe is sick for much of it. When the captain dies after the voyage, Crusoe, who considers himself "set up for a Guiney Trader," decides to repeat the voyage himself, taking command of the captain's ship. The ship, however, is attacked by pirates, and Crusoe and his crew are "carry'd all [as] Prisoners into Sallee, a port belonging to the Moors" (that is, an important port on the Barbary Coast controlled by African Muslims). Crusoe becomes a slave.  
Analysis  
Readers who believe themselves familiar with the plot of Robinson Crusoe from its many incarnations in popular culture may be surprised to discover that the story begins, not with Crusoe's shipwreck, but with his several previous sea voyages. Defoe, following the conventions of popular autobiographical travel narratives of his day, presents detailed information about Crusoe's early life and career in order to establish a sense of verisimilitude. It is a quality that accounts for much of the story's enduring popularity-it feels as though it "really could happen."  
This section also introduces the question of Providence-one of the two dominant thematic concerns of the book. The preface has already told readers that Crusoe will relate his adventures to the theme of God's providence- God provides for the needs of God's creatures. The master's son in Yarmouth Roads, for instance, urges Crusoe not to "tempt Providence to [his] Ruin." The text sometimes seems to equate Providence with Fate: for example, "But my ill Fate push'd me on now with anObstinacy that nothing could resist." Readers will therefore also need to ask whether Crusoe is the prisoner of Fate or an active and free agent who shapes his own life-and, furthermore, whether he is not ultimately the better for it.

**2. "As my new Patron."**

"As my new Patron." through ".what to do next with myself I was now to consider" (pp. 16-26)  
Left behind when his master goes to sea, Crusoe ponders how he might escape from slavery. Two years pass before he has the chance to put any plans into action. Crusoe's master is in the habit of sending Crusoe, another man named Ishmael (a relation of the master), and a young a Spanish Moor named Xury out to fish, working from a fully stocked boat. On one such occasion, Crusoe thinks about his intentions of escaping. He catches Ishmael by surprise and tosses him overboard. Xury, however, vows his loyalty to Crusoe, and the two set out on their voyage.  
They eventually arrive "in the Mouth of a little River, I knew not what, or where," only that they are surrounded by various wild beasts. Crusoe scares the beasts away by firing a gun at them. Finally, however, Crusoe and Xury must go ashore in search of water. On shore, Xury shoots a wild creature the two are able to eat, and they find fresh water. They press further inland and shoot another animal, but it is not edible; Crusoe, however, skins the beast, hoping the hide may prove of some use. They make their way toward the Cape de Verd in anticipation of meeting a European vessel. Along the way they encounter the native population; Crusoe earns the natives' admiration by killing attacking wild beasts with his gun. He and Xury receive from "my friendly Negroes" food and water.  
Back at sea in their boat some days later, Crusoe and Xury are rescued by a Portuguese slaving ship. The captain refuses to take any financial recompense for the rescue, but offers to take Crusoe safely to Brazil, where, he says, he will help Crusoe arrange for passage back to England. The captain buys not only Crusoe's boat but also Xury as a slave.  
Analysis

This section plays on readers' fears of the unknown and stereotypes of "savages" to create drama and suspense. Defoe skillfully evokes, for instance, the noise that surrounds Crusoe and Xury when they drop anchor: "But it is impossible to describe the horrible Noises, and hideous Cries and Howlings, that were raised as well upon the Edge of the Shoar." Note how Defoe enlists the reader's own imagination to help fill out the setting. Notice, too, how Defoe draws on European readers' conceptions of the "savage" to populate his plot. The evocations of such stereotypes are, as one would expect from an early 18th- century text, matter-of-fact and unapologetic, as is the fact that the Portuguese vessel is engaged in the slave trade. Modern readers will question the portrayal of Xury as willing being sold by Crusoe as a slave. The irony of Crusoe wishing to escape slavery and ultimately doing so thanks to a vessel with a mission of bringing others into slavery is apparently lost on Defoe, but that fact only establishes him as an author of his time, as are all writers. Nonetheless, readers today may profitably consider the moral issues raised by Crusoe's engagement in the slave trade.  
Incidentally, Crusoe's adventures in this section-e.g., hunting and skinning animals, locating fresh water, establishing relations with "savages"-establish the character as possessing the survival skills that he will later need.

**3. "The generous Treatment."**

"The generous Treatment." through ".possible I could get on Shore?" (pp. 26-35)  
Crusoe proceeds to settle as a plantation owner in Brazil. He eventually realizes, with rueful irony, that he has entered into the very station of life-the middle class-that he sought to escape by leaving home all those years before. No longer having the services of Xury, or of any servants or slaves, Crusoe reflects that he is living "just like a Man cast away upon some desolate Island." Making arrangements to have half of his wealth transferred from England, however, Crusoe soon buys a slave, and his plantation's fortunes continue to grow.  
Four years later, some of Crusoe's fellow plantation owners prevail upon Crusoe to undertake a voyage to "Guinea" to procure slaves. Although Crusoe does not really need to increase his wealth, he agrees. On September 1, 1659-"being the same Day eight Year that I went from my Father and Mother"-Crusoe again sets sail. A hurricane soon arises, blowing the ship off course. Twelve days later, the vessel is "leaky and very much disabled," and the master resolves to return to Brazil. Unfortunately, yet another storm blows the ship into unknown waters: "we knew nothing where we were." Their ship having struck sand, the crew scrambles into an escape boat and begin rowing to shore; however, the wild waves sweep most of them away. Only Crusoe is driven to land.  
Analysis  
With this section, Defoe at last begins the main portion of his narrative. Now, however, readers can see the necessity of what has come before. For example, we learn something of Crusoe's character in his decision to undertake the slaving mission to Guinea. As Crusoe (who is, of course, telling the tale in retrospect) states, he ignores the multiple warnings of others and of circumstance in deciding to once more set out to sea. He does not use "Prudence" when deliberating "what [he] ought to have done, and ought not to have done" Why does Crusoe make this bad decision? He indicates that his motive is greed: he confesses that the idea of the slaving voyage might have been "a fair Proposal" to a poorer plantation owner, but that for him, now "being worth three or four thousand Pounds Sterling. To think of such a Voyage, was the most preposterous thing that ever Man in such Circumstances could be guilty of." But deeper than the greed, perhaps, lies Crusoe's vanity as a motive. His plantation's prosperity leads him to plan "Projects and Undertakings beyond my Reach"-language that evokes the classical concept of overreaching pride. The text raises another set of questions, however, regarding why and how Crusoe finds himself shipwrecked and alone (a circumstance that is, incidentally, signaled with a none-too-subtle passage of foreshadowing as Crusoe reflects on his early hard labor on his Brazilian plantation). Even as he, in a sense, accepts the responsibility for his calamity by admitting his greed and pride. He suggests that the sailing vessel's shipwreck on an unknown island was foreordained-"our Voyage was otherwise determined." Again, the book evidences a concern with the question of the degree to which human beings are shapers of their own destiny. Is each individual "the wilful Agent of all [her or his] own Miseries," or must the individual make allowance for the fact that "all human Affairs are subject to Changes and Disasters?"

**4. "After I had solac'd my Mind."**

"After I had solac'd my Mind." through ".those things were of small use to me" (pp. 35-43)  
Crusoe surveys his surroundings and determines that he has experienced "a dreadful Deliverance," for he sees, upon climbing a hill, that he is stranded on an island. He therefore has no visible hope of returning to civilization. He has only a knife, a pipe, and a little tobacco. In order to secure more provisions, he makes as many trips to the shipwreck as he can before the waters entirely engulf it. On one occasion he notes an irony: "if we had kept on board [instead of abandoning ship in the smaller boat], we had all got safe on Shore." As it is, of course, Crusoe is-so far as he believes-utterly alone. Nevertheless, he manages to gather a fair amount of provisions and even to establish a hut-like shelter for himself, though not without expending much effort in the process. He establishes himself near the coast in the hopes that a passing vessel will see and rescue him. He gathers munitions from the sunken ship, creating a means of self-defense should he need it. He even brings ashore coins that he found in the wreckage-although he ruefully laments that money is of little use to him now.  
Analysis  
Crusoe makes two rafts in this section; the second is superior because he has "had Experience of the first." This new raft is one small but concrete example of how Crusoe will learn from his experiences. He will adapt because he must in order to survive. Readers can trace Crusoe's growth through his experiences during the rest of the narrative. This theme of development-one might even term it "maturation"-follows naturally on the heels of the "baptismal" rebirth that Crusoe experienced when he was washed ashore. One way in which readers may already see Crusoe's development is in his attitude toward money. He smiles as he brings the now-worthless treasure ashore, addressing it as "O Drug!": "Thou art not worth to me, no not the taking off of the Ground." Readers cannot fail to note the irony, of course; it was the pursuit of this same "drug" that induced Crusoe to undertake a slaving voyage that he did not need to undertake. The money is of no use, and thus confronts readers with the question: What is of ultimate value in life?  
On the other hand, this section shows readers that Crusoe is not ready to abandon all accoutrements of civilization: when he fires his gun at a bird, he muses that "it was first Gun that had been fir'd there since the Creation of the World." The mention of Creation may have prompted Defoe's original audience to think also of humanity's fall from grace, a concept expanded in post-biblical literature to typify human beings' inevitable fall from evidence. Naturally, on the literal level of the text, Crusoe is simply doing what he must to survive (or must he?-latter portions of the text will return to this question in ways both subtle and overt). At a deeper, symbolic level, however, Crusoe may be unwittingly inviting readers to view him as the agent who introduces "civilization".

**5. "My Thoughts were now wholly employ'd."**

"My Thoughts were now wholly employed." through ".forced to leave it off" (pp. 43-52)  
Crusoe builds a more secure and permanent dwelling for himself, which is both "a Cave in the Earth, [and] a Tent upon" it: "Into this Tent I brought all my Provisions, and everything that would spoil by the Wet, and having thus enclosed all my Goods, I made up the Entrance." He further fortifies the dwelling when he realizes, during a sudden storm, that a blast of lightning could explode the gunpowder he has salvaged from the shipwreck. He divides the powder into smaller portions for safety's sake.  
Crusoe hunts daily for food, but, his physical situation now somewhat more secure, he begins to devote time to reflecting philosophically and theologically upon his predicament. Furthermore, he erects a makeshift monument on the spot on which he came ashore, where he marks off each day as it passes. His only companions at this point, aside from his thoughts, are a dog and two cats from the ship. Crusoe begins a journal, which he proceeds to reproduce in the present narrative. It covers the time from which he was shipwrecked until, having run out of ink, he was obliged to abandon it.  
Analysis

Readers should not fail to note the humorous understatements Crusoe makes not only in this section but throughout the narrative. For instance, as he introduces his philosophical reflections upon his plight, Crusoe tells us of his "Thoughts about Living, which it may well be supposed were not a few."   
Irony surfaces in Crusoe's lengthy description of how he built his new shelter: although his main concern is securing himself against the so-far unverified threats of "Savages" and "wild Beasts," he hints that he later discovered "there was no need of all this Caution." This realization raises the question of how secure any of us are in our lives. People, particularly in affluent societies, spend a great deal of time and effort "securing" or insulating themselves. Crusoe's comment could prompt readers to wonder if this time and effort are necessary, and whether the "security" that results is real or illusory, for apparently Crusoe will learn that he was "secure" enough from the beginning of his island exile.  
This section of the narrative could also lead readers to wonder whether Crusoe is trusting or, indeed, should trust in Providence more. Although we have seen him attribute his survival to God, we have also heard him call it a "dreadful Deliverance," and now we watch as he "secures" himself away in his shelter with all the provisions he salvaged from the foundered ship. Surely Crusoe, of all people, is supposed now to be free from materialism: what, beyond the basic essentials of survival, does he need? He speaks often of improving his comfort, but how "comfortable" need he make himself-and has he learned anything about Providence from his experience thus far?

And yet so does the nature of Providence itself. Crusoe's inner debate, summarized in the list of "evil" and "good" that he writes, attempts to penetrate the mystery of Providence: is it identifiable with fate? Is Crusoe's situation "a Determination of Heaven"? Does divine Providence "ruin its Creatures" so that life is no longer something for which to be grateful? This tension is not completely eased, but Crusoe does determine that any situation, no matter how dire, can yield some positive good. His philosophy is admirable, especially when expressed under such circumstances; only the remainder of the narrative will show whether it serves him well.

**6. Crusoe's Journal, September 30 through June 27**

Crusoe's Journal: September 30 through June 27 (pp. 52-67)

Crusoe begins his journal by recounting his narrative from the point of his shipwreck on September 30. On December 10, just when Crusoe believes he has finished building his "Cave," an earthquake strikes, obliging him to do much of his work over again. After the turn of the year, however, his fortunes take a sudden and seemingly miraculous turn for the better as he notices "perfect green Barley" growing near his shelter. He regards this sudden new growth as an act of God-until he remembers that he had earlier thrown out grain in that place. A second quake strikes, causing a convulsion of the sea and a storm. Crusoe, despondent, takes an uneasy shelter in his cave, fearing that it will collapse on him. Although it does not, Crusoe is concerned enough to spend April 19-20 preparing to move his dwelling. He is distracted from this plan, however, when the tide on May 1 brings in a cask of gunpowder from the shipwreck. The wreckage has been moved closer to shore, and so Crusoe proceeds to remove more provisions from it. Throughout May and June he goes to the wreck and recovers much timber and iron. In late June, Crusoe falls sick with an "Ague very violent." During his illness, he has a nightmare in which he sees a brilliantly illuminated man descend from a cloud amidst flashing fire. The earth shakes when this man steps upon it. The strange visitor makes as if to kill Crusoe with a spear-like weapon, pronouncing judgment as he does: "Seeing all these Things have not brought thee to Repentance, now thou shalt die." Frightened, Crusoe awakens. For the first time, he considers that not only his current shipwreck but also the misfortunes previous to it may be divine punishment visited upon him for his sins of abandoning his father and, headstrong, pursuing his desire to travel and seek adventure. Feeling alone and helpless, Crusoe prays, "Lord be my help, for I am in great Distress." He notes that it was the first prayer he had prayed in many years.

**Analysis**

Crusoe's journal makes more apparent the fact that the elements of "civilization" are slowly falling, or being stripped, away-as well as Crusoe's attempts to continue to cling to them. Note, as just one instance, how Crusoe comments on the way in which he started losing track of Sundays (the entry for November 7). Contrast that with his repeated returns to the shipwreck for wood and iron.

On the other hand, the journal also further develops previously established themes. For example, we continue to see Crusoe learning from his experiences as he begins to breed tame animals, and as he unloads more goods from the shipwreck: "I had learn'd not to despair of any Thing."

Crusoe's journal continues to explore the theme of providence. The incident with the "miraculous" growth of grain, as Crusoe himself acknowledges, raises the question of how providence works in human affairs. Although Crusoe, at the time, no longer regarded the grain's appearance as a miracle, perhaps he should have, "for it was really the Work of Providence that 10 or 12 Grains of Corn should remain unspoil'd" for him to have discarded in the first place. The incident can be taken as a suggestion that providential arrangements and "miracles" surround us, if we have eyes to see them. (This suggestion corresponds with the purpose of the narrative as stated in the Preface: "to justify and honour the Wisdom of Providence in all the Variety of our Circumstances.")

This section of the text also raises the question of divine justice. Crusoe's nightmare relies heavily on biblical images of apocalyptic judgment. It is, at least to Crusoe's mind, unambiguous in its meaning: for his repeated rejection of providence, most manifest in his determination to leave his father's home and "good Instruction" Crusoe has been and is now being punished: for the first time, Crusoe considers the events "already past. All the Variety of Miseries that had to this Day befallen me. [as] the Hand of God." This newfound conviction of guilt leads Crusoe to make his penitential prayer.

**7. Crusoe's Journal, June 28 through September 30**

Crusoe's Journal, June 28 through September 30 (pp. 67-76)

Crusoe begins considering such philosophical, existential questions as "What is this Earth and Sea. and what am I.?" He decides that "if God has made all these Things, He guides and governs them all"; therefore, "God had appointed all this to befall me." Crusoe's conscience convicts him of his sin; the castaway decides that his past errors are the reason God is now punishing him. Troubled, Crusoe begins reading a Bible from one of the chests he salvaged from the shipwreck. The first passage he ponders is Psalm 50: "Call on me in the Day of Trouble, and I will deliver, and thou shalt glorify me." Crusoe states that he eventually took these words as God's promise to him of rescue. He begins to consider, however, that in a sense he has already been delivered: he is, after all, the only survivor of the shipwreck. He has not, however, glorified God. He decides this must be the reason he has not yet been saved from the island. As he continues to study the Bible seriously, he grows more convinced of the errors of his past life and of a hope that God will now hear him. He begins to glorify God.

In mid-July, ten months into his exile, Crusoe resolves to make a further exploration of the island. He begins bringing heaps of grapes back to a bower he builds in a fruitful and pleasant valley. On one occasion, he is surprised to discover that, while he was away, the grapes have been disturbed. "By this I concluded, there were some wild Creatures therabouts." On the whole, however, Crusoe is pleased with his surroundings: "I fancy'd now I had my Country-House, and my Sea-Coast-House." At length, the one-year anniversary of his shipwreck arrives. Crusoe marks the day with a solemn religious fast. Shortly thereafter, he runs out of ink, and is forced to stop his journal.

Analysis

Most of this section is overtly concerned with the possible theological implications of Crusoe's experience. Crusoe arrives at a fairly conventional religious interpretation of his ordeal: it is punishment visited upon him by God for his past sins and ingratitude, and his only recourse now lies in worshiping God and trusting in God for deliverance. Notably, however, Crusoe's new-found religious fervor and trust in God does not lead to passivity. Indeed, the castaway realizes that he still has much to learn about how to survive. Although he is surrounded by native growth, for instance, he acknowledges that he did not observe enough back in Brazil what plants and fruit would prove beneficial to him and which would not. On the other hand, he shows that he continues to learn from his experiences when he eats sparingly of the grapes he discovers, remembering how eating grapes in Barbary killed several of his fellow English slaves. Thus, although this section in one sense establishes a view of fixed destiny-God's determination to punish Crusoe-in another sense it reminds readers that destiny is within our controls-Crusoe amends his life so that he might be delivered, and he continues to grow in self-reliance and capability to ensure his own survival.

**8. "The rainy Season."**

"The rainy Season." through ".as will appear by what follows" (pp. 76-84)  
Crusoe, having determined the rainy and the dry times of year, begins to plant and harvest grain successfully: "I was made Master of my Business," he declares. He also gains more mastery over identifying his physical location: he makes a trip to survey the whole island, and even spies other land in the distance, across the open water.  
Crusoe continues his extended reflections upon God and the operations of God's providence. He considers, for example, that he may be far better off on this deserted island than among "Savages; for they are Cannibals, or Men-eaters."   
Crusoe notes the second anniversary of his shipwreck; once more, he observes the day as a holy fast. He reflects that he is actually better off in his island life than he was in his life in civilization. He applies the teachings of Christianity to his own situation and decides that "if I had all the World, and should lose the Favour and Blessing of God, there wou'd be no Comparison in the Loss." He is, however, still troubled by the seeming hypocrisy of being grateful for a situation from which he nevertheless desires to be saved!  
At length, Crusoe's third year upon the Island commences. His days are taken up in his morning worship of God, his hunting with his gun for food, and his preparation of his meals. For only four hours a day is the island heat bearable enough for physical labor; Crusoe spends this limited time improving his dwellings.  
Analysis

Crusoe continues to demonstrate his ability to adapt based on his experiences in this section; for example, he begins to identify the regular, cyclical procession of rainy and dry seasons on the island (note his detailed, monthly calendar), and "to provide for them accordingly." Readers are again impressed by the castaway's flexibility and resiliency; as another example, we can consider his efforts in weaving wicker baskets. Crusoe demonstrates ingenuity and resourcefulness. Not all, however, immediately becomes well with Crusoe. Notice the passage in which he begins to narrow down his island's location: "I could not tell what Part of the World this might be, otherwise than that I know it must be Part of America, and as I concluded by all my Observations, must be near the Spanish Dominions, and perhaps was all Inhabited by Savages." Thus, even as Crusoe grows more secure in his situation, a certain degree of ambiguity and insecurity remains. Ultimately, however, any insecurity Crusoe may feel in this section seems to be put to rest, for the time being, by his professed fervent trust in Providence, "which I began now to own, and to believe, ordered every Thing for the best; I say, I quieted my Mind with this." Thus, this lesson may be one of the truths the preface told us this narrative was designed to inculcate in its readers. One way in which we see "things working together for good" in Crusoe's case is in the "infinite Number of Fowls, of many Kinds" on the island, with which he is able to feed himself. As Adam was master of the primeval earth, so does Crusoe declare himself to be "Master of my Business." Thus Defoe continues the ironic presentation of Crusoe as a "new Adam," "trapped" in "Paradise," declaring himself "Master" even as he acknowledges the extent to which God's providence ordains and manages the affairs of mortals.  
The "Wisdom of Providence" is posited as the narrative's central concern, and here Crusoe decides that divine wisdom has seen fit to make him a "new creation" .

**9. "I was now, in the Months of November and December."**

"I was now, in the Months of November and December." through ".at last find some Means of Escape" (pp. 84-91)  
Crusoe cultivates his crops of barley and rice, although he is somewhat stymied by having planted at inopportune times, as well as by the snacking habits of the island's birds and beasts! Nevertheless, the gathering of the wheat is a great encouragement to Crusoe: "I forsaw that in time, it would please God to supply me with Bread." Much of the rest of this section details Crusoe's ultimately successful efforts to bake bread-when he is not diverting himself by teaching his parrot to speak! The castaway also learns how to sculpt and fire clay vessels sturdier than his wicker baskets. As Crusoe approaches the beginning of his fourth year of exile, he continues to harbor wishes for a way to get off the island to the land he spied over the water.  
Analysis  
The emphasis early in this section upon Crusoe's making of bread is yet a further recollection of the biblical Adam who, as punishment for sin, was condemned thus by God. Thus, even though Crusoe has developed greater religious affection for God, this perhaps subconscious evocation of humanity (represented by Adam) actually estranged from God keeps alive Defoe's subtle manipulation of the question of how far Crusoe's own reports about his faith can be trusted.  
Another notable theme explicitly introduced in this section is the "State of Nature" in which Crusoe says he has arrived. The "state of nature" was a common theme of 17th and 18th-century philosophy that describes humanity's natural state as "nasty, brutish, and short." Readers will want to consider how Defoe's Robinson Crusoe engages the philosophical views of its time in conversation about "noble savages" and the "state of nature." For all the ways in which civilization has been stripped from him, Crusoe, after all, manages to either reconstruct or approximate a good many of them on the island, as we have seen.

**10. "But all this while."**

"But all this while." through ." I went away and was no more sad" (pp. 91-97)  
Undaunted by the thought that, should he leave the island, he may "fall into the Hands of Savages," Crusoe attempts to salvage the boat from the shipwrecked sailing vessel in order to strike out for the land he has spied. When this plan proves impossible, he sets about building himself a canoe. Looking back on his experiences, Crusoe seems amused that he was not dissuaded from the fact that, even were he able to make such a canoe, he would not be able to pull it to water by himself. Crusoe, with much effort, fells a cedar and proceeds to make his canoe. He is able, some three months later when the project is finished, to bring it to within a hundred yards of water by himself, but no further due to a steep incline. Crusoe thus resolves to bring the water to the canoe by creating a canal. This plan also fails. Crusoe comments on the lesson he learned: "the Folly of beginning a Work before we count the Cost."  
The fourth anniversary of the shipwreck passes, giving Crusoe occasion to reflect on how far separated from the world he has become. He further reflects on the many advantages that he does, in fact, enjoy in his island exile, and concludes that, since he has already received far more from God's hand than he deserves, considering his former way of life, "that [his] Repentance was accepted, and that God hath yet Mercy in store for" him.  
Analysis

This section begins with some more of Crusoe's thoughts on savagery, thoughts that, as gruesome as they are, do not dissuade him from his fervor in finding some way to escape the island. The comments about savages are ironic considering that Crusoe promptly proceeds to emulate them in building a canoe; the irony is further compounded when he realizes that he-a "civilized" man-would not be able to accomplish what "the Negroes or Indians" can in bringing his canoe to the water, since he is a solitary individual. This passage, along with Crusoe's theological and philosophical reflections on his separation from "the World"-i.e., civilization-thus provide more valuable material to readers interested in tracing the theme of savagery and civilization through the narrative. (On the other hand, to Crusoe's credit, the problem with which he is faced provides further examples of his ability to learn from experience and his ingenuity, as he creates a canal to bring the water to the canoe rather than vice versa, even though the attempt ultimately fails.)

Like that biblical figure, traditionally identified with King Solomon, Crusoe is a careful observer of nature and of human experience (namely, his own on the island), and is capable of drawing moral instruction from his observations. (For example, Crusoe thinks about the folly of beginning a labor before counting the cost, and he extols to his readers the virtues of "look[ing] more upon the bright Side of [a] Condition.") Crusoe realizes that material wealth and possessions are, ultimately, of limited worth: "That all the good Things of this World, are no further good to us, than they are for our Use; and that whatever we may heap up indeed to give others, we enjoy just as much as we can use, and no more." Surely it is no accident that Robinson Crusoe, with its constant attention to the mysterious ways of Providence, should echo the theme of religion.

**11. "I had now been here so long."**

"I had now been here so long." through ".except that of Society" (pp. 97-105)  
Crusoe enters his fifth year of exile. The remnants of civilization continue to fall away, one by one, from Robinson Crusoe: his ink, his bread, his clothes. Nonetheless, the castaway at the same time continues to compensate-for example, he makes a cap, suit, and even an umbrella out of dried animal skins. He returns to the digging of the canal; he is successful, "though I was near two Years about it," and his canoe is at last in water. He sets off to circumnavigate the island on November 6th of the sixth year "of my Reign, or my Captivity, which[ever] you please." As he has so often before, however, Crusoe again sails into trouble: the fault is not in the act of sailing itself, but in Crusoe's rashness, which makes him "a warning piece to all rash and ignorant Pilots." He gets into water that is too deep and is helplessly swept along by strong currents toward the vast open ocean. He seems in danger of never returning to what he now calls his "beloved" island, but at length, the eddies-which Crusoe interprets as agents of God's providence-return him to shore, where he again gives thanks to God for deliverance, as he had six years before. He makes a long march back to his old "Country House," where he sleeps. He awakens to hear a voice calling his name; it is Poll, the parrot he has trained to talk. "I had now," Crusoe concludes, quite understandably, "had enough of rambling to Sea for some time."  
Analysis

In this section, we see, in Crusoe's words, how he "lived mighty comfortably, by Mind being entirely composed by resigning to the Will of God, and throwing myself wholly upon the Disposal of his Providence"-the moral which, according to the book's preface, the narrative is designed to impress upon the reader. In Defoe's text, Providence may be predominantly didactic in nature, rather than either benign or malevolent. Crusoe interprets the action as proving that he needed to appreciate his island situation more: as he states, "we never see the true State of our Condition, till it is illustrated to us by its Contraries."

The parrot's appearance at the end of this section, coupled with Crusoe's mild lament that he lives "really very happily in all things, except that of Society," may serve to foreshadow the introduction of Friday later in the narrative.  
Incidentally, Crusoe's attempts to cling to civilization in the face of encroaching savagery by making an umbrella "earned the early 18th-century English umbrella the nickname, 'Robinson.' Note that Crusoe desired to carry it under his arm, like a proper gentleman"

**12. "I improv'd my self in this time."**

"I improv'd my self in this time." through "I was like to have too much" (pp. 105-108)  
Summary: Crusoe is now in the eleventh year of his island exile. His ammunition running low, he resolves to find a way of snaring live goats instead of having to depend upon shooting them. At first, the goats simply rob the bait from his traps; eventually, however, he captures several goats, both male and female. After some time raising the goats, he finds it necessary to create a barrier between the wild and the tame ones. In a year-and-half's time, he has a flock of about a dozen goats, and is able to feed on both their meat and their milk. Crusoe interprets this development as evidence of God's goodness; once again, he sees divine providence as spreading a table for him the wilderness.  
Analysis  
This section offers further evidence of Crusoe's ability to learn from experience as he, for instance, achieves "an unexpected Perfection in [his] Earthen Ware." It also shows us further instances of Crusoe acting as an 18th-century Adam: for example, exercising dominion over the wild goats of the island. The section reintroduces imagery we have glimpsed earlier (for example, Crusoe as "master"): Crusoe is his "Majesty the Prince and Lord of the whole Island." He is not, however, unaware of the irony of his situation, for he knows he is "king" only over animals, including his favorite subject, Poll the parrot; he still keenly feels the need for the human companionship that is lacking.

**13. "I was something impatient."**

"I was something impatient." through ".but without a Scabbard" (pp. 108-121)  
Garbed in clothing made from animal skins but still attempting to dress with dignity, Crusoe journeys back to the boat he made. Observing the ebbing of the tide, he becomes afraid of returning to the water, and decides instead to build a second canoe.  
One day, Crusoe makes a startling discovery: "the Print of Man's naked Foot on the shore." Crusoe knows the footprint is not his, and he is sorely confused and, indeed, terrified as he tries to understand how the footprint has come to be there. He even wonders if Satan himself is the culprit; eventually, however, he imagines all manner of "savages"-and what they might do to him-who could be responsible. After many years, apparently, of doubt and confusion, however, Crusoe is able to control his fear by the use of reason-"I concluded, That this Island, which was so exceeding pleasant, fruitful, and no further from the main Land than as I had seen, was not so entirely abandoned as I might imagine"-as well as by an increase in his spiritual devotion. At the same time, Crusoe fortifies his cave-dwelling to create a double wall: "I took all the Measures humane Prudence could suggest for my own Preservation." About two years later, Crusoe concludes that "savages" from the main land do indeed cross over to the island on a frequent basis, cannibalizing their victims on the island's shores. Crusoe, seeing the evidence of cannibalism on the beach, decides the fact that he was shipwrecked on the island's opposite shore is yet one further example of Providence.  
Analysis

Appropriately, the text itself gives the impression that Crusoe is literally "stranded" between savagery and civilization: he attempts to maintain a dignified appearance but he is, in the end, dressed in animal skins. Readers will recall how, following his initial shipwreck, Crusoe thanked God for deliverance, but then, through misadventure that led to a reading of Scripture, underwent a deepening of his religious faith. The character undergoes a similar movement at this point: following his second shipwreck (i.e., the wreck of his canoe), he undergoes the "misadventures" of discovering the footprint and the evidence of cannibalism upon the beach, which eventually drive him back to the Bible. This "doubling" of events and their consequences for Crusoe's spiritual life are probably means by which Defoe wants to emphasize the ostensible morality of his tale: "'it was my unquestioned Duty to resign myself absolutely and entirely to [God's] Will." Ironically, however, Crusoe's newly intense gratitude to God takes on a form of prayer. Whether Crusoe intended to create this dissonance, it is inherent in Crusoe's prayer.   
Crusoe's extended meditations upon savagery in this section-not to mention his discovery of the footprint, one of the most famous moments in the story-further prepare the readers for the impending introduction of Friday into the narrative.

**14. "Things going on thus."**

"Things going on thus." through ".in this dismal Place" (pages 121-127)  
Crusoe makes plans to ambush the "savages" who sail to the island from the mainland to slaughter and cannibalize their victims. As he reflects on his plans, however, he realizes he is no place to judge the local inhabitants: "What Authority, or Call I had, to pretend to be the Judge and Executioner upon these Men as Criminals, whom Heaven had thought fit for so many Ages to suffer unpunished." Crusoe's reflections further lead him to decide that, since the natives had not harmed him, he would be guilty of no less a crime than the Spanish conquistadores were he to fight them. He will not attack the "savages," he resolves, unless they first attack him. Crusoe comes to regard this change in his attitude as yet another deliverance at the hands of Providence: a deliverance from sin.  
Analysis  
Although Crusoe had purportedly made peace with his fear in the previous section, modern readers are no doubt likely to be struck by the extent to which the immediately succeeding portion of the narrative is preoccupied with the "savages." As noted in the Summary above, however, Crusoe does ultimately conclude that he is in no place to judge the native inhabitants of the island and the mainland-a conclusion he, perhaps, would not have been able to reach previously. Crusoe finds himself unable to sit in judgment upon the internecine warfare of this indigenous population because his home civilization acts in similar ways, fighting within itself. Similar standards of what is and is not acceptable must therefore apply. The section both begins and concludes with Crusoe's moralistic applications of his experience to his and his readers' lives: the initial lesson that people would be happier if they avoided comparing their state in life to that of others (a lesson Crusoe now, no doubt, wishes he had heeded in his youth); and the latter lesson, "How wonderfully we are deliver'd, when we know nothing of it." Here, of course, Crusoe refers not to physical deliverance from peril but to spiritual deliverance from sin. This moral would tend to reinforce a reading of the narrative assigning symbolic value to the island as a microcosm of the human experience.