



The

P I L G R I M ' S
P R O G R E S S

From This World to That Which Is to Come

Edited by C. J. Lovik

J O H N B U N Y A N

Illustrations by Mike Wimmer

The Pilgrim's Progress

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Published by Crossway Books

a publishing ministry of Good News Publishers
1300 Crescent Street
Wheaton, Illinois 60187

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Cover design: Josh Dennis

Cover and interior illustrations: Mike Wimmer

First printing, 2009

Printed in the United States of America

Hardcover ISBN: 978-1-4335-0699-4

PDF ISBN: 978-1-4335-0700-7

Mobipocket ISBN: 978-1-4335-0701-4

ePub ISBN: 978-1-4335-1880-5

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Bunyan, John, 1628–1688.

The pilgrim's progress : from this world to that which is to come / John Bunyan ; updated by C.J. Lovik ; illustrated by Michael Wimmer. — (Updated version).

p. cm.

Includes bibliographical references.

ISBN-13: 978-1-4335-0699-4 (hc)

1. Christian pilgrims and pilgrimages—Fiction. 2. Christian life—Fiction.

I. Lovik, Craig John, 1946– . II. Title.

PR3330.A2L68 2009

823'.4—dc22

2009004765

LB	19	18	17	16	15	14	13	12	11	10	09			
15	14	13	12	11	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1

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EDITOR'S INTRODUCTION

by C. J. Lovik



The writings of John Bunyan have been an immeasurable gift to generations of English-speaking Christians. His most famous work, *Pilgrim's Progress*, has provided rich nutrients to the soil out of which practical Christianity has flourished and borne much fruit. Bunyan was the supreme Bible teacher for “everyman.” To use an old illustration, it was Bunyan who placed the grain down on the barn floor where the little lambs could reach it, feast, and thrive.

There was nothing elitist or sophisticated about Bunyan, but there was something uniquely profound. Bunyan understood and expounded the timeless eternal truths of Holy Scripture—the miracle of redemptive grace and the battle every pilgrim must wage before he arrives at the Celestial City. And he did it in a way that even the simplest child could understand.

Since the age of nine years old, my appreciation and love for the works of Bunyan, especially *Pilgrim's Progress*, has grown and deepened. There was a time when I rarely heard a sermon in which some incident from *Pilgrim's Progress* was not used to illustrate a biblical truth. Many of those illustrations have guided me through my own pilgrimage. But, sadly, what was such a great benefit to me is enjoyed by only a relative few today.

In my late twenties I began teaching a class called “Pictures from *Pilgrim's Progress*,” a title borrowed from Charles Spurgeon. In those days, three or four decades ago, I did not need to ask for a show of hands from those who had read *Pilgrim's Progress*, as all were familiar with the book. Even the unchurched were familiar with *Pilgrim's Progress*, as it was on the required reading list for every public high school student. Today things are much different, and you would be hard-pressed to find one in twenty Christians who have read *Pilgrim's Progress*. For those who are under thirty, the ratio would be even higher. And among those who were familiar with the book, it would typically not be the original text they had read but a children's paraphrase.

Many skilled authors have attempted to bring *Pilgrim's Progress* to modern English readers. I applaud their efforts and respect the desire to reclaim the lost readership this book once enjoyed. But it occurred to me, after reading many of these attempts, that something very important had been lost in the translation. In short, many of the truths that Bunyan so skillfully and artfully proposed had been dulled or skipped over in an attempt to keep the modern reader's interest. In addition much of the antiquity of the work had been lost, and with it was lost the voice and tenor of Bunyan himself.

For anyone who wishes to “update” the original text of *Pilgrim's Progress*, the challenge is indeed great. The English language has changed significantly in the last three hundred and fifty years. Scores of metaphors and sayings that were in common use and understood by all in the seventeenth century are now antiquated or obscure, creating a major obstacle for the modern reader. But in addition to this, the modern English reader often considers Bunyan's literary form of allegory to be antiquated and inconsequential, thereby missing the vibrant truths that are so richly illustrated in Bunyan's allegory.

The challenge of updating Bunyan's classic—in a way that preserves the author's voice and respects the antiquity of the work—was daunting and arduous. For nearly a year this was my

constant focus—to prayerfully and carefully discern which stones on the path to leave untouched and which stones to adjust, however slight an adjustment may be necessary, to make the path passable once more (and glorious!) for the modern English reader. Likewise, my goal throughout has always been to respect the literary style of Bunyan and the truths he unfolded in his timeless narrative. The greatest compliment that I could receive after reading this updated edition of *Pilgrim's Progress* is that the reader would be able to honestly say that he has really read and encountered Bunyan and his classic work.

It is my hope and prayer that *Pilgrim's Progress* might once more be a blessing and inspiration to a new generation. Clearly Christians today are in great need of understanding, guidance, and encouragement. Thus it is my dream that in the pulpits of the English-speaking world *Pilgrim's Progress* might once again come into prominence and popular understanding—and likewise in the hearts of individuals and the homes of families around the world. What a tremendous thing it would be if a whole generation were to rediscover the deep, eternal truths of Bunyan's allegory—as an alternative and antidote to the lurid diet of Vanity Fair that is everywhere today in movies, videos, literature, and the Internet.

I have dedicated my efforts on this work to my gracious Lord and Savior, who is the author of all that is good and true. And having said this, I feel an obligation to add one more thing: As wonderful as *Pilgrim's Progress* is, it is not the Bible, nor is it equal to the Bible in any way except as a brilliant commentary on the only Scriptures—the Old and New Testaments. Bunyan wanted his readers to understand that fact; and so, in his absence, I am compelled to pass this along to you—the Scriptures stand alone!

Finally, one cannot read much of Bunyan without coming into contact with his poems and rhymes. When Bunyan's character Christian lost his burden at the foot of the cross, Bunyan exuberantly voiced the unimaginable joy of the event in a poem. This has inspired me to do the same. And so I offer my own poem to you,

the reader, in hopes that it might be enjoyed by you and pleasing to my Lord.

*The shadow of a wooden cross
A rising Son displayed.
In that place and on that day
An ancient debt was paid.*

*Prophetic Word merged with flesh,
With love bound to a tree.
There justice met with mercy
For all the world to see.*

*Divine the name of Him who hangs
With emblem wounds of glory,
Page of light that turned the night
Into a different story.*

*Joy was mixed with agony
That day upon the tree.
Reflecting on the Book of Life
My Savior thought of me.*

*Love deep and wide and full and free,
Love priceless and apart,
Love stained with crimson hues and tears
Has entered human hearts.*

*Look up, dear soul, and fix blind eyes
Upon the Savior's tree
And you will find as others have,
He makes the sightless see.*

*An unexpected resting place
Was found beneath that tree,
Where all my burdens came undone
And I found liberty.*

Now, as you immerse yourself in the following pages, may Bunyan's timeless story come alive for you in all its rich allegorical power and beauty.



Christian looks for a way of escape outside the City of Destruction.

Chapter Three

A BURDEN LIFTED AND A JOURNEY BEGUN



Now I saw in my dream that the highway up which Christian was to go was fenced on each side with a wall; the wall was called Salvation.^a Therefore, it was up this highway that Christian ran, but not without great difficulty because of the burden of the load on his back.¹

He ran till he came to a small hill, at the top of which stood a cross and at the bottom of which was a tomb. I saw in my dream that when Christian walked up the hill to the cross, his burden came loose from his shoulders and fell off his back, tumbling down the hill until it came to the mouth of the tomb, where it fell in to be seen no more.

Then Christian was relieved and delighted and exclaimed with a joyful heart, “He has given me rest by His sorrow and life by His death.” For a while he stood still in front of the cross to look and wonder; it was very surprising to him that the sight of the cross should ease him of his burden. He continued looking at the cross until tears began streaming down his cheeks.^{b2} As he stood looking and weep-

^aIsaiah 26:1.

^bZechariah 12:10.

ing, three Shining Ones came to him and greeted him with, "Peace be with you." Then the first said to him, "Your sins are forgiven."^c The second stripped him of his rags and dressed him with new clothing.^d The third put a mark on his forehead and gave him a scroll with a seal on it. He told Christian to review it often as he went on his way and at the end of his journey to turn it in at the Celestial Gate.^{e3} After this they went their way.

Then Christian gave three leaps for joy and went on his way singing:

*"Thus far I did come,
Burdened with my sin.
Nor could I find relief
From my grief within.*

*Until here I came,
What a place this is!
Here shall be the beginning,
Of full, eternal bliss!*

*Now my burden falls
From my back forever.
From the cords that bound it,
By grace my grief is severed.*

*Blessed cross! Blessed tomb!
Rather, most blessed be
The Man who there was put to shame,
A shame He took for me!"*

I saw then in my dream that Christian went on until he came to the bottom of the hill. There he saw lying by the side of the path three men fast asleep, with chains upon their feet. The name of the one was Foolish, the second Sloth, and the third Presumption.⁴

Christian went to them to see if he might awaken them and said to them, "You will be like one who lies down in the midst of the sea,

^cMark 2:5.

^dZechariah 3:4.

^eEphesians 1:13.



Formalist and Hypocrisy trespass over the Wall of Salvation.

like one who lies on top of a mast,^f though the Dead Sea is under you, a gulf that has no bottom. Wake up and get back on the path, and if you are willing, I will help you take off your iron shackles.” He also told them, “If he that ‘goes about like a roaring lion’ comes by and finds you like this, he will destroy you with his teeth.”^g With that they looked at Christian and began to reply to him. Foolish said, “I see no danger.” Sloth said, “I just need a little more sleep.” And Presumption said, “Everyone needs to make his own choices. You need to mind your own business and not meddle in ours.” So they all lay down to sleep again, and Christian went on his way.

Christian was troubled to think that men in such danger should have so little regard for the kindness he had extended when he awakened them, counseled them, and offered to free them of their iron shackles.⁵ As he was thinking about this, he saw two men come tumbling over the wall on the left side and onto the path. They immediately came toward Christian. The name of the one was Formalist, and the name of the other was Hypocrisy. Soon they were walking with Christian on the path. Christian immediately began to engage them in conversation.⁶

Christian asked, “Gentlemen, where did you come from, and where are you going?”

Formality and Hypocrisy replied, “We were born in the land of Vain-Glory and are going to Mount Zion where we expect we will receive both praise and honor.”

“Why didn’t you enter by the gate that stands at the beginning of the way? Don’t you know that it is written that ‘he who does not come in by the door but climbs up some other way is a thief and a robber?’”^h

Formalist and Hypocrisy answered that to go to the gate in order to enter into the way was considered by them and all their countrymen to be too inconvenient and roundabout, especially since

^fProverbs 23:34.

^g1 Peter 5:8.

^hJohn 10:1.

they could shorten the journey by simply climbing over the wall, as they had done.

“But won’t this be seen as trespassing?” Christian asked. “Don’t you think the Lord of the City for which we are bound must count it as a violation of His revealed will?”

Formalist and Hypocrisy told Christian not to worry about it since it had been the custom of their land for more than a thousand years.

“But,” asked Christian, “will your custom stand up in a court of law?”

They replied, “This custom of entering the way by taking a shortcut has been going on as a long-standing practice for more than a thousand years and would be ruled as a legal practice by any impartial judge. And besides,” they added, “as long as we get into the way, what does it matter how we get in? If we are in, we are in. You came into the way through the narrow gate, and we came tumbling over the wall, and since we are both in, who is to say that your chosen path is better than ours?”

Christian told them, “I walk by the rule of my Master; you walk by the rude working of your own notions. You are condemned as thieves already by the Lord of the way; therefore, I doubt you will be found as true men at the end of the journey. You came in by yourselves, without His direction, and will go out by yourselves, without His mercy.”

To this they had little to say, except to tell Christian to mind his own business. Then I saw that Formalist and Hypocrisy went along with Christian, saying only that as far as the laws and ordinances were concerned, they would obey them as conscientiously as Christian. They added that they saw no difference between themselves and Christian except for the coat he wore, which they speculated was given to Christian to hide his shame and nakedness.

Christian responded, “You will not be saved by keeping laws and ordinances. You cannot be saved, because you did not come in



Christian begins his journey up the Hill Difficulty.

by the door.ⁱ As for the coat that is on my back, it was given to me by the Lord of the place where I am going and is, as you say, a cover for my nakedness. I take it as a token of His kindness to me, for I had nothing but rags before. Besides, I take some comfort in the fact that when I come to the gate of the City, the Lord of that place will surely recognize me since it is His coat on my back, a coat that He gave me the day that He stripped me of my rags.

“I also have a mark on my forehead, which perhaps you have not noticed. One of my Lord’s most intimate associates placed it on my forehead the day that my burden fell off my shoulders.

“Also I have been given a scroll to read as a comfort to me as I make my journey. I was also told to turn it in at the Celestial Gate as an assurance that I will be welcomed into the Celestial City. I doubt you have any interest in all these things since you did not come in at the gate.”

To this, Formalist and Hypocrisy gave no reply. They just looked at each other and laughed.

Then I saw that they all kept walking along the path, except that Christian walked up ahead and had no more conversation with Formalist and Hypocrisy. He only talked with himself, sometimes sighing, sometimes encouraging himself, and often refreshing himself by reading from the scroll that one of the Shining Ones had given him.

I saw, then, that they all went on until they came to the foot of the Hill Difficulty,⁷ at the bottom of which was a spring of fresh water. Here the men were faced with a choice of three paths. The path that led directly from the gate continued straight up the steep hill. Another path turned to the left and a third to the right of the hill. Christian went to the spring and drank until he was no longer thirsty^j and then began to go up the Hill Difficulty, saying:

*“The hill, though high, I desire to ascend,
The difficulty will not me offend;*

ⁱGalatians 2:16.

^jIsaiah 49:10.

*For I perceive the way to life lies here.
 Be strong, my heart, let's neither faint nor fear;
 Better, though difficult, the right way to go,
 Than wrong, though easy, where the end is woe."*

Formalist and Hypocrisy also came to the foot of the hill, but when they saw how steep and high it was and that there were two simpler ways to go, they chose the ways that looked easier. They supposed that the two ways would go around the hill and meet up again with the straight way that Christian was taking. Now the name of one of those ways was Danger, and the name of the other was Destruction. So Formalist took the way that is called Danger, which led him into a great wooded area; and Hypocrisy went the way to Destruction, which led him into a wide field full of dark mountains, where he stumbled, fell, and never got up.

I looked and saw Christian go up the hill, where I noticed him slowing his pace from running to walking and finally to scrambling up the path on his hands and knees because it was very steep.

Now I saw that about halfway up the hill there was a pleasant arbor built by the Lord of the hill for the refreshment of weary travelers. When Christian reached this spot, he sat down to rest.

Then he pulled his scroll out from under his coat and was comforted by what he read. He also took a fresh look at the coat that had been given to him earlier when he stood by the cross. As he entertained pleasant thoughts about the changes that had taken place in his life, he at last fell into a slumber and finally into a deep sleep, from which he did not awake until it was almost night; and in his sleep, his scroll fell out of his hand.⁸

Now, as he was sleeping, someone came to him and awakened him, saying, "Go to the ant, O sluggard; consider her ways and be wise."^k And with that Christian sprang up and sped on his way. He had not traveled far when he came to the top of the hill.

Now, at the top of the hill, two men came running to meet him. The name of the one was Timorous and of the other Mistrust, to

^kProverbs 6:6.



Christian sleeps in the arbor on the Hill Difficulty.

whom Christian said, "Sirs, what's the matter? You're running the wrong way."⁹

Timorous answered that they were going to the City of Zion and had climbed up the Hill Difficulty. "But," he added, "the farther we went, the more danger we encountered. So we turned around and are going back from where we came."

"Yes," said Mistrust, "for just ahead there are a couple of lions in the way—we don't know if they are sleeping or awake. But we are sure that if we came within their reach, they would pull us to pieces."

Then Christian said, "You're making me afraid. Where shall I run to be safe? If I go back to my own country, which is prepared for fire and brimstone, I shall certainly perish. If I can get to the Celestial City, I am sure to be safe. I must go forward. To go back is nothing but death; to go forward is fear of death, and life everlasting beyond it. I will go forward."

So Mistrust and Timorous ran down the hill, and Christian went on his way. But thinking again of what he had just heard from the men, he felt in his coat for his scroll so that he might read it and be comforted; but it was not there.

Then Christian was in great distress and didn't know what to do. He wanted to be comforted by the words in the scroll and also knew it was his pass into the Celestial City.

He stood still and became very perplexed and didn't know what to do. At last he remembered that he had slept in the arbor that is on the side of the hill. Falling down upon his knees, he asked God's forgiveness for his foolish act and then went back to look for his scroll.

All the way as he went back, there was a great sorrow in Christian's heart. Sometimes he sighed, sometimes he wept, and oftentimes he chided himself for being so foolish as to fall asleep in that place, which was only erected for a little refreshment for the weary. So he went all the way to the arbor, carefully looking on this side and on that, hoping he might find the scroll that had been such a comfort to him on his journey.

Finally he came within sight of the arbor where he had previously sat and slept. The sight of the place renewed his sorrow as he remembered again how wrong he had been to fall asleep.¹

He began crying over his sinful sleep, saying, “O wretched man that I am, that I should sleep in the daytime, that I should sleep in the midst of difficulty, that I should so indulge the flesh as to use that rest to ease my flesh, which the Lord of the hill intended only for the relief of the spirits of pilgrims!

“How many steps have I taken in vain! This is what happened to Israel for their sin. They were sent back again by the way of the Red Sea. I am now retracing those steps with sorrow that I might have traveled with delight, had it not been for this sinful sleep. How far I might have been on my way by this time! I am forced to retrace those steps three times over that I should have traveled only once. Now I am about to enter the darkness of night, for the day is almost over. Oh, that I had not slept.”¹⁰

Christian sat down in the arbor and wept, but at last looking sorrowfully down under the seat, he spied his scroll. With trembling and haste he snatched it up and put it into his coat. No one could have been more joyful than this man was after he retrieved his scroll! The scroll was the assurance of his life and acceptance at the Celestial City. He placed it carefully in his coat, gave thanks to God for directing his eyes to the place where it lay, and with joy and tears began his journey again.

Christian nimbly went up the rest of the hill. But before he reached the top of the hill, the sun went down. He recalled again the vanity of sleeping at the arbor; and so he began to talk with himself.

“O sinful sleep; for that little rest I am now making my journey in the dark of night! I must walk without the sun; darkness must cover the path of my feet; and I must hear the noise of the doleful creatures because of my sinful sleep.”^m

Just then he remembered the story that Mistrust and Timorous

¹1 Thessalonians 5:7–8; Revelation 2:5.

^m1 Thessalonians 5:6–7.



Christian is terrified by the lions.

had told him of how they were frightened by the sight of the lions. Then Christian said to himself, “These beasts prowl in the night looking for their prey, and if they should meet with me in the dark, how can I escape from them? How should I keep from being torn in pieces by them?”

With these thoughts in his mind, he went on his way. But while he was fretting over his unhappy circumstances, he lifted up his eyes and beheld a very stately palace in front of him. The name of the place was House Beautiful, and it stood by the side of the highway.¹¹

So I saw in my dream that he quickly walked forward, hoping he might find lodging. But before he had gone far, he entered into a very narrow passage, which was about a furlong off the porter’s lodge. Looking very carefully ahead as he went, he spied two lions in the way.

“Now,” he thought, “I see the dangers that drove Mistrust and Timorous back.” The lions were chained, but he did not see the chains. Then he was afraid and thought about going back, seeing nothing but death ahead of him.

Just then the porter at the lodge, whose name is Watchful, seeing that Christian had stopped his progress as if he would go back, cried out to him, asking, “Is your strength so small?ⁿ Don’t fear the lions, for they are chained and are placed there to test your faith and to discover those who have none. Keep in the middle of the path, and no harm shall come to you.

*“Difficulty is behind, Fear is before.
Though he’s got on the hill, the lions roar.
A Christian man is never long at ease.
When one fright’s gone, another does him seize.”*

Then I saw that Christian went forward, trembling for fear of the lions, but carefully following the directions of the porter.¹² He heard them roar, but they did him no harm. Then he clapped his

ⁿMark 8:34–37.

hands and went on until he came and stood in front of the gate where the porter was.

Then said Christian to the porter, "Sir, whose house is this? And may I lodge here tonight?"

The porter answered, "This house was built by the Lord of the hill. He built it for the relief and security of pilgrims." The porter also asked Christian where he was from and where he was going.¹³

"I am come from the City of Destruction and am going to Mount Zion," Christian replied, "but because the sun has now set, I was hoping to lodge here tonight."

The porter inquired, "What is your name?"

"My name is now Christian, but my name used to be Graceless. I came of the race of Japheth, whom God will persuade to dwell in the tents of Shem."^o

"But why is it that you come so late?" the porter asked. "The sun has indeed set."

Christian replied, "I would have been here sooner, but 'wretched man that I am!' I slept in the arbor that stands on the hillside, and in my sleep I lost my scroll. I traveled without it to the brow of the hill, where I searched for it but could not find it. I was then forced, with a sorrowful heart, to go back to the arbor where I had slept. It was there I recovered my scroll, and now I am here."

The porter stated, "Well, I will call out one of the virgins of this place who will, if she approves of your testimony, bring you in to the rest of the family, according to the rules of the house."

Then Watchful, the porter, rang a bell, at the sound of which a serious-looking, beautiful maiden came out of the door of the house. Her name was Discretion, and she immediately asked why she had been called.

The porter answered, "This man is on a journey from the City of Destruction to Mount Zion, but being weary and with night coming on he has asked me if he might lodge here tonight. I told him I would call for you, who, after having a conversation with

^oGenesis 9:27.



Christian is greeted outside the House Beautiful.

him, may do what seems best to you, even according to the law of the house.”

Then she asked Christian where he was from and where he was going, and he told her. She asked him also how he got into the way, and he told her. Then she asked him what he had seen and met with in the way, to which he replied, “My name is Christian, and I have a very strong desire to lodge here tonight because from what I perceive, this place was built by the Lord of the hill for the relief and security of pilgrims.” So she smiled, with tears in her eyes; and after a short pause, she said, “I will call for two or three more of the family.”

So she ran to the door and called out for Prudence, Piety, and Charity, who after a little more conversation with him invited him to meet the family. Many of them met him at the threshold of the house. “Come in,” they said, “you are blessed of the Lord. This house was built by the Lord of the hill for the purpose of showing hospitality to pilgrims such as yourself.” Then he bowed his head and followed them into the house.

When he had come in and sat down, they gave him something to drink and conversed together until supper was ready. Some of them passed the time profitably with very interesting discussions. Finally they asked Piety and Prudence and Charity to converse with him.

Piety began, “Come, good Christian, since we have received you into our home with such charity this night, let’s spend our time profitably by discussing all the things that have happened to you so far on your journey.”

Christian responded, “I am glad you are interested in my journey and would be happy to share my adventures with you.”

“What was the first thing that motivated you to become a pilgrim?” Piety asked.

“I was driven out of my native country by a dreadful message that I could not get out of my head, and the message was that destruction was unavoidable if I stayed in the place where I was.”

“But how did it happen that you came out of your country by this way?” Piety inquired further.

Christian answered, “It was as God would have it. I was under the fear of destruction. I did not know where to go, but by chance I was approached by a man as I was trembling and weeping. His name was Evangelist, and he directed me to the small sheep gate, which without his direction I would never have found. And that put me on the way that led me directly to this house.”

Piety then asked, “But did you not come by the house of the Interpreter?”

“Yes,” Christian went on, “and while I was there I saw and heard things that I will remember forever, three things that were the most important. First, how Christ, despite Satan, maintains His work of grace in the heart. Second, the man in the iron cage who sinned himself out of the hope of God’s mercy. And finally, the dream of the man who thought in his sleep that the Day of Judgment had come.”

“Did he tell you about his dream?” Piety wondered.

“Yes, and it was dreadful. It made my heart ache as he was telling it; yet I am glad I heard it.”

Piety inquired, “Was that all that you saw at the house of the Interpreter?”

Christian answered, “No. He took me to a stately palace where the people were dressed in gold; and it was here that I saw a brave man cut his way through the armed men who stood in the door to keep him out. Then he was invited to come in to eternal glory. Seeing these things enraptured my heart! I would have stayed at that good man’s house for a year, but I knew I had further to go.”

“And what else did you see in the way?” Piety wanted to know.

“See! I went a little farther, and I saw one who hung bleeding upon a tree, and the very sight of Him made my burden fall off my back (for I had groaned under a very heavy burden, but then it fell off). It was a strange thing to see, and I have never seen anything like it before. And while I stood looking up at the one hanging on the cross, three Shining Ones came to me. One of them testified that

my sins were forgiven; another stripped me of my rags and gave me this embroidered coat that you see; and the third gave me the mark that you see on my forehead and gave me this sealed scroll." And with that he plucked it out of his coat.

Piety again asked, "But you saw more than this, did you not?"

Christian continued, "The things that I have told you were the best. But there were some other things I saw. Namely, I saw three men—Foolish, Sloth, and Presumption—lying asleep a little out of the way, with irons upon their ankles. But do you think I could awake them?"

"I also saw Formality and Hypocrisy come tumbling over the wall with a false pretense of going to Zion, but they were quickly lost, as I warned them they would be, but they would not believe me. But the hardest thing I encountered was getting up this hill and then coming upon the lions. If it had not been for the good porter who stands at the gate, I think I might have retreated and abandoned my journey. But now I thank God I am here, and I thank you for receiving me."

Then Prudence began to ask Christian some questions.

"Do you ever think of the country you came from?"

"Yes," Christian replied, "but with much shame and detestation. 'Honestly, if I had pleasant thoughts about the country from which I have come, I might have taken the opportunity to return; but I desire a better country, one that is heavenly.'"^p

Prudence asked further, "Do you not still carry some of the baggage from the place you escaped?"

"Yes, but against my will. I still have within me some of the carnal thoughts that all my countrymen, as well as myself, were delighted with. Now all those things cause me to grieve. If I could master my own heart, I would choose never to think of those things again, but when I try only to think about those things that are best, those things that are the worst creep back into my mind and behavior."^q

^pHebrews 11:15–16.

^qRomans 7:16–19.

“Don’t you find that sometimes you can defeat those evil things that at other times seem to defeat you?” Prudence suggested.

Christian answered, “Yes, it happens occasionally. They are golden hours that I treasure.”

“Can you remember the means by which you’re able occasionally to defeat the evil desires and thoughts that assail you?”

Christian said, “Yes. When I think about what I experienced at the cross, that will do it. When I look at the embroidered coat, that will do it. When I read the scroll that I carry in my coat, that will do it. And when my thoughts turn to the place to which I am going, that will do it.”

Prudence inquired, “And what is it that makes you desirous to go to Mount Zion?”

Christian replied, “Why, it is there that I hope to see alive my Savior who hung dead on the cross. It is there that I hope to be rid of all those things that to this day are an annoyance to me. They say that in that place there is no death, and I will dwell there with the company that I like best.[†] For, to tell you the truth, I love Him because He eased me of my burden. I am weary of my inward sickness. I desire to be where I will die no more, with a company that will continually cry, ‘Holy, holy, holy!’”

Then Charity said to Christian, “Do you have a family? Are you a married man?”

“I have a wife and four small children.”

“And why did you not bring them along with you?” Charity asked.

Then Christian wept and said, “Oh, how willingly would I have brought them along! But they were all completely against my going on this pilgrimage.”

Charity urged, “But you should have talked to them and should have tried to show them the danger of being left behind.”

“I did,” Christian explained. “I told them what God had shown

[†]Isaiah 25:8; Revelation 21:4.

to me regarding the destruction of our city. But they treated me like I was jesting, and they did not believe me.”^s

Charity inquired further, “And did you pray to God that He would bless your counsel to them?”

Christian replied, “Yes, I did and with much pleading. As you can imagine, my wife and poor children are very precious to me.”

“Did you tell them of your own sorrow and fear of destruction?” Charity asked. “I suppose that the coming destruction was visible enough to you.”

“Yes, over and over and over,” Christian reported. “They could also see the fear in my face, in my tears, and also in my trembling under the apprehension of the judgment that hung over our heads. Unfortunately, all this was not enough to convince them to come with me.”

Charity inquired, “What did they say for themselves? What reason did they give for not coming with you?”

“My wife was afraid of losing this world, and my children were swayed by the foolish delights of youth. So by one thing or another they left me to make this pilgrimage on my own.”

Charity asked further, “But couldn’t they see the vanity of life in the City of Destruction and how your life had changed for the better as you prepared to leave? Couldn’t you convince them how foolish it was to stay and how much better it would be for them to come along with you?”

Christian responded, “Yes, although I cannot commend my life, for I am conscious of my many failings. I know that a man by the witness of his life may overturn any persuasive arguments he may make. Yet I can say that I was very careful not to give them any occasion for offense by my own actions. I did nothing to give them cause for not coming on this pilgrimage. And it was for this very thing that they found fault with me. They complained that I was too precise and that I denied myself things, for their sakes, in which they saw no evil. I think I can say that what they saw in me that

^sGenesis 19:14.



Christian is entertained at the House Beautiful.

hindered them was my great concern that I not sin against God or do any wrong to my neighbor.”

Charity commented, “Indeed Cain hated his brother ‘because his own works were evil, and his brother’s righteous.’^t And if your wife and children have been offended with you for this, they show themselves to be implacable to good, and ‘you will have delivered your soul’ from their blood.”^u

Now I saw in my dream that they sat talking together until supper was ready. So when all was prepared and ready, they sat down to eat. Now the table was furnished with savory foods and with wine that was well refined, and all their conversation at the table was about the Lord of the hill.

They spoke with reverence about what He had done and why He did what He did and the reason He built that house. And by the things they said, I perceived that He had been a great warrior. He had fought with and slain “him that had the power of death,” but not without great danger to Himself.^v Hearing this made me love Him even more.

They said, and I believe (as said Christian), that He did it with the loss of much blood. But what made it most glorious and gracious was that He did it all out of pure love to His country. And besides, some of the household said they had spoken with Him since He died on the cross; and they have attested that they heard it from His own lips that there is nowhere to be found, no matter how far one might travel, anyone who had a greater love for poor pilgrims than He.

They, moreover, gave an instance of what they heard Him say, which was that He had stripped Himself of His glory that He might do this for the poor. They also heard Him say and affirm “that He would not dwell in the mountain of Zion alone.” They said also that He had made many pilgrims into princes, even though by nature they were born beggars, and their original dwelling had been the dunghill.^w

^t1 John 3:12.

^uEzekiel 3:19.

^vHebrews 2:14–15.

^w1 Samuel 2:8; Psalm 113:7.



Christian examines the records contained in the House Beautiful.

This was the topic of their fellowship and conversation, which lasted late into the evening. After they had prayerfully committed themselves to their Lord for protection, they all went to bed. They took Christian to a large upper chamber, whose window opened toward the rising sun. The name of the chamber was Peace, and this is where he slept until the break of day. When he awoke he sang:

*"Where am I now? Is this the love and care
Of Jesus for the men that pilgrims are?
Thus to provide! That I should be forgiven,
And dwell already the next door to Heaven!"*

So in the morning they all got up, and after some more discourse they told him that he should not depart until they had shown him some of the treasures of that place. First they took him into the study, where they showed him records of the greatest antiquities; in which, as I remember my dream, they showed him first the pedigree of the Lord of the hill, that He was the son of the Ancient of Days and became that by eternal generation. Here also was more fully recorded the acts that He had done and the names of many hundreds whom He had taken into His service. Recorded there was how He had placed them in such habitations that could neither by length of days nor decays or nature ever be dissolved.

Then they read to him some of the worthy acts that some of His servants had done, how they had "through faith conquered kingdoms, enforced justice, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions, quenched the power of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, were made strong out of weakness, became mighty in war, put foreign armies to flight."^x

Then they read, in another part of the records, where it was declared how willing their Lord was to receive anyone into His favor, even those who in time past had offered great affronts to His person and proceedings. Here also were several other histories of many other famous things that Christian was able to read. Things

^xHebrews 11:33–34.

both ancient and modern together with prophecies and predictions of things that have already occurred or soon will come to pass. Predictions and prophecies full of dread and amazement to our enemies, and comfort and solace for pilgrims.

The next day they took him into the armory, where they showed him all manner of furniture that their Lord had provided for pilgrims. There were swords, shields, helmets, breastplates, ALL-PRAYER, and shoes that would not wear out. And there was enough to dress out as many men for the service of their Lord as there were stars in the heavens.

They also showed him the instruments with which some of His servants had done wonderful things. They showed him Moses' rod; the hammer and nail with which Jael slew Sisera; the pitchers, trumpets, and lamps, too, with which Gideon put to flight the armies of Midian. Then they showed him the ox's goad used by Shamgar to slay six hundred men. They also showed him the jawbone with which Samson did such mighty feats. They showed him the sling and stone with which David slew Goliath of Gath, and the sword also with which their Lord in the final days will kill the Man of Sin. And besides all that they showed him many other excellent things, with which Christian was much delighted. Once this was done, they all went to rest.

Then I saw in my dream that the next day Christian got up to continue his journey. But before he could leave, they convinced him to stay for another day, hoping the weather would be clear so they could show him the Delectable Mountains. They told Christian that this would further encourage and comfort him since those mountains were nearer to his final destination than where he was now. So he consented to stay. When the next morning came, they took him to the top of the house and asked him to look south, which he did. Then he saw some distance away a most pleasant mountainous country, beautified with woods, vineyards, fruits of all sorts, flowers, springs, and fountains, very delectable to behold.^y

^yIsaiah 33:16–17.



Christian views Immanuel's Land from the House Beautiful.

Then he asked the name of the country. They said it was Immanuel's Land; and "like this hill it is for all the pilgrims. And when you go there, with the assistance of the shepherds who live there, you may see the gates of the Celestial City."

Now they all agreed that Christian was ready to go forward on his journey. But they wanted to visit the armory one last time before he left.

So they did, and while they were there, they covered him from head to foot with armor to protect him should he be assaulted along the way. Christian, now dressed in full armor, went with his friends to the gate.¹⁴ When he arrived at the gate, he asked the porter if any other pilgrims had passed by. The porter answered, "Yes."

"Did you ask him his name?" Christian inquired.

The porter replied, "I asked him his name, and he told me it was Faithful."

"Oh," said Christian, "I know him. He is my townsman, a close neighbor. He comes from the place where I was born. How far ahead do you think he is?"

The porter responded, "By this time I think he should be below the hill."

"Well," said Christian, "good porter, the Lord be with you and increase your blessings for all the kindness you have shown me."

Then he began to go forward. Discretion, Piety, Charity, and Prudence accompanied him down to the foot of the hill. And they all went on together, rehearsing their former conversations until they came to the top of the hill.

Then Christian said, "It appears that going down the hill is going to be as difficult and dangerous as it was climbing up the hill."

"Yes," said Prudence, "it is a hard thing for a man to go down into the Valley of Humiliation, which is where you are headed. It is difficult to go down the hill without slipping and falling, which is why we are going to accompany you down the hill."

So he began to do down, very carefully; and even with all his caution and assistance he almost slipped a time or two.

Then I saw in my dream that they all arrived at the bottom of the hill where they gave Christian a loaf of bread, a bottle of wine, and a cluster of raisins. Then Christian went on his way.

Written in the form of a highly imaginative allegory, *The Pilgrim's Progress* tells the unforgettable story of Christian and the extreme, soul-threatening dangers he encounters on his journey to the Celestial City. But it is also much more than an allegory; in a sense, it is both the personal story of Bunyan and the universal story of anyone who undertakes the same eternal pilgrimage. The result is a masterpiece of literature as well as spiritual truth—a book that at one time was loved and read in nearly every home in England and North America, a book that has endured as a classic for more than three centuries.

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