

# The Pilgrim's Progress

The World's Second Most Read Book

BY JOHN BUNYAN

**HAVE YOU EVER HAD A BURDEN?**

**ONE THAT GOT HEAVIER EVERY DAY?**

**WHAT WOULD YOU DO TO GET RID OF IT?**

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## Pilgrim's Progress

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## About the Book

### The Birth

*Pilgrim's Progress* was written in two parts. Each part is a long continuous narrative, without divisions. Consequently, the narrative will be dealt with in sections based on major scenes and incidents

*The Pilgrim's Progress*, Part I, was conceived and largely written by Bunyan while he was lying in prison, and he tells us the circumstances. He was working hard to finish another book when he conceived the idea of writing a story about the adventures that a devout Christian might meet in trying to save his soul by setting out on a pilgrimage to Heaven. Bunyan, wishing to complete the book in hand; put the new idea in the back of his mind. But it would not stay there, crowding up front and blazing through his mind "like sparks that from the coals of fire do fly." So many ideas flashed into his mind that he had a hard time in keeping notes for future use.

### Understanding

To understand Bunyan and what he is saying in *Pilgrim's Progress*, it is essential to understand the origin, background, and effects of the Puritan movement which so deeply affected England and our own country as well through the powerful influence of Puritan New England. After his break from the Roman Catholic Church in the early 1500s, less for doctrinal reasons than for reasons of state, Henry VIII set up his own church, the Church of England, with himself virtually as pope. The king was not a Protestant, and did not propose to become one, keeping most of Roman ritual and belief. His was an official church, a state church, to which everyone had to belong and pay tithes. No other form of worship was tolerated. Bunyan's puritan style preaching led to his incarcerations, in one of which he wrote *Pilgrim's Progress*, which was originally published in 1678.

### The Style of writing

*Pilgrim's Progress* is a Puritan story, and Bunyan chose to tell it in the form of an allegory, a form with which he was familiar from his reading. In addition, Bunyan chose to present his allegory in the form of a dream, which gave the widest latitude to his always fertile and often rather dramatic imagination.

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### Little know Facts

Charles Spurgeon found Pilgrim's progress to be one of the best books he ever read and he said "Next to the Bible, the book I value most is John Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress*. I believe I have read it through at least a hundred times. It is a volume of which I never seem to tire; and the secret of its freshness is that it is so largely compiled from the Scriptures."

Liam Neeson's film debut was in a [1970s version of a Pilgrim's Progress](#). (Incidentally, he also was the voice of Aslan in the recent Chronicles of Narnia films.)

### Audio Resource

A Free audio version available at <http://www.loyalbooks.com/book/the-pilgrims-progress-by-john-bunyan>

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## *The Characters*

Part I of the book has only one main character, Christian, the Pilgrim. He appears in every scene and dominates them all. Other characters are those he chances to meet on his journey and with whom he talks for a longer or shorter time. Only two of them, Faithful and Hopeful, share any of his experiences.

**Christian** A poor, ragged man who flees from the wicked City of Destruction, convinced that God is about to blast it for its sins, and sets out on a pilgrimage to find the Celestial City, where his soul will be saved and he can live for all eternity in the company of God, and of the Heavenly Host.

**Evangelist** Preacher of the Holy Word, always eager to help those who are seriously concerned about the state of their souls and about finding the way to Heaven.

**Obstinate** Who accepts things as they are, resisting any change, and thinks anyone undertaking a pilgrimage like Christian's is a fool, out of his mind.

**Pliant** A well-intentioned man who decides to join Christian on his pilgrimage but, having little courage and less resolution, turns back at the first obstacle.

**Mr. Worldly Wiseman** Knows the world and has come to terms with it on a high moral level. A generous and sympathetic man, he obeys the Ten Commandments and lives in great esteem among his friends and neighbors. With his plausibility he almost seduces Christian in advising him to settle down in the village of Morality instead of going on toward the Celestial City.

**Good-will** Keeper of the Wicket Gate, entrance to the Holy Way, or "King's Highway," leading to the Celestial City on Mount Zion.

**Interpreter** The Holy Spirit which inhabits a large house that Christian visits and where he is shown many wonders and given a number of exhortations on the way he should go.

**Three Shining Ones** Angels who meet Christian at the Cross.

**Formalist and Hypocrisy** Formalist is one of those who knows all the outward forms of religion, but not the inner spirit. The Gospel is in his head, not in his

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heart. Hypocrisy is what his name implies, being all things to all men. Both Formalist and Hypocrisy come to a bad end at the foot of Difficulty Hill.

**Discretion, Prudence, Piety, and Charity** Virgins in charge of Palace Beautiful, where Christian rests for several days and is shown the "rarities" of the place.

**Apollyon** A foul fiend whom Christian encounters in the Valley of Humiliation. The monster has scales like a fish, wings like a dragon, feet like a bear, and a mouth like a lion. Out of a hole in his belly belch smoke and flame. Christian has a narrow escape from death when Apollyon attacks him.

**Faithful** A townsman from the City of Destruction whom Christian meets as he emerges from the Valley of the Shadow of Death. The two Pilgrims go along together until Faithful meets his death by execution at Vanity Fair.

**Mr. Talkative** One of those willing to discuss anything, often very sensibly, but never willing to do anything. "Good riddance," says Christian when Talkative decides to go his own way to salvation.

**Lord Hate-good** The judge who sentences Faithful to a frightful death at Vanity Fair.

**Hopeful** A refugee from Vanity Fair who joins Christian, and the two of them go on together all the way to the Celestial City.

**By-ends** From the wealthy town of Fair-speech, By-ends likes religion when it "goes in silver slippers," with the sun shining and the people applauding. By-ends is a nickname given to him by friends because of his knack in snatching every opportunity for profit that falls in his way.

**Giant Despair** Who surprises Christian and Hopeful while asleep in By-path Meadow, seizes them as trespassers, and throws them into the cellar dungeon in his stronghold, Doubting Castle. The prisoners are about to be killed by the giant when Christian suddenly remembers that he has a magic key that will open all the doors and gates of the castle, and they escape back to the Holy Way.

**Knowledge, Experience, Watchful, and Sincere** Shepherds tending the flocks of the Lord on the heights of the Delectable Mountains. The shepherds are very



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helpful to the Pilgrims, giving them exact directions to the Celestial City and telling them what to avoid along the way.

**Ignorance** A "very brisk" lad who comes down a little crooked lane from the Country of Conceit and encounters Christian and Hopeful in the Holy Way. They think he is all wrong in his ideas, but he tells them to mind their own business. Trailing along behind, Ignorance makes it all the way to the gates of the Celestial City. But as he does not have the proper credentials, the "King" (God) has him thrown down a side pit into Hell.

**Turn-away** An apostate who has been seized by seven devils, tied with seven stout cords, and is being carried off to be tossed down the side mouth to Hell which Christian and Hopeful had been shown, to their great fright, in the Delectable Mountains.

**Flatterer** A "man black of flesh, but covered with a very light robe," who induces the two Pilgrims to follow him, leading them a circular course into a net from which there appears to be no means of escape. But a Shining One appears with a whipcord, cuts the net, and leads them back to the Holy Way.

**Atheist** Who laughs at the Pilgrims, telling them that he has made great search and there is no such place as the Celestial City, which greatly shocks Christian and Hopeful: "What! no Mount Zion!"

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Part 1

## The Life of Christian

"I write these things to you who believe in the name of the Son of God that you may know that you have eternal life."

*1 JOHN 5:13*

***"As I walked through the wilderness of this world"***

## The Journey

### [Stage 1] The Journey Begins

*"Enter by the narrow gate. For the gate is wide and the way is easy that leads to destruction, and those who enter by it are many."*

*Matthew 7:13*

#### Summary

Bunyan begins *Pilgrim's Progress* this way: "As I walked through the wilderness of this world, I lighted on a certain place where was a den [jail], and I laid me down in that place to sleep; and as I slept I dreamed a dream."

#### Christian's deplorable Condition

In his dream the author sees a poor, ragged man standing off by himself in the fields, a heavy burden on his back, a Bible in his hand. As he opens the Book to read from time to time, he weeps and trembles and cries out: "What shall I do? What shall I do to be saved?" He is convinced that the City of Destruction where he lives is about to be "burned with fire from Heaven" for its manifold sins and corruptions. He tells his family and friends of this, and of the need to flee immediately. But they put down his distress to some "frenzy distemper [that] had got into his head." They put him to bed in the hope "that sleep might settle his brains," but that does no good. As the ragged



man goes on talking about the immediate need of finding some way of escape from the doomed city, those around him begin to grow hardened about all his apocalyptic notions. In the hope of driving away his "distemper by harsh and surly carriages toward him," they chide him, deride him, and quite neglect him. He pities them and prays for them, but to no effect.

#### Evangelist Directs Him

- **Evangelist** = a bearer of the good news

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The poor, ragged, distraught man is soon given a name; appropriately, it is Christian. One day when he is walking along, reading the Bible, and crying out in spiritual torment, he is met by Evangelist, who asks Christian what is the matter, what is troubling him. Christian explains that he wishes to flee the City of Destruction to live forever in the Celestial City, but how is he going to do that, not knowing the way. Pointing across a very broad field, Evangelist asks: "Do you see yonder Wicket-gate?" (Matt. 7:13). No, says Christian. "Do you see yonder shining Light? (Ps. 119:105, 2 Pet. 1:19). Christian thinks he does. Very well, Evangelist concludes, he should follow the Light to the Wicket Gate, where he should knock and he would there be told what to do.

At this, Christian begins to run. As he is near his house, he is seen by his wife and children, who run after him, calling out to him to return and not leave them destitute. Christian does not look back, puts his fingers in his ears to keep from hearing the pitiful wails of his family, and runs on crying: "Life! Life! Eternal Life!"

### Obstinate and Pliable

- **Obstinate** = stubbornly refusing to change one's opinion or chosen course of action
- **Pliable** = easily bent; flexible

To fetch Christian back, by force if necessary, neighbors send out two men, Obstinate and Pliant. They cannot persuade Christian to return. Obstinate gives up the attempt and goes back, dismissing Christian as a "brain-sick fellow." But Pliant becomes interested in what Christian has to say and decides to join him in his pilgrimage, particularly after Christian has unfolded his vision of the wonders they will enjoy at the end of their pilgrimage. "There is an endless kingdom to be inhabited, and everlasting Life to be given us. There are crowns of glory to be given us, and garments that will make us shine like the sun in the firmament . . . There shall be no more crying, nor sorrow . . . There we shall be with Seraphims and Cherubims, creatures that will dazzle your eyes to look at them."

### Slough of Despond

- **Slough** = being slow in progress

As they walk along together, Christian and Pliant are so busy talking about immortality and other things that they do not notice where they are going and suddenly fall into a bog, the Slough of Despond, where they wallow for a time. Weighted down by the burden on his back, Christian begins to sink in the mire. Pliant calls out:

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"Ah, neighbor Christian, where are you now?"

"Truly. I do not know."

"Is this the happiness you have told me all this while of?" asks Pliant angrily. "If we have such ill speed at our first setting out, what may we expect 'twixt this and our journey's end."

After a struggle, Pliant pulls himself out of the swamp and, all covered with slime and mud, returns home, where his neighbors laugh at him as a fool for having become involved in such a silly venture. Christian, determined to go on, finally manages to flounder across the Slough of Despond, having received unexpected assistance from a **man named Help**, who suddenly appears and almost as suddenly disappears.

### Worldly Wiseman

Proceeding, Christian soon meets with a "gentleman" named Mr. Worldly Wiseman, who offers some advice. Instead of traveling in such a burdened manner, with so many sighs and groans, Christian should give up his pilgrimage, which would certainly end only in pain, hunger, perils, "nakedness, swords, lions, dragons, darkness and, in a word, death." Rather, he should be a sensible fellow and go to **the neighboring village of Morality**, which Mr. Wiseman points out to him, saying that the people there are honest, law-abiding, and God-fearing; a good house can be had at a low rent; provisions of all kinds are plentiful and cheap. Besides, there is in the village a "very judicious man," **Mr. Legality**, who has relieved many a man of his burdens and thus cured a great number of those "crazed in their wits with their burdens."

If Christian were to send for his wife and children, the family could settle down in the village and live happily "with honest neighbors, in credit and good fashion." Christian is tempted, at least to the point of deciding to have a closer look at the village and perhaps have a talk with Mr. Legality. The way to the village leads by a steep high hill which overhangs the wayside. Christian stops, fearing that the overhang might fall on his head.

### Conversation with Evangelist

While he is standing there, not knowing what to do, he sees a figure coming toward him. It is Evangelist, and Christian begins "to blush for shame." With a "severe and dreadful countenance," Evangelist upbraids Christian for listening to Mr. Worldly Wiseman and swerving from the Holy Way. The village of Morality is a good enough place, but it is not the Celestial City. If Christian is

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seriously interested in saving his soul, he had better make all speed to get on the path leading to the Wicket Gate pointed out to him before by Evangelist.

After a lengthy religious discourse on the "very great sin" Christian has committed, Evangelist assures him: "All manner of sin and blasphemies shall be forgiven unto men. Be not faithless, but believing" (Matt. 12:31; Mark 3:28). Worried about whether he will be admitted, Christian starts running toward the Wicket Gate. He talks to no one along the way, going "like one that was all the while treading on forbidden ground, and could by no means think himself safe till again he was got into the way which he left to follow Mr. Worldly Wiseman's counsel."

### **Discussion and Application**

## **[Stage 2A] To Interpreter's House**

*"When the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all the truth..."*

*John 16:13a*

### **Summary**

#### **The Gate and Good-Will**

Reaching the little Wicket Gate, Christian sees a sign over it: "Knock and it shall be opened unto you" (Matt. 7:7). He knocks, and then again, and many more times before he arouses the gatekeeper, a "grave person" named Good-will, who comes out to ask what he wants. When Christian tells him that he was directed to the gate by Evangelist and that he is a poor burdened sinner bound for Mount Zion, Good-will unlocks the gate and gives Christian a strong pull to get him inside quickly. Why the pull? asks Christian. Because there is a strong castle nearby from which Beelzebub and his minions shoot arrows at those knocking at the gate, hoping to kill them before they enter.

Under Good-will's questioning, Christian relates his adventures at length. Good-will then walks a little way with Christian to show him the way he must go, pointing out that it is a very narrow path that runs as straight as a rule can make it. Are there no turnings or windings to confuse a stranger? Yes, but Christian need not be confused if he remembers there is only one right path, "That only being straight and narrow" (Matt. 7:14).

#### **The Interpreter's House**

Good-will directs Christian to the house of Interpreter, saying the latter would show him "excellent things." Arriving there, Christian knocks and knocks before a man comes to the door. Christian asks to speak with the master of the house, who in time appears and invites the traveler to come in to see things that will help him in his journey.

#### **The Sights There Shown Him**

##### **Very Grave Person**

Commanding his man to light "the candle," Interpreter leads Christian into a private room, where there is a picture of a "very grave person" hanging on the wall. "It had eyes lifted up to Heaven, the best of Books in his hand, the Law of Truth was written upon his lips, the world was behind his back. It stood as if it pleaded with men, and a crown of gold did hang over his head."

- The picture, explains Interpreter, is that of one of many sincere, inspiring preachers of the Gospel, a man of God, and Christian should mark his



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features well and remember them so that he will be able to distinguish any pious pretenders who may try to mislead him on his journey.

### The Heart Of Man

Leading Christian into a very large parlor full of dust, Interpreter calls for a man to sweep out the room. The latter raises such a cloud of dust that Christian all but chokes. Turning to a damsel standing by, Interpreter asks her, "Bring hither water and sprinkle the room." As soon as that is done, the room is "swept and cleansed with pleasure."

- When Christian asks the meaning of this, Interpreter tells him that the parlor is the heart of man, which has to be swept out to remove the dust of "Original Sin and inward corruptions," and that the damsel with her water is the Gospel that makes the soul clean and "consequently fit for the King of Glory to inhabit" (John 15:3; Eph. 5:26; Acts 15:9; Rom. 16:25,26).

### The Two Small Children

Then Interpreter took him by the hand into a little room, where sat two little children, each one in his chair— Passion (the bad boy, wanting everything here and now) and Patience (the good boy, willing to wait for his reward in Heaven)

- Passion seemed to be much discontent, but Patience was very quiet. Then Christian asked, "What is the reason of the discontent of Passion?" The Interpreter answered, "The governor of them would have him stay for his best things till the beginning of the next year, but he will have all now; but Patience is willing to wait."
- These two lads are figures; Passion of the men of this world, and Patience of the men of that which is to come; for, as here thou seest, passion will have all now, this year, that is to say, in this world; so are the men of this world: They must have all their good things now; they cannot stay till the next year, that is, until the next world, for their portion of good.
- The glory of the next world will never wear out; but that of the present are suddenly gone.

## Discussion and Application

## [Stage 2B] At Interpreter's House Continued

### The Sights There Shown Him

#### Summary

#### The Unquenched Fire

Later Interpreter takes Christian to a place where there is a fire burning against a wall. By the fire is a sinister figure constantly throwing water on the blaze to put it out. But the fire gets higher and hotter because a man on the other side of the wall is secretly adding fuel to the flames from a vessel of oil — "the oil of Christ's Grace." Do what he may, the Devil will never extinguish the flame kindled in the hearts of men as a work of Grace.

#### Entering The Kingdom Of Heaven

Christian is next led to a place where stands a stately beautiful palace. In front of it is gathered a large crowd anxious to get in. But in the doorway stands a troop of armed men to keep everybody out. It is not that the people in the palace want to keep people out. It is that Satan has posted the soldiers to intimidate the crowd and prevent anyone from entering.

Off to the side sits a man with a pen and inkhorn on the table before him, ready to register in a book the names of those deemed worthy to enter the palace. A man of "very stout countenance" approaches and says: "Set down my name, sir." That done, the man draws his sword, puts on his helmet, and rushes upon the soldiers in the doorway, who wound him many times. But the man, "cutting and hacking most fiercely," finally presses through the soldiers and into the palace, and those outside hear a pleasant voice welcoming him:

- Come in, come in;  
Eternal glory thou shalt win.

So he went in, and was clothed with such garments as they.

*Matthew 11:12 From the days of John the Baptist until now the kingdom of heaven has suffered violence, and the violent take it by force.*

*Acts 14:22 strengthening the souls of the disciples, encouraging them to continue in the faith, and saying that through many tribulations we must enter the kingdom of God.*

#### The Man In The Iron Cage

Christian suggests that he had better be on his way now, but Interpreter has some other things to show him, leading him into a very dark room where there is a man in an iron cage. Christian talks with the dejected man in the iron cage of Despair and learns that the prisoner was once a "fair and flourishing"

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Christian, with good hopes of getting to the Celestial City. But tempted by the lusts, pleasures, and profits of this world, he had fallen by the wayside, renounced the Faith, and become an apostate — a sin against the Holy Ghost for which he can never be forgiven. Through all eternity he must suffer the tortures of Hell.

- CHRISTIAN: But how camest thou into this condition?
- THE MAN: I left off to watch and be sober: I laid the reins upon the neck of my lusts; I sinned against the light of the word, and the goodness of God; I have grieved the Spirit, and he is gone; I tempted the devil, and he is come to me; I have provoked God to anger, and he has left me: I have so hardened my heart, that I cannot repent.
- CHRISTIAN: Why, the Son of the Blessed is very pitiful.
- THE MAN: I have crucified him to myself afresh, Heb. 6:6; I have despised his person, Luke 19:14; I have despised his righteousness; I have counted his blood an unholy thing; I have done despite to the spirit of grace, Heb. 10:29: therefore I have shut myself out of all the promises and there now remains to me nothing but threatenings, dreadful threatenings, faithful threatenings of certain judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour me as an adversary.
- CHRISTIAN: For what did you bring yourself into this condition?
- THE MAN: For the lusts, pleasures, and profits of this world; in the enjoyment of which I did then promise myself much delight: but now every one of those things also bite me, and gnaw me like a burning worm.

## The Judgment

Christian again suggests that he should be going, but Interpreter insists on showing him one more thing, leading him into a chamber where a man is getting up from bed and violently trembling as he dresses himself. He is shaking because of a dream he just had, and he proceeds to relate it. In the dream, the skies suddenly grew very black, with great lightning and thunder. A trumpet sounds as a man sitting on a cloud appears with his heavenly attendants around him, "all in flaming fire," and a voice rings out: "Arise ye dead, and come to Judgment!"

Rocks split asunder, graves open up, the dead emerge. Some are "exceeding happy" and hopefully look upward. Others try "to hide themselves under the mountains" (Isa. 26:21; Mic. 7:16, 17; Ps. 50:1-3). The man on the cloud orders his attendants to go among the resurrected to "gather together the tares, the chaff, and stubble, and cast them into the burning lake." To receive the chaff,

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the bottomless pit opens up and out of it comes hellish smoke and flames, "with hideous noises." At another order, "Gather my wheat into my garner," angels come winging down, catch up many, and carry them away into the clouds.

When Christian asks what was so frightening about that, the dreamer replies that he thought the Day of Judgment had come, and he was not ready for it. His conscience greatly troubled him. Besides, he could see that the "Judge" (the man on the cloud) was closely watching him, "showing indignation in his countenance."

## The Conclusion

Now content to let the Pilgrim be on his way, Interpreter first questions him on whether he has understood the deeper meaning of all the "excellent things" he has been shown, and whether he will always remember the lessons they have taught. Assuring Interpreter that he will never forget, Christian girds up his loins and is off, still burdened by the sack of sins on his back.

So Christian went on his way, saying

"Here I have seen things rare and profitable, Things pleasant, dreadful, things to make me stable In what I have begun to take in hand: Then let me think on them, and understand Wherefore they showed me were, and let me be Thankful, O good Interpreter, to thee."

## Discussion and Application

## The Challenges

### [Stage 3A] The Cross and Difficulty Hill

*"If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me." Matthew 16:24*

#### Summary

#### Loses his burden at the Cross

Proceeding from Interpreter's House, Christian comes to higher ground on which stands a Cross. Below it, down the slope, is an open sepulcher. Just as Christian reaches the Cross, the heavy bundle on his back slips from his shoulders, rolls down the slope, and falls into the sepulcher, to be seen no more.

Then was Christian glad and lightsome, and said with a merry heart, "He hath given me rest by his sorrow, and life by his death." Then he stood still a while, to look and wonder; for it was very surprising to him that the sight of the cross should thus ease him of his burden. He looked, therefore, and looked again, even till the springs that were in his head sent the waters down his cheeks. Zech. 12:10.

#### Three Shining Ones

As Christian stands weeping with joy, three "Shining Ones" (angels) appear. One tells him that all of his sins are now forgiven. Another strips him of his rags, and clothes him in bright new raiment. The third puts a mark on his forehead and hands him a parchment, "a Roll with a seal upon it," This Roll he should read as he journeys along and when he gets to the Celestial Gate, he should present it as his credentials, as his passport to Heaven so to speak.

Giving three leaps for joy, singing...

- "Thus far did I come laden with my sin,
- Nor could aught ease the grief that I was in,
- Till I came hither. What a place is this!
- Must here be the beginning of my bliss?
- Must here the burden fall from off my back?
- Must here the strings that bound it to me crack?
- Blest cross! blest sepulchre! blest rather be
- The Man that there was put to shame for me!"

#### Simple, Sloth, and Presumption

Christian goes along singing until he comes upon three men lying asleep on the ground — Simple, Sloth, and Presumption. He feels duty-bound to wake them

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up and warn them of the great danger they are in if they do not get up and be on their way.

A lion might come by and eat them up. Saying that they can see no danger, the three turn over and go to sleep again, which leaves Christian "troubled to think that men in that danger should so little esteem the kindness of him that so freely offered to help them."

### Formalist and Hypocrisy

Still musing about such ingratitude, Christian is proceeding along the Holy Way when he sees two men come tumbling over one of the high walls that line the narrow way. The walls had been built to prevent any from entering the Holy Way except through the Wicket Gate. The wall-jumpers — Formalist and Hypocrisy — identify themselves by saying that they come from "the land of Vain-glory and are going for praise to Mount Zion." But why had they not come in by the Wicket Gate, which was the proper way? asks Christian. Surely they must know "that he that cometh not in by the door, but climbeth up some other way, the same is a thief and a robber" (John 10:1).

It was too far around to the Wicket Gate, they reply, so they had followed their usual course in taking a shortcut. When Christian raises a doubt about their reception at the Celestial Gate, they tell him not to bother his head about that; their reception would be as good as his.

### Difficulty Hill

Not very pleased with his company, Christian proceeds with Hypocrisy and Formalist to the foot of Difficulty Hill, where there are three paths and they must make a choice. One path goes straight ahead, right up the steep face of the hill; another goes around the base to the left; the third around the other way. Recalling Good-will's instructions, Christian knows that the right path is that going straight ahead up the hill. Not liking that prospect, Formalist and Hypocrisy decide to take the level paths going around the hill. Both get lost and perish.

### A Pleasant Arbor

Clambering up the hill, in places so steep that he has to crawl on hands and knees, Christian comes to a pleasant arbor, "made by the Lord of the hill for the refreshing of weary travelers." Sitting down to rest, he takes out his Roll to read, which comforts him. But reading makes him drowsy, and he falls into a

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fast sleep, from which he is awakened after a time by someone saying: "Go to the ant, thou sluggard; consider her ways, and be wise" (Prov. 6:6).

### Timorous and Mistrust

Jumping up, Christian speeds as fast as he can to the top of the hill, where he meets two returning Pilgrims, Timorous and Mistrust. What's the matter that you run the wrong way? asks Christian. Because there are lions ahead, they reply, adding that "the further we go, the more danger we meet with," so they were turning back and returning home.

They advise Christian to come with them, but the latter decides to venture on. There might be death ahead, but death was certain if he went back to the City of Destruction, which was being "prepared for fire and brimstone." Still, the reports of Timorous and Mistrust were disturbing. To find solace and encouragement in reading it, Christian reaches into his blouse for his Roll, but it is not there.

Shocked, moaning and groaning, loudly bewailing his carelessness in having lost his "pass into the Celestial City," Christian recalls that he had last had his Roll in the arbor and retraces his steps there. Not finding his treasure immediately, he is in utter despair and sits weeping when, suddenly, he spies the Roll, which had fallen from his lap during his "sinful sleep." Offering "thanks to God for directing his eye to the place where it lay," Christian tucks the Roll securely in his blouse and painfully climbs back to the top of the hill. From there he sees a stately palace not too far away. As it is getting on toward dark he hastens there.

## Discussion and Application

## *[Stage 3B] Palace Beautiful*

### Summary

#### The Porter

The palace stands a little off the Holy Way, being approached by a narrow lane leading to a lodge, or gatehouse. Starting up the lane, Christian has not gone far when he sees two lions in front of him. He stops and turns as if to go back. The porter at the lodge has been observing him and calls out: "Is thy strength so small? Fear not the lions, for they are chained, and are placed there for trial of faith where it is, and for discovery of those that have none. Keep in the midst of the path, and no hurt shall come to thee."

#### Discretion, Piety, Prudence, and Charity

Taking heart, but still trembling, Christian advances warily, taking good care to walk exactly in the middle of the path as directed. Straining at their chains, the lions roar at him but cannot reach him. Clapping his hands at having safely passed between them, Christian arrives at the lodge, where he asks Watchful, the porter, "What house is this?" He is told that it was built by the Lord of the hill for the relief and security of Pilgrims. He then asks if he might spend the night. Watchful says that he will find out by summoning one of the virgins in charge of the establishment. "A grave and beautiful damsel" named Discretion appears, soon followed by three other virgins — Prudence, Piety, and Charity. Satisfied with Christian's answers to their queries, they invite him to come into Palace Beautiful, introduce him to the rest of the family, give him drink, and sit him down to supper at a table "furnished with fat things and with wine well refined."

In a lengthy conversation the virgins question Christian about himself: Why did he set out on his pilgrimage; what has he seen and encountered on his journey? (Bunyan once again, for the third time, tells the reader what he has already been told about Christian's adventures and misadventures.) Has he a family? Charity inquires. When Christian replies that he has a wife and four children, Charity then asks why he had not brought them with him. Because they would not come, says Christian, and he begins to weep. He had tried time and again to persuade them, but to no avail. His wife was afraid to give up this world on the chance of finding a better one. As for his children, they were "given to the foolish delights of youth; so what by one thing, and what by another, they left me to wander in this manner alone."



## Pilgrim's Progress

Next day, the virgins show their guest the "rarities" of the place, first taking him to the study, which is filled with ancient documents dating back to the beginning of time. One is a unique document (never seen before or since), "the pedigree of the Lord of the hill, that he was the son of the Ancient of Days and came by an eternal generation." They read aloud about "some of the worthy acts that some of his servants had done: as how they had subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions, quenched the violence of fire, escaped the edge of the sword; out of weakness were made strong, waxed valiant in fight, and turned to flight the armies of the aliens."

### Christian is Armed

Christian is then taken to the armory and shown things the Lord provides for Pilgrims, such as "sword, shield, helmet, breastplate, All-prayer, and shoes that would not wear out," and all these items in quantity sufficient to equip "as many men for the service of the Lord as there be stars in the Heaven." The armory is something of a historical museum, too, and Christian is shown some really remarkable things that deeply impress him: Moses' rod, the jawbone with which Samson wrought such havoc among the Philistines, the slingshot and the very stone with which David slew Goliath of Gath, and the sword "with which the Lord will kill the man of sin in the day that he shall rise up to the prey."

Escorting Christian to the palace roof, the virgins point to mountains in the distance. Those are the Delectable Mountains, they tell him, and his path will take him there, where he will find great comfort among the shepherds of the Lord. But the path is difficult, and the next stretch is particularly dangerous, they warn him and, as he is leaving, take him to the armory again and give him a sword, a helmet, a shield, and a breastplate for his protection along the way.

## Discussion and Application

## ***[Stage 4] Valley of Humiliation and Valley of the Shadow of Death***

### **Summary**

#### **Valley of Humiliation**

Just beyond Palace Beautiful lies the Valley of Humiliation. Christian has scarcely entered it when he sees coming toward him a "foul fiend" named Apollyon — a hideous monster with scales like a fish, wings like a dragon, feet like a bear, mouth like a lion; fire and smoke pour out of a hole in his belly. The monster asks Christian: "Whence come you, and whither are you bound?"

When Christian replies that he is coming from the City of Destruction and bound for the City of Zion, Apollyon points out that he is the prince and god of the City of Destruction and all surrounding territory, that Christian is therefore one of his subjects and owes him obedience, that he should obey his command and turn around and go home. Christian refuses, announcing his intention of continuing "in the King's highway, the way of holiness." With that, Apollyon blocks the path and lets fly at Christian with a flaming dart, which Christian deflects with his shield. But then comes a shower of flaming darts, "thick as hail," inflicting many wounds. Christian's sword is useless to him, for Apollyon stays out of reach as he moves around hurling his darts.

The fight goes on for above half a day." Toward the end, growing weaker and weaker from loss of blood, Christian has to give way a step or two, at which the monster rushes at him, knocks the sword from his hand, and throws him down, pinning his shoulders to the ground. Thinking each breath will be his last, Christian reaches out a hand, fortunately finds his sword within reach, and plunges it into his tormentor. Apollyon jumps up and staggers back, with Christian after him, hoping to bury his sword in his heart. But the monster escapes by taking to his dragon wings and flying off, threatening to be back again to deal with Christian.

Thanking God for his deliverance by placing his fallen sword within reach, Christian sits down wearily and "there came to him a hand with some of the leaves of the Tree of Life." He applies the leaves to his many wounds, which are "healed immediately." Having eaten the bread and drunk of the bottle given him at Palace Beautiful, he feels sufficiently refreshed to resume his journey, keeping his sword unsheathed in case of another attack, but none comes in this valley.

## Pilgrim's Progress

### Valley of Shadow of Death

Christian now enters the Valley of the Shadow of Death, a fearsome place, "a wilderness, a land of deserts and pits, a land of drought and of the shadow of death, a land that no man (but a Christian) passeth through, and where no man dwelt," as the Prophet Jeremiah described it (Jer. 2:6). The path in the valley is very narrow, with a deep, water-filled ditch on one side in which many ("the blind leading the blind") have drowned, and on the other side a great bog, "a very dangerous quag," in which others have perished. In addition, it is quite dark, so that Christian has to walk very slowly and cautiously, often not knowing where his next step will carry him.

Halfway through the valley, he comes to the mouth of Hell, which is spewing forth sparks, flames, and great clouds of smoke. As his sword is of no use to him here, Christian puts it away and takes out another potent weapon, All-prayer (Eph. 6:18), a sort of blanket prayer that covers all kinds of exigencies. Protected by this, Christian goes on a great while, with long fingers of flame reaching after him. Then he hears demons moving all around him, but he cannot see them because of the smoke. He again considers turning back, but rejects the idea. There might be more danger in going back than going forward.

Suddenly, coming from up front, a voice rings out: "Though I walk through the Valley of the Shadow of Death, I will fear no evil, for Thou art with me" (Ps. 23:4). As that cry could have been raised only by a Pilgrim, Christian is "exceeding happy" and hastens forward to see who it is.

## Discussion and Application

## *The Difficulties*

### *[Stage 5] Faithful and Difficulty Hill*

#### **Summary**

##### **Faithful**

To his surprise, Christian finds that the cry had been raised by an old friend, Faithful, one of his neighbors in the City of Destruction. Happy in each other's company, they walk along exchanging the news. Faithful tells Christian that his departure had caused quite a stir in the city, with most people denouncing him as a fool. Faithful adds that he wishes Christian had informed him of his intention, in which case he would have accompanied Christian from the start instead of following after him.

Faithful's adventures along the way had been different from Christian's. He had managed to get around the Slough of Despond in which Christian had floundered, but on the path to the Wicket Gate had been accosted by one Wanton, a woman with a very flattering tongue. She had tried hard to induce him to turn aside with her, promising him "all carnal and fleshly content." But he closed his eyes to her bewitching looks, and walked on.

##### **Difficulty Hill**

At the foot of Difficulty Hill, he met a very aged man by the name of Adam the First, who lived in the town of Deceit. Adam invited Faithful to come live with him, saying that his house was "maintained with all the dainties in the world," and that he had three beautiful daughters: Lust of the Flesh, Lust of the Eyes, and Pride of Life (1 John 2:16). Faithful might marry one of these — or all of them if he so desired — and become his heir. Faithful was "somewhat inclinable" at first but, thinking better of it, went on, with old Adam cursing and reviling him.

Ascending Difficulty Hill as far as the arbor — the very place where he had lost his Roll, Christian interjects — Faithful looked behind and there was someone coming after him, "swift as the wind." Overtaking Faithful, he knocked him down. When Faithful got up, he was knocked down again, and then again. "That man that overtook you was Moses," says Christian, and he "spareth none, neither knoweth he how to show mercy to those that transgress his law." Under the harsh Mosaic Code he was punishing Faithful for having so much as looked at Wanton and for "secretly inclining to Adam the First."

## Pilgrim's Progress

Faithful had not stopped at Palace Beautiful as Christian had, which explained why he had come to be ahead of him on the Holy Way. Traversing the Valley of Humiliation, he had not encountered Apollyon, who was perhaps nursing the wound given him by Christian, but he had met Discontent and another named Shame. The latter argued the view that religion was a "pitiful low sneaking business . . . that it was a shame to sit whining and mourning under a sermon, and a shame to come sighing and groaning home." The mighty, rich, and wise did not do that He had noted that Pilgrims were chiefly men of "base and low estate and condition," having no bravery of spirit nor any understanding of "natural science." Faithful was somewhat taken aback by this, but consoled himself with the thought that what men most esteem is abominated by God, and that "what God says is best, though all the men in the world are against it."

### Talkative

As Christian and Faithful go on walking and talking, they see a tall man, "something more comely at a distance than at hand." When he says he is bound for the heavenly country, Faithful invites him to join them, which is a mistake. Christian soon recognizes the man as Talkative, son of Say-well, of Prating Row, and warns Faithful not to be taken in by him, for "notwithstanding his fine tongue, he is but a sorry scrub . . . this man is for any company and for any talk; as he talketh now with you, so will he talk when he is on the ale-bench. And the more drink he hath in his crown, the more of these things he hath in his mouth. Religion hath no place in his heart, or house or conversation; all he hath lieth in his tongue, and his religion is to make a noise therewith." After many long arguments in which Christian and Faithful assail his views, Talkative decides they are peevish men "not fit to be discoursed with," and goes off; "and good riddance," says Christian.

## Discussion and Application

## [Stage 6] Vanity Fair

### Summary

#### Evangelist

Farther on, Faithful chances to look back and sees someone coming toward them. It is their good friend Evangelist, who asks how they have fared in their journey. In turn, they ask him what they may expect to meet up ahead. There will be tribulations, he answers, for tribulations mark the way to Heaven. They would soon come to a town where they would be attacked by enemies. One or both of them might be killed. "But be you faithful unto death, and the King will give you a crown of life," Evangelist assures them.

#### Vanity Fair

Emerging from the wilderness, Christian and Faithful see before them a town they must enter because the Holy Way passes through it. It is an ancient town named Vanity Fair, where, all year round, such merchandise is bought and sold "as houses, lands, trades, places, honors, preferments, titles, countries, kingdoms, lusts, pleasures, and delights of all sorts, as whores, bawds, wives, husbands, children, masters, servants, lives, blood, bodies, souls, silver, gold, pearls, precious stones, and what not." At all times, one can see "jugglings, cheats, games, plays, fools, apes, knaves, rogues, and that of all sorts," as well as, "and that for nothing, thefts, murders, adulteries, false-swearers, and that of a blood-red color."

Entering the town, the two Pilgrims cause quite a stir. Their dress is different from that of the townspeople, and they speak a language ("the language of Canaan") that is not understood. They are plainly "outlandish men" (foreigners), and are put down as fools or "bedlams" (madmen). But what particularly irks the townspeople is their attitude toward the goods displayed at the fair. When called to look at them, they turn away, putting their fingers in their ears and crying out, "Turn away mine eyes from beholding vanity" (Ps. 119:37). When mockingly asked what they might be interested in buying, they "gravely" reply, "We buy the Truth" (Prov. 23:23). A crowd gathers to taunt and revile them, "some calling upon others to smite them," which leads to a great hubbub and the arrest of the Pilgrims for disturbing the peace. After being questioned, they are severely beaten and locked up in an iron cage to be made a spectacle to the multitude, being for some time "the objects of any man's sport, or malice, or revenge."

### The Pilgrims brought to trial

Under these trying circumstances, Christian and Faithful conduct themselves so "very wisely and soberly" that some of the townspeople begin to sympathize with them and urge their release. This splits the town into two factions which soon clash in the streets, creating another hubbub. The prisoners, though they have done nothing, are held responsible for this, too, and the authorities decide to bring them to trial on charges that they are "enemies to and disturbers of their trade; that they have made commotions and divisions in the town, and had won a party to their own most dangerous opinions in contempt of the law of their prince."

### Faithful's Martyrdom

Faithful is the first to be called before the judge, Lord Hate-good. When allowed to speak in his own defense, he declares himself to be a man of peace, bound on an innocent journey to the Celestial City; as for the prince of the place, "since he is Beelzebub, the enemy of our Lord, I defy him and all his angels." To testify against him, three witnesses are brought forward — Envy, Superstition, and Pickthank. Swearing falsely, Envy testifies that he has long known Faithful, that he has always been a troublemaker, persistently denouncing the laws and customs of the town; Superstition, that he had heard Faithful say that all in Vanity Fair were damned because their "religion was naught"; Pickthank, that he was well ac-quainted with the defendant, who railed continuously against "our noble Prince Beelzebub and . . . his honorable friends, . . . Lord Old Man, Lord Carnal Delight, Lord Luxurious, Lord Desire of Vainglory, my old Lord Lechery, Sir Having Greedy, with all the rest of our nobility." Turning toward Lord Hate-good, he adds that Faithful "hath not been afraid to rail on you, my Lord, who are now appointed to be his judge, calling you an ungodly villain, with many other such-like vilifying terms." The jury, having heard the false witnesses and Faithful's reply, retires to discuss what should be done.

- "I see clearly that this man is a heretic," says Mr. Blind-man, foreman of the jury.
- "Away with such a fellow from this earth," cries Mr. No-good; Mr. Malice, Mr. Love-lust, and Mr. Live-loose agree.
- "Hang him, hang him!" exclaims Mr. Heady.
- "A sorry scrub," says Mr. High-mind.
- "Hanging is too good for him," Mr. Cruelty insists.
- After Mr. Liar and other jurors have expressed similar views. Mr. Implacable sums up: "Let us forthwith bring him in guilty of death."

## Pilgrim's Progress

### Judge Hate-good

Judge Hate-good is only too happy to order that Faithful be executed in accord with the laws of the land. He is first scourged, "then they buffeted him, then they lanced his flesh with knives; after that they stoned him with stones, then pricked him with their swords and, last of all, they burned him to ashes at the stake. Thus came Faithful to his end." But this was only his earthly end, as Evangelist had prophesied. For unseen by any, "there stood behind the multitude a chariot and a couple of horses, waiting for Faithful, who (so soon as his adversaries had dispatched him) was taken up into it and straightway was carried up through the clouds, . . . the nearest way to the Celestial City."

### Hopeful

For some unexplained reason, Christian is not brought to trial and, after a time, "escapes" and is on his way again — but not alone, for he is joined by Hopeful, a native of Vanity Fair, who had been so impressed by the Pilgrims' words and behavior during their sufferings that he decided to become a Pilgrim himself. And many more in Vanity Fair would follow his path in due time, Hopeful tells Christian, who is pleased to have helped break the power of Beelzebub.

## Discussion and Application



## *The Temptations* *[Stage 7A] Deviating from the Path*

### Summary

#### By-ends and his companions

- **By-ends** = One who takes advantage of every opportunity

Christian and his new companion have not gone very far when they catch up with a man known as By-ends, from the town of Fair-speech. His is a nickname, given to him because he is shifty, always with an eye out for a good bargain, a "by-end." Fair-speech is a wealthy place, and By-ends boasts of his fine connections there. His wife is the daughter of Lady Feigning, and he is on the best of terms with "my Lord Turnabout, my Lord Time-server, . . . also Mr. Smooth-man, Mr. Facing-bothways, Mr. Anything; and the parson of our parish, Mr. Two-tongues, . . . my mother's own brother by father's side."

Questioned about his beliefs, By-ends replies; "'Tis true we somewhat differ in religion from those of the stricter sort, yet but in two small points: First, we never strive against wind or tide; secondly, we are always most zealous when religion goes in his silver slippers; we love much to walk with him in the street if the sun shines, and the people applaud him."

#### Mr. Hold-the-World, Mr. Money-love and Mr. Save-all

Christian and Hopeful tell him that if he wants to go along with them, he must strive against wind and tide, and "own religion in his rags, as well as when in his silver slippers, and stand by him, too, when bound in irons." Saying that he will not desert his old principles, "since they are harmless and profitable," By-ends drops behind and there meets three old friends, Mr. Hold-the-World, Mr. Money-love, and Mr. Save-all. All of them had been students of "one Mr. Gripe-man, a schoolmaster in Love-gain, . . . in the county of Coveting," who had "taught them the art of getting either by violence, cozenage, flattery, lying, or by putting on a guise of religion." They were such apt pupils that "they could, each of them, have kept such a school themselves."

#### Demas

- **Lucre** = a dishonorable desire for gain or money
- **Demas** = a companion of Paul that loved of the world more and deserted the apostle (2 Timothy 4:10)

## Pilgrim's Progress

Discussing By-ends' sin in making "religion a stalking-horse to get and enjoy the world" — the sin of heathens, "the hypocritical Pharisees" "Judas the devil," "Simon the witch," and others — Christian and Hopeful come to a "delicate plain" called Ease, where they do not stop, and go on to "a little hill called Lucre, and in that hill a silver mine." A certain Demas appears and invites them to come over, saying that with a little digging, they can richly provide for themselves. Hopeful suggests having a look, but Christian objects. As they go on their way, they look behind and see By-ends and his friends accept Demas' invitation and turn off toward the silver mine. "Now whether they fell into the pit by looking over the brink thereof, or whether they went down to dig, or whether they were smothered by the damps that commonly arise," Christian and Hopeful never knew, but the By-ends' party they never saw again on the Holy Way.

Having passed a pillar of salt in the shape of a woman, upon which is written "Remember Lot's wife," Christian and Hopeful come to a very pleasant river, "which David the King called 'the river of God,' but John called 'the river of the water of life'" (Ps. 65:9; Rev. 22, 1-3; Ezek. 47). It is lined with fruit trees and beautiful meadows bright with lilies and other flowers. Drinking the Water of Life, the weary Pilgrims are greatly refreshed and remain here for several days, picking fruit and sleeping in the meadows.

Moving on, they find that the Holy Way runs along the river bank for a time, but then it veers off onto rough ground which is very hard on their sore feet. They are "much discouraged" until they come to another meadow, "and a stile to go over into it, and that meadow is called By-path Meadow." Suggesting that the going might be easier in the meadow, Christian climbs over the stile to have a look. Finding a path there going their way, he persuades Hopeful that they should take it.

## Discussion and Application

## *[Stage 7B] The Doubting Castle*

### Summary

#### Vain-confidence

Making good time in By-path Meadow, which is "very easy for their feet," they catch up with another pilgrim, by the name of Vain-confidence.

Assuring them that he knows the way, their new acquaintance starts out ahead and tells them to follow him. As it is now night and very dark, they soon lose sight of him and continue on until they hear a loud cry and a heavy thud. Creeping forward, they find that Vain-confidence has been killed by falling into a deep pit dug "by the prince of those grounds to catch vainglorious fools withal."

#### Giant Despair

Christian and Hopeful turn back, scarcely knowing where they are, meeting great difficulties. It is not only dark, but now it begins to rain, with terrible lightning and thunder. The water rises till they are "like to have been drowned nine or ten times." Despairing of finding the stile that night, they lie down in the meadow to sleep.

In the morning they are surprised and seized by the owner of the meadow, Giant Despair. Charging them with trespassing, he drags them to his stronghold, Doubting Castle, and throws them into a "nasty and stinking" dungeon. Here they lie for four days "without one bit of bread, or drop of drink, or light, or any to ask how they did." Giant Despair finally appears and beats them with a crab tree cudgel until they can scarcely roll over on the floor.

When he talks with his wife Diffidence about what to do with the prisoners, she suggests that he might save himself some exertion if he did not kill the prisoners himself but counseled them to take their own lives. He does this, telling them that, since they are going to die anyhow and have their bodies thrown on the heap of human bones and skulls behind the castle, they might prefer to do away with themselves, "either with knife, halter, or poison." When his counsel is rejected, he rushes at the Pilgrims to kill them then and there. But he is subject to fits, it appears, and he is seized with one now, temporarily losing the use of his hands, so he withdraws, leaving Christian and Hopeful to ponder their dilemma.

## Pilgrim's Progress

Christian is uncertain about what to do. For his part, Hopeful rules out suicide; "for one to kill himself is to kill body and soul at once," a more heinous sin than murder of another. Suicide would forever bar them from entering the heavenly Jerusalem. Perhaps their case is not so desperate, Hopeful suggests. Maybe the giant will die, or forget to lock the dungeon doors, or be permanently disabled by one of his fits.

Toward evening, the giant appears in the dungeon again and, finding that the prisoners have not taken his advice, rages against them so furiously and threatens them with such dire punishment that Christian swoons. When the latter comes to, he again contemplates suicide. Hopeful urges a little more patience, pointing out that Christian had driven off Apollyon, passed safely through the Valley of the Shadow of Death, and managed to escape from Vanity Fair. "Well, on Saturday about midnight," they begin to pray and continue until almost daybreak. Suddenly, Christian cries out:

### The Key Of Promise

"What a fool am I, thus to lie in a stinking dungeon, when I may as well walk at liberty? I have a key in my bosom called Promise that will (I am persuaded) open any lock in Doubting Castle."

"That's good news," says Hopeful. "Good brother, pluck it out of thy bosom and try."

They try it on the dungeon door, which opens with ease, as do other doors in the castle. Outside, they try it on a big iron gate, which finally opens, though the lock "went damnable hard." As they push the big gate open, its rusty hinges creak so loudly that Giant Despair is awakened. Jumping up, he is dressing to pursue the prisoners when he suffers another fit and has to go back to bed.

Running with desperate speed, Christian and Hopeful finally find the stile by which they entered By-path Meadow, climb over it, and are once again on the King's highway. Before going on, they decide to erect a pillar, on the side of which they engrave a warning: "Over this stile is the way to Doubting Castle, which is kept by Giant Despair, who despiseth the King of the Celestial Country, and seeks to destroy his holy Pilgrims."

## Discussion and Application

## *[Stage 8] Delectable Mountains*

### Summary

#### Delectable Mountains

Still talking of the perils they have just passed through safely, thanks to God, Christian and Hopeful come to the Delectable Mountains, which Christian had seen in the distance from the roof of Palace Beautiful. The mountains are indeed delectable, with gardens and orchards, vineyards and fountains of water. They drink and wash in the waters, "freely eat of the vineyards," and feel much refreshed.

#### Entertained by the Shepherds

Climbing upward, they come upon four shepherds — **Knowledge**, **Experience**, **Watchful**, and **Sincere** — who welcome them and invite them to their tents for supper and to spend the night. "These mountains are Immanuel's Land," the shepherds explain, "and they are within sight of his city; and the sheep also are his, and he laid down his life for them."

Next morning, the shepherds escort their guests around the mountains to show them some of the wonders of the place, taking them first to the top of a hill called Error. On the far side of the hill is a high cliff. Peering over, Christian and Hopeful see at the bottom of it some men dashed all to pieces. These men, so they are told, were some of those who, like the Quakers, err in having no faith in the resurrection of the body. The bodies of those at the foot of the cliff would remain forever unburied as an "example to others to take heed how they clamber too high, or how they come too near the brink of this mountain."

#### A Side-road (by-way) to Hell

Having been taken to the top of another mountain, named Caution the Pilgrims are led into a hollow where there is a door in the side of a hill. When the door is opened, they are invited to look in, which they do and are terrified. Inside, it is very dark and smoky, smelling of brimstone. They can hear the noise of fire and a cry of some tormented. "This is a by-way to Hell," Christian is told when he inquires, "a way that hypocrites go in at; namely, such as sell their birthright, with Esau; such as sell their Master, with Judas . . ."

The Pilgrims are next taken to the top of a very high hill, named Clear, where the shepherds hand them a perspective glass (telescope) and tell them that if they have skill in using it, they will be able to see the gates of the Celestial City.

### **Pilgrim's Progress**

Christian and Hopeful have a look but as their hands are shaking, they cannot see clearly, though they think they see "something like the gate, and also some of the glory of the place." As the Pilgrims prepare to depart, the shepherds give them written instructions on how to go on the way ahead, and what to avoid. Let them beware of the Flatterer, and be sure not to sleep on the Enchanted Ground.

### **Discussion and Application**

## *Almost Home* *[Stage 9] Another Way*

### Summary

#### Christian and Hopeful meet Ignorance

Beyond the mountains, the Holy Way is joined by a little crooked lane which comes down from the **country of Conceit**. Just as the Pilgrims reach this point, there comes swinging down the lane "a very brisk lad" to whom Bunyan gives the name **Ignorance**. He, too, is bound for the Celestial City. Why had he not come in at the Wicket Gate? Christian wants to know. And what reason had he to believe that if he ever got to the Celestial Gate, it would be opened for him? Because he has always led a good life and knows God's will, Ignorance replies: "I pray, fast, pay tithes, and give alms." When Christian and Hopeful argue that this is not enough, Ignorance tells them to mind their own business: "be content to follow the religion of your country, and I will follow the religion of mine. I hope all will be well."

#### Turn-away and Little-Faith

Finding him a man "wise in his own conceit" and not worth talking to, Christian and Hopeful push ahead and soon enter a very dark lane, where they see a man who has been bound with seven strong cords by seven devils; they are carrying him back to throw him through the door to Hell in the Delectable Mountains. Christian recognizes the man as one **Turn-away**, "a wanton professor and damnable apostate," and is reminded of a story he once heard about one **Little-faith**, from the town of Sincere.

#### The Flatterer

While Christian is relating to Hopeful the story he had heard about Little-faith and his tribulations, they come to a **fork in the path**. One fork seems to lead as straight as the other in the direction they want to go. As they stand wondering which path to take, they are approached by a man "black of flesh, but covered with a very light robe." He is bound for the Celestial City himself, the man says, and as he knows the right way, they should follow him, which they do. He leads them in a circular course and finally into a **great net** in which they become helplessly entangled; "and with that, the white robe fell off the black man's back," and the Pilgrims recognize that they have been seduced by **Flatterer**, "a false apostle that hath transformed himself into an angel of light."

## Chastised by a Shining One

After a time, a Shining One appears, tears the net open, frees the prisoners, and then begins to question them:

- Had not the shepherds on the Delectable Mountains given them "a note of direction for the way?"
- "Yes."
- "Did you, when you were at a stand, pluck out and read your note?"
- "No."
- "Why?"
- "We forgot."
- "Did not the shepherds bid you beware of the Flatterer?"
- "Yes. But we did not imagine that this fine-spoken man had been he."

The **Shining One** orders Christian and Hopeful to lie down and with the small-cord whip he is carrying, lays it on them and chastens "them sore, to teach them the good way wherein they should walk." Thanking him "for all his kindness," promising to reform, the Pilgrims are up again and on their way till they see someone coming toward them, "with his back toward Zion." They stop to talk with this man, who turns out to be **Atheist**. When he learns of their hopes and plans, he starts laughing, saying that they will have only their pains for their travel.

- "Do you think we shall not be received?" asks Christian.
- "Received! There is no such place as you dream of in all this world."
- "But there is in the world to come."

**Atheist** replies that he had once heard this and believed it, and had set out to discover if it were true. He had spent twenty years searching for the Celestial City and had not found it anywhere. It was a mirage. Laughing again at their dreams, Atheist continues on his way toward home, leaving the Pilgrims deeply shocked. "What! no Mount Zion!" exclaims Hopeful. But had they not seen the gate of the city from the Delectable Mountains? Were they not now to walk by Faith (2 Cor. 5:7)? And they had better be getting along, Hopeful adds, "lest the man with the whip overtakes us again."

## Discourse of Christian and Ignorance

Going on, they come to a place where Hopeful, becoming very drowsy, wants to lie down and take a nap. By no means, says Christian. This is the **Enchanted Ground** the shepherds had warned them about. Those who fall asleep here



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never wake up. "Let us watch and be sober" (1 Thes. 5:6) and "to prevent drowsiness, let us fall into good discourse." (Their "good discourse" goes on and on, being a sermon in the form of a duet, with Christian sounding one note and Hopeful chiming in to sound another. As none of this advances the story of the pilgrimage one bit, the long passage is omitted in most modern editions of the book.)

- The "good discourse" is interrupted when Hopeful happens to look back and sees Ignorance coming up behind them. They stop to wait for him:
- "How stands it between God and your soul now?" Christian greets him.
- "I hope well, for I am always full of good motions that come into my mind to comfort me as I walk."
- "What good motions?"

Well, says Ignorance, he keeps thinking of God and Heaven. When Christian remarks, "So do the devils and damned souls," Ignorance objects that his case is quite different, for he not only thinks of God and Heaven constantly, but desires them and has left all for them. Saying he doubts this, Christian asks what reason he has to suppose that he has given up everything in his desire to go to Heaven. Because his heart tells him so, answers Ignorance, to which Christian tartly replies: "He that trusts his own heart is a fool. . . Except the Word of God beareth witness in this matter, other testimony is of no value."

As Christian and Hopeful go on catechizing Ignorance as if he were a small boy, the latter understandably becomes somewhat annoyed and declares that their notions about the correct meaning of the Word are "but the fruit of distracted brains," as shown by their belief in revelations. This provokes Hopeful to exclaim: "Why man! Christ is so hid in God from the natural apprehensions of all flesh that he cannot by any man be savingly known unless God the Father reveals him to them."

"That is your Faith, but not mine," says Ignorance. "Yet mine, I doubt not, is as good as yours, though I have not in my head so many whimsies as you." Giving up on Ignorance, who drops behind again, Christian and Hopeful resume their "good discourse."

## Discussion and Application

## **[Stage 10] Beulah Land, Dark River, and Celestial City**

### **Summary**

#### **Talk of Christian and Hopeful**

Leaving the Enchanted Ground and terminating their discourse, the Pilgrims enter "a delightful land, the country of Beulah" (Isa. 62:4; Song of Sol. 2:10-12). Here the sun "shineth night and day," the air is sweet and pleasant, flowers bloom everywhere, birds sing continually, and "the voice of the turtle is heard in the land." Beulah lies within sight of the Celestial City, "builded of pearls and precious stones . . . and pure gold." The reflection of the sun on it is so bright as to be blinding.

Passing orchards, vineyards, and gardens, the Pilgrims meet the Gardener, who tells them that the Lord himself comes down from the city now and again to enjoy a bit of rural peace and beauty, and to rest in one of the arbors. Christian and Hopeful are soon joined by two men dressed in golden raiment and whose faces shine "as the light." Accompanied by these angels, they suddenly come to Dark River, broad and swift. There is no bridge over it, no boat to carry them across, and they are "very much astounded," asking their companions what they should do.

#### **Passing the River**

"You must go through, or you cannot come at the gate." Is the water all of a depth? No, they are told, "you shall find it deeper or shallower, as you believe in the King of the place." Crossing the River of Death is a test of Faith. Apprehensively, the Pilgrims wade in and presently Christian cries out: "I sink in deep waters; the billows go over my head; all his waves go over me. Selah . . . I shall not see the land that flows with milk and honey."

"Be of good cheer," Hopeful calls out, saying that he has found good footing and will help him. But Christian goes down in "a great darkness and horror" as he recalls all his sins "both since and before he began to be a Pilgrim." Somewhat losing his senses, he begins to see hobgoblins and evil spirits. Hopeful has all he can do "to keep his brother's head above water. Yea, sometimes he would be quite gone down, and then ere a while he would rise up again, half dead." This goes on until Hopeful persuades him that he is not lost, that his faith in Christ will save him, which it does.

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Reaching the far bank of the river, the wet and weary Pilgrims find Shining Ones waiting for them. The ascent to the Celestial City is steep, for it stands "on a mighty hill . . . higher than the clouds." But the ascent for them is easy because the Shining Ones, taking them by the arms, help them up and because "they had left their mortal garments behind them in the river." As they are climbing, a company of the Heavenly Host comes out to greet them, as well as several of the King's trumpeters, who make the Heavens ring "with melodious noises and loud."

### Welcome to the Celestial city

Over the Celestial Gate is written in letters of gold: "Blessed are they that do his Commandments, that they may have right to the Tree of Life and may enter in through the gate into the city." From the parapet above the gate, some notables are looking down — "Enoch, Moses, and Elijah, &c." They direct the Pilgrims to hand in their certificates, which are carried forthwith to the "King of the place" (God). Satisfied after examining their credentials, the Lord orders the gate to be opened so that they "that keepeth Truth may enter in."

With bells pealing joyously, Christian and Hopeful walk into the city and are "transfigured." They are clothed in new raiment that shines like gold. Each is given a golden harp and a gold crown, and they are soon marching along the gold-paved streets with many of the Heavenly Host, some of whom have wings. All are playing their harps and, "without intermission," singing in chorus: "Holy, Holy, Holy, is the Lord" — which is the last seen of Christian and Hopeful in the Paradise they have been seeking.

### The Un-welcomed Visitor

Not long after the gate was closed behind them, another Pilgrim approaches and knocks. It is Ignorance, who has been plodding along behind since Christian and Hopeful walked off and left him. When the keepers of the gate ask him for his certificate, Ignorance fumbles "in his bosom" as if he had a paper and could not find it. When pressed about this, he does not answer. On being informed of this, the King orders several of the Shining Ones to seize Ignorance, bind him hand and foot, carry him to the door to Hell just outside the Celestial City, and throw him through it. On that note the bookends, with the author remarking: "So I awoke, and behold it was a dream."

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### Conclusion of Part First

Bunyan appended to his book four stanzas of rather doggerel verse, of which some lines are these:

*Now, reader, I have told my dream to thee.  
See if thou canst interpret it to me,  
Or to thyself, or neighbor . . .*

*Take heed, also that thou be not extreme  
In playing with the outside of my dream.*

*Nor let my figure, or similitude,  
Put thee into laughter or a feud.  
Leave this for boys and fools; but as for thee,  
Do thou the substance of the matter see . . .*

*What of my dross thou findest there, be bold  
To throw away, but yet preserve the gold . . . But if thou shalt cast all away as  
vain,  
I know not but 'twill make me dream again.*

## Discussion and Application