

# **JOURNEYING WITH CHRISTIAN**

by

**John Burgess**

**September 1973**

## JOURNEYING WITH CHRISTIAN

A 14 part study on the Allegory of the Christian life by John Bunyan, contained in his book "Pilgrim's Progress - part one".

	Page
INTRODUCTION TO PILGRIM'S PROGRESS - Concerning John Bunyan, his life and times and a summary of the book	2
THE CITY OF DESTRUCTION AND THE WICKET GATE - The Christian's call and acceptance	9
THE INTERPRETER'S HOUSE - Christian catechism	13
THE CROSS AND THE HILL - The acceptance of Christ as Saviour and Lord	17
THE PALACE BEAUTIFUL - The Church	20
THE TWO VALLEYS - The confrontation with evil and the Devil	23
CHRISTIAN AND FAITHFUL - Personal temptations	26
CHRISTIAN, FAITHFUL AND TALKATIVE - Faith needs both knowledge and action	28
VANITY FAIR - The temptations of the world	31
CHRISTIAN, BY-ENDS AND FRIENDS - The temptation of wealth and success	36
DOUBTING CASTLE - The temptation of ease	39
THE DELECTABLE MOUNTAINS - True and false wisdom	42
THE ENCHANTED GROUND - Justification by faith not works	46
THE CELESTIAL CITY - The joys of Eternal Life	49

## INTRODUCTION

At the conclusion of his book, John Bunyan writes

'Now, header, I have told my dream to thee;  
See if thou canst interpret it to me,  
Or to thyself, or neighbour; but take heed  
Of misinterpreting; for that, instead  
Of doing good, will but thyself abuse:  
By misinterpreting, evil ensues.

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 a laughter or a feud.  
Leave this for boys and fools; but as for thee,  
Do thou the substance of my matter see.

Put by the curtain, look within my veil,  
Turn up my metaphors, and do not fail,  
There, if thou seekest them, such things to find,  
As will be helpful to an honest mind.

What of my dross thou findest there, be bold  
To throw away, but yet preserve the gold;  
What if my gold be wrapped up in ore? -  
None throws away the apple for the core,  
But if thou shalt cast all away as vain,  
I know not but 'twill make me dream again.'

Bunyan warns that we should interpret his book correctly. Misinterpretation will lead to abuse, and wrong belief. He tells us that we need to look beyond the surface (i.e. within the veil) for it is not a simple story, but is full of 'similitudes'. But also he warns us not to look too deeply for things that are not there.

Also it has a very serious point, or points, so we should not treat it lightly. Yet he is also humble, and admits that while it is no doubt inspired writing it is not perfect or scripture. It probably contains errors. If this is so, he asks us to dismiss them, but in so doing not to throw it all away, lest we throw out the 'baby with the bathwater'. Some of the points will be difficult to discern, so spend time on it, 'refining' the work. Finally he realizes that for some people the story will be completely meaningless. For them he has a second dream, that of Christiana's Progress. That may help them better.

Before we start, then, we have to bear these things in mind, and others too. Of all the books written in the 17th century, 'Pilgrim's Progress' must be the most popular. It is also one of the most unread books - like the Bible itself. Only two other books, of around this time - although both a little later (up to 45 years), are of comparable popularity, or perhaps today even more popular - i.e. 'Robinson Crusoe' (1719), and 'Gulliver's Travels' (1726).

All three books have similarities, but of course also differences. We must ask the question of why they were and are popular. Of greatest importance is that people can relate to them. They become autobiographical e.g. Robinson Crusoe is the person who has courage, adaptability, determination. He is able to create something out of nothing, civilization out of an untamed island. He is self-sufficient, and the epitome of the adventurous, upright, middle-class, individualistic Englishman. In all his adventures, he maintains his morals, standards, and religion. Gulliver's travels - Gulliver has similar traits in his

person. But we see a comment upon life. This book is also a comment on the times and history and politics of the nation (Britain) and brings to the fore the inadequacies, fears and self-centredness of people.

This brings us to 'Pilgrim's Progress'. It is different to the other two books in many ways, but is similar in that again it is auto-biographical. Christian is every Christian. His journey is every Christian's journey, struggles, hopes, fears, Unlike Robinson Crusoe and Gulliver, Christian is not the perfect Englishman. He becomes led astray, bewildered. He has his doubts and fears, his depressions and his lack of understanding. But the book is also a comment upon the times. If we were to compare it to 'Christiana's Progress' that was written some years later, we would find that it reflects a change in the situation in England, and in particular the effect of the 'restoration' on the Church and state. Pilgrim's Progress was written in 1676-7, and Christiana's Progress in 1684-5. e.g. the Lions, before the Palace Beautiful. These are chained, but did not harm him, even though they roared, In Christiana's progress the Lions are joined by a 'Giant' that helps the lions make the people fear, and deters them from going into the Church (Palace Beautiful). This giant is interpreted as the agent of the state, persecuting the free churches.

Before we study 'Pilgrim's Progress' therefore, we need to know the background, of both Bunyan, and the times in which he wrote. That does not mean it has no interpretation outside the 17th century. We shall find that it has a lot to say about our situation and times, and a lot to the Christian, but by understanding the times, we shall be less likely to misinterpret.

Bunyan was born in 1628, at the end of the reign of James I of England, and VI of Scotland. It is worth remembering that the Stuarts were Catholic in religion. Scotland was 'Reformed', and England was protestant. But England was going through a difficult time, both religiously and politically. Europe was politically unstable, and so was Britain, hence it had to have stabilizing and unifying structures. Religion was the obvious one. Hence the Acts of Uniformity begun in Elizabeth's reign and with them the development of the Church of England. The reaction to this development was in the form of 'Puritanism', which later became 'dissent' 'Independency', and 'Non-conformity'. Remember it was in the early 1600's, when many puritans and dissenters left England for Holland and in 1620 the Pilgrim Fathers went to New England.

Bunyan grew up in this atmosphere, but was basically nominally religious in his youth. He enjoyed the festivities, gaining, etc. that took place on the village greens on Sunday. He was also the son of a tinker, which having 'gypsy' connections made him despised. However, his father, although poor, was able to find sufficient money to send John to elementary school, the teaching of which would be based around the Bible and Catechism.

His youth was spent under Charles I, a very arrogant King, who dissolved parliament, and undertook a 'personal rule' of the country. He continued persecution of 'non-conformists' more forcibly under William Laud, as Archbishop of Canterbury.

This led to unrest in the country, due both to politics and religion which ended in confrontation between Parliament and the King. Civil war broke out in 1642, and Bunyan was 'impressed' to fight, but little is known of his army service. We do not even know if he was in the royalist or parliamentary forces. Quite often the country folk had little choice in the matter. He probably saw no real action, yet this time had a certain influence upon him, but not much.

After the civil war, and the establishment of the commonwealth, John took up his trade as tinker. This involved a lot of travelling and meeting people (He carried his tools and anvil on his back - weight at least 60 lbs). He also married at this time and his wife we know had two books (quite an inheritance in those days), one of which was 'The Plain Man's pathway to heaven' by Rev. Arthur Dent.

He continued his old way of 'worldliness', until on Sunday he heard a 'voice' condemning his life. From this time onwards he began to change, and think, and have inner conflicts and struggles.

He joined the Independent meeting at Bedford, and became a prominent member and preacher. This was the time of the 'commonwealth', when Puritanism and Independency had the power and authority over the country and ruled Parliament. Yet this time was not without its difficulties. The struggle was between Independents and Presbyterians. Cromwell set up the Westminster assembly to bring some resolutions. It was unable to do this, but produced the 'Westminster Confession' in 1647. The Independents or 'dissenting Brethren' produced the Savoy declaration in 1658. But by this time the Commonwealth was coming to an end. With the death of Cromwell came the death of the Commonwealth, and the fall of Puritan power. Also the toleration and religious liberty disappeared.

With Charles II and the restoration, the Puritans, Dissenters and Independents, found themselves now trodden down by the power of the Royalists. Charles feared the safety of his throne, and was strict in the persecution of 'non-conformists' partly from a religious standpoint, but also from a political point. Unregistered and unrestricted meetings could be seats of rebellion, as indeed was the case at times, viz, the Fifth Monarchists in 1661. Bunyan was arrested and imprisoned in 1660, for preaching by Justice Winegate. During the first two years of Charles' rule, non-conformists were persecuted, excluded from public and municipal offices; in 1662, the Act of Uniformity made it impossible for them to be incumbents, lecturers, or schoolmasters. Also many at this time were executed for their part in the Civil war, Commonwealth, regicide, or anti-royalist activities. There were series of 'public inspections', disrupting of meetings, fines, and the threat of death and transportation.

It was the most difficult time of all for dissenters, yet it was also their greatest hour. From this suffering, arose the Spiritual insight and height of the 'non-conformist' and 'Puritan' faith, which has never been matched since. It was during these years, 1660-1672, and again in 1676-7, that Bunyan was imprisoned. During these years he wrote 'Grace Abounding' and 'Pilgrim's Progress'. In the later years after he was released, he continued to preach and write, until his death in 1688. His body was buried in the same cemetery, the 'Dissenters burial ground', at Bunhill Fields, with Isaac Watts, and Daniel Defoe.

Such is the background to the times and writing of 'Pilgrim's Progress'.

# **PILGRIM'S PROGRESS**

## **SUMMARY**

### **1) Christian leaves the City of Destruction — the Call of God**

People he meets: Evangelist; Obstinate and Pliable; Help; Worldly Wiseman;  
Good will

Journey: 1) Neighbours mocking;  
2) Across 'the plain'  
3) slough of despond;  
4) the road to legality's house (Mt. Sinai)  
5) Wicket Gate  
6) Discourse between Goodwill and Christian (review of journey) and the way forward.

Discourses: 1) Evangelist: the way to salvation i.e. light and gate  
2) Obstinate: the authority of the Bible  
3) Pliable: the Bible and promised inheritance  
(Celestial city)  
4) Help: the 'slough' and means of crossing it  
5) Worldly-Wiseman: the 'spiritual' life versus morality  
and legality.

### **2) The House of the Interpreter - Catechism**

People he meets: Interpreter

Journey: 1) Interpreter's house Explanation of the gospel,  
and sin and the way to find the truth; the natural  
man/spiritual man; the work of the Spirit and the inner  
conflict; entering the church; the consequence of rejection  
of the gospel; the day of judgement.

### **3) The Cross and the Hill - Acceptance of Christ**

People he meets: Simple, sloth, Presumption; Hypocrisy and Formalist Mistrust  
and Timorous.

Journey: 1) The cross finds forgiveness and salvation and  
justification through Christ.  
2) Meets Simple, Sloth and Presumption, who are blind  
to their needs.  
3) Meets Hypocrisy and Formalist, - discourse on entry  
to Kingdom through tradition cf. to Jesus Christ.  
4) Hill Difficulty - sleep in Arbour (lack of watch-  
fulness) complacency cf. 10 virgins.  
5) Search for the Roll

### **4) The Palace Beautiful - Entry into the Church**

People he meets: Watchful; Porter; Discretion, Prudence, piety, Charity.

Journey: 1) Palace Beautiful - the Church; means of entry by

testimony; refreshment and fellowship and encouragement;  
concern for the world and those not saved; the purpose  
of Jesus Christ.

2) Teaching of the church, martyrs, christian history;  
provision of God through faith, prayer etc

3) Christian puts on the armour of God.

## **5) Valley of Humiliation and Valley of Shadow of Death**

People he meets: Apollyon; Two men

Journey:

- 1) Discourse with Apollyon i.e. the tussle with the devil  
discussion over 'citizenship'; fear of the future.
- 2) Christian Tights Apollyon, as words are not enough,  
and although early defeated, he overcomes him. This  
makes Christian watchful and prepared to fight as he  
continues his journey.
- 3) Valley of Death – a lifeless valley. It needs to be  
passed through to get to the city.
- 4) Christian resorts to prayer, in the fear of suffering and  
death, and in temptation. It is the darkness of the night  
he fears. In the light of morning he sees the things  
that frighten him.
- 5) Sees the caves, Pope and Pagan.

## **6) Christian and Faithful**

People he meets: Faithful

Journey:

- 1) Christian tries to outdo Faithful, but falls.
- 2) Discourse about: (a) the city of Destruction  
(b) Pliable;  
(c) the journey;  
(d) Wanton i.e. Lust and sexual desire; deceit; Law versus  
gospel (Moses and Jesus Christ); discontent; shame.

## **7) Christian, Faithful and Talkative**

People he meets: Talkative, Evangelist

Journey:

- 1) Discourse: Talkative is concerned only with the  
intellectual, mental approach to things: Christianity  
for him is only word-deep.
- 2) Discourse between Christian and Faithful, talking and  
knowing is not sufficient, Faith needs to be put into  
action – the discourse is the 'sign of Grace' in a  
person. Experience, conscience and grace, are essential  
to faith, as well as knowledge.
- 3) Talkative refuses to listen to Faithful and goes on his  
own way.
- 4) Evangelist encourages them having been victors over  
temptation and trials.

## **8) Vanity Fair**

People he meets: Judge Lord Hate-good; Envy, Superstition, Pickthank, and the  
Jury.

Journey:

- 1) The fair is the place of worldliness and vanity, i.e.  
pride, ambition etc. All must go through the town,  
or die. Beelzebub is lord of town and fair.
- 2) The Pilgrims are noticeably different to the townsfolk  
so are taunted and mocked.

- 3) Christian and Faithful arrested for disturbing the peace. Their 'characters' are blackened – no doubt this is also a comment upon the times.
- 4) Faithful is tried, and condemned and put to death.

## 9) Christian, Hopeful and By-ends

People he meets: Hopeful, By-Ends, Hold-the-World, Money-Love; Save-All, Gripe-man, Lovegain.

Journey:

- 1.) Discourse with By-ends about city 'Fair Speech' – concerning the people who change with the moods of the times i.e. turncoats. This is the comfortable religion.
- 2) Discourse between By-Ends and his companions. These use religion to their own ends.
- 3) Encounter with Demas at the Silver Mine, and the pillar of salt.
- 4) The river of the Water of Life, and the meadow of fruit trees. Here they stop for a while and enjoy the gifts.

## 10) Doubting Castle

People he meets: Vain-Confidence; Giant Despair

Journey:

- 1) By-path meadow – which takes them out of the way. They become trapped between a pit in front and water behind and cannot find the way back to the Highway.
- 2) Giant Despair finds them and imprisons them in the Castle dungeon; beats them.
- 3) Conversation between the Pilgrims, lamenting their fate and encouraging each other.
- 4) The courtyard of bones; Christian remembers the Key of Promises and so escapes.

## 11) Delectable Mountains

People he meets: Shepherds : Knowledge, Experience; Watchful and Sincere; Ignorance ; Little Faith

Journey:

- 1) Shepherds show (a) the hill of Error;
  - (b) Mount Caution;
  - (c) The Door of hypocrisy;
  - (d) Hill Clear
- 2) Ignorance and Christian's discourse re : good deeds.
- 3) Meet Little-Faith being carried to the door of hypocrisy; Little-Faith puts too much store by money; talk of Great-Grace.

## 12) Enchanted Ground

People he meets: The Flatterer; Atheist

Journey:

- 1) At the fork in the road, meet Flatterer, who leads them out of the way. They are ensnared. The Shining ones set them free and lead them back to the way.
- 2) Discourse with Atheist
- 3) Discourse about conversion – probably Bunyan's own.
- 4) Continued conversation with Ignorance – continue with the concept of good deeds, and the nature of man, justification,
- 5) Discussion about the 'Fear of God', and 'backsliding'



### **13) The Land of Beulah and The Celestial City**

People he meets: The Shining ones, gardener, men in gold

Journey:

- 1)The Land of Beulah - the borders of Heaven - the sight of the city makes them sick with desire and love
- 2)The Garden and orchards
- 3)The deep waters to cross - the hour of death
- 4)The pilgrims leave mortality behind, and climb the Hill to the city; discourse with the shining ones about the city.
- 5)At the gate of the City
- 6)Ignorance is rejected.

## **PART ONE - THE CITY OF DESTRUCTION - THE CALL OF GOD**

The story starts with Bunyan setting the originating of the story in a dream in a 'den'. The 'den' is no doubt his imprisonment. Tradition holds this to be the Bedford gaol, but it could have been the local county gaol, which was very close to Bunyan's home. This was the 'den'. Note the similarity between Plough's Pierman and also the book of Revelation. Tradition has it that John the Seer was in a cave. Note : dreams for the Christian, are signs of the last days (Acts 2 v 17) – but this story is not apocalyptic. Habakkuk 2 v 2 – is the command to write down the dream.

First, Bunyan describes the pilgrim Christian:

1) He stands in rags Isaiah 6k v 6 – 'all our righteousness is as rags'. This sets the scene and the theology of the book; external righteousness is not a means of salvation. This reflects on Bunyan's day and the concept of the Act of Uniformity etc.

2) 'With his face from his house' i.e. Luke 14 v 33 – renouncing all he has – we would say – he has turned his back on his wealth, house etc. This 'worldliness' will be seen as a temptation time and again. The reason for this rejection of what is considered important is that he has heard the gospel, from the scriptures (the Book) and realises that they are of no help to him. His problem now is the 'burden on his back'. Psalm 38 v 4 – his sins.

On reading the scriptures, he becomes even more distressed. He realizes his unworthiness, the scripture condemns him, and he does not know the way to salvation (even though Acts 16 v 31 is mentioned – presumably this is for the reader's benefit, to proclaim what he (Christian) has to find) He is depressed and tormented, but at first he keeps his problem to himself. Then he shares it with his family, but they do not understand. He is aware of his own sin, that of his family and that of the world (the city). There is only judgement to come, which will involve destruction like the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah (Genesis 19 v 24). He does not know the way of escaping destruction, and presumably cannot explain his emotional depression. Hence he is considered mad. The treatment of him by his family is the treatment of a madman

1) They say he is tired;

2) they become tired of him, and ostracise him. He withdraws into himself, with inner searching, prayer etc.

This period not doubt reflects Bunyan's own troubled past, before the time of his conversion, it is a case of 'Twas grace that taught my heart to fear'. The evangelical theology here will see the grace of God working on Christian to convince him of his sin and lack of salvation. This is the first step on the road to righteousness, and preludes the 'call of God'.

### **Christian meets Evangelist**

He is in a state of turmoil and utter confusion (looking this way and that), when Evangelist comes to him. The job of Evangelist is referred to in Job 33 v 19–28. Christian is like the man (Job) in utter distress, and needs someone to help him out of his misery. Evangelist (the preacher of Good News), is to point Christian on his journey from this world to 'the next'. Christian's sin is so great he wishes to die, but he knows that will only bring judgement. He is 'between the Devil and the Deep Blue Sea'. He has no courage either to face his sin or to die (Ezekiel 22 v 14).

Tophet is another name for Sheol, or Hell - literally 'a burning places - (Isaiah 30 v 33) a fire kept burning by the breath of God. He knows he is condemned to eternal damnation, and he is unprepared to face judgement etc.

The Parchment roll is probably the scriptures - cf. Matthew 3 v 7, 23 v 33 ff, - the warnings of the prophets and writers of the wisdom writings of the Old Testament cf. I Thessalonians 1 v 10 - Jesus Christ is the one who delivers us from the 'wrath to come' or judgement. So Evangelist is saying that:

1) he must flee from the city of Destruction, like Sodom and Gomorrah, and

2) that he does not have to face the 'wrath' or judgement, but he can escape from it. The means of escape is through Jesus Christ. Hence he points him in the direction of the Wicket Gate (Matthew 7 v 13f) - the gate of the sheep fold, and the door is Jesus Christ, so is the 'light of the world'. But the light here represents not so much Christ, but the gospel (the light in the world) that leads us to Christ. Psalm 119 v 105 - the Word is a lamp (Word = Jesus Christ and Scriptures and Gospel). The way to Christ is to follow the gospel without deviation.

Immediately he is tempted to turn back to the world, by his family and neighbours, but he has more desire for 'life' and Christ, than his faintly. He is prepared to 'hate' or 'love less' his family than Christ (Luke 14 v 26f.) The neighbours watch because they want to see him fail in his adventure (Jeremiah 20 v 10). Most people prefer you to conform to their attitudes because if you are different you are threatening.

Obstinate and Pliable try to persuade him to return, but are unable to. These are two more temptations on the beginning of the road. Obstinate again tries to persuade Christian with worldly things, but these now to him are insignificant (ii Corinthians 4 v 18 - we look to things eternal). Obstinate refuses to look at the scriptures and be convinced of the things eternal that are promised. Obstinate rejects religion and Christianity. He is concerned only for the things that are tangible. He too considers Christian mad. Crazy-headed coxcomb is a broken-headed fool or clam, a person who is not rational. Such is the opinion of many about a person with strong convictions.

## **Christian and Pliable's Discourse**

Pliable asks Christian what the purpose and end of the journey is. He wants to know about the delights of heaven. Note that it will become apparent that he does not want to know of difficulties or hardships, only the pleasures. This is his downfall!

Christian cannot tell of the delights because they are not concrete things, but turns to the Bible, which he believes is the inspired word of God, fully only of truth (God cannot lie - Titus). The 'Heavenly city' is found only in terms of symbols, metaphors etc. It is eternal, and we are all like kings with crowns, and precious robes, (2 Timothy = crown of righteousness, Revelation = white garments, Matthew = 'sun of righteousness.) Hence we are made righteous. It is a place of happiness - it is evil and sin that bring unhappiness. Isaiah = feasting.

Heaven is full of 'heavenly creatures', saints and martyrs, elders. These people receive the gift of eternal life freely.

However, all this revelling in the delights of heaven, and forgetting that there are problems and difficulties in the life as well, they fall into the trap of despair as soon as things stop being easy. Pliable cannot face this, so struggles and returns to the old way of life in the City of Destruction (Note the parable of the Sower). Pliable is concerned for his life, so he loses it (Mark 8 v 35). Christian, however, has enough faith and determination to struggle through, but in the end needs help to be pulled out of his despair.

In the discussion, it is plain that Christian was not fully prepared for his journey, for if he had been, he would be aware of the 'slough' and also of the way across it. God is the one who helps us through the despair (Psalm 40 v 2). Often the first difficulty of a Christian makes him despair, because he does not realise that there will be problems involved in the Christian life.

Bunyan uses a literary device now to interpret to the reader what the 'slough' is. It is similar to 'Twas Grace that taught my heart to fear'. The 'slough' obviously represents the fear produced by the Law. Note Paul's attitude to it (Rom 7 v 7 etc.) When we begin to know God, we see our own appalling sinfulness. The way across despair is by faith and acceptance of Christ, and knowing the forgiveness he has won for us. This dispels any self-condemnation. This all reflects on our human nature that cannot be changed no matter how hard we try, it can only be changed through the Grace of God.

## **Mr Worldly Wiseman**

He recognizes Christian because he has heard about him, but Christian does not know his companion. Again the doubts and pressures of worldliness and what he left behind play on Christian's mind. He has until now put them to the back of his mind, because all he is aware of is his sinfulness (burden). Mr Worldly Wiseman's counsel starts off good. He speaks the truth (but like the serpent in the Garden of Eden). Christian knows he must get rid of his sinfulness and knows also that he cannot do it himself. Mr Worldly Wiseman gives Christian the 'easy way out' by by-passing all the troubles that he will encounter on the road. He is persuaded that alternative ways to salvation are Morality, Legality and Civility i.e. Good Works. To be an upright citizen is all that is needed, in this understanding of salvation. Here salvation and religion is mixed with social values, law of the land, and moral standards.

But Christian finds that this is an even harder road to follow, for this is also akin to the Salvation through the Law of the Old Testament. The mountain he passes under is Sinai. Paul's attitude to the law is that it is a law of bondage not of freedom. Good works, or 'Law', only makes our sin greater because we know we cannot achieve righteousness on our own effort.

Christian had been 'conned' by Mr Worldly Wiseman's appearance as a gentleman etc. But appearances are deceptive. Rather Evangelist shows him that Salvation comes only through faith, not works, and that we must have faith, and believe that our sins are forgiven. Note however, that Bunyan in Matthew 12 v 31 omits that blasphemy against the Holy Spirit is unforgivable. Bunyan never really knew what this was and always was afraid that he had committed it.

Evangelist gives a short sermon now, on avoidance of worldliness. The first point is that we must heed the counsel of God, not of mankind. (Note Acts 4 v 19f. and 1 Kings 13) The second is that the difficulties must not make us look back to the 'fleshpots' of Egypt. Any advice that avoids the necessity of sacrifice is bad advice. Legality is explained in terms of Abraham's wife, in Galatians 4 v 21 ff. Bunyan again refers to the unforgivable sin. But is assured that backsliding, or being led astray is not such a sin. There is always forgiveness and hope. In fact this encounter serves to make Christian all the more sure he is not led astray again, because next time he may not come to his senses.

## **The Wicket Gate**

Christian knocks at the gate. Jesus is the door, he is also the knocker – the means of entry. Christian can only enter the life and find the way to the city through Christ. But Christian cannot just go through the gate. He has to be aware of what he is doing. He is willingly accepting and knowing this situation.

This is his first definite response to the call. He accepts that Christ is the way. The first great hurdle is passed. The awareness of the centrality of Christ for salvation is the first essential step towards it. Christian has now found that, and rejected the other alternatives to salvation - of worldliness etc. Hence, the reason why Beelzebub (or Satan) tries to prevent Christian doing this. Now for Christian there is no turning back. The assurance that this brings makes all the hazards and difficulties worthwhile. Christian's faith is growing. Then follows a recap of the journey. But the purpose of this is in Goodwill's speech, that the former life of a person is of no consequence once he has accepted Christ. John 6 v 37 - God will not turn anybody away who truly comes to him. All is forgiven. Finally he is told that the road to follow is an easily distinguishable one, but that there are many false trails. There is only one true way - the straight and narrow way.

## PART TWO - THE INTERPRETER'S HOUSE - CATECHISM

The Interpreter's house and the Interpreter, take the place of Catechism, or teaching of the Christian before he makes his ultimate confession of Faith. In the Early Church this took place before baptism, which often took place at Easter. Hence Lent is the time of preparation and learning. In Bunyan's day it is difficult to know if this took place at all. One of the great issues of the Reformation was the lack of knowledge and teaching in the Church. Often the incumbents (of the Church of England) were ignorant, unschooled and held their positions due to favours, and status, rather than anything to do with faith or belief.

The non-conformist churches, and dissenters, however, were much more concerned with education, and suitability of their leaders. The other point is that they believed that the understanding of the scriptures and the Christian life was for every Christian, not just a few. By introducing the Interpreter's House, early in the story, Bunyan shows that he sees this teaching as an essential part of the Christian's growth towards maturity and salvation.

The Interpreter's house is this basic Christian teaching put into pictorial language. It is teaching through visual aids that will help him on his pilgrimage. Note that Christian has to knock hard and long on the door of the house, and is not admitted until he has declared his intentions and purpose in life. This suggests that these teachings are only for the person who is truly seeking the truth. They are not pearls to be cast before swine.

### The room with the picture of the Guide.

This is the only true guide for Christian. There will be others, but these will be false guides that will take him away from the correct path - i.e. teach him heresies, untruths, and misinterpret things. Hence Christian is to become well acquainted with the guide. The true guide is symbolized by:

'one of a thousand'	=	a perfect human being
'eyes lift to heaven'	=	a righteous person or full of love
'truth on lips'	=	a truthful person
'the best of books'	=	scripture
'he reveals dark things'	=	full of wisdom
'world behind'	=	not concerned with worldly things
'crown'	=	the glory that he receives, not in this world
'he is authorised by the Lord of the city'	=	he is the only guide sent by God.

Finally he gives birth to children, with pain and anguish, and looks after them. (1 Corinthians 4 v 15; Galatians 4 v 19; 1 Thessalonians 2 v 7) All these references point to this guide as St Paul. All the other characteristics might fit St Paul, e.g. he certainly interprets the Old Testament, he has great wisdom, knowledge and love and understanding. He always speaks of winning the crown etc. The difficulty, however, is that this guide is for Bunyan 'the only man who is authorized' by God. This may suggest that Bunyan, like many of the reformers, puts St Paul as the greatest of the apostles - because of his interpretation of Justification and salvation by faith alone, and good works emanating from faith, so that the Christian lives a life worthy of God. This is the nutshell of the reformed and Puritan theology, of which the Pauline letters are the centre.

We may want to suggest that the guide is the apostles, and these only are authorized, but one suspects that this is not in Bunyan's mind. He would be very wary of suggesting anything that might relate to the cult of saints, apostles,

and martyrs of the Catholic and Anglican Church. This was seen as one of the greatest abuses of the church at the time.

The third suggestion is that the person is Christ himself, but this does not really fit the 'facts' e.g. the person is the 'only man' – would Bunyan use this title of Jesus Christ? The other characteristics fit Jesus, but one suspects that if he meant Christ, there would be a more obvious reference to it. The conclusion is probably St Paul, because he is the true interpreter of scripture, for the reformers and dissenters. It is the Key to Puritanism, as opposed to Anglicanism and Catholicism, which stress other aspects of theology and doctrines. We shall encounter some of them later on in the journey.

### **The room of dust - Law and Grace**

This is a vivid example and illustration of the contrast between the Law and the Grace of God in Christ. The dust is the sin in our lives, and no matter how hard we try to rid ourselves of it, we cannot. We only stir it up and make it worse cf. the Parable of the seven evil spirits (Matthew 12 v 43–45). Also Paul's attitude to the Law and Grace is here expounded (1 Corinthians 15 v 56, Romans 5 v 20). The water represents Grace, the grace and forgiveness of God, through Christ. With the Grace, sin is subdued, and swept away, not just disturbed. Hence it is grace that makes us righteous. (Ephesians 5 v 26 – this indicates the use of the symbol of water)

### **The room with two children - Patience and Passion**

The boy 'Passion' represents the people of the world (carnal people) who want everything now. They want all their pleasures and fortunes in the present world. However, these things are basically trinkets, and 'Passion' does not really look after them – like a spoilt child, he does not value his toys and gifts. Hence he is always discontented, being more ambitious, and always looking for something better. He is the Mr Worldly Wiseman, and Pliable and Obstinate, with eyes only on the pleasures of this life.

'Patience' (one of the aspects of the fruit of the Spirit) represents the true Christian attitude. He is not concerned with the pleasures and trinkets of this world, but looks to the heavenly riches before him. This reward is far greater than 'Passion's' and is not eaten away by moths or stolen by thieves (Matthew 6 v 19). This, together with the story of the Prodigal son (Luke 15 11–32), and Lazarus and Dives (Luke 16 v 25) make up the basis of the teaching.

### **The 'backside of the wall' and the fire**

This I find one of the most impressive of Bunyan's visual aids. It is the tussle between sin and grace, or the devil and Christ within us, and in the world. To allegorize the illustration: The fire is faith, the water is temptations/doubt, the oil is grace or the working of the Holy Spirit (oil is the symbol of anointing with the Holy Spirit – also that the person is chosen by God – grace) The whole scene, is the person's whole being represented in 'the heart'. The wall represents the difficulty of the person who is tempted by doubt etc, to see the work of grace in our lives.

The secret or mystery is of course, that the water can never put out the fire. Whether Bunyan knew it or not, the illustration is almost perfect. You cannot put oil or petrol fires out with water – they have to be asphyxiated. If you pour water on oil, the oil floats and the fire continues to burn.

## **A pleasant, or beautiful palace**

It is the picture of the Palace Beautiful - here representing not so much the Church, as it does later, but the Kingdom of God. However, for Bunyan the two are probably synonymous, so it will be interesting to compare this picture with what actually happens when Christian arrives at the Palace Beautiful.

Note that Bunyan does not interpret this visual aid. That in itself gives us a clue as to what it is all about. He leaves the picture unclear to us, but no doubt much clearer to his contemporaries. Acts 14 v 22 helps us to interpret. There are many difficulties to overcome, to enter the Kingdom of God. Only the most determined person will get into the Kingdom of God, and he has to be prepared to fight his way into it. However, note that the names are collected before the battle begins.

This is a commentary on the situation in England in the 17th century. Bunyan makes the assumption that the true Christians in England, those who are really part of the Kingdom of God, are the dissenters. They are the ones who have declared their intentions, i.e. given their names. But once they have done that, the law of England, the Established Church, and the King immediately made life difficult for them. Dissenting Churches were outlawed, the members persecuted, property taken, preachers imprisoned. In fact, everything possible was done to stop these churches existing. If these are the only true church, then the King was attempting to stop everybody entering the Kingdom of God. However, he was not successful. While many, like Pliable, did not pursue the struggle, many did. Interpreting it for today is not so easy. There is little that is comparable to this situation of the 17th century. Nevertheless, there are things today that make it difficult for people to be part of the church - not law, but social custom in England today.

## **The man in the iron cage**

This is a warning to what can happen to Christians who are not diligent in their faith. He is the seed with no root (Luke 8 v 13), and so is easily tempted away. Note that the man is a 'professor' i.e. a learned teacher. Bunyan here may be making a comment upon the university trained clergy, who have knowledge, but little faith. These were the people who despised Bunyan for his lack of learning and qualifications.

The man became complacent like the 5 foolish virgins (Matthew 25, particularly being led astray by worldliness. (Bunyan's greatest temptation) His list of sin is long. Grieving the Spirit - see Ephesians 4 v 30, and basically he has allowed his own selfish will to be more important than God's. Hence he has rejected God, and his salvation, and the Spirit no longer lives in him.

The hardening of the heart is a common phrase for the rejection of God, His state is pitiful, and for Bunyan, steeped in Calvinistic theology there is no escape cf. Hebrews 6 v 4-6. This is a difficult passage, so is Hebrews 10 v 28-29. The strict Calvinistic theology here declares that there is no hope for those who know God but reject him. They are not the chosen ones. This man in the iron cage has been tempted by the world and has rejected God in favour of it. He is ensnared by it and cannot escape. He cannot repent.

The man has been a true Christian, but then has renounced his faith. This sort of person is the most difficult to reclaim for Christ cf. Mohammedans and fighting. While Bunyan's statement must in today's understanding be seen as hyperbole, we must not dismiss the gravity of the man's situation, This man has failed the test.



## **The man with the dream - the coming of the last judgement**

This is Bunyan's understanding, based on a broad Old Testament and New Testament apocalyptic approach, of the second coming and last judgement. Notice the large number of scripture references, here, so that Bunyan shows his deep knowledge of the Biblical aspects of eschatology. There were sects in his day, as in our own day, that put great emphasis on the second coming, predicting that it would soon take place. Bunyan does not say this, but rather shows that the Christian should always be aware of it. Again the concept of 'watch and pray' comes through. Vigilance is a necessary part of the Christian life.

The fear of the man in the dream was again that he had failed the test, and was doomed to eternal damnation. At the last judgement, all the person's sins will be apparent to him, to accuse him, Note the parable of the sheep and goats - it is the ones we are unaware of that condemn us.

With all this teaching and these warnings, Christian is sent on his way in search of the Celestial City. But he receives a blessing as he goes - that God's Spirit (the Comforter) will go with him, as his guide.

## **PART THREE - THE CROSS AND THE HILL - THE ACCEPTANCE OF CHRIST AS LORD & SAVIOUR**

Having learnt some of the basics of the Christian doctrines and faith, Christian is now ready to embark upon the road to his acceptance of Christ as Saviour and Lord. This is to be the response to his faith and teaching that he has so far accepted. Yet even with his faith, and the knowledge he has gained, the task is not as easy as it may seem.

However, Christian is now more confident than he was before. Because of his knowledge he now has an assurance of salvation, or at least the hope of it, which helps him along. He still has his burden.

### **The Cross and Sepulchre**

This is obviously Calvary and the empty tomb. This is where Bunyan's burden is removed. He now understands the meaning of the cross in terms of forgiveness for his sins. The burden rolls into the empty tomb. Why this is depicted can only be guessed at. Is it a symbol of destruction of the sin and guilt, or a symbol of cleansing it? Indeed, is it correct to understand the sepulchre as the empty tomb, or is it an entrance to Hades? Later an entrance at the bottom of the hill is an entrance into Hades.

Christian's relief at forgiveness is expressed in joy, dancing, and tears. But in his joy he realises the cost of this forgiveness. The cost is the death of Jesus Christ – God's only Son, and this begins to make him sad (Zechariah 12 v 10.)

Bunyan mentions the cross, and as a Puritan we would assume that this is the empty cross. However, the reference to Zechariah, and his later discourse in the Palace Beautiful tell that it was the crucifixion that he sees on the hill. Having realised and accepted the salvation won by Christ, he is to receive the marks of a Christian assurance of forgiveness; an assurance of righteousness symbolized in the new garments, and is given the seal of Christ (Mark ) which is the Holy Spirit. Note the use of the 'mark on the forehead' from Revelation 14 v 1 and Ezekiel 9 v 4.

What is the 'sealed roll'? Probably this represents the guarantee of the salvation and inheritance that Christian will receive i.e. it is a passport to heaven. This passport, however, is only given to those who have accepted Christ and his work – again the Holy Spirit.

Note how in this action and in Christian's joy and song, he is already reaping the benefits of the new life and new creation of salvation. He does not have to wait until he enters the 'celestial city'. He is part of the new order.

### **Simple, Sloth and Presumption, and Formalist and Hypocrisy**

Simple, Sloth and Presumption – these three persons have been unconcerned and forgotten to watch and pray. They had fallen asleep on duty, like people who had become drunk and unable to keep awake and alert (Proverbs 23 v 34). In this situation they are a prey to temptation and the devil, and Christian, in his new enthusiasm, tries to help, but they do not want help. They are unconcerned and only care for the present. Presumption's remarks mean that Christian is interfering, and it is up to each person to sort himself out.

Formalist and Hypocrisy want salvation on the cheap. They wish to get to the Celestial City by the shortest, quickest and easiest route. They did not go

through the wicket gate, or approach the hill, instead they have by-passed them. They wish to be part of the Kingdom of God, without knowing or accepting Christ, It is much easier to follow traditions and rituals, as superficial means of religion, than to allow it to affect your life. This discourse of Christian and Formalist and Hypocrisy illustrates the tussle in Bunyan's day, and today in the church. It is not conformity to traditions that is important but acceptance of Christ. To any bystander, there appears to be no difference in the end product of the two approaches to religion, but those who have no root to their faith are soon led astray.

There is also a small allusion here to the concept of salvation by works, and the Law, Christian has a symbol of his salvation, righteousness and forgiveness, in the coat and scroll. The others do not have these. To Formalist and Hypocrisy these things are unimportant. Indeed they laugh at Christian because he puts such store by them. But the truth is soon found out. Because the two friends have no real faith and therefore no strength in that faith, when difficulties arise, they cannot face them. They take the easy route, and are led astray.

Here then we see another Puritan attack on the established church, with its rituals and its ordinances – its prayer book and its conformity. This is seen as insincerity and formality. In many cases it is hypocrisy. In comparison Christian relies upon his faith and the grace of God.

### **The Hill difficulty**

Christian takes the narrow and difficult path, heading the warnings that he received from the Interpreter. But before he tackles the hill, he prepares himself, by drinking from the spring. Water is the symbol of life, the Spirit and guidance, Guidance because watered oases are the means of traversing a desert.

The hill tells us that although Christian has found his salvation, this does not remove all the difficulties and obstacles in his path. Indeed his new found faith means that the difficulties become greater. However, even though he tires, God does not forsake him. As he becomes weary, so he finds rest in the small wood.

However, Christian now falls prey to temptation. He begins to lose his humility and becomes overconfident. This happens time and again. He becomes self-assured, and begins to think highly of himself, because of what he achieves. However, this means that he forgets to 'watch and pray', and so falls asleep. He wakes up knowing what he has done, and begins to lose his confidence. The roll slipping away is this lack of confidence in his salvation. He has become less than vigilant, and he begins to doubt. This doubt is enhanced by meeting Mistrust and Timorous.

In the end Christian will have to back for his roll. This is put in to make the story, and we need not allegorize this. It is sufficient comment to say that when we doubt and fear, we find a set back, and have to go over the same ground again to regain our confidence in Christ. It is very much two steps forward and one back. To doubt and fear, and to lack in vigilance, makes the journey much harder and longer. Hence Christian continues his journey in the dark, having had to go through hill difficulty a second time, Darkness, of course, is symbolic for the realm of evil, and the devil, Having had a set back, Christian must now be ready to meet these horrors and temptations.

### **Mistrust and Timorous**

They are people who do not have enough faith. They lack in trust. It seems that they thought things would go easily for them when they accepted Christ. However, reality was different. In fact the Christian life is full of hardships and

dangers. But there is something particular that Bunyan is pointing to here, The two lions symbolize the difficulties facing the dissenters in Britain, Many of them were made to turn back on their beliefs, because they did not have the faith, and the resilience to fight through, However Bunyan, who had experienced persecution, knew that the persecution was not as great as it could be. The efforts of the state and King were 'chained'. They could only scare, but not stop the dissenter from entering the Church. The Lions themselves may not represent the King's efforts against the church, as such, although the use of Lions may suggest this to us. It could be more representative of the pressures of the society of Bunyan's day. This temptation from the world, then, Bunyan would consider to be chained. It does not have total freedom. Christ has defeated evil on the cross. Hence, those, like Christian who have the surety of salvation through the cross, have nothing to fear from the 'Lions', Hence Christian looks for his guarantee scroll and finds it missing. His doubts must lead him back to the cross to gain his confidence in his salvation again.

Christian passes this next test of faith with encouragement from the 'Watchman'. Christian is afraid, but he trusts the porter's words, until he realised himself that he had nothing to fear.

## PART FOUR - THE PALACE BEAUTIFUL - ENTRY INTO THE CHURCH

Christian requests to lodge in the Palace for the night. The Palace was built for the purpose of the rest and refreshment of Pilgrims, and to provide them with security. This security will be seen in terms of fellowship with other Christians and encouragement. Also in the Palace, Christian is taught many more truths, and all this added together makes him more ready to proceed upon the next part of his journey and more able to face the difficulties. There can be little doubt that the Palace Beautiful represents the church: that is the 'true church' of believers - the dissenting and puritan churches of Bunyan's day. In his concept of the church outlined here, we have the contrast between the dissenting church (free churches), and the established church, in terms of their function and constitution and membership. Remember the established church was under the control of a Catholic King, and it was used by the state as a means of uniting the country, and keeping people loyal to crown and country. It was, for Bunyan, an organisation that did not comply with the requirements of Christ.

### Christian's entry into the church

He is required to give a testimony of his life and how he has come to the Palace (church), i.e. how he has become a Christian. He relates this briefly to the porter. He describes himself as a European - Japheth was one of the sons of Noah, and was considered to be the founder of the Indo-European people. These people will share the inheritance of the Semitic people (Shem). There seems to be an allusion here that the Europeans will share in the salvation first offered to the Jews by God. Through Christ, Europeans and, of course, all people can share in this salvation. He also has to explain that he has had his doubts and these have meant that it has been a harder struggle to arrive at his decision to enter the church. Is this passage just to make the story flow, or does it have some illusion to the historical situation? It may reflect on the fact that Bunyan only joined the church at Bedford in about 1654. It was originally founded much earlier and there had been dissenting churches from the 1650's, but of course principally from the 1660's. Bunyan was baptised and converted in 1666. Does this suggest that Bunyan himself, like so many people of the time, must have had many doubts about leaving the established church and joining an independent meeting?

The purpose of the Palace (Church) is to help the Pilgrim, to give him rest and security; we shall see what that is as the others entertain Christian. Note also some of the other concepts of the church. 1.) It was founded by 'the Lord of the Hill' - who is Christ - Christ is the head and cornerstone (Ephesians 2 v 19-20) Also that the church is a family (Ephesians 2 v 19.) This is a concept that is found in the early church, and also in Bunyan's day. Due to persecution, it was necessary to help each other.

The essentials of entering the church are a faith in Jesus Christ, a life that testifies to it, and a willingness to be 'set apart'. The four maidens give us an idea of the aspects of the Christian faith.

1) Discretion. This is to determine whether his faith is true - the strict reformed theology states that only those called by God have faith. Those not called may show a faith, but it is not true (Calvinism.) How do you determine such? - by an analysis of the person and his lifestyle.

2) Prudence. A rational understanding, not impulsive faith i.e. he needs to be the seed sown in good ground - not one that soon withers away.

3) Piety. Devoutly religious - not really a 'holier than thou' attitude, but that he has a sincere faith and sincerity in entering the church. It is not lightly undertaken, but he knows the full implications.

4) Charity. Not love – they did mean different things in Bunyan's day, even if the translators of the Bible got confused. This is the outworking of faith i.e. kindness, and mercy to others, a concern for the poor and needy, as well as giving alms.

These, then, are essential to being part of the church.

## **Fellowship of the church**

This section gives Bunyan the opportunity to have his characters drink together and to talk about their faith and their Christian life. To wit Christian reviews his journey. The part of this conversation that is new is the talk of the conflict between the old way of life (the Old Country) and the New way. (cf. Hebrews 11 v 15 – Abraham) However, as St Paul records in Romans 8 v 16–19, it is impossible to divest ourselves totally of the old carnal nature and it often catches up with us.

How do we overcome these things – by remembering our salvation that is guaranteed to us through Christ on the cross, remembering that our sins have been paid for by Christ on the cross, and that through the power of the Holy Spirit within us – he leads us into all righteousness, The scroll is this guarantee of salvation i.e. the Holy Spirit.

The discourse continues about Heaven, and what Christian expects to find there. The concepts are drawn from Isaiah (surprising here he quotes Isaiah 25 v 8 – that death will be no more, but mentions nothing of 11 v 6ff). He also alludes to the continual worship in heaven. Perhaps his concern for the destruction of death and all that is associated with it reveals a fear of Bunyan's. Or perhaps it is due to the fact that persecution makes death much nearer and more obvious. The discourse at table is about Jesus, and his work. Here points come out. First that Jesus can be experienced personally 'there were some of the household that said they had been and spoke with him since he had died on the cross'. Hence this confirms the resurrection of Jesus. The primary evidence of the resurrection, is not the empty tomb, but the fact that Jesus is alive today, and appears to his followers.

## **The Treasures of the Palace**

1) The records of antiquity. These are the truths that the church keeps, as guardian. It is the truth of Christ and the church throughout the ages. We often call them doctrines, which the church teaches. First the divinity of Christ, second the work of Christ (Atonement), and the record of the saints and martyrs, prophets etc. Then the doctrine of grace and salvation, and the amazing works of God.

2) The armoury. cf. Ephesians 6 v 10–20 and Isaiah 59 v 17 & 11 v 5. Breastplate = righteousness; shoes peace; shield faith; helmet = salvation; sword = word of God – scripture. Note all these things are gifts of God to the Christian, as indeed Christian will be given these things when he leaves the Palace. These gifts of God (Grace) are sufficient for all people who believe. The other armour is all-prayer. Prayer has no symbol in Ephesians Is this because in a sense it is not the same sort of gift, from God as these others? Ephesians 6 v 18 – Prayer is in the Spirit, so it is through the Holy Spirit that we can pray.

3) The 'relics'. This is obviously a counter-attack to the Catholic belief in 'relics' of the saints, Such things will be rejected by Bunyan, but note how close he gets to a cult of the saints – as did so many reformers and puritans, in their attitude to martyrs, and the great reformers, (cf. Foxes book of Martyrs), These as far as they are concerned are the real 'saints' cf. Revelation.

The only two obscure ones here are Jael's hammer and nail - see Judges chapter 4 - a gruesome story; Shamgar and the ox's goad. Judges 3 v 31 - goad = spiked stick for urging cattle. . We know nothing of this episode. Also, the sword of God refers to the archangel Michael v dragon, in Revelation 12 v 7 ft. Yet note that this fight is something of the past.

4) The delectable mountains. Christian will traverse these much later, after he has gone through many more trials. They are closer to the celestial city. We shall leave our analysis of them until later. The Isaiah reference is a reference really to the place where the righteous live.

As Christian leaves the palace to continue on his journey, he is told of Faithful who has gone on. We need to ask two questions here:

1) Faithful did not enter the palace beautiful, yet in the story there is no doubt that he is a Christian and goes to the Celestial city. Does this mean that we do not need to be part of the church, to be a citizen of God's Kingdom?

2) Christian leaves the Palace Beautiful; does this mean that the church is only part of the Christian's life, and that as he matures he no longer needs the church?

Both these questions would be answered in the negative. We cannot take every incident in the story as equivalent to life. The story needs to go on, and we must realise that although the story is full of 'incidents' these are not in a chronological order, as far as every Christian is concerned.

## PART FIVE - THE VALLEYS OF HUMILIATION AND THE SHADOW OF DEATH

First, Christian is accompanied on the outset of his journey by the members of the church. They help him on the journey and warn him not to fall. However, as is the case with most of Christian's journey it has to be trodden alone. While he has companionship for most of the journey, all the trials are his. But this is particularly so of the valleys. He must tread them alone. These valleys represent the evil, antichrist, Devil, Satan, or whatever you want to call the spiritual opposition to God. Having committed himself to Christ, and become a confessing member of the church, he now has to face opposition that is stronger than before. We could compare this spiritual fight that Christian has to undergo with Luther fighting the Devil and throwing an inkpot at him at Wittenburg Castle, or the trough of the screwtape patient, where he is vulnerable to attack by the devils. It is the experience of every Christian, particularly the puritans of the 16th century found this a very real spiritual war. We can rationalize it, by psychoanalysis, but anyone who has experienced real commitment, has also experienced real trial and temptation. In a sense we have to face it alone, i.e. not with anyone else, but of course, we have our faith, the Spirit, and Christ with us.

Christian is given as parting gifts: a loaf of bread, and bottle of wine, and some raisins, Apart from being obviously food for the journey, they are symbolic.

Bread and Wine = Lord's Supper - remembrance of Christ, atonement, death and resurrection, The Spirit with us, the new Covenant, Salvation etc.

Cluster or bunch of raisins see 1 Samuel 25 v 18; 30 v 12, 2 Samuel 16 v 1; 1 Chronicles 12 v 40. In these passages the raisins are included in the gifts to King David.

### Apollyon

The first decision of Christian is to stand his ground. Although afraid he knows he will be better with a frontal attack on the Evil one. Apollyon = in Greek, the Destroyer cf. Revelation 9 v 11, or the Devil, The description bears some resemblance to the locusts of Revelation 9, Also it is the 'Beast' that comes out of the sea, viz. scales, bear, lion, and it is associated with the 'Dragon'. Also no doubt Bunyan had the concept of Leviathan, the sea monster of Chaos, which is described in Job 41 v 15-21.

Apollyon or the Devil is the 'Prince of this world' cf. the temptations of Jesus.

1) Christian is now being tempted to go back to the Devil and reject Christ. The arguments are:

- 1) He promises Christian all that the world can offer him (what our country can afford, I do here promise to give thee)
- 2) Christ is a worse choice than the devil
- 3) All Christians give up their allegiance to Christ and go back to the Devil.
- 4) He offers him mercy, i.e. Apollyon is really the 'good guy'.

However, Christian does not really argue with Apollyon about these things, he just confirms his allegiance to Christ. He does not believe Apollyon's promises.

2) Then Apollyon speaks of all the hazards on Christian's journey, and tells of the sufferings of the faithful servants of Christ. They only die for their faith. But of course, Apollyon does not speak of eternal life, but Christian does.



3) Then Apollyon shows the failures and doubts of Christian, as his faithlessness, and his true allegiance to the world, but Christian counters them with the mercy of Christ.

The fight ensues, because there are no arguments left, and Apollyon pursues it with haste and wholeheartedly (again). Note that Christian does not escape unscathed. He is wounded by the fight and grows weaker as the fight continues. But through God's grace, Christian manages to defeat Apollyon, by giving a mortal wound (cf. Revelation 13 v 12). Bunyan is also thinking of Romans 8 v 31-39. We are conquerors in the fight against the devil because God has justified us.

James 4 v 7 - Resist the devil and he will flee from you.

Other Biblical thoughts here are of Michael defeating the Dragon (Revelation 12 v 7-17), and the Dragon then chases the faithful. Also no doubt Bunyan is putting his own experience here, when he was tempted to turn back, and had to fight the devil.

Note: his thanksgiving to God is in David's words when he fought Goliath.

The leaves of the tree of life: see Revelation 22

## **Shadow of Death**

Cf. Psalm 23 - 'even though I walk through the valley of deep darkness, I fear no evil, for thou art with me, they rod and thy staff they comfort me', Linked with this is the Wilderness through which the Hebrew children went with Moses - and the story of the spies that went to Canaan ahead of the Israelites. All these suggest the idea of fear, anxiety, and lack of courage. The fight with Apollyon is not as bad as this valley. Apollyon was a time of direct confrontation, but this is the 'nibbling away' type of attack, where the enemy is in a sense unknown, and all types of things are imagined. Apollyon could be compared to a war where two armies confront each other across a valley, but the shadow of death is guerrilla warfare. Here the Christian needs faith and trust in the promises of God, and needs to rely upon him as his guide. The two men are based upon the people sent by Moses to investigate the Promised Land. But when they saw the cities and the strongholds they became afraid and they did not have enough courage to go into the Land (Numbers 13). So like the spies the two men look only at the dangers before them.

The horror of the valley is depicted as

1) Mythical evil creatures - goblin = evil demon, satyr = half man/half goat, dragons of the pit cf. Revelation 9.

2) The nether gloom of Hades (Jeremiah 10 v 22.)

3) Gehenna - the hell of the New Testament, or the valley of rubbish and burning fires etc. This then to a large extent is the horror of the mind. It is in the Job references, depression and gloom. Nearly always this follows after such a high encounter as the defeat of Satan - from the hill top to the trough.

4) The pit is the pit of false religion (Matthew 15 v 14.)

5) The quagmire is probably adultery. These two are easily fallen into and to tread the narrow path is difficult cf. Revelation, where the adultery and" false religion are the ways of the Beast.

It is depression, which is so difficult to overcome. Even the Word of God is not able to release Christian from it, only prayer. Cf. the many psalms and Job, which are prayers of the person that he may be delivered from distress etc. Also this is Bunyan's experience and the experience of many Christians e.g. Cowper.

This is as close to hell as Christian gets, and all that is evil seems to come at him. However with God's name he keeps them at bay.

6) Deception by the devil, and blasphemies in the mind.

Bunyan normally explains a situation by introducing a character, and so insuring a dialogue. Here he does it differently. He simply states why Christian was glad, in the valley.

1) There are others who have gone through the same experience.

2) God is with him, even in the darkest place, and even though he cannot see him (Job 9 v 11 and Psalm.)

3) He felt the companionship of another person.

4) The sun rises, which chases the darkness away, and with it go the evil creatures. However, it also shows him the way through the valley, that he has to go. Hence the light is the guidance of God, or Christ, who shows him the way around the pitfalls.

The valley ends in a graveyard. In other words many people have lost their salvation in false religions. Paganism is the religion of Bunyan's former life - and it still infiltrates the church and society today, so it is interesting that he is dead. In the 16th century there was still a lot of pagan practices about, although the old pagan religions had been done away with. The second false religion is Roman Catholicism and 'papism'. This he considers is dying, because of the reformation. It does not have the power it once had. The Puritans believed the Pope to be the antichrist, for many reasons; mainly because of the authority the position assumed, and also because of the doctrine of works, indulgences etc., in the Roman Catholic church. Note also the references to the martyrdoms in Mary's reign in England.

The two valleys are On the King's Highway - the road to the Celestial City. The fight with the Devil, and with temptation, despair etc, is part of the Christian's life. We cannot avoid it- rather we need to go through it. But these are the case of many people losing their faith. Christian is tempted to go back, but does not, because he clings to his faith in God, with prayer. Only then can he rejoice in God his Saviour.

## PART SIX -- CHRISTIAN AND FAITHFUL - THE PERSONAL TEMPTATIONS

Christian, having come through the traumas and difficulties of the valleys, is uplifted in Spirit. At first he gives thanks to God, realising that it is only through his care, that he has traversed the valleys. But then his vanity gets the better of him, and his humility that he has found in the valley is soon forgotten. In the path to heaven he does not want to be outdone by anyone else. He now sees it as a race to win the prize. Therefore he does not want Faithful to be in front of him. Also, all this time, since he left the Palace Beautiful he knew that Faithful was in front of him. We know that Faithful came from the City of Destruction where Christian once lived, and that no doubt he was scorned by the townsfolk for his Faithfulness. Christian now would think of Faithful in a different light and would want to tell him of his salvation and adventures. Hence he wants to catch up with Faithful, and also overtake him. But his pride leads to his downfall. With head proudly erect, striding out in front of Faithful, Christian falls over a stone, and becomes helpless. Because of his pride he fell and he could only get up again when he rejected pride and took on humility, by letting Faithful help him.

From this point on Christian always has a travelling companion. First Faithful, until he is martyred in Vanity Fair, and then Hopeful who finishes the journey with him.

### The Discussion - about the carnal life

The discussion between Faithful and Christian involves basically four things. It starts with the continuing story of the City of Destruction. We have not been told of much, since Christian left it. Now we hear more of their reaction to Christian.

1) City of Destruction. This is no doubt influenced by the story of Sodom and Gomorrah (Genesis 17). The people are blind and dead to God's warning, and it is only Christian and Faithful who 'flee from the wrath to come'. The townsfolk then talk badly of these two, deriding them, for their courage, and mocking Pliable because he had been with them. The discourse emphasises the attitude to people who having embraced Christ, then turn back when going is difficult cf. Luke 11 v 21 - 26.

The outcome then, is shame and embarrassment, and it is worse than if he had not set out at all. The reference to Jeremiah 19 v 18-19, also suggests that the attitude of the neighbours is part of the 'punishment' of God, for the people he calls, who go back on their calling. In his shame also he avoids other Christians.

2) One temptation and battle that Christian has so far escaped is that of 'Wanton'. But Faithful has encountered this 'Woman' and so relates this story to Christian and the reader. 'Wanton' is the personification of worldly, or carnal lust. It is the temptations of the flesh - adultery etc. Here no doubt Bunyan has both the 'Harlot' of Revelation, the prophets, and the story of Joseph in mind, but principally that of Joseph, and the greatness of the sin of adultery. His doubt, about whether he escaped, will be due to Jesus' words, that if we want to do something it is as bad as the deed itself (Matthew 15 v 19; 5 v 27). The sweet words of the prostitutes, become swear words when she is rejected.

3) Adam, the first, is another aspect of Lust and carnality. He represents the Law, and disobedience for Paul in Romans, but here Bunyan is using him in terms of deceit i.e. Adam and the fall (Eve and the Apple), Ephesians 4 v 22. The Law is a deceit (cf. Romans chs. 5 - 8) because it is based on works, and the wages are death. Deceit is seen in terms of lust and pride, and is worldliness. Bunyan himself was tempted by such things.

Again this lust sounds plausible and good, but Faithful remembers Paul's words, and he realised the truth. To follow worldliness is to be a slave to it. Even though Faithful rejects lust, he is still pulled by it because of his natural side of life. The person, Moses, that followed Faithful, represents the Law, that has no mercy, Because he had broken the law, by lust, he must suffer the punishment, But Christ releases him from the Law.

4) Faithful is also tempted by Pride, Arrogance, self-conceit, and worldly-glory, as he enters the valleys. These however, with lust, belong to the former life of a Christian, and so he has rejected them. Even though they still try to tempt him, they have no power over the Christian. Faithful chooses what is foolish in the eyes of the world – the valleys rather than that which seems glorious (Galatians 1 v 20–21.)

Shame is another aspect of worldliness. It is that which makes us feel guilty or humiliated or a failure, or traitor, of Pliable – who was made to feel guilty about having followed Christian. Shame tries to tell Faithful that he is a disgrace to the human flee, by being religious and rejecting licentiousness. The 'successful' of the world, the rich, are those who follow the way of the world. It is the fool who rejects this. If we look at those in authority we see it to be true (John 7 v 48).

Also we see here a modern phenomenon: the fact that we should do our own thing. We should not be ashamed of doing anything. This is self-expression. We are responsible only to ourselves.

However all this is opposite to the way of God (Luke 16 v 15; 1 Corinthians 3 v 18). To live as 'Shame' does is to live according to the world and see things only in this light. But the Christian lives according to the way of God. Hence again, this 'lust' has no hold over the Christian, even if he tempts him from time to time.

These, then, are the personal temptations, that according to his autobiography afflicted Bunyan. They are all temptations to conform to the way of the world, and to belittle religion. 'Shame' attempts to make people ashamed of what is good, and pleased to do what is wrong. These are among the hardest of the temptations, because the Christian is attacked by them from outside and within. Having read all this, the reader will wonder how the pilgrims, and the Christian can resist such worldliness. The answer is given by Faithful: 'I think we must cry to Him, for help against shame, who would have us to be valiant for the truth upon earth'. 'Him' is either God, or Jesus Christ. God is the one person who can enable us to withstand the temptations of the world.

Note a small comment by Bunyan in Faithful's penultimate speech. It is a comment upon the Reformed Doctrine of Man. 'Shame tells me what men are, but it tells nothing what God or the Word of God is', For Bunyan man is basically evil and carnal.

## **PART SEVEN - CHRISTIAN, FAITHFUL AND TALKATIVE - FAITH IS MORE THAN KNOWLEDGE**

Discernment (1 Corinthians 12 v 10), is a vital part of the Christian life, It is a gift of the Spirit that we should all pray to receive, because without it, we can so easily be led astray, and be deceived. There are many false religions today that use familiar Christian terms e.g. Mormons, Jehovah's Witnesses, Moonies. If you read much of their literature or hear them talking you could be convinced that they are Christians, but they are not. For although they use familiar terms, names and phrases, they use them with a different meaning to the Christian.

In Bunyan's day there were a number of 'religions' in England, but all of them were Christian. The only non-Christian religions known at that time were Judaism, with which the people will have had contact and Islam (the Turks), which they will know of only by hearsay and reputation. However, among the Christian sects and groups in Britain were many heretics. These generally had been weeded out by Bunyan's day, with the exception of the Quakers. But here in this discourse, Bunyan is not attacking the sects or dissenters, but the 'established' church, and in particular those who consider Christianity is a mental attitude and an intellectual exercise. At a distance this Christianity appears to be good, and wholesome, as the person is very knowledgeable about the faith, but on closer inspection it is found that it is mere knowledge like any other academic discipline, which is of little value, unless it is applied. This is the sort of Christianity of Talkative. The reader is given the hint at the beginning when he is told that Talkative is 'something more comely at a distance than at hand'. It is expanded as Christian takes Faithful aside and explains it all to him.

At first all sounds good, as Talkative is concerned only for earnest conversation. He does not like idle talk or gossip. A good intellectual discussion is what he wants. There is insufficient time to talk of the things of God - let alone anything else. But notice right from the beginning, Talkative is evasive. He does not give a direct answer to a simple question. The profit that Talkative requires from discussion is to learn more - that for him is its purpose. But for Faithful, he means it in a different way.

Notice how Talkative has got all his doctrines right - justification by grace, not law; Faith and knowledge is a gift of God; the need of repentance, prayer etc; and how he says he knows his scriptures.

But all this is deception, for Talkative is not a Christian by Bunyan's standards. He talks, but he does not put into action. Talkative is the 'pharisee' or the 'hypocrite'. The truth is found in his lineage - the son of Say-well', who lived in 'Prating Row'.

Bunyan's point is brought out in Christian's response, quoting I Corinthians 4 v 20 - the Kingdom of God does not consist in talk but in power ('dunamis') i.e. dynamic - powerful action. Talkative always talks about and learns about, but he has no conviction behind this talking. He is like a professor studying comparative religions, without believing in any of them. It is academic. Roman 2 v 24-25, this talking is only an outward appearance, like circumcision. It is of no meaning unless it is derived from an inner conviction. Such people are worse than 'Turks'. This would have been a real insult, for the 'Turk' was the despised of the despised by sheer definition, because he was a Moslem, not a Christian. In 1525 Charles V made a treaty with the Turks, because the Holy Roman Empire was being threatened by them, in Austria. The Christians were being defeated, so they came to an agreement. This was considered a shameful thing at the time because no Christian could, as it were, shake hands with a dishonest infidel.

He considers them so unworthy because they distort Christianity, and propound a very subtle heresy; a heresy that is always in the Church and particularly in a state church, that demanded consent to a certain creed. This is declaring that Christianity is 'a mental assent to certain truths, rather than a religion of the heart.

Bunyan then uses several texts to make his point: James 1 v 22-27; Matthew 13 and 25 – the sower, the talents etc., 1 Corinthians 13 v 1-3; 14 v 7. He also alludes to Galatians 5, John 15 v 1-6 when referring to the Fruit of the Spirit. He also allegorizes the law in Leviticus 11 v 3-7, and Deuteronomy 14 v 6-8 – a common literary and sermonic device.

Having shown the reader the falseness of such a religion, he now makes his arguments against it, to show that it is false. The way to find out is ask a direct question. Not about religion, but about conflation. This is the true test of such a 'Christian'. The question put is about the working of Grace in a person.

Talkative considers grace to do two things. First to make an outcry against sin, and second, to produce knowledge of the gospel.

But this is 'heretical', as Faithful explains they should instead read: abhor sin, and do the things of God. Unless the Christian hates sin, and hence can have nothing to do with it, he has not put aside his former life. Paul encountered this in the Corinthian church and elsewhere, and calls it licentiousness. Likewise, the second point is the heresy of Gnosticism i.e. it is knowledge that brings us to God and particularly knowledge of the mysteries.

But we do not know if Bunyan knew of these heresies. Rather he is thinking about the Christians in England and his own life. Until he hated sin, he was drawn to it and could not conquer it, and he did not commit himself to Christ. In the second aspect he is attacking the intellectuals who despised such people as Bunyan, because they were unlearned, having no theological or university training, yet preached the gospel; the sentiment is found in the ditty:

These kind of vermin swarm like caterpillars,  
And hold conventicles in barns and cellars  
Some preach (or Prate) in woods, in fields, in stables,  
In hollow trees, in tubs, on tops of tables,

and

When women preach and cobblers pray  
The fiends of hell, make holiday.

Bunyan retaliates to show that knowledge is useless unless it is accompanied by faith and love (1 Corinthians 13 v 2; Psalm 119 v 34.) The third point is that such grace of God is apparent both to the person and to others. Today we would put it in terms of the Spirit of God. If a person has the Spirit of God, it is seen to be manifest in terms of gifts and fruit.

To the person, not only does it convict of sin, but also shows the mercy of God (cf. Newton). It also makes the person seek forgiveness and find it through his faith in Jesus Christ, (note Mark 16 v 16 – this is the meaning of the references.) Outwardly the grace is shown in terms of joy and peace in life i.e. his Holiness, and a holiness that is lived out, and which he expects of his family and friends. This grace of God in a person works to bring grace into the world.

Romans 10 v 10 – a person with faith, confesses it with his lips. Matthew 5 v 19, he keeps all the commandments of God, and Philippians 1 v 27 – his whole life is acceptable to God through Christ. Note that is Puritanism. Particularly Philippians 1 v 27, with other Pauline texts, is the key to the 'Puritan' lifestyle and spirituality. This is what Christianity is all about. Because we

have faith, then we live our lives in that reflection. It also reflects on Bunyan's and the dissenter's belief in the 'gathered church'. This is the people of God, who confess together their faith in Word and deed.

Hence Faithful continues with two questions: does Talkative experience this grace, and is it manifest in his life? These are the two questions that would have been asked by a church of a new member. In other words, has he felt the grace of God working in his life to produce faith, and have other people seen it to be so?

Talkative refuses to answer the question, and takes umbrage. Hence he denies that the grace of God works in him. He leaves because he is embarrassed, and does not wish to keep company with a faithful Christian. In effect Talkative does not more than lip-service to Christianity. For Bunyan this is what all such people should do. They are a blemish on the church of God and should not be part of it. All they do is to turn people away from the church and God!

### **Interlude with Evangelist**

Here all that is done is that Evangelist encourages the pilgrims on their way, by congratulating them in overcoming their temptations and trials, and continuing to seek 'the prize'. But he also reminds them that there will be further trials and the Devil is still 'after them'. They must be very discerning and concentrate always on what is happening or they will be deceived, Bunyan uses Evangelist to encourage all Christians, explaining that all have to undergo temptation and trial (cf. Jesus in the Garden of Gethsemane) He then tells that the future is going to be hard, and predicts the martyrdom of Faithful in Vanity Fair. Yet martyrdom is not a bad thing. Though it involves suffering, it does mean that the martyr will reach heaven before the other Pilgrims, and so avoid many of the trials of the rest of the journey, Bunyan here displays his belief that the person receives resurrection at the time of death. There is no purgatory, and no waiting for the 'Great Resurrection'.

### **Note on the Scriptures of Bunyan**

In Faithful's discourse to Talkative where he speaks about the work of grace, backed up by many scripture references, he uses the text Mark 16 v 16. There are many other texts he could have used, so why did he chose this? In our Bibles, it is part of the 'long ending of Mark', and is considered to be an addition to the text. Mark's gospel either ending at verse 8, or having lost its ending. In the authorized version, however, it is part of the text and considered to be authentic.

## PART EIGHT - VANITY FAIR - THE TEMPTATIONS OF THE WORLD

The pilgrims, Christian and Faithful, continue into the Town of Vanity, where in many ways they meet the greatest temptations, and also the greatest persecutions and confrontation yet on the journey. The confrontation with Apollyon in the valley of humiliation was desperate, but the foe could be seen and fought, with full faculties. In Vanity, the foe Apollyon hides behind the human beings and their human nature to defy the pilgrims. This section of the story is very dynamic, and it moves along very quickly, from the pilgrims entering the city, being tempted by the whores of the fair, attacked by the crowds, imprisoned, brought before the judge and condemned. It can be subdivided for study into the following parts

- 1) Vanity Fair, its history, nature, and purpose.
- 2) The trial and its outcome.
- 3) The attitudes of the people of the Town Vanity.
- 4) The response and character of the pilgrims.

### Vanity and its Fair

We are told several things about the town and its fair. First we see that the town was there on the road to the Celestial City, from the beginning. Five thousand years would take Bunyan back to the year 3320 B.C. which approximates with the Biblical dating of the flood(see appendix.) The present Jewish year is 5744. In other words, vanity is there from the beginning. We understand Vanity to mean, unsubstantial or futile nature, empty display (pocket Oxford Dictionary), perhaps also associating it with falsehood and pride i.e. we say 'He is vain'; conceit and boastful. But it is used in the 17th century, and in the Authorized Version to mean of no purpose, e.g.; empty cf. Ecclesiastes 1 v 2 'vanity of vanities, saith the preacher, vanity of vanities; all is vanity'. In the Good News Bible, it reads: 'It is useless, useless, says the Philosopher. Life is useless, all useless'.

This city is on the road to the Celestial City, and has always been so. Note Bunyan's belief in the connection between the Old Testament and New Testament and his concept of the saints of the Old Testament, Even in the beginning there were Pilgrims on the road to the Celestial City, e.g. Abraham and Isaac, and Jacob. Did they reach the city, we must ask, and did they come upon the cross and the hill and the door (wicket gate)? How did they get upon the road without Christ? What do we think about that?

Vanity is part of human nature, and if it is there from the beginning, it is part of original sin, which no doubt Bunyan as a Calvinist would have believed in, But note that it is no problem to the Pilgrims until Apollyon and co. come across it, and then they use it to their own ends to hinder the pilgrims. Apollyon, Beelzebub, and Legion, build the fair, at a most sensitive and important place. This is the only city or town that lies on the route to the Celestial City. All others are by-passed.

The city itself is seen as a symbol of iniquity cf. London and other towns of Bunyan's day, and even today. But even more than this, biblically, the city is evil. This stems from the Old Testament beginning with the Tower of Babel, and with Sodom and Gomorrah etc. The history of the Israelites was of a nomadic existence, not of city dwellers, and there was always a certain dislike and distrust of cities in Jewish thought of the Rechabites, Also Joshua and the Hebrews on entering Canaan are instructed to destroy the cities and their inhabitants, which they did not do. So the Canaanite cities are always seats of idolatry and syncretism within the Israelite society and religion.



## Legion, Beelzebub and Apollyon

Bunyan puts these three together, and adds that they have many companions. These are unspecified and could be assumed to be demons, or evil spirits, However they can also be the fallen angels (Genesis 6 v 1) and perhaps evil people as well.

Beelzebub is the name of the Devil, or Satan. He is Basal of the Old Testament, the Canaanite god of fertility. Ba'al was called Ba'al-zebul – 'the lord of the high places', The Hebrew's altered the name to Baal-zebul – 'the lord of the flies' – probably in derision, Baal actually means lord or master, and hence god, and in Canaan each piece of land had its god, but these later became combined into Baal-zebul, the fertility god, It was the worship of Baal-zebul that was the great challenge to the worship of Yahweh in the Old Testament. Worship included prostitution, immorality, orgies and child sacrifice, In the New Testament, Baal-zebul is mentioned as the 'Prince of Demons' (Matthew 12 v 24-29, 10 v 25 etc) and Jesus associates him with Satan, the deceiver and tempter and accuser of God's people.

Apollyon we meet in Revelation (9 v 11) – of the bottomless pit, or abyss. This is the Hebrew place of the dead, or of chaos, and the belief was that this was the source of evil in the world. The angel of the abyss releases this evil in Revelation. He is called Apollyon the destroyer, or the ruler of the bottomless ~, it. As such he also appears to be Satan, but Revelation does not equate the two. Apollyon may be an aspect of Satan, or an 'underling', but he is not the same as, Indeed, he is the manifestation of evil in the world of the death. That is where he has his power, Bunyan has, however, used the name Apollyon before, and from his description we found Bunyan equating the Devil, Apollyon, the Beast and Levathian, Is then Beelzebub, and Apollyon a parallelism?

The third person is Legion (Matthew 5 v 1-20). This is the Evil spirits or spirit that filled the demoniac and the pigs at Gerasa, or Gadara, He, no doubt, is the most destructive evil spirit that we encounter in the gospels, and that is why Bunyan mentions him. He could, however, be representative, and represent the evil spirits in the world.

It may be that Bunyan mentions the three names, just to emphasise the greatness of evil and the nature of Satan. He may not mean anything more than simply Satan. However, what he has written suggests more. He has produced a trinity of evil. Satan – the totality of Evil, Apollyon the aspect of Satan in the underworld (of the dead) and Legion, the aspect of Evil spirits in this world. One cannot but wonder if this is a counterpart to the Trinitarian God? What Bunyan does show, however, is the totality of the work of evil, in all existence, past, present and future. Hence Beelzebub could be related to the Old Testament, Legion to the time of the Gospels, and Apollyon to the rest of history.

All pilgrims have to go through this town and its fair, and be tempted by its 'emptiness' – even Christ was tempted, and had to go through this temptation. Bunyan refers to the temptation in the desert, but no doubt there was a constant temptation throughout Christ's ministry, and particularly in his passion. The purpose of the Fair is plain enough It is to stop the pilgrims reaching the Celestial City, by tempting them onto 'other roads'. This, of course, is true of all Christian's encounters on his journey.

What is the nature of the Fair? And how does it tempt the pilgrims away from the road? What is the 'emptiness' or vanity that it sells? They, of course, are all 'worldly things'. Things that we think we need to 'get on in life'. The first part of the list is houses, work and promotion. We also see the use of these things in 'blackmail' or persuasion'. Titles and honours and given to people to keep them quiet or under control. Remember also in Bunyan's day the non-conformist was barred from offices etc. So these honours could be a temptation away from the true church, and against his conscience. Next in the list are

carnal desires of the body, followed by the subtleties of the family - which Christian has already encountered in the City of Destruction. Remember it was they who first tried to persuade him to give up his search for the Celestial City. Masters and servants represent security (as do houses, honours etc). This is the worldliness of jobs and work. In our unemployment situation today we know the temptation to hold on to work, almost at all costs; and know this can be used as blackmail against the worker. 'Lives, blood, bodies, souls,' is the temptation to hold on to this life at all costs. It is easy to think that we have the right to life and forget that it is a gift from God, and he has the right to take it when he wishes. The Christian has to commit his life to Christ, and if that means giving up his life, health etc, then it must be done, But the temptation is always to hold on to these things. 'Silver, gold etc is the temptation of money and wealth. Today is an affluent society and time and money is the most important thing for some People.

All these things in the list, are derived from Jesus' words in Mark 10 v 28-31, 8 v 35, Matthew 6 v 19-21, and also they are contained in the Temptations of Jesus - Matthew 4 v 1-11 i.e. Life (food), popularity and power.

The second list is of things that could be seen as time wasters, stupidity and foolishness. 'Juggling, cheats, games, plays' (note cheats tricks) - perhaps what we might call the side-shows at a fair. These things are described to attract our attention, and waste our time, and spend our money for nothing in return. These were the things that attracted Bunyan in his youth, and they were often seen on village greens on Sundays. 'Fools, apes, knaves, and rogues' are the people who have insincere and immature attitudes to life - 'fools and apes' are people who cannot take life seriously. Everything is a joke, and a laugh - perhaps even 'happy-go-lucky'. They cannot take Christ seriously, and try to make it difficult for others to take him seriously. Knaves and rogues are liars and people without scruples or morals. They are the people who cannot be trusted, because they are only concerned for themselves.

The third list is of people who break the laws - both of God and of the land thieves, murderers, adulterers, people bearing false witness, and people who are angry and seek vengeance.

The people mentioned in the last two lists, are those who break the Ten Commandments (Deuteronomy 5 v 7 ff) Also St Paul lists such people as not entering the Kingdom of God (Galatians 5 v 19-21; Romans 1 v 29-32; Ephesians 5 v 3-5; Colossians 3 v 5; Titus 3 v 3 and I Peter 4 v 3; Revelation 21 v 8; 22 v 15; say the same.)

The final list is of street names, or rows. They are names after the goods they sell - a well-known phenomena in many old cities e.g. Baker's Street in London. He lists Britain and four European countries that sell vanities. What does he refer to? His reference to Rome, is an anti-Roman apology. He considers the Roman Christian religion as worldly e.g. it is based upon salvation by words, indulgencies, authority, corruption etc. etc.

## **The Trial and its Outcome**

The trial is brought about because the Pilgrims are the cause of a riot in the city. Hence they were arrested cf. the problems that St Paul encountered in Galatia. He was the centre of a riot even though he did not start it. He was arrested and imprisoned. So, too are the pilgrims. It is in fact the people of the fair that start the riot.

The first examination is before 'trustworthy friends', who considered them guilty and started to punish them - beating and humiliation (dirt and cage), of here the 'trial of Jesus' - the 'trials' of St Paul, and also the punishments of dissenters in Bunyan's day - imprisonment, ill-treatment by the authorities, and

also the 'stocks'. Often too, they were paraded in cages i.e. wagons, to take them to court and to prison. The first punishment and humiliation is to make other people aware of the situation and to frighten them, so they will not be persuaded to join the Pilgrims. This was exactly the purpose of the authorities actions in Bunyan's day. It is also the way that things work today. It also meant that the proper trial, to come, would be totally biased. The case was pre-judged by the people and authorities.

Note the names of the people in court:

Judge = Lord Hate Good – he is not the upholder of truth.

Witnesses = Envy, Superstition, and Pickthank

Envy's evidence is that Faithful is disloyal to his country. He is a traitor because he claims that Christianity is not the same as the customs of Vanity, Superstitions evidence is one of heresy, and a brief conversation with Faithful. He accuses Faithful of blasphemy, saying that the worship of Vanity is not what God requires. Pickthank's evidence is that Faithful has spoken against the Prince of the town (Beelzebub) and his servants. Hence they all accuse the pilgrims of being traitors.

The Jury consists of people who do not live by the truth, but by worldliness and selfishness. They want to vent their anger and vengeance on the pilgrims, so they are biased before they start. The verdict of guilty is a foregone conclusion.

Faithful's defence confirms the accusations and evidence of the witnesses. He does not deny that he has challenged the town of Vanity, its life-style and its religion. His defence is that he speaks the truth, And if the people of Vanity do not live by the truth, then they have condemned themselves. Note the essence of Faithful's defence:

1) What is against the Word of God, is opposite to Christianity and must be of the Devil and evil.

2) People can only truly worship God if they have 'divine' faith, that is 'righteous' faith or faith in God that has been given through the Holy Spirit. This faith is possible only through Revelation, i.e. the Grace of Jesus Christ. Hence if worship does not stem from this, it is false worship. Tradition, superstition, etc, has no part in worship. It must be centred in the Word of God.

3) The truth is that the lives of the people of Vanity, tell of the Lord that they worship – the lord of the world, not God, and so they condemn themselves. Basically Faithful is guilty of the charges. And the basis on which he is judged (the scripture reference of the Old Testament) says that he must be put to death. Faithful is not of this world, so judged by the standards of this world he is condemned. Cf. statements in I Peter 3 v 15-18, 4 v 12-17.

Faithful's death is a compilation of the many ways in which martyrs were killed for their faith of. See Foxes Book of Martyrs and also Hebrews 11 v 36 ff. But note also the Passion of Christ. But Faithful was taken to Heaven. The chariot and horses is a reference to Elijah (II Kings 2 v 11-12) which became a symbol of Christ's ascension. So Faithful follows in the way of Christ and all martyrs, in resurrection and ascension to God, Hence it is important to realise what has happened. The great statement of faith comes in Christian's song and also in the poem of Faithful:

Brave Faithful, bravely done in word and deed;  
Judge, witnesses, and jury have instead  
Of overcoming thee, but shown their rage:  
When they are dead, thou'lt live from age to age.

The victory does not belong to the Prince of the world, but the Prince of Peace,

## **The People of Vanity and the Pilgrims**

A comparison between the Pilgrims and the people of Vanity is very stark, It is as Patience and Passion.

- 1) The People of Vanity live by the 'rules' of the world, and could not speak the language of Canaan, i.e. they were not people of God. But also this is a reference to Babel, because they could not understand each other.
- 2) The things of the world were very important to them, and it was the fact that the Pilgrims thought little of the things of the world that upset the people.
- 3) They wanted all people to conform to their way, and were frightened, despised, and considered fools any who did not.
- 4) They are emotional, and become easily aroused.
- 5) They are of a high opinion of themselves (pride) and consider themselves graceful and fair to others, while they are the opposite.

The Pilgrims on the other hand portray the opposite characteristics:

- 1) They dress, act, and speak as heavenly citizens (Philippians 1 v 27.)
- 2) They value the things of heaven not of the world (Philippians v 19–20.)
- 3) The pilgrims display no fear, in the riots and imprisonment. Instead they give good for evil etc.
- 4) They were patient and humble, and they displayed the Fruit of the Spirit (Galatians 5 v 22 ff.)
- 5) They are humble and polite at the trial, but not a false humility, because they have truth on their side.

So the greatest test so far is endured. It is the test of life and this world and none of us can avoid it. We either pass the test or fail. But the judgement is made according to the truth of God and the Word of God, not according to the standards of the world.

This passage shows that even the Puritans believed in good works. But it is not the good works that save the Pilgrims, but their faith. The good works stem from their faith and declare their faith to others, Some of the key texts for the Puritan life-style are Philippians 1 v 27; Colossians 1 v 10; I Peter 1 v 14–16; Romans 12 v 1–2.

The passage of Vanity Fair is really about Faithful, Christian slides into the background, and even the trial is really the trial of Faithful. It is he who suffers the martyr's death. Christian simply escapes from the town. We do not know how, and I suspect that Bunyan did not know how to get him out - so he plays the 'trump' card. God overrules what is happening like a referee blowing the whistle and sets Christian free and on his way again.

## PART NINE - CHRISTIAN, BYENDS AND FRIENDS - THE TEMPTATION OF WEALTH AND SUCCESS

Christian escapes from Vanity Fair, in an air of anti-climax, but is joined by Hopeful, as his companion for the rest of the journey. The initial part of the journey from Vanity Fair involves the introduction of Hopeful. He has been influenced and converted by the testimony of Faithful and Christian, The martyrdom of Faithful was not without result - and Hopeful believes that more people were influenced than just himself.

Almost immediately they meet with By-ends - we would call him the 'opportunist' - taking the advantage of every situation. His genealogy is of interest, for all his ancestors have names relating to people who are not to be trusted because they are 'fickle' - Mr Smooth-man = slippery character, Mr Facing both-ways, two tongues, and the boatman, have similar qualities of being 'two-faced'. Mr Anything would not be pinned down to give an opinion, or make a decision, By-ends pats great store by his family-tree, and likewise by his wife's. His pride is in his ancestry, and the fact that they are 'self-made' men, and thus have bought themselves into the gentlemen class (? upper middle class) by their 'industry' - such that he was able to marry into a 'titled' family.

He has managed all this by being careful not to be zealous for anything, and 'playing his cards, according to the game', He never fights a hard battle, but always gives way - because he likes the successful life. He always backs the favourite such that he 'swims with the tide'. He will wear the latest Sshions He was the person who would be the last to speak, so that he had first judged the general opinion, He is typical 'yes-man.' By-ends' principles are that he shall have none, that he will stick with.

By-ends' attitudes to religion is taken up with his discourse with Mr Hold- the-world, Mr Money-love, and Mr Save-all. These men, with their tutor Mr Gripe-man, all have a similar outlook on life, It is one of success, and taking what they want - covetousness. But they also live by the principle that they want everybody to love them and think well of them. Note that the town of 'Coveting' is placed in the 'north'. This is interesting. I wonder what the 'north' represented in Bunyan's day? Remember he lived his life in Bedford. In a later century we might interpret this as the great wealth that was produced in the Yorkshire and Lancashire 'mills', and the inevitable materialist society that it produced. But this surely was not the case in Bunyan's day.

The four men are worldly characters, and look only to things for their profit. They use any means they can, viz: violence, trickery (cozenage), flattery, lying and religion. This then is the point that is brought out and discussed - how they use religion for their own aims.

The first thing we learn about their attitude to religion is their attitude to Christian and Faithful. These two are seen as rigid and dogmatic, and self-opinionated. Because they are sure of their own faith they are derided as intolerant. Such intolerance is seen to lead to a judgemental attitude, which condemns other. Note that this is often the opinion of people about those who have strong opinions and firm principles. We feel threatened inadequate and condemned by them. By-ends and friends believes that tolerance is the right understanding of religion, e.g. 'all religions lead to God'.

The second is seen in their derision of the pilgrim's determination to battle on. The four are 'fair weather Christians'. They believe that Christianity brings ease and comfort. When their religion provides this they will follow it, but when it becomes difficult, they will find another belief that is comfortable.

Basically they look for the religion that brings success. Note the sociologists study on religion, People move from Non-conformist religion to 'Anglican' as they move up the social scale, Mrs Thatcher was a Methodist - now she is Anglican. Note in Brill, it was necessary to be seen as part of the Anglican Church. Religion is there to provide God's blessings, and to make use of the good things of life, Abraham and Solomon benefited from their religion. They see the purpose of religion as providing earthly benefits.

This then is brought out in the following discourse, of the ambitions of a clergyman, and a tradesman. We shall see that the arguments and logic they use are back to front. They believe that they are supported by scripture, and by good reason. However, of course, this is the wrong approach. We should not seek support of our ideas from scripture or reason, but rather we should search the scriptures for the truth. To search for the truth is different to using scripture for our own ends or aims. But, of course, this is how they approach the whole of life.

The clergyman is ambitious for greater prosperity, wealth and status, so he:

- 1) becomes more studious and zealous
- 2) he improves his preaching, and moulds it to what the people want to hear, rather than what they need.
- 3) he becomes subservient to the people.

In all these ways, the minister becomes a 'nice fellow' in the eyes of the congregation, and so gets a good 'reference' and moves on up the ladder. The argument goes that because this makes the person a 'better fellow' then, even though his motives are covetousness and greed, it is good, The fourth point is added that he gets the promotion by Providence anyway,

Of course, what is forgotten is:

- 1) it is against God's law to be covetous and greedy - the man is being selfish.
- 2) hence he does not really care about the people
- 3) he does not have any true principles.
- 4) because he preaches what the people want to hear, and not what scripture teaches, he preaches a false gospel.

So in all he is a dishonest person not an 'honest' one.

Likewise the tradesman, can use 'religion' to better himself and gain wealth and position.

Christian confronts the four fellows, with qualifications from scripture to show how God reacted to people like the minister and the tradesman:

- 1) Genesis 34 v 20-23
- 2) Luke 20 v 46-47
- 3) Judas
- 4) Acts 8 v 19-22 - we don't actually know that Simon wanted to make money out of the gift of the Holy Spirit, we only know that he wanted to buy the gift.

Also, Christian's argument is simple. If a person takes up religion to gain worldly things, he will also be ready to give up religion if that is beneficial.

Note: it is often easy to convince ourselves of our own arguments and ideas, because we look on them objectively, and from what we want to do. It is not so easy to uphold them in a good argument, unless they are the truth. Also if we cannot fool other people, we will certainly not fool God.

## The silver mine in hill Lucre

Silver, and gold, have been the cause of great troubles and problems in the world. The gold rushes of the 19th century in California and South Africa have so much to tell us of the greed that gold brings. It is so luring that people fall into great 'pits' of danger, as Bunyan depicts. However, Demas claims that if one is careful you will not fall into danger. The call of easy wealth, and therefore ease is a pall on all of us. But it is an obvious pull if we have our 'eyes open'. Christian and Hopeful know that to even look at the silver mine will take them out of their path to the city and therefore this is wrong. To covet, or 'court' wealth is wrong, To turn aside to seek silver, is to make it more important than travelling on the 'Highway' - something that interrupts what we are doing must be more important than the thing in progress - viz. a telephone call etc. To turn aside to the silver mine is to say that this is at least momentarily more important than God. Hence to turn aside is to turn away from God to wealth, God knows all that we do, and so he will know even the smallest turning away from him.

The people mentioned are:

1) Demas of II Timothy 4 v 10; Philemon 24; Colossians 4 v 14. In Philemon and Colossians, Demas is a co-worker with Paul. Colossians and Philemon are part of Paul's prison correspondence. Here Demas is the faithful companion of Paul, 'though we know nothing of him at all, He is simply a name. In Ephesus then, it seems that Demas, associated with Luke, is faithful, but in Rome he 'deserts' and goes back to Thessalonica - the reason - he is in love with the present world. We do not know how true this is, or whether it is simply Paul's bias. Paul was arrogant and it appears intolerant with others who saw things differently. The great discrediting of 'Demas' is found in writings such as 'The Acts of Paul and Theda' which are purely conjectural.

Basically, we can understand Demas as one who was discontented with the 'hard slog' of apostleship, and looked for something more prosperous and thrilling - like digging for silver.

2) Judas - mentioned before. Matthew 26 v 14 f. Judas the traitor, who put more store in 30 pieces of silver, than Christ, although, of course, he repented later. Matthew's gospel is the most pointed, and says that Judas was looking for a deal - he asks for the money. The other gospels are less willing to so condemn Judas.

3) Gehazi was Elisha's servant - II Kings 5-6. After healing Naaman, Gehazi took the money that Elisha refused. He was greedy. The consequence was death as a leper.

## PART TEN - DOUBTING CASTLE - THE TEMPTATION OF EASE

Following the temptation of Wealth, comes the temptation of ease, Wealth and ease often go together. To have Wealth is to have an easy life, Demas and Gehazi and Judas, looked for the easy life, and the pleasure~ of this world. Christian and Hopeful have over come the temptation of wealth, but are led astray by the temptation of ease. They become weary on their journey, and they look for an easier path to take, But the results are disastrous, it is even more amazing, that they should be so easily led into temptation, when they have a warning in the form of Lot's wife. She had looked back to the 'old things' – the ease and comfort of the past – the wealth and ease of earthly pleasures. But this does not remain in the Pilgrims minds. But how true is this of all of us? We easily forget or ignore the warnings of, Luke 16 v 19-31 ( Lazarus and the rich man), So like Lot's wife, we shall find that although they have so far escaped Judgement by faith and discernment, they will yet fall into temptation.

Korah, Dathan and Abiram, are examples of disputing with God's appointed authority. it really has nothing to do with the temptations of wealth or ease – see Numbers 16 v 3, 7-11, 13, They rebelled against Moses because he set himself and Aaron apart from the rest of Israel (v 13 as Prince); He had failed to bring them into the promised land (v 14); He allowed only himself and Aaron (and his sons) to be priests.

The concept and theme of 'ease' continues with the motif of the river of life, and the 'Pleasant meadow'. The 'pleasant' meadow is from the 23rd Psalm – 'green pastures', it is a place of rest and comfort. In the song, it is compared to the parable of the field with the hidden treasure (Matthew 13 v 11-4) on the outside the field looks ordinary – but in fact it is special. No doubt the special quality for the pilgrim's is the peace of God. In the parable the treasure is like the Kingdom of God. The river is Psalm 65 v 9 – the river of God, and Ezekiel and Revelation – the river of life. It is the water that represents the life giving quality and work of God. In Ezekiel 47, the river flows from the temple, in Revelation it is in the New Jerusalem. Living or flowing water is that which refreshes and gives life.

Hence we see that, the pilgrims having rejected the temptation of ease, through worldly things, in the silver mine, and the pleasures of the world in Vanity Fair, are now given freely, the peace, ease and pleasures of God, in the meadow, It is their 'reward' for overcoming temptation – that perhaps is the way that the pilgrims see it – rather than a preparation for what is to come. The days in the meadow are to give them strength and nourishment to face the hardships on the journey, However, because they see it as a reward for the past, they are unprepared for the rigors ahead. So that when the path becomes hard again, they begin to become fainthearted. The 'easy living' rather than preparing them for the future, makes them soft and want to avoid the difficulties. What the evils and temptations of Vanity Fair and the Silver mine could not do, abuse of the gifts of God found easy,

The rough way is compared to the Wilderness wanderings. The Hebrews had a life of ease in Egypt, compared to the rigours of nomadic wanderers – so the Bible reference (Numbers 21 c 4). They look for an easier and more comfortable life, and when a possibility of this arises, it is interesting to notice the difference in the two pilgrims.

Christian is the 'older' and 'mature' Christian, with many 'campaigns' behind him. He has gained a lot of experience in his Christian life, and has been on the journey a long while compared to Hopeful. So:

- 1) He is sure in his own judgement
- 2) He is wanting an easier life after the rigours



- 3) He believes that his wish is consistent with God's will
- 4) He sees what he wants - e.g. the path goes the right way
- 5) He assumes authority

Hopeful as the new Christian:

- 1) He accepts the authority and leadership of Christian
- 2) He does not assume that his wish is akin to God's
- 3) He is dubious about the truth of the path
- 4) He is unsure about his judgement

But Christian is wrong, and leads Hopeful astray. He has assumed authority, but has 'abused it'. Note the condemnation of false leaders in the Bible cf. Isaiah 8 v 16; Ezekiel 13 v 34. They are condemned for leading their brethren astray. Note also Paul, in 1 Corinthians chapter 8, condemning the 'stronger brethren' for leading 'weaker' astray.

Note Christian is like 'Vain Confidence'. He is confident in himself - not in God. He does not bother to determine God's will. Jesus too warns teachers that they shall be judged the harder, for this same reason.

Because Christian wanted it easier, he persuades Hopeful to go with him. It is the older Christian discouraging the younger, because the younger disturbs the older's conscience. The discouragement is for the 'ease' of the older. Hopeful is in a quandary. He does not believe the path is the right way, but he recognises Christian's authority as the elder Christian. He follows Christian's advice.

Having found out their error, Christian is repentant, but so is Hopeful that he did not speak what he believed was right. It is the quandary of every young Christian - when does he accept the authority of those who are more mature, and when does he stick to his beliefs? - the responsibility is both with the 'weaker' and the 'stronger'. The pilgrims now find great difficulty in going back. It is night, and they are in a storm. Jeremiah 31 v 21, gives us the clue to the analogy. It is very difficult to find our way back. The water and darkness represent the pilgrim's confusion, and the beginnings of doubt, due to their faithlessness. They were beginning to lose their faith and trust in God, because of their own stupidity.

## **Giant Despair and Doubting Castle**

Their confusion turns to doubt and despair the next day. They lose trust in God, and in themselves. All this is personified in the Castle, the Giant, and his wife. We see Bunyan's psychology of doubt and despair, and how one state leads to another.

Wednesday - the pilgrims become imprisoned in their doubt, so that they despair of all things. They are left without any nourishment, and they have nobody to help them. Hence, the feeling of isolation. It is a time of reprimand, that they have only themselves to blame for the situation they find themselves in. They become inward looking. They had looked for ease, but ease led to despair, despair to doubt, and doubt to grief and, hardship - the very thing that they wanted to avoid.

Thursday - they are beaten and left in agony the next day by the giant. Their doubts leave them in an even worse state. The doubts are stronger than faith, and they are wounded by them.

Friday - The Giant tries to persuade them to kill themselves, as the only real option. Christian, who is so low in his doubts and fear, believes that this advice is good. He does not believe that life in misery is better than death. However, Friday is really the turning point, for we have two discourses between the pilgrims. Note, now, how Hopeful is the one with strength and Christian is weak.

Christian's contribution is that life in such misery is not worth living. However, Hopeful, lives up to his name:

- 1) The Christians cannot kill themselves as this is murder and against God's will and law. If they did this then death would be worse than their miserable life - because they would go to hell. So this is not an option open to them.
- 2) The Giant Despair is not as great as he makes out - in the past others have escaped from despair and doubt. It can be overcome. We note an element of predestination here in Hopeful's speech, that God has control of all things. The giant has weaknesses that can be exploited.
- 3) He recalls Christian's past faith and glories - Apollyon, shadow of death, Vanity Fair, which were much worse than the Castle of Doubt.

Even a second visit from the Giant does not dissuade Hopeful from his course of action.

Saturday - the giant tries again - by showing them the graveyard, and threatens the same to the pilgrims. This is not just a threat of death, but involves with it the degradation of no proper burial. This is an humiliation and was the treatment of criminals. To leave a body unburied meant it was impossible for it to be raised to life. The Yard of bones represents the separation from God for eternity. Cf. Valley of Hinnon; dry bones of Ezekiel.

We need to note at this point, that the Giant Despair, and the overwhelming doubts really have no power. The giant obviously cannot really kill the pilgrims he can only harm and 'persuade' them. So too with despair. In itself it can do nothing, but it is instrumental in making the person do things. Even though all the doubt, fear etc, the pilgrims or at least Hopeful, have hope, and a little faith and fear of God.

During the night the Christians turn back to God, and pray. Indeed as they pray their faith and hope increases. They pray until the break of day, at which point Christian finds the answer to his problem - the Promise of God. It is the key to the door.

Sunday - with the key, early Sunday morning - at the break of day - the pilgrims are set free.

We need to ask - what is the Promise? The clue is with us all through the scene of Doubting Castle, because the chronology is compared to Holy Week e.g.

Day	Jesus	The Pilgrims
Wednesday	Judas goes to the High Priest	doubt begins and blossoms in fear
Thursday	Jesus' betrayed, mocked and beaten	pilgrims beaten
Friday	Jesus crucified	pilgrims encouraged to kill themselves. Christian sinks to the lowest
Saturday	Jesus in the place of the dead (Hades)	Pilgrims in the yard of bones
Sunday	Resurrection	Escape

We see that Friday is the turning point. While it is the lowest point it is also the point where hope begins again. Sunday is the day of Resurrection, to new life, with forgiveness and renewal for the Christian. The Resurrection is the victory of death, doubt, and fear.

The Promise of God and the Key is Jesus Christ, and his Resurrection. It is the love, and forgiveness of God cf. H.A.Williams 'True Resurrection'. This is the conquering of ourselves and our doubts and fears etc. So here Bunyan is saying much the same. Through Christ and the 'Promise of God' we are more than victors. cf. Paul in Romans 8 v 31-39.

The Christians escape, and quickly find their way back to the Highway. At the style they erect a signpost to warn other pilgrims of the danger of Doubting Castle. Note, then, that the experiences of Christians are shared with others to help them in their pilgrimage.

## **PART ELEVEN - THE DELECTABLE MOUNTAINS - TRUE AND FALSE WISDOM**

In this section, the pilgrims encounter two adventures and have one discourse. They meet several people, including Ignorance, but the dialogue with this character comes at a later story.

These three encounters are there to show that persistence in the journey needs to be supplemented with courage and knowledge and above all, discernment and wisdom. These are all necessary aids to Faith. Without these the pilgrim becomes weary and can be led astray by his weariness. This general pattern is continued with Atheist, Ignorance, and Christian and Hopeful's final discourse. The warning is here, near the end of the story, and these discourses become a little wearisome for the reader.

From now on, there is little to attract the imagination of the reader, such as giants, castles, battles, and the like. One wonders whether Bunyan had in fact exhausted his supply of characters and adventures, but had failed to bring the Pilgrims to the Celestial City. The shepherds are the last real characters in the story, that can be allegorized, and their purpose is to give the pilgrims a final encouragement before they take the last lap to the Celestial City. Indeed they leave the Delectable Mountains with a view of the Celestial City.

It is notable that at this point, Bunyan in fact claims that he woke from his Dream. His dream had ended! One needs to ask what this represents, and why he decided to continue the story to get the Pilgrims into the city. I feel sure that there is a significance in this. For after this, the book continues only with dialogue and becomes less dynamic. Indeed, most people will remember the stories of Vanity Fair, and the Giant etc., but will not recall the passages from the Delectable Mountains to the Celestial City. Perhaps Bunyan had found that the story had missed our drastically on certain doctrines and catechisms of the faith, such as 'good works' and so he added them in as it were, in a post script. The book then, with the adventures, and the basic doctrines becomes an all-round basic Christian book, about faith, lifestyle and doctrine. It is also a plainly Puritan, Calvinistic book.

### **The Delectable Mountains**

We had a view of these from the Palace Beautiful, This is first based on Isaiah 33 v 15-17, where it is promised to the righteous person, that he will 'dwell on the heights' ... 'his bread will be given him, his water will be sure'. We are told that shepherds live there, and from them the Celestial City may be seen. When the Pilgrims arrive at the Mountains they find that this is so.

The mountains are also called 'Immanuel's Land'. We know the importance of mountains in the OH Testament. They are the place of God, the place of meeting with God, the place of refuge, the place of holiness, the place of vision and view (e.g. a watch tower). We can think of many examples from the Psalms, and from Isaiah, about the concept of mountains. In them are found cool, refreshing streams, for the psalmist they are the place 'from whence cometh my strength'.

The shepherds, are a little more difficult to define, but they are the ones who look after the sheep and we find them instructing the pilgrims, and also questioning them about the journey. These then must be the leaders of God's people, who are entrusted with the work of leading the people of God, and declaring what is good and wrong. Cf. Ezekiel's condemnation of the 'bad' shepherds of Israel (Ezekiel 33.) The names of the shepherds suggest this - knowledge, experience, watchful and sincere. These are the essentials that are added to faith, so that the Christian can remain true and faithful. The Pilgrims have all these four attributes by the time they reach the mountains, but they need them continually, as we shall later see, and as the shepherds warn them.

Note that the Christians are questioned first, so that their faith and commitment is determined, before the shepherds will show them any of the sights. This motif of questions and telling of the person's conversion and Christian experiences is strong in Pilgrim's Progress. It is not a once-off thing, but is repeated time and again.

The sights the pilgrims see are:

1) The Hill Error. This is the fate of those who err from the straight and narrow. Death without burial was considered to be a disgrace, and seen to be a sign of lack of favour from God. This is punishment described in for certain crimes. Hymeneus, Philetus and Alexander (1 Timothy I v 19–20; 2 Timothy 2 v 17–18) were teachers of false doctrines.

2) Hill Caution. A reminder of those who look for ease, but in so doing become blinded from the truth and faith. These people were caught by the giant.

3) The Door of Hypocrisy. Even so close to the end of the road, there is a way that leads to Hell, The hypocrite will come a long way along the road. Yet they are all false. All the people mentioned are well known, but only Ananias and Sapphira, are actually killed because of their hypocrisy. Alexander is 'delivered to Satan' – whatever that means. The pilgrims meet Turn-away, who is possessed with 7 devils being transported to this doorway. He, no doubt, has turned away from his faith. This has great repercussions, when we think about it – the Calvinist would say that such a person was not chosen, and he had no real faith.

4) Hill Clear. A glimpse of the Celestial City.

Note the predestination in the answers the shepherds give – as to the future journey.

## **The Tale of Little-Faith**

Little-Faith was a person who set out on the pilgrimage like Christian and Faithful and Hopeful. He therefore was a Christian. He had the necessities for lit pilgrimage, a) Faith; b) Money and c) Jewels, Faith speaks for itself, but he was rather deficient in it. The money was the means of living as he trudged the pilgrimage. Christian etc, never have need of money as such and so this must represent other things that the pilgrims need, such as courage, strength, etc. However, these are stolen from him, when he is mugged by 'Guilt, Mistrust, and Faintheart'. In other words, Little-Faith is beset by guilt, because he does not have faith in God's forgiveness. Hence his mistrust and his lack of courage, He does not know what will happen to him, when he reaches the gates of the city. He is the Christian without any confidence, because he does not trust in God's Word and Promises.

The Jewels are things that are very precious, but cannot be sold to help him on his way, because he needs to present them at the Celestial city. It seems a little unclear what these might be. They are compared to Esau's birthright or blessing. Also we find that if they are sold then Little-Faith will fill his mind with empty things. While he has the Jewels, he thinks of things divine and spiritual. Hence these jewels must be a knowledge cf. Proverbs 20 v 15. This is also the thing that is worthless in the world cf. I Corinthians 2 v 6–13. These jewels are due to God's Spirit, so that those who have the Spirit have this wisdom. The reason why the jewels are important is that they show Little-Faith is sealed with the Spirit of God, even though he himself is so unsure.

Little-Faith did not have the things necessary to sustain him on his journey (through his life) He is depressed, lacks joy and vitality and sees in his religion only the sadness and weariness. This is because he dwells on the hardships and does not allow God to show him the joys. Hopeful cannot understand

this, but Christian can, Bunyan experienced the guilt and despair, and here for once we have some compassion and comfort from the author, He is not as hard and rigorous as we think! To the Christian in distress the things like guilt seem overwhelming and Grace is forgotten about.

But this sort of person, only reflects what happens- to the greatest of People, like Christ himself – in the Garden of Gethsemane (is Great-Grace – Jesus Christ?), Peter, the apostle who is scared of a maid in the courtyard, and Heman and Hezekiah, Hezekiah was one of the greatest kings of Israel, restoring the true religion and worship and cleansing the temple, In Isaiah 38, is recorded the prayer of Hezekiah at his illness, it is a time of the depth of despair. We know nothing of Heman, but it probably refers to Psalm 88 – a lament and prayer, attributed to Heman the Ezrahite, probably the same as the sage of Solomon (1 Kings 4 v 31). Hence he had great knowledge and wisdom, but even he was in the depths of despair at one time, Hence Christian and Bunyan take this matter very seriously. It is not to be lightly dismissed, as lack of faith etc, as Hopeful tackles it – but it is a real problem even for the great believer cf. William Cowper.

Note how throughout this section, Job is quoted time and again, yet he is never mentioned as such.

The solution to the problem of despair, is two-fold. Faith, strong and living, that is with us continually, and knowing that God is always with us, and 'fighting' for us.

### **The Flatterer and the Net**

Christian and Hopeful, start to lose their watchfulness They have escaped many dangers, but now they are becoming too sure of themselves, They do not heed the shepherds' advice – they have forgotten about it, and so are led astray by the Flatterer. Basically they were not concentrating on what they should be doing. Why Bunyan has this person is a little unknown, He is obviously of importance, because he is announced beforehand, yet so little is made of it. Presumably the trap or net of flattery is Pride, The pilgrims have got so far on their journey that they are being proud. This problem is only sorted out by divine revelation in the form of Angles for Christian and Hopeful, but they are punished for their waywardness, as a lesson 'not to do it again'. The purpose of the chastisement is to bring repentance, and so forgiveness.

## PART TWELVE - THE ENCHANTED GROUND - JUSTIFICATION BY FAITH

Having been let out of the net, Christian and Hopeful are to meet one more person before their journey's end, and they shall also join up again with Ignorance. Now is the time then to finish of all conversations, and to discuss any doctrines that have, to date, been omitted. The person they meet is Atheist, Basically he is the person who has grown up in the Christian faith, and has been searching for the Celestial city. But he has been looking in the wrong place for it, He is looking for a 'heaven on earth' - viz. 'there is no such place as you dream of in all this world', Atheist has been looking for a heaven with worldly concepts and has been unable to find it, He has also become weary in his travels and searching, and all this has made him give up his search (Ecclesiastes 10 v is). Not only this, but he has persuaded himself that the city does not exist. He now would rather seek the pleasures of the world. 'Eat, drink and be merry, for tomorrow we may die'.

Atheist is also a flatterer, because he leads people astray. Note how Christian, even yet, is ready to listen to him and has to be reminded by Hopeful, that they have actually seen the city - even though indistinct, and a long way off. Christian pretends he is only 'testing' Hopeful.

### The Enchanted Ground

The enchanted ground represents the weariness of the Pilgrim. Having travelled so far, and almost in sight of the city, they begin to weary, They feel they have done so much that they need to rest, (cf. Corrie Ten Boer) It is so easy to become less vigilant as time goes on, but even here, the pilgrims might lose their way (in the twilight of life), unless they 'watch and pray'.

To keep themselves awake we find three conversations. (Monica Furlong concludes that the conversations may keep the pilgrims awake but they will send their readers to sleep.) They do, in fact, become tedious. They all have a common purpose, and that is to discover what 'saving faith' really is e.g. what belief in Jesus Christ really means. Whether words can save a person, and what true respect of God really is. We start with 'saving faith' as Hopeful tells of his conversion Experience. There is little doubt that this is based upon Bunyan's own experience, and perhaps that of others. But it also follows a 'classic' Calvinistic conversion experience, and has several stages, which it goes through. It is both a lightening experience in the sense that it suddenly comes upon Hopeful, by the preaching and witness of Faithful. It is not something he grows up with, but he is definitely converted from one type of life to another. But also it is a conversion that takes a while to come to fruition, as he muses over it. As a 'classic' conversion experience, we will be able to relate to it, even if we have not experienced every aspect of it ourselves.

His conversion experience follows the following pattern:

- 1) He listens to the preaching of the Word, against worldliness and sin.
- 2) He tries to ignore what has been heard, because he did not know this was God at work. He did not realise that God shows us our sin as the first aspect of conversion. He did not want to stop sinning.
- 3) An inner conflict, with the work of grace within him, continually confronting him with his sin and his judgement, and his fear of the outcome.
- 4) Hopeful becomes religious - prayer, reading and sorry for sin, and a reformed character.
- 5) The awareness that trying to be righteous is not enough cf. the example of the debt.

6) He is introduced to Jesus Christ and his work on the cross, and that he could receive Christ's righteousness by faith, and repentance.

7) Christ is 'revealed' to Hopeful. This really is what we would call, the invitation of Christ into our lives, – it is the acceptance of Christ and what he has done for us. It is seen in a dramatic way and is really the realisation of the work of Christ – his salvation for us, our acceptance by God, if we accept Christ. It is by 'faith' that Christ is revealed to Hopeful. He understands and knows the grace of God, so that he is overjoyed.

8) The result of this conversion is that Hopeful is a new person, loving God and Christ, living a holy life, to the glory of God.

This conversion experience then tells us of the necessity of 'Saving Faith'. It shows that 'righteousness' and 'justification' only comes through a true repentance and acceptance of Jesus Christ as Saviour. It is personal and it is a real experience. It also intimates that we cannot be saved by 'good works' or by our own 'righteousness' because these things are SO infiltrated with sin that they are not pure and anyway they do not 'balance' our sin.

The second conversation or discourse is with Ignorance, and we should compare his thoughts and beliefs with those of Hopeful. This conversation is rather tedious to say the least. Bunyan spends four pages in discussing what are 'good thoughts'. It is a very drawn out affair, but basically the conclusion to it all is that Ignorance considers himself a 'good fellow', who has good thoughts, and does good things (motions). But the judgement of his 'good behaviour' is not according to any standards that would be acceptable to Christians. He bases it purely on his 'feelings' e.g. his conscience.

Basically he believes he is saved by his own righteousness, which in Hopeful's discourse is seen to be non-existent in a person. His belief and need of Jesus Christ, is only to add merit to his righteousness e.g. Ignorance does his best and where it is not good enough, Christ steps in to make up the deficit. This is very reminiscent of medieval Catholic theology of the 'merits' of Christ's 'grace' e.g. indulgences, Peter's Pence etc.

So we find Ignorance deficient in the two major concepts of faith: his own righteousness/sinfulness and the work and person of Christ. And Christian declares that it is unbiblical and contrary to orthodox belief.

Ignorance, however, is a Pelagian, and considers that he is to be righteous in his own respect. Without this there will be licentiousness cf. Paul's attack on this attitude in Romans chapter 6 where it is said that if we are justified only by Christ, it does not matter how we live 'let sin abound that grace may abound the more'.

Ignorance is basically the person who believes that he will be saved by his 'good works'. This is all that matters. He dismisses the mystical aspect of faith, and the acceptance of Christ and commitment to him. He does not believe in revelations, visions, and probably dismisses miracles as well. Ignorance believes he knows God, but of course the God he knows is shaped and moulded by his own ideas. He will not accept what Christian and Hopeful have to offer, so parts company.

The third conversation, is between Hopeful and Christian, and centres around 'Fear of God'. We return to the concept of sin, and that God uses the conviction of sin to bring about salvation. Here we have a good Calvinistic attitude – the fear of God, and of sin, as the motivator for redemption. Basically it is the Fear of Hell that they are speaking about, that keeps people on the straight and narrow. It is such a fear, that leads to a conviction of sin, and so people, like Ignorance, who consider themselves 'good' put such fears out of their minds. Other people, who do not have such a real conviction of sin, are people who turn back from their beliefs. The discourse continues, about one person called 'Temporary', He is a person who was religious, only because he feared



Hell. But when Hell lost its reality, religion lost its purpose, and the person became a backslider. The commentary on 2 Peter 2 v 22 is good.

Other things also happen as Hell becomes less real. The world becomes more important, pride, wealth, etc., take over cf. By-ends and friends. These people are not people with conviction, who have repented (turned about), but people who are trying to get what they can.

The list of the 'fall' of the Christians is worth noting. As Hell becomes less real, God becomes less real and so there is little purpose in the Christian life, which by degrees is rejected – small things lead onto greater things.

Basically the whole of this passage centres around the fact that the Christian has to take both sin and Christ seriously. True faith accepts the sinful state of man (his righteousness is as filthy rags) and the righteousness of God in Jesus Christ, Salvation is by faith (e.g. acceptance of and commitment to Christ) and not by 'good works'. A lack of understanding of sin, is the basis to Ignorance and Backsliding. An acceptance of the Grace of God in Christ is the Key to faith.

So the structure is:

- 1) The way of conversion (Hopeful's experience) – acceptance of sinfulness and righteousness through grace.
- 2) The result of not accepting our sin and lack of righteousness (Ignorance)- as false hope.
- 3) The result of not accepting the seriousness of sin – Temporary and Backsliding.

So the only true faith and salvation is through the righteousness of Christ and not our own righteousness.

## PART THIRTEEN - THE CELESTIAL CITY - THE JOYS OF ETERNAL LIFE

In the final episode of the Pilgrim's Progress, the pilgrims have three encounters, which are reasonably brief, for Bunyan. One is a joy and two are 'tests'. They all herald their arrival at the Celestial City. They are the walk through the land of Beulah, the crossing of the river that surrounds the celestial city, and the encounter at the gate of the city.

Having come through the 'Enchanted Ground', without falling prey to the sweet air, and drowsiness, they have almost arrived at the destination. They enter the Land of Beulah, a place of great delight and naturally pleasant. It is a land of abundance that always seems to be in both springtime and summer - 'every day the flowers appear in the earth', the corn is ripe, and the grapes ready to eat (cf. Song of Songs 2 v 10-12.)

This place is obviously a paradise on earth. It is based upon Paradise and the Garden of Eden; the concept of the Promised Land, flowing with milk and honey; and also the 'King's' garden, found in the ancient cities such as Babylon, attached to the Royal Palace - rather like the walled gardens of medieval castles and Manor houses - places in which the royalty could take a pleasant, yet protected and safe walk.

We find that it is superabundant in food and drink, all provided freely for the pilgrims. They have only to venture into the gardens and vineyards, to feed to their heart's delight. Note Deuteronomy 23 v 24 - the concept here that we can share our neighbour's goods, provided we do not exploit the situation. Also the 'turtle' is a 'turtle dove'.

The pilgrims become sick, as in 'love-sick', for the delights that they are tasting. They know that this land of Beulah is only the 'hors d'oeuvre' of what is yet to come. Indeed they can now see the 'main course' clearly before them. They also know that the past is behind them and they cannot be troubled by it. Despair, temptation etc is all behind, for now they are secure in their faith and hope - they are testing the promises of God.

Indeed they become so secure that they seem to overindulge in the 'grape juice' and sleep soundly, talking in their sleep. But what does Bunyan imply by this? They at last have found a contentment and rest and security on this earth, that could never be dreamed of. It is the Land of Beulah - Beulah is Hebrew for marriage - the land of marriage to Christ the Bridegroom. It is the fertile, messianic age. Beulah in Isaiah 62 v 4 ff expresses the closeness of relationship between Zion and her sons. It is the fulfilling of our relationship with God through Christ, as a marriage cf. 'as the Bridegroom to his chosen' (John Tauler, tr. Emma Bevan.)

However, before they reach the 'main course', the pilgrims have to take a dose of 'Cod Liver Oil'. After a 'season' - long while in the Land of Beulah, they make for the city, but they have first to cross the river. In this final part of the journey they are accompanied by angels, but they have to cross the river alone. The river is Death, and dying. Everybody has to pass through death, with three exceptions - Enoch, Elijah, and those people who are still alive when Christ returns to earth (1 Corinthians 15 v 51 f).

Faced with death the Pilgrims look for an alternative, but there is none. So they plunge into the river. We are told that death can be traversed easily, or less easily, depending on our faith. Two thoughts here come to mind:

1) The story of Jesus walking on the water and Peter coming to him (Matthew 14 v 22-33) when Peter saw the wind, he was afraid and began to sink (v 30). This was what happened to Christian. His old fears and doubts rose up again at the last, and he began to sink in them. He begins to doubt the existence of 'the City'. Then he begins to think his sins will turn him away from the city; then he is

plagued by devils and hobgoblins etc. In other words he relives all the doubts and troubles of his life. He quotes lit Psalm 18 v 4 'the sorrows of death have compassed me about'.

Hopeful, however, again lives up to his name, He still has the city in sight, With Hopeful's encouragement, Christian again, as in Doubting Castle, at last takes hold of the promises of God in Jesus Christ - Isaiah 43 v 2. With Christ before them, the temptations and fear disappear,

2) The Crossing of the Jordan river into the Promised Land, The Israelites crossed on dry land, because the river stopped flowing. The Pilgrims find firm ground to walk upon. They have a real foundation for their faith cf. the Parable of the house builders (Matthew 7 v 24 - 27.) The quotation from Psalm 73, indicates that the righteous have no fear of losing their footing the Pilgrims are righteous through Christ.

Across the river, they have left their mortal life behind, have come through death, and are accompanied by angels, saints and martyrs to the gate of the city. These surround them and hence protect them, as they take them (literal].y) up to the city. They discuss the joys of the heavenly or Celestial city on their journey, which is now easy, because they are out of the realms of time and space, and the world and all that attends it.

At the gate the final test takes place. The pilgrims have come through all other tests, but now even after death there is one more. Do they have the 'certificates' or 'scrolls'. These, remember, represented their guarantee of salvation, the Holy Spirit, The final test is not of their faithfulness, or worthiness, but of their faith. It is not whether they have won or lost battles, or fallen prey to temptation, but whether they have real faith in Jesus Christ, and have given their lives to Him, They have the 'Truth' (cf. Colossians 1; 1 Timothy 4 v 3) The Key to opening these gates is obedience to Christ. They are let in.

But the story does not end here. It ends with Ignorance who has managed to cross the river of Death, with great confidence and hope, but all in vain, for he has no real faith, and commitment and obedience to Christ. He is not known by the 'King', and so he is taken away, and thrown into Hell. This is the final warning to Bunyan's readers, that unless they truly believe in Christ, then even if they have a hope, it is not sufficient, for salvation comes through no other than Christ.

But for those who have faith, then they share the joys of eternal life in the Celestial City, These joys are inexpressible because they are beyond this world 'Oh, by what tongue or pen can their glorious joy be expressed!' Yet he does tell us something of the celestial city, taken mainly from Revelation:

- 1) City of Gold, paved with gold, with pearls at the gates (Revelation 21.)
- 2) It is a city set high - the mountain of the North - Zion.
- 3) It is the place of reward and comfort.
- 4) It is a place where the pilgrims are Kings and princes (wear the crown of life.)
- 5) It is the place of continual worship of God.
- 6) It is the place of listening to and seeing and being with God.
- 7) It is the place of reconciliation and reunion of 'the saints'.
- 8) It is the place of the messianic supper, or marriage feast of the lamb - true fellowship with Christ.

From the Celestial city, the saints reign with Christ, share in the second coming, and in the judgement of the world.

In short, it is the final place of rest. Throughout the pilgrimage we have had glimpses of the city, of reward and refreshment (the meadow), of joy and companionship and fellowship (Palace Beautiful). Christian has glimpsed the victory of Christ, and has beaten the adversaries (Apollyon etc), and now it all comes to fruition and fulfilment.

It is simply the story of every Christian, in his life and his struggles, leading from his conversion, to his commitment to Christ; through the trials and agonies of life, to a real deep commitment to Christ, living in his presence and peace, to finally the joy of eternal life, having passed through death.

Christian is the 'Hero', yet a very fallible hero. He needs Faithful and Hopeful, as his companions along the way. They encourage him in his faith and his determination. We too need the same as Christian, for we are so much like him. We need the conviction of sin. We need our faith in Christ. We need to be fully committed to Christ, and rest in the strength of God. We need 'to battle' throughout our lives against the temptations and evil from without and within. And we need to always keep before us the promises of God, being faithful to Him, and resting in the hope of Christ our Saviour.

## Appendix

To date the Old Testament, we have to start at a fixed historical date of the fall of Jerusalem, and the exile in Babylon, This has always been dated as 587/6 B.C. From here we need to work back. The books of Kings and Chronicles, list the length of reigns of the Kings of Israel and Judah, which take us back to Saul. Modern Chronology puts Saul's reign beginning at about 1020 B.C. Other authorities put it variously up to 1119 B.C.

From Saul, we go back through the Judges and wanderings to the Exodus period. This is difficult to estimate, and there are no reliable comparisons in Near Eastern History. The Exodus has been estimated anywhere between 1250 B.C. and 1515 B.C.

From here the ages of the Patriarchs, and the ante-delusion Patriarchs, Adam and his sons, found in Genesis, can be added up to give us a Biblical date of the creation of the world.

However, there are discrepancies between the Hebrew Old Testament and the Greek, and also variations in the Old Testament data itself. Below is a table showing the various dates:

Destruction of temple	586/7 B.C.	
Beginning of Solomon's reign	1039 B.C.	
Fourth year of Solomon's reign	1035 B.C.	
1 Kings 6 v 1 – Exodus to building of the temple	480 years	
Therefore, Exodus	1515 B.C.	
Genesis 15 v 13 – Sojourn in Egypt =	400 years	
Exodus 12 v 40 – Sojourn in Egypt	430 years	
(difference hereafter shown in brackets)		
Therefore, descent into Egypt	1915 B.C.	(1945)
Jacob died at 147 years, and spent 17 years in Egypt (Genesis 47 v 28) so 130 years before descent		
Birth of Jacob, born when Isaac was 60 yrs (Genesis 25 v 26)	2045 B.C.	(2075)
Birth of Isaac, born when Abraham was 100 yrs (Genesis 21 v 5)	2105 B.C.	(2135)
Birth of Abraham	2205 B.C.	(2235)

	Hebrew	Septuagint
Flood to birth of Abraham	352	1072
Noah to flood	600	600
Adam to Noah	1056	1662
Total	2008	3334
Date of Creation	4213 (4243)	5539 (5569)

Vanity Fair = 5000 years = 5000 – 1670 = 3330 B.C. – the flood