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Bunyan, John, 1628-1688.

Grace abounding to the chief  
of sinners



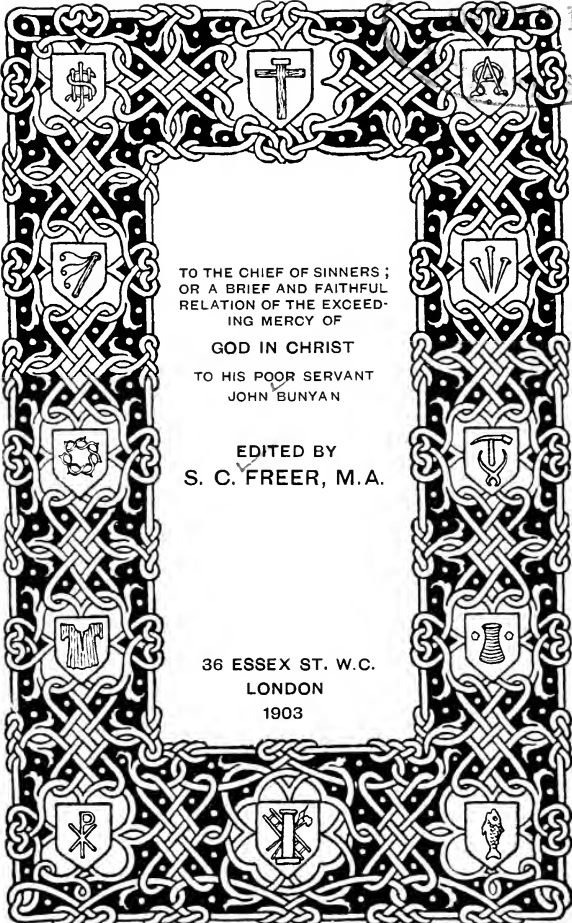






1913

SEMINA



TO THE CHIEF OF SINNERS ;  
OR A BRIEF AND FAITHFUL  
RELATION OF THE EXCEED-  
ING MERCY OF

GOD IN CHRIST

TO HIS POOR SERVANT  
JOHN BUNYAN

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# CONTENTS

## INTRODUCTION

	PAGE
I. CONCERNING CERTAIN EDITIONS OF "GRACE ABOUNDING" . . . . .	vii
II. OF THE LIFE OF JOHN BUNYAN . . . . .	x
III. NOTES TO INTRODUCTION . . . . .	xxxix

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AUTHOR'S PREFACE . . . . .	i
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## GRACE ABOUNDING

I. RELATION OF THE EXCEEDING MERCY OF GOD IN CHRIST TO HIS POOR SERVANT JOHN BUNYAN. Sections 1-264 . . . . .	7
II. ACCOUNT OF THE AUTHOR'S CALL TO THE WORK OF THE MINISTRY. Sections 265- 317 . . . . .	139
III. ACCOUNT OF THE AUTHOR'S IMPRISONMENT. Sections 318-339 . . . . .	161
IV. CONCLUSION . . . . .	173
<i>a</i>	v

## APPENDICES—

	PAGE
(1) Bunyan's view of Election . . .	177
(2) A brief character of Mr John Bunyan	179
(3) A catalogue of certain copies of seven- teenth century editions of Bunyan's Works. By James Backhouse .	180
(4) Consideration of Bunyan's share in the Great Rebellion .	186

# INTRODUCTION

## I

### CONCERNING CERTAIN EDITIONS OF "GRACE ABOUNDING"

THE first edition of "Grace Abounding" was published in 1666, the sixth year of Bunyan's first imprisonment in Bedford gaol. It was issued by George Larkin, London, in a well printed octavo. Only one copy is known to survive. This was acquired by the British Museum in 1883. The first edition omitted some of the most characteristic personal details of Bunyan's life which are to be found in the sixth edition published by him in duodecimo in 1688, the year of his death. As no copy of any edition between the first and the sixth is known to survive, it is uncertain whether these additional touches were added by Bunyan for the first time in the sixth edition. The first edition of "Grace Abounding" that appeared after Bunyan's death was produced in 1692.

In this appears "a continuation of Mr Bunyan's life," added by one who describes himself as a "true friend and long acquaintance of Mr Bunyan." In this edition is also included "a brief character of John Bunyan," which seems to be by the same hand. The text of the present edition is substantially the same as the first complete work published in 1688. Spelling and typography have been slightly modernised, but no changes of importance have been introduced. In the sixth edition all quotations from Holy Scripture are followed by the references to the chapters and verses of the Books from which they are taken. As Bunyan's spiritual difficulties turn so largely upon his interpretation of Scripture, it has been thought advisable to adopt this practice in the present work. An appendix is given discussing Bunyan's view of Election and Reprobation; also one containing the "Brief Character" which appeared for the first time in 1692. There is also added a catalogue of known copies of seventeenth century editions of Bunyan's works which can be found in the public libraries of the British Museum, the Bodleian, Bedford, the library of the Dean and Chapter of York Minster, and the Lenox Library, New York; and in the large private

collections of J. Backhouse, Esq., Harrogate, and Dr Huth, London. For this catalogue the Editor has to thank Mr Backhouse, as well as for other kind assistance. Some additions have been made to this list of copies which are to be found in the Libraries of Cambridge University; Trinity College, Cambridge; the Guild Hall, London; and the Signet Library, Edinburgh; for which the Editor has to thank the Librarians of these Institutions. In the appendix is also added a consideration of the much disputed question of Bunyan's share in the military operations of the Great Rebellion, alluded to in "Grace Abounding."

"This book, being little, may best suit such as have but shallow purses, short memories, and but little time to spare" (Bunyan). For the most exhaustive work on the subject, the student of Bunyan is referred to the volume on his life by Rev. J. Brown, D.D., to whom the Editor desires to express his deep obligation.

## II

## OF THE LIFE OF JOHN BUNYAN

THE story of Bunyan's life has been told by distinguished men; by Southey, by Lord Macaulay, by Professor J. A. Froude, and with all the incident and local colouring that can be derived from painstaking investigation and accurate research, by his successor in his pulpit, Rev. J. Brown, D.D. Yet never has it been told so graphically as by himself. His narrative is sadly incomplete, but it is one that men will not easily let die.

He was born of poor parents at Elstow, a village near Bedford, in 1628. He says, "My descent was of a low and inconsiderable generation, my father's house being of that rank that is meanest and most despised of all families in the land." "I never went to school to Aristotle or Plato, but was brought up in my father's house in a very mean condition, among a company of poor countrymen." The Bunyan family had indeed held property in the district for many generations. From the year 1199 onwards the name occurs in many documents and registers, in which Dr Brown tells us it is spelled in thirty-four different ways. But

as in the case of too many yeoman families, the Bunyan property had diminished bit by bit. John Bunyan's father held little but the ancestral name. He was of the "national religion," a point of some importance with reference to a disputed incident in his son's career. Though poor, he was "very careful to maintain his family," and sent his son John to the Grammar School at Bedford, where he "learnt to read and write, according to the rate of other poor men's children." His father, however, like the father of St Augustine, while appreciating the value of the education given in school, seems to have exercised little personal supervision over the moral training of his son. Conscience-smitten once in later years, Bunyan says, "I stood there, and hanging down my head, I wished with all my heart that I might be a little child again, that my father might learn me to speak without this wicked way of swearing." His mother died before he was sixteen.

This lack of good home influence was not without its effect upon the lad. The bad habits he contracted in those early years were subsequently the occasion of most keen remorse. He tells that even in childhood he had few equals for "cursing, swearing, lying and blaspheming the Holy Name of God," and that these

things became a "second nature to him." Yet it is evident that even in these early years he was not without strange and menacing conceptions of religion. He was often greatly troubled at the thought of the Day of Judgment, and trembled as he pictured to himself the torments of hell fire. Sometimes the child (for he was but nine or ten years of age at this time) was so overcome with despair of Heaven that he would wish, either that there had been no hell, or that he had been a devil—"supposing that devils were only tormentors, and that if it must needs be that he indeed went thither, he might be rather a tormentor than be tormented himself." As he grew bigger these terrible dreams and apprehensions left him. For a time even the very thought of religion became grievous to him. He could "neither endure it himself, nor that any one else should." He became the ringleader of the youths that kept him company "in all manner of vice and ungodliness." It is clear, however, that even at this time Bunyan was not altogether without a certain sense of the obligations of sincere Christian living. Even in his wildest days, if he saw wicked things done by those who professed goodness, it would "make his spirit tremble." Once hearing one swear, that was accounted a religious man, he



says "it had so great a stroke upon my spirit, it made my heart ache." It appears too that he was preserved from some of the grosser forms of sin. He seems never to have been guilty of drunkenness, and certainly never of unchastity. He could feel in later life that even in these years, God had not left Himself without a witness to him. Nay, he believed, that God had mercifully interposed, twice to save him from drowning, once from a viper's "sting," and once from the perils of a siege.

The real beginning of the drama of Bunyan's spiritual life may be said to have been determined by his early marriage at the age of nineteen. "My mercy was to light upon a wife whose Father was counted godly. This woman and I came together as poor as poor as might be. . . . Yet she had this for her part, 'The plain man's Pathway to Heaven,' and 'The Practice of Piety,' which her Father had left her when he died." These books Bunyan sometimes read with her, and though they "did not reach his heart to awaken it about his sad and sinful state, they did beget within him some desires to Religion." At this time, therefore, he not only began to join heartily and regularly in the services of the parish church, but even revered extravagantly everything connected with

them. Yet "he retained his sins." When a sermon preached by the Vicar against sports and games on Sunday seemed specially addressed to him, he was momentarily impressed, but soon made up his mind to continue them. The same afternoon, however, as he was in the midst of his game, a heavenly admonition seemed to speak aloud to him, "Wilt thou leave thy sins and go to Heaven, or have thy sins and go to Hell?" At this he was "put to an exceeding maze." He was miserable if he left his sins, and but miserable if he followed them. His conclusion was, "I can be but damned, and if it must be so, I had as good be damned for many sins, as be damned for few." So he "returned desperately to his sport again." For a month or more he went on in a reckless frame of mind. One day as he was standing at a shop window, cursing and swearing and playing the madman, after his wonted manner, he was rebuked by the "ungodly" mistress of the house, as one who would "spoil all the youth of the whole town." He was conscience-stricken at a rebuke from such a quarter. From that day he left off swearing. Yet he knew not Jesus Christ. He continued in his sports and play. A leaven, however, was at work. Soon after this he "fell in company with a poor man

that made profession of religion, and talked pleasantly of the Scriptures." Through this man's influence Bunyan betook himself to the study of the Bible, and began to "take great pleasure in reading it, especially the Historical parts; for as for St Paul's Epistles and Scriptures of that nature he could not away with them." And so, he tells us, "I fell to some outward reformation both in my words and life, and did set the commandments before me for my way to Heaven, which commandments I also did strive to keep, and, as I thought, did keep them pretty well sometimes, and then I should have comfort: yet now and then I should break one, and so afflict my conscience; but then I should repent, and say I was sorry for it, and promise God to do better next time, and then get help again; for then I thought that I pleased God as well as any man in England." Thus he continued about a year. Meanwhile his neighbours took him to be "a very godly man, a new and religious man, and did marvel much to see such a great and famous alteration in his life and manners." And truly, he says, "so they well might; for this my conversion was as great, as for Tom of Bedlam to become a sober man." Temptations were not wanting. He had a very characteristic struggle to give up

the ringing of the church bells. His dancing began to trouble him. It was fully a year before he could make up his mind to give up that. But, on the whole, progress was steadily made in "external righteousness." Yet he felt afterwards that all this while "he knew not Christ, nor grace, nor faith, nor hope; and had he died then, his state had been most fearful."

The greatest turning-point in John Bunyan's life was yet to come. It came when "the Good Providence of God" took him to Bedford, and he met there "three or four poor women sitting at a door in the sun, talking about the things of God." They were talking of the new birth, the work of God upon their hearts, the comfort of the love of the Lord Jesus in their souls. They told how they abhorred their own righteousness, and spoke of God's very present help in temptation and in trial. And Bunyan adds, "Methought they spake, as if Joy did make them speak." It was a complete revelation to the soul of Bunyan, though already "a brisk talker" in matters of religion. Its first effect was to establish in him a great sense of humility and self-distrust. Yet his heart was greatly attracted by their words. Again and again he went into their company. He shook off his acquaintance with a wild young man to

whom his heart had been more knit than to any other. He gave up the company of the "poor religious man," who had become "a most devilish ranter," and had given himself up to "all manner of filthiness." He betook himself in a new spirit to prayer and to the constant study of the Holy Scriptures. He read them with "new eyes." He now found the Epistles of St Paul especially sweet and pleasant to him. He was, however, greatly troubled with his want of knowledge and instruction in them. "What was faith, and how was he to know if he had got it?" He felt himself "an ignorant sot," with no standard for a decision. One day he was tempted to think there was no way to tell if he had faith, but by working a miracle. He would say to the puddles, "Be dry," and to the dry places, "Be you the puddles." The risk, however, he felt to be too great. If he failed to work the miracle, he had no faith, and so was lost.

Then strange picturesque visions of the state of his new friends and of his own position came to him, and on the whole presented comfort. But half-grasped truths of technical theology soon intervened and dashed it. "Am I elected?" "How if the Day of Grace be passed and gone?" These troubled him, not as ques-

tions of a mere academic interest, but as full of most fearful personal import. A text in the Apocrypha suggested comfort. The discovery that it was not in the Canonical Scriptures daunted him. Soon the old question came back embittered. The struggle lasted long. Conferences with the Baptist Pastor at Bedford, Mr Gifford, brought some little light and help to him. Again he felt old hankerings and temptations. Yet as to the act of sinning he was almost morbidly conscience-stricken. He could "hardly tell how to speak his words for fear he should misplace them." He felt more loathsome in his own eyes than was a toad. He thought he was a reprobate from God, and given over to damnation. "Thus I continued a long while, even for some years." At last a sermon on Christ's love produced a few weeks' calm. After that a new storm shook him. Thoughts of rank infidelity, of wild blasphemy surged over him. He could have "leapt head downwards into a muckhill hole to prevent the words escaping him." He envied now the condition of dog, or horse or toad, that had no soul to perish under the everlasting weight of hell and sin, as his was like to do. He thought he must be possessed with the devil. This temptation lasted about a year, and during it, he could not even attend upon the

ordinances of God but with sore and great affliction. In prayer too he was greatly troubled. He thought he should see the devil. He felt him pull his clothes. He heard him whispering. He thought God mocked at him. When sweet words of gracious texts came to him, like Peter's sheet, of a sudden they were caught up from him into Heaven again. Yet some blessed promises seemed to stay with him. Mr Gifford was again a help to him. The former and the latter rain once more descended on him. His faith returned. Overjoyed at the removal of the overmastering strain, he wished he were fourscore years old, so that he might die quickly, and that his soul might go to rest.

A copy of the Commentary on the Epistle to Galatians by Martin Luther, "so old it was ready to fall piece from piece, if he did but turn it over," came into his hands. He preferred this book (excepting the Holy Bible) before all the books that ever he had seen, as most fit for a wounded conscience. He felt he knew at last the fulness of the Love of Christ.

Yet the tempter came upon him again, and that with a more grievous and dreadful temptation than before. This temptation was to "*Sell Christ*; to sell and part with this most blessed Christ, to exchange Him for the things of this

life, for anything." This temptation lay upon him for a year, and followed him so continually that he was not rid of it one day in a month, nor sometimes one hour in many days together, unless when he was asleep. He says of it, "It was neither my dislike of the thought, nor yet any desire and endeavour to resist it, that in the least did shake or abate the continuation or force or strength thereof; for it did always, in almost whatever I thought, intermix itself therewith, in such sort that I could neither eat my food, stoop for a pin, chop a stick, or cast mine eye to look on this or that, but still the temptation would come, Sell Christ for this, or sell Christ for that, sell Him, sell Him." The worst was yet to come. Overpowered by the unceasing struggle, one morning in bed, he felt the thought pass through his heart, "Let Him go if He will." This was the greatest blow that had yet befallen him. He staggered from his bed, and went off moping into a field, and for two hours remained there like a man half dead—beyond recovery doomed to eternal death. He felt that like Esau he had sold his birthright, and that there was no place of repentance for him. His sin was point blank against his Saviour. For two whole years he continued in this state believing himself guilty of the unpardonable sin, with nothing but ever-



lasting damnation as his final fate. At last about eleven or twelve o'clock one day, the words, "The Blood of Christ remits all guilt," bolted in upon his mind. At this he made a stand. The words took hold of him. For two or three hours he felt encouraged. He at least could begin again to reason and ponder on the mercies of God. He considered the cases of the sinners of the Old and New Testaments, but seemed to find his own case worse than all. At last he gained some little relief because his sin might not be as bad as that of Judas Iscariot. His own was not deliberately intentioned and premeditated, but against his earnest prayers. Then doubts returned, this time as to the reality of sins and judgment. But the very reality of his fears and dread repelled them. Still he felt such agonies as if his breast would split asunder. The Lord had set the mark of Cain upon him. Masterless hell-hounds seemed to roar and bellow and make a hideous noise within him. Yet even now voices seemed to cry aloud behind him, "Return, Return." He, as it were, looked over his shoulder to see if he could discover that the God of Grace did follow him with a pardon in His Hand. "The clouds returned after the rain." Yet he no longer felt himself entirely deserted. A voice came to him: "Didst ever refuse to be justified by the Blood

of Christ?" It was as the visitation of an angel. Twenty years afterwards he felt it was a mystery only to be solved at the Day of Judgment. It brought great calm to him. It gave him hope. Yet still "his life hung in doubt before him, not knowing which way he should tip." The Devil still tempted him. He seemed to urge, "It is no good for such as you to pray." Yet he decided that even if he were to be cut off by God's immediate judgment, it were well that of such an one it were said, "He died at the foot of Christ in prayer." And so he prayed and sought the prayers of others. He consulted an ancient Christian, and told him he thought he had committed the sin against the Holy Ghost. The old man said he thought so to. Unhelped by man, he fled again to God. Though tossed again and again by spiritual tempest he regained a firm belief in the Holy Scriptures as the Word of God.

One day as he was sitting on a settle in the street, a voice again spake to him: "This sin is not unto death." Next evening, in answer to an "exceeding bitter cry," came back the words, "I have loved thee with an everlasting Love." He went to bed in quiet. Also when he awaked the next morning, it was fresh upon his soul, and he believed it. This was the beginning

of the long awaited end. The struggle was not over. It could not be so little, he says, as a hundred times that day, that the tempter laboured to break his peace. He was up and down twenty times in an hour. Yet God did still uphold him for several days together with very much sweetness, and comfortable hopes of pardon.

Though the day be never so long,  
At length it cometh to evensong.

The sky indeed was far from clear as yet. The storm was even often to buffet him. Yet with a thankful heart he could write of this period in after years, "Thus was my soul at this time (and as I then did think, for ever) set at liberty from being afflicted with my former guilt and amazement." It was not, however, at once that he felt the full assurance of perfect peace and pardon. Sometimes the promises of pardon and sentences of judgment in Holy Scripture arrayed themselves on opposite sides in his heart and brain, like serried hosts at the battle of Armageddon. At times the arms uplifted sank down, and the enemy appeared to triumph over him; and many a terse and nervous phrase expresses his temporary defeat or hardly won victory.

*But the end is now in sight.* "There now remained only the hinder part of the tempest, for the thunder was gone beyond me, only some drops did still remain, that now and then would fall upon me." Even these soon ceased. One day, as he was in a field, this sentence fell upon him, "Thy Righteousness is in Heaven." It was accompanied with a heavenly vision. He "saw with the eyes of his soul Jesus Christ at the Right Hand of God." His chains fell off his legs. His temptations fled away. From that time those dreadful Scriptures of God ceased to trouble him. "Christ, Christ, there was nothing but Christ before my eyes. Now Christ was all; all my wisdom, all my righteousness, all my sanctification, all my redemption. I was joined to Him. . . . Now I could see myself in Heaven and Earth at once; in Heaven by my Christ, by my Head, by my Righteousness, and Life, though on Earth, by my body or person."

The second part of "Grace Abounding" is devoted to a brief account of Bunyan's ministry from 1655 to 1660, at which date his first imprisonment began. He addresses himself especially to those "whom God hath counted him worthy to beget to faith, by his ministry in the Word." To them he had dedicated his

book. He tells them it was not until five or six years after his soul was awakened and helped to see the want and worth of Jesus Christ that he began to preach. It was with much diffidence and humility that he yielded to the earnest appeals of trusted friends. Even then it was only in private assemblies with his friends that he ventured to speak. Soon, however, being "desired by the Church," he was set apart for more regular ministrations, with solemn prayer and fasting. It was with great fear and trembling at the thought of his own weakness, he began his public ministry. As he preached, the hunger of souls grew in him. He yearned with love and pity that he might "lay hold of, and awaken the consciences" of his hearers. There were hearts that responded to him, and he felt "the blessing of them that were ready to perish is come upon me." He rejoiced to remember the words, "The Seal of mine apostleship are ye in the Lord."

These things were as an argument that God had called him to, and stood by him in, his work. His first great longing was to awaken the sense of conviction of sin. His own past struggles here stood him in good stead. He felt he was as one sent to them from the dead. He went himself in chains to preach to them in

chains. He carried in his own conscience that fire that he persuaded them to beware of. Thus he went on for some two years, crying out against men's sins, and their fearful state because of them. Then the Lord came to him with Peace and Grace and Comfort to his soul. He altered in his preaching, for still "he preached what he saw and felt." He "laboured to hold forth Jesus Christ in all His offices and relations and benefits to the world."

He seemed sometimes while speaking to have an angel behind him, strengthening him. These truths likewise he preached for some two years. He then felt himself led into deep thoughts of the mystery of the Union with Christ. After he had discovered this truth to his hearers for about a year, he was cast into prison, "to confirm the Truth by way of Suffering." In looking back upon this ministry from his cell in prison, he noticed that when he had had a work to do for God in any place, he had had first, as it were, the "Going of God upon his spirit" to desire he might preach there. He observed that such and such souls in particular had been strongly set upon his heart, and that he had been stirred up to wish for their salvation; and that these very souls had after

this been given him as the fruits of his ministry. In his preaching too, he had really been "in pain," and had travailed to bring forth children to God. He counted as if he had goodly buildings and lordships in those places where his children were born. When any awakened by his ministry fell away he felt, as he could say truly, their loss was more to him than if one of his own children had been going to its grave. He had his moments of spiritual dryness, and, even in the pulpit, of violent temptations. It is noticeable that while strongly asserting his right to use his "*Gifts*" in God's service, the temptations to spiritual pride, and vanity in his powers, seem to have been among the least of them. He indignantly repelled slanders on his moral character, and yet he felt he ought to rejoice in bearing reproaches for Christ's sake. He meddled little in controversy on minor points, though his two earliest books, published in 1656 and 1657, were upon controversial lines, contending against the Quakers, for what he felt to be cardinal points of the faith once delivered to the saints. It was not, however, upon controversial lines that he felt his call had come. His great desire was to get into the dark places of the country. He felt "his spirit did lean most after awakening and converting work,

and that the Word he carried did lean itself most that way also. In his "Author's Preface" he had bidden his readers "remember the Word that had first laid hold of them; their terror of conscience, and fear of Death and Hell; their tears and prayers to God." "Have you forgot the close, the milk-house, the stable, the barn and the like, where God did visit your souls?" But now, writing to them in prison, he can add words which should encourage them, and stir them up to bless God, should his case ever be their own. He had indeed met with many turnings and goings in his soul, yet he says he "never had in all his life so great an inlet into the Word of God as in this imprisonment. Never had Jesus Christ been more real and apparent to him. Here he has seen and felt Him indeed. He has had sweet sights of the forgiveness of his sins in this place, and of his being with Jesus in another world. He has seen that which, he is persuaded, he shall never, while in this world, be able to express. He has seen a truth in the Scripture, 'Whom, having not seen, ye love; in Whom, though now ye see Him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory.'" Yet the victory was not won without heavy cost. The last part of "Grace Abounding," which



gives a brief account of Bunyan's first imprisonment, shows us how the iron entered into his soul. At first he was greatly cast down. Despite the comforting promises of the Word of God he felt himself a man compassed with infirmities. The parting with his wife and children was to him like the pulling the flesh from his bones. He mourned especially the possible fate of his poor blind child. When he thought of the hardships, miseries and wants his poor blind one might undergo, it was like to "break his heart to pieces." For many weeks too when he was a "young prisoner," he found it hard to bear the thought that his imprisonment might end at the gallows. The thought came with a sense of spiritual desertion. "How if when you come to die you should not have any evidence upon your soul for a better state hereafter?" The things of God were hidden. He felt not fit to die. Yet his fears were not for himself alone. He was afraid lest, with quaking or other symptoms of fainting, he should give occasion to the enemy to reproach the way of God and His people for their timorousness. He was ashamed to die with a pale face and tottering knees for such a cause as this.

At this time he was so possessed with the

idea that he would be put to death, that he often felt as if he were actually on the ladder, with the rope round his neck. His only comfort was that he might then have an opportunity to speak his last words to the multitude that would come to see him die. If God willed that he might convert one soul by his last words, he would not count his life thrown away nor lost. Yet all this time the blessed assurance of Christ's presence with him, which was to be his, had not come. He could not believe his own eternal future to be secure. He felt his feet, however, on firm ground in the thought that it was for the Word and Way of God that he was there in that condition, and that he was therefore engaged not to flinch an hair's breadth from it. It was his duty to stand by God's words, whether God ever looked upon him, or saved him at the last or not. He would go on whether he had comfort here or not. "If God doth not come in, thought I, I will leap off the ladder even blindfold into Eternity, sink or swim, come Heaven, come Hell; Lord Jesus, if Thou wilt catch me, do; if not, I will venture for Thy Name." The decision once made, light seemed once more to shine upon his soul. His heart was "full of comfort." He adds, "many more of the dealings of God towards me, I

might relate, but these, *out of the spoils won in battle, have I dedicated to maintain the House of God.*"

During his imprisonment John Bunyan had to work for his own maintenance and that of his wife and four young children. His first wife was dead. His young second wife to whom he had only been married two years at the time he was imprisoned, had appeared before his Judges, and bravely but fruitlessly pleaded for him, though she seems to have excited the pity of Sir Matthew Hale. Yet with her own babe but a few months old, she could do but little for the family maintenance. Dr Brown notes, however, that in a collection of seven shillings made in St Cuthbert's parish at Bedford in 1670 for the "poor enslaved English Christians cap(tured) in Algiers," Bunyan's name appears as contributing sixpence. His literary activity from 1660 to 1666 appears to have been great. No less than nine works appeared during this period, including "The Holy City," and "Grace Abounding." He spent much time also in comforting and exhorting those who were with him in prison. A passage in "The Holy City" (published 1665) gives us an insight into the way these two tasks blended themselves together. He says, "Upon a certain first day, I being

together with my brethren in our prison chamber, they expected that according to custom, something should be spoken out of the Word for our mutual edification; but at that time I felt myself, it being my turn to speak, so empty, spiritless and barren, that I thought I should not have been able to speak among them so much as five words of truth with life and evidence." Then suddenly he seemed to see in the chapter before him "something of that jasper in whose light you there find this Holy City is said to come or descend." "I did carry my meditations to the Lord Jesus for a blessing, which He did forthwith grant according to His Grace; and helping me to set before my brethren, we did all eat and were well refreshed, and behold, also, that while I was in the distributing of it, it so increased in my hand that of the fragments that we left, after we had well dined, I gathered up this basketful." (*Vide* Dr Brown, *op. cit.* p. 178.)

The later days of Bunyan's life do not come within the compass of this book. It is only needful to say that after six years of imprisonment, he had a brief respite in 1666. After a few weeks' freedom, he was again thrown into prison, where he remained for six years more. During this period his literary activity almost

ceased. The Declaration of Religious Indulgence by Royal Proclamation in 1672 set him free. From 1672 to 1675 he ministered as the Pastor of the Bedford congregation. In 1675 it seems that he was in prison again. It was a short imprisonment but very memorable. It witnessed the writing of two-thirds of the first part of "Pilgrim's Progress."

The release of Bunyan on this occasion was due in part at least to the initiative of Dr Barlow, Bishop of Lincoln, through the influence brought to bear on him by Dr Owen, the Nonconformist Divine. It took place probably in the summer of 1676. The first part of "Pilgrim's Progress" was published by Nathanael Ponder in 1678. In the same year appeared "Come and Welcome to Jesus Christ," a discourse on St John vi. 37. His reputation had already spread to London. The announcement of the preaching of "Bishop Bunyan" always drew great crowds. More attractive spheres of work, with more ample remuneration were urged upon him. His reply to these was, "I dwell among mine own people." In 1682 he published the "Holy War." The second part of "Pilgrim's Progress" appeared in 1685. His last work prepared for publication in his lifetime was

called "The Acceptable Sacrifice." It contained these words: "The broken heart is hard to bear, for soul pain is the sorest pain. . . . It is wounding work of course, this breaking of the hearts, but without wounding there is no saving. Conversion is not the smooth, easy-going process some men seem to think it, otherwise man's heart would never have been compared to fallow ground, and God's Word to a plough. The fallow ground must be ploughed and ploughed, and even after that be soundly harrowed, else there will be but slender harvest." (*Vide* Dr Brown, *op. cit.* p. 389.)

Bunyan's last sermon was preached in Whitechapel on the text St John i. 13. It was delivered less than a fortnight before his death. Notes of it were taken by one in the congregation. The words were not unworthy of "Bishop Bunyan." "Dost thou see a soul that has the image of God in him? Love him, love him: say, this man and I must go to Heaven one day; serve one another; and if any one wrong you, pray to God to right you, and love the Brotherhood."

His last words in the sermon were, "Be ye holy in all manner of conversation. Consider that the Holy God is your Father, and let this oblige you to live like the

children of God, that you may look your Father in the face with comfort another day." (*Vide* Dr Brown, *op. cit.* p. 388.)

Before the sheets of "The Acceptable Sacrifice" were through the press, a violent chill, caught by exposure to heavy rains on a drive of forty miles, undertaken to reconcile the quarrel of a father and his son, brought on a serious fever. "Worn out with sufferings and age, and his often teaching, after ten days' illness, during which he bore his sufferings with much constancy and patience," and "desiring nothing more than to be with Christ," at the age of sixty, on August 31st, he died. He was buried in the cemetery of Bunhill Fields.

"Then he departed poor and stricken in years,  
And if the world could know the heart he had,  
In begging bit by bit his livelihood,  
Though it much laud him, it would laud him more."  
Dante, *Paradiso*, vi. 139, trans. Longfellow.

His voice, however, was not yet stilled. Several posthumous works were published, for love of him, by Charles Doe, a London Comb Maker, in 1692. Bunyan's own approbation of the undertaking had been given before his death. One is a sermon on 2 Tim. iv. 6-8, called "Paul's departure and crown." It is on the

true "offering up" of the Believer. Another is a sermon on Ps. cxxx. 7, entitled "Israel's Hope encouraged." It is on faith and hope. "Fly thou to Christ for life, and remember humbly thy sins. . . . He that will keep water in a sieve, must use more than ordinary diligence. Our heart is the leaky vessel, and therefore we ought to give the more earnest heed to the things which we have heard, lest at any time we should let them slip." (*Vide* Dr Brown, *op. cit.* ch. xviii.) The reader that has followed us thus far in this slight sketch of "Grace Abounding," will have already felt that he is dealing with no ordinary work. It is, in fact, one that belongs to that small class of books which reveal the "*vie intime*," of which the world contains perhaps but five or six. If any one wishes to estimate the real spiritual rank of this little book, he must place it side by side with the "Meditations of Marcus Aurelius," with the "Confessions of St Augustine," and with the "De Imitatione Christi" of St Thomas à Kempis.

It may, at first sight, seem strange to compare the untutored outpourings of the "village braseyer" with the wise and sane thoughts of the Roman Emperor, educated in the best knowledge of his time, and with his world-wide



outlook upon men and things. It may seem hardly more natural to compare the "local preacher's" incomplete record of his life and work with the experiences of the brilliant young student of Rhetoric, who, if the son of a poor North African freeman, yet as St Augustine has affected immeasurably for more than a millennium and a half the life and thought of Christendom. The religious experiences of the seventeenth century convert to Puritanism may seem little likely to correspond to the musings and aspirations that struggled to birth and light in the cell of the solitary mediæval monk.

Yet if we look into the calm depths of the *anima naturaliter Christiana* of the Stoic Emperor, and into the more storm-tossed souls of these true followers of Christ, we shall not fail to find some inner harmonies. Reduced to their simplest terms, each of these little books contains a record, or rather a "faithful transcript" of the workings of a rare human soul, which, above all things truthful, is conscious both of its duties and its human frailties, and, amid all the differences of external circumstances and inward training, yet ever lives in presence of the Divine Existence and longs and wrestles for the perfecting of the interior life.

## xxxviii INTRODUCTION

A tinge of sadness and philosophic doubt may cloud at times the pure thoughts of the Author of the "Meditations," which may seem far removed in intensity from the fierce storms which shook the lives of Bunyan and St Augustine, and even of St Thomas à Kempis, in the days when for them there was "No open Vision." A mystic rapture may envelop the soul of the child of the prayers of Monica, as well as that of the imaginative contemporary of Milton, to which we can find no near parallel in the diaries of the Stoic Emperor, though in his campaigns upon the Danube he could write of the "almost sensible inspirations of Heaven," and muse of the Universe as "dear City of God." Yet as we turn over the pages of the records of these lives, beyond the outward accidents of race and class and age, we cannot help but feel that in this absolute sincerity, in this unsparring analysis of self, in this constant yearning for purity both of life and thought, there is a kindred bond of Union which springs from a Common Source. Perhaps the secret may be found in some words of St Augustine himself, "*Vera religio, quae jam erat, ab Incarnatione Christi, coepit appellari Christiana.*" "He is, where Truth is loved."

## NOTES TO INTRODUCTION

*Bunyan's Publishers.*

All the works written by John Bunyan in prison previous to the issue of "Grace Abounding" were published by Francis Smith of "The Elephant and Castle without Temple Bar." Francis Smith had the reputation of being "a disaffected Person and a Phanatick." Between 1660 and 1666 his house and business premises were frequently searched, and he himself was imprisoned four times on the charge of "printing and compiling dangerous bookes." Large quantities of books were carried away from his warehouse by the orders of the Censor, Mr L'Estrange, and were confiscated. Among these, Smith especially mentions those of "Mr Bunnyan's." This fact, mentioned by Dr Brown, appears not only to account for the change of publisher, but also throws light upon the extreme scarcity of the early editions of some of Bunyan's works. It is significant that some of the books seized under the Censor's orders were subsequently "sold to the trade."

*Details of Bunyan's Life added in the Sixth Edition.*

His escapes from death alluded to in Sections 12, 13.

His struggles to give up his bell-ringing and dancing. Sections 33-35.

The discovery of Martin Luther's commentary on the Epistle to the Galatians. Section 129.

His vehement affirmations of his personal chastity. Section 309 *et seq.*

*Bunyan's "Pedigree."*

1199. William Buniun pleaded against the Abbess of Elstow in the Court of King's Bench, with respect to the title to half a virgate of land, which he held at Wilstead, a mile from Elstow.

1257. The Prior of Dunstable bought of Almaric S. Amand land which he had of John Boynun, at Pullokeshille for 43½ marks.

1286. A payment was made to the executors of S. Amand for the fee of John Boynun, who made service for half a knight.

1327. William Boynon (living near Elstow) sold a messuage and an acre of land with the appurtenances at Elnestowe for one hundred shillings in silver.

1542. William Bonyon held freely of the King a messuage and a pightell with the appurtenances at Elnestow, and nine acres of land in the fields at Elnestow by fealty, suit of Court, and rent by the year of three shillings and a halfpenny.

1547. Thomas Bonyon was fined one penny for selling beer and bread above the rates fixed by the Manor Court. His wife was fined eleven times for the same offence. He was appointed one of the two parish constables in 1547.

1617. Thomas Bonyon of Elstow, the grandfather of the Author, who describes himself as a "pettie chapman", was "presented" to the archdeacon for calling the churchwardens of Elstow "foresworn men."

1627. The first wife of Thomas Bonyon, son of the above, died. In the same year, 23rd May, he married Margaret Bentley, John Bunyan's mother.

1628. This entry occurs among the Baptisms in the Register of Elstow Church:—

"John the Sonne of Thomas Bonnionn, Junr.  
the 30th of Novemb."

*(Vide Dr Brown, op. cit. ch. ii.)*

A

## PREFACE

Or, Brief Account of the Publishing of this *Work*. Written by the Author thereof, and dedicated to those whom GOD hath counted him worthy to beget to Faith, by his Ministry in the *Word*.

**C**HILDREN, *Grace be with you. Amen. I being taken from you in presence, and so tied up that I cannot perform that duty, that from GOD doth lie upon me to youward, for your farther edifying and building up in faith and holiness, &c. yet that you may see my soul hath fatherly care and desire after your spiritual and everlasting welfare, I now once again, as before, from the top of Shenir and Hermon, so now from the Lions' Den, and from the Mountain of the Leopards, (Song iv. 8.) do look yet after you all, greatly longing to see your safe Arrival into THE Desired Haven.*

*I thank GOD upon every remembrance of you ; and rejoyce, even while I stick between the teeth of the lions in the wilderness, that the grace and*

*mercy, and knowledge of CHRIST our Saviour, which GOD hath bestowed upon you, with abundance of faith and love; your hungering, and thirsting after farther acquaintance with the Father, in the Son; your tenderness of heart, your trembling at sin, your sober and holy deportment also, before both GOD and Men, is a great refreshment to me; for you are my glory and joy, 1 Thess. ii. 20.*

*I have sent you here inclosed, a drop of that honey that I have taken out of the carcass of a lion, Judg. xiv. 5, 6, 7, 8. I have eaten thereof myself, and am much refreshed thereby. (Temptations, when we meet them at first, are as the lion that roared upon Samson; but if we overcome them, the next time we see them, we shall find a nest of honey within them.) The Philistines understand me not. It is something of a relation of the Work of GOD upon my soul, even from the very first, till now, wherein you may perceive my castings down, and risings up; for He woundeth, and His Hands make whole. It is written in the Scripture, Isaiah xxxviii. 19, The Father to the Children shall make known the Truth of God. Yea, it was for this reason I lay so long at Sinai, Deut. iv. 10, 11, to see the fire, and the cloud, and the darkness, that I might fear the Lord all the days of my life upon earth, and tell of His wondrous works to my children, Psal. lxxviii. 3, 4, 5.*

*Moses, Numb. xxxiii. 1, 2, writ of the journeyings of the Children of Israel, from Egypt*

*to the land of Canaan; and commanded also, That they did remember their forty years' travel in the wilderness. Thou shalt remember all the ways which the Lord thy God led thee these forty years in the wilderness, to humble thee, and to prove thee, and to know what was in thine heart, whether thou wouldst keep His Commandments, or no, Deut. viii. 2, 3. Wherefore this I have endeavoured to do; and not only so, but to publish it also; that, if GOD will, others may be put in remembrance of what He hath done for their souls, by reading His Work upon me.*

*It is profitable for Christians to be often calling to mind the very beginnings of Grace with their souls. It is a night to be much observed to the Lord, for bringing them out of the land of Egypt. This is that night of the Lord to be observed of all the Children of Israel, in their generation, Exod. xii. 42. My God, saith David, Ps. xlii. 6, my soul is cast down within me; but I will remember Thee, from the land of Jordan, and of the Hermonites, from the hill Mizar. He remembered also the lion and the bear, when he went to fight with the giant of Gath, 1 Sam. xvii. 36, 37.*

*It was Paul's accustomed manner, Acts xxii. and that when tried for his life, Acts xxiv. even to open before his judges the manner of his conversion: he would think of that day, and that hour, in which he first did meet with Grace; for he found it supported him. When*

*GOD had brought the Children of Israel out of the Red Sea, far into the Wilderness, yet they must turn quite about thither again, to remember the drowning of their enemies there, Num. xiv. 25, for though they sang His praise before, yet they soon forgot His Works, Psal. cvi. 13.*

*In this discourse of mine, you may see much : much I say, of the grace of GOD, towards me : I thank GOD, I can count it much, for it was above my sins and Satan's temptations too. I can remember my fears and doubts, and sad months, with comfort ; they are as the head of Goliath in my hand. There was nothing to David like Goliath's sword, even that sword that should have been sheathed in his bowels ; for the very sight and remembrance of that did preach forth God's deliverance to him. Oh ! the remembrance of my great sins, of my great temptations, and of my great fear of perishing for ever ! They bring afresh into my mind, the remembrance of my great help, my great supports from Heaven, and the great grace that GOD extended to such a wretch as I.*

*My dear children, call to mind the former days, and years of ancient times : remember also your songs in the night, and commune with your own heart, Psal. lxxvii. 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12. Yea, look diligently, and leave no corner therein unsearched for that treasure hid, even the treasure of your first and second experience of the grace of GOD towards you. Remember, I say, the Word that first laid hold upon you :*



*Remember your terrors of conscience, and fear of death and hell: remember also your fears and prayers to GOD; yea, how you sighed under every hedge for mercy. Have you never an hill Mizar to remember? Have you forgot the close, the milk-house, the stable, the barn, and the like, where GOD did visit your souls? Remember also the Word, the Word, I say, upon which the LORD hath caused you to hope: if you have sinned against light, if you are tempted to blaspheme, if you are drowned in despair, if you think GOD fights against you, or if Heaven is hid from your eyes; remember it was thus with your father; but out of them all the Lord delivered me.*

*I could have enlarged much in this my discourse, of my temptations and troubles for sin; as also of the merciful kindness and working of GOD with my soul: I could also have stepped into a style much higher than this, in which I have here discoursed, and could have adorned all things more than here I have seemed to do, but I dare not: GOD did not play in tempting of me; neither did I play, when I sunk as into a bottomless Pit, when the pangs of Hell caught hold upon me; wherefore I may not play in my relating of them, but be plain and simple,<sup>1</sup> and lay down the thing as*

<sup>1</sup> Bunyan's "plain and simple style." Cf. "When we find a natural style, we are astonished and delighted; for we expected to find an author, and we find a man!" *Thoughts of Pascal*. Ed. C. S. Jerram. Methuen. Ch. viii. 12.

For Bunyan's "style," also cf. Macaulay's Essay on Southey's edition of *Pilgrim's Progress*.

*it was. He that liketh it, let him receive it ;  
and he that doth not, let him produce a better.*  
Farewell.

My dear Children,  
*The Milk and Honey is beyond this Wilderness.*  
God be merciful to you, and grant that you  
*be not slothful to go in to possess the Land.*

JOHN BUNYAN.

# GRACE ABOUNDING

TO THE

## CHIEF OF SINNERS

OR

A Brief RELATION of the Exceeding Mercy of  
GOD in CHRIST, to His poor Servant,  
JOHN BUNYAN.

1. **I**N this my relation of the merciful Working of God upon my soul, it will not be amiss, if, in the first place, I do, in a few words, give you an hint of my pedigree, and manner of bringing up; that thereby the goodness and bounty of God towards me, may be the more advanced and magnified before the sons of men.

2. For my descent then, it was, as is well known by many, of a low and inconsiderable generation; my father's house being of that rank that is meanest, and most despised of all the families of the land. Wherefore I have not here, as others, to boast of noble blood or of any high born state, according to the flesh; though, all things considered, I magnify the heavenly Majesty, for that by this door He

## 8 GRACE ABOUNDING

brought me into the world, to partake of the Grace and Life that is in Christ by the Gospel.

3. But notwithstanding the meanness and inconsiderableness of my parents, it pleased God to put it into their hearts, to put me to school, to learn me both to read and write; the which I also attained, according to the rate of other poor men's children; though, to my shame, I confess I did soon lose that I had learned, even almost utterly, and that long before the Lord did work His gracious Work of Conversion upon my Soul.

4. As for my own natural life, for the time that I was without God in the world, it was indeed, according to the course of this world,

4. With regard to Bunyan's account of these early years, it is well to bear in mind the utterances of two very different men, well skilled in the human heart.

"Without doubt it is an evil to be full of faults, but it is a greater evil to be full of them and unwilling to recognise them." Pascal, *Pensées*, Bk. I. ch. iii. 2.

"We cannot know God well without knowing our own wickedness." *Ib.* Bk. II. ch. vii. 6.

*Cf.* "For whosoever, called by Thee, followed Thy voice, and avoided those things which he reads me recalling and confessing of myself, let him not scorn me, who being sick, was cured by that same physician, through whose aid it was that he was not sick, or rather was less diseased. For this let him love Thee as much, yea more; since by the same Hand he sees me to have been recovered from such deep consumption of sin, he has himself been preserved from as great evils." S. Augustine, *Confessions*, Bk. II. 7.

and the Spirit that now worketh in the Children of Disobedience, *Eph.* ii. 2, 3. It was my delight to be taken captive by the Devil at his will, *2 Tim.* ii. 26, being filled with all unrighteousness: The which did also so strongly work, and put forth itself, both in my heart and life, and that from a child, that I had but few equals (especially considering my years, which were tender, being but few) both for cursing, swearing, lying, and blaspheming the holy Name of God.

5. Yea, so settled and rooted was I in these things, that they became as a second nature to me; the which, as I have also with soberness considered since, did so offend the Lord, that even in my childhood He did scare and affrighten me with fearful dreams, and did terrify me with fearful visions: For often, after I had spent this and the other day in sin, I have in my bed been greatly afflicted, while asleep, with the apprehensions of devils and wicked spirits, who still, as I then thought, laboured to draw me away with them, of which I could never be rid.

6. Also I should, at these years, be greatly afflicted and troubled with the thoughts of the Day of Judgment, and that both night and day, and should tremble at the thoughts of the fearful torments of Hell-fire; still fearing that it would be my lot to be found at last among those devils and hellish fiends, who are there bound down with the chains and bonds of darkness, unto the Judgment of the Great Day.

7. These things, I say, when I was but a

Child, but nine or ten years old, did so distress my soul, that then, in the midst of my many sports and childish vanities, amidst my vain companions, I was often much cast down, and afflicted in my mind therewith, yet could I not let go my sins: yea, I was also then so overcome with despair of life and Heaven, that I should often wish, either that there had been no Hell, or that I had been a Devil; supposing they were only tormentors; that if it must needs be, that I went thither, I might be rather a tormentor, than be tormented myself.

8. A while after these terrible dreams did leave me, which also I soon forgot; for my pleasures did quickly cut off the remembrance of them, as if they had never been: wherefore with more greediness, according to the strength of nature, I did still let loose the reins of my lust, and delighted in all transgressions against the Law of God: so that until I came to the state of marriage, I was the very ringleader of all the youth that kept me company, in all manner of Vice and Ungodliness.

9. Yea, such prevalency had the lusts and fruits of the flesh on this poor Soul of mine, that had not a miracle of precious Grace prevented, I had not only perished by the stroke of Eternal Justice, but had also laid myself open, even to the stroke of those laws which bring some to disgrace and open shame before the Face of the World.

10. In these days the thoughts of religion

were very grievous to me ; I could neither endure it myself, nor that any other should ; so that when I have seen some read in those books that concerned Christian Piety, it would be as it were a prison to me. Then I said unto God, *Depart from me, for I desire not the knowledge of Thy Ways*, Job xxi. 14, 15. I was now void of all good consideration, Heaven and Hell were both out of sight and mind ; and as for saving and damning, they were least in my thoughts. *O Lord Thou knowest my life, and my ways are not hid from Thee.*

11. But this I well remember, that though I could myself sin with the greatest delight and ease, and also take pleasure in the vileness of my companions ; yet, even then, if I had at any time seen wicked things, by those who professed goodness, it would make my spirit tremble. As once, above all the rest, when I was in the height of vanity, yet hearing one to swear, that was reckoned for a religious man, it had so great a stroke upon my spirit, that it made my heart ache.

12. But God did not utterly leave me, but followed me still, not with convictions, but judgments ; yet such as were mixed with

12. With Bunyan's sense of God's mercies following him in these years, compare—

“Thy faithful mercy hovered over me although from afar . . . I, withdrawing farther from Thee, loving mine own ways and not Thine, loving a vagrant liberty.” S. Augustine, *op. cit.* Bk. III. 3.

mercy. For once I fell into a creek of the sea, and hardly escaped drowning. Another time I fell out of a boat into *Bedford* River, but Mercy yet preserved me alive. Besides, another time, being in the field, with one of my companions, it chanced that an adder passed over the highway, so I having a stick in my hand, struck her over the back; and having stunned her, I forced open her mouth with my stick, and plucked her sting out with my fingers; by which act, had not God been merciful unto me, I might, by my desperateness, have brought myself to my end.

13. This also I have taken notice of, with thanksgiving: When I was a soldier, I, with others, were drawn out to go to such a place to besiege it; but when I was just ready to go, one of the company desired to go in my room; to which, when I had consented, he took my place; and coming to the siege, as he stood sentinel, he was shot into the head with a musket-bullet, and died.

14. Here, as I said, were judgments and mercy, but neither of them did awaken my soul to righteousness; wherefore I sinned still, and grew more and more rebellious against God, and careless of my own salvation.

15. Presently after this, I changed my condition into a married state, and my mercy was,

13. For the episode of the siege *vide* Appendix III.

15. "The Plain Man's Pathway to Heaven" was written by Rev. Arthur Dent, Incumbent of Shoe-



to light upon a wife, whose father was counted godly. This woman and I, tho' we came together as poor as poor might be (not having so much household stuff as a dish or spoon betwixt us both) yet this she had for her part, *The Plain Man's Path-way to Heaven* and *The Practice of Piety*; which her father had left her when he died. In these two books I should sometimes read with her, wherein I also found some things that were somewhat pleasing to me; (but all this while I met with no conviction). She also would be often telling of me what a godly man her father was, and how he would reprove and correct vice, both in his house, and among his neighbours; what a

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bury, Essex. It was published in 1601. By the year 1637 it had reached its 24th edition. It is written in the form of a dialogue between a divine, a plain, honest man, an ignorant man and a caviller. They meet under the shade of an "oke tree to conferre of heavenly matters." It seems to have influenced Bunyan not only in the early years of his marriage, but also in his writings in his later life.

"The Practice of Piety" was published by Lewis Bayly, afterwards Bishop of Bangor in 1612. By 1653 it had been reprinted 50 times, and translated into many Continental languages. *Vide* Dr Brown, *op. cit.* pp. 54-56.

With regard to Bunyan's poverty we learn from Dr Brown that Bunyan's grandfather in 1641 left to his grandchildren "Sixpence a peece to bee paid them when they accomplish their severall ages of one and twentie yeares." John Bunyan's father, who died in 1676, left his son "one shilling to bee paid within a yeare after my death."

strict and holy life he lived in his days, both in word and deed.

16. Wherefore these books, with this relation, though they did not reach my heart, to awaken it about my sad and sinful state, yet they did beget within me some desires to reform my vicious life, and fall in very eagerly with the Religion of the times; to wit, to go to Church twice a day, and that too with the foremost; and there should very devoutly, both say and sing, as others did, yet retaining my wicked life; but, withal I was so overrun with the spirit of superstition, that I adored, and that with great devotion, even all things (both the High - place, Priest, Clerk, Vestment, Service, and what else) belonging to the Church; counting all things holy that were therein contained, and especially, the Priest and Clerk most happy, and without doubt, greatly blessed, because they were the Servants, as I then thought, of God, and were principal in the holy Temple, to do His work therein.

17. This conceit grew so strong in a little time upon my spirit, that had I but seen a Priest (though never so sordid and debauched in his life) I should find my spirit fall under him, reverence him, and knit unto him; yea, I thought, for the love I did bear unto them (supposing they were the Ministers of God) I could have laid down at their feet, and have been trampled upon by them; their name, their garb, and work did so intoxicate and bewitch me.

18. After I had been thus for some considerable time, another thought came in my mind; and that was, Whether we were of the *Israelites*, or no? For finding in the Scripture that they were once the peculiar people of God, thought I, if I were one of this race, my soul must needs be happy. Now again, I found within me a great longing to be resolved about this question, but could not tell how I should. At last I asked my father of it; who told me, No, we were not. Wherefore then I fell in my spirit, as to the hopes of that, and so remained.

19. But all this while, I was not sensible of the danger and evil of sin; I was kept from considering that sin would damn me, what Religion soever I followed, unless I was found in Christ: Nay, I never thought of Him, nor whether there was such a One, or no. Thus man, while blind, doth wander, but wearieith himself with vanity, for he knoweth not the way to the City of God, *Eccles. x. 15.*

20. But one day (amongst all the Sermons our Parson made) his subject was, to treat of the Sabbath day, and of the evil of breaking that, either with labour, sports, or otherwise: (Now

20. "Sunday Sports" lasted on in the rural districts of England long after the generation had passed away which strove so earnestly against them. An old man living in Australia about fifteen years ago, told the present editor, that when he was a boy in a village in Somerset, on Sundays after Morning Service, the vicar and church-wardens used regularly to play "fives" against the Church Tower.

I was, notwithstanding my Religion, one that took much delight in all manner of vice, and especially that was the Day that I did solace myself therewith) wherefore I fell in my conscience under his Sermon, thinking and believing that he made that Sermon on purpose to shew me my evil-doing. And at that time I felt what Guilt was, though never before, that I can remember; but then I was, for the present greatly loaded therewith, and so went home when the Sermon was ended, with a great burthen upon my spirit.

21. This, for that instant, did benumb the sinews of my best delights, and did embitter my former pleasures to me; but behold, it lasted not, for before I had well dined, the trouble began to go off my mind, and my heart returned to its old course: But oh! how glad was I, that this trouble was gone from me, and that the fire was put out, that I might sin again without control! Wherefore, when I had satisfied Nature with my food, I shook the Sermon out of my mind, and to my old custom of sports and gaming I returned with great delight.

22. But the same day, as I was in the midst of a game of Cat, and having struck it one blow from the hole, just as I was about to strike it the second time, a Voice did suddenly dart from Heaven into my soul, which said, *Wilt thou leave thy sins and go to Heaven, or have thy sins and go to Hell?* At this I was put to an

exceeding maze; wherefore, leaving my Cat upon the ground, I looked up to Heaven, and was, as if I had, with the eyes of my understanding, seen the Lord Jesus looking down upon me, as being very hotly displeased with me, and as if He did severely threaten me with some grievous punishment for those and other ungodly practices.

23. I had no sooner thus conceived in my mind, but suddenly this conclusion was fastened on my spirit (for the former hint did set my sins again before my face) that I had been a great and grievous sinner, and that it was now too late for me to look after Heaven; for Christ would not forgive me, nor pardon my transgressions. Then I fell to musing on this also; and while I was thinking of it, and fearing lest it should be so, I felt my heart sink in despair, concluding it was too late; and therefore I resolved in my mind to go on in sin: For, thought I, if the case be thus, my state is surely miserable; miserable if I leave my sins, and but miserable if I follow them: I can but be damned, and if I must be so, I had as good be damned for many sins, as be damned for few.

24. Thus I stood in the midst of my play, before all that then were present; but yet I told them nothing: but I say, having made this conclusion, I returned desperately to my sport again; and I well remember, that presently this kind of despair did so possess my soul, that I was persuaded, I could never attain to other

comfort than what I should get in sin; for Heaven was gone already, so that on that I must not think. Wherefore I found within me great desire to take my fill of sin, still studying what sin was yet to be committed, that I might taste the sweetness of it; and I made as much haste as I could to fill my belly with its delicates, lest I should die before I had my desires; for that I feared greatly. In these things, I protest before God, I lie not, neither do I frame this sort of speech; these were really, strongly, and with all my heart, my desires. The good Lord, whose Mercy is unsearchable, forgive my transgressions.

25. And I am very confident, that this temptation of the Devil is more usual among poor creatures, than many are aware of, even to overrun the spirits with a scurvy and seared frame of heart, and benumbing of conscience; which frame he stilly and sliely supplieth with such despair, that though not much guilt attendeth souls, yet they continually have a secret conclusion within them, that there is no hope for them; for they have loved sins, therefore after them they will go, *Jer.* ii. 25, and xviii. 12.

26. Now therefore I went on in sin with great greediness of mind, still grudging that I could not be satisfied with it as I would. This did continue with me about a month, or more; but one day, as I was standing at a neighbour's shop-window, and there cursing and swearing, and playing the madman, after my wonted

manner, there sat within, the woman of the house, and heard me; who, though she was a very loose and ungodly wretch, yet protested that I swore and cursed at that most fearful rate, that she was made to tremble to hear me; and told me further, that I was the ungodliest fellow for swearing, that she ever heard in all her life; and that I, by thus doing, was able to spoil all the youth in the whole town, if they came but in my company.

27. At this reproof I was silenced, and put to secret shame; and that too, as I thought, before the God of Heaven; wherefore, while I stood there, and hanging down my head, I wished with all my heart that I might be a little child again, that my father might learn me to speak without this wicked way of swearing; for, thought I, I am so accustomed to it, that it is in vain for me to think of a reformation, for I thought that could never be.

28. But how it came to pass, I know not; I did from this time forward, so leave my swearing, that it was a great wonder to myself to

27. For the binding force of a bad habit, *cf.* S. Augustine. "The enemy held my will, and thence had made a chain for me, and bound me. For of a froward will was a lust made; and a lust served became custom; and custom not resisted became necessity." *Op. cit.* Bk. viii. 5.

*Cf.* also, "It is great folly not trying to part with your own faults, which is possible, instead of trying to escape from other peoples' faults, which is impossible." M. Aurelius, *Meditations*, Bk. vii 71.

observe it ; and whereas before I knew not how to speak unless I put an oath before and another behind, to make my words have authority ; now I could, without it, speak better, and with more pleasantness than ever I could before. All this while I knew not Jesus Christ, neither did leave my sports and plays.

29. But quickly after this, I fell into company with one poor man that made profession of Religion ; who, as I then thought, did talk pleasantly of the Scriptures, and of the matter of Religion ; wherefore falling into some love and liking to what he said, I betook me to my Bible, and began to take great pleasure in reading, but especially with the historical part thereof : for as for *Paul's* Epistles, and such like Scriptures, I could not away with them, being as yet ignorant, either of the corruptions of my Nature, or of the want and worth of Jesus Christ to save us.

30. Wherefore I fell to some outward reformation both in my words and life, and did set the Commandments before me for my way to Heaven ; which Commandments I also did strive to keep, and as I thought, did keep them pretty well sometimes, and then I should have comfort ; yet now and then should break one, and so afflict my conscience ; but then I should repent, and say, I was sorry for it, and promise God to do better next time, and there got help again ; for then I thought I pleased God as well as any man in *England*.



31. Thus I continued about a year; all which time our neighbours did take me to be a very godly man, a new and religious man, and did marvel much to see such great and famous alteration in my life and manners; and indeed so it was, though I knew not Christ, nor Grace, nor Faith, nor Hope; for, as I have well since seen, had I then died, my state had been most fearful.

32. But, I say, my neighbours were amazed at this my great conversion, from prodigious profaneness, to something like a moral life; and truly, so they well might; for this my conversion was as great, as for *Tom of Bedlam* to become a sober man. Now therefore they began to praise, to commend, and to speak well of me, both to my face, and behind my back. Now I was, as they said, become godly; now I was become a right honest man. But oh! when I understood those were their words and opinions of me, it pleased me mighty well. For though as yet I was nothing but a poor painted hypocrite, yet I loved to be talked of as one that was truly godly. I was proud of my godliness, and indeed, I did all I did, either to be seen of, or to be well spoken of by men: And thus I continued for about a twelve-month, or more.

33. Now you must know, that before this

33. For a different view of the church bells, *vide* Dante.

“ Like sacred bells that tell the time,  
And call, because she loves, the Church of God,

I had taken much delight in ringing, but my conscience beginning to be tender, I thought such practice was but vain, and therefore forced myself to leave it; yet my mind hankered; wherefore I would go to the steeple-house, and look on, though I durst not ring: But I thought this did not become Religion neither; yet I forced myself, and would look on still: But quickly after, I began to think, *How if one of the bells should fall?* Then I chose to stand under a main beam, that lay overthwart the steeple, from side to side, thinking here I might stand sure: But then I thought again, Should the bell fall with a swing, it might first hit the wall, and then rebounding upon me, might kill me for all this beam: This made me stand in the steeple-door; and now thought I, I am safe enough; for if a bell should then fall, I can slip out behind these thick walls, and so be preserved notwithstanding.

34. So after this I would yet go to see them ring, but would not go any farther than the steeple-door; but then it came into my head, *How if the steeple itself should fall?* And this thought (it may, for ought I know, when I

To praise the Bridegroom in the early prime  
Of morn; on this side and on that abroad  
Soft chiming with such sweet alternate note  
As moves the willing soul to love and laud."

*Paradiso*, Canto x. 139 *seq.* trans. Mrs Oliphant.  
Cf. also "In Memoriam," cvi.

stood and looked on) did continually so shake my mind, that I durst not stand at the steeple-door any longer, but was forced to flee, for fear the steeple should fall upon my head.

35. Another thing was, my dancing; I was a full year before I could quite leave that; but all this while, when I thought I kept this or that Commandment, or did, by word or deed, any thing that I thought was good, I had great peace in my conscience; and would think with myself, God cannot choose but be now pleased with me; yea, to relate it in mine own way, I thought no man in *England* could please God better than I.

36. But, poor wretch, as I was, I was all this while ignorant of Jesus Christ; and going about to establish my own righteousness; and had perished therein, had not God, in mercy, shewed me more of my state by nature.

37. But upon a day, the good providence of God called me to *Bedford*, to work on my calling; and in one of the streets of that town,

37. *Cf.* the story of Pontitianus of himself and his three companions.

“These in their wanderings, lighted upon a certain cottage, inhabited by certain of Thy servants, poor in spirit, of whom is the Kingdom of Heaven. . . . Two of the party with hearts lingering on the earth, returned to the palace, but the other two, fixing their hearts in heaven, remained in the cottage.” S. Augustine, *op. cit.* Bk. viii. 6.

“Wherever a man lives, he may live well.” M. Aurelius, *Meditations*, v. 16.

I came where there were three or four poor women sitting at a door, in the sun, talking about the things of God ; and being now willing to hear their discourse, I drew near to hear what they said, for I was now a brisk talker of myself, in the matters of Religion ; but I may say, *I heard, but understood not*, for they were far above, out of my reach. Their talk was about a New Birth, the Work of God in their hearts, as also how they were convinced of their miserable state by Nature ; they talked how God had visited their souls with His Love in the Lord Jesus, and with what Words and Promises they had been refreshed, comforted and supported against the temptations of the Devil. Moreover, they reasoned of the suggestions and temptations of Satan in particular ; and told to each other, by what means they had been afflicted, and how they were borne up under his assaults. They also discoursed of their own wretchedness of heart, and of their unbelief ; and did contemn, slight and abhor their own righteousness, as filthy, and insufficient to do them any good.

38. And methought they spake, as if you did make them speak ; they spake with such pleasantness of Scripture language, and with such appearance of Grace in all they said, that they were to me, as if they had found a new world ; as if they were *people that dwell alone, and were not to be reckoned among their neighbours*, Numb. xxiii. 9.

39. At this I felt my own heart began to

shake, and mistrust my condition to be naught, for I saw that in all my thoughts about Religion and Salvation, the New Birth did never enter into my mind; neither knew I the comfort of the Word and Promise, nor the deceitfulness and treachery of my own wicked heart. As for secret thoughts, I took no notice of them; neither did I understand what Satan's temptations were, nor how they were to be withstood and resisted, &c.

40. Thus therefore, when I had heard and considered what they said, I left them, and went about my employment again, but their talk and discourse went with me; also my heart would tarry with them, for I was greatly affected with their words, both because by them I was convinced that I wanted the true tokens of a truly godly man, and also because by them I was convinced of the happy and blessed condition of him that was such a one.

41. Therefore I would often make it my business, to be going again and again into the company of these poor people, for I could not stay away; and the more I went among them, the more I did question my condition; and as I still do remember, presently I found two things within me at which I did sometimes marvel (especially considering what a blind, ignorant, sordid and ungodly wretch but just before I was). The one was a very great softness and tenderness of heart, which caused me to fall under the conviction of what by Scripture they asserted;

and the other was a great bending in my mind, to a continual meditating on it, and on all other good things, which at any time I heard or read of.

42. By these things my mind was now so turned, that it lay like an horse-leach at the vein, still crying out, *Give, give*, Prov. xxx. 15, which was so fixed on Eternity, and on the things about the Kingdom of Heaven (that is so far as I knew, though as yet, God knows, I knew but little) that neither pleasures, nor profits, nor persuasions, nor threats, could loose it, or make it let go his hold; and though I may speak it with shame, yet it is in very deed, a certain truth, it would then have been as difficult for me to have taken my mind from Heaven to earth, as I have found it often since, to get it again from earth to Heaven.

43. One thing I may not omit: There was a young man in our town, to whom my heart before was knit, more than to any other, but he being a most wicked creature for cursing, and swearing, and whoring, I now shook him off, and forsook his company; but about a quarter

43. For a similar recognition of what is lacking to a friendship not "in the Lord," *vide* S. Augustine, *op. cit.* Bk. iv. 4 *seq.*

"He was not yet my friend as afterwards, nor was he even my friend as true friendship is; for true it cannot be, unless in such as Thou cementest together, cleaving unto Thee, by that Love which is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us."

of a year after I had left him, I met him in a certain lane, and asked him how he did: He after his old swearing, and mad way, answered, He was well. *But, Harry, said I, why do you curse and swear thus? What will become of you, if you die in this condition?* He answered me in a great chafe, *What would the Devil do for company, if it were not for such as I am?*

44. About this time I met with some Ranters' books, that were put forth by some of our countrymen, which books were also highly in esteem by several old professors; some of these I read, but was not able to make any judgment about them; wherefore as I read in them, and thought upon them, seeing myself unable to judge, I would betake myself to hearty prayer in this manner: *O Lord, I am a fool, and not able to know the truth from error: Lord, leave me not to my own blindness, either to approve of, or condemn this doctrine; if it be of God, let me*

44. The "Ranters" seem to have held, by a logical extension of Calvinistic doctrine as to election, that as the "Elect" must be saved, it does not matter what personal excesses they may commit. It is interesting to notice how Faustus, Bishop of Riez, in the fifth century meets a somewhat similar question in a letter to a correspondent named Paulinus, who wished to know whether those who professed a correct creed would be saved in spite of sins against morality. The Bishop replies that "In divine things not only is a plan of believing required, but also of pleasing. A baptised person must remember that he is the Temple of God, and if any man defile the Temple of God, him shall God destroy." Ep. v.,

*not despise it ; if it be of the Devil, let me not embrace it. Lord, I lay my soul in this matter, only at Thy foot ; let me not be deceived, I humbly beseech Thee.* I had one religious intimate companion all this while, and that was the poor man I spoke of before ; but about this time, he also turned a most devilish Ranter, and gave himself up to all manner of filthiness, especially uncleanness : he would also deny that there was a God, Angel, or Spirit ; and would laugh at all exhortations to sobriety. When I laboured to rebuke his wickedness, he would laugh the more, and pretend that he had gone through all Religions, and could never hit upon the right till now. He told me also, That in a little time I should see all professors turn to the ways of the Ranters. Wherefore abominating those cursed principles, I left his company forthwith, and became to him as great a stranger, as I had been before a familiar.

45. Neither was this man only a temptation to me, but my calling lying in the country, I

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quoted in " An Introduction to the Creeds." A. E. Burn.

*Cf.* also another description of " Ranters."

" I fell among men proudly doting, exceeding carnal and great talkers, in whose mouths were the snares of the devil, limed with the mixture of the syllables of Thy Name, and of our Lord Jesus Christ, and of the Holy Ghost, the Paraclete, our Comforter. These names were ever in their mouths, but as to the sound only and the noise of the tongue, for the heart was void of truth." S. Augustine, *op. cit.* Bk. iii. 6.



happened to come into several people's company, who though strict in Religion formerly, yet were also drawn away by these Ranters. These would also talk with me of their ways, and condemn me as illegal and dark; pretending that they only had attained to Perfection, that could do what they would, and not sin. Oh! these temptations were suitable to my flesh, I being but a young man, and my nature in its prime; but God, who had, as I hoped, designed me for better things, kept me in the fear of His Name and did not suffer me to accept such cursed principles. And blessed be God who put it into my heart to cry to Him to be kept and directed, still distrusting mine own wisdom; for I have since seen even the effects of that prayer, in His preserving me, not only from ranting errors, but from those also that have sprung up since. The Bible was precious to me in those days.

46. And now methought, I began to look into the Bible with new eyes, and read as I never did before; and especially the Epistles of the Apostle St *Paul* were sweet and pleasant to me; and indeed then I was never out of the Bible, either by reading or meditation; still crying out to God, that I might know the truth and way to Heaven and Glory.

47. And as I went on and read, I hit upon that passage, *To one is given by the Spirit the Word of Wisdom, to another the Word of Knowledge by the same Spirit; and to another Faith, &c., 1 Cor. xii.* And though, as I have since seen, that by

this Scripture the Holy Ghost intends, in special, things extraordinary, yet on me it did then fasten with conviction, that I did want things ordinary, even that understanding and wisdom that other Christians had. On this Word I mused, and could not tell what to do, especially this Word [*Faith*] put me to it, for I could not help it, but sometimes must question, whether I had any Faith, or no; but I was loath to conclude, I had no Faith; for if I do so, thought I, then I shall count myself a very castaway indeed.

48. No, said I, with myself, though I am convinced that I am an ignorant sot, and that I want those blessed gifts of knowledge and understanding that other people have; yet at a venture I will conclude, I am not altogether faithless, though I know not what Faith is; for it was shewn me, and that too (as I have seen since) by Satan, that those who conclude themselves in a faithless state, have neither rest nor quiet in their souls; and I was loath to fall quite into despair.

49. Wherefore by this suggestion, I was for awhile, made afraid to see my want of Faith; but God would not suffer me thus to undo and destroy my soul, but did continually, against this my sad and blind conclusion, create still within me such suppositions, insomuch that I could not rest content, until I did now come to some certain knowledge whether I had *Faith* or no, this always running in my mind, *But how if you want Faith indeed? But how can*

*you tell you have Faith?* And besides, I saw for certain, if I had not, I was sure to perish for ever.

50. So that tho' I endeavoured at the first to look over the business of *Faith*, yet in a little time, I better considering the matter, was willing to put myself upon the trial whether I had *Faith* or no. But alas, poor wretch, so ignorant and brutish was I, that I knew not to this day no more how to do it, than I know how to begin and accomplish that rare and curious piece of art, which I never yet saw or considered.

51. Wherefore while I was thus considering, and being put to a plunge about it (for you must know, that as yet I had not in this matter broken my mind to any one, only did hear and consider), the Tempter came in with this Delusion, *That there was no way for me to know I had Faith, but by trying to work some miracles*; urging those Scriptures that seem to look that Way, for the enforcing and strengthening his

51. A reminiscence of these days may well have been in Bunyan's mind when he wrote the following words:

"There is nothing like faith to help at a pinch. . . . Only put not in the place thereof presumption. . . . There is faith and wild faith; and wild faith is this presumption. I call it wild faith, because God never placed it in His garden—His Church; 'tis only to be found in His field, the world. I also call it wild faith, because it only grows up, and is nourished where other wild notions abound. Wherefore take heed of this, and all may be well." "A Treatise on the Fear of God." John Bunyan, 1679.

Temptation. Nay, one day, as I was between *Elstow* and *Bedford*, the temptation was hot upon me, to try if I had *Faith*, by doing some miracle; which miracle at this time was this, I must say to the *puddles* that were in the horse-pads, *be dry*; and to the *dry places*, *be you puddles*: and truly one time I was going to say so indeed; but just as I was about to speak, this thought came into my mind; *but go under yonder hedge and pray first, that God would make you able*. But when I had concluded to pray, this came hot upon me; that if I prayed, and came again, and tried to do it, and yet did nothing notwithstanding, then to be sure I had no *Faith*, but was a castaway, and lost. Nay, thought I, if it be so, I will not try yet, but will stay a little longer.

52. So I continued at a great loss; for I thought, if they only had *Faith*, which could do so wonderful things, then I concluded, that for the present I neither had it, nor yet, for time to come, were ever like to have it. Thus I was tossed betwixt the Devil and my own ignorance, and so perplexed, especially at some times, that I could not tell what to do.

53. About this time, the state and happiness of these poor people at *Bedford* was thus, *in a kind of a vision*, presented to me. I saw, as if they were on the sunny-side of some high mountain, there refreshing themselves with the pleasant beams of the sun, while I was shivering and shrinking in the cold, afflicted with frost,

snow, and dark clouds: methought also, betwixt me and them, I saw a wall that did compass about this mountain. Now through this wall my soul did greatly desire to pass; concluding, that if I could, I would even go into the very midst of them, and there also comfort myself with the heat of their sun.

54. About this wall I bethought myself, to go again and again, still praying as I went, to see if I could find some way or passage, by which I might enter therein; but none could I find for some time. At the last, I saw, as it were, a narrow gap, like a little door-way in the wall, through which I attempted to pass. Now the passage being very strait and narrow, I made many offers to get in, but all in vain, even until I was well nigh quite beat out, by striving to get in; at last, with great striving, methought I at first did get in my head, and after that, by a sideling striving, my shoulders, and my whole body; then I was exceeding glad, went and sat down in the midst of them, and so was comforted with the light and heat of their sun.

55. Now this mountain and wall, &c., was thus made out to me: The mountain signified the Church of the Living God; the sun that shone thereon, the comfortable shining of His merciful Face on them that was therein; the wall I thought was the world, that did make separation between the Christians and the world; and the gap which was in the wall, I thought, was Jesus Christ, who is the Way to God the

Father, *John* xiv. 6. *Matt.* vii. 14. But forasmuch as the passage was wonderful narrow, even so narrow, that I could not, but with great difficulty enter in thereat, it shewed me, that none could enter into Life, but those that were in downright earnest, and unless also they left that wicked world behind them; for here was only room for body and soul, but not for body and soul, and sin.

56. This resemblance abode upon my spirit many days; all which time I saw myself in a forlorn and sad condition, but yet was provoked to a vehement hunger and desire to be one of that number that did sit in the sunshine: Now also would I pray wherever I was; whether at home or abroad; in house or field; and would also often, with lifting up of heart, sing that of the Fifty-first Psalm, *O Lord, consider my Distress*; for as yet I knew not where I was.

57. Neither as yet could I attain to any comfortable persuasion that I had Faith in Christ, but instead of having satisfaction here I began to find my soul to be assaulted with fresh

57. The wise advice of Dante was needed by others besides Bunyan in this age, though few felt the agony over the question of "Election" that he did.

"Oh how far removed  
Predestination! is thy root from such  
As see not the First Cause entire: and ye,  
Oh mortal men! be wary how ye judge:  
For we, who see our Maker, know not yet

doubts about my future happiness; especially with such as these, *Whether I was elected: But how if the Day of Grace should now be past and gone?*

58. By these two temptations I was very much afflicted and disquieted; sometimes by one, and sometimes by the other of them. And first, to speak of that about my questioning my Election, I found at this time, that though I was in a flame to find the way to Heaven and Glory, and though nothing could beat me off from this, yet this question did so offend and discourage me, that I was, especially sometimes, as if the very strength of my body also had been taken away by the force and power thereof. This Scripture did also seem to me to trample upon all my desires; *it is neither in him that willeth, nor in him that runneth; but in God that sheweth mercy*, Rom. ix.

59. With this Scripture I could not tell what to do; for I evidently saw, unless that the great God, of His infinite grace and bounty, had voluntarily chosen me to be a vessel of mercy, though I should desire, and long, and labour until my heart did break, no good could come of it. Therefore this would stick with me,

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The number of the Chosen; and esteem  
Such scantiness of knowledge our delight:  
For all our good is, in that primal good,  
Concentrate; and God's will and ours are one."

Dante, *Paradiso*, canto xx. 130-138.

Trans. Cary.

*How can you tell that you are elected; And what if you should not? How then?*

60. O Lord, thought I, what if I should not indeed? It may be you are not, said the Tempter; it may be so indeed, thought I. Why then, said Satan, you had as good leave off, and strive no farther; for if indeed, you should not be elected and chosen of God, there is no hope of your being saved; *For it is neither in him that willeth, nor in him that runneth; but in God that sheweth mercy.*

61. By these things I was driven to my wit's-end, not knowing what to say, or how to answer these temptations. Indeed, I little thought that Satan had thus assaulted me, but that rather it was my own prudence thus to start the question; for that the Elect only obtained eternal Life; that I without scruple did heartily close withal; but that myself was one of them, there lay the question.

62. Thus therefore, for several days, I was greatly assaulted and perplexed, and was often, when I have been walking, ready to sink where I went, with faintness in my mind. But one day, after I had been so many weeks oppressed and cast down therewith as I was now quite giving up the ghost of all my hopes of ever attaining Life, that Sentence fell with weight upon my spirit, *Look at the Generations of Old, and see; Did ever any trust in God, and were confounded?*

63. At which I was greatly enlightened, and



encouraged in my soul; for thus, at that very instant, it was expounded to me: *Begin at the beginning of Genesis, and read to the end of the Revelations, and see if you can find, that there was ever any that trusted in the Lord, and was confounded.* So coming home, I presently went to my Bible, to see if I could find that saying, not doubting but to find it presently; for it was so fresh, and with such strength and comfort on my spirit, that it was as if it talked with me.

64. Well, I looked, but I found it not; only it abode upon me: Then did I ask first this good man, and then another, if they knew where it was, but they knew no such place. At this I wondered, that such a Sentence should so suddenly, and with such comfort and strength, seize, and abide upon my heart; and yet that none could find it (for I doubted not but that it was in the Holy Scripture).

65. Thus I continued above a year, and could not find the place; but at last, casting my eye upon the *Apocrypha* Books, I found it in *Ecclesiasticus*, *Eccles. ii. 10.* This, at the first, did somewhat daunt me; but because by this time I had got more experience of the love and kindness of God, it troubled me the less, especially when I considered that Thought was not in those Texts that we call Holy and Canonical; yet forasmuch as this Sentence was the sum and substance of many of the Promises, it was my duty to take the comfort of it; and I bless God for that Word, for it was of good to

me: That Word doth still oft-times shine before my face.

66. After this, that other doubt did come with strength upon me, *But how if the Day of Grace should be past and gone?* How if you have overstood the time of Mercy? Now I remember that one day, as I was walking in the country, I was much in the thoughts of this, *But how if the Day of Grace is past?* And to aggravate my trouble, the Tempter presented to my mind those good people of *Bedford*, and suggested thus unto me, That these being converted already, they were All that God would save in those parts; and that I came too late, for these had got the Blessing before I came.

67. Now was I in great distress, thinking in very deed that this might well be so; wherefore I went up and down bemoaning my sad condition; counting myself far worse than a thousand fools for standing off thus long, and spending so many years in sin as I have done; still crying out, Oh! that I had turned sooner! Oh! that I had turned seven years ago! It made me also angry with myself, to think that I should have no more wit, but to trifle away my time, till my soul and Heaven were lost.

68. But when I had been long vexed with this fear, and was scarce able to take one step more, just about the same place where I received my other encouragement, these words broke in upon my mind, *Compel them to come in, that My House may be filled; and yet there is*

room, Luke xiv. 22, 23. 'These words, but especially those, *And yet there is room*, were sweet words to me; for truly, I thought that by them I saw there was place enough in Heaven for me; and moreover, that when the Lord Jesus did speak these words, He then did think of me; and that He knowing that the time would come, that I should be afflicted with fear, that there was no place left for me in His Bosom, did before speak this Word, and leave it upon record, that I might find help thereby against this vile temptation. This I then verily believed.

69. In the light and encouragement of this Word, I went a pretty while; and the comfort was the more, when I thought that the Lord Jesus should think on me so long ago, and that He should speak those words on purpose for my sake: for I did think verily, that He did on purpose speak them to encourage me withal.

70. But I was not without my temptations to go back again; temptations I say, both from Satan, mine own heart, and carnal acquaintance; but I thank God these were out-

70. With Bunyan's keen sense of the "Visitations of God," *cf.*

"Often when he (Luther) was meditating attentively on the wrath of God, or on wonderful examples of punishments, he was suddenly assailed by such terror that he almost fainted away. I myself once saw him, exhausted by his exertions in a doctrinal disputation, throw himself on a bed in the next

weighed by that sound sense of Death, and of the Day of Judgment, which abode, as it were, continually in my view: I would often also think on *Nebuchadnezzar*; of whom it is said, *He had given him all the Kingdoms of the Earth*, Dan. v. 18, 19. Yet, thought I, if this great man had all his portion in this world, one hour in hell-fire would make him forget all. Which consideration was a great help to me.

71. I was also made, about this time, to see something concerning the beasts that *Moses* counted clean and unclean: I thought those beasts were types of men; the Clean, types of them that were the people of God; but the Unclean, types of such as were the children of the wicked one. Now I read, that the clean beasts *chewed the cud*; that is, thought I, they shew us, we must feed upon the Word of God: They also *parted the hoof*, I thought that signified, we must part, if we would be saved, with the ways of ungodly men. And, also, in further reading about them, I found,

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chamber, where he repeated these words, intermixed with gesticulations, *He concluded all under sin that He might have mercy upon all.*"

Philip Melancthon, quoted in *Life of Luther*. Hare, p. 11. Also *cf.*

"The method of God, who does all things gently, is to place religion in the intellect by reason, and in the heart by grace. But to desire to place it in the mind and in the heart by force and menaces, that is to place in it not religion but terror." Pascal, *op. cit.*, Bk. ii. ch. ix. 1.

that though we did chew the cud, as the hare ; yet if we walked with claws, like a dog ; or if we did part the hoof, like the swine, yet if we did not chew the cud, as the sheep, we are still, for all that, but Unclean : For I thought the hare to be a type of those that talk of the Word, yet walk in the ways of sin ; and that the swine was like him that parted with his outward pollution, but still wanteth the Word of Faith, without which, there could be no Way of Salvation, let a man be ever so devout, *Deut.* xiv. After this, I found by reading the Word, that those that must be glorified with Christ in another world, *must be called by Him here* ; called to the partaking of a share in His Word and Righteousness, and to the comforts and first-fruits of His Spirit ; and to a peculiar interest in all those Heavenly Things, which do indeed prepare the soul for that Rest, and House of Glory, which is in Heaven above.

72. Here again I was at a very great stand, not knowing what to do, fearing I was not called ; for, thought I, if I be not called, what then can do me good ? None but those who are effectually called, inherit the Kingdom of Heaven. But Oh ! how I now loved those Words that spake of a *Christian's Calling* ! as when the Lord said to one, *Follow Me* ; and to another, *Come after Me* : And Oh, thought I, that He would say so to me too ; how gladly would I run after Him !

73. I cannot now express with what longings and breathings in my soul, I cried to Christ to call me. Thus I continued for a time, all on a flame to be converted to Jesus Christ; and did also see at that day, such glory in a converted state, that I could not be contented without a share therein. Gold! Could it have been gotten for gold, what would I have given for it! Had I had a whole world, it had all gone ten thousand times over for this, that my soul might have been in a converted state.

74. How lovely now was every one in my eyes, that I thought to be converted men and women! They shone, they walked like a people that carried the broad-seal of Heaven about them. Oh! I saw the lot was fallen to them in pleasant places, and they had a goodly heritage, *Psalm. xvi.* But that which made me sick, was that of Christ, in *St Mark, He went up into a Mountain and called to Him whom He would, and they came unto Him, Mark iii. 13.*

75. This Scripture made me faint and fear, yet it kindled fire in my soul. That which made me fear, was this; lest Christ should have no liking to me, for He called *whom He would.* But Oh! the Glory that I saw in that condition, did still so enrage my heart, that I could seldom read of any that Christ did call but I presently wished, *Would I had been in their clothes; would I had been born Peter; would I had been born John; or, would I had been by and had heard Him when He called them,*

*how would I have cried, O Lord, call me also !  
But, Oh ! I feared He would not call me.*

76. And truly, the Lord let me go thus many months together, and shewed me nothing; either that I was already, or should be called hereafter: But at last, after much time spent, and many groans to God, that I might be made partaker of the holy and heavenly Calling; that Word came in upon me, *I will cleanse their Blood, that I have not cleansed, for the Lord dwelleth in Zion, Joel iii. 21.* These words I thought were sent to encourage me to wait still upon God; and signified unto me, that if I were not already, yet time might come, I might be in truth converted unto Christ.

77. About this time, I began to break my mind to those poor people in *Bedford*, and to tell them my condition; which when they had heard, they told Mr *Gifford* of me, who

77. Gifford had taken a prominent part in the Civil War. He had held the rank of Major in the Royalist Army. He was taken prisoner at the Battle of Maidstone where the Royalists were defeated, with a loss of 300 killed, by General Fairfax. He and eleven others were condemned to death. On the night previous to the day fixed for his execution, by the aid of his sister, he escaped from prison. He fled to Bedford and there began to practise as a physician. After leading a reckless and profligate life for some little time, he was brought under strong religious conviction. In 1650 he was appointed Pastor of the little congregation which exercised so great an influence over Bunyan's career. Gifford died in 1655. His last words, written from his

himself also took occasion to talk with me; and was willing to be well persuaded of me, though I think from little grounds: But he invited me to his house, where I should hear him confer with others, about the dealings of God with their souls; from all which I still received more conviction, and from that time began to see something of the vanity, and inward wretchedness of my wicked heart; for as yet I knew no great matter therein; but now it began to be discovered unto me, and also to work at that rate as it never did before. Now I evidently found, that lusts and corruptions

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death-bed to his congregation, are worthy of remembrance—"Concerning separation from the Church about Baptism, laying on of hands, anointing with oil, psalms, or any externals, I charge every one of you respectively, as you will give an account of it to our Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge both quick and dead at His Coming, that none of you be found guilty of this great evil, which, while some have committed—and that through a zeal for God, yet not according to knowledge—they have erred from the Law of the Love of Christ, and have made a rent from the true Church, which is but One." *Vide* Dr Brown, *op. cit.* p. 94.

Gifford's views on this question seem to have exercised considerable influence over Bunyan. *Vide* his "Difference in Judgment about Water-Baptism no bar to Communion," published in 1673, with the "Judgment of Mr Henry Lesse," to the same effect. *Cf.* also Bunyan's reply to Mr Paul and Mr Danvers; quoted Dr Brown, *op. cit.* p. 229.

In "The Holy City" Bunyan wrote,

"There is but one street in this City, for at last the Saints shall walk in one way, and in one light."



put forth themselves within me, in wicked thoughts and desires, which I did not regard before ; my desires also for Heaven and Life began to fail ; I found also, that whereas before my soul was full of longing after God, now it began to hanker after every foolish vanity ; yea, my heart would not be moved to mind that which was good ; it began to be careless, both of my soul and Heaven ; it would now continually hang back, both to and in every duty ; and was as a clog on the leg of a bird, to hinder him from flying.

78. Nay, I thought, now I grow worse and worse ; now I am farther from conversion than ever I was before : Wherefore I began to sink greatly in my soul, and began to entertain such discouragement in my heart, as laid me as low as Hell. If now I should have burned at the stake I could not believe that Christ had a Love for me ; alas ! I could neither hear Him, nor see Him, nor feel Him, nor savour any of His things ; I was driven as with a tempest, my heart would be unclean, and the *Canaanites* would dwell in the land.

79. Sometimes I would tell my condition to the people of God ; which, when they heard, they would pity me, and would tell me of the Promises ; but they had as good have told me that I must reach the Sun with my finger, as have bidden me receive or rely upon the Promises ; and as soon I should have done it : All my sense and feeling was against me ; and

I saw I had a heart that would sin, and that lay under a Law that would condemn.

80. These things have often made me think of the Child which the Father brought to Christ, *who while he was yet a coming to Him, was thrown down by the Devil, and also so rent and torn by him, that he lay and wallowed, foaming*, Luke ix. 42. Mark ix. 20.

81. Further in these days, I would find my heart to shut itself up against the Lord, and against His Holy Word: I have found my unbelief to set, as it were, the shoulder to the door, to keep Him out; and that too even then when I have with many a bitter sigh cried, *Good Lord, break it open: Lord, break these gates of brass, and cut those bars of iron asunder*, Psalm cvii. 16. Yet that Word would sometimes create in my heart a peaceable pause, *I girded thee, though thou hast not known Me*, Isaiah xlv. 5.

82. But all this while, as to the act of sinning, I was never more tender than now: my hinder parts were inward: I durst not take a pin or stick, though but so big as a straw; for my Conscience now was sore, and would smart at every touch: I could not now tell how to speak my words, for fear I should misplace them. Oh, how cautiously did I then go, in all I did or said! I found myself as in a miry bog, that shook if I did but stir, and was, as there, left both of God and Christ, and the Spirit, and all good things.

83. But I observed, though I was such a great sinner before conversion, yet God never much charged the guilt of the sins of my ignorance upon me; only He shewed me I was lost if I had not Christ, because I had been a sinner: I saw that I wanted a perfect righteousness to present me without fault before God, and this righteousness was nowhere to be found, but in the Person of Jesus Christ.

84. But my original and inward pollution; that, that was my plague and affliction, that I saw at a dreadful rate, always putting forth itself within me; that I had the guilt of, to amazement; by reason of that, I was more loathsome in mine own eyes, than a toad, and I thought I was so in God's Eyes too: Sin and Corruption, I said, would as naturally bubble out of my heart, as water would bubble out of a fountain: I thought now, that every one had a better heart than I had; I could have changed heart with anybody; I thought none but the Devil himself could equalize me for inward wickedness and pollution of mind. I fell therefore at the sight of my own vileness deeply into despair; for I concluded, that this condition that I was in, could not stand with a state of Grace. Sure, thought I, I am forsaken of God; sure, I am given up to the Devil, and to a reprobate mind: And thus I continued a long while, even for some years together.

85. While I was thus afflicted with the fears

85. For Bunyan's perplexity over the worldliness

of my own damnation, there were two things would make me wonder; the one was, when I saw old people hunting after the things of this life, as if they should live here always: the other was, when I found the professors much distressed and cast down, when they met with outward losses; as of Husband, Wife, Child, &c. Lord, thought I, what ado is here about such little things as these! What seeking after carnal things, by some, and what grief in others for the loss of them! If they so much labour after, and shed so many tears for the things of this present life, how am I to be bemoaned, pitied, and prayed for! My soul is dying, my soul is damning. Were my soul but in a good condition, and were I but sure of it, ah! how rich should I esteem myself, tho' blessed but with bread and water! I should count those but small afflictions, and should bear them as little burthens. *A wounded spirit who can bear!*

86. And though I was much troubled, and

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of "Professors of Religion," cf. S. Thomas à Kempis, "I know not how it is, nor what induces us, nor what we pretend to, that we who have the name of spiritual persons, bestow all our labour, and very much of our care, on things which are transitory and worthless, and scarcely ever gather ourselves up to think about our inward life." *De Imitatione Christi*, iii. 31, 8.

Pascal expresses himself with greater severity.

"To see in the same heart, and at the same time this sensibility in regard to the smallest things, and this strange insensibility in regard to the greatest, is a monstrosity." *Op. cit.* ch. i. p. 59.

tossed, and afflicted, with the sight and sense and terror of my own wickedness, yet I was afraid to let this sight and sense go quite off my mind: For I found, that unless guilt of conscience was taken off the right way, that is, by the Blood of Christ, a man grew rather worse for the loss of his trouble of mind, than better. Wherefore, if my guilt lay hard upon me, then should I cry that the Blood of Christ might take it off: And if it was going off without it (for the sense of sin would be sometimes as if it would die, and go quite away) then I would also strive to fetch it upon my heart again, by bringing the punishment of sin in Hell-fire upon my spirits; and would cry, *Lord, let it not go off my heart, but the right way, by the Blood of Christ, and the application of Thy Mercy, through Him, to my soul*; for that Scripture did lay much upon me, *Without shedding of Blood there is no Redemption*, Heb. ix. 22. And that which made me the more afraid of this, was, because I had seen some, who, though when they were under the wounds of conscience, would cry and pray; yet feeling rather present ease for their trouble, than pardon for their sin, cared not how they lost their guilt, so they got it out of their mind: Now having got it off the wrong way, it was not sanctified unto them; but they grew harder and blinder, and more wicked after their trouble. This made me afraid, and made me cry to God the more, that it might not be so with me.

87. And now I was sorry that God had made me man, for I feared I was a reprobate : I counted man as unconverted the most doleful of all creatures. Thus being afflicted and tossed about my sad condition, I counted myself alone, and above the most of men unblessed.

88. Yea, I thought it impossible that ever I should attain to so much godliness of heart, as to thank God that He had made me a man. Man indeed is the most noble by Creation, of all creatures in the visible world ; but by sin he had made himself the most ignoble. The beasts, birds, fishes, &c. I blessed their condition ; for they had not a sinful nature ; they were not obnoxious to the Wrath of God ; they were not to go to Hell-fire after Death ; I could therefore have rejoiced, had my condition been as any of theirs.

89. In this condition I went a great while ; but when the comforting time was come, I heard one preach a Sermon on these words in the *Song* (*Song* iv. 1), *Behold thou art Fair, My Love ; behold thou art Fair* : But at that time

89. It is characteristic both of the age and of the man that these thoughts of the Love of God in Christ for man, could not as yet find a permanent resting-place in John Bunyan's heart. In later days he could write "Salvation hath its roots in Fatherly Love : I myself have often found that when I can say but this word Father, it doth me more good than when I call Him by any other Name." "Come and welcome to Jesus Christ," 1678.

*Cf.* the comfort with which the like thought could

he made these two words, *My Love*, his chief and subject matter; from which, after he had a little opened the Text, he observed these several conclusions; 1. *That the Church, and so every saved Soul, is Christ's Love, when loveless.* 2. *Christ's Love without a Cause.* 3. *Christ's Love, which hath been hated of the world.* 4. *Christ's Love, when under temptation and under destruction.* 5. *Christ's Love from first to last.*

90. But I got nothing by what he said at present; only when he came to the Application of the fourth particular, this was the word he said; *If it be so, that the saved soul is Christ's Love, when under temptation and destruction; then, poor tempted soul, when thou art assaulted and afflicted with Temptations and the hidings of Face, yet think on these two words, My Love, still.*

91. So as I was going home, these words came again into my thoughts; and I well remember, as they came in, I said thus in my heart, *What shall I get by thinking on these two*

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fill the soul of another much tried servant of Jesus Christ.

“The God of the Christians is a God of love and consolation. He is a God who fills all the soul and heart of those whom He possesses. He is a God who makes them feel their inward misery and His infinite pity, who is in union with the depth of their soul, who fills it with humility, with joy, with confidence, with love, who makes them incapable of any other end than Himself.” Pascal, *op. cit.* Bk. ii. ch. vii. 2.

*words?* This thought had no sooner passed through my heart, but these words began thus to kindle in my spirit, *Thou art My Love, thou art My Love*, twenty times together, and still as they ran in my mind, they waxed stronger and warmer and began to make me look up; but being as yet between hope and fear, I still replied in my heart, *But is it true, but is it true?* At which that sentence fell upon me, *He wist not that it was true, which was done unto him of the Angel*, Acts xii. 9.

92. Then I began to give place to the Word, which with power, did over and over make this joyful sound within my soul, *Thou art My Love, thou art My Love, and nothing shall separate thee from My Love*. And with that my heart was filled full of comfort and hope, and now I could believe that my sins would be forgiven me; yea, I was now so taken with the Love and Mercy of God, that I remember, I could not tell how to contain till I got home: I thought I could have spoken of His Love, and have told of His Mercy to me, even to the very crows that sat upon the ploughed lands before me, had they been capable to have understood me: Wherefore I said in my soul, with much gladness, Well, would I had a pen and ink here, I would write this down before I go any further; for surely I will not forget this forty years hence. But, alas! within less than forty days I began to question all again; which made me begin to question all still.

93. Yet still at times I was helped to believe,



that it was a true manifestation of Grace unto my soul, though I had lost much of the life and savour of it. | Now about a week or fortnight after this, I was much followed by this Scripture, *Simon, Simon, behold Satan hath desired to have you*, Luke xxii. 31, and sometimes it would sound so loud within me, yea, and as it were, call so strongly after me, that once, above all the rest, I turned my head over my shoulder, thinking verily that some man had, behind me, called me; being at a great distance, methought he called so loud. It came, as I have thought since, to have stirred me up to Prayer, and to Watchfulness. It came to acquaint me, that a cloud and a storm was coming down upon me; but I understood it not.

94. Also, as I remember, that time that it called to me so loud, was the last time that it sounded in mine ears; but methinks I hear still with what a loud voice these words, *Simon, Simon*, sounded in mine ears. I thought verily, as I have told you, that somebody had called after me, that was half a mile behind me: And altho' that was not my name, yet it made me suddenly look behind me, believing that he that called so loud, meant me.

95. But so foolish was I, and ignorant, that I knew not the reason of this sound; (which as I did both see and feel soon after, was sent from Heaven as an Alarm, to awaken me to provide for what was coming) only I would muse and wonder in my mind, to think what should

be the reason of this Scripture, and that at this rate, so often and so loud, it should still be sounding and rattling in my ears: But, as I said before, I soon after perceived the End of God therein.

96. For, about the space of a month after, a very great storm came down upon me, which handled me twenty times worse than all I had met with before; it came stealing upon me, now by one piece, then by another: First, All my comfort was taken from me; then darkness seized upon me; after which, whole floods of blasphemies, both against God, Christ, and the

96. "To question the Being of God and the Truth of His Gospel," Bunyan tells us, in "The Conclusion" to "Grace Abounding," was the hardest to bear of all his trials. Yet the knowledge of the love of God has not always been won by His Saints without passing through the deep waters of doubt, which now form part of the spiritual discipline of Bunyan. The writer who, from his heart's experience, could give the description of the "Christian's God of Love" had also written,

"This is what I see, and what troubles me. I look everywhere and I see nothing but darkness. If I saw nothing there which pointed to a Divinity, I should determine that there is no God. If I saw everywhere signs of a Creator, I should rest in peace in the Faith. But, seeing too much for denial, and too little for assurance, I am in a piteous plight." Pascal, *op. cit.* Bk. i. ch. xiv. 2.

The insight of the thirteenth century could not only divine the "Soul of Good" that may lie concealed within that darkness, which seems even to have gathered round the Cross; but can state it in a startling paradox.

Scriptures, was poured upon my spirit, to my great Confusion and Astonishment. These blasphemous Thoughts were such as stirred up questions in me against the very Being of God, and of His only beloved Son : As whether there were in truth, a God or Christ ? And whether the holy Scriptures were not rather a fable, and cunning story than the holy and pure Word of God.

97. The Tempter would also much assault me with this, *How can you tell but that the Turks had as good Scriptures to prove their Mahomet the Saviour, as we have to prove our Jesus ? And, could I think, that so many ten thousands, in so many countries and kingdoms, should be without the knowledge of the right way to Heaven ; (if there were indeed a Heaven) and that we only, who live in a corner of the earth, should alone be blessed therewith ? Every one doth think his own Religion rightest, both Jews and Moors, and Pagans ; and how if all our Faith, and Christ, and Scriptures, should be but a Think-so too ?*

“Well I perceive that never sated is  
 Our intellect unless the Truth illumine it,  
 Beyond which nothing true expands itself.  
 It rests therein, as wild beast in his lair,  
 When it attains it ; and it can attain it ;  
 If not, then each desire would frustrate be.  
 Therefore springs up, in fashion of a shoot,  
 Doubt at the foot of Truth ; and this is Nature  
 Which to the top, from height to height impels us ”  
 Dante, *Paradiso*, canto iv 124-132.  
 Trans. Longfellow.

98. Sometimes I have endeavoured to argue against these suggestions, and to set some of the sentences of blessed *Paul* against them; but alas! I quickly felt, when I thus did, such Arguings as these would return again upon me, *Though we made so great a matter of Paul, and of his words, yet how could I tell, but that in very deed, he being a subtle and cunning man, might give himself up to deceive with strong delusions; and also take the pains and travail, to undo and destroy his fellows.*

99. These suggestions (with many other which at this time I may not, nor dare not utter, neither by word or pen) did make such a seizure upon my spirit, and did so overweigh my heart, both with their number, continuance, and fiery force, that I felt as if there were nothing else but these from morning to night within me; and as though indeed, there could be room for nothing else; and also concluded, That God had, in very wrath to my soul, given me up to them, to be carried away with them, as with a mighty whirlwind.

100. Only by the distaste that they gave unto my spirit, *I felt there was something in me, that refused to embrace me.* But this consideration I then only had, when God gave me leave to swallow my spittle: otherwise the noise, and strength, and force of these temptations would drown and overflow, and as it were, bury all such thoughts, or the remembrance of any such thing. While I was in this temptation,

I often found my mind suddenly put upon it to curse and swear, or to speak some grievous thing against God, or Christ His Son, and of the Scriptures.

101. Now I thought, surely I am possessed of the Devil: At other times again I thought I should be bereft of my wits; for instead of lauding and magnifying God the Lord with others, if I have but heard Him spoken of, presently some most horrible blasphemous thought or other would bolt out of my heart against Him; so that whether I did think that God was, or again did think there were no such thing, no love, nor peace, nor gracious disposition could I feel within me.

102. These things did sink me into very deep despair; for I concluded, that such things could not possibly be found amongst them that loved God. I often, when these temptations had been with force upon me, did compare myself to the case of such a child, whom some gipsy hath by force took up in her arms, and is carrying from friend and country. Kick sometimes I did, and also shriek and cry; but yet I was bound in the wings of the temptation, and the wind would carry me away. I thought also of *Saul*, and of the evil spirit that did possess him; and did greatly fear that my condition was the same with that of his, 1 *Sam.* xvi. 14.

103. In these days, when I have heard others talk of what was the Sin against the Holy Ghost, then would the Tempter so

provoke me to desire to sin that sin, that I was as if I could not, must not, neither should be quiet until I had committed it; now no sin would serve but that: If it were to be committed by speaking of such a word, then I have been as if my mouth would have spoken that word, whether I would or no: And in so strong a measure was this temptation upon me, that often I have been ready to clap my hands under my chin, to hold my mouth from opening; and to that end also I have had thoughts at other times, to leap with my head downward, into some muckhill-hole or other, to keep my mouth from speaking.

104. Now again I blessed the condition of the dog and toad, and counted the estate of everything that God had made, far better than this dreadful state of mine, and such as my companions was: yea, gladly would I have been in the condition of a dog or horse; for I knew they had no souls to perish under the everlasting weight of Hell, or Sin, as mine was like to do. Nay, and though I saw this, felt this, and was broken to pieces with it; yet that which added to my sorrow was, that I could not find, that with all my soul I did desire deliverance. That Scripture did also tear and rend my soul in the midst of these distractions, *The Wicked are like the troubled Sea, which cannot rest, whose Waters cast up Mire and Dirt. There is no Peace to the Wicked, saith my God, Isa. lvii. 20, 21.*

105. And now my heart was, at times, exceeding hard; if I would have given a thousand pounds for a tear, I could not shed one; no, nor sometimes scarce desire to shed one. I was much dejected, to think that this would be my lot. I saw some could mourn and lament their sin; and others again, could rejoice and bless God for Christ; and others again, could quietly talk of, and with gladness remember the Word of God; while I only was in the storm or tempest. This much sank me, I thought my condition was alone, I should therefore much bewail my hard hap, but get out of, or get rid of these things, I could not.

106. While this temptation lasted, which was about a year, I could attend upon none of the Ordinances of God, but with sore and great affliction. Yea, then was I most distressed with blasphemies: If I had been hearing the Word, then uncleanness, blasphemies and despair would hold me a captive there; if I have been reading, then sometimes I had sudden thoughts to question all I read; sometimes

105. Bunyan wrote afterwards with humour, as well as with the sympathy born of his past experience: "He that comes to Christ cannot, it is true, always get on as fast as he would. Poor coming Soul, thou art like a man that would ride full gallop, whose horse will hardly trot." "Come and Welcome," &c., 1678.

Cf. "O Lord, this is not the work of a day nor child's play." *De Imitatione Christi*, Bk. iii. 32, 2.

again, my mind would be so strangely snatched away, and possessed with other things, that I have neither known, nor regarded, nor remembered so much as the sentence that but now I have read.

107. In Prayer also I have been greatly troubled at this time; sometimes I have thought I have felt him behind me, pull my clothes: he would be also continually at me in time of prayer, to have done, break off: Make haste, you have prayed enough, and stay no longer; still drawing my mind away. Sometimes also he would cast in such wicked thoughts as these, that I must pray to him, or for him: I have thought sometimes of that, *Fall down; or if thou wilt fall down and worship me*, Matt. iv. 9.

108. Also, when because I have had wandering thoughts in the time of this duty, I have laboured to compose my mind, and fix it upon God; then with great force hath the Tempter laboured to distract me, and confound me, and to turn away my mind, by presenting to my heart and fancy, the form of a bush, a bull, a besom, or the like, as if I should pray to these: To these he would also (at some times especially) so hold my mind, that I was as if I could think of nothing else, or pray to nothing else but to these, or such as they.

109. Yet at times I should have some strong and heart-affecting apprehensions of God, and the reality of the Truth of His Gospel: But, Oh! how would my heart, at such times put



forth itself with unexpressible groanings. My whole soul was then in every word ; I should cry with pangs after God, that He would be merciful unto me : But then I should be daunted again with such conceits as these ; I should think that God did mock at these my prayers, saying, and that in the audience of the holy Angels, *This poor simple wretch doth banker after Me, as if I had nothing to do with My Mercy, but to bestow it on such as he. Alas, poor soul ! how art thou deceived ! It is not for such as thee to have favour with the Highest.*

110. Then hath the Tempter come upon me also with such discouragements as these : *You are very hot for mercy, but I will cool you ; this frame shall not last always : Many have been as hot as you for a Spirit, but I have quenched their zeal* (and with this, such and such, who were fallen off, would be set before mine eyes). Then I would be afraid that I should do so too : But, thought I, I am glad this comes into my mind : Well, I will watch, and take what care

110. With Bunyan's continued temptations to discouragement in these early days, compare again the more ripened experience of à Kempis.

“Never have I found any religious person who has not sometimes suffered from this withdrawal of grace, or has not experienced a decrease of favour. . . . The devil is not asleep, and the flesh is not yet dead ; therefore do not cease to prepare yourself for the conflict, for on your right hand and on the left are adversaries who never rest.” *De Imitatione Christi*, Bk. ii. 9. 7.

I can. *Tho' you do (saith Satan) I shall be too hard for you ; I will cool you insensibly, by degrees, by little and little. What care I (saith he) though I be seven years in chilling your heart, if I can do it at last ? Continual rocking will lull a crying child asleep : I will ply it close, but I will have my end accomplished. Tho' you be burning hot at present, I can pull you from this fire ; I shall have you cold before it be long.*

111. These things brought me into great straits ; for as I at present could not find myself fit for present death, so I thought, to live long, would make me yet more unfit ; for time would make me forget all, and wear even the remembrance of the evil of sin, the worth of Heaven, and the need I had of the Blood of Christ to wash me, both out of mind and thought. But I thank Christ Jesus, these things did not at present make me slack my crying, but rather did put me more upon it (like her who met with the adulterer, *Deut. xxii. 27*), in which days that was a good word to me, after I had suffered these things a while ; *I am persuaded that neither Height, nor Death, nor Life, &c. shall separate us from the Love of God, which is in Christ Jesus, Rom. viii. 39.* And now I hoped long life would not destroy me, nor make me miss of Heaven.

112. Yet I had some supports in this temptation, though they were then all questioned by me ; that in *Jer. iii.* at the first was something to me ; and so was the consideration of Verse 4

of that Chapter ; that though we have spoken and done as evil things as we could, yet we shall cry unto God, *My Father, Thou art the Guide of my youth* ; and shall return unto Him.

113. I had also once a sweet glance from that in *2 Cor. v. 21. For He hath made Him to be Sin for us, who knew no Sin, that we might be made the Righteousness of God in Him.* I remember that one day, as I was sitting in a neighbour's house, and there very sad at the consideration of my many blasphemies ; and as I was saying in my mind, *What ground have I, to say that I, who have been so vile and abominable, should ever inherit Eternal Life ?* That Word came suddenly upon me, *What shall we say to these things ? If God be for us, who can be against us ?* Rom. viii. 31. That also was an help unto me, *Because I live, you shall live also,* John xiv. 19. But these Words were but hints, touches, and short visits, though very sweet when present ; only they lasted not ; but *like to Peter's sheet, of a sudden were caught up from me, to Heaven again,* Acts x. 16.

114. But afterwards the Lord did more fully and graciously discover Himself unto me, and indeed did quite, not only deliver me from the guilt that by these things was laid upon my conscience, but also from the very filth thereof ; for the temptation was removed, and I was put into my right mind again, as other Christians were.

115. I remember that one day, as I was

travelling into the country, and musing on the wickedness and blasphemy of my heart, and considering the enmity that was in me to God, that Scripture came into my mind, *He hath made Peace by the Blood of His Cross*, Col. i. 20, by which I was made to see, both again and again, that God and my soul were friends by His Blood; yea, I saw that the Justice of God, and my sinful soul could embrace and kiss each other, through His Blood. This was a good day to me; I hope I shall never forget it.

116. At another time, as I sat by the fire in my house, and musing on my wretchedness, the Lord made that also a precious Word unto me, *Forasmuch then as Children are Partakers of the Flesh and Blood, He also Himself likewise took part of the same, that through Death He might destroy him that had the Power of Death, that is, the Devil; and deliver those who through the Fear of Death, were all their Life subject to Bondage*, Heb. ii. 14, 15. I thought that the glory of these Words was then so weighty on me, that I was both once and twice ready to swoon as I sat; yet not with grief and trouble, but with solid joy and peace.

117. At this time I also sat under the Ministry of holy Mr *Gifford*, whose doctrine, by God's grace, was much for my stability. This man made it much his business to deliver the people of God from all those hard and unsound tests, that by nature we are prone to. He would bid us take special heed that we took not

up any truth upon trust; as from this, or that, or any other man or men; but cry mightily to God, that He would convince us of the reality thereof, and set us down therein by His own Spirit in the Holy Word: For, said he, if you do otherwise, when temptation comes, if strongly upon you, you not having received them with evidence from Heaven, will find you want that help and strength now to resist, that once you thought you had.

118. This was as seasonable to my soul, as the former and latter rains in their season; for I had found, and that by sad experience, the truth of these his words; (for I had felt, no man can say, especially when tempted by the Devil, that Jesus Christ is Lord, but by the Holy Ghost). Wherefore I found my soul, through grace, very apt to drink in this doctrine, and to incline to pray to God, that in nothing that pertained to God's glory, and my own eternal happiness, He would suffer me to be without the confirmation thereof from Heaven; for now I saw clearly, there was an exceeding difference betwixt the notion of the flesh and blood, and the revelation of God in Heaven: Also a great difference betwixt that Faith that is feigned, and according to man's wisdom, and of that which comes by a man's being born thereto of God, *Matt. xvi. 17.* 1 *John v. 1.*

119. But, Oh! now, how was my soul led from truth to truth by God! Even from the Birth and Cradle of the Son of God, to His

Accession, and Second Coming from Heaven to judge the World.

120. Truly, I then found, upon this account, the Great God was very good unto me; for, to my remembrance, there was not anything that I then cried unto God to make known, and reveal unto me, but He was pleased to do it for me; I mean, not one part of the Gospel of the Lord Jesus, but I was orderly led into it: Methought I saw with great evidence, from the Four Evangelists, the wonderful Works of God, in giving Jesus Christ to save us, from His Conception and Birth, even to His Second Coming to Judgment: Methought I was as if I had seen Him born, as if I had seen Him grow up; as if I had seen Him walk through this World, from the Cradle to the Cross; to which also, when He came, I saw how gently He gave Himself to be hanged, and nailed on it, for my sins and wicked doing. Also as I was musing on this His Progress, that dropped on my spirit, *He was ordained for the Slaughter*, 1 Pet. i. 19, 20.

121. When I have considered also the Truth of His Resurrection, and have remembered that Word, *Touch Me not*, Mary, &c. I have seen, as if He had leaped out of the grave's mouth, for joy, that He was risen again, and had got the conquest over our dreadful foes, *John xx. 17*. I have also, in the spirit, seen Him a Man, on the Right-Hand of God the Father for me; and have seen the manner of His Coming from

Heaven, to judge the World with Glory, and have been confirmed in these things by these Scriptures following, *Acts* i. 9, 10, and vii. 56, and x. 42. *Heb.* vii. 24. and viii. 36. *Rev.* i. 18. *1 Thess.* iv. 17, 18.

122. Once I was troubled to know whether the Lord Jesus was Man as well as God, and God as well as Man: And truly, in those days, let men say what they would, unless I had it with evidence from Heaven, all was nothing to me; I counted myself not set down in any Truth of God. Well, I was much troubled about this point, and could not tell how to be resolved; at last, that in *Rev.* v. came into my mind, *And I beheld, and lo, in the midst of the Throne, and of the four Beasts, and in the midst of the Elders, stood a Lamb.* In the midst of the Throne, thought I, there is the Godhead; in the midst of the Elders, there is His Manhood: But Oh! methought this did glister! It was a goodly touch, and gave me sweet satisfaction. That other Scripture also did help me much in this, *To us a Child is born, to us a Son is given, and the Government shall be upon His Shoulders: And His Name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, the Mighty God, the Everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace, &c.* *Isa.* ix. 6.

123. Also besides these teachings of God in His Word, the Lord made use of two things to confirm me in this Truth; the one was the errors of the *Quakers*, and the other was the

guilt of sin : For as the *Quakers* did oppose the Truth, so God did the more confirm me in it, by leading me into the Scripture that did wonderfully maintain it.

124. The errors that this people then maintained, were,

1. *That the Holy Scriptures were not the Word of God.*

2. *That every man in the world had the Spirit of Christ, Grace, Faith, &c.*

3. *That Christ Jesus, as Crucified, and Dying, Sixteen Hundred Years ago, did not satisfy Divine Justice for the Sins of the People.*

4. *That Christ's Flesh and Blood was within the Saints.*

5. *That the Bodies of the Good and Bad that are buried in the Church-Yard, shall not arise again.*

6. *That the Resurrection is past with good men already.*

7. *That that Man Jesus, that was crucified between two thieves on Mount Calvary, in the Land of Canaan, by Judea, was not ascended above the starry Heavens.*

8. *That He should not, even the same Jesus that died by the Hand of the Jews, come again*

124. For a more full statement of Bunyan's grounds of opposition to the *Quakers* *vide* his first work, "Some Gospel Truths Opened," published in 1656. The book is an earnest protest against any merely subjective view of Gospel Truth being taken as an adequate substitute for objective fact. *Vide* Dr Brown *op. cit.* p. 114.



at the last Day ; and as Man, judge all Nations, &c.

125. Many more vile and abominable things were in those days fomented by them, by which I was driven to a more narrow search of the Scriptures, and was, through their light and testimony, not only enlightened, but greatly confirmed and comforted in the Truth : and as I said, the guilt of sin did help me much ; for still as that would come upon me, the Blood of Christ did take it off again, and again, and again ; and that too sweetly, according to the Scripture. O Friends ! cry to God to reveal Jesus Christ unto you ; there is none teacheth like Him.

126. It would be too long here to stay, to

125. "There is none teacheth like Him."

*Cf.* "The book which I would have thee read, beloved, is Christ Jesus and Him crucified. In it is described the pattern of every virtue. It is the Book of Life, not only because it instructs the understanding by precepts, but also because it inflames the will by bright examples. The world is full of books, but all put together are not able to teach thee the art of acquiring virtue like the Life of Christ Crucified." Scupoli, *Spiritual Combat*, ch. 1.

"My Son, hear My words ; My words are most sweet, surpassing all the knowledge of the philosophers and wise men of the world. . . .

"Write My words on your heart, and meditate diligently upon them, for they will be found to be very needful in time of temptation."

"Teach me, O Lord, to do Thy will. Teach me to walk humbly and worthily before Thee." *De Imitatione Christi*, iii. 3, 1, *seq.*

tell you in particular, how God did set me down in all the things of Christ, and how He did, that He might do so, lead me into His Words; yea, and also how He did open them unto me, and make them shine before me, and cause them to dwell with me, talk with me, and comfort me over and over, both of His own being, and the being of His Son, and Spirit, and Word, and Gospel.

127. Only this, as I said before, I will say unto you again, that in general, He was pleased to take this course with me; First, To suffer me to be afflicted with temptations concerning them, and then reveal them unto me: As sometimes I should lie under great guilt for sin, even crushed me to the ground therewith; and then the Lord would shew me the Death of Christ; yea, so sprinkle my Conscience with His Blood, that I should find, and that before I was aware, that in that conscience, where but just now did reign and rage the Law, even there would rest and abide the Peace and Love of God, through Christ.

128. Now I had an evidence, as I thought, of my Salvation from Heaven, with many golden seals thereon, all hanging in my sight: Now could I remember this manifestation, and the other discovery of Grace, with comfort; and would often long and desire that the Last Day were come, that I might be for ever inflamed with the sight, and joy, and communion with Him, whose Head was crowned with Thorns,

whose Face was spit upon, and Body broken, and Soul made an Offering for my Sins : For whereas before I lay continually trembling at the mouth of Hell, now methought I was got so far therefrom, that I could not, when I looked back, scarce discern it : And Oh ! thought I, that I were fourscore years old now, that I might die quickly, that my soul might be gone to rest.

129. But before I had got thus far out of these my temptations, I did greatly long to see some ancient godly man's experience, who had writ some hundreds of years before I was born ; for those who had writ in our days, I thought (but I desire them now to pardon me) that they had writ only that which others felt : or else had, through the strength of their wits and parts, studied to answer such objections as they perceived others were perplexed with, without going down themselves into the Deep. Well, after many such longings in my mind, the God, in whose Hands are all our days and ways, did cast into my hand (one day) a Book of *Martin Luther's* ; it was his Comment on the *Galatians* ; it also was so old, that it was ready to fall piece from piece if I did but turn it over. Now I

129. It is interesting to compare the help which Bunyan thus received from an "ancient godly man's experience," with the comfort which Luther himself had received from an old brother in the Augustinian convent at Erfurt, when he himself was almost worn out by terror of conscience. Luther, *Table Talk*, c. 27.

was pleased much, that such an old book had fallen into my hands; the which when I had but a little way perused, I found my condition in his experience, so largely and profoundly handled, as if his book had been written out of my heart. This made me marvel; for thus thought I, This man could not know any thing of the state of Christians now, but must needs write and speak the experience of former days.

130. Besides, he doth most gravely also in that book, debate of the rise of these temptations, namely, blasphemy, desperation, and the like; shewing that the Law of *Moses*, as well as the Devil, Death, and Hell, hath a very great hand therein: the which at first, was very strange to me; but considering and watching, I found it so indeed. But of particulars here, I intend nothing; only this methinks I must let fall before all men, I do prefer this Book of *Martin Luther* upon the *Galatians* (excepting the Holy Bible) before all the books that ever I have seen, as most fit for a wounded conscience.

131. And now I found, as I thought, that I loved Christ dearly: Oh! methought my soul cleaved unto Him, my affections cleaved unto Him: I felt my love to Him as hot as fire, and now, as *Job* said, I thought I should die in my nest; but I did quickly find, that my great love was but too little; and that I, who had, as I thought, such burning love to Jesus Christ, could let Him go again for a very trifle; God can tell how to abase us, and can

hide pride from man. Quickly after this my love was tried to purpose.

132. For after the Lord had, in this manner, thus graciously delivered me from this great and sore temptation, and had set me down so sweetly in the Faith of His Holy Gospel, and had given me such strong consolation and blessed evidence from Heaven, touching my interest in His Love through Christ; the Tempter came upon me again, and that with a more grievous and dreadful temptation than before.

133. And that was, *To sell and part with this most blessed Christ, to exchange Him for the things of this life, for any thing.* The temptation lay upon me for the space of a year, and did follow me so continually, that I was not rid of it one day in a month; no, not some time one hour in many days together, unless when I was asleep.

134. And though, in my judgment I was persuaded, that those who were once effectually in Christ (as I hoped through His Grace, I had seen myself), I could never lose Him for ever; (*For the land shall not be sold for ever, for the land is Mine, saith God, Lev. xxv. 23*) yet it was a continual vexation to me, to think that I should have so much as one such thought within me against a Christ, a Jesus, that had done for me as He had done; and yet then I had almost none others, but such blasphemous ones.

135. But it was neither my dislike of the thought, nor yet any desire and endeavour to

resist it, that in the least did shake or abate the continuation or force and strength thereof; for it did always, in almost whatever I thought, intermix itself therewith, in such sort, that I could neither eat my food, stoop for a pin, chop a stick, or cast mine eye to look on this or that, but still the temptation would come, *Sell Christ for this, or sell Christ for that; sell Him, sell Him.*

136. Sometimes it would run in my thoughts, not so little as a hundred times together, *Sell Him, sell Him, sell Him*: Against which, I may say, for whole hours together, I have been forced to stand as continually leaning and forcing my spirit against it, lest haply, before I were aware, some wicked thought might arise in my heart, that might consent thereto; and sometimes the Tempter would make me believe I had consented to it; but then I should be, as tortured upon a rack, for whole days together.

137. This temptation did put me to such scares, lest I should at some times, I say, consent thereto, and be overcome therewith, that by the very force of my mind, in labouring to gainsay and resist this wickedness, my very body would be put into action or motion, by way of pushing or thrusting with my hands or elbows; still answering as fast as the Destroyer said, *Sell Him; I will not, I will not, I will not; no, not for thousands, thousands, thousands of worlds*: Thus reckoning, lest I should in the midst of these assaults, set too low a value

on Him; even until I scarce well knew where I was, or how to be composed again.

138. At these seasons he would not let me eat my food at quiet; but, forsooth, when I was set at the table at any meat, I must go hence to pray; I must leave my food now, and just now, so counterfeit holy also would this Devil be. When I was thus tempted, I would say in myself, *Now I am at meat, let me make an end.* No, said he, *you must do it now, or you will displease God, and despise Christ.* Wherefore I was much afflicted with these things; and because of the sinfulness of my nature (imagining that these were Impulses from God) I should deny to do it, as if I denied God; and then should I not be as guilty, because I did not obey a temptation of the Devil, as if I had broken the Law of God indeed.

139. But to be brief: One morning as I did lie in my bed, I was, as at other times, most fiercely assaulted with this temptation, *To sell and part with Christ*; the wicked suggestion still running in my mind, *Sell Him, sell Him, sell Him, sell Him, sell Him*, as fast as a man could speak: Against which also, in my mind, as at other times, I answered, *No, no, not for thousands, thousands, thousands*, at least twenty times together: But at last, after much striving, even until I was almost out of breath, I felt this thought pass through my heart, *Let Him go, if He will*; and I thought also, that I felt my heart freely consent thereto. Oh! the diligence

of Satan! Oh! the desperateness of man's heart!

140. Now was the battle won, and down fell I, as a bird that is shot from the top of a tree, into great guilt, and fearful despair. Thus getting out of my bed, I went moping into the field; but God knows, with as heavy an heart as mortal man, I think, could bear; where, for the space of two hours, I was like a man bereft of life; and, as now, past all recovery, and bound over to eternal punishment.

141. And withal, that Scripture did seize upon my soul: *Or profane person, as Esau, who for one morsel of meat, sold his birth-right: For ye know, how that afterwards, when he would have inherited the blessing, he was rejected; for he found no place of repentance, though he sought it carefully with tears,* Heb. xii. 16, 17.

142. Now was I as one bound, I felt myself shut up unto the Judgment to come; nothing now, for two years together, would abide with me, but Damnation, and an expectation of Damnation: I say, nothing now would abide with me but this, save some few moments for relief, as in the sequel you will see.

143. These words were to my soul, like fetters of brass to my legs, in the continual sound of which I went for several months together. But about ten or eleven o'clock on that day, as I was walking under an hedge (full of sorrow and guilt, God knows) and



bemoaning myself for this hard hap, that such a thought should arise within me, suddenly this sentence rushed in upon me, *The Blood of Christ remits all guilt.* At this I made a stand in my spirit. With that this Word took hold upon me, *The Blood of Jesus Christ His own Son, cleansed us from all sin,* 1 John i. 7.

144. Now I began to conceive peace in my soul, and methought I saw, as if the tempter did leer and steal away from me, as being ashamed of what he had done. At the same time also I had my sin, and the Blood of Christ, thus represented to me, That my Sin, when compared to the Blood of Christ, was no more to it, than this little clod of stone before me, is to this vast and wide field that here I see. This gave me good encouragement for the space of two or three hours; in which time also, methought, I saw, by faith, the Son of God, as suffering for my sins: But because it tarried not, I therefore sunk in my spirit, under exceeding guilt again.

145. But chiefly by the afore-mentioned Scripture concerning *Esau's* selling of his birth-right; for that Scripture would lie all day long in my mind, and hold me down, so that I could by no means lift up myself; for when I would strive to turn to this Scripture or that for relief, still that sentence would be sounding in me; *For ye know, how that afterwards, when he would have inherited the blessing, he found no place of repentance, though he sought it carefully with tears.*

146. Sometimes, indeed, I should have a touch from that in *Luke xxii. 32. I have prayed for thee that thy faith fail not*; but it would not abide upon me; neither could I, indeed, when I considered my state, find ground to conceive in the least, that there should be the root of that grace in me, having sinned as I had done. Now was I torn and rent in an heavy case for many days together.

147. Then began I with sad and careful heart, to consider of the nature and largeness of my sin, and to search into the Word of God, if I could in any place espy a word of promise, or any encouraging sentence, by which I might take relief. Wherefore I began to consider that of *Mark iii. All manner of sins and blasphemies shall be forgiven unto the sons of men, wherewith soever they shall blaspheme*. Which place methought, at a blush, did contain a large and glorious promise for the pardon of high offences; but considering the place more fully, I thought it was rather to be understood, as relating more chiefly to those who had, while in a natural estate, committed such things as there are mentioned; but not to me, who had not only received light and mercy, but that had both after, and also contrary to that, so slighted Christ as I had done.

148. I feared therefore that this wicked sin of mine, might be that sin unpardonable, of which He there thus speaketh: *But he that shall blaspheme against the Holy Ghost, hath never for-*

*givenness, but is in danger of eternal damnation, Mark iii. And I did the rather give credit to this, because of that sentence in the Hebrews: For you know how that afterwards, when he would have inherited the blessing, he was rejected; for he found no place of repentance, though he sought it carefully with tears. And this stuck always with me.*

149. And now was I both a burthen and a terror to myself; nor did I ever so know, as now, what it was to be weary of my life, and yet afraid to die. Oh! how gladly now would I have been anybody but myself! any thing but a man, and in any condition but my own! for there was nothing did pass more frequently over my mind, than that it was impossible for me to be forgiven my transgression, and to be saved from wrath to come.

150. And now I began to labour to call again time that was past; wishing a thousand times twice-told, that the day was yet to come, when I should be tempted to such a sin; concluding with great indignation, both against my heart, and all assaults, how I would rather have been torn in pieces, than be found a consenter thereto. But alas! these thoughts, and wishings, and resolvings, were now too late to help me; this thought had passed my heart, God hath let me go, and I am fallen. Oh! thought I, *that it was with me as in months past, as in the days when God preserved me!* Job xxix. 2.

151. Then again, being loth and unwilling to perish, I began to compare my sin with others, to see if I could find that any of those that were saved, had done as I had done. So I considered *David's* adultery, and murder, and found them most heinous crimes; and those too committed after light and grace received: But yet by considering that his transgressions were only such as were against the Law of *Moses*, from which the Lord Christ could, with the consent of His Word, deliver him: But mine was against Gospel; yea, against the Mediator thereof, I had sold my Saviour.

152. Now again should I be as if racked upon the wheel, when I considered, That, besides the guilt that possessed me, I should be so void of grace, so bewitched! What, thought I, must it be no sin but this? Must it needs be the *great transgression*? Psalm xix. 13. Must that Wicked One touch my soul? 1 *John* v. 18. Oh! what sting did I find in all these sentences!

153. What, thought I, is there but one sin that is unpardonable? But one sin that layeth the soul without the reach of God's Mercy; and must I be guilty of that? Must it needs be that? Is there but one sin among so many millions of sins, for which there is no forgiveness; and must I commit this? Oh! unhappy sin! Oh! unhappy man! These things would so break and confound my spirit, that I could not tell what to do; I thought at times, they

would have broke my wits; and still, to aggravate my misery, that would run in my mind, *You know how, that afterwards, when he would have inherited the blessing, he was rejected.* Oh! no one knows the terrors of those days but myself.

154. After this I began to consider of *Peter's* sin, which he committed in denying his Master: And indeed, this came nighest to mine of any that I could find, for he had denied his Saviour, as I, after light and mercy received; yea, and that too, after warning given him. I also considered, that he did it once and twice; and that, after time to consider betwixt. But though I put all these circumstances together, that, if possible, I might find help, yet I considered again, that his was but a *Denial of his Master*, but mine was, a *Selling of my Saviour*. Wherefore I thought with myself, that I came nearer to *Judas*, than either to *David* or *Peter*.

155. Here again my torment would flame out and afflict me; yea, it would grind me, as it were to powder, to consider the preservation of God towards others, while I fell into the snare; for in my thus considering of other men's sins, and comparing of them with mine own, I could evidently see, God preserved them, notwithstanding their wickedness, and would not let them, as He had let me become a son of perdition.

156. But, Oh! how did my soul at this time prize the preservation that God did set

about His people! Ah, how safely did I see them walk, whom God had hedged in! They were within His care, protection, and special providence. Though they were full as bad as I by nature; yet because He loved them, He would not suffer them to fall without the range of mercy. But as for me, I was gone, I had done it; He would not preserve me, nor keep me; but suffered me, because I was a reprobate, to fall as I had done. Now did those blessed places that speak of God's keeping His people, shine like the sun before me, though not to comfort me, yet to shew me the blessed state and heritage of those whom the Lord hath blessed.

157. Now I saw, that as God had His hand in all the providences and dispensations that overtook His elect; so he had His hand in all the temptations that they had to sin against Him; not to animate them to wickedness, but to chuse their temptations and troubles for them; and also to leave them for a time, to such things only that might not destroy, but humble them; as might not put them beyond, but lay them in the way of the renewing His mercy. But Oh! what love, what care, what kindness and mercy did I now see, mixing itself with the most severe and dreadful of all God's ways to His people! He would let *David, Hezekiah, Solomon, Peter,* and others fall, but He would not let them fall into the sin unpardonable, nor into Hell

for sin. O! thought I, these be the men that God hath loved; these be the men that God, though He chastiseth them, keeps them in safety by Him; and them whom He makes to abide under the shadow of the Almighty. But all these thoughts added sorrow, grief, and horror to me, as whatever I now thought on, it was killing to me. If I thought how God kept His own, that was killing to me; if I thought of how I was fallen myself, that was killing to me. As all things wrought together for the best, and to do good to them that were the called, according to His purpose; so I thought that all things wrought for damage, and for my eternal overthrow.

158. Then again I began to compare my sin with the sin of *Judas*, that, if possible, I might find if mine differed from that, which in truth is unpardonable: And Oh! thought I, if it should differ from it, though but the breadth of an hair, what a happy condition is my soul in! And by considering, I found that *Judas* did this intentionally, but mine was against prayer and strivings: Besides, his was committed with much deliberation, but mine in a fearful hurry, on a sudden: All this while I was tossed to and fro like the locust, and driven from trouble to sorrow; hearing always the sound of *Esau's* fall in mine ears, and the dreadful consequences thereof.

159. Yet this consideration about *Judas's* sin was, for a while, some little relief to me;

for I saw I had not, as to the circumstances, transgressed so fully as he. But this was quickly gone again, for I thought with myself, there might be more ways than one to commit this unpardonable sin, also I thought that there might be degrees of that, as well as of other transgressions; wherefore, for aught I yet could perceive, this iniquity of mine might be such, as might never be passed by.

160. I was often now ashamed that I should be like such an ugly man as *Judas*: I thought also how loathsome I should be unto all the saints in the Day of Judgment: Insomuch, that now I could scarce see a good man, that I believed had a good conscience, but I should feel my heart tremble at him, while I was in his presence. Oh: now I saw a glory in walking with God, and what a mercy it was to have a good conscience before Him.

161. I was much about that time tempted to content myself by receiving some false opinions; as, That there should be no such thing as a Day of Judgment; That we should not rise again; and that sin was no such grievous thing: The Tempter suggesting thus: *For if these things should indeed be true, yet to believe otherwise, would yield you ease for the present. If you must perish, never torment yourself so much beforehand; drive the thoughts of damning out of your mind, by possessing your mind with some such conclusions that Atheists and Ranters use to help themselves withal.*



162. But, Oh! when such thoughts have led through my heart, how, as it were, within a step, hath Death and Judgment been in my view! Methought the Judge stood at the door; I was as if come already; so that such things could have no entertainment. But methinks, I see by this, that Satan will use any means to keep the soul from Christ; he loveth not an awakened frame of spirit; security, blindness, darkness and error, is the very kingdom and habitation of the Wicked One.

163. I found it a hard work now to pray to God, because despair was swallowing me up; I thought I was as with a tempest, driven away from God; for always when I cried to God for mercy, this would come in, *'Tis too late, I am lost, God hath let me fall; not to my correction, but my condemnation: my sin is unpardonable; and I know concerning Esau, how that after he had sold his birth-right, he would have received the blessing, but was rejected.* About this time I did light on that dreadful story of that miserable mortal *Francis Spira*; a book that was to my troubled spirit, as salt, when rubbed into a fresh wound: every sentence in that book, every groan of that man, with all the rest of his actions in his dolours, as his tears, his prayers, his gnashing of teeth, his wringing of hands, his twisting, and languishing, and pining away under that mighty hand of God that was upon him, was as knives and daggers in my soul; especially that sentence of his was frightful to me, *Man*

*knows the beginning of sin, but who bounds the issues thereof?* Then would the former sentence, as the conclusion of all, fall like an hot thunder-bolt again upon my conscience; *For you know how that afterwards, when he would have inherited the blessing, he was rejected; for he found no place of repentance, though he sought it carefully with tears.*

164. Then would I be struck into a very great trembling, insomuch that at some times I could, for whole days together, feel my very body, as well as my mind, to shake and totter under the sense of this dreadful Judgment of God, that would fall on those that have sinned that most fearful and unpardonable sin. I felt also such a clogging and heat at my stomach, by reason of this my terror, that I was, especially at some times, as if my breast-bone would split asunder; then I thought concerning that of *Judas, who by his falling headlong burst asunder, and all his bowels gushed out, Acts i.*

165. I feared also that this was the mark that God did set on *Cain*, even continual fear and trembling, under the heavy load of guilt that He had charged on him for the blood of his brother *Abel*. Thus did I wind, and twine, and shrink under the burthen that was upon me; which burthen also did so oppress me, that I could neither stand nor go, nor lie either at rest or quiet.

166. Yet that saying would sometimes come into my mind, *He hath received gifts for the*

*rebellious*, Ps. lxxviii. 18. *The rebellious*, thought I! Why, surely they are such as once were under subjection to their Prince; even those who after they have once sworn subjection to His government, have taken up arms against Him; and this, thought I, is my very condition: I once loved Him, feared Him, served Him; but now I am a rebel; I have sold Him, I have said, *Let Him go if He will*; but yet He has gifts for rebels; and then why not for me?

167. This sometimes I thought on, and would labour to take hold thereof, that some, though small refreshment, might have been conceived by me; but in this also I missed of my desire; I was driven with force beyond it; I was like a man going to execution, even by that place where he would fain creep in and hide himself, but may not.

168. Again, after I had thus considered the sins of the *saints* in particular, and found *mine* went beyond them, then I began to think with myself, Set the case, I should put all *theirs* together, and *mine alone* against them, might I not then find encouragement! For if *mine*, though bigger than any one, yet should be but equal to all, then there is hopes; for that Blood that hath virtue enough in it to wash away all theirs, hath virtue enough in it to wash away mine, though this one be full as big, if not bigger than all theirs. Here again, I would consider the sin of *David*, of *Solomon*, of *Manasseh*, of *Peter*,

and the rest of the great offenders; and would also labour, that I might with fairness, to aggravate and heighten their sins by several circumstances.

169. I would think with myself that *David* shed blood to cover his adultery, and that by the sword of the children of *Ammon*; a work that could not be done, but by contrivance, which was a great aggravation to his sin. But then this would turn upon me: Ah: but these were but sins against the Law, from which there was a Jesus sent to save them; but yours is a sin against the Saviour, and who shall save you from that?

170. Then I thought on *Solomon*, and how he sinned in loving strange women, in falling away to their idols, in building them temples, in doing this after light, in his old age, after great mercy received: But the same conclusion that cut me off in the former consideration, cut me off as to this; namely, That all those were but sins against the Law, for which God had provided a remedy; *but I had sold my Saviour*, and there remained no more Sacrifice for sin.

171. I would then add to these men's sins, the sins of *Manasseh*; how that he built altars for idols in the House of the Lord; he also observed times, used enchantments, had to do with wizards, was a wizard, had his familiar spirits, burned his children in the fire in sacrifice to devils, and made the streets of *Jerusalem* run down with the blood of innocents. These,

thought I, are great sins, sins of a bloody colour; but yet it would turn again upon me, *They are none of them of the nature of yours; you have parted with Jesus, you have sold your Saviour.*

172. This one consideration would always kill my heart, my sin was point-blank against my Saviour; and that too, at that height, that I had in my heart said of Him, *Let Him go if He will.* Oh! methought this sin was bigger than the sins of a country, of a kingdom, or of the whole world, no *one* pardonable; nor *all* of them together, was able to equal mine; mine out-went them every one.

173. Now I should find my mind to flee from God, as from the face of a dreadful Judge; yet this was my Torment, I could not escape His hand: (*It is a fearful thing to fall*

172. For a similar conception of the magnitude of sin, cf. "Do not fancy, beloved, that you can ever dig deep enough; but believe that if it were possible for anything connected with a creature to be infinite it would be his vileness."

For comfort under this overwhelming sense of sin, v. the same author, as follows:

"Wouldst thou praise God, condemn thyself, and bear the reproaches of others. . . . Humble thyself as far as possible, and He will seek thee, and take thee in His Arms, and receive thee to Himself, and will most lovingly embrace thee the more vile thou art in thine own sight." Scupoli, *Spiritual Combat*, ch. xxxii.

Cf. "It is high time for those people to die who have outlived the sense of their own misdemeanours." M. Aurelius, *Meditations*, Bk. vii. 24.

into the hands of the Living God, Heb. x.) But blessed be His Grace, that Scripture, in these flying fits, would call, as running after me, *I have blotted out, as a thick cloud, thy transgressions ; and as a cloud thy sins : Return unto Me for I have redeemed thee*, Isaiah xlv. 22. This, I say, would come in upon my mind, when I was fleeing from Face of God ; for I did flee from His Face ; that is, my mind and spirit fled before Him ; by reason of His highness, I could not endure : Then would the text cry, *Return unto Me* ; it would cry aloud with a very great voice, *Return unto Me for I have redeemed thee*. Indeed, this would make me make a little stop, and, as it were, look over my shoulder behind me, to see if I could discern that the God of grace did follow me with a pardon in His hand ; but I could no sooner do that, but all would be clouded and darkened again by that sentence, *For you know, how that afterwards, when he would have inherited the blessing, he found no place of repentance, though he sought it carefully with tears*. Wherefore I could not refrain, but fled, though at some times it cried, *Return, Return*, as it did hollow after me : but I feared to close in therewith, lest it should not come from God ; for that other, as I said, was still sounding in my conscience, *For you know that afterwards, when he would have inherited the blessing, he was rejected, &c.*

174. Once as I was walking to and fro in

a good man's shop, bemoaning of myself in my sad and doleful state, afflicting myself with self-abhorrence for this wicked and ungodly thought; lamenting also this hard hap of mine, for that I should commit so great a sin, greatly fearing I should not be pardoned; praying also in my heart, that if this sin of mine did differ from that against the Holy Ghost, the Lord would shew it me. And being now ready to sink with fear, suddenly there was, as if there had rushed in at the window, the noise of wind upon me, but very pleasant, and as if I heard a voice speaking, *Didst thou ever refuse to be justified by the Blood of Christ?* And withal, my whole life of profession past, was in a moment opened to me, wherein I was made to see, that designedly I had not: so my heart answered groaningly, *No.* Then fell, with power, that Word of God upon me, *See that ye refuse not Him that speaketh*, Heb. xii. 25. This made a strange seizure upon my spirit; it brought light with it, and commanded a silence in my heart of all those tumultuous thoughts, that did before use, like masterless hell-hounds, to roar and bellow, and make an hideous noise within me. It shewed me also that Jesus Christ had yet a word of grace and mercy for me, that He had not, as I had feared, quite forsaken and cast off my soul; yea, this was a kind of check for my proneness to desperation; a kind of threatening of me, if I did, notwithstanding my sins, and the heinousness of them, venture my salvation

upon the Son of God. But as to my determining about this strange dispensation, what it was, I know not; or from whence it came, I know not; I have not yet in twenty years time been able to make a judgment of it; *I thought then what here I should be loth to speak.* But verily that sudden rushing wind was, as if an Angel had come upon me, but both it, and the salvation, I will leave until the Day of Judgment; only this I say, it commanded a great calm in my soul; it persuaded me there might be hope: it shewed me, as I thought, what the sin unpardonable was, and that my soul had yet the blessed privilege to flee to Jesus Christ for mercy. But I say, concerning this dispensation; I know not what to say unto it yet; which was also, in truth, the cause, that at first I did not speak of it in the book; I do now also leave it to be thought on by men of sound judgment. I lay not the stress of my salvation thereupon, but upon the Lord Jesus, in the promise; yet seeing I am here unfolding of my secret things, I thought it might not be altogether inexpedient to let this also shew itself, though I cannot now relate the matter as there I did experience it. This lasted in the savour of it for about three or four days, and then I began to mistrust, and to despair again.

175. Wherefore still my life hung in doubt before me, not knowing which way I should



tip; only this I found my soul desire, even to cast itself at the Foot of Grace, by prayer and supplication. But Oh! 'twas hard for me now, to have the face to pray to this Christ for mercy, against whom I had thus vilely sinned: 'Twas hard work, I say, to offer to look Him in the Face, against whom I had so vilely sinned; and indeed I have found it as difficult to come to God by prayer, after back-sliding from Him, as to do any other thing. Oh! the shame that did now attend me! especially when I thought, I am now a going to pray to Him for mercy, that I had so lightly esteemed but a while before! I was ashamed; yea, even confounded, because this villainy had been committed by me. But I saw that there was but one way with me, I must go to Him, and humble myself unto Him, and beg that He, of His wonderful mercy, would shew pity to me, and have mercy upon my wretched sinful soul.

176. Which, when the Tempter perceived, he strongly suggested to me, *That I ought not to pray to God, for prayer was not for any in my case; neither could it do me good, because I had rejected the Mediator, by Whom all prayers came with acceptance to God the Father; and without Whom, no prayer could come into His Presence: Wherefore now to pray, is but to add sin to sin; Yea, now to pray, seeing God has cast you off, is the next way to anger and offend Him more than you ever did before.*

177. *For God (saith he) hath been weary of*

*you for these several years already, because you are none of His ; your bawlings in His ears hath been no pleasant voice to Him ; and therefore He let you sin in this sin, that you might be quite cut off ; and will you pray still ?* This the Devil urged, and set forth that in *Numbers*, when *Moses* said to the Children of *Israel*, *That because they would not go up to possess the land, when God would have them, therefore for ever He did bar them out from thence, though they prayed they might with tears*, *Numb. xiv. 36, 37, &c.*

178. As 'tis said in another place, *Exod. xxi. 14. The man that sins presumptuously shall be taken from God's altar, that he may die ; even as Joab was by King Solomon, when he thought to find shelter there, 1 Kings ii. 27, 28, &c.* These places did pinch me very sore ; yet my case being desperate, I thought with myself, I can but die ; and if it must be so, it shall once be said, *That such an one died at the Foot of Christ in prayer.* This I did, but with great difficulty, God doth know ; and that because, together with this, still that saying about *Esau* would be set at my heart, even like a flaming sword, to keep the way of the Tree of Life, lest I should take thereof and live. Oh ! who knows how hard a thing I found it, to come to God in prayer !

179. I did also desire the prayers of the people of God for me, but I feared that God would give them no heart to do it ; yea, I tremble in my soul to think, that some or other

of them would shortly tell me, that God hath said those words to them, that He once did say to the Prophet, concerning the children of *Israel*, *Pray not for this people, for I have rejected them*, Jer. xi. 14. So, *Pray not for him, for I have rejected him*. Yea, I thought that He had whispered this to some of them already, only they durst not tell me so; neither durst I ask them of it, for fear if it should be so, it would make me quite beside myself: *Man knows the beginning of sin* (said *Spira*) *but who bounds the issues thereof?*

180. About this time I took an opportunity to break my mind to an ancient Christian, and told him all my case; I told him also, that I was afraid that I had sinned the sin against the Holy Ghost; and he told me, *He thought so too*. Here therefore I had but cold comfort; but talking a little more with him, I found him, though a good man, a stranger to much combat with the Devil. Wherefore I went to God again, as well as I could, for mercy still.

181. Now also did the Tempter begin to mock me in my misery, saying, *That seeing I had thus parted with the Lord Jesus, and provoked Him to displeasure, Who would have stood between my soul and the flame of devouring fire, there was now but one way, and that was, To pray that God the Father would be a Mediator betwixt His Son and me; That we might be reconciled again, and that I might have that blessed benefit in Him, that His blessed saints enjoyed.*

182. Then did that Scripture seize upon my Soul, *He is of one mind, and who can turn Him?* Job xxiii. 13. Oh! I saw, 'twas as easy to persuade Him to make a new world, a new covenant, or new Bible, besides that we have already, as to pray for such a thing. This was to persuade Him, that what He had done already, was mere folly, and persuade Him to alter, yea, to disannul the whole way of salvation: And then would that saying rend my soul asunder, *Neither is there salvation in any other; for there is none other Name under Heaven, given among Men, whereby we must be saved,* Acts iv. 12.

183. Now the free, and fully, and gracious Words of the Gospel, were the greatest torment to me; yea, nothing so afflicted me, as the thoughts of Jesus Christ, the remembrance of a Saviour; because I had cast Him off, brought forth the villany of my sin, and my loss by it, to mind; nothing did twinge my conscience like this: Every thing that I thought of the Lord Jesus, of His grace, love, goodness, kindness, gentleness, meekness, death, blood, promises and blessed exhortations, comforts, and consolations, it went to my soul like a sword; for still, unto these my considerations of the Lord Jesus, these thoughts would make place for themselves in my heart; *Aye, this is the Jesus, the loving Saviour, the Son of God, whom you have parted with, whom you have slighted, despised, and abused. This is the only*

*Saviour, the only Redeemer, the only one that could so love sinners, as to wash them from their Sins in His own most precious Blood, but you have no part nor lot in this Jesus ; you have put Him from you ; you have said in your heart, Let Him go if He will. Now therefore you are severed from Him ; you have severed yourself from Him : Behold then His Goodness, but yourself to be no partaker of it ! Oh ! thought I, what have I lost. What have I parted with ! What has disinherited my poor soul ! Oh ! 'tis sad to be destroyed by the Grace and Mercy of God ; to have the Lamb, the Saviour, turn Lion and Destroyer, Rev. vi. I also trembled, as I have said, at the sight of the Saints of God, especially at those that greatly loved Him, and that made it their business to walk continually with Him in this World ; for they did, both in their words, their carriage, and all their expressions of tenderness and fear to sin against their precious Saviour, condemn, lay guilt upon, and also add continual affliction and shame unto my soul. The Dread of them was upon me, and I trembled at God's Samuels, 1 Sam. xvi. 4.*

184. Now also the Tempter began afresh to mock my soul another way, saying, *That Christ indeed did pity my case, and was sorry for my loss ; but forasmuch as I had sinned and transgressed as I had done, He could by no means help me, nor save me from what I feared ; for my sin was not of the nature of theirs, for whom He bled and died ; neither was it counted with those that were laid to*

*His charge, when He hanged on a tree : Therefore unless He should come down from Heaven, and die anew for this sin, though indeed He did greatly pity me, yet I could have no benefit of Him.* These things may seem ridiculous to others, even as ridiculous as they were in themselves, but to me they were most tormenting cogitations; every one of them augmented my misery, that Jesus Christ should have so much Love as to pity me, when yet He could not help me too; nor did I think that the reason why He could not help me, was, because His Merits were weak, or His Grace and Salvation spent on others already, but because His faithfulness to His threatenings, would not let Him extend His Mercy to me. Besides, I thought, as I have already hinted, that my sin was not within the bounds of that pardon, that was wrapped up in a Promise; and if not, then I knew surely, that it was more easy for Heaven and Earth to pass away, than for me to have Eternal Life. So that the ground of all these fears of mine, did arise from a steadfast belief I had of the stability of the holy Word of God, and also from my being misinformed of the nature of my sin.

185. But Oh! how this would add to my affliction, to conceit that I should be guilty of such a sin, for which He did not die. These thoughts did so confound me, and imprison me, and tie me up from faith, that I knew not what to do. But Oh! thought I, that He would come down again! Oh! that the work of man's

redemption was yet to be done by Christ! How would I pray Him and intreat Him to count and reckon this sin among the rest for which He died! But this Scripture would strike me down as dead; *Christ being raised from the dead, dieth no more; Death hath no more dominion over Him*, Rom. vi. 9.

186. Thus, by the strange and unusual assaults of the Tempter, my soul was like a broken vessel, driven as with the winds, and tossed sometimes headlong into despair; sometimes upon the Covenant of Works, and sometimes to wish that the New Covenant, and the conditions thereof might so far forth as I thought myself concerned, be turned another way, and changed. *But in all these, I was as those that jostle against the rocks; more broken, scattered and rent.* Oh! the unthought of imaginations, frights, fears, and terrors, that are effected by a thorough application of guilt yielding to desperation! *This is the man that hath his dwelling among the tombs with the dead; that is always crying out and cutting himself with stones*, Mark v. 1, 2, 3. But I say, all in vain; desperation will not comfort him, the Old Covenant will not save him: Nay, *Heaven and Earth shall pass away, before one Jot or Tittle of the Word and Law of Grace will fail or be removed.* This I saw, this I felt, and under this I groaned; yet this advantage I got thereby, namely, a farther confirmation of the certainty of the way to salvation; and that the Scriptures were the Word of God. Oh! I cannot now

express what I then saw and felt of the steadiness of Jesus Christ, the Rock of man's salvation: What was done, could not be undone, added to, nor altered. I saw, indeed, that sin might drive the soul beyond Christ, even the sin which is unpardonable; but woe to him that was so driven, for the Word would shut him out.

187. Thus was I always sinking, whatever I did think or do. So one day I walked to a neighbouring town, and sat down upon a settle in the street, and fell into a very deep pause about the most fearful state my sin had brought me to; and after long musing, I lifted up my head, but methought I saw, as if the sun that shineth in the heavens did grudge to give light; and as if the very stones in the street, and tiles upon the houses, did bend themselves against me. Methought that they all combined together to banish me out of the world; I was abhorred of them, and unfit to dwell among them, or be partaker of their benefit, because I had sinned against the Saviour. O how happy now was every creature over I was! For they stood fast and kept their station, but I was gone and lost.

188. Then breaking out in the bitterness of my soul, I said to my soul, with a grievous sigh, *How can God comfort such a wretch!* I had no sooner said it, but this returned upon me, as an echo doth answer a voice, *This sin is not unto death.* At which I was, as if I had been raised out of the grave, and cried out again, *Lord, how couldst Thou find out such a word as this!* For



I was filled with admiration at the fitness, and at the unexpectedness of the sentence ; the fitness of the word, the rightness of the timing of it ; the power, and sweetness, and light, and glory that came with it also, was marvellous to me to find : I was now, for the time, out of doubt as to that about which I so much was in doubt before ; my fears before *were*, that my sin was not pardonable, and so that I had no right to pray, to repent, &c. or that if I did, it would be of no advantage or profit to me. But now, thought I, if *this sin* is not unto death, then it is pardonable ; therefore from this I have encouragement to come to God by Christ for mercy, to consider the promise of forgiveness as that which stands with open arms to receive me, as well as others. This therefore was a great easement to my mind, to wit, that my sin was pardonable, that it was not the sin unto death (1 *John* v. 16, 17). None but those that know what my trouble (by their own experience) was, can tell what relief came to my soul by this consideration. It was a release to me from my former bonds, and a shelter from my former storms : I seemed now to stand upon the same ground with other sinners, and to have as good right to the Word and Prayer as any of them.

189. Now I say, I was in hopes that my sin was not unpardonable, but that there might be hopes for me to obtain forgiveness. But Oh ! how Satan did now lay about him for to bring me down again ! But he could by

no means do it, neither this day, nor the most part of the next, for this sentence stood like a mill-post at my back. Yet towards the evening of the next day, I felt this word begin to leave me, and to withdraw its supportation from me, and so I returned to my old fears again, but with a great deal of grudging and peevishness, for I feared the sorrow of despair; nor could my faith now long retain this word.

190. But the next day at evening, being under many fears, I went to seek the Lord, and as I prayed, I cried, and my soul cried to Him in these words, with strong cries; *O Lord, I beseech Thee, shew me that Thou hast loved me with everlasting Love*, Jer. xxxi. 3. I had no sooner said it, but with sweetness this returned upon me, as an echo, or sounding again, *I have loved thee with an everlasting love*. Now I went to bed in quiet; also when I awaked the next morning, and it was fresh upon my soul; and I believed it.

191. But yet the Tempter left me not, for it could not be so little as an hundred times, that he that day did labour to break my peace. Oh! the combats and conflicts that I did then meet with; as I strove to hold by this word, that of *Esau* would fly in my face like lightning: I should be sometimes up and down twenty times in an hour; yet God did bear me out, and keep my heart upon this word; from which I had also, for several

days together very much sweetness, and comfortable hopes of pardon: For thus it was made out unto me: *I loved thee whilst thou wast committing this sin, I loved thee before, I loved thee still, and I will love thee for ever.*

192. Yet I saw my sin most barbarous and a filthy crime, and could not but conclude with great shame and astonishment, that I had horribly abused the Holy Son of God; wherefore I felt my soul greatly to love and pity Him, and my bowels to yearn towards Him; for I saw He was still my Friend, and did reward me good for evil; yea, the love and affection that then did burn within me to my Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, did work at this time such a strong and hot desire of revengement upon myself for the abuse I had done unto Him, that, to speak as I then thought, had I a thousand gallons of blood within my veins, I could freely then have spilt it all, at the command and feet of this my Lord and Saviour.

193. And as I was thus a musing, and in my studies, considering how to love the Lord, and to express my Love to Him, that saying came in upon me, *If Thou, Lord, shouldst mark Iniquities, O Lord, who should stand? But there is forgiveness with Thee, that Thou mayst be feared,* Psalm cxxx. 3, 4. These were good words to me, especially the latter part thereof; to wit, That there is forgiveness with the Lord, that He might be feared; that is, as I then

understood it, That He might be loved, and had in reverence ; for it was thus made out to me, *That the Great God did set so high an esteem upon the love of His poor creatures, that rather than He would go without their love, He would pardon their transgression.*

194. And now was that word fulfilled on me, and I was also refreshed by it ; *Then shall they be ashamed and confounded, and never open their mouths any more, because of their shame, when I am pacified towards them for all that they have done, saith the Lord God, Ezek. xvi. 63.* Thus was my soul at this time (and as I then did think for ever) set at liberty from being afflicted with my former guilt and amazement.

195. But before many weeks were gone I began to despond again, fearing, lest, notwithstanding all that I had enjoyed, that I might be deceived and destroyed at the last ; for this consideration came strong into my mind, *That whatever comfort and peace I thought I might have from the Word of the Promise of Life, yet unless there could be found in my refreshment, a concurrence and agreement in the Scriptures, let me think what I will thereof, and hold it so fast, I should find no such thing at the end ; for the Scriptures cannot be broken,* John x. 35.

196. Now began my heart again to ache, and fear I might meet with a disappointment at last. Wherefore I began with all seriousness to examine my former comfort, and to

consider whether one that had sinned as I had done, might with confidence trust upon the faithfulness of God, laid down in these words, by which I had been comforted, and on which I had leaned myself: But now were brought to my mind, *For it is impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have the heavenly Gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Ghost, and have tasted the good Word of God, and the powers of the World to come, if they shall fall away, to renew them again unto repentance, Heb. vi. For, if we sin wilfully, after we have received the knowledge of the Truth, there remains no more sacrifice for sin, but a certain fearful looking for of Judgment, and a fiery Indignation, which shall devour the adversaries, Heb. x. Even as Esau, who for one morsel of meat, sold his birth-right. For ye know how that afterwards, when he would have inherited the blessing, he was rejected; for he found no place of repentance, though he sought it carefully with tears, Heb. xii.*

197. Now was the Word of the Gospel forced from my soul; so that no Promise or Encouragement was to be found in the Bible for me: And now would that saying work upon my spirit to afflict me, *Rejoice not, O Israel, for joy, as other people, Hosea ix. 1.* For I saw indeed, there was cause of rejoicing for those that held to Jesus; but for me, I had cut myself off by my transgressions, and left myself neither foot-hold, nor hand-hold, among

all the stays and props in the precious Word of Life.

198. And truly, I did now feel myself to sink into a Gulf, as an house whose foundation is destroyed ; I did liken myself in this condition, unto the case of a child that was fallen into a mill-pit, who though it could make some shift to scrabble and sprawl in the water, yet because it could find neither hold for hand nor foot, therefore at last it must die in that condition. So soon as this fresh assault had fastened on my soul, that Scripture came into my heart, *This is for many Days*, Dan. x. 14. And indeed I found it was so ; for I could not be delivered, nor brought to peace again, until well nigh two years and an half were completely finished. Wherefore these words, though in themselves they tended to no discouragement, yet to me, who feared this condition would be eternal, they were at some times as an help and refreshment to me.

199. For thought I, *Many days* are not for ever, *Many days* will have an end ; therefore seeing I was to be afflicted not a few but many days, yet I was glad it was but for many days. Thus, I say, I could recall myself sometimes, and give myself an help, for as soon as ever the Word came into my mind, at first, I knew my trouble would be long, yet this would be but sometimes ; for I could not always think on this, nor ever be helped by it, though I did.

200. Now while these Scriptures lay before me, and laid sin a-new at my door, that saying in *Luke xviii. 1*, with others, did encourage me to prayer. Then the Tempter again laid at me very sore, suggesting, *That neither the Mercy of God, nor yet the Blood of Christ, did at all concern me, nor could they help me for my sin; therefore it was but in vain to pray.* Yet thought I, *I will pray.* But, (said the Tempter) *your sin is unpardonable.* Well, said I, *I will pray.* 'Tis to no boot, said he. Yet, said I, *I will pray.* So I went to prayer to God; and while I was at prayer, I uttered words to this effect: *Lord, Satan tells me, that neither Thy Mercy, nor Christ's Blood, is sufficient to save my soul: Lord, shall I honour Thee most, by believing Thou wilt, and canst? or*

200. On the temptation to discouragement and despair, note the advice of Scupoli:—

“The second assault with which the devil strives to entirely crush us, is the fear he puts us in by calling our sins to remembrance, with the object of hurling us into the pit of despair. Observe this sure rule against the danger. All remembrance of sin is the gift of grace, and a help to salvation, when it brings with it humiliation, sorrow for having offended against God and trust in His mercy. . . . Everything may appear quite true, and thou mayest feel certain of the justice of thy damnation, and that there is no time left for thee to be saved. Nevertheless, treat it all as a temptation of the great deceiver. Humble thyself more and more, put more trust in God, and in this way and with these weapons, you will conquer the enemy, and give all glory to the Lord.” *Spiritual Combat*, ch. lxi.

*him, by believing Thou neither wilt not nor canst? Lord, I would fain honour Thee, by believing Thou wilt and canst.*

201. And as I was thus before the Lord, that Scripture fastened on my heart, [*O man, great is thy faith!*] Mat. xv. 28, even as if one had clapped me on the back, as I was on my knees before God: Yet I was not able to believe this, that this was a prayer of faith, till almost six months after; for I could not think that I had faith, or that there should be a Word for me to act faith on; therefore I should still be, as sticking in the jaws of desperation, and went mourning up and down in a sad condition.

202. There was nothing now that I longed for more than to be put out of doubt, as to this thing in question; and as I was vehemently desiring to know, if there was indeed hope for me, these words came rolling into my mind: *Will the Lord cast off for ever? And will He be favourable no more? Is His Mercy clean gone for ever? Doth His Promise fail for evermore? Hath God forgotten to be gracious? Hath He in anger shut up His tender Mercies?* Psalm lxxvii. 7, 8, 9. And all the while they run in my mind, methought I had still this as the answer, *'Tis a Question whether He hath or no: It may be He hath not.* Yea, the interrogatory seemed to me to carry in it a sure affirmation that indeed He had not, nor would so cast off, but would be favourable: That His promise doth not fail, and that He hath not forgotten to be



gracious, nor would in anger shut up tender mercy: Something also there was upon my heart at the same time, which I now cannot call to mind, which, with this text, did sweeten my heart, and make me conclude, that His mercy might not be quite gone, nor gone for ever.

203. At another time I remembered, I was again much under this question, *Whether the Blood of Christ was sufficient to save my soul?* In which doubt I continued from morning till about seven or eight at night; and at last when I was, as it were, quite worn out with fear, lest it should not lay hold on me, these words did sound suddenly within my heart, *He is Able:* But methought, this word *Able*, was spoke loud unto me; it shewed a great word, it seemed to be writ in great letters, and gave such a jostle to my fear and doubt (I mean for the time it tarried with me, which was about a day) as I never had from that, all my life, either before or after, *Heb vii. 25.*

204. But one morning as I was again at prayer, and trembling under the fear of this, *That no Word of God could help me*, that piece of a sentence darted in upon me, *My Grace is sufficient.* At this methought I felt some stay, as if there might be hopes. But, Oh! how good a thing it is for God to send His Word! for about a fortnight before, I was looking on this very place, and then I thought it could not come near my soul with comfort, therefore I threw down my book in a pet: Then I thought

it was not large enough for me ; no, not large enough ; but now it was as if it had arms of grace so wide, that it could not only inclose me, but many more besides.

205. By these words I was sustained, yet not without exceeding conflicts, for the space of seven or eight weeks ; for my peace would be in it, and out, sometimes twenty times a day, comfort now, and trouble presently ; peace now, and before I could go a furlong, as full of fear and guilt as ever heart could hold : And this was not only now and then, but my whole seven weeks' experience : For this about the sufficiency of Grace, and that of *Esau's* parting with his Birth-right, would be like a pair of scales within my mind ; sometimes one end would be uppermost, and sometimes again the other ; according to which would be my peace or troubles.

206. Therefore I did still pray to God, that He would come in with His Scripture more fully on my heart ; to wit, that He would help me to apply the whole sentence, for as yet I could not : That He gave, that I gathered ; but further I could not go, for as yet it only helped me to hope there might be mercy for me, *My Grace is sufficient* : And though it came no farther, it answered my former question ; to wit, That there was hope ; yet because *for thee*, was left out, I was not contented, but prayed to God for that also. Wherefore, one day, when I was in a meeting of God's people,

full of sadness and terror; for my fears again were strong upon me; and as I was now thinking, my soul was never the better, but my case most sad and fearful, these words did with great power suddenly break in upon me; *My Grace is sufficient for thee, My Grace is sufficient for thee, My Grace is sufficient for thee*, three times together: And Oh! methought that every word was a mighty word unto me; as *My* and *Grace* and *sufficient*, and *for thee*; they were then, and sometimes are still, far bigger than others be.

207. At which time my understanding was so enlightened, that I was as though I had seen the Lord Jesus look down from Heaven, through the tiles upon me, and direct these words unto me. This sent me mourning home; it broke my heart, and filled me full of joy, and laid me low as the dust; only it stayed not long with me, I mean in this glory and refreshing comfort; yet it continued with me for several weeks, and did encourage me to hope: But as soon as that powerful operation of it was taken from my heart, that other, about *Esau*, returned upon me as before; so my soul did

207. Cf. "I saw through Grace that it was the Blood shed on Mount Calvary that did save and redeem sinners as clearly and as really with the eyes of the soul, as ever methought I had seen a penny loaf bought with a penny."

"The Doctrine of the Law and Grace Unfolded. By that poor and contemptible creature, John Bunyan of Bedford," 1659.

hang as in a pair of scales again, sometimes up, and sometimes down; now in peace, and anon again in terror.

208. Thus I went on for many weeks, sometimes comforted, and sometimes tormented; and especially at some times my torment would be very sore, for all those Scriptures afore-named in the *Hebrews*, would be set before me, as the only sentences that would keep me out of Heaven. Then again I would begin to repent that ever that thought went through me; I would also think thus with myself: *Why, how many Scriptures are there against me? There are but three or four: And cannot God miss them, and save me for all them?* Sometimes again I would think, *Oh! if it were not for these three or four words, now how might I be comforted!* And I could hardly forbear at some times, to wish them out of the Book.

209. Then methought I should see as it both *Peter* and *Paul*, and *John* and all the Writers, did look with scorn upon me, and hold me in derision; and as if they had said unto me, *All our words are truth, one of as much force as the other: It is not we that have cut you off, but you have cast away yourself: There is none of our sentences that you must take hold upon, but these, and such as these: It is impossible, Heb. vi.; there remains no more Sacrifice for Sin, Heb. x. And it had been better for them not to have known the Will of God, than after they had known it, to turn from the holy Commandment delivered unto them, 2 Pet.*

ii. 21. *For the Scriptures cannot be broken*, John x. 35.

210. These are the Elders of the City of Refuge, I saw, were to be the Judges both of my case and me, while I stood with the *Avenger of Blood* at my heels, trembling at their gate for deliverance; also with a thousand fears and mistrusts, I doubted that he would shut me out for ever, *Joshua xx. 3, 4.*

211. Thus was I confounded, not knowing what to do, or how to be satisfied in this question, *Whether the Scriptures could agree in the salvation of my soul?* I quaked at the Apostles; I knew their words were true, and that they must stand for ever.

212. And I remember, one day, as I was in divers frames of spirit, and considering that these frames were according to the nature of several Scriptures that came in upon my mind; if this of Grace, then was I quiet; but if that of *Esau*, then tormented. *Lord*, thought I, *if both these Scriptures should meet in my heart at once, I wonder which of them would get the better of me.* So methought I had a longing mind that they might come both together upon me; yea, I desired of God they might.

213. Well, about two or three days after, so they did indeed: They bolted both upon me at a time, and did work and struggle strongly in me for a while; at last that about *Esau's* birth-right began to wax weak, and withdraw and vanish; and this about the Sufficiency of Grace prevailed

with Peace and Joy. And as I was in a Muse about this thing, that Scripture came in upon me, *Mercy rejoiceth over Judgment*, James ii. 13.

214. This was a wonderment to me, yet truly, I am apt to think it was of God, for the Word of the Law and Wrath must give Place to the Word of Life and Grace; because, though the Word of Condemnation be glorious, yet the Word of Life and Salvation doth far exceed in Glory, 2 *Cor.* iii. 8, 9, 10, 11. *Mark* ix. 5, 6, 7. *John* vi. 37. Also that *Moses* and *Elias* must both vanish, and leave Christ and His saints alone.

215. This Scripture did also most sweetly visit my soul; *And him that cometh to Me I will in no wise cast out.* Oh! the comfort that I had from this Word, *in no wise!* As who should say, *by no means, for nothing whatever he hath done.* But Satan would greatly labour to pull this promise from me, telling of me, *That Christ did not mean me, and such as I, but sinners of a lower rank that had not done as I had done.* But I would answer him again, *Satan, here is in these words no such exception; but him that comes, him, any him: Him that cometh to Me, I will in no wise cast out.* And this I well remember still, That of all the slights that Satan used to take this Scripture from me, yet he never did so much as put this question, *But do you come aright?* And I have thought the reason was, because he thought I knew full well what

coming aright was; for I saw, that to come aright, was to come as I was, a vile and ungodly sinner, and so cast myself at the Feet of Mercy, condemning myself for sin. If ever Satan and I did strive for any Word of God in all my life, it was for this good Word of Christ; he at one end and I at the other: Oh! what work we made! It was for this in *John*, I say, that we did so tug and strive, he pulled, and I pulled; but God be praised, I overcame him; I got sweetness from it.

216. But, notwithstanding all these helps, and blessed Words of Grace, yet that of *Esau's* selling of his birth-right would still at times distress my conscience; for though I had been most sweetly comforted, and that but just before, yet when that came into my mind, 'twould make me fear again; I could not be quite rid thereof, 'twould every day be with me: Wherefore now I went another way to work, even to consider the nature of this blasphemous thought; I mean, if I should take the Words at the largest, and give them their own natural force and scope, even every Word therein: So when I had thus considered, I found, that if they were fairly taken, they would amount to this: *That I had freely left the Lord Jesus Christ to His Choice, whether He would be my Saviour or no; for the wicked Words were these, Let Him go if He will.* Then that Scripture gave me Hope, *I will never leave thee nor forsake thee,* Heb. xiii. 5. *O Lord, said I, but I have left Thee.*

Then it answered again, *But I will not leave thee.* For this I thanked God also.

217. Yet I was grievous afraid He should, and found it exceeding hard to trust Him, seeing I had so offended Him; I could have been exceeding glad that this thought had never befallen; for then I thought I could, with more ease and freedom in abundance, have leaned on His Grace. I saw it was with me, as it was with *Joseph's* brethren; the guilt of their own wickedness did often fill them with fears that their brother would at last despise them, *Gen. l. 15, 16, &c.*

218. Yet, above all the Scriptures that I yet did meet with, that in *Joshua xx.* was the greatest comfort to me, which speaks of the slayer that was to flee for refuge: *And if the Avenger of Blood pursue the Slayer, then, saith Moses, they that are the Elders of the City of Refuge shall not deliver him into his hands, because he smote his neighbour unwittingly, and hated him not aforetime.* Oh! blessed be God for this Word: I was convinced that I was the Slayer; and that the Avenger of Blood pursued me, I felt with great terror; only now it remained that I enquire whether I have right to enter the City of Refuge: So I found, that he must not, *who lay in wait to shed blood:* It was not the *wilful murderer*, but he who *unwittingly* did it, he who did it unawares; not out of spite, or grudge, or malice, he that shed it *unwittingly*; even he who did not *hate his neighbour before.* Wherefore,



219. I thought verily I was the man that must enter, because I had smitten my Neighbour *unwittingly, and hated Him not aforetime.* I hated Him not aforetime; no, I prayed unto Him, was tender of sinning against Him; yea, and against this wicked temptation I had strove for twelve months before; yea, and also when it did pass through my heart, it did in spite of my teeth: Wherefore I thought I had a right to enter this City, and the Elders, which are the Apostles, were not to deliver me up. This therefore was great comfort to me, and gave me much ground of hope.

220. Yet being very critical, for my smart had made me that I knew not what ground was sure enough to bear me, I had one question that my soul did much desire to be resolved about; and that was, *Whether it be possible for any soul that hath sinned the unpardonable sin, yet after that to receive tho' but the least true spiritual comfort from God through Christ?* The which, after I had much considered, I found the answer was, *No, they could not;* and that for these reasons:

221. *First,* Because those that have sinned that sin, they are debarred a share in the Blood of Christ, and being shut out of that, they must needs be void of the least ground of hope, and so of Spiritual comfort, *For to such there remains no more Sacrifice for Sin,* Heb. x. 26, 27. *Secondly,* Because they are denied a share in the promise of Life: *They shall never be forgiven,*

*neither in this world, nor in that which is to come,* Matth. xii. 31. *Thirdly,* The Son of God excludes them also from a share in His blessed Intercession, being for ever ashamed to own them, both before His holy Father, and the blessed Angels in Heaven, *Mark* viii.

222. When I had with much deliberation considered of this matter, and could not but conclude that the Lord had comforted me, and that too after this my wicked sin; then methought I durst venture to come nigh unto those most fearful and terrible Scriptures, with which all this while I had been so greatly affrighted, and on which indeed, before I durst scarce cast mine eye (yea, had much ado an hundred times, to forbear wishing them out of the Bible), for I thought they would destroy me; but now, I say, I began to take some measure of encouragement, to come close to them, to read them, and consider them, and to weigh their scope and tendency.

223. The which when I began to do, I found my visage changed; for they looked not so grimly, as before I thought they did: And first I came to the VIth of the *Hebrews*, yet trembling for fear it should strike me; which when I had considered, I found that the falling there intended, was a falling *quite away*; that is, as I conceived, a falling from, and an absolute denying of the Gospel, of remission of sins by Jesus Christ; for, from then the Apostle begins his argument, Verse 1, 2, 3. *Secondly,* I found

that this falling away must be openly, even in the view of the world, even so as to *put Christ to an open shame*. *Thirdly*, I found that those he there intended, were for ever shut up of God, both in blindness, hardness and impenitency: *It is impossible they should be renewed again unto repentance*. By all these particulars, I found to God's everlasting praise, my sin was not the sin in this place intended.

*First*, I confessed I was fallen, but not fallen away; that is, from the Profession of Faith in Jesus unto eternal Life.

*Secondly*, I confessed that I had put Jesus Christ to *Shame* by my Sin, but not to open *Shame*; I did not deny Him before men, nor condemn Him as a Fruitless One before the world.

*Thirdly*, Nor did I find that God had shut me up, or denied me to come (though I found it hard work indeed to come) to Him by Sorrow and Repentance: Blessed be God for unsearchable Grace.

224. Then I considered that in the Xth Chapter of the *Hebrews*, and found that the *wilful sin* there mentioned, is not every wilful sin, but that which doth throw off Christ, and then His Commandments too. *Secondly*, That must be done also openly, before two or three witnesses, to answer that of the Law, Verse 28. *Thirdly*, This sin cannot be committed, but with great despite done to the Spirit of Grace; despising both the dissuasions from that Sin,

and the Persuasions to the contrary. But the Lord knows, though this my sin was devilish, it did not amount to these.

225. And as touching that in the XIIth Chapter of the *Hebrews*, about *Esau's* selling of his birth-right; though this was that which killed me, and stood like a spear against me, yet now I did consider, *First*, That his was not a hasty thought against the continual labour of his mind, but a thought consented to, and put in practice likewise, and that after some deliberation, *Gen. xxv.* *Secondly*, It was a publick and open action, even from his brother, if not before many more; this made his sin of a far more heinous nature than otherwise it would have been. *Thirdly*, He continued to slight his birth-right, *He did eat and drink, and went his way; thus Esau despised his birth-right;* yea twenty years after he was found to despise it still. And *Esau* said, *I have enough, my brother, keep that thou hast thyself,* *Gen. xxxiii. 9.*

226. Now as touching this, *That Esau sought a place of repentance:* Thus I thought: *First*, This was not for the *birth-right*, but the *blessing*: This is clear from the Apostle, and is distinguished by *Esau* himself; *He hath taken away my birth-right;* (that is formerly) *and now he hath taken away my blessing also,* *Gen. xxvii. 36.* *Secondly*, Now this being thus considered, I came again to the Apostle, to see what might be the Mind of God, in a New Testament stile

and sense concerning *Esau's* sin; and so far as I could conceive, this was the Mind of God, *That the Birth-right* signified *Regeneration*, and the *Blessing*, the *Eternal Inheritance*; for so the Apostle seems to hint. *Lest there be any prophane person, as Esau, who for a morsel of meat sold his birth-right*: As if he should say, That shall cast off all those blessed beginnings of God that at present are upon him, in order to a New-Birth; lest they become as *Esau*, even be rejected afterwards, when they should inherit the blessing.

227. For many there are, who in the day of Grace and Mercy despise those things which are indeed the Birth-right to Heaven, who yet when the declining day appears, will cry as loud as *Esau, Lord, Lord, open to us*, but then, as *Isaac* would not repent, no more will God the Father, but will say, *I have blessed these, yea, and they shall be blessed*; but as for you, *Depart, you are the workers of iniquity*, Gen. xxvii. 33. Luke xiii. 25, 26, 27.

228. When I had thus considered these Scriptures, and found that thus to understand them, was not against, but according to other Scriptures; this still added further to my encouragement and comfort, and also gave a great blow to that objection, to wit, *That the Scriptures could not agree in the Salvation of my Soul*. And now remained only the hinder part of the tempest, for the thunder was gone beyond me, only some drops did still remain, that now and then would

fall upon me ; but because my former frights and anguish were very sore and deep, therefore it oft befel me still, as it befalleth those that have been scared with Fire. I thought every voice was *Fire ! Fire !* every little touch would hurt my tender Conscience.

229. But one day, as I was passing into the field, and that too with some dashes on my conscience, fearing lest yet all was not right, suddenly this sentence fell upon my soul, *Thy Righteousness is in Heaven*: And methought withal, I saw with the eyes of my soul, Jesus Christ at God's Right-hand ; there, I say, was my Righteousness ; so that wherever I was, or whatever I was doing, God could not say of me, *He wants My Righteousness*, for that was just before Him. I also saw moreover, that it was not my good frame of heart that made my Righteousness better, nor yet my bad frame that made my Righteousness worse ; for my Righteousness was Jesus Christ Himself, *The same Yesterday, To-day, and for ever*, Heb. xiii. 8.

230. Now did my chains fall off my legs indeed ; I was loosed from my afflictions and irons ; my temptations also fled away ; so that from that time those dreadful Scriptures of God left off to trouble me ; now went I also home rejoicing, for the Grace and Love of God ; so when I came home, I looked to see if I could find that sentence, *Thy Righteousness is in Heaven*, but could not find such a saying ; wherefore my heart began to sink again, only that was brought

to my remembrance, 1 Cor. i. 30. *He is made unto us of God, Wisdom, Righteousness, Sanctification, and Redemption*; by this Word I saw the other Sentence true.

231. For by this Scripture I saw that the Man Christ Jesus, as He is distinct from us, as touching His Bodily Presence, so He is our Righteousness and Sanctification before God. Here therefore I lived, for some time, very sweetly at peace with God through Christ. Oh! methought, Christ! Christ! there was nothing but Christ that was before my eyes; I was not now (only) for looking upon this and the other benefits of Christ apart, as of His Blood, Burial, or Resurrection, but considering Him as a whole Christ! as He is in whom all these, and all other His Virtues, Relations, Offices, and Operations met together, and that He sat on the Right-hand of God in Heaven.

232. 'Twas glorious to me to see His Exaltation, and the Worth and Prevalency of all His Benefits, and that because now I could look from myself to Him, and would reckon, that all those Graces of God that now were green on me, were yet but like those cracked groats and four-pence-half-pennies that rich men carry in their purses, when their gold is in their trunks at home: Oh! I saw my Gold was in my trunk at home! In Christ my Lord and Saviour. Now Christ was all; all my Righteousness, all my Sanctification, and all my Redemption.

233. Further, the Lord did also lead me into the Mystery of Union with the Son of God; that I was joined to Him, that I was Flesh of His Flesh, and Bone of His Bone; and now was that a sweet Word to me, in *Ephes. v. 30.* By this also was my Faith in Him, as my Righteousness, the more confirmed in me; for if He and I were one, then His Righteousness was mine, His Merits mine, His Victory also mine. Now could I see myself in Heaven and Earth at once: In Heaven by my Christ, by my Head, by my Righteousness and Life, though on Earth by Body or Person.

234. Now I saw Christ Jesus was looked upon of God; and should also be looked upon by us, as that Common or Publick Person, in whom all the whole Body of His Elect are always to be considered and reckoned; that we fulfilled the Law by Him, died by Him, rose from the Dead by Him, got the Victory over Sin, Death, the Devil, and Hell, by Him; when He died, we died, and so of His Resurrection. *Thy dead men shall live together, with My dead body shall they arise,* saith He, *Isa. xxxvi.* And again, *After two days He will revive us, and the third Day we shall live in His sight,* *Hosea vi. 2.* Which is now fulfilled by the sitting down of the Son of Man on the Right-hand of the Majesty in the Heavens, according to that to the *Ephesians,* *He hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in Heavenly Places in Christ Jesus,* *Eph. ii. 6.*



235. Ah! these blessed considerations and Scriptures, with many others of like nature, were in those days made to spangle in mine eye, so that I have cause to say, *Praise ye the Lord God in His Sanctuary; Praise Him in the Firmament of His Power; Praise Him for His mighty Acts; Praise Him according to His excellent Greatness*, Psalm cl. 1, 2.

236. Having thus in few words given you a taste of the sorrow and affliction that my soul went under, by the guilt and terror that these my wicked thoughts did lay me under; and having given you also a touch of my deliverance therefrom, and of the sweet and blessed comfort that I met with afterwards, which comfort dwelt about a twelve-month with my heart, to my unspeakable admiration; I will now (God willing), before I proceed any farther, give you in a word or two, what, as I conceive, was the cause of this temptation; and also after that, what advantage, at the last, it became unto my soul.

237. For the causes, I conceived they were principally two: Of which two also I was deeply convinced all the time this trouble lay upon me. The first was, for that I did not, when I was delivered from the temptation that went before, still pray to God to keep me from the temptations that were to come; were to come; for though, as I can say in truth, my soul was much in prayer before this tryal seized me, yet then I prayed only, or at the most

principally, for the removal of present troubles, and for fresh discoveries of His Love in Christ, which I saw afterwards was not enough to do; I also should have prayed that the great God would keep me from the evil that was to come.

238. Of this I was made deeply sensible by the prayer of Holy *David*, who when he was under the present mercy, yet prayed that God would hold him back from sin and temptation to come; *For then, saith he, shall I be upright, and I shall be innocent from the great transgression, Psalm xix. 13.* By this very Word was I galled and condemned quite thro' this long temptation.

239. That was also another Word that did much condemn me for my folly, in the neglect of this duty, *Heb. iv. 16. Let us therefore come boldly unto the Throne of Grace, that we may obtain Mercy, and find Grace to help in time of need.* This I had not done, and therefore was thus suffered to sin and fall, according to what is written, *Pray that ye enter not into temptation.* And truly this very thing is to this day of such weight and awe upon me, that I dare not, when I come before the Lord, go off my knees, until I intreat Him for Help and Mercy against the temptations that are to come; and I do beseech thee, Reader, that thou learn to beware of my negligence, by the afflictions that for this thing I did for days, and months, and years, with sorrow undergo.

240. Another cause of this temptation was, That I had tempted God; and on this manner did I do it: Upon a time my wife was great with child, and before her full time was come, her pangs, as of a woman in travail, were fierce and strong upon her, even as she would have immediately fallen in labour, and been delivered of an untimely birth: Now at this very time it was, that I had been so strongly tempted to question the Being of God; wherefore, as my wife lay crying by me, I said, but with all secresy imaginable, even thinking in my heart, *Lord, if now Thou wilt remove this sad affliction from my wife, and cause that she be troubled no more therewith this night* (and now were her pangs just upon her), *then I shall know that Thou canst discern the most secret thoughts of the heart.*

241. I had no sooner said it in my heart, but her pangs were taken from her, and she was cast into a deep sleep, and so continued till morning; at this I greatly marvelled, not knowing what to think; but after I had been awake a good while, and heard her cry no more, I fell asleep also; so when I awaked in the morning it came upon me again, even what I had said in my heart the last night, and how the Lord had shewed me, that He knew my secret thoughts, which was a great astonishment unto me for several weeks after.

242. Well, about an year and a half afterwards, that wicked sinful thought, of which I have spoken before, went through my wicked

heart, even this thought, *Let Christ go if He will*: So when I was fallen under guilt for this, the remembrance of my other thought, and of the effect thereof, would also come upon me with this retort, which also carried rebuke along with it, *Now you may see that God doth know the most secret thoughts of the heart.*

243. And with this, that of the passages that were betwixt the Lord, and His Servant *Gideon*, fell upon my spirit; how because that *Gideon* tempted God with his fleece, both wet and dry, when he should have believed and ventured upon His words; therefore the Lord did afterwards so try him, as to send him against an innumerable company of enemies, and that too, as to outward Appearance, without any strength or help, *Judges* vi. 7. Thus He served me, and that justly, for I should have believed His Word, and not have put an *If* upon the All-seeingness of God.

244. And now to shew you something of the advantages that I also have gained by this temptation: And first, by this I was made continually to possess in my soul a very wonderful sense both of the Blessing and Glory of God, and of His beloved Son; in the temptation that went before, my soul was perplexed with unbelief, blasphemy, hardness of heart, questions about the Being of God, Christ, the truth of the Word, and certainty of the World to come: I say, then I was greatly assaulted and tormented with Atheism, but

now the case was otherwise; now was God and Christ continually before my face, though not in a way of comfort, but in a way of exceeding dread and terror. The Glory of the Holiness of God, did at this time break me to pieces; and the Bowels and Compassion of Christ did break me as on the wheel; for I could not consider Him but as a lost and rejected Christ, the remembrance of which, was as the continual breaking of my bones.

245. The Scriptures also were wonderful things unto me; I saw that the truth and verity of them were the Keys of the Kingdom of Heaven; *those* that the Scriptures favour, *they* must inherit bliss; but *those* that they oppose and condemn, must perish for evermore: Oh! this Word, *For the Scriptures cannot be broken*, would rend the cawl of my heart: And so would that other, *Whose sins ye remit, they are remitted; but whose sins ye retain, they are retained*. Now I saw the Apostles to be the Elders of the City of Refuge, *Joshua xx. 4*. Those that they were to receive in, were received to Life; but those that they shut out, were to be slain by the Avenger of Blood.

246. Oh! one Sentence of the Scripture did more afflict and terrify my mind, I mean those Sentences that stood against me (as sometimes I thought they every one did) more, I say, than an army of forty thousand men that might come against me. Woe be to him against whom the Scriptures bend themselves!

247. By this temptation I was made to see more into the nature of the Promises than ever I had before; for I lying now trembling under the mighty Hand of God, continually torn and rent by the thundering of His Justice; this made me with careful heart, and watchful eye, with great fearfulness to turn over every leaf, and with much diligence, mixed with trembling, to consider every sentence, together with its natural force and latitude.

248. By this temptation also I was greatly holden off from my former foolish practice of putting by the Word of Promise when it came into my mind; for now, though I could not suck that comfort and sweetness from the Promise, as I had done at other times, yet, like to a man a sinking, I would catch at all I saw. Formerly I thought I might not meddle with the Promise, unless I felt its comfort, but now it was no time thus to do; the Avenger of Blood too hardly did pursue me.

249. Now therefore was I glad to catch at that Word which yet I feared I had no ground or right to own; and even to leap into the bosom of that Promise that yet I feared did shut his heart against me. Now also I would labour to take the Word as God hath laid it down, without restraining the natural force of one syllable thereof: O! what did I see in that blessed VIth Chapter of *St John: And him that cometh to Me, I will in no wise cast out,* John vi. 37. Now I began to consider with

myself, that God hath a bigger Mouth to speak with, than I had a heart to conceive with; I thought also with myself, that He spake not His Words in haste, or in an unadvised heat, but with infinite Wisdom and Judgment, and in very Truth and Faithfulness.

250. I would in these days, often in my greatest agonies, even flounce towards the Promise (as the horses do towards sound ground, that yet stick in the mire), concluding (tho' as one almost bereft of his wits through fear) on this will I rest and stay, and leave the fulfilling of it to the God of Heaven that made it. Oh! many a pull hath my heart had with Sātan, for that blessed VIth Chapter of *St John*; I did not now, as at other times, look principally for comfort (though, O how welcome would it have been unto me!). But now a Word, a Word to lean a weary soul upon, that it might not sink for ever! 'Twas that I hunted for.

251. Yea, often when I have been making to the Promise, I have seen as if the Lord would refuse my soul for ever; I was often as if I had run upon the pikes, as if the Lord had thrust at me, to keep me from Him, as with a flaming sword. Then would I think of *Esther*, who went to petition the King contrary to the Law, *Esther* iv. 16. I thought also of *Benhadad's* servants, who went with ropes upon their heads to their enemies for Mercy, *1 Kings* xx. 31, &c. The Woman of *Canaan* also, that would not be daunted, though called

Dog by Christ, *Matt.* xv. 22, &c. and the Man that went to borrow Bread at Midnight, *Luke* xi. 5, 6, 7, 8, &c. were also great encouragements unto me.

252. I never saw those heights and depths in Grace, and Love, and Mercy, as I saw after this temptation: great Sins to draw out great Grace; and where Guilt is most terrible and fierce, there the Mercy of God in Christ, when shewed to the soul, appears most high and mighty. When *Job* had passed through his captivity, *he had twice as much as he had before*, *Job* xlii. 10. Blessed be God for Jesus Christ our Lord. Many other things I might here make observation of, but I would be brief, and therefore shall at this time omit them; and do pray God that my harms may make others fear to offend, lest they also be made to bear the iron yoke as I did.

I had two or three times, at or about my deliverance from this temptation, such strange apprehensions of the Grace of God, that I could hardly bear up under it: It was so out of measure amazing, when I thought it could reach me, that I do think if that sense of it had abode long upon me, it would have made me incapable for business.

253. Now, I shall go forward to give you a relation of other of the Lord's dealings with me at sundry other seasons, and of the temptations I then did meet withal. I shall begin with what I met with when first I did join in



fellowship with the people of God in *Bedford*. After I had propounded to the Church, that my desire was to walk in the order and ordinances of Christ with them, and was also admittted by them: While I thought of that blessed Ordinance of Christ, which was His Last Supper with His disciples before His Death, that Scripture, *Do this in remembrance of Me*, Luke xxii. 19, was made a very precious Word unto me: for by it the Lord did come down upon my conscience with the discovery of His Death for my Sins; and as I then felt, did as if He plunged me in the Virtue of the same. But behold, I had not been long a partaker at that ordinance, but such fierce and sad temptation did attend me at all times therein, both to blaspheme the Ordinance, and to wish some deadly thing to those that then did eat thereof: That lest I should at any time be guilty of consenting to these wicked and fearful thoughts, I was forced to bend myself all the while, to pray to God to keep me from such blasphemies: And also to cry to God to bless the Cup and Bread to them, as it were from mouth to mouth. The reason of this temptation, I have thought since, was, because I did not with that reverence that became me, at first approach to partake thereof.

254. Thus I continued for three quarters of a year, and could never have rest nor ease: But at the last the Lord came in upon my soul with that same Scripture, by which my soul was

visited before: And after that, I have been usually very well and comfortable in the partaking of that blessed Ordinance; and have, I trust, therein discerned the Lord's Body, as broken for my sins, and that His precious Blood hath been shed for my transgressions.

255. Upon a time I was something inclining to a consumption, wherewith about the Spring I was suddenly and violently seized, with much weakness in my outward man; insomuch that I thought I could not live. Now began I afresh to give myself up to a serious examination after my state and condition for the future, and of my evidences for that blessed world to come: for it hath, I bless the Name of God, been my usual course, as always, so especially in the day of affliction, to endeavour to keep my interest in the Life to come, clear before mine eyes.

256. But I had no sooner began to recall to mind my former experience of the Goodness of God to my soul, but there came flocking into my mind an innumerable company of my sins and transgressions; amongst which these were at this time most to my affliction, namely, my deadness, dulness and coldness in my holy duties; my wanderings of heart, of my wearisomeness in all good things, my want of love to God, His ways and people, with this at the end of all, *Are these the fruits of Christianity? Are these tokens of a blessed man?*

257. At the apprehensions of these things my sickness was double upon me, for now I was

sick in my inward man, my soul was clogged with guilt; now also was my former experience of God's Goodness to me quite taken out of my mind, and hid as if they had never been, or seen: now was my soul greatly pitched between these two considerations, *Live I must not, Die I dare not*: Now I sunk and fell in my spirit, and was giving up all for lost; but as I was walking up and down in the house, as a man in a most woeful state, that Word of God took hold of my heart, *Ye are justified freely by His Grace, through the Redemption that is in Christ Jesus*, Rom. iii. 24. But Oh! what a turn it made upon me!

258. Now was I as one awaked out of some troublesome sleep and dream; and listening to this Heavenly sentence, I was as if I had heard it thus spoken to me: *Sinner, thou thinkest, that because of thy sins, and infirmities, I cannot save thy soul; but behold, My Son is by Me, and upon Him I look, and not on thee, and shall deal with thee according as I am pleased with Him*. At this I was greatly enlightened in my mind, and made to understand, that God could justify a sinner at any time; it was but His looking upon Christ, and imputing of His Benefits to us, and the Word was forthwith done.

259. And as I was thus in a muse, that Scripture also came with great power upon my spirit, *Not by Works of Righteousness that we have done, but according to His Mercy He hath saved us, &c.* 2. Tim. i. 9. Tit. iii. 5. Now was I got on high, I saw myself within the

Arms of Grace and Mercy ; and though I was before afraid to think of a dying hour, yet now I cried, *Let me die* ; now death was lovely and beautiful in my sight, for I saw, *we shall never live indeed, till we be gone to the other world.* Oh ! methought this life is but a slumber, in comparison of that above. At this time also I saw more in these Words, *Heirs of God* (Rom. viii. 17), than ever I shall be able to express while I live in this world ; *Heirs of God !* God Himself is the Portion of the Saints. This I saw and wondered at, but cannot tell you what I saw.

260. Again, as I was at another time very ill and weak, all that time also the Tempter did beset me strongly (for I find he is much for assaulting the soul ; when it begins to approach towards the grave, then is his opportunity), labouring to hide from me my former experience of God's Goodness ; also setting before me the terrors of Death, and the Judgment of God, insomuch that at this time, through my fear of miscarrying for ever (should I now die) I was as one dead before death came, and was as if I had felt myself already descending into the pit ; methought I said, There was no way, but

260. Cf. "Ah, when God makes the bed he must needs lie easy that weakness hath cast thereon ; a blessed pillow hath that man for his head, though to all beholders it is as hard as a stone."

"Paul's Departure and Crown," J. Bunyan (Posthumous). (*Vide* Dr Brown, *op. cit.* p. 432 )

to Hell I must: But behold, just as I was in the midst of those fears, these words of the Angel's carrying *Lazarus* into *Abraham's* bosom darted in upon me, as who should say: *So it shall be with thee when thou dost leave this world.* This did sweetly revive my spirits, and help me to hope in God; which when I had with comfort mused on awhile, that word fell with great weight upon my mind, *O Death, where is thy Sting! O Grave, where is thy Victory!* 1 Cor. xv. 55. At this I became both well in body and mind at once, for my sickness did presently vanish and I walked comfortably in my work for God again.

261. At another time, though just before I was pretty well and savoury in my spirit, yet suddenly there fell upon me a great cloud of darkness, which did so hide from me the Things of God and Christ, that I was as if I had never seen or known them in my life: I was also so overrun in my soul with a senseless heartless frame of spirit, that I could not feel my soul to move or stir after *Grace* and *Life* by *Christ*; I was as if my loins were broken, or as if my hands and feet had been tied or bound with chains. At this time also I felt some weakness to seize upon my outward man, which made still the other affliction the more heavy and uncomfortable to me.

262. After I had been in this condition some three or four days, as I was sitting by the fire, I suddenly felt this word to sound in my

heart, *I must go to Jesus*: At this my former darkness and atheism fled away, and the blessed things of Heaven were set in my view. While I was on this sudden thus overtaken with surprize, Wife, said I, is there ever such a Scripture, *I must go to Jesus*? She said, she could not tell; therefore I stood musing still, to see if I could remember such a place: I had not sat above two or three minutes, but that came bolting in upon me, *And to an innumerable Company of Angels*; and withal the XIIth Chapter of *Hebrews*, about the Mount *Sion* was set before mine Eyes, *Heb. xii. 22, 23, 24.*

263. Then with joy I told my Wife, *O! now I know, I know!* But that night was a good night to me, I never had but few better; I longed for the company of some of God's people, that I might have imparted unto them what God had shewed me. Christ was a precious Christ to my soul that night; I could scarce lie in my bed for joy, and peace, and triumph, through Christ. This great glory did not continue upon me until morning, yet the XIIth Chapter of the Epistle to the *Hebrews*, *Heb. xii. 22, 23*, was a blessed Scripture to me for many days together after this.

264. The Words are these: *Ye are come to Mount Sion, to the City of the Living God, to the*

264. "Men should warm their hearts by the sweet promise of Christ's acceptance. Discouraging thoughts are like unto cold weather, they benumb our senses, and make us go ungainly about our

*Heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable Company of Angels, to the General Assembly and Church of the First-born, which are written in Heaven; to God the Judge of all, and to the Spirits of Just Men made Perfect, and to Jesus the Mediator of the New Testament, and to the Blood of Sprinkling, that speaketh better things than that of Abel.* Through this Sentence the Lord led me over and over, first to this Word, and then to that; and shewed me wonderful glory in every one of them. These words also have oft since that time been great refreshment to my spirit. Blessed be God for having Mercy on me.

*A Brief ACCOUNT of the AUTHOR'S CALL  
to the Work of the MINISTRY.*

265. **A**ND now I am speaking my experience, I will in this place thrust in a word or two concerning my preaching the Word, and of God's dealing with me in that particular also. After I had been about five or six years awakened, and helped myself to see both the Want and Worth of Jesus Christ

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business; but the sweet and warm gleads of promise are like the comfortable beams of the sun which liven and refresh. You see how little the bee and fly do play in the air in winter; why the cold weather hinders them from doing it; but when the wind and sun is warm, who so busy as they." "Come and Welcome," J. Bunyan, 1678.

our Lord, and also enabled to venture my soul upon Him; some of the most able among the saints with us, I say, the most ablest for judgment and holiness of life, as they conceived, did perceive that God had counted me worthy to understand something of His Will in His holy and blessed Word, and had given me utterance in some measure, to express what I saw to others, for edification; therefore they desired me, and that with much earnestness, that I would be willing, at some times, to take in hand, in one of the meetings, to speak a word of exhortation unto them.

266. The which, though at the first it did much dash and abash my spirit, yet being still by them desired and intreated, I consented to their request, and did twice at two several Assemblies (but in private), though with much weakness and infirmity, discover my gift amongst them; at which they not only seemed to be, but did frequently protest, as in the sight of the great God, they were both affected and comforted; and gave thanks to the Father of Mercies, for the Grace bestowed on me.

267. After this, sometimes, when some of them did go into the country to teach, they

266. Luther was so strongly impressed with the awful responsibility of preaching—"of speaking to the people in God's stead"—that Staupitz (vicar over forty Augustinian convents) had great difficulty in persuading him to mount the pulpit." "Life of Luther," Hare, p. 29.



would also that I should go with them ; where though as yet, I did not, nor durst not, make use of my gift in an open way, yet more privately still, as I came amongst the good people in those places, I did sometimes speak a word of admonition unto them also ; the which they, as the other, received with rejoicing at the Mercy of God to me-ward, professing their souls were edified thereby.

268. Wherefore, to be brief, at last, being still desired by the Church, after some solemn prayer to the Lord, with fasting, I was more particularly called forth, and appointed to a more ordinary and publick preaching of the Word, not only to, and amongst them that believed, but also to offer the Gospel to those who had not yet received the Faith thereof: About which time I did evidently find in my mind a secret pricking forward thereto ; though, I bless God, not for desire of vain-glory, for at that time I was most sorely afflicted with the fiery darts of the Devil, concerning my eternal state.

269. But yet I could not be content, unless I was found in the exercise of my gift, unto which also I was greatly animated, not only by the continual desires of the godly, but also by that saying of *Paul* to the *Corinthians* ; *I beseech you Brethren (ye know the Household of Stephanus, that is the First-Fruits of Achaia, and that they have addicted themselves to the Ministry of the Saints) that ye submit yourselves*

*unto such, and to every one that helpeth with us, and laboureth, 1 Cor xvi. 15, 16.*

270. By this text I was made to see that the Holy Ghost never intended that men who have gifts and abilities, should bury them in the earth, but rather did command and stir up such to the exercise of their gift, and also did commend those that were apt and ready so to do. *They have addicted themselves to the Ministry of the Saints:* This Scripture in these days, did continually run in my mind, to encourage me, and strengthen me in this my work for God; I have also been encouraged from several other Scriptures and examples of the Godly, both specified in the Word, and other ancient histories, *Acts viii. 4. and xviii. 24, 25. 1 Pet. iv. 10. Rom. xii. 6. Fox's Acts and Monuments.*

271. Wherefore, though of myself, of all the saints the most unworthy, yet I, but with great fear and trembling at the sight of my own weakness, did set upon the work, and did according to my gift, and the proportion of my faith, preach that blessed Gospel that God has shewed me in the holy Word of Truth: Which when the country understood, they came in to hear the Word by hundreds, and that from all parts, though upon divers and sundry accounts.

272. And I thank God, He gave unto me some measure of bowels and pity for their souls, which also did put me forward to labour with

great diligence and earnestness, to find out such a Word as might, if God would bless it, lay hold of, and awaken the conscience, in which also the good Lord had respect to the desire of His servant; for I had not preached long, before some began to be touched, and be greatly afflicted in their minds at the apprehension of the greatness of their sin, and of their need of Jesus Christ.

273. But I first could not believe that God should speak by me to the heart of any man, still counting myself unworthy; yet those who were thus touched, would love me, and have a particular respect for me; and though I did put it from me, that they should be awakened by me, still they would confess it, and affirm it before the saints of God: They would also bless God for me (unworthy wretch that I am!) and count me God's instrument that shewed to them the Way of Salvation.

274. Wherefore seeing them in both their words and deeds to be so constant, and also in their hearts so earnestly pressing after the Knowledge of Jesus Christ, rejoicing that ever God did send me where they were; then I began to conclude it might be so, that God had owned in His work such a foolish one as I; and then came that Word of God to my heart, with much sweet refreshment, *The blessing of them that are ready to perish, is come upon me; yea, I caused the widow's heart to sing for joy,* Job xxix. 13.

275. At this therefore I rejoiced; yea, the tears of those whom God did awaken by my preaching, would be both solace and encouragement to me; I thought on those sayings, *Who is he that maketh me glad, but the same that is made sorry by me?* 2 Cor. ii. 2. And again, *Though I be not an Apostle to others, yet doubtless, I am unto you; for the Seal of my Apostleship are ye in the Lord,* 1 Cor. ix. 2. These things therefore, were as another argument unto me, that God had called me to, and stood by me in this work.

276. In my preaching of the Word, I took special notice of this one thing, namely, that the Lord did lead me to begin where His Word begins with sinners; that is, to condemn all flesh, and to open and alledge, that the curse of God by the Law, doth belong to, and lay hold on all men as they come into the world, because of sin. Now this part of my work I fulfilled with great sense; for the terrors of the Law, and guilt for my transgressions, lay heavy on my conscience: I preached what I felt, what I smartingly did feel; even that under which my poor soul did groan and tremble to astonishment.

277. Indeed, I have been as one sent to them from the dead; I went myself in chains, to preach to them in chains; and carried that fire in my own conscience, that I persuaded them to be aware of. I can truly say, and that without dissembling, that when I have been to preach, I have gone full of guilt and terror,

even to the pulpit-door, and there it hath been taken off, and I have been at liberty in my mind until I have done my work; and then immediately, even before I could get down the pulpit-stairs, I have been as bad as I was before; yet God carried me on, but surely with a strong hand, for neither guilt nor hell could take me off my work.

278. Thus I went on for the space of two years, crying out against men's sins, and their fearful state because of them. After which, the Lord came in upon my own soul, with some sure peace and comfort through Christ; for He did give me many sweet discoveries of His blessed Grace through Him: Wherefore now I altered in my preaching (for still I preached what I saw and felt), now therefore I did much labour to hold with Jesus Christ in all His Offices, Relations and Benefits unto the world, and did strive also to discover, to condemn, and remove those false supports and props on which the World doth both lean, and by them fall and perish. On these things also I stayed as long as on the other.

279. After this, God led me into something of the Mystery of the Union of Christ; where-

279. The leading of Bunyan into the mystery of the Union with Christ:

*Cf.* "I, in a moment can light up the humble mind, and make it enter more deeply into the principles of External Truth, than if one had studied ten years in the schools. . . For one simply by

fore that I discovered and shewed to them also. And, when I had travelled through these three chief points of the Word of God, about the space of five years or more, I was caught in my present practice, and cast into prison, where I have lain above as long again to confirm the truth by way of suffering, as I was before in testifying of it according to the Scripture, in a way of preaching.

280. When I have been preaching, I thank God, my heart hath often, all the time of this and the other exercise, with great earnestness cried to God that He would make the work effectual to the salvation of the soul; still being grieved lest the enemy should take the Word away from the conscience, and so it should become unfruitful: Wherefore I shall labour to speak the Word, as that thereby, if it were possible, the sin and person guilty might be particularized by it.

281. Also when I have done the exercise, it hath gone to my heart, to think the Word should now fall as rain on stony places; still wishing from my heart, Oh! that they who have heard

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loving Me intensely, learnt Divine Mysteries, and gave them utterance." *De Imitatione Christi*, Bk. iii. 43, 3 and 4.

"The unlearned start up and take Heaven by force, and we with our learning, but without heart; lo, where we wallow in flesh and blood." St Augustine, *op. cit.* viii. 8.

St Luke x. 21.

me speak this day, did but see as I do, what Sin, Death, Hell, and the Curse of God is ; and also what the Grace, and Love, and Mercy of God is, through Christ, to men in such a case as they are, who are yet estranged from Him. And indeed, I did often say in my heart before the Lord, *That if I be hanged up presently before their eyes, it would be a means to awaken them, and confirm them in the Truth, and I gladly should be contented.*

282. For I have been in my preaching, especially when I have been engaged in the doctrine of Life by Christ, without works, as if an Angel of God had stood by at my back to encourage me ; Oh ! it hath been with such power and heavenly evidence upon my own soul, while I have been labouring to unfold it, to demonstrate it, and to fasten it upon the consciences of others ; that I could not be contented with saying, *I believe, and am sure* : Methought I was more than sure (if it be lawful to express myself) that those things which then I asserted, were true.

283. When I first went to preach the Word abroad, the doctors and priests of the country did open wide against me : But I was persuaded of this, Not to render railing for railing ; but to see how many of their carnal professors I could convince of their miserable state by the Law, and of

283. Cf. "It is a royal thing to be ill spoken of for good deeds." Antisthenes qu. M. Aurelius, *Meditations*, vii. 36.

"There is only one thing here worth the minding,

the Want and Worth of Christ: For thought I, *That shall answer for me in time to come, when they shall be for my hire before their face,* Gen. xxx. 33.

284. I never cared to meddle with things that were controverted, and in dispute among the saints, especially things of the lowest nature; yet it pleased me much to contend with great earnestness for the Word of Faith and the Remission of Sins by the Death and Sufferings of Jesus: But I say, as to other things, I would let them alone because I saw they engendered strife; and because that they neither in doing, nor in leaving undone, did commend us to God to be His: Besides, I saw my work before me did run into another channel, even to carry an awakening Word; to that therefore I did stick and adhere.

285. I never endeavoured to, nor durst make use of other men's lines, *Rom. xv. 18* (tho' I condemn not all that do) for I verily thought, and found by experience, that what was taught me by the Word and Spirit of Christ, could be spoken, maintained, and stood to, by the soundest

and that is to be true and just and to show benevolence, even to the untrue and unjust." *Meditations*, vi. 47.

"It is the privilege of human nature to love those that disoblige us." *Op. cit.* vii. 22, *cf.* xi. 13.

"Gentleness is invincible provided it is of the right stamp." *Op. cit.* xi. 18.

St Matt. v. 11 and x. 25; 2 Cor. x. 1.



and best established conscience; and though I will not now speak all that I know in this matter, yet my experience hath more interest in that Text of Scripture, *Gal. i. 11, 12*, than many amongst men are aware.

286. If any of those who were awakened by my ministry, did after that fall back (as sometimes too many did), I can truly say, their loss hath been more to me, than if my own children, begotten of my own body, had been going to their grave: I think verily, I may speak it without any offence to the Lord, nothing has gone so near me as that; unless it was the fear of the loss of the salvation of my own soul. I have counted as if I had goodly buildings and lordships in those places where my children were born: My heart hath been so wrapped up in the glory of this excellent work, that I counted myself more blessed and honoured of God by this, than if He had made me the emperor of the Christian World, or the lord of all the Glory of the Earth without it! Oh these Words! *He that converteth a Sinner from the Error of his Way, doth save a Soul from Death, James v. 20. The Fruit of the Righteous is a Tree of Life; and he that winneth Souls is wise, Prov. xi. 30. They that be wise shall shine as the Brightness of the Firmament, and they that turn many to righteousness, as the Stars for ever and ever, Dan. xii. 3. For what is our Hope, our Joy, our Crown of Rejoicing? Are not ye even in the Presence of our Lord Jesus*

*Christ at His Coming? For ye are our Glory and Joy,* 1 Thess. ii. 19, 20. These, I say, with many other of a like nature, have been great refreshments to me.

287. I have observed, that where I have had a work to do for God, I have had first, as it were, the going of God upon my spirit, to desire I might preach there: I have also observed, that such and such souls in particular, have been strongly set upon my heart, and I stirred up to wish for their salvation; and that these very souls have, after this, been given in the fruits of my ministry. I have observed, that a Word cast in by the by, hath done more execution in a sermon, than all that was spoken besides: Sometimes also, when I have thought I did no good, then I did the most of all; and at other times, when I thought I should catch them, I have fished for nothing.

288. I have also observed, that where there has been a work to do upon sinners, there the Devil hath begun to roar in their hearts, and by the mouths of his servants; yea, often times, when the wicked world hath raged most, there hath been souls awakened by the Word: I could instance particulars but I forbear.

289. My great desire in my fulfilling my Ministry, was to get into the darkest places of the country, even amongst those people that were farthest off of profession: Yet not because I could not endure the light (for I feared not to shew my Gospel to any), but

because I found my spirit did lean most after awakening and converting work, and the Word that I carried did lean itself most that way also: *Yea, so have I strived to preach the Gospel, not where Christ was named, lest I should build upon another man's foundation, Rom. xv. 20.*

290. In my preaching I have really been in pain, and have, as it were, travailed to bring forth children to God; neither could I be satisfied unless some fruits did appear in my work: If I were fruitless, it mattered not who commended me; but if I were fruitful, I cared not who did condemn. I have thought of that, *Lo! Children are an Heritage of the Lord; and the Fruit of the womb is His Reward. As Arrows in the hand of a mighty man, so are Children of the Youth. Happy is the man that hath filled his quiver full of them; they shall not be ashamed, but they shall speak with the Enemies in the Gate, Psalm cxxvii. 3, 4, 5.*

291. It pleased me nothing to see people drink in opinions, if they seemed ignorant of Jesus Christ, and the worth of their own Salvation. Sound Conviction for Sin, especially Unbelief, and an heart set on fire to be saved by Christ, with strong breathings after a truly sanctified soul: That it was that delighted me; those were the souls that I counted blessed.

292. But in this work, as in all other, I had my temptations attending me, and that of divers

kinds ; as sometimes I should be assaulted with great discouragement therein, fearing that I should not be able to speak a word at all to edification ; nay, that I should not be able to speak sense to the people ; at which times I should have such a strange faintness and strengthlessness seize upon my body, that my legs have scarce been able to carry me to the place of exercise.

293. Sometimes again, when I have been preaching, I have been violently assaulted with thoughts of blasphemy and strongly tempted to speak the words with my mouth before the congregation. I have also at some times, even when I have begun to speak the Word, with much clearness, evidence, and liberty of speech, yet been, before the ending of that opportunity, so blinded, and so estranged from the things I have been speaking, and have been also so straitened in my speech, as to utterance before the people, that I have been, as if I had not known, or remembered what I have been about ; or as if my head had been in a bag all the time of my exercise.

293. Bunyan's temptations in the pulpit.

*Cf.* "Oh what do I inwardly suffer, whilst with my mind I am occupied with heavenly objects, lo, presently a crowd of carnal thoughts and temptations interrupt my prayer! My God, be not Thou far from me, nor turn Thy Face away from Thy servant in displeasure. Cast forth Thy lightnings and scatter them ; send out Thine arrows, and let all the phantoms of the enemy be dispelled." *De Imitatione Christi*, Bk. iii. ch. 48, 5.

294. Again, when as sometimes I have been about to preach upon some smart and searching portion of the Word, I have found the Tempter suggest, *What! will you preach this! This condemns yourself; of this your own soul is guilty; wherefore preach not of this at all; or if you do, yet so mince it, as to make way for your own escape; lest instead of awakening others, you lay that guilt upon your own soul, that you will never get from under.*

295. But, I thank the Lord, I have been kept from consenting to these so horrid suggestions, and have rather, as *Samson*, bowed myself with all my might, to condemn sin and transgression, wherever I found it; yea, though therein also I did bring guilt upon my own conscience: *Let me die*, thought I, *with the Philistines*, *Judges* xvi. 29, 30, rather than deal corruptly with the blessed Word of God. *Thou that teachest another, teachest not thou thyself?* It is far better then to judge thyself, even by preaching plainly unto others, than thou, to save thyself, imprison the Truth in unrighteousness: Blessed be God for His help also in this.

296. I have also, while found in this blessed work of Christ, been often tempted to pride and liftings up of heart; and though I dare not say, I have not been affected with this, yet truly the Lord, of His precious mercy, hath so carried it towards me, that for the most part I have had small Joy to give way to such a thing: For it hath been my every day's portion to be let into

the evil of my own heart, and still made to see such a multitude of corruptions and infirmities therein, that it hath caused hanging down of the head under all my gifts and attainments: I have felt this thorn in the flesh (2 Cor. xii. 8, 9), the very Mercy of God to me.

297. I have also had, together with this, some notable place or other of the Word presented before me, which Word hath contained in it some sharp and piercing sentence concerning the perishing of the soul, notwithstanding gifts and parts: As for Instance, that hath been of great Use to me; *Though I speak with the tongues of men and Angels, and have not Charity, I am become as sounding brass, and a tinkling cymbal*, 1 Cor. xiii. 1, 2.

298. A tinkling cymbal is an instrument of music, with which a skilful player can make such melodious and Heart-inflaming music, that all who hear him play, can scarcely hold from dancing; and yet behold the cymbal hath not life, neither comes the music from it, but because of the art of him that plays therewith; so then the instrument at last may come to nought and perish, though in times past such music hath been made upon it.

299. Just thus I saw it was, and will be, with them that have gifts, but want saving Grace; they are in the Hand of Christ, as the cymbal in the hand of *David*; and as *David* could with the cymbal make that mirth in the service of God, as to elevate the hearts of the

worshippers, so Christ can use these gifted men, as with them to affect the souls of His people in His Church; yet when He hath done all, hang them by, as lifeless, though sounding cymbals.

300. This consideration therefore, together with some others, were for the most part, as a maul on the head of pride, and desire of vain-glory: What, thought I, shall I be proud because I am a sounding brass? Is it so much to be a fiddle? Hath not the least creature that hath life, more of God in it than these? Besides, I knew it was Love should never die, but these must cease and vanish: So I concluded, a little Grace, a little Love, a little of the true Fear of God, is better than all the Gifts: Yea, and I am fully convinced of it, that it is possible for souls that can scarce give a man an answer, but with great confusion as to method; I say, it is as possible for them to have a thousand times more Grace, and so to be more in the Love and Favour of the Lord, than some who by the Virtue of the Gift of Knowledge, can deliver themselves like Angels.

301. Thus therefore I came to perceive, that though Gifts in themselves were good, to the thing for which they are designed, to wit,

300. Bunyan's "maul on the head of pride, and desire of vain glory."

*Cf.* "A bee does not make a noise when it has laid a little honey. A man that has done a kindness does not proclaim it, but does another as soon as he can, just like a vine that bears again the next year."  
*Meditations*, Bk. v. 6.

the edification of others, yet empty, and without power to save the soul of him that hath them, if they be *alone*: Neither are they, as so, any sign of a man's state to be happy, being only a dispensation of God to some, of whole improvement, or non-improvement, they must when a little Love more is over, give an account to Him that is ready to judge the quick and the dead.

302. This shewed me too, that Gifts being alone, were dangerous, not in themselves, but because of those evils that attend them that have them, to wit, pride, desire of vain-glory, self-conceit, &c. all which are easily blown up at the applause and commendation of every unadvised Christian, to the endangering of a poor creature to fall into the condemnation of the Devil.

303. I saw therefore that he that hath Gifts, had need to be let into a sight of the nature of them, to wit, that they come short of making of him to be in a truly saved condition, lest he rest in them, and so fall short of the Grace of God.

304. He hath cause also to walk humbly with God, and be little in his own eyes, and to remember withal, that his Gifts are not his own, but the Church's; and that by them he is made a servant to the Church; and he must give at last an account of his stewardship unto the Lord Jesus; and to give a good account, will be a blessed thing.

305. Let all men therefore prize a little with



the Fear of the Lord. Gifts indeed are desirable, but yet great Grace and small Gifts are better than great Gifts and no Grace. It doth not say, the Lord gives Gifts and Glory, but the Lord gives Grace and Glory; and blessed is such an one, to whom the Lord gives, Grace, true Grace, for that is a certain fore-runner of Glory.

306. But when Satan perceived that his thus tempting and assaulting of me, would not answer his design; to wit, to overthrow the Ministry, and make it ineffectual, as to the ends thereof: Then he tried another way, which was, to stir up the minds of the ignorant and malicious to load me with slanders and reproaches: Now therefore I may say, That what the Devil could devise, and his instruments invent, was whirled up and down the country against me, thinking, as I said, that by that means they should make my Ministry to be abandoned.

307. It began therefore to be rumoured up and down among the people that I was a Witch, a Jesuit, a Highwayman, and the like.

308. To all which, I shall only say, God knows that I am innocent. But as for mine accusers, let them provide themselves to meet me before the Tribunal of the Son of God, there to answer for all these things (with all the rest of their iniquities) unless God shall give them repentance for them, for the which I pray with all my heart.

309. But that which was reported with the boldest confidence, was, That I had my *Misses*, my *Whores*, my *Bastards*; yea *Two Wives at once*, and the like. Now these slanders (with the others) I glory in, because but slanders, foolish, or knavish lies, and falsehoods cast upon me by the Devil and his seed; and should I not be dealt with thus wickedly by the world I should want one sign of a saint, and a child of God. *Blessed are you* (said the Lord Jesus) *when men shall revile you and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil of you falsely for My sake; rejoice and be exceeding glad, for great is your reward in Heaven; for so persecuted they the Prophets which were before you*, Matth. v. 11.

310. These things therefore, upon mine own account, trouble me not; No, though they were twenty times more than they are. I have a good conscience; and whereas they speak evil of me, as an evil-doer, they shall be ashamed that falsely accuse my good conversation in Christ.

311. So then, what shall I say to those who have thus bespattered me? Shall I threaten them? Shall I chide them? Shall I flatter them? Shall I intreat them to hold their

309. "If St Paul did try to please all in the Lord, and to make himself all things to all men, yet he also counted it a very small thing that he should be judged of man's judgment. . . . Sometimes, however, he rebutted the charge, lest on account of his silence there should arise an occasion of scandal to the weak." *De Imitatione Christi*, Bk. iii. 36, 1, 2.

tongues? No, not I. Were it not for that these things make them ripe for damnation, that are the authors and abettors, I would say unto them, *Report it*, because it will increase my glory.

312. Therefore I bind these lies and slanders to me as an ornament; it belongs to my Christian Profession to be vilified, slandered, reproached and reviled; and since all this is nothing else, as my God and my conscience do bear me witness, I rejoice in reproaches for Christ's sake.

313. I also call all those fools and knaves that have thus made it any thing of their business to affirm any of these things afore-named of me; namely, That I have been naught with other women, or the like. When they have used the utmost of their endeavours, and made the fullest enquiry that they can, to prove against me truly, that there is any woman in Heaven, or Earth, or Hell, that can say, I have at any time, in any place, by day or night, so much as attempted to be naught with them; and speak I thus, to beg mine enemies into a good esteem of me? No, not I: I will in this beg belief of no man: Believe or dis-believe me in this, all is a case to me.

314. My foes have missed their mark in this their shooting at me. I am not the man. I wish that they themselves be guiltless. If all the fornicators and adulterers in *England* were hanged up by the neck till they be dead, *John Bunyan*, the object of their envy, would be still alive and well. I know not whether there be

such a thing as a woman breathing under the copes of the Heavens, but by their apparel, their children, or by common fame, except my wife.

315. And in this I admire the wisdom of God, that He made me shy of women from my first conversion until now. These know, and can also bear me witness, with whom I have been most intimately concerned, that it is a rare thing to see me carry it pleasantly towards a woman; the common salutation of women I abhor, 'tis odious to me in whomsoever I see it. Their company alone, I cannot away with; I seldom so much as touch a woman's hand, for I think these things are not so becoming me. When I have seen good men salute those women that they have visited, or that have visited them, I have at times made my objection against it; and when they have answered, that it was but a piece of civility, I have told them, it is not a comely sight: Some indeed have urged the Holy Kiss; but then I have asked why they made baulks, why they did salute the most handsome, and let the ill-favoured go: Thus, how laudable soever such things have been in the eyes of others, they have been unseemly in my sight.

316. And now for a wind-up in this matter, I calling not only men, but Angels, to prove me guilty of having carnally to do with any women save my wife; nor am I afraid to do it a second time, knowing that I cannot offend the Lord in such a case, to call God for a

record upon my soul, that in these things I am innocent. Not that I have been thus kept, because of any goodness in me, more than any other, but God has been merciful to me, and has kept me, to whom I pray that He will keep me still, not only from this, but every evil way and work, and preserve me in His Heavenly Kingdom. *Amen.*

317. Now as Satan laboured by reproaches and slanders, to make me vile among my countrymen, that if possible, my preaching might be made of none effect, so thereby was added hereto, a long and tedious imprisonment, that thereby I might be frightened from my service for Christ, and the world terrified, and made afraid to hear me preach, of which I shall in the next place give you a brief account.

*A Brief ACCOUNT of the AUTHOR'S*  
IMPRISONMENT.

318. **H**AVING made profession of the glorious Gospel of CHRIST a long time, and preached the same about five years, I was apprehended at a meeting of good people in

318. John Bunyan was apprehended on Nov. 12, 1660, when holding a service at the hamlet of Lower Samsell, about thirteen miles from Bedford. The site of the farm house can still be identified. Bunyan was warned before the meeting that a warrant had been issued by Francis Wingate for his arrest. He was advised to give up his preaching that day. His

the country (among whom, had they let me alone, I should have preached that day, but they took me away from amongst them) and had me before a Justice; who after I had offered security for my appearing the next Sessions, yet committed me, because my Sureties would not consent to be bound that I should preach no more to the people.

319. At the Sessions after I was indicted for an upholder and maintainer of unlawful as-

reply was, "No, by no means . . . our cause is good, we need not be ashamed of it; to preach God's Word is so good a work, that we shall be well rewarded even if we suffer for it."

After his condemnation before Sir John Kelynge, Chairman of Quarter Sessions at Bedford, his last words to his judge were, "I am at a point with you; for if I were let out of prison today, I would preach the Gospel again tomorrow, by the help of God." (*Vide* Dr Brown, *op. cit.* p. 153.)

*Cf.* the answer of Luther when challenged for a direct reply at the Diet of Worms, April 1521. "Unless I be convicted of error by the Holy Scripture, or by cogent and evident reasons . . . I neither can nor dare retract anything; for my conscience is held captive by God's Word, and it is neither safe nor right to go against conscience. Here I take my stand. I can do no otherwise—So help me God." "Life of Luther," Hare, p. 66.

*Cf.* also "Endure chains and bodily servitude; for the present I do not deliver but from spiritual slavery." Pascal, *Pensées*, Bk. II. ch. xi. 2.

319. The statement made in this section in 1672 that Bunyan "has now lain complete twelve years' in prison, shows that alterations were introduced into the text between the 1st edition published in

semblies and conventicles, and for not conforming to the National Worship of the Church of *England*; and after some conference *there* with the Justices, they taking my plain-dealing with them for a confession, as they termed it, *of the Indictment, did sentence me to a perpetual banishment, because I refused to conform.* So being again delivered up to the gaoler's hands, I was had home to prison, and there have lain now complete twelve years, waiting to see what God would suffer these men to do with me.

320. In which condition I have continued with much content, through Grace, but have met with many turnings and goings upon my heart, both from the Lord, Satan, and my own corruption; by all which (Glory be to Jesus Christ) I have also received among many things, much conviction, instruction, and understanding, of which at large I shall not here discourse; only give you a hint or two, a word that may stir up the Godly to bless God, and to pray for me; and also to take encouragement, should the case be their own, *Not to fear what man can do unto them.*

321. I never had in all my life, so great an inlet into the Word of God as now: Those Scriptures that I saw nothing in before, were

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1666, and the 6th published in 1688. It is not improbable, therefore, that the other additions made to the latter edition, did not appear then for the first time.

made in this place and state to shine upon me; Jesus Christ also was never more real and apparent than now; here I have seen and felt Him indeed: Oh! that Word, *We have not preached unto you cunningly devised fables*, 2 Pet. i. 16, and that, *God raised Christ from the dead, and gave Him glory, that our faith and hope might be in God*, 1 Pet. i. 2, were blessed words unto me in this imprisoned condition.

322. These three or four Scriptures also have been great refreshments in this condition to me; *John* xiv. 1, 2, 3, 4. *John* xvi. 33. *Col.* iii. 3, 4. *Heb.* xii. 22, 23, 24. So that sometimes when I have been in the savour of them, I have been able to laugh at destruction, *and to fear neither the horse nor his rider*. I have had sweet sights of the forgiveness of my sins in this place, and of my being with Jesus in another world: *Oh! the Mount Sion, the heavenly Jerusalem, the innumerable Company of Angels, and God the Judge of all, and the Spirits of Just Men made perfect, and Jesus*, have been sweet unto me in this place: I have seen *That* here, that I am persuaded I shall never, while in this world, be able to express: I have seen a truth in this Scripture, *Whom having not seen, ye love; in whom, though now ye see Him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable, and full of glory*, 1 Pet. i, 8.

323. I never knew what it was for God to stand by me at all terms, and at every offer of Satan to afflict me, &c. as I have found Him



since I came in hither: For look how fears have presented themselves, so have supports and encouragements; yea, when I have started, even as it were, at nothing else but my shadow, yet God, as being very tender of me, hath not suffered me to be molested, but would with one Scripture or another, strengthen me against all; insomuch that I have often said, *Were it lawful, I could pray for greater trouble, for the greater comfort's sake*, Eccles. vii. 14. 2 Cor. i. 5.

324. Before I came to prison, I saw what was coming, and had especially two considerations warm upon my heart; the first was, How to be able to encounter death, should that be here my portion. For the first of these, that Scripture, *Col. i. 11*, was great information to me, namely, to pray to God *to be strengthened with all might, according to His glorious power, unto all patience and long-suffering with joyfulness*. I could seldom go to prayer before I was imprisoned, but for not so little as a year together, this sentence or sweet petition, would, as it were, thrust itself into my mind, and persuade me, That if ever I would go through long-suffering. I must have patience, especially if I would endure it joyfully.

325. As to the second consideration, that Saying (2 Cor. i. 9) was of great use to me, *But we had the sentence of death in ourselves, that we might not trust in ourselves, but in God, that raised the dead*. By this Scripture I was made to see, That if ever I would suffer rightly, I

must first pass a sentence of death upon every thing that can properly be called a thing of this life, even to reckon myself, my wife, my children, my health, my enjoyments, and all, as dead to me, and myself as dead to them.

326. The second was to live upon God that is invisible, as *Paul* said in another place; the way not to faint, is, *To look not on the things that are seen, but at the things that are not seen; for the things that are seen are temporal, but the things that are not seen are eternal.* And thus I reasoned with myself, If I provide only for a prison, then the whip comes at unawares, and so doth also the pillory. Again, If I only provide for these, then I am not fit for banishment; Further, If I conclude that banishment is the worst, then if death comes, I am surprized: So that I see, the best way to go through sufferings, is to trust in God, through Christ, as touching the world to come; and as touching this world, *to count the grave my house, to make my bed in darkness; to say to corruption, thou art my father, and to the worm, thou art my mother and sister:* That is, to familiarize these things to me.

327. But notwithstanding these helps, I found myself a man encompassed with infirmities; the parting with my wife and poor children, hath often been to me in this place, as the pulling the flesh from the bones, and that not only because I am somewhat too fond of these great mercies, but also because I should

have often brought to my mind the many hardships, miseries, and wants that my poor family was like to meet with, should I be taken from them, especially my poor blind child, who lay nearer my heart than all beside: Oh! the thoughts of the hardship I thought my poor blind one might go under, would break my heart to pieces.

328. Poor child! thought I, what sorrow art thou like to have for thy portion in this world! Thou must be beaten, must beg, suffer hunger, cold, nakedness, and a thousand calamities, though I cannot now endure the wind should blow upon thee. But yet recalling myself, thought I, I must venture you all with God, though it goeth to the quick to leave you: Oh! I saw in this condition I was as a man who was pulling down his house upon the head of his wife and children; yet thought I, I must do it, I must do it: And now I thought on those *two milch kine that were to carry the Ark of God into another country, and to leave their calves behind them.* 1 Sam. vi. 10.

329. But that which helped me in this temptation, was divers considerations, of which,

329. Cf. the answer of Richard Wavel, a non-conformist preacher who had suffered in prison for his convictions. When advised to be more prudent for his children's sake he replied, "My children will never want. Their Heavenly Father will provide what is necessary, and what is more than necessary is hurtful." (*Vide* Dr Brown, *op. cit.* p. 382, 3.)

three in special here I will name: The first was the consideration of those two Scriptures, *Leave thy fatherless children, I will preserve them alive; and let thy widows trust in Me: And again, The Lord said, Verily it shall go well with thy remnant; verily, I will cause the enemy to entreat them well in the time of evil, &c. Jer. xlix. 11. Chap. xv. 11.*

330. I had also this consideration, That if I should venture all for God, I engaged God to take care of my concernments; but if I forsook Him in His Ways, for fear of any trouble that should come to me or mine, then I should not only falsify my profession, but should count also that my concernments were not so sure, if left at God's Feet, whilst I stood to and for His Name, as they would be if they were under my own care, though with the denial of the Way of God. This was a smarting consideration, and as spurs unto my flaw. That Scripture also greatly helped it to fasten the more on me, where Christ prays against *Judas*, that God would disappoint him in his selfish thoughts which moved him to sell his Master. Pray read it soberly, *Psal. cix. 6, 7, 8, &c.*

331. I had also another consideration, and that was, The dread of the Torments of Hell, which I was sure they must partake of, that for fear of the Cross, do shrink from their profession of Christ, His Words and Laws before the sons of men: I thought also of the Glory that He had prepared for those that in Faith,

and Love, and Patience, stood to His Ways before them. These things, I say, have helped me, when the thoughts of the misery that both myself and mine, might for the sake of my Profession be exposed to, hath lain pinching on my mind.

332. When I have indeed conceited that I might be banished for my Profession, then I have thought of that Scripture, *They were stoned, they were sawn asunder, were tempted, were slain with the sword; they wandered about in sheep-skins, and goat-skins, being destitute, afflicted, tormented, of whom the world was not worthy,* for all they thought they were too bad to dwell and abide amongst them. I have also thought of that Saying, *The Holy Ghost witnesseth in every city, that bonds and afflictions abide on me.* I have verily thought that my soul and it have sometimes reasoned about the sore and sad estate of a banished and exiled condition, how they were exposed to hunger, to cold, to perils, to nakedness, to enemies, and a thousand calamities; and at last, it may be, to die in a ditch, like a poor and desolate sheep. But I thank God, hitherto I have not been moved by these most delicate reasonings, but have rather, by them, more approved my heart to God.

333. I will tell you a pretty business: I was once above all the rest, in a very sad and low condition for many weeks; at which time also, I being but a young prisoner, and not acquainted with the laws, had this laid much upon my

spirit, *That my imprisonment might end at the gallows for ought that I could tell.* Now therefore Satan laid hard at me, to beat me out of heart, by suggesting thus unto me: *But how if, when you come indeed to die, you should be in this condition ; that is, as not to savour the things of God, nor to have any evidence upon your soul for a better state hereafter ?* (For indeed at this time all the things of God were hid from my soul.)

334. Wherefore when I at first began to think of this, it was a great trouble to me ; for I thought with myself, *That in the condition I now was in, I was not fit to die, neither indeed did I think I could, if I should be called to it :* Besides, I thought with myself, if I should make a scrambling shift to clamber up the ladder, yet I should either with quaking, or other symptoms of fainting, give occasion to the enemy to reproach the Way of God and His people for their timorousness. This therefore lay with great trouble upon me, for methought I was ashamed to die with a pale face, and tottering knees, in such a case as this.

335. Wherefore I prayed to God that He would comfort me, and give me strength to do and suffer what He should call me to ; yet no comfort appeared, but all continued hid. I was also at this time, so really possessed with the thought of death, that oft I was as if I was on the ladder with a rope about my neck ; only this was some encouragement to me, I thought

I might now have an opportunity to speak my last words unto a multitude, which I thought would come to see me die; and thought I, if it must be so, if God will but convert one soul by my last words, I shall not count my life thrown away, nor lost.

336. But yet all the things of God were kept out of my sight, and still the Tempter followed me with, *But whither must you go when you die? What will become of you? Where will you be found in another World? What evidence have you for Heaven and Glory, and an Inheritance among them that are sanctified?* Thus was I tossed for many weeks, and knew not what to do; at last this consideration fell with weight upon me, *That it was for the Word and Way of God that I was in this condition; wherefore I was engaged not to flinch an hair's breadth from it.*

337. I thought also, That God might chuse whether He would give me comfort now, or at the hour of death; but I might not therefore chuse whether I would hold my Profession or no: I was bound, but He was free; yea, it

337. With Bunyan's sense of spiritual desertion in prison, *cf.* Luther's Prayer at the Diet of Worms.

“Oh God! Oh God! Dost Thou not hear me, oh my God? Art Thou dead? No, Thou canst not die, Thou only hidest Thy Face. Oh tell me, hast Thou not chosen me for this work? I know Thou hast. Then see Thou to it, oh God! . . . Be Thou upon my side, oh God! for the name of Thy dear Son Jesus Christ. . . . Oh Lord, why dost Thou

was my duty to stand to His Word, whether He would ever look upon me or no, or save me at the last: Wherefore thought I, the point being thus, I am for going on, and venturing my eternal state with Christ, whether I have comfort here or no; if God doth not come in, thought I, *I will leap off the ladder even blind-fold into Eternity, sink or swim, come Heaven, come Hell; Lord Jesus, if Thou wilt catch me, do; if not, I will venture for Thy Name.*

338. I was no sooner fixed with this Resolution, but this Word dropped upon me, *Doth Job serve God for nought? As if the Accuser had said, Lord, Job is no upright man, he serves Thee for bye-respects: Hast Thou not made an hedge about him, &c. But put forth now Thine Hand, and touch all that he hath, and he will curse Thee to Thy Face.* How now! thought I, Is this the sign of an upright soul, to desire to serve God, when all is taken from him? Is he a godly man that will serve God for nothing, rather than give out? Blessed be God; then I hope I have an upright heart, for I am resolved (God giving

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tarry? My God, where art Thou? Come! Come! I am ready to yield up my life patient as a lamb. . . . And though my body, which is the work of Thy Hands, should perish, yea be torn in pieces (If I have but Thy Word and Spirit with me, and the body alone is touched) my soul is Thine and belongs to Thee, and shall abide with Thee for ever and ever. Amen. God Help me! Amen." "Life of Luther," *op. cit.*



me strength) never to deny my Profession, though I had nothing at all for my pains: And as I was thus considering, that Scripture was set before me, *Psalm* xliv. 12, &c.

339. Now was my heart full of comfort, for I hoped it was sincere: I would not have been without this trial for much; I am comforted every time I think of it, and I hope I shall bless God for ever for the teaching I have had by it. Many more of the dealings of God towards me I might relate, *But these out of the spoils won in battle have I dedicated to maintain the House of God*, 1 *Chron.* xxvi. 27.

### The CONCLUSION.

1. **O**F all the temptations that ever I met with in my life, to question the Being of God, and Truth of His Gospel is the worst, and the worst to be borne; when this temptation

339. "Now was my heart full of comfort . . . I would not have been without this trial for much."

*Cf.* "He would never have conquered unless he had fought; and the more peril there was in the battle, so much more joy is there in the triumph. . . .

Everywhere the greater joy is ushered in by the greater pain." St Augustine, *Confessions*, Bk. viii. 3.

"And His will is our Peace; this is the Sea  
To which is moving onward whatsoever  
It doth create, and all that Nature makes."

Dante, *Paradiso*, C. iii. 85. Trans.  
Longfellow.

comes, it takes away my girdle from me, and removeth the foundation from under me: Oh! I have often thought of that Word, *Have your loins girt about you with Truth*, and of that, *When the Foundations are destroyed, what can the Righteous do?*

2. Sometimes, when after sin committed, I have looked for sore chastisement from the Hand of God, the very next that I have had from Him, hath been the discovery of His Grace. Sometimes, when I have been comforted, I have called myself a fool for my so sinking under trouble. And then again, when I have been cast down, I thought I was not wise, to give such way to comfort; with such strength and weight hath both these been upon me.

3. I have wondered much at this one thing, That tho' God doth visit my soul with never so blessed a discovery of Himself, yet I have found again, that such hours have attended me afterwards, that I have been in my spirit so filled with darkness, that I could not so much as once conceive what that God and that comfort was, with which I have been refreshed.

4. I have sometimes seen more in a line of the Bible, than I could well tell how to stand under; and yet at another time, the whole Bible hath been to me as a dry stick; or rather, my heart hath been so dead and dry unto it, that I could not conceive the least dram of refreshment, tho' I have looked it all over.

5. Of all fears, they are best that are made by the Blood of Christ; and of all joy, that is the sweetest that is mixed with mourning over Christ: Oh! 'tis a goodly thing to be on our knees, with Christ in our arms, before God: I hope I know something of these things.

6. I find to this day seven abominations in my heart. 1. Inclining to Unbelief. 2. Suddenly to forget the Love and Mercy that Christ manifesteth. 3. A leaning to the Works of the Law. 4. Wanderings and Coldness in Prayer. 5. To forget to watch for that I pray for. 6. Apt to murmur because I have no more, and yet ready to abuse what I have. 7. I can do none of those things which God commands me, but my corruptions will thrust in themselves. *When I would do good, evil is present with me.*

7. These things I continually see and feel, and am afflicted and oppressed with, yet the Wisdom of God doth order them for my good. 1. They make me abhor myself. 2. They keep me from trusting my heart. 3. They convince me of the insufficiency of all inherent righteousness. 4. They shew me the necessity of flying to Jesus. 5. They press me to pray unto God. 6. They shew me the need I have to watch and be sober. 7. And provoke me to pray unto God, thro' Christ, to help me, and carry me through this world.



## APPENDIX I

*Section 155 et seq.—Bunyan's View of Election and Reprobation.*

It is only necessary to deal with this question here so far as to try to meet Bunyan's special difficulty that the doctrine of Election must imply that of Reprobation of other souls even if desirous to be saved.

(1) There is ample scriptural authority to sustain the teaching of a real and definite election of such a body as the Israel of old, of the Family of Aaron, of the Tribe of Levi, of the Church of Christ, as well as of individual members—"an election within an election"—of the old and new Dispensations (Isaiah lxxv. 9, 22; Acts xiii. 7; 1 Pet. v. 13; 2 St John i. 13).

(2) The *grounds* of that election are distinctly stated to lie in the love (Deut. vii. 8), the faithfulness (Deut. ix. 5; Rom. xi. 29), and the mercy of God (Rom. ix. 16). (*Vide* Hastings' *Dict. Bible*, Art. "Election.")

(3) The *Purposes* of election—*considered only with the view to the particular point at issue*—we shall find indicated in the following passages:—

(a) Abraham was "called of God" with the promise that "in thee and in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed" (Gen. xxii. 18).

(b) St Peter writes, "Ye are an elect race . . . that ye may shew forth the excellencies of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvellous light" (1 Pet. ii. 9).

(c) The close of St Paul's argument on this subject in the Epistle to the Romans is, "So have these also now been disobedient, *that by the mercy shewn to you*

*they also may now obtain mercy.* For God hath shut up all unto disobedience, that He might have mercy upon all " (Rom. xi. 31, 32).

(4) We note then—

(a) That the call of Abraham was for the blessing of the *world*.

(b) That the elect follower of Christ is reminded that the "excellencies of God" which he is to set forth are not those only shewn in Creation, but those manifested in Redemption (St John iii. 16 makes us understand that that Redemption is the Redemption of the *world*).

(c) That the elect believer is called not only to "set forth" that Redemption, but to be a "fellow worker with God," in bringing home to them that are still in disobedience the knowledge of the mercies of Him who will have mercy upon all.

(5) So far then from the doctrine of "Election" being allied to one of "Reprobation," we learn that the exact opposite is the truth. We are led to see that in the Love and Providence of God, the purpose of Election is even allied to the mystery of the Incarnation of the Son of God, "who willeth that all men should be saved and come to the knowledge of the truth" (1 Tim. ii. 4).

The scripture quotations in these notes are taken from the Revised Version.

## APPENDIX II

### *A Brief Character of Mr. John Bunyan*

HE appeared in countenance to be of a stern and rough temper, but in his conversation mild and affable; not given to loquacity or much discourse in company, unless some urgent occasion required it; observing never to boast of himself or his parts, but rather seem low in his own eyes, and submit himself to the judgment of others, abhorring lying and swearing, being just in all that lay in his power to his word, not seeming to revenge injuries, loving to reconcile differences, and make friendship with all; he had a sharp quick eye, accompanied with an excellent discerning of persons, being of good judgment and quick wit. As for his person, he was tall of stature, strong-boned, though not corpulent, somewhat of a ruddy face, with sparkling eyes, wearing his hair on his upper-lip, after the old *British* fashion; his hair reddish, but in his latter days, time had sprinkled it with grey; his nose well set, but not declining or bending, and his mouth moderate large; his forehead somewhat high, and his habit always plain and modest. And thus we have impartially described the internal and external parts of a person, whose death hath been much regretted; a person who had tried the smiles and frowns of time; not puffed up in prosperity, nor shaken in adversity; always holding the Golden Mean.

*In him at once did three great worthies shine,  
Historian, Poet, and a choice Divine:  
Then let him rest in undisturbed dust,  
Until the Resurrection of the Just.*

## APPENDIX III

### CATALOGUE OF SOME SEVENTEENTH CENTURY COPIES OF JOHN BUNYAN'S WORKS BY JAMES BACKHOUSE

Title.	Edition.	Date of Pub- lication.	Place of Pub- lication.	Size.	Where copies are now extant.
Some Gospel Truths Opened.	1st	1656	London	12mo	B. M.
A Vindication of the Book called Some Gospel Truths Opened.	? 1st	1657	London (John Wright)	4to	Trin. Coll. Cam.
Do. do.	? 2nd	1657	London (Mr Cowley)	4to	" "
Sighs from Hell.	1st	1658	London	8vo	B. M.
Do. do.	2nd	[? 1666]	"	8vo	B. M.
Do. do.	...	1675	"	8vo	Bodleian.
Do. do.	...	1688	...	...	Bedford.
Doctrine of the Law and Grace Un- folded.	...	1659	London	8vo	B. M. Bedford.
Do. do.	...	1685	"	8vo	B. M. Bedford.
Do. do.	...	1701	"	12mo	B. M.
Profitable Medita- tions.	...	[1661]	"	sm. 4to	B. M.
I will Pray with the Spirit.	2nd	1663	"	16mo	Backhouse.
Do. do.	3rd	? 1685	"	12mo	B. M. (imper- fect, wanting all after p. 116).



Title.	Edition.	Date of Publication.	Place of Publication.	Size.	Where Copies are now extant.
One Thing is Needful.	...	N. D.	London	8vo	Bodleian.
Do. do.	3rd	1683	"	12mo	B. M.
Prison Meditations.	2nd	[? 1690]	"	12mo	B. M. (2 copies).
The Holy Citie	1st	1665	"	8vo	B. M.
Duplicate with new Title-page.	1st	1669	"	8vo	B. M. Bodl. Bedf.
Resurrection of the Dead.	1st	[1665]	"	8vo	B. M.
Grace Abounding.	1st	1666	"	8vo	B. M.
Do. do.	6th	1688	"	12mo	B. M. Bedf.
Do. do.	7th	1692	"	12mo	B. M. Back.
Do. do.	8th	[? 1693]	"	12mo	B. M.
Defence of Justification by Faith.	1st	1672	[ " ]	sm. 4to	B. M. Backhouse.
Do. do.	...	1673	"	8vo	Backhouse.
Differences of Judgment about Water Baptism.	1st	1673	"	sm. 4to	B. M. Bodl. Backh. Huth.
*Reprobation Asserted.	? 1st	[? 1674]	"	4to	B. M.
Do. do.	2nd	1696	"	4to	B. M. Bodleian.
Light to them that sit in Darkness.	1st	1675	"	8vo	Bodl. Bedf. Guild Hall.
Christian Behaviour.	1st	[1663]	"	12mo	B. M.
Do. do.	..	[? 1690]	"	12mo	B. M. (2 copies).
Instruction for the Ignorant.	1st	1675	"	8vo	Bodleian.
The Strait Gate	1st	1676	"	8vo	Bodl. Univ. Lib. Cam.
Pilgrim's Progress, Pt. I.	1st	1678	"	8vo	B. M. Lenox. Bodl.
Do. do.	2nd	1678	"	12mo	B. M. Lenox. Bodl. Univ. Lib. Cam.
Do. do.	3rd	1679	"	12mo	B. M. Lenox.
Do. do.	4th	1680	Dondon [sic]	12mo	B. M. Lenox.

\* "Reprobation Asserted" is, in Dr Brown's judgment, a spurious work. *Op. cit.* p. 244.

Title.	Edition.	Date of Publication.	Place of Publication.	Size.	Where Copies are now extant.
Pilgrim's Progress, Pt. I.	5th	1680	London	12mo	B. M. Lenox.
Do. do.	6th	1681	"	12mo	B. M. Lenox.
Do. do.	7th	1681	"	12mo	B. M. Lenox.
Do. do.*	3th	1682	"	12mo	B. M. Len. Bed. (2 copies)
Do. do.	9th	1683	"	12mo	B. M. Lenox.
Do. do.	?	1684	...	...	Bedford.
Do. do.	10th	1685	"	12mo	B. M. Back- house.
Do. do.	11th	1688	"	12mo	B. M.
Do. do.	12th	1689	"	12mo	Lenox.
Do. do.	13th	1692	"	12mo	Lenox.
Do. do.	13th	1693	"	12mo	B. M. Len. Backhouse.
Do. do.	14th	1695	"	12mo	Lenox.
Do. do.	15th	1702	"	12mo	B. M.
Pilgrim's Progress, Pt. II.	1st	1684	"	12mo	Lenox.
Do. do.	2nd	1686	"	24mo	B. M.
Do. do.	..	1687	"	12mo	Lenox.
Do. do.	3rd	1690	"	12mo	B. M.
Do. do.	6th	1693	"	12mo	B. M. Lenox.
The Spurious Pt. III.	..	1693	"	8vo	Bodleian.
The Treatise of the Fear of God.	1st	1679	"	12mo	B. M. (2 cop.) Bedf. Back- house.
Life and Death of Mr Badman.	1st	1680	"	12mo	B. M. Len. Bedf. D. & C. York.
Do. do.	3rd	1696	"	12mo	B. M. Bedford.
Come and Welcome.	1st	1678	"	8vo	B. M. Bodleian.
Do. do.	2nd	1684	"	12mo	B. M.
Do. do.	..	1685	"	12mo	Backhouse.
Do. do.	3rd	1686	"	12mo	B. M.
Do. do.	6th	1691	"	12mo	B. M.
The Holy War.	1st	1682	"	8vo	B. M. Len. Bedf. Huth. Signet.
Do. do.	2nd	1684	"	12mo	B. M. Bedf. Backhouse.

Title.	Edition.	Date of Publication.	Place of Publication.	Size.	Where Copies are now extant.
The Holy War.	3rd	1696	..	..	Huth.
Barren Fig Tree.	2nd	1688	London	12mo	B. M.
Do. do.	3rd	1692	..	12mo	B. M. Bodl. Univ. Lib. Cam.
Do. do.	4th	1695	..	12mo	B. M.
Do. do.	5th	1697	Glasgow	12mo	Backhouse.
Do. do.	5th	1698	London	12mo	Bedf. D. and C. York. Back.
Greatness of the Soul.	1st	1683	..	12mo	B. M. Bedf. (2 cop.) Guild Hall.
Do. do.	2nd	1691	..	12mo	B. M.
Caution against Sin.	1st	[1684]	..	Sh. Fol.	B. M.
Seasonable Counsel.	1st	1684	..	12mo	B. M. Bedf. Backhouse.
A Holy Life.	1st	1684	..	12mo	B. M. Bedf. Backhouse.
Discourse upon the Pharisee and the Publican.	1st	1685	..	12mo	B. M. Backh. Cath. Lib. Durham.
* Divine Emblems	1st	1686	..	8vo	B. M.
Questions about Seventh Day Sabbath.	1st	1685	..	12mo	B. M. Trin. Coll. Cam.
Jerusalem Sinner Saved.	1st	1688	..	12mo	B. M.
Do. do.	2nd	1689	..	12mo	B. M.
Do. do.	3rd	1697	..	12mo	B. M. D. and C. York.
Do. do.	3rd	1700	..	12mo	B. M.
Jesus Christ as Advocate.	1st	1688	..	12mo	B. M. Bedf. D. and C. York. Huth.
Do. do.	2nd	1688	..	12mo	B. M.
Water of Life.	1st	1688	..	12mo	B. M. Bedf. Backhouse.

\* "Divine Emblems" is a hash up of an older work entitled "A Book for Boys and Girls; or, Country Rhymes for Children," of which an unique copy was acquired by the British Museum in 1888, dated 1686.

Title.	Edition.	Date of Publication.	Place of Publication.	Size.	Where Copies are now extant.
Solomon's Temple.	1st	1688	London	12mo	B. M. D. and C. York.
Do. do.	3rd	1689	„	12mo	B. M. Bedf. Backhouse.
Do. do.	..	1691	„	12mo	Trin. Coll. Cam.
The Acceptable Sacrifice.	1st	1689	„	12mo	B. M. Bedf. Backhouse.
Do. do.	2nd	1691	„	12mo	B. M.
Do. do.	3rd	1698	„	12mo	B. M. Backhouse.
The Heavenly Footman.	1st	1698	„	8vo	B. M. Bedford.

Of the remainder of Bunyan's works some of the following are not known as separately published books, but are to be found in the first edition of the complete works, dated 1692 (London, folio). This book, of which the second volume was apparently never written, is represented in the Libraries at the British Museum, Bodleian, Bedford, Guild Hall, London, Cambridge University, and that of the writer.

## LIST OF CONTENTS.

<i>Manuscripts.</i>	<i>Books formerly Printed.</i>
An exposition the ten first chapt. of Gen.	Saved by Grace.
Justification by imputed Righteousness.	A Map of Salvation and Damnation.
Paul's Departure and Crown.	Christian Behaviour.
Israel's hope encouraged.	Pray with the Spirit, and understanding.
The Desire of the Righteous granted.	The Strait Gate.
The Saints Priviledge and Profit.	Some Gospel Truths Opened.
	Light for them in Darkness.
	Instruction for the ignorant

*Manuscripts.*

Christ a compleat Saviour in  
His intercession.  
The Unsearchable riches of  
Christ.  
The House of the Forrest of  
Lebanon.  
A Description of Anti Christ  
and his ruine.

*Books formerly Printed.*

The Holy City, the New Jeru-  
salem.  
The Resurrection of the dead.

[Since going to press, the Editor learns that the Bunyan library belonging to Mr Backhouse is in the hands of Messrs Sotheby, Wilkinson & Hodge, London, for sale.]

## APPENDIX IV

DID BUNYAN JOIN "THE PARLIAMENT'S ARMY"?

(*Vide* Section 13.)

A writer who published a life of Bunyan in 1700, and who claimed to be a "personal friend of Bunyan," makes this statement.

Bunyan "being a soldier in the Parliament's Army at the siege of Leicester in 1645, was drawn out to stand centinel; but another soldier voluntarily desiring to go in his room," was shot dead (*vide* Dr Brown, *op. cit.* p. 51). There are two obvious mistakes in this short paragraph.

(1) The Parliamentary Army were themselves besieged at the siege of Leicester by the Royalist forces under Prince Rupert, and not *vice versa*.

(2) Bunyan himself distinctly states that though he was drawn to go to the siege, he did *not* go (*vide* Section 13). It is at least open to question, therefore, whether Bunyan was ever a soldier in the "Parliament's Army."

As Carlyle and Lord Macaulay apparently both rely solely upon the authority of the "personal friend" for their opinion that Bunyan took the popular side in the Civil War, we are enabled to dismiss these great names until some further information, not considered by them, can be produced. Dr Brown, fortunately for us, marshalls all the evidence that, with the most careful research, can be brought forward in support of this view (*vide op. cit.* ch. iii.).

Dr Brown thus sums up the case. "Having regard, then, to all the local circumstances of the case, to the fact that there was a strong set of the stream in the Parliamentary direction (*i. e.* in the county of Bedford), that Bunyan was a mere lad of

sixteen, that he listened at Elstow Church to the preaching of Christopher Hall, a vicar who went so far with the prevailing current as to preach against Sunday sports, and to christen his son with Cromwell's name of Oliver; it seems scarcely likely that he would think his way to independent conclusions so wide apart from those of his neighbours, break through all the carefully-kept lines of the Parliamentary forces west of the county, and join the Royalist army with the King" (*op. cit.* p. 49).

The "strong set of the stream in the Parliamentary direction" in the county of Bedford, as a whole, must be frankly admitted. It is quite a different thing to admit it in the parish of Elstow in particular.

(1) There is no evidence, *at this date* (*i.e.* before the battle of Naseby) of the Puritan tendencies and influence of the Vicar of Elstow. *Three or four years later*, when the Commonwealth was fully established, he might "go so far with the current of the times, as to preach against Sunday sports, and to christen his son by Cromwell's name of Oliver." We have, however, unimpeachable evidence of the orthodox character of the vicar's real opinions in the fact mentioned by Dr Brown, that he was appointed to the living of Elstow "in 1639, when Archbishop Laud was supreme." The further fact that he retained his living at the Restoration, and for two years after the passing of the Act of Uniformity, confirms the idea that these concessions to Puritanism may have been of a temporary or even temporising character (*vide op. cit.* p. 57). There seems at least a *primâ facie* case that in these earlier days Rev. C. Hall is unlikely to have exercised much influence over his parishioners in a Puritan direction, and still less over a wild boy of sixteen who, on his own confession, in these days was wholly hostile to religion (*vide* Sections 8 to 10).

We have now to consider evidence of a more decisive nature. When Bunyan, after his marriage, began to attend the Parish Church, the services, even under the Commonwealth, were of a quite notably

unpuritanical character. In the famous Sections 16 and 17, he tells us that he was "so overrun with the spirit of superstition, that he adored, and that with great devotion, even all things (both the High Place, Priest, Clerk, Vestment, Service, and what else) belonging to the Church." Surely this description appears quite conclusive as to the Episcopalian character of the services in the Parish Church; as to the nature of the probable influence of the vicar; and incidentally as to the Episcopalianism of the *parishioners*, who would put up with such a service, without protest, in days when it was as illegal as it was unpuritanical. There is, however, further evidence of the atmosphere of the "National Religion" prevailing amongst the Elstow people. We see this in the willingness of Bunyan's Elstow neighbours to accept him, shortly after his marriage, as a "very godly man, a new and religious man," on the mere evidence of his regular attendance at church, and his changed moral character, without any special profession of religious experience or conversion (Section 31). They were quite willing even to accept him in this character without his giving up either his bell-ringing or his dancing. At Elstow, he tells us himself, to "fall in with the Religion of the Times was to go to church twice a day and that with the foremost" (Section 16). We have negative evidence in the same direction in the fact that until Bunyan met with "the three or four poor women at Bedford," he had never even heard of the characteristic doctrines of the Puritan faith (Sections 37 to 39). When we add to this that Bunyan's father all his life was incontestibly of the "national religion," we have the right to say, not only that the Rev. C. Hall was very unlikely to exercise any influence over the youth in a Puritan direction; but also that any improbability that Bunyan would "think his way to independent conclusions so wide apart from those of his neighbours," at this early age, makes *against* and not *for* Bunyan's adoption at this age of Puritan convictions.



There is another point which seems to press with great force upon the student of the earlier chapters of "Grace Abounding." If Bunyan had been for some months surrounded by the strong religious atmosphere of the Puritan Army in its most disciplined and effective days, it is almost inconceivable that he should have given us no trace of it in his autobiography. Such aggravation of his youthful offences, as this deliberate *Sinning against Light* (as it must have appeared to him in later years) could hardly have been passed unnoticed by him. It would certainly lessen our admiration for "Grace Abounding" as a faithful record of his inner life, if it contained no reminiscence of, no touch of sorrow for such a blinding of his eyes to high precept and example.

A serious question still presents itself. *Could* John Bunyan have broken through "the carefully-kept ranks of the Parliamentary forces, west of the county, and have joined the Royalist army with the King"?

The diligence of Dr Brown has enabled him to supply us with an answer. He has compiled a list of twenty names from the county of Bedford of those who fought for the King, and of fifteen more whose sympathies for the King were sufficiently pronounced for them to be subsequently obliged to compound for their estates. Amongst the former it is interesting to note the names of Robert Audley of Northill, a youth of seventeen, and of one Thomas Foster, a *Yeoman of Elstow* (*op. cit.* pp. 43, 44). It is an odd coincidence that Bunyan was at this time in his seventeenth year, that he belonged to an old yeoman family of Elstow, and that, at least later in the century, his father had relations at Northill. The name of Thomas Foster of Elstow is however of real importance. It shews that, whatever the "general set of the stream" in the county of Bedford might be, one man at least from Bunyan's native village *was* able to "break through the Parliament's carefully-kept lines, . . . and join the Royalist army with

the King." It cannot therefore have been impossible for Bunyan to have done the same, and only one point remains. If Bunyan was not carried by pressure of local circumstances into the ranks of the Parliamentary army, can we suggest any cause which might have determined a wild youth to have voluntarily braved the dangers involved in his enlistment under the Standard of the King? For such a motive we must, for a moment, look at the Bunyan home.

It is known that Bunyan's mother died in June 1644, and that his sister followed her to the grave within a month, and that within yet another month Bunyan's father married again. Is it not a natural solution of the question that a bold-spirited and yet at bottom affectionate youth (for such he must have been if in any way the boy was father to the man), repelled by his father's apparently unfeeling conduct, and probably offended also at the presence of his father's new wife, found home for a time insupportable, and within a few months seized with gladness such an opportunity for excitement and change of scene as his "listing" for the King's service along with Foster, or such another, would secure. The whole affair would then appear to Bunyan in his later life simply as another instance of his boyish recklessness, about which the manifestation of God's Providence over him would be the one salient point, and the only one worthy of record.

To some such solution as this the story of the "Personal Friend" seems to tend. It is not impossible that he remembered one fact correctly; viz., that it was at the siege of Leicester that Bunyan's substitute was killed. From Bunyan's later career it would not be unnatural for him to suppose that this took place on the Parliament's side; and, secondly, that Bunyan himself was there. If this interpretation be correct, Bunyan's substitute died fighting for the King.

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