



Courteous companions, it has been some time since I have told you my dream that I had of Christian the pilgrim and of his dangerous journey towards the Celestial Country. I know it was pleasant to me, and I hope it was profitable to you. I told you then also what I saw concerning his wife and children and how unwilling they were to go with him on pilgrimage; insomuch that he was forced to go on his progress without them, for he durst not run the danger of that judgment that he feared would come by staying with them in the City of Destruction. Wherefore, as I then showed you, he left them and departed.

Now it hath so happened, through the multiplicity of business, that I have been much hindered and kept back from my wonted travels into those parts whence he went; and so I could not till now obtain an opportunity to make further inquiry after those whom he left behind that I might give you an account of them. But having had some concerns that way of late, I went down again thitherward. Now having taken up my lodgings in a wood about a mile off the place, as I slept, I dreamed again.

And as I was in my dream, behold, an aged gentleman came by where I lay; and because he was to go some part of the way that I was traveling, methought I got up and went with him. So as we walked, we fell into discourse as travelers are wont to do; and our talk happened to be about Christian and his travels. For thus I began with the man:

Bunyan: Sir, what town is that there below, which lieth on the left hand of our way?

Then said Mr. Sagacity (for that was his name),

Sagacity: It is the City of Destruction, a populous place but inhabited by a very ill-conditioned and idle sort of people.

Bunyan: I thought that was that city. I went once myself through that town and therefore know that this report you give of it is true.

Sagacity: Too true; I wish I could speak truth in speaking better of them that dwell therein.

Bunyan: Well, Sir, then I perceive you to be a well-meaning man and so one that takes pleasure to hear and tell of that which is good. Pray, did you never hear what happened to a man whose name was Christian, who went on pilgrimage up towards the higher regions some time ago from this town?

Sagacity: Hear of him! Aye, and I also heard of the molestations, troubles, wars, captivities, cries, groans, frights, and fears that he met with and had in his journey. Besides, I must tell you, all our country rings of him. There are but few houses that have heard of him and his doings that have not also sought after and got the full records of his pilgrimage. Yea, I think I may say that his hazardous journey has got many well-wishers to his ways. For though when he was here, he was scorned in every man's mouth, yet now that he is gone, he is highly commended of all. For it is said he lives bravely where he is; yea, many of them that are resolved never to run his hazards yet have their mouths water at his gains.

Bunyan: If they think anything that is true, they may rightly think that he liveth well where he is; for he now lives with the Fountain of Life and has what he has without labor and sorrow, for there is no grief mixed therewith. But pray, what talk have the people about him?

Sagacity: Talk! The people talk strangely about him. Some say that he now walks in white, that he has a chain of gold about his neck, and that he has a crown of gold, beset with pearls, upon his head. Others say that the Shining Ones, who sometimes showed themselves to him in his journey, are become his companions and that he is as familiar with them

in the place where he is as here one neighbor is with another. Besides, it is confidently affirmed concerning him that the King of the place where he is has bestowed upon him already a very rich and pleasant dwelling at court as well as that he every day eateth and drinketh and walketh and talketh with Him and receiveth of the smiles and favors of Him that is Judge of all. [Rev. 3:4; Luke 14:15]

Moreover it is expected of some that his Prince, the Lord of that country, will shortly come into these parts and will know the reason (if they can give any) why his neighbors set so little by him and had him so much in derision when they perceived that he would be a pilgrim. For they say that now he is so in the affections of his Prince and that his Sovereign is so much concerned with the indignities that were cast upon Christian when he became a pilgrim that He will look upon all as if done unto Himself – and no marvel, for it was for the love that he had to his Prince that Christian ventured as he did. [Jude 1:14+15; Luke 10:16]

Bunyan: I dare say I am glad of it. I am thankful for the poor man's sake that he now has rest from his labor, that he reapeth the benefit of his tears with joy, and that he has got beyond the grasp of his enemies and is out of the reach of them that despise him. I also am glad for that a rumor of these things is noised abroad in this country; who can tell but that it may work some good effect on certain that are left behind? But pray, Sir, while it is fresh in my mind, do you hear anything of his wife and children? Poor hearts! I wonder in my mind what they do. [Rev. 14:13; Ps. 126:5+6]

Sagacity: Who, Christiana and her sons? They are like to do as well as did Christian himself. For though they all played the fool at the first and would by no means be persuaded by either the tears or entreaties of Christian, yet second thoughts have wrought wonderfully with them. So they have packed up and are also gone after him.

Bunyan: Better and better! But what, wife and children and all?

Sagacity: It is true. I can give you an account of the matter, for I was upon the spot at the instant and was thoroughly acquainted with the whole affair.

Bunyan: Then a man, it seems, may report it for a truth?

Sagacity: You need not fear to affirm it. I mean that they are all gone on pilgrimage, both the good woman and her four boys. And since we are, as I perceive, going some considerable way together, I will give you an account of the whole of the matter.

This Christiana (for that was her name from the day that she and her children betook themselves to a pilgrim's life), after her husband was gone over the river, where she could hear of him no more, began to contemplate in her mind. First, she wept that she had lost her husband and for that the loving bond of that relation was utterly broken betwixt them. For you know, nature can do no less than entertain the living with many a heavy cogitation in the remembrance of the loss of loving relations. This, therefore, of her husband did cost her many a tear.

But this was not all; for Christiana did also begin to consider with herself whether her unbecoming behavior towards her husband was not one cause that she saw him no more and that in such sort he was taken away from her. And upon this there came into her mind by swarms all her unkind, unnatural, and ungodly carriages to her dear friend, which also clogged her conscience and did load her with guilt. She was, moreover, much broken with calling to remembrance the restless groans, brinish tears, and self-bemoanings of her husband and how she did harden her heart against all his entreaties and loving persuasions of her and her sons to go with him. Yea, there was not anything that Christian either said to her or did before her all the while that his burden did

hang on his back that did not return upon her like a flash of lightning and rent her heart in sunder. Especially that bitter outcry of his, "What shall I do to be saved?" did ring in her ears most dolefully. Then said she to her children,

Christiana: Sons, we are all undone. I have sinned away your father, and he is gone. He would have had us with him, but I would not go myself. I also have hindered you from life.

With that the boys fell all into tears and cried out to go after their father.

Christiana: Oh, that we had but gone with him! Then had it fared well with us beyond what it is like to do now. For though I formerly foolishly imagined, concerning the troubles of your father, that they proceeded of a strange fancy that he had or for that he was overrun with melancholy humors; yet now it will not out of my mind but that they sprang from another cause, to wit, for that the Light of lights was given him. By the help of this Light, as I perceive, he has escaped the snares of death. [James 1:23-25]

Then they all wept again and cried out,

Christiana and Sons: Oh, "woe worth the day!" [Ezek. 30:2]

The next night Christiana had a dream; and behold, she saw as if a broad parchment were opened before her, in which was recorded the sum of her ways. The state of things, as she thought, looked very black to her. Then she cried out aloud in her sleep,

Christiana: Lord, have mercy upon me a sinner! (And the little children heard her.) [Luke 18:13]

After this she thought she saw two very ill-favored ones standing and saying,

Ill-favored Ones: What shall we do with this woman? For she cries out for mercy waking and sleeping. If she be suffered to go on as she begins, we shall lose her as we have lost her husband. Wherefore we must, by one way or another, seek to take her off from the thoughts of what shall be hereafter. Else all the world cannot help it, but she will become a pilgrim.

Now she awoke in a great sweat; also a trembling was upon her. But after a while she fell to sleeping again. And then she thought she saw Christian her husband in a place of bliss among many immortals with a harp in his hand, standing and playing upon it before One that sat on a throne with a rainbow about His head. She saw also as if he bowed his head, with his face to the paved work that was under the Prince's feet, saying,

Christian: I heartily thank my Lord and King for bringing me to this place.

Then shouted a company of them that stood round about and harped with their harps. But no man living could tell what they said, only Christian and his companions.

Next morning, when she had got up, had prayed to God, and had talked with her children a while, one knocked hard at the door; to whom she spake out, saying,

Christiana: If thou comest in God's name, come in. So he opened the door and saluted her thus:

Secret: Amen. "Peace be to this house." [Luke 10:5]

The which when he had done, he said,

Secret: Christiana, knowest thou wherefore I am come?

Then she blushed and trembled; also her heart began to

wax warm with desires to know whence he came and what was his errand to her.

Secret: My name is Secret. I dwell with those that are high. It is talked of, where I dwell, as if thou hadst a desire to go thither. Also there is a report that thou art aware of the evil thou hast formerly done to thy husband in hardening thy heart against his way and in keeping these thy babes in their ignorance.

Christiana, the Merciful One has sent me to tell thee that He is a God ready to forgive and that He taketh delight to multiply pardon. He also would have thee know that He inviteth thee to come into His presence, to His table, and that He will feed thee with the good things of His house and "with the heritage of Jacob thy father." [Isa. 58:14]

There is Christian thy husband with legions more, his companions, ever beholding that face that doth minister life to beholders. And they will all be glad when they shall hear the sound of thy feet stepping over thy Father's threshold.

At this Christiana was greatly abashed in herself; and as she bowed her head to the ground, this visitor proceeded and said,

Secret: Christiana, here is also a letter for thee, which I have brought from thy husband's King.

So she took it and opened it. It smelt after the manner of the best perfume; also it was written in letters of gold. The contents of the letter were these: that the King would have her do as did Christian her husband, for that was the way to come to His City and to dwell in His presence with joy forever. Now the good woman was quite overcome, so she cried out to her visitor, [Song 1:3]

Christiana: Sir, will you carry me and my children with you that we also may go and worship this King?

Secret: Christiana, the bitter is before the sweet. Thou must through troubles, as did he that went before thee, enter this Celestial City. Wherefore I advise thee to do as did Christian thy husband. Go to the wicket-gate yonder over the plain, for that stands in the head of the way up which thou must go, and I wish thee all good speed. Also I advise that thou put this letter in thy bosom and that thou read therein to thyself and to thy children until you have got it by rote of heart, for it is one of the songs that thou must sing while thou art in this house of thy pilgrimage. Also this thou must deliver in at the further Gate. [Ps. 119:54]

Now I saw in my dream that this older gentleman, as he told me the story, did himself seem to be greatly affected therewith. He moreover proceeded and said,

Sagacity: So Christiana called her sons together and began thus to address herself unto them:

Christiana: My sons, I have, as you may perceive, been of late under much exercise in my soul about the death of your father; not for that I doubt at all of his happiness, for I am satisfied now that he is well. I have been also much affected with the thoughts of mine own state and yours, which I verily believe is miserable by nature. My carriages also to your father in his distress are a great load to my conscience, for I hardened both my own heart and yours against him and refused to go with him on pilgrimage.

The thoughts of these things would now crush me outright but for a dream that I had last night and but for the encouragement that this stranger has given me this morning. Come, my children, let us pack up and be gone to the gate that leads to the Celestial Country that we may see your father and

be with him and his companions in peace, according to the laws of that land.

Then did her children burst out into tears for joy that the heart of their mother was so inclined. So their visitor bade them farewell, and they began to prepare to set out for their journey.

We hope you enjoyed this excerpt from
Christiana's Journey.
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