

CHAPTER I

In the Similitude of a Dream

- 1 I walked through the wilderness of this world,
I lighted on a place where was a den;
I laid me down to sleep; and, as I slept,
I dreamed a dream. I dreamed, and dreamed again.

- 2 And behold, I saw a man clothed with rags
standing in a certain way, with his face
from his own house, and a book in his hand,
and a great burden upon his back, placed.

- 3 I looked, and saw the man open the book,
read therein; and as he read, he wept too;
he trembled; and not able to contain,
broke out with a cry, "O, what shall I do?"

- 4 In this plight therefore he went home, refrained
himself from speaking his heart to his wife;
lest his dear children perceive his distress,
but he could not so long silence his strife.

- 5 Wherefore at length he spake his mind to them;
thus he began, "O my dear wife," said he,
"and you, the children of my own loins, I'm
undone by burdens that bear upon me."

6 "Moreover, I am for certain informed
that this our city will be burned by fire,
in which fearful overthrow, both myself,
with thee, my wife, and the sweet babes we've sired

7 shall miserably come to ruin except
we find a fortress for which to flee to."
At this his relations were sore amazed—
not that they believed what he said was true,

8 but because they thought that some distemper
had drilled deep down into his frenzied head;
therefore, it drawing towards the night they, with
haste, escorted the man off to his bed.

9 But the night was as troublesome to him
as the day; wherefore instead of sleeping,
he spent it in sighs and tears. So, when morn
was come, Christian was worn thin from weeping.

10 So, he set to talk to them once again;
but they all turned away—hardened their hearts;
they thought to drive his distemper away
by harsh and surly verbal swords and darts.

11 Sometimes, they'd deride, other times, they'd chide,
while other times, they would quite neglect him;
wherefore, he began to retire himself
away to pray they would not reject him.

- 12 Also, to console his own misery,
he would walk alone in the fields, reading
and sometimes praying: and thus for some days
he spent time in pastures, interceding.
- 13 I saw, upon a time, he was walking
in fields, as he was wont, reading a book,
greatly distressed in his mind; as he read,
he burst out—crying with a voice that shook,
- 14 “What shall I do to be saved?” he cried as
he looked to and fro searching for a guide;
yet he stood frozen, for as I perceived,
the way which to go, he could not decide.
- 15 I looked, and saw a man, Evangelist
coming to him, asked, “Wherefore dost thou cry?”
He answered, “Sir, I perceive by the book
in my hand that I am condemned to die,
- 16 and after that, I’m to come to judgment;
and so, Sir, here is what is the matter;
I am not willing to perform the first,
nor am I able to do the latter.”
- 17 Then said Evangelist, “Since this brief life
is attended with so many scandals,
why not willing to die, to breathe thy last—
escape Tophet’s many woes and vandals?”

- 18 The man answered, "I fear that this burden
that is on my back will sink me deeper—
will sink me lower than the lowest grave
into the foul hands of my soul's Reaper.
- 19 And Sir, if I be not fit for prison,
I am not fit for judgment, I am sure,
and from thence to execution; these thoughts
have caused my soul to cry out for its cure."
- 20 Evangelist said, "If this be thy plight,
why be paralyzed—why standest thou still?"
Christian said, "I know not wither to go—
what fate awaits me beyond yonder hill."
- 21 Then he gave him a parchment roll, and there
was written within, these words dark and glum;
a most foreboding prophecy of doom,
warning mankind, "Fly from the wrath to come!"
- 22 Christian, he read it, and said carefully
to Evangelist, "Whither must I fly?"
He said, "Do you see yonder Wicket-gate,
where embrace of this wide field mates with sky?"
- 23 Christian replied, "No;" then said the other,
"Tell me, do you see yonder shining light?"
He said, "I do," then said Evangelist,
"Keep it and the Wicket-gate within sight,

- 24 and go up directly thereto: so shalt
thou see the gate which, when thou knockest there,
it shall then be told thee what thou shalt do,
when you reach Wicket-gate—a land most fair.”
- 25 So, I saw in my dream, the man began
to run, and when not far from his own door,
but his wife and children, perceiving it,
began to cry out in grief and horror.
- 26 But the man put his fingers in his ears,
and ran on, crying, “Life! Eternal Life!”
So he looked not behind him, but he fled
towards the plain in the middle of the night.
- 27 The neighbors came out to see him run, and
as he ran, some threatened, some mocked his course;
while some others cried for him to return,
while two resolved to fetch him back by force.
- 28 The name of the first one was Obstinate,
his friend Pliable was the second man;
Christian was got a good distance from them;
but in hot pursuit, with vigor they ran,
- 29 and in a little while, they over-took,
then said Christian, “Wherefore are you both come?”
They said, “To persuade you to go with us.”
He said, “Nay! That can by no means be done!

- 30 You dwell," said he, "in city Destruction,
the same city also where I was born:
I see it is so; and, dying there, you
shall sink to depths where souls may only mourn,
- 31 into a place where fiery brimstone burns;
be content, good neighbors, and come with me."
Obstinate wailed "What? And leave friends behind?"
"Yes. That which you forsake makes you worthy,"
- 32 said Christian, "and if you will come with me
and hold it, you shall fare as well as I,
for there where I go, is enough to spare,
come away; prove my words are not a lie."
- 33 Said Obstinate, "What is the thing you seek,
since you leave behind the world to find it?"
Christian said, "I seek an inheritance,
though no man has properly defined it.
- 34 It fadeth not away, 'tis undefiled,
it is laid up in heaven where 'tis safe
to be bestowed upon all of mankind
at an appointed time and chosen place
- 35 on all those that diligently seek it.
Read it so, if you will, please take a look."
"Tush! Away!" Obstinate growled at the man,
"We have no need to read your holy book!

- 36 "Will you go back with us, Christian, or no?"
He said, "I have laid my hand to the plough."
"Come now," Obstinate said to Pliable,
"We've no use for men *Holier Than Thou*."
- 37 "Don't revile," spoke Pliable, "if what good
Christian says is true—my heart is inclined
to follow him and the words of his book."
"What now! More fools still?" Obstinate opined.
- 38 "Be ruled by me, and go back; for who knows
whither such a brainsick fellow will lead.
Go back! Go back! Pliable, please be wise,
do not force me to grovel, beg, and plead!"
- 39 "Nay, but do thou come with me, Pliable;"
Christian said, "For there are things to be had;
the things of which I spoke and many more—
pure glories that swell hearts and make man glad.
- 40 If you believe not me, read in this book,
and for truth of what I expressed therein,
behold, all is confirmed by blood of Him,
crucified so to sanctify our sin."
- 41 "Well, Neighbor Obstinate," said Pliable,
"I begin to come to a point, and so,
I intend to go along with this man;
Sir, do you know the desired way to go?"

- 42 Christian replied, "Yes, I am directed
by a man whose name is Evangelist
to speed me to a little, yonder gate,
where to receive instructions to assist."
- 43 "Ah! Come, then, good neighbor," said Pliable,
"Let us be gone!" And they both went their way.
"I will be no companion of misled,
foolish men!" was all Obstinate could say.
- 44 In my dream, when Obstinate was gone back,
Christian and Pliable went forth talking,
thus they began their discourse together,
exchanging sweet pleasantries while walking.
- 45 "Come, Neighbor Pliable, how do you do?
I am very glad you have come along;
had Obstinate but felt what I have felt—
powers and terrors of the unseen dawn—
- 46 he would not thus lightly have given us
the back, or turned 'round to go his own way."
"Come, Neighbor Christian," Pliable, he said,
"since there is none but us two here today,
- 47 please tell me now further, what the things are;
and how it is these things should be enjoyed."
"I cannot conceive of them with my mind;
neither can my tangled tongue be employed;

- 48 yet, since you are so desirous to know,
I will read of them, in my book, to you."
Then, Pliable, he said, "And do you think
the words of your book are certainly true?"
- 49 "Yes, verily, for it was made by Him
who cannot lie, mislead, or disavow."
"Well said: What things are they?" Pliable asked.
"Please, good neighbor, Christian, do tell me now."
- 50 "There is an eternal kingdom to be
inhabited and everlasting life;
a kingdom paved with gilted streets, where men
and angels dance to sound of harp and fife;
- 51 garments that will make us shine like the sun;
a place where pain and sorrow disappears;
no more crying, no more weeping, for He,
our High Priest, shall wipe away all our tears.
- 52 We shall see seraphim and cherubim,
holy creatures that will dazzle your eyes!
There also you shall meet ten thousand saints,
ten thousand more, who've risen to the skies.
- 53 None are hurtful, but loving and holy;
all have crossed over Jordan's parted stream,
now standing in His presence, bowing down
'fore the feet of Yahovah Elohim.

- 54 In a word, there we shall see the elders
wearing crowns, clothed in righteous purity;
holy virgins with golden harps, martyrs
kissed by flame—embraced by waves of the sea.
- 55 Also, we shall see men that, by the world,
were cut in pieces and devoured by beasts;
for their love of Yahshua, in white robes clothed;
seated down for the bridegroom's wedding feast."
- 56 Pliable gasped, "The hearing of this tale
is enough to ravish one's broken heart!
But are these things to be enjoyed? How shall
we hope to share in even a small part?"
- 57 Christian said, "The King, the Governor of
that country hath recorded in this tome;
the substance of which, if we be willing,
he shall bestow upon us this new home."
- 58 Pliable said, "My good companion, glad
am I to hear this: let us mend our gait."
But Christian said, "I cannot go so fast,
for upon my back is a heavy weight."
- 59 Now I saw in my dream, that just as they
ended this talk, they very closely drew
near to what was in the midst of the plain;
there they came, to a very miry slough.

- 60 Being heedless, did both fall suddenly,
into the very thick of that foul pond;
therefore, there, they wallowed, for quite some time
in the sump known as the *Slough of Despond*.
- 61 Being grievously bedaubed with the dirt,
Christian began to sink deep in the mire.
"Neighbor, where are you now?" And Christian said,
"I know not, but fear my fortune is dire."
- 62 "Is this the happiness," Pliable scoffed,
"of which thou hast told me of all this while?
If we have such ill speed at our first step,
what must we expect in the coming miles?"
- 63 And may I get out again with my life,
you shall possess this brave country alone."
With that he gave a struggle or two and
got out on the bank closest to his home.
- 64 Wherefore dear Christian was left there to jounce
midst the Slough of Despond's algae and foam,
but still he endeavored to struggle to
that side of the slough furthest from his home,
- 65 and next to Wicket-gate; but he could not,
because of the burden upon his back.
But I beheld in my dream a man, Help,
to assist Christian with his heavy pack.

- 66 Help asked what he did there and Christian said,
"Sir, Evangelist bid me take this path;
directed me also to yonder gate,
to escape the coming judgment and wrath.
- 67 As I was going thither, I fell here
and sank down into the depths of this slough."
"Why did not you look for the steps?" Help said,
"laid about this bog to so direct you?"
- 68 "For fear followed me so hard," Christian said,
"that I fled the next way, and nearly drowned."
"Give me thy hand!" So, Help, he drew him out;
and set Christian down upon solid ground.