

# JOURNEY to HELL



# JOURNEY to HELL



JOHN BUNYAN



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*Publisher's note:*

This new edition from Whitaker House has been updated for the modern reader. Words, expressions, and sentence structure have been revised for clarity and readability.

Whitaker House wishes to thank Judith Bronte for the valuable resources available on the Acacia John Bunyan Online Library.

Scripture quotations are taken from the King James Version (KJV) of the Holy Bible.

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**JOURNEY TO HELL**

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## Sayings of John Bunyan

"Hell would be a kind of paradise if it were no worse than the worst of this world."

"A man would be counted a fool to slight a judge before whom he is to have a trial of his whole estate. The trial we have before God is of another kind of importance. It concerns our eternal happiness or misery, and yet we dare to affront Him?"

"I have often thought that the best of Christians are found in the worst of times. And I have thought again that one reason why we are no better is because God purges us no more. Noah and Lot—who was as holy as they in the time of their afflictions? And yet who so idle as they in the time of their prosperity?"

"In times of affliction, we commonly meet with the sweetest experiences of the love of God."

"Prayer will make a man cease from sin, or sin will entice a man to cease from prayer."

"Forsake not the public worship of God, lest God forsake you, not only in public, but in private."

About the Author

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## The Life of John Bunyan

John Bunyan, a name familiar to every ear, was born in 1628 in the little village of Elstow, England, within a mile of Bedford. To use his own words, he was born “of a low inconsiderable generation,” for his father followed the universally despised calling of a tinker (a mender of pots and pans). This occupation seems to have been held in low repute in those days, probably because of the wandering and unprincipled habits of most of the tinker fraternity. But Bunyan’s father had a settled place of residence in Elstow and a good reputation among his neighbors.

In addition, he saw to it that John attended school at a time when it was much less common for parents in a humble position to avail themselves of the blessings of education for their children than, happily, it is now. John learned to read and write although he later said that he “did soon lose that little [that he had] learned.”

It is clear, however, from his writings, that his memory must have been tenacious to an extraordinary degree and that the other powers of his mind were healthy and vigorous. It is likely that his assessment of what he remembered from school only reflects Bunyan’s judgment that as a consequence of his youthful behavior, he lost all relish for learning. He felt that he had added nothing to his meager stock of knowledge until many precious years had been dissipated by him in evil and unprofitable courses. The reader will find a vivid and faithful narrative of his boyhood activities and the extreme distress he felt as a consequence of them in his spiritual autobiography entitled *Grace Abounding to the Chief of Sinners*.

## God's Grace in Action

During his early life, he made some remarkable escapes from imminent danger. Twice he narrowly escaped drowning. When he served in the Parliamentary army, a soldier asked to take Bunyan's post, and that man was "shot into the head with a musket bullet, and died." Afterward, Bunyan looked back with a deep feeling of gratitude to a preserving and forbearing God who had not cut him off in his sins but had mingled mercy with judgment. Among those mercies, not the least of which was his being led while yet a very young man "to light upon a wife" who had been religiously educated. Her example and conversation persuaded Bunyan to go fairly regularly to church and to prefer his own fireside and her company to the alehouse and his drinking companions.

The young couple "came together as poor as poor might be, not having so much household stuff as a dish or spoon betwixt [them] both." His wife did have two books that she brought to their marriage: *The Plain Man's Pathway to Heaven* and *The Practice of Piety*. These books had a significant influence on Bunyan's spiritual development.

Bunyan was young, healthy, and had a trade by which he could always earn a decent livelihood. His wife was frugal, industrious, and good-tempered. What more was needed to light up their cottage with peace and contentment except the presence of true religion in both?

To true piety, however, John was yet a stranger. He had acquired a certain taste for churchgoing and a great respect, as he describes it, for "the high place, priest, clerk, vestment, service, and what else, belonging to the church." His strong and active imagination would often be powerfully excited by circumstances that would have made little impression on the average person's mind. But he was still an utter stranger to real religion.

His devotions were as formal as could well be imagined, and they often failed to keep his conscience quiet even though he felt a certain kind of pleasure in returning to them. His religious notions were exceedingly confused and contradictory. They seemed to have

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been accompanied by a strong leaning toward mysticism as well as bold speculation.

Sometimes he thought that words were spoken to him from heaven. At other times, he thought that new and mysterious objects were presented to his very senses. He would commit himself to prayer and Bible reading with something of a childlike willingness to be taught. Then, he would abandon his study of the Word to lose himself amid speculations utterly too high for him on the subject of the divine laws.

### Times of Despair

Sometimes a gleam of light and hope shot across the darkness of his troubled soul, and he thought he could perceive what it was reasonable and expedient for him to do in order to be at peace with himself and his God. At other seasons, the darkness of despair's deepest midnight seemed to settle down on his soul, and in this fearful mood, he would argue thus insanely: "My state is miserable, miserable if I leave my sins, 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 for few." Thus, he said of himself on one occasion,

I stood in the midst of my play, before all that were present, but yet I told them nothing; but 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 lest I should die before I had my desires.

### A Changed Man

From this wretched course, he was rescued in an unusual manner. A woman, herself of very bad character, happened one day to scold him for swearing. She told him that he was "the

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ungodliest fellow that ever she heard in all her life" and fit to corrupt all the youth in the town. The criticism struck him so forcibly that from that hour, he began to discontinue the sin of swearing. He also pledged himself anew to the reading of his Bible. His conduct was so changed that his neighbors began to look on him as quite a reformed character.

Formerly, he had taken great delight in ringing the church bells. With his conscience growing very tender, he began to feel that "such practice was but vain." He abandoned that amusement and also quit dancing, considering it an ensnaring and frivolous recreation. A spirit of legality took possession of him; he began to think that "no man in England could please God better" than he. He did not know the necessity of a deeper, more powerful change of heart and nature than anything he had yet experienced; however, he felt certain misgivings and unrest as to his true condition in the sight of God. Happening to overhear some pious women talking about regeneration, he became at last convinced that his views of religion were very defective—that he "lacked the true tokens of a true godly man."

The women to whom Bunyan was indebted for his new light were members of a small Baptist congregation in Bedford of which John Gifford was pastor. Of this good man, Mr. Ivimey, in his *History of the English Baptists*, said,

His labors were apparently confined to a narrow circle, but their effects have been very widely extended and will not pass away when time will be no more. We allude to his having baptized and introduced to the church the wicked tinker at Elstow. He was doubtless the honored evangelist who pointed Bunyan to the Wicketgate by instructing him in the knowledge of the Gospel, by turning him from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God. Little did he think such a chosen vessel was sent to his house when he opened his door to admit the poor, the depraved, and the despairing Bunyan.

It is affirming too much to represent Mr. Gifford as having been the means of Bunyan's conversion; but that his conversation

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and preaching were greatly blessed to the once “wicked tinker of Elstow,” we have the best authority for believing.

Bunyan endured great inward agitation of soul not only because of his own consciousness of sin but also because of the destructive talk of some antinomians (who taught that Christ’s forgiveness eliminated the need for laws) into whose company he had fallen. But Bunyan had already studied the Scriptures with great diligence and fervent prayer, and by the blessing of God’s Spirit, he gained a resting place for his troubled spirit in the scriptural assurance that “none ever trusted God and was confounded.” (See Isaiah 45:17 and Psalm 25:20.)

### Appointed to Preach

In 1655, Bunyan, then twenty-seven years of age, was admitted as a member of Mr. Gifford’s church. Soon after, the church was deprived of its pastor by death, and the young brother so recently added to their fellowship was, after some trial of his qualifications, called on to undertake the office of occasional preacher or exhorter among them. About this appointment, Bunyan wrote,

Some of the most able among the saints with us, I say the most able 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; the which, though at the first it did much dash and abash my spirit, yet being still by them desired and entreated, I consented to their request.

When Bunyan first began to preach, people came from all over the countryside to hear him. Such was the visible success of his ministry that before long, “after some solemn prayer and fasting,” he was specially set apart by the church for the regular exercise of an itinerant ministry in Bedford and the neighborhood.

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In the beginning of his ministry, he dealt chiefly on the terrors of the law. About this aspect of his preaching, he wrote,

This part of my work, I fulfilled with great sense; for I preached what I felt, what I smartingly did feel, even that under which my poor soul did groan and tremble to astonishment. 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.

As his own spiritual horizon cleared up, his preaching took a better tone. He now labored, "still preaching what he saw and felt," to preach Christ, "the sinner's friend, while sin's eternal foe," and to persuade his hearers to lean entirely on the work and offices of Christ. He made it a leading object in his sermons "to remove those false supports and props on which the world does lean, and by them fall and perish."

### A Dedicated Writer

He now had a sphere of constant activity and abundant usefulness opened to him. With his characteristic energy, he sought to fill it not only by preaching the Word but also by publishing short religious treatises. His first publication was entitled *Some Gospel Truths Opened according to the Scriptures*. To this treatise, John Burton, Mr. Gifford's successor in the regular ministry of the church at Bedford, prefixed a commendatory letter. Burton wrote,

Having had experience with many other saints of this man's soundness in the faith, of his godly conversation, and his ability to preach the Gospel, not by human art but by the Spirit of Christ, and that with much success in the conversion of sinners, I say, having had experience of this and judging this book may be profitable to many others as well as to myself, I thought it my duty on this account to bear witness with my brother to the plain and simple and yet glorious truths of our Lord Jesus Christ.

The particular occasion of this treatise seems to have been the opposition that Bunyan experienced to his preaching from some

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Quakers who told him that he “used conjuration and witchcraft” and that he “preached up an Idol, because he had said that the Son of Mary was in heaven with the same body that was crucified on the cross.” Against such accusations and in defense of his views of Scripture concerning the death, resurrection, ascension, and meditation of Christ, Bunyan argued with great force as well as plainness of reasoning and with much less sharpness and lack of polish than might have been anticipated from the temper and education of the man and the character of the times in which he wrote.

His language is idiomatic but pure to an extraordinary degree for the first effort in composition by an uneducated man. A reply to Bunyan’s pamphlet was published by one Edward Burroughs with the title *The True Faith of the Gospel of Peace Contended For in the Spirit of Meekness*. It was a railing and declamatory production, but Bunyan replied to it, and Burroughs rejoined, after which the controversy ended.

### Sentenced to Prison

In 1657, Bunyan was indicted for preaching at Eaton. Nothing came of it, although Dr. Robert Southey, a biographer of Bunyan, labored to prove the existence of an extremely persecuting spirit at that time in the British Commonwealth. A few months after the Restoration, however, a warrant was issued against Bunyan, and he was arrested at Samsell in Bedfordshire and carried before Justice Wingate. When Bunyan refused to abstain from preaching, he was committed to the Bedford jail. At the quarter sessions, his indictment stated:

John Bunyan of the town of Bedford, laborer, had devilishly and perniciously abstained from coming to church to hear divine service and was a common upholder of several unlawful meetings and conventicles [secret religious meetings not sanctioned by law] to the great disturbance and distraction of the good subjects of this kingdom, contrary to the laws of our sovereign lord the king.

On this ridiculous charge, he was returned to prison for three months and informed that if at the end of that period he did not

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submit to go to church and quit preaching, he would be banished from the realm.

### **A Faithful Wife**

At this period, Bunyan was the father of four young children by his first wife. Mary, his oldest child, had been born blind. A year following his first wife's death, he had married a second wife. The birth of their child was approaching. News of Bunyan's imprisonment and the prospect of his impending banishment so affected her that she prematurely delivered a dead child. Yet in the middle of this complicated suffering, this noble-minded woman struggled hard to obtain her husband's deliverance. With simplicity of heart, she traveled to London to petition the House of Lords for her husband's liberation but was directed to apply to the judges at the judicial inquest. She then returned home, and with modesty and "a trembling heart," she put forth her request to the judges in the presence of many magistrates and gentry of the county. Sir Matthew Hale was one of them, but he shook his head and professed his inability to do anything for her husband.

"Will your husband leave off preaching?" asked Judge Twisden. "If he will do so, then send for him."

"My lord," replied the courageous woman, "he dares not leave preaching as long as he can speak."

Sir Matthew listened sadly to her, but Twisden brutally taunted her and said poverty was her cloak.

"Yes," observed she, "and because he is a tinker and a poor man, therefore he is despised and cannot have justice." Elizabeth Bunyan concluded her own account of this interview in these words:

Though I was somewhat timorous at my first entrance into the chamber, yet before I went out, I could not but break forth into tears—not so much because they were so hard-hearted against me and my husband, but to think what a sad account such poor creatures will have to give at the coming of the Lord.

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## A Productive Confinement

Bunyan remained in prison twelve years, but occasionally during that period, through the connivance of the jailer, he was allowed to steal out under cover of night. On one occasion, he was even able to pay a visit to the Christians in London. It was during this long imprisonment, while wasting the flower of his age in confinement and with no books except the Bible and *Foxe's Book of Martyrs*, that he penned his immortal work, *The Pilgrim's Progress*, besides many other treatises that have afforded much instruction and comfort to the people of God.

## Freed from Prison

During the last year of his imprisonment (1671), he was chosen pastor of the Baptist church in Bedford. He appears to have been allowed to attend the church meetings for the last four years of his imprisonment. Doubtless, his word was considered a sufficient pledge that he would return every evening to prison. At last, his release was ordered. It is said that Barlow, Bishop of Lincoln, intervened on Bunyan's behalf. Soon after his release, a new chapel was built at Bedford, where he preached to large audiences during the remainder of his life.

Once every year, he visited London, where he preached with great acceptance, generally at the meetinghouse in Southwark. Also, he used to itinerate extensively in the surrounding counties. It is said that Dr. Owen was always among his metropolitan hearers. On being asked by Charles II how a learned man such as he could sit and listen to an illiterate tinker, that great scholar and divine replied, "May it please Your Majesty, could I possess that tinker's abilities for preaching, I would most gladly relinquish all my learning."

The writer of the first biographical sketch of Bunyan described his character and personal appearance in this way:

He appeared in countenance to be of a stern and rough temper; but in his conversation, mild and affable, not given to talkativeness or much discourse in company unless

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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 friendships 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 stout; 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 later days, time had sprinkled it with gray; his nose well set, but not declining or bending; and his mouth moderate large; his forehead something high; and his habit always plain and modest.

### His Work Lives On

Little is recorded of the remainder of Bunyan's life. It is not known whether he was again made a sufferer for conscience' sake when the spirit of persecution revived and waxed hot against the people of the Lord in the latter part of Charles's reign. He died in London on the twelfth day of August 1688 of a fever that he had caught by exposure to rain. He was buried in a churchyard in Bunhill Fields, in London. His widow survived him four years. The names of a few of his descendants appear in the books of the Baptist church at Bedford, but his last known descendant, Hannah Bunyan, a great-granddaughter, died in 1770 at the age of seventy-six.

In 1692, the year of Elizabeth Bunyan's death, her husband's collected works were published in two folio volumes by Ebenezer Chandler, his successor in the ministry at Bedford, and John Wilson, a fellow minister. These volumes contain about sixty pieces of various degrees of merit. All are richly impregnated with the unction of deep and fervent piety.

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(Adapted from the introductory notes of the Reverend Thomas Scott in *Bunyan's Whole Allegorical Works*, Glasgow: Fullarton, 1840.)

## Preface

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# The Author to the Reader

Dear Reader,

**A**s I was considering what I had written in *The Pilgrim's Progress* about the journey of one traveling from this world to glory, and how that book has been helpful to many, it came to me to write about the life and death of the ungodly, and of their travels from this world to hell. As you will see, I have done that in this book entitled *Journey to Hell*, a title very appropriate for such a subject. I have written this allegory as a dialogue to make it easier for me to tell the story and hopefully for you to enjoy it. Although I have created the conversation between the two characters, I have tried to stay true to reality. As a matter of fact, what these fictitious characters relate has been acted on the stage of this world many times—even before my own eyes.

Here then, courteous reader, I present you with the life and death of Mr. Badman. I follow him in his life from his childhood to his death so that you may, as in a mirror, observe with your own eyes the steps that lead to hell and also discern, while you are reading about Mr. Badman's death, whether you yourself are walking on the same path.

Let me implore you to refrain from ridicule and mockery because Mr. Badman is dead; instead, gravely ask yourself if you are one of his lineage, for Mr. Badman has left many of his relatives behind. In fact, the world is overrun with his family. True, some of his relatives, as he, are gone to their eternal home, but thousands and thousands are left behind, including brothers, sisters, cousins,

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nephews, and innumerable friends and associates. I may say, and yet speak nothing but the truth in so saying, that there is scarcely a fellowship, community, family, or household where he has not left behind either a brother, nephew, or friend.

The target, therefore, that I shoot at is wide. It will be as impossible for this book to go into several families and not to arrest some as for government officials to rush into a houseful of traitors and find none but honest men there. I cannot but think that this shot will hit many, since our fields are so full of this game. How many it will kill to Mr. Badman's course and make alive to the Pilgrim's progress, I cannot determine. This secret is with the Lord our God alone, and only He knows to whom He will bless it to so good and so favorable an end. However, I have put fire to the pan, and I do not doubt but that the report will quickly be heard.

I told you before that Mr. Badman had left many of his friends and relatives behind. If I survive them, as that remains to be seen, I may also write of their lives; however, whether my life is long or short, this is my prayer at present: May God stir up witnesses against them who will either convert or destroy them, for wherever they live and wallow in their wickedness, they are a pest and a plague to that country.

England shakes and totters already because of the burden that Mr. Badman and his friends have wickedly laid upon it. Yes, our earth reels and staggers to and fro like a drunkard (see Psalm 107:27) because of the heaviness of its transgressions.

Courteous reader, I advise you now, even as we stand at the door and threshold of this house, that Mr. Badman lies dead within. Be pleased, therefore, if your leisure will permit, to enter and see the state in which he is laid, between his deathbed and the grave. He is not buried as yet, nor does he stink, as he surely will before he lies down in oblivion. As others have had their funerals commemorated according to their greatness and grandeur in the world, so likewise will Mr. Badman have his funeral according to his earthly deeds. Even he deserves not to go down to his grave in silence (Psalm 31:17).

## The Author to the Reader

Four conventions are common at great men's funerals; I hope to allude to these customs without offense in the funeral of Mr. Badman.

First, the dead are sometimes presented to their friends in their completely adorned images, as lively as they can be by cunning men's hands. This act is done so that the remembrance of them may be renewed to their survivors—the remembrance of them and their deeds. I have endeavored to include a physical description in my memoir of Mr. Badman; therefore, I have described his features and actions from his childhood to his gray hairs. Here, therefore, you have him lively depicted in stages—from infancy, to the flower of youth, to his senior years, together with those actions of his life that he most customarily did in and under his present circumstances of time, place, strength, and opportunity.

Second, it is also customary at great men's funerals to display their badges and shields of honor, which they have received from their ancestors or have been thought worthy of for the deeds and exploits they have done in their lives. Mr. Badman has his collection, but they vary from those received by men of worth; his coat of arms heralds lack of merit in his actions. His honors all have decayed, and he has become *"an abominable branch"* (Isaiah 14:19) on his family tree. His deserts are the deserts of sin; therefore, his coat of arms is only that he died without honor, *"and at his end he [became] a fool"* (Jeremiah 17:11). *"Thou shalt not be joined with them [the honored dead] in burial.... The seed of evildoers shall never be renowned"* (Isaiah 14:20). Consequently, Mr. Badman's funeral pomp will merely be the badges of a dishonorable and wicked life since *"his bones are full of the sin of his youth, which will lie down with him in the dust"* (Job 20:11).

Nor is it fitting that any should be his attendants, now at his death, except for those who conspired against their own souls in their lifetimes—persons whose transgressions have made them infamous to all who have known or will know what they have done. I have pointed out to the reader here in this little discourse those who were his associates in his life and attendants at his death. I have

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given a hint of some of the high villainy committed by them, as well as those judgments that have overtaken and fallen upon them from the just and revenging hand of God. All these things are either fully known by me as an eyewitness, or I have received the information from trustworthy sources whose accounts I am bound to believe.

Third, the funerals of persons of quality have been solemnized with suitable sermons at the times and places of their burials, but I have not come to that part as yet, having gone no further than to Mr. Badman's death. Since he must be buried, after he has stunk out his time before his onlookers, I do not doubt that some like those who we read are appointed to be at the burial of Gog will do this work in my place. (See Ezekiel 39.) They will leave neither skin nor bones above ground, but will *"set up a sign by it, til the buriers have buried it in the valley of Hamongog"* (Ezekiel 39:15).

Fourth, we usually hear mourning and crying at funerals, but once again Mr. Badman's funeral is different from others. His friends cannot lament his departure, for they do not have a sense of his damnable state. Instead, they ring him and sing him to hell in the sleep of death, in which he goes there. Good men count him no loss to the world. His workplace is better off without him. His loss is only his own. It is too late for him to recover that damage by a sea of bloody tears, even if he could shed them. Who then will lament for him, saying, "Oh, my brother"? He was but a stinking weed in his life and no better at all in his death. Those like him may well be thrown over the wall without sorrow (see 2 Samuel 20:21-22; 2 Kings 9:30-33), once God, in His wrath, has plucked them up by the roots (Jude 12).

Reader, if you are of the race, lineage, stock, or brotherhood of Mr. Badman, I tell you, before you read this book, you will neither tolerate the author nor what he has written about Mr. Badman. For he who condemns the wicked who die also passes the sentence upon the wicked who live; therefore, I expect neither credit nor approval from you for this narration of your kinsman's life. For your old love for your friend, his ways, and his actions will stir up in you enmity in your hearts against me. I imagine that you will tear up, burn, or throw away the book in contempt. You may even wish that for

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writing so notorious a truth, some harm may come my way. I expect that you may heap disdain, scorn, and contempt on me; that you will malign and slander me, saying I am a defamer of honest men's lives and deaths. For Mr. Badman, when he was alive, could not stand to be called a villain, although his actions told everyone that indeed he was one. How then should his friends who survive him, and who follow in his very steps, approve of the sentence that by this book is pronounced against him? Will they not rail at me for condemning him and imitate Korah, Dathan, and Abiram's friends who falsely accused Moses of wrongdoing? (See Numbers 16:1-33.)

I know it is dangerous to *"put [your] hand on the cockatrice's [viper's] den"* (Isaiah 11:8) and hazardous to hunt for wild boar. Likewise, the man who writes about Mr. Badman's life needs to be protected with a coat of armor and with the shaft of a spear so that Mr. Badman's surviving friends will be less able to harm the writer; but I have ventured to tell his story and to play, at this time, at the hole of these asps. If they bite, they bite; if they sting, they sting. Christ sends His lambs *"in the midst of wolves"* (Matthew 10:16), not to do like them, but to suffer by them for bearing plain testimony against their bad deeds. But does one not need to walk with a guard and to have a sentinel stand at one's door for protection? Verily, the flesh would be glad for such help, just as Paul was when the Jews conspired to kill him and the commander circumvented their plot. (See Acts 23.) But I am stripped naked of support, yet I am commanded to be faithful in my service for Christ. Well then, I have spoken what I have spoken, and now *"come on me what will!"* (Job 13:13). True, the Scripture says, *"He that reproveth a scorner getteth to himself shame: and he that rebuketh a wicked man getteth himself a blot. Reprove not a scorner, lest he hate thee"* (Proverbs 9:7-8). But what then? *"Open rebuke is better than secret love"* (Proverbs 27:5), and he who receives it will find it so afterward.

So then, whether Mr. Badman's friends will rage or laugh at what I have written, I know that the victory is mine. My endeavor is to stop a hellish course of life and to *"save a soul from death"* (James 5:20). And if for doing so I meet with malice from them, from whom reasonably I should receive thanks, I must remember the man in

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the dream who cut his way through his armed enemies and thus entered the beautiful palace (a reference to *The Pilgrim's Progress*); I must, I say, remember him and do the same myself.

Yet four things I will offer for consideration by Mr. Badman's friends before I turn my back on them.

Suppose that there actually is a hell—not that I question its existence any more than I wonder if there is a sun to shine, but I say it for the sake of argument with Mr. Badman's friends. I say, suppose there is a hell, such as the Scripture speaks of, one at the remotest distance from God and life eternal, one where the worm of a guilty conscience never dies and where the fire of the wrath of God is never quenched (Isaiah 66:24). Suppose, I say, that there is such a hell, prepared by God—as there is indeed—for the body and soul of the ungodly to be tormented in after this life. Suppose hell is real, and then tell me if it is prepared for you, if you are a wicked man. Let your conscience speak. Is it prepared for you? And do you think if you were there now that you could wrestle with the judgment of God? Why then do the fallen angels tremble there? (See Isaiah 24:21-22.) Your hands cannot be strong, nor can your heart endure in that day when God will deal with you (Ezekiel 22:14).

Suppose that a sinner who is now a soul in hell was permitted to come to earth to live again, and that he had a grant that, upon amending his way of life, the next time he died, he could exchange his place for heaven and glory. What do you say, O wicked man? Do you think anyone would follow the same course of life as before and risk being damned again for sins he had already been involved in before? Would he choose again to lead that cursed life that would once again rekindle the flames of hell for him and that would bind him up under the heavy wrath of God? He would not; he would not! The Scripture insinuates it (see Luke 16:19-31); reason itself would abhor and tremble at such a thought.

Suppose again that you who live and revel in your sin have as yet known nothing but the pleasures of sin. Imagine that an angel conveyed you to a place where you could easily view the joys of heaven and the torments of hell. Suppose that from this position

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you might have such a view that would fully convince you that both heaven and hell are realities as the Word declares them to be. Do you think you would, when brought to your home again, choose your former life, namely, to return to your folly again? No! If belief of what you saw remained with you, you would eat fire and brimstone first.

I will make one more suggestion. Suppose that there was a law and an official capable of imposing the punishment that for every known wickedness you committed, a certain portion of your flesh would be plucked from your bones with burning pincers. Would you continue in your bold way of lying, swearing, drinking, and whoring, as you delight to do now? Surely, you would not. The fear of the punishment would make you refrain, would make you tremble, even when your lusts were powerful. You would be sure to think about the punishment you would endure as soon as the pleasure was over.

But oh, the folly, the madness, the desperate insanity that is in the hearts of Mr. Badman's friends. In spite of the threats of a holy and sin-revenging God, and of the outcries and warnings of all good men, in spite of the groans and torments of those who are now in hell for their sins (see Luke 16:24), they continue on a sinful course of life, even though every sin is also a step of descent down to that infernal cave. How true is that saying of Solomon, *"The heart of the sons of men is full of evil; and madness is in their heart while they live, and after that they go to the dead"* (Ecclesiastes 9:3). *"To the dead"*—that is, to the dead in hell, to the damned dead, the place to which those who have died as bad men are gone, and where those who now live as bad men are likely to go, when a little more sin, like stolen waters, has been imbibed by their sinful souls. (See Proverbs 9:16-18.)

I have written this book because wickedness, like a flood, is likely to drown our world. It already appears to be above the tops of the mountains. It has almost swallowed up everything; our youth, middle age, old age, and all are almost carried away by this flood. O debauchery, debauchery, what have you done? You have corrupted

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our young men and have made our old men beasts; you have deflowered our virgins and have made matrons madams of prostitution. You have made our earth *"reel to and fro like a drunkard, and... [totter] like a cottage; and the transgression thereof shall be heavy upon it; and it shall fall, and not rise again"* (Isaiah 24:20).

Oh, that I could mourn for our country, and for the sins that are committed here, even while I see that, without repentance, the men of God's wrath are about to deal with us, each one of them *"with a deadly weapon in his hand"* (Ezekiel 9:1). By God's assistance, I have written to warn people against sin, and I will pray that this flood of evil may lessen. If I could just see the tops of the mountains above it, I would think that the waters were abating.

It is the duty of those who can to cry out against this deadly plague, to lift their voices like a trumpet against it, so that people may be awakened and flee from it, as from that which is the greatest of evils. Sin pulled angels out of heaven, pulls men down to hell, and overthrows kingdoms. Who sees a house on fire and will not sound the alarm for those who live inside? Who sees the land invaded and will not signal a warning? Who sees the devil prowling like a roaring lion, continually devouring souls (1 Peter 5:8), and will not make an outcry? But above all, when we see sin, sinful sin, swallowing up a nation, sinking it, and bringing its inhabitants to temporal, spiritual, and eternal ruin, will we not cry out? Will we not say, *"They are drunken, but not with wine; they stagger, but not with strong drink"* (Isaiah 29:9); they are intoxicated with the deadly poison of sin, which will, if its malignity is not by wholesome means subdued, bring soul and body, estate, country, and all to ruin and destruction"?

In and by this outcry, I will deliver myself from the ruins of those who perish, for a man can do no more in this matter—I mean a man in my capacity—than to detect and condemn the wickedness, warn the evildoer of the judgment, and flee from it himself. But oh, that I might not only deliver myself! Oh, that many would hear and turn from sin! Then they would be protected from the death and judgment that attend it.

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I have concealed most of the names of the persons whose sins or punishments I talk about in this book. The reasons I have handled the matter in this method are best known to me. In part, though, I have not revealed the names of many people because not all of their sins or their judgments are public; the sins of some were committed in private, and the judgments executed for them were kept confidential. Even though I could have learned some of their names, I would not have revealed them for this reason: I would not provoke those of their relatives who survive them. Nor would I lay them under disgrace and contempt, which would, as I think, unavoidably have happened to them had I revealed their names.

As for those whose names I mention, their crimes, or judgments, were made public as almost anything of that nature that happens to mortal men. Such, therefore, have published their own shame by their sins, and God has declared His anger by taking open vengeance. As Job said, God *“strieth them as wicked men in the open sight of others”* (Job 34:26). Therefore, I cannot imagine that my warning the world of their sins should turn to their detriment since their sins and judgments were so conspicuous. For the publishing of these things are, so far as my telling of them is concerned, intended for remembrances, so that they may recall the truth themselves, repent, and turn to God—lest the judgments for their sins should prove hereditary. For the God of heaven has threatened to visit *“the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them who hate [Him]”* (Exodus 20:5).

Nebuchadnezzar’s punishment for his pride was made public—because of his sin, he lost his kingly dignity and was driven from among men to eat grass like an ox and to keep company with the beasts (Daniel 4:30–33). Daniel did not hesitate to tell Belshazzar, Nebuchadnezzar’s son, to his face about his sins and the sins of his father (Daniel 5:18–30) and to publish the account so that it might be read and remembered by generations to come. The same may be said of Judas (Acts 1:18–19), Ananias (Acts 5:1–5), and others who for their sins and punishments were known to all who lived in Jerusalem. It is a sign of desperate impenitence and hardness of heart that

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the offspring or relatives of those who have fallen into open, fearful, and immense sin will overlook, forget, pass by, or take no notice of such high costs imposed by God against them and their households. Thus Daniel increased Belshazzar's crime because Belshazzar hardened his heart in pride, though he knew that for that very sin and transgression his father had been brought down from his height and made to be a companion to asses. *"But thou his son, O Belshazzar, hast not humbled thine heart, though thou knewest all this"* (Daniel 5:22). This reproof hit home, but it was most fitting for Belshazzar's continued, open practice of sin.

Let those, then, who are the offspring or relatives of such, who by their own sins and the dreadful judgments of God have become a sign (Numbers 16:38-40) and have been swept like dung from the face of the earth, beware, lest when judgment knocks at their doors for their sins, as it did before at the doors of their progenitors, it falls with as heavy a stroke on them as on those who went before them—lest they, in that day, instead of finding mercy, find for their daring and offensive sins, *"judgment without mercy"* (James 2:13).

To conclude, let those who would not die Mr. Badman's death take heed of Mr. Badman's ways; for his ways led to his end. Wickedness will not deliver those who are given over to it even though they would cloak themselves with a profession of religion. If it was a transgression of old for a man to wear a woman's apparel, surely it is a transgression now for a sinner to wear a Christian profession for his coat. Wolves in sheep's clothing (Matthew 7:15) swarm in this day, wolves both as to doctrine and as to practice. Some men put on the cloak of Christianity in order to gain entrance into a profession. Then they try to build an estate even if in their dishonesty they ruin their neighbors. Let such take heed, for those who do such things will receive great damnation.

Christian, make your reputation shine with conduct that conforms with the Gospel (Philippians 1:27); otherwise, you will damage religion, bring scandal to your brothers, and become a *"stumbling-block"* (Romans 14:13). If you cause others to sin, *"it were better for [you] that a millstone were hanged about [your] neck, and that [you]*

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*were drowned in the depth of the sea*" (Matthew 18:6). Christian, a godly reputation is, in these days, a rare thing; seek it, put it on, and keep it *"without spot"* (1 Timothy 6:14). It will make you white and clean, and you will be an uncommon Christian indeed.

The prophecy of the end times, as I understand from 2 Timothy 3, is that even professing men will become vile, *"having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof"* (verse 5). I urge you to *"continue thou in the things which thou hast learned"* (verse 14), not from depraved men, nor from licentious times, but from the Word and doctrine of God, that is, according to godliness. Then you will walk with Christ in purity. God Almighty gave His people grace, not to hate or malign sinners, nor to choose any of their ways, but to keep them pure from *"the blood of all men"* (Acts 20:26). God's people are to speak and act according to His name and His rules, which they profess to know and love for Jesus Christ's sake.

—John Bunyan





## Chapter One

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# The Consequences of a Bad Man's Death

**Mr. Wiseman.** Good morning, my good neighbor, Mr. Attentive. Why are you out walking so early this morning? You look as if you are concerned about something. Have you lost any of your cattle, or is something else the matter?

**Mr. Attentive.** Sir, good morning to you. I have not as yet lost anything, but you are right. I am troubled in my heart, but it is because of the evil of the times. Sir, you, as all our neighbors know, are a very observant man. Please, therefore, tell me what you think of these times.

**Wiseman.** Why, I think, primarily, that they are bad times, and bad they will be, until men are better; for bad men make bad times. If people, therefore, would change, so would the times. It is foolish to look for good days as long as sin is so rampant and those who promote its growth so many. I pray for God to bring sin down, and for those who encourage it to repent. Then, my good neighbor, you will be concerned, but not as you are now. You are distressed now because times are so bad, but then you will be glad because times will be so good; now you are concerned and it causes you to be perplexed, but then your interest in the times will cause you to lift up your voice with shouting. I daresay, if you could see such days, they would make you exclaim with joy!

**Attentive.** Yes, so they would. I have prayed for and longed for such times, but I fear things will turn worse before they become better.

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**Wiseman.** Make no conclusions, friend, for He who has the hearts of men in His hand can change them from worse to better; likewise, bad times into good. I pray that God will give long life to those who are good, especially to those who are capable of serving Him in the world. The grace and beauty of this world, next to God and His wonders, are those who glitter and shine in godliness.

*Now as Mr. Wiseman said this, he gave a great sigh.*

**Attentive.** Amen, amen. But why, good sir, do you sigh so deeply? Is it for the same reason that causes my apprehension?

**Wiseman.** I am as troubled as you are over the wickedness of the times, but that was not the reason for the sigh that you noticed. I sighed at the remembrance of the death of that man for whom the bell tolled in our town yesterday.

**Attentive.** I hope that your neighbor Mr. Goodman is not dead. I heard that he had been sick.

**Wiseman.** No, no, I am not referring to Mr. Goodman. Had it been he, I would have been concerned, but not as distressed as I am now. If he had died, I would only have mourned because the world would have lost a light. But the man whom I am concerned for now was one who was never good; therefore, he is one who is not only dead, but also damned. His natural death brought him into eternal death. (See 1 Corinthians 6:9.) He went from life to death, and then from death to death.

*As Mr. Wiseman spoke these words, tears welled up in his eyes.*

**Attentive.** Indeed, to go from a deathbed to hell is a fearful thing to think about. But, good neighbor Wiseman, please tell me who this man was and why you judge him to be so miserable in his death.

**Wiseman.** Well, if you can stay, I will tell you who he was and why I conclude that his end was wretched.

**Attentive.** My schedule will allow me to stay, and I am willing to hear you out. I pray to God that what you say will take hold of

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my heart so that I may be bettered by it.

*So they agreed to sit down under a tree. Then Mr. Wiseman proceeded.*

**Wiseman.** The man whom I mean is Mr. Badman. He has lived in our town a long time, and now, as I said, he is dead. But the reason for my concern over his death is not because he was related to me, or because any good conditions died with him, for he was far from them. But I greatly fear, as I hinted before, that he died two deaths at once.

**Attentive.** I see what you mean by two deaths at once. To speak honestly, it is a fearful thing to have grounds to think of any person going to hell. To die in such a state is more dreadful and appalling than anyone can imagine. Indeed, if a man had no soul, if his state was not truly immortal, the matter would not be so devastating. But since man has been made by his Maker to be a sensible being forever, for him to fall into the hands of revenging justice, punishing him in the dismal dungeon of hell to the utmost extremity that his sin deserves, will always be an unutterably sad and lamentable end.

**Wiseman.** Any man, I think, who is capable of perceiving the worth of one soul, must, when he hears of the death of an unconverted man, be stricken with sorrow and grief. As you have already well stated, man's state is such that he is a sensible being forever. For it is sense that makes punishment heavy. But yet sense is not all that the damned have; they have reason, too. So then, as sense receives punishment with sorrow, because it feels and bleeds under the pain, so by reason, and the exercise thereof, in the midst of torment, all present affliction is increased. That happens in three ways.

First, reason will consider thus with itself: For what am I being tormented? It will easily discover that it is for nothing but that base and filthy thing: sin. Now vexation will be mixed with punishment, greatly heightening the affliction.

Next, reason will consider the following question: How long

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must this be my state? Then it will soon return this answer: This must be my state forever and ever. This realization will greatly increase the torment.

Finally, reason will consider this last thought: What more have I lost than present ease and quiet by the sins that I have committed? This answer will quickly come: I have lost communion with God, Christ, saints, and angels, and a share in heaven and eternal life. This awful thought must increase the misery of poor damned souls. And this is the case of Mr. Badman.

**Attentive.** I feel my heart shake at the thoughts of coming into such a state. Hell—what person who is yet alive knows what the torments of hell are? The word “hell” produces a very dreadful sound.

**Wiseman.** Yes, it does, in the ears of him who has a tender conscience. But if, as you say so truthfully, the very name of hell is dreadful, what is the place itself like, and what are the punishments that are inflicted there, without the least intermission, upon the souls of damned men, forever and ever?

**Attentive.** Before we go on with that subject, since I have the time to talk, please tell me what it is that makes you think that Mr. Badman has gone to hell.

**Wiseman.** I will tell you. But first, do you know which of the Badmans I mean?

**Attentive.** Why, was there more than one of them?

**Wiseman.** Oh yes, a great many, both brothers and sisters, and yet all of them were the children of a godly parent, which makes the truth even more pitiful.

**Attentive.** Which of them therefore was it who died?

**Wiseman.** The eldest, old in years, and old in sin; but the sinner who dies a hundred years old will be accursed.

**Attentive.** But what makes you think he has gone to hell?

**Wiseman.** His wicked life and fearful death, especially since the

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manner of his death so corresponded to his life.

**Attentive.** Please let me know the manner of his death, if you know the details accurately.

**Wiseman.** I was there when he died. While I live, I hope I never see another man die in the way he did.

**Attentive.** Please tell me about it.

**Wiseman.** You say you have time and can stay; therefore, if it is agreeable with you, we will examine his life and then proceed to his death, because hearing about his death may affect you more once you have heard about his life.

**Attentive.** Did you know him well during his life?

**Wiseman.** I knew him when he was a child. When he was a boy, I was a man, so I had the opportunity to observe him for his whole life.

**Attentive.** Then please let me hear an account of his life, but be as brief as you can, for I am interested in hearing about the manner of his death.