

VALLEY OF HUMILIATION



But now in this Valley of *Humiliation*, poor *Christian* was hard put to it; for he had gone but a little way, before he espied a foul fiend coming over the field to meet him: his name is *Apollyon*. Then did *Christian* begin to be afraid, and to cast in his mind whether to go back or to stand his ground.¹ But he considered again,

¹ The temptations of Satan are principally of two sorts. The *first* are common to all believers in a greater or less degree. The enemy endeavors to work upon their corruption's and unbelief, but they are enabled to resist him, and in the strength of the Lord (though not without wounds) obtain the victory. The *second* sort are still more dreadful when (usually through some indisposition of the animal frame) he attacks and poisons their very faculties;—clouds and disturbs the imagination, and fills them with terrors.—These when violent, deprive the soul of the power of resistance, and often force it into the very border of despair. But many of the Lord's people know no more of these exercises, than they who live upon the land are acquainted with the perils and distresses of those who do their business upon the great waters. Persons subject to lowness of spirits are more harassed with these depths of Satan. Temptations of the former kind may be referred to *Christian's* fight with *Apollyon*; some representations of the latter is given in his passage through the Valley of the Shadow of Death.

N.B. This battle was fought in a narrow passage just beyond Forgetful Green. Let the reader be careful to retain a grateful sense of Divine favors at all times, and of his own unworthiness, lest Satan

that he had no armor for his back, and therefore thought that to turn the back to him might give him greater advantage, with ease to pierce him with his darts; therefore he resolved to venture, and stand his ground; for, thought he, had I no more in mine eye than the saving of my life, 'twould be the best way to stand.

Christian has no armour for his back.

Christian's resolution on the approach of Apollyon.

2. So he went on, and *Apollyon* met him. Now the monster was hideous to behold; he was clothed with scales like a fish and they are his pride; he had wings like a dragon, feet like a bear, and out of his belly came fire and smoke, and his mouth was as the mouth of a lion. When he was come up to *Christian* he beheld him with a disdainful countenance, and thus began to question with him.

3. *Apollyon*. Whence come you? and whither are you bound?

Discourse betwixt Christian and Apollyon.

4. *Chr*. I am come from the city of *Destruction*, which is the place of all evil, and am going to the city of *Zion*.

5. *Apol*. By this I perceive thou art one of my subjects; for all that country is mine, and I am the

make the like assault upon him that he did upon *Christian*; for the want of these, there are few professors but what fail here.

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prince and god of it.² How is it then that thou hast run away from thy king? Were it not that I hope thou mayest do me more service, I would strike thee now at one blow to the ground.

Rom. 6. 23.

6. **Chr.** I was born indeed in your dominions, but your service was hard, and your wages such as a man could not live on; for the *Wages of Sin is Death*; therefore, when I was come to years, I did as other considerate persons do, look out, if perhaps I might mend myself.

Apollyon's
flattery.

7. **Apol.** There is no prince that will thus lightly lose his subjects, neither will I as yet lose thee; but since thou complainest of thy service and wages, be content to go back; what our country will afford, I do here promise to give thee.

8. **Chr.** But I have let myself to another, even to the King of princes, and how can I, with fairness, go back with thee?

Apollyon
undervalues
Christ's
service.

9. **Apol.** Thou hast done in this according to the proverb, changed a *bad for a worse*; but it is ordinary for those that have professed themselves His servants, after a while to give Him the slip, and return again to me. Do thou so to, and all shall be well.

² Satan attempts to terrify believers by the sins of their ignorance, the difficulties of the way, seeming delays of answers to prayer, their backslidings, and the corruption's of their hearts. But faith can find an answer to all.

10. **Chr.** I have given Him my faith, and sworn my allegiance to Him, how then can I go back from this, and not be hanged as a traitor?

11. **Apol.** Thou didst the same to me, and yet I am willing to pass by all, if now thou wilt turn again and go back.

[Apollyon
pretends to
be merciful.
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12. **Chr.** What I promised thee was in my non-age: and besides, I count that the Prince under whose banner now I stand, is able to absolve me, yea, and to pardon also what I did as to my compliance with thee. And besides, (O thou destroying *Apollyon* to speak truth, I like His service, His wages, His servants, His government, His company, and country, better than thine; and therefore leave off to persuade me further, I am His servant, and I will follow Him.

13. **Apol.** Consider again, when thou art in cool blood, what thou art like to meet with in the way that thou goest. Thou knowest, that for the most part, His servants come to an ill end, because they are transgressors against me and my ways. How many of them have been put to shameful deaths! And besides, thou countest His service better than mine, whereas he never came yet from the place where he is, to deliver any that served Him out of our hands; but as for me, how many times, as all the world very well knows, have I delivered, either by power or fraud, those that have faithfully served me, from Him and

Apollyon
pleads the
grievous
ends of
Christians,
to dissuade
Christian
from persist-
ing in his
way.

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His, though taken by them! And so I will deliver thee.

14. **Chr.** His forbearing at present to deliver them is on purpose to try their love, whether they will cleave to Him to the end; and as for the ill end thou sayest they come to, that is most glorious in their account: for, for present deliverance, they do not much expect it; for they stay for their glory and then they shall have it, when their prince comes in His, and the glory of the angels.

15. **Apol.** Thou hast already been unfaithful in thy service to Him; and how dost thou think to receive wages of Him?

16. **Chr.** Wherein, O *Apollyon*, have I been unfaithful to Him?

17. **Apol.** Thou didst faint at first setting out, when thou wast almost choked in the gulf of *Despond*. Thou didst attempt wrong ways to be rid of thy burden, whereas thou shouldest have stayed till thy prince had taken it off.³ Thou didst sinfully sleep, and lose thy choice things.

*Apollyon
pleads
Christian's
infirmities
against him..*

³ The enemy of souls, though he cannot finally destroy the believer, yet he will leave no method untried to damp his comforts, and diminish his usefulness. To this end he sometimes sets before us the sins of our unconverted state with peculiar aggravation. In such a case we must not deny the charge, but acknowledge ourselves guilty, as Christian did, and plead the mercy held out in the atonement of Jesus. Lord, teach us thus to put to flight all the armies of the aliens.

Thou wast also almost persuaded to go back at the sight of the lions. And when thou talkest of thy journey, and of what thou hast heard and seen, thou art inwardly desirous of vain-glory in all that thou sayest or dost.

18. **Chr.** All this is true, and much more, which thou hast left out; but the Prince whom I serve and honor, is merciful and ready to forgive. But besides, these infirmities possessed me in thy country; for there I sucked them in, and I have groaned under them, been sorry for them, and have obtained pardon of my Prince.

19. **Apol.** Then *Apollyon* broke out into a grievous rage, saying, I am an enemy to this Prince; I hate His person, His laws, and people; I am come out on purpose to withstand thee.

*Apollyon
in a rage
falls upon
Christian.*

20. **Chr.** *Apollyon*, beware what you do; for I am in the King's highway, the way of holiness; therefore take heed to yourself.

21. **Apol.** Then *Apollyon* straddled quite over the whole breadth of the way,⁴ and said, I am void of fear in this matter; prepare thyself to die; for I swear by my infernal den, that thou shalt go no further: Here will I spill thy soul!

⁴ *Apollyon* sometimes stops up the path of duty so close, that a believer can neither pray, read, hear, converse, or manage his ordinary calling, but his enemy stands close at his right hand to resist him.

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22. And with that he threw a flaming dart at his breast; but *Christian* had a shield in his hand, with which he caught it, and so prevented the danger of that.

23. Then did *Christian* draw, for he saw it was time to bestir him; and *Apollyon* as fast made at him, throwing darts as thick as hail; by the which, notwithstanding all that *Christian* could do to avoid it,⁵ *Apollyon* wounded him in his *head*, his *hand*, and foot. This made *Christian* give a little back: *Apollyon*, therefore, followed his work amain, and *Christian* again took courage, and resisted as manfully as he could. This sore combat lasted for above half a day, even till *Christian* was almost quite spent. For you must know that *Christian*, by reason of his wounds, must needs grow weaker and weaker.

24. Then *Apollyon* espying his opportunity, began to gather up close to *Christian*, and wrestling with him gave him a dreadful fall; and with that *Christian's* sword flew out of his hand. Then said *Apollyon*, I am sure of thee now. And with that he had almost pressed him to death; so that *Christian* began to despair of life. But, as God would have it,

⁵ Great allowances are to be made for souls in an hour of temptation. Perhaps they judge, speak, or act amiss. But you would rather pity than blame them, if you knew how they are assaulted. They who have not been tempted themselves, are not competent judges of the case, nor able duly to pity them, or rightly to advise them.

while *Apollyon* was fetching of his last blow, thereby to make a full end of this good man, *Christian* nimbly reached out his hand for his sword, and caught it⁶ saying, *Rejoice not against me, O mine enemy! when I fall I shall arise*; and with that gave him a deadly thrust, which made him give back, as one that had received his mortal wound. *Christian* perceiving that, made at him again, saying, *Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors, through him that loved us*. And with that *Apollyon* spread forth his dragon's wings, and sped him away, that *Christian* saw him no more.

25. In this combat no man can imagine, unless he had seen and heard as I did, what yelling and hideous roaring *Apollyon* made all the time of the fight; he spake like a dragon: and on the other side, what

⁶ The sword of a Christian wherewith he smites his spiritual enemies is the Word of God. When this weapon fails us we become a prey to unbelief. This was the situation of the Pilgrim in his dreadful combat with *Apollyon*. Through the power of unbelief he has lost his sword out of his hand, and begun to despair of his life; but when he got his sword into his hand again, he gave his enemy a home thrust, with a *Rejoice not against me O mine enemy, &c.* Finding he had gained advantage, he seconded his blow; nay, *in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us*, and with that he was put to flight. Our victorious General made use of his weapon in his engagement with the devil, and prevailed. And if his followers had always the skill to wield aright the same weapon, they would never fail of success.

Christian's
victory over
Apollyon.
Mic. 7. 8.

Rom. 8. 37.
Jam. 4. 7.

A brief relation
of the
combat, by
the specta-
tor.

Christian
wounded in
his under-
standing,
faith and
conversa-
tion.

Apollyon
casteth
Christian
down to the
ground.

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sighs and groans burst from *Christian's* heart. I never saw him all the while give so much as one pleasant look, till he perceived he had wounded *Apollyon* with his two-edged sword; then, indeed, he did smile, and look upward: But it was the dreadfullest fight that ever I saw.

A more unequal match
can hardly be:
Christian must fight an angel;
but you see
The valiant man,
by handling sword and shield,
Doth make him, tho' a dragon,
quit the field.

tree of life, the which *Christian* took and applied to the wounds that he had received in the battle, and was healed immediately.⁷ He also sat down in that place to eat bread, and to drink of the bottle that was given him a little before; so being refreshed, he addressed himself to his journey, with his sword drawn in his hand; for, he said, I know not but some other enemy may be at hand. But he met with no other affront from *Apollyon* quite through this valley.

Christian goes on his journey with his sword drawn in his hand.

NOTES:

Christian gives God thanks for deliverance.

26. So when the battle was over, *Christian* said, I will here give thanks to Him that hath delivered me out of the mouth of the *lion*, to Him that did help me against *Apollyon*. And so he did; saying,

Great Beelzebub,
the captain of this fiend,
Designed my ruin;
therefore to this end
He sent him harnessed out;
and he with rage,
That hellish was,
did fiercely me engage:
But blessed Michael helped me,
and I,
By dint of sword,
did quickly make him fly:
Therefore to him let me
give lasting praise,
And thank, and bless
His holy name always.

27. Then there came to him a hand with some of the leaves of the

⁷ In Revelations, Chap. 22. 2, we read of a *tree of life*, which yielded her fruit every month, and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations. This tree of life was *Christ*, and the leaves of this tree were his atoning blood and everlasting righteousness, which applied by faith to the wounded conscience can only heal its deadly wounds. When guilt is removed, then the believer eats the bread and drinks the wine of consolation, and goes on the way rejoicing.

