

***“The Pilgrims Progress”***  
***“A Royal Reception”***  
***(2 Peter 1:11)***

**Introduction:**

1. The Last Time:
  - We Were With Christian & Hopeful:
    - In Their Pilgrimage:
      - They Stood At The Gate:
        - Of Their Final Destination:
          - The Celestial City!
  - But - Since Bunyan:
    - Slowed Down The “Instantaneous Process” It Took:
      - For Them To Get There:
        - Led By & Carried By:
          - Angels:
    - Their Anticipation:
      - And Our Anticipation:
        - Continued To Build:
          - Until They Came To The Place:
            - Where They Now Stand!
2. And Now Comes:
  - The Biggest Question Of All!
    - How Will They Be Received:
      - At The Gate! And Even:
        - Who Will Receive Them:
          - At The Gate!
  - Well - The Answer Is Clear And Unforgettable:
    - As We Turn Back To:
      - Page 102 - And Get To See & Hear:
        - The Kind Of Reception:
          - Our Pilgrims Finally Receive!
    - Read From: *Page 102, Paragraph 2:*
      - *“Now When They Were Come Up To The Gate!”*
    - Read Through: *Page 102, Paragraph 6:*
      - *“And After That, They Shut Up The Gates; Which, When I Had Seen, I Wished Myself Among Them!”*
3. What We Just Read:
  - Is A Imaginative Description:
    - Of What Peter Calls - In 2 Peter 1:11:
      - Our “Abundant Entrance” Into:
        - Heaven Itself!
  - In Fact - Lets First Turn There:
    - 2 Peter 1 - Where Peter Writes:
      - 1:10-11 - “Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure: for if ye do these things, ye shall never fall: For so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ!”
        - And - What An Entrance:
          - It Will Be:
            - For All True Christian Pilgrims!
  - Bunyan Wants Us To Realize:
    - In This Part Of His Story:
      - That As Much As:
        - You May Look Forward To & Anticipate:
          - Your Reception:
            - In Heaven!
    - The Lord Himself:
      - Looks Forward To & Anticipates:
        - Your Arrival:

- In An Infinitely Greater Way!
- And That Is Why These Pilgrims:
  - Were Given Such A:
    - Royal Welcome!
    - Fit For Princes Of The King!

4. And So - Tonight:
- We Are Going Step Back To The Gate:
    - To Get A Sense:
      - Of Just How Great:
        - This Reception Was!
        - Because - We First See - At:

**1. *The Coming To The Gate:***

- The Words Of The Lord:
  - Invited Them To Enter:
    - Into The Joy & Blessing Of The Lord!
- Quoting From Revelation 22:14:
  - The Words Written In Gold:
    - Were Words Of Great Blessing:
      - “Blessed Are They That Do His Commandments, That They May Have Right To The Tree Of Life, And May Enter In Through The Gates Into The City!”
- These Words Of Blessing:
  - Are There To Encourage:
    - Those Who Are Obedient:
      - To The Lord & His Commands:
        - By Reminding Them:
          - Of The Rights & Privileges They Have:
          - As The Children Of The King!
- Now - We Need To Remember:
  - Where This Gate Is:
    - In Relation To The Pilgrimage:
      - Christian & Hopeful Were On!
  - This Gate:
    - Is At The End!
      - And That Is Why:
        - The Emphasis Is On:
          - Obedience!
  - Because The Entrance At This Gate:
    - All Depends On Whether Or Not:
      - You Entered The First Gate:
        - That Old “Wicket Gate” That Christian & Hopeful Did!
- Because That First Gate:
  - Is The Gate Of Faith:
    - And Faith Alone:
      - In The Lord Jesus Christ!
    - Where - Faith Is The Only Key:
      - That Can Unlock The Blessings Of Salvation!
  - Even As Ephesians 2:8-9 Tells Us:
    - “For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: / Not of works, lest any man should boast!”
- But This Second Gate:
  - Is The Gate Of Sight:
    - And The Key To This Gate:
      - Is The Evidence & Fruit Of Your Faith!
  - Even As Paul Continues In Ephesians 2:10:
    - “For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them!”
- The Key To Both Gates:
  - Is The Grace Of God:

- That Not Only:
  - Brings You To Faith - But Then Also:
    - Cultivates Fruit:
      - In Your Faith!
- And - To Those Who Have Received & Responded To:
  - His Grace:
    - Are Forever Invited To:
      - The City Of God!
- Just Think Of All The Words:
  - That We Have In The Scriptures:
    - That Continue To Invite Us & Woo Us:
      - To Christ & Heaven Itself!
        - But Then - We Also Saw At:

2. ***The Call At The Gate:***

- How - The Watchers Of The Lord:
  - Invited Them To Enter!
- When The “Shining Men” Bid Them To Make Their Call:
  - Bunyan Tells Us That:
    - “Some Looked Down From Above Over The Gate, To Wit, Enoch, Moses, And Elijah!”
- Once Again - This Image:
  - Reminds Us Of Another Experience Of Christian:
    - In The Early Part Of His Pilgrimage:
      - When He Went To The Interpreters House:
        - And Was Shown A “Stately Palace, Beautiful To Behold!”
  - That Palace Was:
    - The Sight Of Heaven:
      - By Faith!
        - And - “Upon The Top” Of That Palace He Also Saw “Certain Persons Walking, Who Were Clothed In Gold!”
  - Could Those Men Have Been:
    - The Same Ones He Sees Now?
      - Perhaps - Though We Are Not Told As Much!
        - But Even Then - Their Words Invited Pilgrims To Enter!
          - They Said - “Come In, Come In; Eternal Glory Thou Shalt Win!”
- Well Now - This Palace Is:
  - The Sight Of Heaven Itself!
    - But - It Still Had:
      - A Hint Of The Familiar:
        - To Christian & Hopeful!
  - And - So It Will Be:
    - For All True Believers!
- When You Call At The Gate:
  - It May Seem As If:
    - You’ve Seen:
      - Some Of Those Same People Before!
  - Because - In Some Ways:
    - You Have!
      - Even As We Live In This World:
        - We Are “Compassated About With So Great A Cloud Of Witnesses!” (Hebrews 12:1)
    - And Many Of Their Portraits:
      - Have Been Painted For Us:
        - On The Canvas Of God’s Word!
    - We Have The Portraits Of Others As Well!
      - Of Those We Knew:
        - In Life - As Well As Those:
          - We Came To Know:
            - Through History!

- Of Course - There Will Be Many, Many Others:
  - Who We Could Never Have Known!
  - But - We Will Have All Eternity:
    - To Learn Their Stories & Worship & Serve Along With Them!
- When You Call At The Gate:
  - It May Feel As If:
    - You've Heard:
      - Some Of Those Same Words Before!
  - Because Again - In Some Ways:
    - You Have!
      - Their Words & God's Words:
        - Resonate With Us:
          - Through This Living Book!
- And Just Think Of All The Watchers:
  - That Are Waiting In Heaven:
    - To Receive You:
      - Into Glory!
        - And Especially The Main Watcher - Who Gives:

### 3. ***The Command At The Gate:***

- The King Himself!
  - Who - First Received Their Certificates:
    - Which Were His Own Seal Upon Them:
      - And The Proof That Were Citizens:
        - Of His Kingdom!
    - Those Certificates:
      - Were Given To The Pilgrims:
        - When They Were Relieved Of Their Burdens:
          - At The Cross!
  - But - After Receiving Their Certificates:
    - The King Welcomed Them:
      - By Commanding The Gates To Open:
        - So That "The Righteous Nation Which Keepeth The Truth, May Enter In!"
          - And So They Did!
  - Imagine What It Will Be Like:
    - When Jesus Himself:
      - Will Look At You:
        - With His Loving Eyes!
      - Motion To You:
        - With His Gentle Arms:
      - And Say To You:
        - With His Kind Voice:
          - "Well done, thou good and faithful servant: thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy lord!"
  - As We Find In The Song Of Salvation:
    - In Isaiah 26 - "In that day shall this song be sung in the land of Judah; We have a strong city; salvation will God appoint for walls and bulwarks. / Open ye the gates, that the righteous nation which keepeth the truth may enter in. / Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee: because he trusteth in thee. / Trust ye in the LORD for ever: for in the LORD JEHOVAH is everlasting strength!"
  - What A Welcome:
    - The Lord Has In Store For You:
      - When You Make Your Final Call:
        - At The Gate Of Heaven!
      - The Gate Will Swing Open Before You:
        - At His Command:
          - And "So Shall You Ever Be With The Lord!"
    - But Then - We Also Saw:

4. ***The Change At The Gate:***

- Which Shows The Great Wealth:
  - Of The Lord - And Invites Us:
    - To Pursue Heaven:
      - With All Of Our Heart!
  - In 1 Peter 1:1-4 - Peter Writes:
    - “Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, / To an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you, / Who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time!”
- The Pilgrims Were Glorified:
  - When They Went Through The Gate!
- The Pilgrims Wore Gold:
  - When They Went Through The Gate!
    - In Their Raiment & With Their Crowns!
      - Crowns Of:
        - Life & Righteousness & Glory!
- And - As Barry Horner Once Wrote:
  - This New Apparel:
    - “Will Never Soil Or Wear Out! It Will Never Go Out Of Fashion! Its Radiance Will Never Go Dim!”
- What A Change:
  - From This Old World!
    - And All The Wealth Of The Lord:
      - Will Belong To You:
        - Forever!

\* Then - Bunyan Gives Another Glimpse At:

5. ***The City Through The Gate:***

- And The Great Wonders There:
  - That Will Forever Captivate:
    - Our Hearts!
- The City Will Shine:
  - Like The Sun:
    - Because Of The Light Of The Lord!
- The Streets Will Sparkle:
  - Being Paved With Gold:
    - Because Of The Excellence Of The Lord!
- The People Will Sing:
  - With Crowns On Their Heads:
    - And Palms In Their Hands:
      - Because Of The Love Of The Lord!
- But - The Wonders Of The City:
  - Are Just A Reflection:
    - Of The Wonders Of The Lord!
      - Which Causes Us To Say With Longing:
        - “Whom have I in heaven but thee? and there is none upon earth that I desire beside thee. / My flesh and my heart faileth: but God is the strength of my heart, and my portion for ever!” (Psalm 73:25-26)

\* But Then - After The Pilgrims Went Through The Gate - We Saw:

6. ***The Closing Of The Gate:***

- And Its Closing Caused The Dreamer Of Our Story:
  - To Sigh - And Share His Great Wish:
    - “Which, When I Had Seen, I Wished Myself Among Them!”
- And That Great Wish:
  - Continues To Be The Sigh Of The Hearts:
    - Of God’s Pilgrims!

- As Paul Once Wrote:

- 2 Corinthians 5:4 - "For we that are in this tabernacle do groan, being burdened: not for that we would be unclothed, but clothed upon, that mortality might be swallowed up of life!"

**Conclusion:**

1. Just Think About:
  - The Great Words:
    - That We Find In Scripture:
    - That Invite Us:
      - To The Gate Of Heaven!
2. Just Think About:
  - The Great Watchers:
    - That Are Looking Over The Battlements Of Heaven:
      - Anticipating Our Arrival!
3. Just Think About:
  - The Great Welcome:
    - When Jesus Himself Will:
      - Command The Gate To Open:
        - And Bid You To Enter!
4. Just Think About:
  - The Great Wealth:
    - That Awaits You In Heaven:
      - For Glory & For Beauty!
5. And - Just Think About:
  - The Great Wonders:
    - That You Will Experience In Heaven:
      - And - In The New Heavens & Earth:
        - For All Eternity!
6. And - As Don Wyrzten Once Wrote:
  - Just Think Of Stepping On Shore, And Finding It Heaven!
  - Of Touching A Hand, And Finding It God's!
  - Of Breathing New Air, And Finding It Celestial!
  - Of Waking Up In Glory, And Finding It Home!
7. This Is What Is In Store For You:
  - When You Turn To & Trust In Jesus Christ:
    - As Your Lord And Savior!
      - And As Much As:
        - You Long For The Day:
          - When Your Faith Is Made Sight!
            - Even With The Great Sigh & Wish Of Our Dreamer!
  - Know This!
    - That The Lord Is Looking Forward To That Day:
      - Even More Than You Are!
        - Because - As We Are Told In:
          - Psalm 116:15 - "Precious in the sight of the LORD is the death of his saints!"

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