

***“The Pilgrims Progress”***  
***Help Is On The Way!***  
***(Pages 5b-6a)***

**Introduction:**

1. Last Week - In Our Journey Through The Pilgrim’s Progress:
  - We Met Two Men:
    - From The City Of Destruction:
      - Who Went After Christian:
        - To Bring Him Back To His Home!
    - **Obstinate:**
      - Met His Match:
        - With Our Pilgrim:
          - Who Was Resolved:
            - To Get Relief From His Burden!
      - And So - Obstinate Went Back Without Him!
    - **Pliable:**
      - However, Made A Momentary Decision:
        - To Go Along With Our Pilgrim:
          - Because Of All The Good & Glorious Things:
            - He Was Told By Christian About His Destination!
2. And So - For A Time - We Were Able To:
  - Eavesdrop On The Conversation:
    - Between Christian & Pliable!
      - The Conversation:
        - Caused Pliable:
          - To Want To Go Faster!
      - But - That Same Conversation:
        - Caused The Thoughts Of Christian:
          - To Turn Once Again:
            - To His Burden!
      - And - On Pg. 5 - 3<sup>rd</sup> Paragraph Down:
        - Christian Said:
          - “I Cannot Go So Fast As I Would, By Reason OF This Burden That Is On My Back!”
    - And So - We Continue:
      - Our Journey With Him!
        - *Read Through Pg. 6:*
          - *“And Thus Much Concerning Pliable.”*
  - 3. So - With Christian & Pliable:
    - We Arrive At:
      - The Infamous “Slough Of Despond!”
        - A Place That - As We Just Read:
          - Is Impossible To Mend:
            - Though, Not For Lack Of Effort!
      - In Bunyan’s Day:
        - God’s Laborers Had Used:
          - The Promises Of The Gospel:
            - To Try Fill In That Gully:
              - For More Than 1,600 Years!
      - But - In Our Day:
        - Even More “Cart-Loads” And “Millions” More “Of Wholesome Instructions” Have Been:
          - Swallowed Up By:
            - This “Slough Of Despond!”
              - For More Than 2,000 Years Now!
    - 4. And - The Reason For That Is Because:
      - It Remains:

**1. *The Path To Help!***

- Even As The Man Named “Help” Described It - On Page 6:
  - To The Dreamer Of This Dream:
    - “It Is The Descent Whither The Scum And Filth That Attends Conviction For Sin, Doth Continually Run, And Therefore It Is Called The Slough Of Despond: For Still, As The Sinner Is Awakened About His Lost Condition, There Ariseth In His Soul Many Fears, And Doubts, And Discouraging Apprehensions, Which All Of Them Get Together, And Settle In This Place!”
- The Path To True Help:
  - For Pilgrims From The City Of Destruction:
    - Leads Through:
      - This Same Slough - Or Swamp & Quagmire - Of Guilt And Fear And Doubt!
  - Now - The Slough:
    - May Be Deeper & Thicker:
      - For Some, More Than Others:
        - As We Will See Later - When Faithful & Christiana Make It Through Much Easier Than Christian!
  - But - In Order For Someone / Anyone To *Seek* Help:
    - They First Must See Their *Need* For Help!
      - And This Need Is Recognized:
        - Through The “Awakening” Of The Sinner “About His Lost Condition!”
  - Isn’t This What The Apostle Paul Describes For Us:
    - In 2 Corinthians 7:9-10 - “Now I rejoice, not that ye were made sorry, but that ye sorrowed to repentance: for ye were made sorry after a godly manner, that ye might receive damage by us in nothing. / For godly sorrow worketh repentance to salvation not to be repented of: but the sorrow of the world worketh death!”
  - In Order To Be Saved:
    - You Must First:
      - See That You Are In Danger!
  - In Order To Be Found:
    - You Must First:
      - Realize That You Are Lost!
  - And That Is:
    - What The Slough Of Despond:
      - Does For Newly Awakened Sinners!
  - But - Sadly - Not All:
    - Who Experience Conviction Of Sin:
      - Will Experience Conversion:
        - From Their Sin!
    - And That Is Why We See:
      - The Differences That We Do:
        - Between Christian & Pliable:
          - In That Slough! We See:
  - The Different Reasons:
    - For Falling Into The Slough In The First Place!
      - Bunyan Wrote That They Were Both:
        - “Heedless” - And So - “Did Both Fall Suddenly Into The Bog!”
          - But - They Were Heedless:
            - For Different Reasons!
    - Pliable Was Heedless:
      - Because He Was Careless!
        - He Just Wanted To “Mend [His] Pace” And Get To All The Good Things:
          - That Pilgrim Described About The Celestial City!
    - But - Christian Was Heedless:
      - Because He Took His Eyes & Mind:
        - Off Of The Promises In His Book:
          - And Back To:
            - “The Burden That [Was] On His Back!”
    - He Probably Started To Feel:
      - The Pathway Getting Muddy & Murky!

- It Was Hard Going Already:
  - But Now It Was Getting Tougher!
- The Guilt He Felt From His Sin:
  - Overwhelmed His Understanding:
    - Of God's Grace!
- And - The Hell He Felt Within Himself:
  - Swallowed Up His Thoughts:
    - Of Heaven - Because Of:
      - How Undeserving He Was!
- And So - As He Described It Himself:
  - "Fear Followed Me So Hard, That I Fled The Next Way, And Fell In!"
    - He Was Feeling Desperate, So He Tried To Find The Quickest & Easiest Way Out Of The Muck & Mire:
      - But Instead - He Fell In:
        - And Was Completely & "Grievously Bedaubed With The Dirt!"
  - I Like What George Cheever Once Wrote:
    - About This - "Flying From Our Fears, We Fly Only Into Greater Guilt And Fear, If We Do Not Flee To Christ!"
      - But Then, We Also See:
- The Different Results:
  - Of Falling Into The Slough Of Despond!
- For Pliable:
  - It Was Just Another Bother & Nuisance!
    - And - Instead Of Being Offended:
      - At His Own Sin & Guilt:
        - Which Was The Cause Of The Mire!
      - He Was "Offended And Repulsed At The Thought Of Grieving Over Sin!" (Barry Horner)
    - And So - It Only took Him "A Desperate Struggle Or Two" To Get Out!
      - Because - He Never Really Thought About His Sin & Guilt Before God!
        - And Now - He Wasn't About To Let Those Feelings Of Guilt:
          - Get In The Way Of *His* Life & *His* Path!
  - But For Christian:
    - It Was Overwhelming!
      - "Because Of The Burden That Was On His Back" - He - "Began To Sink In The Mire!"
        - And He Could Not Get Out On His Own!
          - ***He Needed Help!***
    - For Pliable:
      - He Got Out Of The Slough:
        - On The Side That "Was Next To His Own House!"
          - Which Shows Us That His Heart Was Already Turned Back:
            - Even Before His Face Was!
        - And - When He Finally Got Back Home:
          - Even Though - For A While:
            - He May Have Felt Embarrassed & "Sneaking" Or Cringing At The Ridicule He Received From His "Friends"!
            - That Feeling Didn't Last Too Long!
        - Because - *Being Pliable*:
          - He "Got More Confidence" - And Then:
            - "They *All* Turned Their Tales, And Began To Deride Poor Christian Behind His Back!"
              - Including Pliable!
        - Proving The Words That We Find In:
          - 1 John 2:19 - "They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would no doubt have continued with us: but they went out, that they might be made manifest that they were not all of us!"
      - But For Christian:
        - We Are Told That He Was:
          - "Left To Tumble In The Slough Of Despond Alone!"
      - But - Of The Two:

- Christian Was In The **Better** Place!
  - Because - Even Though He Was Full:
    - Of “Fears & Doubts & Discouraging Apprehensions!”
    - He Was Still In The Path:
      - To Help!
- Remember The Words:
  - Of David? Psalm 51:17:
    - “The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit: a broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise!”
- Remember The Words:
  - Of Jesus? Matthew 5:3-5:
    - “Blessed are the poor in spirit: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. / Blessed are they that mourn: for they shall be comforted!”
- For Christian - Help Was On The Way!
  - And That Is Why We Then See:

## 2. **The Provision Of Help!**

- On Pg. 5 Bunyan Wrote:
  - “But I Beheld In My Dream, That A Man Came To Him, Whose Name Was Help, And Asked Him What He Did There?”
    - Help Is The Mercy Of God:
      - Coming To The Aid:
        - Of Sinners Who Are Stuck:
          - In The Muck & Mire Of Sin And Guilt!
    - Its Not Just Unbelieving Sinners:
      - Who Go Through This Kind Of Slough:
        - Of Depression & Discouragement:
          - When God Starts To Convict Them Of Their Sin!
    - No - Believers Too:
      - Can Go Through This Kind Of Slough:
        - Of Depression & Discouragement:
          - When They Remember Their Condition & Conduct Of Sin!
    - Christians Are No Strangers:
      - To Depression & Despair!
        - The Great Prophet Elijah Experienced Great Despondency!
          - Not Necessarily For His Own Sin, But For The Sin Of His Own People!
    - But - When Elijah Went & Hid Himself In A Cave:
      - It Was God - In His Mercy & With His Help:
        - Who Came To Him And Asked Him - Not Once, But Twice - “What Doest Thou Here, Elijah?” (1 Kings 19:9, 13)
      - And Then - The Lord Spoke To His Discouraged Servant - And Helped Him:
        - Not In The Great & Strong Wind! Not By The Earthquake! Not In The Fire! But How? Through “A Still Small Voice!”
          - And So It Was For Christian!
          - And We See:
- The Timing Of His Help!
  - Though Christian Tried & Tried & Tried:
    - To Get Free From His Guilt & Fear - He Just “Could Not Get Out!”
  - But Then - When Christian Needed It Most:
    - Along Came A Man:
      - “Whose Name Was Help!”
  - And - Isn’t This Always:
    - The Case With:
      - God’s Mercy & Grace?
    - In Hebrews 4:16 - We Are Told:
      - “Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need!”
  - But - This Is Also Because Of:

- The Truth Of His Help!
  - When Help Offered Christian His Hand:
    - We Read This - "Then Said He, Give Me Thy Hand; So He Gave Him His Hand, And He Drew Him Out, And Set Him Upon Sound Ground, And Bid Him Go On His Way!"
  - When Bunyan Wrote These Words - He Had Psalm 40:1-2 In His Mind:
    - "I waited patiently for the LORD; and he inclined unto me, and heard my cry. / He brought me up also out of an horrible pit, out of the miry clay, and set my feet upon a rock, and established my goings!"
  - But - Even Though:
    - The Words Of David Are Written:
      - **After** His Conversion - The Words Of Bunyan Are Written:
        - **Before** Our Pilgrim's Conversion!
  - And - I Think The Reason For This:
    - Is To Show That:
      - The "Drawing" By God Of Sinners To Himself:
        - Is Not A One-Time Thing! It Certainly Can Be! But Most Of The Time, It Is A Process!
  - The Prophet Jeremiah Was Given This Truth:
    - In Jeremiah 31:3 - When He Wrote That - "The LORD hath appeared of old unto me, saying, Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love: therefore with lovingkindness have I drawn thee!"
  - The Apostle Paul Was Given This Truth:
    - In Galatians - When He Recalled How - "It pleased God, who separated me from my mother's womb, and called me by his grace, To reveal his Son in me!"
  - From Time To Time:
    - You Need To **Look Back**:
      - And See How God Drew You To Himself:
        - With The Cords Of His Everlasting Love:
          - Even Before You Were Saved!
      - This Is Called: "Prevenient Grace!"
        - Think About All The:
          - People, Providences, And Even Problems That God Brought Into Your Life:
            - To Draw & Pull & Woo You To Himself!
      - This Is What His Help Is Like!
    - But Then - Also:
      - You Need To **Look Forward**:
        - And See That He Continues To Draw You Closer & Closer To Himself!
        - And That Leads Us To See:
- The Target Of His Help!
  - When Help Came To Christian:
    - What Help Did He Provide?
      - He "Set Him Upon Sound Ground!"
    - And - For David:
      - The Lord "Set [His] Feet Upon A Rock!"
  - The "Steps" That Led Through:
    - The Slough Of Despond:
      - Bunyan Notes In The Margin:
        - Are "The Promises" Of God In His Word!
      - Peter Tells Us About These Promises In:
        - 2 Peter 1:4 - "Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust!"
    - And - Even Though Those Promises:
      - May Sometimes Be Clouded By:
        - Our Own Doubts & Disbelief:
          - Like They Were For Christian!
        - They Are Still There:
          - And "Good And Substantial!"
            - Because They Are The Promises Of The King & Lawgiver Himself!

- They Are **God's** Promises!
  - And We Can Be "Fully Persuaded That, What He [Has] Promised, He [Is] Able Also To Perform!" (Romans 4:21)
    - The Promises Of God Tell Us That:
    - Help Is Still On The Way!

**Conclusion:**

1. So - Consider Tonight:
  - Your Own Plight And Need Of Help!
    - Are You In A "Slough Of Despond"?
2. You May Be An Unbeliever:
  - Who Is Still Unsure Of What To Do:
    - With Your Burden Of Sin!
      - And You Feel So Overwhelmed With Fear And Doubt And Guilt!
  - Don't Let Those Feelings:
    - Cause You To Turn Back:
      - Like They Did Pliable!
        - Those Feelings Are The Pricks & Pulls Of God Upon Your Conscience!
        - Don't Kick Against Them!
  - Instead - Respond To Them & Listen:
    - To The Promises Of God!
      - Truly Hear & Believe!
        - He Is The Only One:
          - Who Can & Will Help You!
  - When Jesus Said In John 6:37:
    - "Him That Cometh To Me I Will In No Wise Cast Out!"
      - He Meant It! And - He Is Able To Keep This Promise:
        - As Well As All Of The Rest!
  - Turn To & Trust In Him:
    - With All Your Heart:
      - And - With All Your Soul:
        - And Even - With All Your Sin!
          - He Died For Them / For You!
3. Or - You May Be A Believer:
  - Who Is Still Struggling:
    - With Your Own "Fears And Doubts And Discouraging Apprehensions!"
      - The Lord Is Still Your "Help And Shield!" (Psalms 33:20)
4. Remember When:
  - The Apostle Peter:
    - Was Summoned By The Lord:
      - To Walk To Him On The Rough Waters:
        - Of The Sea Of Galilee?
  - That Sea Became To Peter:
    - A Slough - Of His Own Despondency!
      - Because - "When He Saw The Wind Boisterous, He Was Afraid; And Beginning To Sink":
        - What Did He Do?
          - He Cried **To** Help **For** Help!
          - "He Cried, Saying, Lord Save Me!"
  - And - What Did Jesus Do?
    - What Will Jesus **Always** Do?
      - So - "And Immediately Jesus Stretched Forth His Hand, And Caught Him, And Said Unto Him, O Thou Of Little Faith, Wherefore Didst Thou Doubt? And When They Were Come Into The Ship, The Wind Ceased!" (Mark 14:30-32)
5. I'd Like To Close:
  - With These Words From George Cheever:
    - "The Lord Jesus Christ Can Never Resist That Outcry Of The Sinking Soul!"

\* Do You Feel The Burden Of Your Sin Tonight?

- \* Do You See Your Need For Help?
- \* Who Will You Turn To In The Darkness Of Despair?
- \* Remember: "The Lord Jesus Christ Can Never Resist That Outcry Of The Sinking Soul!"

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