

Pilgrim's Progress

The Valley of the Shadow of Death

By John Bunyan

The Pilgrim's Progress from this world — to that which is to come, in the similitude of a dream

Retold for Children and Adapted to School Reading, by James Baldwin, 1913

Now I saw in my dream that when Christian had rested and refreshed himself, he again renewed his journey. And now he carried his *sword* drawn in his hand; for he said, "I know not what other enemy I may meet."

The way was rougher and narrower than before, and it led *downward* into a wild land of bogs and pits which was called the *Valley of the Shadow of Death*.

Near the entrance to this valley, Christian met two men who were running *back* with as much speed as they could.

"Hold, men!" he cried. "What's the matter?"

"Matter enough!" they answered. "We have been as far in that valley as any one dares to go. The air is as dark as pitch down there. We saw hundreds of hobgoblins and dragons and satyrs. We heard the most fearful shrieks and groans. Clouds of confusion hover in the darkness. And *Death* spreads his wings over the whole valley."

"All these things are dreadful," said Christian, "but I see that my way lies through this very valley."

"Well," said the men, "it is not *our way*"; and they parted.

Then Christian went *down* into the valley, carrying his sword in his hand. The way was very narrow. On one side of it, there was a very deep ditch; on the other, there was a dangerous bog which was without bottom!

As Christian went forward, groping in the darkness, he was much distressed. For when he would shun the ditch on the one hand — he felt himself slipping into the bog on the other; and when he drew away from the mire of the bog, he was in danger of stumbling into the ditch.

About the middle of the valley, there was a yawning chasm close by the wayside; and out of this chasm came flame and smoke and hideous sounds, enough to frighten the bravest man. So here, Christian put up his sword and began to *pray* to the Lord of the hill, "O Lord, I beseech you, deliver my soul!"

Thus, for a long time, he went onward; and the angry waves reached their fiery tongues toward him as though they would devour him. Still he went onward; and he heard doleful sounds, the rushing of winds, and the shrieking of fiends.

At times he was minded to *go back*; but then he remembered the scenes he had passed through, and felt that the danger in *front* of him could be no greater than that which was *behind*.

At length, while he was still in the midst of alarms, he thought that he heard a *voice* in the darkness ahead of him. He listened. It was the voice of a man, speaking up clearly in the midst of the great uproar: "Though I walk through the Valley of the Shadow of Death, I will fear no evil, for You are with me."

Then Christian was glad, and he went on with a surer step than before. He called to him that was before: "Oh, my friend Faithful! Is it your voice that I hear?"

But no answer came out of the gloom.

Soon, however, the *day* broke, and the light of the sun began to dispel the darkness. Christian paused and looked back over the road he had traveled.

He could see plainly the ditch and the bog with the narrow pathway between them.

He could see the hobgoblins and the dragons and the satyrs; but they were far off, hiding in the shadows of the valley.

He gave thanks that he had escaped all these, and then resumed his journey. The way, however, was still beset with dangers — for he was not yet out of the valley. There were so many snares, traps, pits, and pitfalls all along the way, that had it now been dark, he would surely have fallen into them and been lost. But, as I have said, the sun was rising.

This article is provided as a ministry of [Third Millennium Ministries](#) (Thirdmill).
If you have a question about this article, please [email](#) our *Theological Editor*.

Subscribe to *Biblical Perspectives Magazine*

BPM subscribers receive an email notification each time a new issue is published. Notifications include the title, author, and description of each article in the issue, as well as links directly to the articles. Like BPM itself, *subscriptions are free*. To subscribe to [BPM](#), please select this [link](#).