

TALKS TO CHILDREN

ON

JOHN BUNYAN'S

HOLY WAR

by

CHARLES BROWN

AN EDITED VERSION

by

GEOFFREY STONIER

CHAPTER 1

A FAMOUS TOWN

Many months ago, I asked the children of my congregation to consider with me on Sunday mornings Bunyan's **Pilgrim's Progress**, and I heard that the little children and big people were all interested, and profited by the exercise.

I am going to ask you to consider for a number of Sundays Bunyan's **Holy War**. It is a book with a different title but it deals with the same subject. It will not be quite as easy to understand, and perhaps will not be quite as interesting as the **Pilgrim's Progress**; the characters are not so clearly drawn, but I hope that even the youngest among us will be interested and helped. You know that in the **Pilgrim's Progress**, the Christian Life is set before us under the figure of a journey — from one city to another — a journey full of difficulties and adventures, while in the **Holy War** the same life is pictured for us as a war or wars.

In the **Pilgrim's Progress**, the interest circles around, or centres in, a person or persons; in the **Holy War**, it chiefly centres in a town which is attacked and defended, attacked and taken, and then re-taken. Now, towns are not as interesting as people: I am sure that you would rather read about the exciting adventures of a person than about what happened to a town. But there are always people in a town, and there are people in this special town which Bunyan pictures for us, people with strange names, people some of whom we will recognise, and in whom I hope that we will become interested as the Sunday mornings go by. I do hope that you will become interested in the town and in what John Bunyan says about it, the scene of so many arguments, negotiations, battles, tumults, and changes.

1. It is a very, very, very old town. Nobody knows how old it is, but it is like some of the old towns which Bunyan knew when he was a soldier, and which perhaps he helped to lay siege to and take, for he fought in the great Civil War between Charles I and the Parliamentary forces in the seventeenth century. Only it is a more wonderful town than any Bunyan ever knew.

2. It had a wall all round it like York and Chester today, showing us a little what the old English towns used to be like; and in the wall there were five gates, which could be shut at night and opened in the morning, out of which the citizens could come and go freely in times of peace. And they were very peculiar walls and gates — they could never be battered down, nor blown up, nor breached by any military force, nor could they be scaled by the nimblest climber unless the people of the town gave their consent. That was a part of the wonderful and secret skill of the One who built the town, and there have never been such gates or such a wall in any other city. Indeed, the writer says that this fair and delicate and strong town had not its equal under heaven.

3. The next thing that you might ask about would be the buildings of the town, and very little is said about them (nothing about shops, I think). But there is one building about which a good deal is said, a building quite as wonderful as the wall. Perhaps we had better read a line or two from the book:

There was reared up in the midst of the town a most famous and stately palace; for strength it might be called a castle, for pleasantness a paradise, for largeness a place so copious as to contain all the world.

Then, as our Sundays go on, I shall tell you about a few of the people who lived in the town: the Lord Mayor, the Recorder, the Military Captain, one or two of the nobility, and some other people. John Bunyan says that they were not all of one complexion or language or way of religion. They differed, he said, from each other, and some are right and some are wrong.

There are two questions I expect you to ask. **First**, who built the town? What was its 'original', as Bunyan would say? And Bunyan is quite clear about this; it was built by a great and mighty and good King called Shaddai, and it was the very pinnacle of all that he ever made, and it belonged, therefore, to him by right. That wonderful Citadel right in the middle of it was built as his place of residence; but the remarkable thing about it was that he gave it into the keeping of the men of the town and would not go and live in it unless they wished it, though he always loved to be welcomed when he stayed there.

Second, Where was, or where is, this town? There, the author is not quite so clear. You may ask, 'Where is this town?', for it does exist, and though it is very old it is very new also. John Bunyan says it is in the Continent of Universe, and is situated just between the two worlds — two great Empires. Which two worlds? The good world and the bad world; and both worlds want it, and the ambassadors from both worlds come to its gates, and soldiers and princes from both worlds encamp outside its walls and now one gets in and now another.

When it was first built, Bunyan says there was not 'a rascal, rogue, nor treacherous person within its walls; they were all true men and fast joined together',

I shall talk to you next Sunday morning about its gates; and, all the while that we are talking, please keep before the eyes of your mind a fair and beautiful town built by one person for himself. Try to follow its fortunes with interest, and if you can tell me before next Sunday, more clearly than John Bunyan has done, where it is, I would be glad to hear. Meanwhile, I will tell you that it is nearer to you than any other place or thing. And its name is:

MANSOUL

CHAPTER 2

FIVE WONDERFUL GATES

We were thinking last Sunday about the famous town of Mansoul, its walls and its builder. I have to thank those who wrote to me to tell me where and what the town was, and they were nearly all right. The best answer I got from anybody was on a post-card saying this — ‘The town of Mansoul is within us, and it is man himself.’ Now, if that answer is true — and I believe it is — the real self is not my body, nor my hands, nor my head; for these are just the servants or the masters of my real self.

The real self lives in the body, and sometimes looks out of the windows, or comes out through one of the gates, and you can see whether it is angry or good tempered, gentle or rude, beautiful or ugly. But it is possible to conceal the real self so that only God knows what it is like. Well, John Bunyan says the gateways to the real self are in the body, and they are none other than the five senses. These, he says, are the ways in and out of the famous town of Mansoul.

Here, then, is a remarkable thing according to John Bunyan, and the post-card from that bright boy who wrote to me. We are to think of ourselves as a town, each one of us built by God and for God, and each one of us put in charge of his own town. I myself believe that there are other gateways, for I sometimes differ from John Bunyan; but I am sure there are these, and I would speak to you about two or three of them this morning. Here are the three: Ear gate, Eye gate, Mouth gate, and, I think if that wonderful Bedfordshire tinker and dreamer were here this morning, he would tell me to say to you to be careful what you hear and see and speak. Because what you see, hear, and speak affects your soul all day long. Crowds of people and other things are clamouring at these three gates.

But someone asks, ‘Can we help what we hear or what we see? Perhaps we can help what we speak, but are we not obliged to hear certain things?’

1. Well, generally speaking, you can determine what you will hear and you can hear the sort of thing that you want to, and you can shut your ears to things that you do not want to hear. You can open your Ear gate to what I am saying this morning, or you can shut it. For example, if you want to hear bad stories that are not clean, or stories that go against the character of other children, stories that are foolish, if you open Ear gate to let these ‘rascals’ in, as John Bunyan would call them, the fact will soon be found out, and Mansoul will soon be overrun by these unfriendly and evil inhabitants (they say beggars have a sign which they make on the gates where they have been well received). But if you steadily bolt and bar Ear gate against these things, and turn away from those who use bad words, and say, ‘I will not have these impure things in my house’, that too will soon be known, and if you want to hear true words, noble words, if you call out for such people to come and live in your town, they will come and live there all your life and be a great comfort to you.

So keep a sharp look-out at Ear gate. Seek companions who will not flatter, and who will speak true, pure, good words. And when you are compelled to listen to evil talk, pray to God to help you shut Ear gate so that it will not enter right in, or, if it does, to give you strength to cast it out so that you may keep the town sweet and clean for the

sake of the One who built it.

2. Mind what you see! Can I decide that? Oh, mostly! I can much more easily shut my eyes than my ears. There was a gentleman living in Mansoul who had more influence there than anybody else, and his name was Willbewill. He lives in every Mansoul, and he can say to the eyes 'Open', and they open, or 'Shut', and they shut. He can say to the hand, 'Open the book, and turn over the leaves', and it obeys; then he can say 'Now close it', and it closes it. Such a powerful person is this Lord Willbewill!

Last Thursday I was preaching at Southend, and just before the afternoon service I had time to walk along to the end of that long pier. The tide was in. It was the highest that had been known for many months. The boats little and big were dancing on the waves. Several Lowestoft trawlers were tacking about near the pier, and the men in them were busy sorting out the fish on deck. A flock of seagulls followed each boat, and there was brilliant sunshine making everything beautiful. Now this gentleman within me had perfect power, for he could say to my eyes, 'Look on all that and let it go into Mansoul as a lovely picture to hang on the wall.' Or he could say, 'Turn away, and look into the window of the refreshment room, and look at oranges and buns and cakes', as he had said to some people who were there.

So you can turn away, and I pray that you will, from any sight that tempts you to think wrong thoughts or from any book that suggests wrong things. And if you are losing this power and control you can pray two prayers found in the Psalms:

Turn away my eyes from looking at worthless things. (119:37)

Open my eyes that I may see wondrous things from your law. (119:18)

Always remember that there are splendid and noble things to be seen, and you may see them. And that with what you see and hear you are admitting things into the soul which may prove to be either useless lumber, or very dangerous, or beautiful.

Now, I must stop and leave out Mouth gate for this time, only saying that what you speak influences your soul, and I urge you to offer another prayer:

'Set a guard, O Lord, over my mouth; keep watch over the door of my lips.'
(Psalm 141:3)

These are the three main gates, and what sort of a town your Mansoul will be will be decided by what you allow to pass through these gates. And if I might be allowed to anticipate a little, I would say the surest way of keeping the gates secure against 'rascals, rogues, or treacherous persons' is to put the citadel in charge of the Great King for whose residence it was built.

I will tell you what I have found, dear children, and that is that I lose control over Eye gate and Ear gate and Mouth gate; things slip in and out before one can detect them, just as a thief and pick-pocket slips into a meeting where people go to pray sometimes. And I want the forces of the Great Prince who came to Mansoul in John Bunyan's story to guard the gates and to be Lord over my Lord Willbewill, and so I would like to say this morning, and you to say with me, the chorus of a hymn which you often sing in

school:

**O come to my heart Lord Jesus,
There is room in my heart for Thee.**

CHAPTER 3

THE CITADEL

We were talking last Sunday about the gates in the wall of the famous town of Mansoul, and a little about one of the noblemen named Lord Willbewill who lived in the town and had a great deal of influence there. Doubtless you are all eager to get to the other people who live in the town, but you must not hurry. You must rather be patient and try to understand all you can about the town itself. Today, we will think about the Citadel, strong and beautiful and spacious. This is the most important building in the town. You know what Bunyan says about this most famous and stately palace: 'For strength it might be called a castle, for pleasantness a paradise, and for largeness a place so copious as to contain all the world.'

Now, I suppose in old times, castles like Ludlow, Stirling, Edinburgh, were the first buildings to be put up, constructed on a high point. On one side sometimes a rocky descent, on the other a moat over which a drawbridge passed, with a high and thick wall and gate as strong as they could be made. It was built also by some rich and strong lord or baron. Then round the castle poorer and weaker people would build their houses, and there the castle would stand overlooking all, stronger than all, a place of refuge, a place of defence.

Within the walls would be all kinds of buildings, sometimes with spacious and beautiful grounds, so that in stormy times of trouble and war the whole population could find shelter inside the walls of a castle. Whoever took the castle and held it would be master of the town, because from its walls and battlements stones could be slung or hurled, and arrows shot, and an enemy held at bay. So Bunyan says there was reared up a castle, and this place King Shaddai intended only for himself, and made a garrison of it, but committed the keeping of it to the men of the town alone.

Then in the margin of his book, to give instruction to boys and girls who want to understand its meaning, there are printed two words : **The Heart.**

But what is the heart? We read a great deal in the Bible about it. In the Psalms we read, 'With my whole heart I have sought you' (Psalm 119:10), and, 'I will praise the Lord with my whole heart' (Psalm 111:1). We also read, 'Keep your heart with all diligence' (Proverbs 4:23), and, 'My son, give me your heart' (Proverbs 23:26), while we find this strange expression about Absalom, that he 'stole the hearts of the men of Israel.' (2 Samuel 15:6) And as long as you can remember, you have been urged to give your hearts to God. We all know what it means, but it is just as well to think about it.

You know that you have a heart in your body; you can feel it beating. If anything wakes you in the night in a fright you can hear it beating! You know what it is doing, pumping out the blood to every part of your body and receiving the blood back again; and if the heart were to cease, all the life of the body would stop. The heart is the seat and throne of life, and it is marvellously protected.

But there is another heart of which this is just a picture; no one knows where that is. That part of you which loves, desires, hates, cherishes thoughts and purposes, or

rejects thoughts and purposes, is really the seat of your thinking, willing, and active life. And we believe that this part of us will live on, keep on thinking, willing, loving, desiring, choosing, long after the body has ceased to speak, walk, move, eat and drink.

There are several things to be said about it, four points perhaps — one more than preachers are supposed to have!

1. Its largeness. It is big enough to hold the whole world. Now, what a wonderful thing that seems, but it is quite true? I believe I read of a man whose heart was big enough to take the whole world in, and he was only a man. His name was Paul. I believe he just loved everybody, and longed to do good to everyone. He wrote to some people in Philippi 'I have you in my heart' (Philippians 1:7), and to Corinth he wrote, 'You are in our hearts' (2 Corinthians 7:3). Why, even you have room for a great many people; and we have room for things — mountains, rivers, moors, sea, and much more! And then Paul had room for another world besides this with all its glory, and room for all beautiful, pure, and loving thoughts. And you have room for all these things too.

2. It was made to be very beautiful — 'For pleasantness a paradise.' What a beautiful heart John must have had! Not an ugly thing in it a — Paradise where he walked and talked with Jesus. And all our hearts were made to be that.

But there is just as much room for useless things and bad things as there is for good things, just as there is as much room in a garden for weeds as for flowers, and the useless and bad things get there much more easily. There is as much room on the walls for stupid pictures and trashy pictures, and pictures that are not at all true to life, as for real and beautiful works of art; and the rubbishy things are much cheaper. When I see a life growing beautiful, gentle, true, kind, industrious, I know the heart has been storing up beautiful things, good desires, good thoughts, lovely pictures.

Boys and girls, there is much danger that the house and grounds intended to be very beautiful will turn into very untidy, unlovely places. Built for a palace, the home can become like a pig-sty.

Do you know what I read in the paper yesterday? I read about a neat room in a cottage, with pictures on the walls and ornaments on the shelves, and a bedstead with bed and blankets and sheets, and between the sheets with its head on the pillow a pig which the person in the cottage had brought up and petted. Now, there was no great harm in the creature; it was even useful in its proper place, but this was certain, that as long as it was kept there no man or woman except the eccentric person herself would go to live there. Moreover, the owner of the house and the authorities of the village said the house was not built for that kind of tenant and it must come out.

Sometimes people act just as crazily with their hearts. I wonder what you are allowing to live in your hearts? Not what gets in like a pig may run into a house, but what you are petting, feeding, keeping there, what sort of books are you reading? Not wicked books I am sure, but foolish books full of rubbish that do not put one good or noble thought into your heads, books that are easy to read, and you will not take the trouble to read a noble book — a great and beautiful life, a stirring history — it is much too dry! Well, you are furnishing your house with common nasty furniture, which is very cheap, in a place that was always intended to be a palace.

3. This place the King intended for himself alone. You have not only room for all sorts of people, you have room for the King, and he desires to come and live in it. Imagine that! Try to think what would happen if a letter came from the King that he, who has Balmoral, Windsor Castle, Buckingham Palace, and Sandringham, wanted to come and stay at your house, and actually stopped at your door and rang the bell. How small the house would seem all at once! And how all the newspapers would be full of the event, and how wonderful it would seem!

Here is something even more wonderful. Christ the King of Glory says, 'Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and dine with him, and he with me.' (Revelation 3:20) He built that wonderful house within us that he might come and stay.

4. 'The King committed the keeping of it only to the men of the town.' What a responsible thing that is! You and I decide who will live in our heart. The King built it and gave it into our keeping and we decide — I was going to say — whether we will entertain a pig or a king. It does not always seem so, I am sure. I am quite sure that sometimes there are things in our hearts which we do not want there.

The old serpent Idleness creeps in, and Carelessness and Greediness and Anger and worse things, and we do not want them there; and just as Diabolus one day crept up to the town wall and got in through Ear gate and marched up to the citadel and became lord of it, so Satan himself seems to get in, even though we have been on the lookout. Do you know why? We have not let in Jesus, and we have not given him our hearts.

If I may alter a word in two lines of the poet Tennyson:

**Our hearts are ours we know not how,
Our hearts are ours to make them Thine.**

We have not done that yet; we can do it today, and let the King teach us what to read and think and love, and rule us altogether.

CHAPTER 4

THE WICKED PRINCE AND HIS EXPEDITION

You will remember what has been said about the famous town of Mansoul, where it lies, by whom it was built, the peculiar features of its walls and gates and citadel. We are going to consider this morning how the town was taken; and here the stirring history begins.

There was one Diabolus, whom Bunyan calls a mighty giant and prince, who made a clever and successful assault upon the town. We had better follow the course of the book and consider who Diabolus was and how this assault was made. John Bunyan tells us that he was once a servant of King Shaddai, and that in the service of the King he had both a great place and great honour; then he became selfishly ambitious and resolved, if possible, to get for himself the chief place and power in all the King's dominion.

So he made up his mind what to do, and that was to kill the King's Son and seize his inheritance; and in the next place he told his plans to a number of his companions, and they formed the plot together in some secret place to destroy the Prince. The plot was as foolish as it was wicked, for nothing was hidden from the great and good King, not even the secret thoughts of his servants' hearts; so the plotters were found out and every one of them banished from the Court and from that part of the King's dominions altogether.

Now, therefore, it became the one purpose of Diabolus in spite and revenge to do all the mischief he could to the King, for the fire of hatred burnt fiercely in his heart against him. So it happened that he and his companions came upon our beautiful and stately town of Mansoul, and with what you may well call fiendish delight determined to get it into their own power and possession. They knew how Shaddai loved the town, for they were there when it was built. They knew how clean and beautiful it was, and they shouted with spiteful joy at the thought that if they could only secure the town they would at one stroke have a dwelling place for themselves and be avenged on the King who had found out and punished their treachery.

It is a terrible thing to think, boys and girls, what wicked things spite and malice and angry revenge will do. So Diabolus and his friends laid their heads together; they were extremely clever; they knew all about the town — how its walls and gates were constructed and how its citadel was given into the hands of the people themselves, and no one, not even the mightiest, could get in without their consent. And so, with the greatest possible cunning, they went to work, and it was decided that Diabolus himself should lead the enterprise. What force he took we are not told, but Bunyan tells us they had the power of making themselves invisible; and so they all marched, except the chief.

Now, you can see at once how dangerous to Mansoul these people were. It is terrible to fight against invisible foes, foes that can shoot at you and that you cannot see. That is what the British soldiers had to do over and over again in the war in South Africa — to fight against foes hidden away in river beds or behind rocks. So all the hosts of the Diabolonians were invisible except one, and he had assumed the shape of a creature

with which the Mansouliaus were so familiar that they would not be likely to be afraid of it. It is a sad story Bunyan tells: they came up to Ear gate, Diabolus blew a trumpet for negotiations, and Captain Resistance, Lord Willbewill, the Lord Mayor, and Mr. Recorder and others came down to the wall to see who was there.

Then Diabolus, knowing that it would be of no use to bluster and threaten, began to speak as gently as a lamb. He assured the chief men of the town that he was their true friend and with purely friendly intention had come. He said so much in praise of himself that if they had been wise the people would have suspected him at once, but they were foolish and for the moment were quite off their guard. Then Diabolus told them that they were really in bondage, that the laws of their town were not good, that the things which they were forbidden were really good and not evil, that if they broke the law and took the forbidden things the consequences threatened would not come to them. In fact, he hinted such false and shameful things to the men of the town against the King that I wonder they did not turn away and leave him talking to himself. But they listened, that is the sad part of it.

Even Captain Resistance listened, and because he listened, and while he leaned over the gate to listen, an arrow from one of Diabolus' invisible warriors struck him in the head and he fell down dead right over the wall at the feet of Diabolus. And what was even worse, while Diabolus' spokesman Ill-pause was speaking, from some mysterious cause, Lord Innocence fainted away and could not be brought to life again. And so it came to pass that the chief men yielded to Diabolus and Ill-pause his orator, and quite distrusting, and almost forgetting their great King who had built the town, they opened Ear gate and Eye gate; and, falling down at the feet of the giant, they gave everything, even the citadel, into his hands.

So he marched up the street and entered the castle amid the submission and even the homage of the foolish people of the town, and the gates were shut behind him and he became king in the town which Shaddai had built for himself. Now this taking of Mansoul is not the incident which gives the title to Bunyan's book. It was not a holy war. It should have been; but there was really no war at all, but a surrender. A town won by craft and guile and lying is what we find in the story.

Now, boys and girls, when did all this happen which John Bunyan puts into a parable here? When did Diabolus, Ill-pause, and the rest march up to the town of Mansoul? You will answer, 'Long, long ago, when Eve listened to the tempter in Eden and took the forbidden fruit.' That is right. But is that the only time? Has Diabolus been idle since then? Do you not think that he marched up to Ear gate and Eye gate when the Lord Jesus was in the wilderness? And when Peter told a lie three times in the High Priest's palace in Jerusalem? And when Ananias and Sapphira told the lie? And when Demas loved money so much that he parted from the Apostle Paul? I will tell you what I think: and that is, that it happened last week and as recently as yesterday, and for anything I know it may happen today.

Listen, boys and girls, it is of almost more importance than anything else. Whenever you are inclined to think that a lie does not matter very much, that cheating is of no consequence if you can do it without being found out, that a lie will keep you from losing marks and save you from a punishment, and there is no great harm in it, Diabolus is at the gate. And when you yield and tell the lie, you let him in! Whenever

you think that it does not matter about trying to do your best, that you may just as well be idle and careless, and it is much more pleasant, whenever there is a whisper in your ear that it is better to be selfish than unselfish, whenever it is suggested to you that you need not obey your parents who have done everything for you, nor try to please them, Diabolus is at the gate. Whenever you are tempted to think that the laws of God, as written in the Bible and taught to you, are very hard and you need not trouble to keep them, and whenever you are tempted to think that sin will not be punished, that you can allow malice and anger to dwell in your heart, and can do forbidden things without most serious and fatal consequences, then Diabolus is at the gate.

Two things more to remember:

1. Diabolus is always false — ‘King of the Blacks’, Bunyan calls him. A temptation seems to be your friend sometimes. It is always your enemy; so you must never yield to it, or you will suffer. Therefore,

2. Say ‘No’ to temptation immediately. Do not look for a moment at any gain or pleasure that you must do wrong to get something. Turn away from it straightway. I believe it was through Ill-pause that Mansoul was lost. Who is Ill-pause? Whatever persuades you to wait a little before saying ‘No’ to temptation. Here is an example. You have been told on a certain day that you must not go out because there is work that you ought to do, and some friend calls to see you, bringing you an invitation to an entertainment. What ought you to say? At once, ‘I cannot go.’ That is right.

But old Ill-pause is close by, and he says, ‘Ask some more about the entertainment; let your friend tell you how great it will be, and who will be there. Then wait a little longer, and think how hard it is that you cannot go, and you could have gone if you had done your work. Then pause a little longer to think that you are almost sure that if your mother were at home and knew all the circumstances she would let you go. Pause a little longer to believe that you can go and get back in time to do your work before bedtime. And with the help of Ill-pause, Diabolus wins the day, and you tell your friend you will be ready to go in ten minutes. Whereas without a moment’s hesitation you should have said ‘No’, and so begun a habit which in still greater things would have proved the greatest blessing.

Dear children, pray for grace to say ‘No’ to the most flattering temptation, and to say it at once, and so overcome both Ill-pause and Diabolus his master.

CHAPTER 5

SORROW AT THE COURT OF KING SHADDAI

We were thinking last Sunday of the shameful surrender of the famous town of Mansoul. We saw how Diabolus, who had once been a great servant of King Shaddai who had built Mansoul, and who was disgraced from his place because of plotting and wicked treachery, came against Mansoul with his invisible force, and by lies and deceit succeeded in capturing the town. What took place after this wicked and false tyrant had taken possession of the citadel which was built in the centre of the town we may learn from the story of the messenger.

This is the tale that he told to the Court, where, Bunyan says, the King, his Son, his high lords and chief captains and nobles, were all present. And we may be sure that they listened with far deeper attention than you are listening now, with strained, eager, and sorrowful attention.

1. That the noble and valiant Captain Resistance had been treacherously shot by an arrow from Tisiphone, one of the followers of Diabolus.
2. That Lord Innocence had fallen down dead.
3. That Diabolus had put out of office the Lord Mayor, Lord Understanding, and the Recorder whose name was Mr. Conscience, and had put wicked and worthless men into their offices. That he kept the former Lord Mayor a prisoner in his own house, and had built a high wall between his windows and the sun to make his house as dark as possible. That while he dare not imprison the old Recorder, and could not silence him, yet he had given him some sort of drug, and had led him into wrong ways, and finally had persuaded the townspeople that the old gentleman was mad.

And saddest of all about the inhabitants, he told how Lord Willbewill had become a perfect slave of Diabolus; that the crafty old tyrant had so flattered his vanity and promised him that he would be lord of the town under himself, and that nothing at all would be done in the town without his consent, so that this most powerful person in the town had renounced all allegiance to Shaddai and given his faith to Diabolus, and was going about every day to crying up and praising his new master in the hearing of the town.

Then the messenger told how the beautiful image of Shaddai, which was set up in the market place to remind the townspeople to whom they belonged and who cared for them, had been, by order of Diabolus, so scratched and mutilated that you could hardly make it out, and Diabolus had put a brand new one of himself in its place.

Indeed, it would take too long to tell you about all the sad things that had taken place in the unhappy town, but the last things of which the messenger spoke were about the old law books of the King which had been destroyed; that Diabolus had made several public speeches which were full of lies concerning the people; and he had told them that they might behave just as they pleased, for they would never be called to account.

And concerning Shaddai, that he was an unjust and unmerciful tyrant who would try

to get them back into his power again, and therefore Diabolus had furnished all the townspeople with arms, and urged them to resist to their last breath any attempt that should be made to retake the town.

You may be sure, boys and girls, that there was never a sadder story told in all the kingdom of Universe than the story which Bunyan says this unnamed messenger told in the Court of Shaddai while the Prince and courtiers, the high lords and captains listened. And there never was such pain and grief, and I think I may say, anger at the Court in all its existence as when this story was told. Because everyone who heard the story knew how miserable would be the fate of the unhappy town, and how it had been tricked and cheated by the evil Diabolus.

And now it is deeply interesting to read what took place. Of course, any boy or girl with a lively imagination can think of what might have taken place.

First, you can imagine what the King might have said: 'I will send the strongest army that can be raised and destroy the ungrateful and disloyal town. They will batter down its wonderful walls, and lay its buildings in the dust, and slay all its people.'

The **second** course which you can think of as being quite fair would have been to say, 'Well, as they have been so foolish and unworthy and disloyal I will now leave them alone; they have chosen their own master, let them find out how false and wicked he is. And as for me, I have many other towns where I am loved and obeyed, and I will forget unhappy Mansoul and leave it to its fate.' But the King did neither, as Bunyan tells us. He loved the town far too much. Instead of doing either this or that, on receiving the sad news he retired with his Son into the private council chamber, and there, together these two eminent Persons, with the consent of both, entered into an agreement of love to one another and to Mansoul. And this was the covenant:

(1) That the Prince, so beloved of his Father and worshipped by the Court, should take a journey into the country of Universe and bring back the town to his Father again; and,

(2) That this same Prince should, at a time convenient, wage war upon Diabolus, and fairly by strength of hand drive him out of the town and citadel and take it as his habitation.

Bunyan tells us, furthermore, of the courtiers' joy and wonder — more than ever before — for they loved and adored great King Shaddai and Prince Emmanuel.

And this, dear children, the expedition or expeditions to recover Mansoul, first by the great Captains and then by Prince Emmanuel himself, is the story which John Bunyan has called the Holy War, and which we are to consider for most of the Sunday mornings this winter unless you grow tired of it, and unless the Great King should bid me stop speaking on this subject.

But there are lessons for today — great lessons. We understand a great deal about Bunyan's parable. Many of us can interpret it; we know who the Great Prince was; we know when he came. The Carol singers have been shouting the story at our doors for weeks past. Our hymns are full of the story. We know how Emmanuel fought with

Diabolus in the wilderness, and in the mysterious sorrow of the garden, and the darkness of the Cross and in the hearts of some of his disciples. We know all that: that is the great and wonderful lesson of Christmas.

But there is another that I want to leave with you this morning. Suppose this sad, sad story should be told by some angel messenger today. 'Mansoul is taken again. Someone quite young has listened to the tempter, opened the gate to bad passions and evil thoughts. Untruth, selfishness, ill-will, uncleanness have entered in. There is no prayer today. The still small voice has been silenced.

There is plain defiance or carelessness or a love of something wrong. Depend on it, Bunyan's story is quite true. There is pain and sorrow in heaven in such a case. It sounds very strange, but I believe it to be true. But there is love in heaven too, greater than anyone can tell you, which, if you could believe it, would melt your defiance. And you still belong to the King; that heart through which all sorts of foolish thoughts and passions have been rushing until it is more like a pig-sty than a palace, is still his.

And what is the message of Christmas to you? 'Eat and drink and get all the presents you can, and do not care about having forgotten God and left off trying to please him?'

No! Oh, no! But this: 'Emmanuel has come to deliver you from this careless mood, from the power of these unworthy passions, to cleanse the palace and live in it.' He knocks at Ear gate, and I think at Eye gate too. Do not be like the foolish people in Bunyan's story who set old Mr. Prejudice and sixty deaf men to keep the gate, but listen, let him in. In his hands he carries both pardon and power.

Give your hearts' love and obedience to him, and your Christmas will be the happiest you have ever known.

CHAPTER 6

THE FIRST BATTLE

You will remember that the last item of news which the messenger from Mansoul related in the Court of Shaddai was that Diabolus, having gained possession of the town, had armed the citizens to resist any attempt which might be made to re-take it; and when he heard, as he did, that Shaddai intended to recapture it, he provided them with additional armour and weapons. And Bunyan tells us in a most interesting way about the helmet and the breast-plate with which the inhabitants of the town were supplied; but I must pass over that and much more to tell you what I know you are longing to hear about, that is, the first battle. Everyone is interested in battles, and no battles were ever fought which were so important as the battle which took place at the town of Mansoul.

First of all, then, I must tell you that the great King sent four famous Captains, each with 10,000 men under his command, to recapture the town. Their names were Boanerges, Conviction, Judgement, and Execution; and stern strong men they all were. It was a long way, says Bunyan, from the Court of the King to the town. It was a long and weary march for the four valiant leaders and 40,000 men. But you may be sure that they made a grand sight, and at all the places through which they passed, and when they encamped, the children would turn out to watch and admire their shining armour. Perhaps some would be frightened, but Bunyan says that they harmed no one through all the march, and took nothing from the people; for the King had supplied them with all they needed for the journey. When they arrived at the town, and encamped before Ear gate, all the people of the town turned out to look over the walls. But Diabolus was extremely angry with them for looking, and with stern and angry words ordered them away from the walls into the centre of the town.

Then Bunyan tells us how the trumpeter of Boanerges first came up to Ear gate, there to summon the town to give audience to his message, but all was perfectly silent, and there was no response; for so had Diabolus commanded. Indeed, it was not until the third summons that there was any response at all to the message. Then, it was only a warning and threat that unless there was answer they would attack the town in force that forced a reply.

When the reply came, who should bring it but Lord Willbewill, whom Diabolus had made the governor of the town and keeper of the gates, and who also had become his slave. With big and blustering words, says Bunyan, he wanted to know who was making so hideous a noise. At the next summons to know what the answer would be, Willbewill was joined by the new Lord Mayor, Lord Incredulity, and even Diabolus himself who came to hear and to answer, but who kept back all the people of the town from hearing the message.

Then the four Captains each delivered his message, which was that the town had rebelled against the King, and was therefore guilty and deserved the severest punishment. If it would repent and submit itself to him again, no one would be hurt, and all would be forgiven; but if not, if it should still allow itself to be deceived by the false flattery of the crafty giant, then there would be war, which would not only cause the greatest suffering, but would end in the destruction of the town. And they ended

their speeches with an offer of mercy and pardon, and a threat of punishment, with an offer that if old Ill-pause, who played such a prominent part in the capture of the town, were thrown over the wall to them, they would give the townspeople time to consider their reply.

I cannot help wishing that they had done this, for, next to Diabolus, there was no greater enemy to the town than this same man whom Bunyan calls an old Traitor. But Diabolus refused, and instead he put up the Lord Mayor to answer, whose speech was just a bold and rude defiance. 'We do not know where you come from, nor who you are. We care nothing whatever for your threats. You are, for anything we know, a set of rebels who have run away from your Master and are trying to flatter or frighten some silly town to hand itself over to you. We are not that town; we do not dread your threats; we will keep our gates shut against you, and, moreover, you had better arise with bag and baggage and be gone, or we will let fly from the walls at you, for we have plenty of means to defend ourselves.' So they spoke, and Lord Willbewill and Mr. Recorder seconded the speech.

Then the foolish townspeople, who had been allowed to hear this, were so delighted at what they thought to be the courage of these men that they gave a great shout, and set the bells ringing, and danced on the walls with delight. Well now, there was nothing for it but for the brave Captains to make good their word. So the trumpet was sounded in the camp for battle, and it was answered with a shout of defiance from the town; and thus the battle began. From the camp, with huge slings, stones were hurled into the town, and battering rams thundered at Ear gate, and from the town the charge was equally fierce. Two guns were planted in the tower above Ear gate, called 'Heady' and 'High Mind', and very mischievous pieces they were. And what with these and other guns, and slings, and the firm resistance of old Mr. Prejudice and his sixty deaf men at Ear gate, the brave Captains found it impossible to effect an entrance into the town, but were compelled to retire into their winter quarters, leaving the town still in the hands of Diabolus.

It is true that some results followed the fighting. The two guns were dismounted and laid in the dirt. The roof of the Lord Mayor's house was battered in and he himself had a narrow escape. Lord Willbewill was actually struck with a ball, while, with one shot from a gun, six aldermen were killed, among whom were Mr. Cheating and Mr. Drunkenness, so that the battle was not all in vain. But it failed in its purpose, which was to drive Diabolus out of the citadel and win it for the King. So the first battle of the Holy War was what you might call a draw. It was won by neither side; only the Captains had the advantage. They did not remove from the town, but camped still near to the walls; and all through the winter they harassed the town a good deal. Next Sunday, we will hear of a serious riot within the town itself.

You see, boys and girls, that today our story takes a new turn. For the last two Sundays, we have been thinking of Mansoul yielding, giving way, listening to, and letting in Diabolus, the prince of evil. To-day, we think of Mansoul resisting. That is a step further, and it is a step that always follows, sometimes so closely that the two seem like one and the same step. You see, the people of Mansoul not only refused to open the gates to the Captains of Shaddai, they actually, under the influence of Diabolus, shot at and tried to drive them away. And where one thing takes place, the other is almost certain to follow. You listen to evil, and let it in, in the form of selfishness,

pride, bad passion, idleness; then comes the message, 'you have done wrong.' It comes from the Bible, it comes from a sermon, it comes in the silence of the night, it comes in some sharp word from parents or teachers. 'You have done wrong; acknowledge it, say you are sorry, and there is forgiveness and a new beginning.' If not, if you allow these things to rule, there will be terrible trouble and suffering.

What will happen? Unbelief answers, and pride answers. The will which Diabolus has enslaved answers, 'No; do not say you are sorry, do not say you have been wrong, brave it out, and no harm can possibly come.'

Dear children, I think one of the voices we least like to listen to after we have been listening to temptation is the voice that says, 'You have been very foolish and very wrong.' As soon as that begins, though it may be quite true, we block up Ear gate, Willbewill gets very angry, Mr. Puff-up brings out his guns, and we fight against it and almost hate the person who tells us our faults. We regard him as our enemy, just as the foolish people of Mansoul regarded the brave and good Captains of Shaddai.

So I think it quite possible that some of us who are here this morning have taken part in this battle and have resisted good. If we have, be sure that there is one at hand who says, 'Keep it up, brave it out'; and that voice is the voice of our enemy wherever it comes from, and we must not listen to it. The last Sunday of the old year is, of all seasons, the season for trying to be honest with ourselves, to find out quite frankly what is wrong in our lives, and to acknowledge it and give ourselves up to the great King who speaks to us, for he is merciful, even to those who have resisted him. There is nothing short of that giving up that will please him.

For though the worst things may be killed in us, though unbelief may be wounded, and Willbewill may have a narrow escape, still Satan continues to rule in our hearts.

CHAPTER 7

THE RIOT IN MANSOUL

You will remember that last Sunday we were thinking about the first battle of Mansoul between the King's Captains and the town, and we saw that although the two guns 'Heady' and 'High Mind' were dismounted, and some of the worst people in the town were killed, yet the gates were not opened to the soldiers of the King.

Diabolus was still. And the whole lesson of that, of course, is that some of our worst sins may be left off, and we may improve a good deal, and yet God is not ruling in our hearts. We may still keep the gates shut against Jesus, and Diabolus, the prince of evil, may rule over us in pride and self-will. However, Bunyan tells us that the people of Mansoul had a very uncomfortable winter. The soldiers every now and then slung great stones over the walls. Then at nightfall, sometimes 10,000 men would be running round the walls blowing the trumpet and shouting their war cry, so that altogether the townspeople had as rough a time of it as the poor people of Kimberley and Ladysmith, South Africa, during the long siege, when the enemy kept dropping shells into the town, and keeping them in a state of suspense and alarm.

For another thing, the old Recorder of the town, old Mr. Conscience, whom Diabolus had not been able to imprison, began to make speeches; and they were so terrible as to make folk tremble with fear. Three times, too, the Captains sent messages urging the town to surrender. So that with the noise of the soldiers, the alarming speeches of Mr. Conscience, and the last warning message of the Captains, that that they would lay their bones at the gates but they would force Mansoul to surrender, the people of Mansoul felt that they really ought to do something.

So a town Council was called, and it was decided that Lord Willbewill should go to the gate and try to make some sort of terms with the Captains. So, with the Lord Mayor, he went and blew the trumpet, and the four Captains, thinking that now the town had come to its right mind, marched to the gate to hear. But when the Captains heard the ridiculous proposals of these two people, which were that King Shaddai should come into the town on condition that nobody who was in office now should be turned out, and no Diabolonians in the town should be disturbed, and that really no change should take place at all, they were astonished; and if it had not been so sad for the town of Mansoul, I think they would have laughed outright at their foolish absurdity.

As it was, they told the people that no such terms could be thought of for a moment, but that they must give themselves into the hands of their true King unconditionally and trust to his justice and good will. Then came the thing that caused the riot. Mr. Unbelief, the new Lord Mayor, made another 'big and blustering speech', in which he threw doubt on the mercy and goodwill of Shaddai, and declared that he for his part would never yield unconditionally to one who was perhaps hard and cruel, and not to be trusted. He also hoped that the townspeople would be of the same mind as himself.

It was just such a speech as delighted Diabolus, and he promised the Mayor on the spot that if they came off best in this dispute he would give him the highest place of honour in his power and make him ruler of the world. But the speech that pleased the cunning prince displeased the people of the town, and made them intensely angry.

For while the Mayor was saying over his speech again to Diabolus, and the two were rejoicing over it, the former Lord Mayor and the former Recorder had got into the market place and had got together a number of the people and were telling them how reasonable the demands of the Captains were, and how shamefully Lord Unbelief had treated them, and they talked so eloquently that the people began to run to and fro and cry, 'Oh that this wretched state of things were past and we were under the government of Shaddai!'

So when the Mayor came out full of the flattery of Diabolus and began to make one of his big and blustering speeches to them, they fell on him so angrily that he had to run in a very undignified way to his house. Even then, Bunyan tells us, they assaulted his house so fiercely that they would have pulled it down about his ears, only it was too strong.

Then there began a quarrel, first of words, between the man who shouted from the window, and the former Mayor, and Recorder who answered them from the street. Then the people in the street began to take sides and join in the shouting. Of course a great crowd gathered, and they soon passed from words to blows, and there was something like a free fight in the market place. You will be interested to hear that in the disturbance Mr. Conscience was knocked down twice by Mr. Be-numbing, that Lord Understanding was very nearly shot; that on the other side one man was killed. A man named Captain Anything, who was taken prisoner in the late war, had his leg broken, and old Mr. Prejudice was so rolled about in the mud that he cut a very sorry figure indeed.

The curious thing about the riot was that Lord Willbewill took no part in it at all. He simply looked on, though he was observed to smile as if he enjoyed it when Mr. Prejudice was rolled about in the mud. But nothing was gained by the riot; it rarely happens that anything is. Indeed, it was a loss to the good side rather than a gain, for it ended in Mr. Conscience and Lord Understanding being shut up in prison so that the town seemed to be the worse and not the better for the riot, and the Captains, after a very anxious council, drew up a petition to the King, expressing their regret at their ill-success, and begging for more forces to be sent.

Now I think we all know the meaning of this part of the story.

Suppose some of you — I must beg your pardon for suggesting it, but it is the easiest way of illustrating what I mean — had done wrong, yielded to temptation as Bunyan says Mansoul had, and had been taken to task for it very severely. And suppose — forgive me again — that instead of sorrowfully confessing the wrong, you defended it and said you did not care, and answered rudely - 'saucily', as Bunyan says. Well, in that case, when you were left alone and began to think, you would hear two voices speaking within you: one would say, 'Well done', or 'Bravo', as Diabolus said to Unbelief. The other would say, 'You were wrong; you have got further wrong than ever now, and you can never have any peace until you confess the wrong. You have not only pained and insulted the person who spoke to you, you have pained the dear Lord Jesus.' Then the other voice would say, 'Oh, never mind, brave it out now, it is not so very wrong.' So there would come a perfect war of feelings, and the will would stand by taking neither one side nor the other.

What John Bunyan calls a riot often takes place in the soul of man or woman, boy or girl; and the sad thought is that such a riot may end in the silencing of conscience and the victory of the bad. And when it does, the state of the soul is worse after the riot than it was before.

And I think, dear children, that Bunyan is trying to show, first of all, that you may come very near to letting Emmanuel into your hearts, may be more than half sorry for wrong behaviour and wrong living, and still not let him in. And secondly, that the understanding and the conscience and the will and all the powers of the soul put together are not strong enough to kill unbelief and turn Satan out of the heart.

It is only Prince Emmanuel himself that can do that; and the shortest and surest way to victory and peace is to welcome him fully into our hearts that he may master and turn out all evil things. How he came to Mansoul in Bunyan's story we shall hear next week. But we need not wait for that to welcome him. He may become our Saviour and Lord on this New Year Sunday, and the Holy War for us, henceforth, may be a fighting on his side.

CHAPTER 8

THE COMING OF EMMANUEL

I spoke to the children last week of the petition sent by the four Captains to the Court of King Shaddai, whose names you remember, and who were encamped outside Mansoul. Which petition showed in writing that the Captains, to their great regret and sorrow, had been unable to subdue the town, and further begged that additional forces might be sent. This petition came into the hands of the King's Son, who, when he had read it, made some alterations and improvements, then added his own name to it, and sent it in to his Father.

To all who are interested in the history of Mansoul, it is cheering to read that the King was well-pleased with the petition, and especially with its endorsement by his Son, and it was decided not only willingly, but with great gladness and joy, that the Prince himself should lead the expedition, and go with his Captains to recover the town. So we read about the setting out of the expedition, how first with great speed someone ran to the camp to tell the Captains, who sent up such a shout of joy as to make the walls of Mansoul shake and Diabolus tremble. How the Prince himself in armour of pure gold rode in his chariot at the head of his forces. How five Captains, each with 10,000 soldiers, with colours flying, and clad in proved armour, followed. Captain Credence came first, then Captain Good Hope, then Captain Charity, then Captain Innocent, and last of all, Captain Patience bringing up the rear. They were a less stern-looking set of men, though not less brave, than the first four of whose journey we heard a few Sundays ago.

You must imagine it all, and think of the excitement caused as this impressive procession carrying fifty-four battering-rams and twelve slings, all of pure gold, swept along the roads on the way from the King's Court to the town of Mansoul. And you can imagine how the four Captains, who had done their best but could not succeed, welcomed them. And now there were so many of them that they quite surrounded the town, so that wherever the Mansouliaus looked, north, south, east, or west, there were soldiers of the King.

And now you will begin to ask, 'How did Prince Emmanuel proceed to win Mansoul?' First, he ordered a number of high mounds to be cast up. Two in particular were called Mount Gracious and Mount Justice, on which the slings and the rams could be placed. The first procedure after that was to hang out a white flag on Mount Gracious with a device of three doves, to signify to the people that he desired to be merciful; and there it hung for two days. Then upon Mount Justice a red flag, the colours of Captain Judgement, fluttered in the wind for several days. But to neither did the people make any response, and of neither did they take the slightest notice. Moreover, a black flag which Emmanuel caused to be displayed made no more impression. Then Emmanuel sent a messenger to explain the meaning of the flags and to demand an answer, to whom they replied that they would consult their prince as to what should be done.

There follows then in the story an interview between Emmanuel and Diabolus in which Diabolus entreated the Prince to go away, claiming all the time that Mansoul belonged to him; and Emmanuel declared that it was made by his Father and given to him, though Diabolus had gained wrongful admittance by deceit and lying, and had

corrupted the minds of the citizens, inflamed their passions, and that the town was not his at all. Moreover, he told the wicked prince that when Mansoul had listened to his lies, he, Emmanuel, had made himself a surety for Mansoul that he would make amends for its foolishness and sin, and he had come now in his Father's name to win it back.

Then the wonderful Prince advanced towards the town of Mansoul, but the gates had been so closely barricaded that the people heard nothing of his gracious declaration that he had come in goodwill and not in vengeance, not to destroy the town, but to save it out of the hand of a wicked tyrant. Nor did they hear when he ended by calling the town 'My Mansoul', for old Mr. Prejudice had quite got over his tumbling about in the mud; and he and his deaf men still kept the gate called Ear gate. It is true that Diabolus sent a messenger to the camp of Emmanuel to try to come to terms with the Prince (of whom I hope to tell you next Sunday), but nothing came of it except defiance, which was sent by old Ill-pause. And just as in the case of the Captains before, there was nothing left for Emmanuel to do but to make war on the town.

And so the second battle began, and several pages of Bunyan's book are taken up with an account of it. At Eye gate and Ear gate, the forces of the King acted so bravely that although these gates were not broken up, they were so shaken that Diabolus trembled. And although, as before, the soldiers did not gain admittance to the town, they made far greater advance.

To begin with, several officers serving in the army of Diabolus were killed outright. Captain Boasting, who thought no one could ever shake the posts of Ear gate, and next, Captain Secure, while Mr. Prejudice and Mr. Anything ran away. And most interesting of all, old Ill-pause received such a bad wound in his head that he was never able to do much mischief again in Mansoul, and shortly afterwards died, while our old friend, Lord Willbewill, who had been so daring when the Captains came, lost all his courage, and what is more, was wounded in the leg so that he limped for some days and was never of any more use to Diabolus.

Now, boys and girls, what do we have in our picture of Mansoul for today? A soul nearly won for God; a soul which has within itself listened to sin and admitted it, then has heard the blame of God's justice, and resisted, and the claims of his law and has resisted. But, at the same time, it has put away some of its worst faults and has greatly improved. Then has come the appeal of Christ in mercy and love, and in warning. As a result, self-confidence is shaken, and boastfulness goes, and prejudice flees away, and the will ceases to rest. But still sin holds sway in the heart, and Satan will not yield if he can help it.

So it may be today with some of us. We do not have wicked ways with us like cheating and lying. But we do not have Credence, and Good Hope, and Charity and Patience; and, most of all, we do not have Emmanuel. We have never yielded up the Citadel. Self still reigns there, or Satan reigns there, and some of us distrust the Lord Jesus. And the whole lesson of this part of the story is that his purposes to us are merciful. Even when he makes war against us, it is against our sins, from which he wishes to deliver us, and he desires to rule over us that he may fill us with his peace.

CHAPTER 9

MR. LOATH-TO-STOOP

I am going to talk today, not about a battle, but about an old gentleman who came out of Mansoul to the camp of Emmanuel to try and make terms with the great Prince. 'He was a stiff man in his way and a great doer for Diabolus', says Bunyan, and when he came to the royal tent he began to make known the proposals of his master, and they were graded proposals.

The **first** was that he should divide the town with Emmanuel. This was refused.

The **second**, Emmanuel should be called Lord of the town if Diabolus might possess a part of it. This was also refused.

The **third**, that Diabolus should have a place to live in privately inside the town. Refused also.

The **fourth**, that he should be able to stay there like a travelling man when he passed that way. That could not be.

The **fifth**, his friends and family should have leave to trade and live in the town. No.

The **sixth**, that at least some token of his love should be left behind. Certainly not.

The **seventh**, if anybody required help he might be sent for, or at least the person should be allowed to go out to Diabolus. That too was denied.

One after another he made his proposals, and departed when he found them all denied one by one. And his name, which I hope you will remember, was Mr. Loath-to-Stoop, or the man who would not give in.

Now, Bunyan says, he was an old man; it is very strange that all Diabolonians are old, like Mr. Prejudice and Mr. Ill pause. I imagine Mr. Loath-to-Stoop a rather fine-looking man with a stately bearing, and extremely well dressed. And he is living yet, and he appears on all sorts of occasions. He tried to get into the mind and heart of Jesus Christ our Lord but he failed. However, he did get into the disciples many times, and once in particular. They had had a very dusty walk and were about to sit down to their meal, and one of them ought to have done the servant's work for the rest, and lo, old Mr. Loath-to-Stoop appeared, and not one of them would do it. And our Lord gave him a great blow that day when he rose from the table, laid aside his coat, and took a towel and girded himself and washed the feet of his disciples.

Ah, but this old gentleman is in many a home today, suggesting that you should not do disagreeable things and should not apologise for wrong-doing. And when children grow older, and go out to learn a business and to earn their living, there is some menial thing to be done, and old Mr. Loath-to-Stoop says, 'Don't you do I; it is for lesser people than you to do.' Sometimes, too, when people grow older, and old Mr. Loath-to-Stoop has taken up his residence in them, he will say, 'You must never be anything but well-dressed; never go to live in a smaller house than that of your friends.'

Never say you cannot afford this or that. You may stoop to take money from those you ought to be helping; to write begging letters; to go into debt; to cheat and defraud; but you must not stoop to admit that you are poor, or to do work that is beneath you. Though Jesus stooped to be a carpenter, and the expert apostle Paul worked with his hands at making tents. So, dear boys and girls, I hope you will beware of, and fight against, old Mr. Loath-to-Stoop even in matters of work, and believe that it is better to be an honest shoe-cleaner earning his own living than the most brilliant person on earth who is living off other people.

So, dear boys and girls, I hope you will beware of, and fight against old Mr. Loath-to-Stoop even in matters of work

But it is chiefly in another department that this gentleman moves. He says two things to people. The **first** is, 'Never say you have been in the wrong if you can help it.' When anybody finds fault with you, and you know the fault is there, do not admit it. Do not say you are sorry, but brave it out. When you have made a mistake, do not admit it; keep it a secret. When something wrong has been done (and you know more about it than anybody else, and the question is asked in school or home, 'Who did that?'), and the proper and brave thing of which Christ would approve would be to say, 'I did it', do not speak up; keep quiet, never mind who gets the blame.

Secondly, do not give up your own way if you can help it at any time. Now, the next time this occurs to you, remember who says it, that is, old Mr. Loath-to-Stoop, and remember where he comes from — from Diabolus.

Most of all, remember him of whom it is written, 'He made himself of no reputation, taking the form of a servant' (Philippians 2:7), and who says to us all. 'Learn from me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart'. (Matthew 11:29)

CHAPTER 10

A STRANGE PROPOSAL AND THE LAST BATTLE

I told you a fortnight ago about Emmanuel's first battle, and last week we were thinking about old Mr. Loath-to-Stoop.

I have to tell you today about a strange proposal, and what came of it.

This proposal was made by Diabolus to Emmanuel. After the first battle, Emmanuel once more hung out the white flag, and Diabolus, knowing that it was not for him, but for Mansoul, determined to do what he could for himself. So one evening, a good while after the sun had gone down and it was dark, he went down to the gate and sounded the trumpet for negotiations. Emmanuel himself went to the gate, and there the proposal was put.

It was the most cunning of all the proposals, as you will say when you hear it. It was that he, Diabolus, was quite willing to become the servant of Emmanuel if the Prince's forces might be drawn off from the town. Then he gave his most solemn pledge to do his best; **first**, to persuade Mansoul to acknowledge Emmanuel; **second**, to turn them away from all bad deeds, and urge them to keep all the laws which before they had broken; **third**, he would pay a number of Ministers of the churches of Mansoul who, under him should teach people how to live. **Fourth**, he promised to pay a tribute every year. In fact, it all sounded so fair and smooth that I am afraid if poor Mansoul had heard it they would have jumped at it, and begged Emmanuel to agree so that they might have peace, and no more war and trouble.

But you can see, can you not, how unfair the proposals were. **First**, Mansoul belonged to Emmanuel, and Diabolus had no right to be there at all. **Second**, he had come to negotiate. Emmanuel himself went to the gate, and there the proposal was made.

But you can see, can you not, how unfair the proposals were. First, Mansoul belonged to Emmanuel, and Diabolus had no right there at all. Second, he had got into the town by lying. Third, he was a mortal enemy of Shaddai, and both before and after entering into the town, had done all he could to turn the heart of Mansoul away from Shaddai, and to make the people hate him. And fourth, on these last two grounds he was not to be trusted.

But now how clever and crafty it all is, boys and girls, and what a cunning enemy we have to deal with! And how hard it is to turn this enemy out of our hearts, and how watchful we ought to be! You see what it means, and how wise and true a teacher John Bunyan is. When you are invited to do wicked things, to cheat and behave in a sly way, to use rude or evil talk, you know perfectly well where the temptation comes from. And probably, you are far too honourable and pure to listen to it. You believe that cheating is found out in time, and that any sort of wickedness is disgraceful and hurtful to the one who allows himself to indulge in it.

But see how subtle, how clever the temptation is! You may go to Sunday School and the services of the Church regularly, and you may read your Bible. Only let Diabolus explain it to you. You may be a member of the Church; you may even be a preacher;

you may do just anything you like, but you must not on any account let Emmanuel into the Palace and set up his throne there. 'That would be very inconvenient', said Diabolus. 'He is such a strict and hard King, and he will not let you do as you like, and he will give you a great deal of trouble.'

Now, I am afraid a good many people are listening to Diabolus. If Mr. Cheating and Lying, Mr. Drunkenness and Boating are dead, and they are nicely behaved and respectable, and are trying to do the best they can, they think anything else does not matter. All this talk about giving up the will and the life to Christ is rather out of the way. It is rather hypocritical.

Now, dear children, this is the most important point of all, and is always to be remembered. The town of Mansoul belongs by right to Emmanuel, and the thing that he asks of us, the thing that he came from heaven that we might be willing to do, is to trust him with the keeping of our lives. And the right thing is the happy thing. The day when you trust Jesus and try to please him, and do all for his sake, is the truly happy day.

So we are not surprised to hear that Emmanuel scornfully refused the proposal, and that the order was given again to prepare for the battle. The war cry was given out, 'Mansoul is won'. The Captains marshalled their forces. Orders were given that all the soldiers were to be favourable and merciful to the inhabitants of Mansoul, and to be men of war against Diabolus. So the trumpets sounded, and the charge was made, and the Prince's men so bravely stood to their arms, that in spite of the fierce resistance of Diabolus and his men, the gate called Ear gate was broken open. Its bolts and bars were shattered into a thousand pieces.

The Prince's Captains and soldiers then poured into the town, and there was such a mighty shout of triumph that the town shook again, and Diabolus, as fast as possible, retreated into the Castle. As for the Prince, he set up his throne in the gate that it might not be shut again, and that it might also be guarded well.

What we must be willing to do is to trust him with the keeping of our lives the day you trust Jesus, and try to please him, and do all for his sake, is a truly happy day.

Emmanuel's victory is not yet complete. We will hear next Sunday of his triumph over Diabolus, and after that of the petition of the town to him sent by Mr. Wet-Eyes and Mr. Desires-Awake. Then of his gracious pardon and of the feast that he made for all the people of Mansoul, and how the town which had been so unhappy nearly went mad with joy. But at present I wish, in closing, that without all this sad battle of which Bunyan tells us, you would of your own free will, without any threatening, open Ear gate to listen to the call of Jesus and trust him with the governing of your life.

CHAPTER 11

THE DEFEAT OF DIABOLUS

The subject of our talk today is The Defeat of Diabolus. You remember that I spoke last week of the victory of Emmanuel over the forces of the wicked prince who had deceived Mansoul, and how Diabolus himself, when the gate of the town was broken down, and the soldiers poured in, fled to the castle and made himself as secure as he could.

Upon the castle, therefore, the Captains of Emmanuel made the battering rams play with all their might that they might beat them down and force Diabolus to surrender. And after some considerable time, labour, and trouble, the gate was broken open and shattered into splinters, and at once the news was carried to Emmanuel as he rested in the gate. Once more, therefore, as when Ear gate was broken, the trumpets pealed and joy ran through the Prince's camp because the war was near an end and Mansoul nearly set free.

And now the whole of the population came out to see the great sight. They stood in their doors, they looked through the windows, and they lined the streets, as the Prince, clad in armour of gold, his standard carried before him, the very flower of his army marching behind, passed from Ear gate through the principal street of the town and up to the castle gate. There was not a single cheer heard from one part of the town to the other; the Prince looked neither to the right nor to the left, and all the townspeople feared as much as they admired.

It is safe to say that every heart went out to him as with stately step he marched through the town, but everybody felt ashamed. They knew that they had forgotten and wronged him by listening to Diabolus and yielding so foolishly to him, nor could anyone tell, though they scanned the Prince's face most closely, whether they were going to be punished or forgiven. So nothing was heard but the tramp of armed feet and the clashing of the armour as the Prince and his soldiers marched up to the gate of the castle.

Then Bunyan tells us that amid the silence of the onlookers Emmanuel commanded Diabolus to appear and surrender. And after much delay, and with great reluctance, he appeared cringing, shrinking, crestfallen, and begging to be allowed to depart out of Mansoul in peace. Then without a word he was taken to the market place, stripped of his armour, bound in chains to Emmanuel's chariot wheels, and, to show to Mansoul the complete triumph of Emmanuel over his false and wicked enemy, he was led right through the town.

Then, when the triumphal procession through the town was ended, Emmanuel drove out through the gate to his camp where he turned Diabolus up in the midst of his contempt and shame and gave him charge never to possess Mansoul again. 'You cannot think', says Bunyan, 'unless you had been there, as I was, what a ringing shout went through the Prince's camp when the tyrant who was altogether wicked was defeated and cast out.'

My dear children, that shout, thank God, has been ringing out constantly for hundreds

of years. Ever since the day when Jesus said to the foul spirit which tormented and ruled the child whom his father had brought to the disciples, 'Come out of him and enter no more into him', this wonderful thing of which Bunyan tells us in his picture story has been repeated over and over. I am speaking of the great mystery which the wisest men who have ever lived cannot fully explain and which our Lord himself has not seen fit to explain to us. There is many a Mansoul into which Emmanuel cannot come, for the people are against him as well as Diabolus. And there are many people who think that they can manage Diabolus themselves without the help of Emmanuel, and they will not open the gate to let Emmanuel in until they have got rid of Diabolus and all his train by themselves.

But amid much mystery, boys and girls, these lessons stand out quite clearly. Jesus, Emmanuel, is the enemy of evil, and whenever we are cherishing it in thought and desire, we are cherishing the enemy of the holy Saviour. Think of that! There is not one of you who would like to grieve him if you thought of it. There is not one of you, if you saw a beautiful picture belonging to one who loved you, being spoiled and smeared with dirt, would not do something to try to stop the destruction.

Now, your souls belong to Jesus: they may become more beautiful than the fairest picture. Whenever you let evil in you are doing your utmost to spoil and destroy your souls. Angry thoughts, selfish passions, idle and envious thoughts all go to destroy them. And this lesson most of all should be learned — that the spirit of evil, of wicked mischief, of malice and uncleanness can be cast out from the soul by the surrender of that soul into the hands of Jesus Christ, and by his power received through prayer.

CHAPTER 12

DESIRES-AWAKE AND WET-EYES

We will think this morning of two men who lived in the town of Mansoul, and who, during the whole of the time in which Diabolus reigned there, were overlooked and forgotten, but who, after Emmanuel had conquered Diabolus and ejected him from the castle and the town, played a very important part in its history. They were not great men like Mr. Loath-to-Stoop, who, I suspect, lived in a great house. They were men who lived in the poorest part of the town, in two mean cottages, and who, I am afraid, were not always cheerful company. Their names were Mr. Desires-Awake-Awake and Mr. Wet-Eyes. Now, as I just said, they may not always have been very cheerful company; and yet there are times in the lives of most of us when their company and their good offices would be the greatest comfort, as they proved to be of the greatest service to Mansoul in the day of her trouble. For Mansoul had offended her great and noble Prince, and had made friends with his enemy; and though the enemy had been banished, the Prince held aloof, and still remained in his pavilion outside the gate, while Mansoul, in doubt and shame and sorrow, sat in suspense.

They had sent a petition to the Prince begging his forgiveness, by the hands of Mr. Would-live, but there had been no answer. Then they had thought of Mr. Desires-Awake — and he had gone — but no answer had really come to his petition. They, therefore, after waiting for many days, begged him to proceed once more to the pavilion of the Prince with a more penitent petition which they had drawn up. And Mr. Desires-Awake agreed to carry out their request on the condition that his poor neighbour, Mr. Wet-Eyes, might go too.

So we are introduced to these two poor men who lived in mean cottages, and who were entrusted by the townspeople with such important business. And those of you who have read the book know that Mr. Desires-Awake went first, with a rope on his head, just as a guilty man would sometimes go to a judge in the old days to confess a crime and to show that he deserved to be hanged, and as I think some men of Calais went once to one of the English kings. And Mr. Wet-Eyes followed wringing his hands.

And so representing the guilt and sorrow of Mansoul, they came to the pavilion of Prince Emmanuel to present him with the most humble petition of the people of Mansoul. It is very interesting to notice what Mr. Desires-Awake says to the Prince when he introduces his friend, Mr. Wet-Eyes: 'There are many of that name that are nothing.' And then Mr. Wet-Eyes, with his face to the ground, said of himself, 'What I am I do not know, nor whether my name is made-up or real.' These are words that we should think about in relation to these two strange men and in relation to ourselves.

There are many children who might be called 'Desires-Awake' who are not at all like this poor man who lived in the mean cottage in Mansoul. Their desires are very much awake from the first thing in the morning to the last thing at night. They are simply a bundle of desires, and are always longing for something they have not got. But they are not of the same family of the man who did such noble service for Mansoul. What did he desire? Forgiveness, and to be at peace with Emmanuel; forgiveness and the presence of Emmanuel.

That is the desire that ought to be in all of us every day, and that ought to be wide

awake when we go to sleep at night and when we wake up from our sleep every morning. I do not know what happened to Mr. Desires-Awake when Emmanuel came to reign in Mansoul; I hope that the people took him out of his old tumble-down shack and built him a beautiful house near the palace where he might every moment see the Prince. 'For', said he, when he came back from presenting his first petition, 'the Prince to whom you sent me is such a great one for beauty and glory that whoever sees him must love him.' But whether they built him a new house or not, I am sure that no one was happier in the whole town on the day when the Prince came to his own than Mr. Desires-Awake, for he could say with David, **'One thing I have desired of the Lord, that will I seek: that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the Lord'**. (Psalm 27:40)

The lesson Mr. Desires-Awake teaches boys and girls is, 'Desire the right thing.' Or, as Paul would say, **'Earnestly desire the best gifts.'** (1 Corinthians 12:31) Or, **'Set your mind on things above'** (Colossians 3:2), or, as our Lord himself said, **'Seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness'**. (Matthew 6:33) Pray to have a heart full of the right desires and to have them always wide awake.

And what can we say about Mr. Wet-Eyes? He was the son of Mr. Repentance, but there are a good many 'Wet-Eyes' that are no relation to Mr. Repentance at all. 'My mother called me by this name from my cradle', said Mr. Wet Eyes to Prince Emmanuel, 'but whether because of the moisture of my brain or the softness of my heart I cannot tell.' By which, as well as by other things, you will see that the 'Wet-Eyes' of Bunyan's Holy War had a very poor opinion of himself.

But some children who might be called 'Wet-Eyes' have by no means a poor opinion of themselves. You say of some of them that they 'cry for nothing.' And you might say of a good many more, 'They cry for the wrong things.' And of a good many more that 'they do not cry for the things that ought to trouble them most.'

What did Mr. Wet-Eyes go along the street wringing his hands and weeping for? The wrong doing of Mansoul; the foolishness and sin of his townsmen. We have most of us wept a good many tears many times in our lives. Some of them were very bitter tears; some of them tears that God would understand and wipe away. But some of our tears we might well be ashamed of. It would be worthwhile just for a moment to try to think why we cry as children. (It is not often that a minister can talk about such things, but it comes in the course of our lessons.) Go back in your thought now, and try to remember why you cried. Perhaps because you were hurt, that comes first; or frightened; or because you lost something. (Ah, I remember losing the first shilling I ever had, and it was years before I had another!); or because we had lost some one dear to us.

Then we sometimes cried because we were disappointed; someone had promised us something and forgotten all about it, or because we were lonely and low-spirited. And we cried from sheer bad temper because someone said a nasty thing to us, or because we could not get our own way. I think I remember all these kinds of crying. But did you ever cry because you had done wrong? Not because you had been punished, but because you were ashamed, and sorry for being naughty.

If you did, then you know something about Mr. Wet-Eyes. You remember when you

were punished and cried, when you were disappointed and cried, but do you remember when someone whose face, full of kindness and grief, and whose eyes glistened with tears, spoke to you about your fault, and knelt down and prayed with you, and before the prayer was over you broke into sobs and tears? Some of us remember that, and those bitter tears are sweet memories today, and we thank God that we have been with Mr. Wet-Eyes to the pavilion of Emmanuel.

Perhaps some of us need to go there today; indeed, we all need to go. But there may be some who need to go especially. We have been in the wrong, and we have refused to own it, and we are just holding out. But such holding out is not courage, it is very harmful stubbornness. There are some tears that we may well be ashamed of, but never of tears of sorrow for sin. These always win God's forgiveness. 'Mr. Wet-Eyes can always speak well to a petition', said Mr. Desires-Awake, and it is the wet-eyed penitents, from David who so grieved over his faults that he said, 'All night long make I my bed to swim', (Psalm 6:6) to the woman who washed the feet of Jesus with her tears, who come into the sweetness of God's peace and joy. (Luke 7:38) It is a sad fact that sorrow for sin is not very common today. I pray that you and I may know it, and that God will give us a tender conscience and a soft heart.

CHAPTER 13

THE PARDON OF MANSOUL

We now think of what response Emmanuel made to the lowly petition which Mr. Desires-Awake and Mr. Wet-Eyes presented at his pavilion by the request of the people of Mansoul, and we had better take our place among the people of the town who were most anxiously awaiting their return from the Court. Even at the very gates the people were waiting, and they began to pursue them with questions as soon as they entered. But they would say nothing until they arrived at the prison gates. But why the prison gates?

Perhaps I forgot to tell you that when Emmanuel overthrew Diabolus, he commanded that Lord Understanding, who, you will remember, was the old Lord Mayor, and Mr. Conscience and Lord Willbewill should be put in prison and kept in the care of Captains Boanerges and Conviction. And it was in their name as well as in the name of the townspeople that the two men had gone to Emmanuel's camp. Thus, quite a crowd had gathered about the prison gates, and the prisoners themselves had come into the yard, and you may be sure that there was anxious attention and perfect silence while Mr. Desires-Awake spoke. He told how the Prince had spoken about their disloyalty, their choice of Diabolus, their resistance to his Captains and himself, and all their wrong.

And yet he had said that he would consider their petition and give such answer to it as would be consistent with his glory. Finally, accompanied by the deep sighs of Mr. Wet-Eyes, Mr. Desires-Awake said that Captain Boanerges and Conviction were ordered to bring the three prisoners down to him the next morning, and that Captains Judgement and Execution were to take charge of the town till their return. 'And having said this', said Mr. Desires-Awake, 'the Prince immediately turned his back on us and went into his royal pavilion.'

Now, this was not a very cheering message to bring to the town, and you can quite imagine that it would badly depress the people. They knew that they had done wrong, and they were quite ignorant of what the punishment was to be, while the summoning of the three prisoners to the camp, they were quite sure in their minds, meant death. So distressed were they that no one slept that night in the whole of the town for sorrow and fear.

It is an extremely vivid picture that Bunyan draws of the three men being marched through the streets closely guarded by the Captains and their soldiers, dressed in mourning, their chains clanking, ropes on their heads, and moaning as they went. So they appeared at the Prince's pavilion, and at the sight of the Prince on his throne they fell on their faces in trembling and shame.

Then, having been commanded to stand up, they were questioned in the most searching manner as to the part which they had played in admitting and welcoming and serving Diabolus and in forgetting their lawful Prince. Then they did what I hope every one of you will do if ever you have done wrong and are questioned about it. As representing the guilty town of Mansoul they admitted everything; they pleaded guilty, not because they hoped that such pleading would get them off, but because they really

felt it, and were just as sorrowful about it as Mr. Wet-Eyes himself.

It is sad that we are often far from the spirit of these men. We can remember when we have behaved badly and have been questioned about it, and when we tried very hard not to admit it, or at least not to admit it all. We made excuses, we blamed others, and we were angry at being blamed ourselves, and the last thing that we were willing to say is that we were totally in the wrong.

Well, we have an example here of true penitence. These three men, who had once been in high position in Mansoul, and who were now prisoners, would not say a single word in excuse. They did not blame anyone, not even Diabolus, but only themselves.

You see, old Mr. Loath-to-Stoop was dead. And when the Prince asked them what they deserved they answered, 'Death and the deep.' And when he asked them what the ropes were for, they answered that there were to bind them and lead them to the place of execution, unless it should please the Prince to be merciful. Indeed, no one has ever felt more deeply sorry for wrong-doing than these three great citizens Mansoul who appeared before Prince Emmanuel on that memorable day, for it was a memorable day. As soon as the Prince heard the confession of the men he gave a command.

First, that a herald should go through the camp proclaiming that he had obtained a perfect victory over Mansoul.

Second, that the prisoners should stand before him once more. Then he addressed them as they stood trembling in his presence. And this is what he said: 'I have power and commandment from my Father to forgive you all your sins, trespasses, and iniquities, and the whole town of Mansoul.' Then he gave them, written on parchment and sealed with seven seals, a large and universal pardon which they were to proclaim throughout the whole town.

And then, while they wondered, and Lord Willbewill almost fainted, he ordered them to be stripped of their ropes and their mourning-clothes, their fetters to be broken and cast into the air, while they themselves were to be dressed in rich clothing, and to each of them was to be given precious jewels and a chain of gold! He also put his arms around them and embraced them all, and told them cheer up because they were now his friends. And the end of that most wonderful day was that the three men who went through the streets in mourning, grief, and woe, went back with a band playing music before them, clothed in white garments, and with chains of gold around their necks.

And in the place of Captain Boanerges and Conviction, Captain Credence, with his scarlet colours flying, accompanied them with a guard of honour, and he was ordered to command Captains Judgement and Execution to come back to the camp of Emmanuel at once while he took charge of the castle.

I must leave you to imagine the excitement of the citizens of Mansoul who were anxiously looking over the wall for the return of their townsmen. John Bunyan tells us, and as no one can imitate him I must ask you to read the story for yourselves, 'how the bells did ring, and the people sang and danced and shouted for joy. And just as the night before no one could sleep for sadness of heart, so this night no one could

sleep an hour for simple excitement and joy.’ And every boy and girl who listens this morning, and who reads the story of those three men bound and guarded and broken-hearted marching through the streets and out of the gates, should try to understand how terrible sin is. That is one of the chief lessons of the Holy War. It is such a terrible thing that no sorrow can be too deep for it.

And then, as you see those same three men coming back from the camp of Emmanuel with gladness, music, singing, and joy, you should try to think how wonderful the mercy of God is, and that there is nothing on earth so sweet as the forgiveness of sin.

And we should all learn that we need to sorrow greatly over our faults, most of all over our neglect and disobedience towards Jesus our Emmanuel, and over our listening to the temptations of Diabolus, and yielding therefore to selfishness and carelessness, to idle and worthless thoughts. And then such sweet joy of forgiveness as filled the hearts of great saints in old time will be ours.

For the meaning of this scene, so graphically described by John Bunyan, is explained in words that are said in the Church of England every Sunday — ‘He pardons and absolves all those who truly repent and believe.’ May such repentance and forgiveness be ours!

CHAPTER 14

EMMANUEL COMES TO LIVE IN MANSOUL

It would be very easy to guess what would be the first desire of all the people of Mansoul after the old Recorder, Mr. Conscience, had read the Prince's gracious pardon in the market place. With one heart and mind and voice they joined in sending a petition to the Prince that he would come and take up his abode in the Castle in which Captain Credence was quartered. You will remember that the Castle was so 'spacious as to be able to contain the whole world.'

Emmanuel's reply to the petition came first by way of a question. He asked, 'If I come, will you allow me to follow what is in My heart against my enemies and yours, and will you help me in carrying out these things?' And the reply of the people seems to me so fitting on that occasion that I think it must have pleased the great Prince. It was just the reply for people who had failed. They said, 'We cannot promise anything, we have failed so badly and are so uncertain of ourselves. We only know that we long for our gracious Prince to come and live amongst us and to conquer us with his love. That our castle and our whole town is humbly and cheerfully placed at his feet; that it will be our life and joy if our Lord will remove his pavilion and bring his golden slings and his soldiers, and, most of all, his beloved presence into the midst of our town, and do as he will with his unworthy subjects.'

And so the Prince consented willingly to comply with the petition, and great as had been some of the previous days in Mansoul, the day when Emmanuel came in was the greatest of all.

First of all the town was completely decorated in preparation. Then the main street of the town, from Eye gate in at which the Prince passed, and where the elders met him with a thousand welcomes right up to the castle gates, was completely strewn with flowers to show the gladness of the people.

Then the Prince was clad in his golden armour. He rode in his royal chariot. The trumpets sounded. The colours were displayed; his brave captains and the very pick of his army marched with him. And as for the people, they lined the street through which he was to pass. They crowded all the casements, windows, balconies, and tops of the houses as the people of London and England crowded every possible place at the coronation of the king.

There was a halt for the brilliant cavalcade at the Recorder's house while a messenger was sent to the Castle to ask if all was ready. Then Captain Credence, who had had the preparation in hand, came out with his soldiers to meet and welcome the Prince; and that night, in the very place that Diabolus had thought was his for ever, the Prince and his mighty captains lodged, to the great joy of the town. Captain Credence also remained in the castle, the gates of which were always left open so that all the people whenever they wanted might have free access to the Prince.

It would take too long to tell you all that followed after Emmanuel's took up his residence in Mansoul. You would expect to hear that at once the image of Diabolus

was destroyed. It was broken down and ground to powder, and scattered to the wind outside the town wall. And the image of Shaddai and Prince Emmanuel were placed on the Castle gates, and an order was given for the arrest and trial of all Diabolonians still lurking in the town.

Our old friend Lord Willbewill was appointed governor of the gates and wall. The old Lord Mayor was restored to his office, and many other things were done of which you will read for yourselves. But I must tell you of a feast that Emmanuel gave for all the people of the town. Such a feast had never been seen in Mansoul before, even by the oldest inhabitants of the town. It was not merely the abundance of the food, but the novelty of them that amazed the people. All manner of exotic food, which grew not in the fields of Mansoul, nor in all the whole kingdom of Universe, but which came direct from the court of Shaddai, was provided. And there was music during the whole of the banquet sweeter than they had ever heard. For the musicians were also from the court of the King.

And there were all kinds of riddles asked by the Prince after dinner when the feast was over. Bunyan tells us that the people were 'transported with joy and drowned with wonderment.' And then after all had been re-modelled in the town according to the will of the Prince, and every one had been allotted his place, the Prince ordained a new officer over the Mayor and Lord Willbewill, and over all the natives, a sweet-natured gentleman, a friend of Captain Credence, not a native of Mansoul but one brought with the Prince from his Father's court, and his name was Mr. God's-Peace. And there were no arguments, nor disagreements, nor quarrels. Men, women, and children would work and sing, work and sing from morning till night. There was nothing but harmony, joy, and health. And this state of things lasted all that summer.

And the remarkable thing about it all is this: John Bunyan in all this is trying to picture for you and me and everybody else, by his flowers and feast, his music, and gladness and joy, the effect of the coming of the Lord Jesus where he is welcomed into the heart. It is sometimes thought by children that when the life is given up to Jesus, farewell is said to gladness and joy. It is a great mistake, and is one of the strong temptations of Satan. There is no life so joyful in this world as a life of real obedience to Jesus.

All that John Bunyan writes in the Holy War can only give you a faint idea of it. You cannot describe happiness, you can only feel it. The life of the Christian is often described as a feast in the New Testament, and never as a sad or unhappy thing. And having come as far as this in the story of the Holy War, and having seen this happy ending of all the struggles and difficulties of the town, the lesson to be deeply engraved on our hearts is this: the happiest day of our lives really comes when we welcome the Lord Jesus into our lives: not to Ear gate that we may listen to him, nor to Eye gate that we may see him, but into the very citadel and palace, and give ourselves completely to him to do his will. There is a verse in one of our hymns which I pray that you may all experience:

**Those who find Thee find a bliss
Nor tongue nor pen can show;
The love of Jesus, what it is,
None but his loved ones know.**

Remember, boys and girls, the town and the palace belong to the King; they were built by him and for him, and are his by right. And the day of gladness dawns when Emmanuel is welcomed to his own possession.

CHAPTER 15

EMMANUEL LEAVES MANSOUL

In our last talk, we left the famous town of Mansoul in great peace and happiness. Prince Emmanuel had forgiven the people their disloyalty, and had come to the castle to live. He had remodelled the town, he had feasted the people, and had clothed them all in his white and shining livery. The sweet natured gentleman, Mr. Gods-peace, was ruling the town. There were no quarrels or arguments. People worked and sang from morning till night; all was harmony and joy.

Now if Bunyan had cared more for a nice story, and to please his readers, than to tell the truth, he would have ended his book there. He would have finished his story, as so many made-up stories which some of you are beginning to read, are finished. Here are two people who love each other, and were evidently made for each other, and something or somebody interferes with their love, makes them misunderstand each other, and separates them for a long time. Then finally the misunderstanding is cleared away, the wicked or cruel person dies, the two people come together and are married, and there the story ends. As though that were the end of life, and there were no more interest, no misunderstandings for ever. It is surprising how willing people are to read that kind of story from generation to generation, as though it were the whole of life, when really it is just a small part of it; the beginning and not the end. But the thrilling incidents and tragic events of life come afterwards.

So, John Bunyan, wanting to instruct his readers, and not merely to please them, goes from sunshine to cloud, from brightness to darkness, as many a story-teller would if he understood human life. From telling of happy loving fellowship, to telling of estrangement and coldness, neglect and unhappiness.

I have to tell you this morning (strange as it may seem) that Emmanuel left the Castle and the town; withdrawing, full of sorrow to his Father's Court again. That Mr. Gods-peace gave up his commission, and all things were set back again. And I hope that you are sufficiently interested in the history of Mansoul to follow carefully the explanation of these sad events.

This is how it came to pass. When Diabolus came to Mansoul, he brought a number of people with him, and I am sorry to say that he did not take them all away with him, for they were not all killed in the war. Some of those who were left behind hid themselves for a while. Some professed to turn round and become the servants of Emmanuel, and it is through one of these mainly that a sad change came over Mansoul. His name, rather a long one, was Mr. Carnal-security. He had been born in Mansoul. His father came in with Diabolus, and his name was Mr. Self-conceit, while his mother's name was Lady Fear-nothing.

They were both dead, but I think Mr. Carnal-security had a son whom he called by the name of his father, Mr. Self-conceit. No sooner had Emmanuel settled in Mansoul than Mr. Carnal-security, who was a great talker, began, to all who would listen, to praise not Emmanuel but the wonderful town of Mansoul. He began to give dinner parties at his house, and to invite all the influential people. They drank a good deal of wine, and all their talk was of the walls and fortifications, the slings and gates of Mansoul, and

how safe they were with all these defences, and how they could do as they pleased because the city was now so strong. It does not seem to be a very harmful proceeding, but the mischief of it began here. Instead of spending their time in feasting and gaiety at Mr. Carnal-security's house, the people should have gone to the feasts which Emmanuel was still preparing. Instead of spending their time in boastful talk and foolish games, they should have been learning the laws of Shaddai. Instead of praising their gates and walls, they should have remembered that their worst enemy had once lived among them and nearly ruined the town; also that Emmanuel had just delivered them out of his power. They should have remembered that it was not the strength of their walls, but his goodness that had saved them, and that he had told them to be on the look-out for Diabolonians who might still be within the walls, and to keep in touch with him in case they should be deceived. But it is sad to be told, and we must believe it, that they forgot all this, and were so deceived that they forgot Emmanuel, and even Mr. Credence and Lord Understanding went to the feast and drank the wine.

Now, Emmanuel saw all this and was deeply grieved, and one day he sent the Lord Secretary to protest against the chief men of the town. He found them feasting and full of mirth, and talking so loudly that his voice could not be heard. So matters went on until one day a great feast was held, and a citizen was present by invitation whose name was Mr. Godly-fear, who would drink no wine and eat no food, but was full of sorrow. The company present tried to cheer him up, especially Mr. Carnal-security.

They questioned him, they protested, they tried joking and banter, but all to no purpose; until he suddenly startled the whole company, except Mr. Carnal-security himself, by asserting that Emmanuel had withdrawn from Mansoul. The mirth suddenly ceased, the guests turned white with fear, and Mr. Carnal-security looked as if he was about to fall down dead at the table. The feast was broken up. They hurried to the Castle and found it all too true. While Mr. Carnal-security had been deceiving them with his vain talk, their Prince had gone. And so angry were they with themselves and their host that they set fire to his house, and burned it to the ground.

We shall have to consider what came of it all; the days of sadness and trouble, and of fighting (for Diabolus sent another army) before Mansoul was happy again. But, for today, let me earnestly urge everyone here to take to heart the interpretation of the picture.

You know that John Bunyan is giving us the history of many a life. Here it is in very plain language. You welcome the Lord Jesus into your heart, and determine to live for him. You tell your dearest friend, and you are very happy. You are baptised and come to Communion, and all the Christian people you know congratulate you and give you loving words of welcome, and you feel how blessed it is to be a Christian: to have the guidance of the Lord Jesus on earth, and the sure hope of living with him for evermore. You think that you are quite safe, and you forget that Jesus warned all his disciples to watch always; that he told them to abide in him, because severed from him they can do nothing; and many more solemn words of warning he uttered. And you forget to pray; and you leave off the study of the words of Christ. You read everything else but the Bible. You do not do anything wicked; but you are busy with other things; your amusements, your pleasures, your duties. You have not been alone with Jesus for a long time now, and he has gone from you, and you do not know it. You are happy and light-hearted and good natured, but the Lord Jesus has gone.

Now, that has happened more times than I can tell; perhaps to some of you Christian boys and girls. If it has happened, let me say this to you. It is a good thing, the best thing, though it makes you very miserable, to find out the truth. And it is a good thing to do as the Mansoulians did — to beg the Lord Jesus to come back. Not to do as some people do, content yourself with other things, and try to forget that he has gone. It is far better to be sad than to be happy if Christ has departed, and to cry, 'Return, O Lord, for my heart can find no rest until it finds rest in you.'

CHAPTER 16

SORROWFUL DAYS IN MANSOUL

We were considering last week the withdrawal of Emmanuel from Mansoul, and the dismay of the people when that fact was discovered. They were full of self-reproach, and they loathed Mr. Carnal-security who had led them astray with his feasting and his merry-making, and who had encouraged and caused them to forget their Prince and his laws.

The pages of the story which follow teach us a severe lesson. I wish the boys and girls would take it to heart, remember it, and act on it, how sad and terrible a thing it is to neglect obedience, to glide into carelessness, and just forget God! It would be of the greatest advantage to us if that warning note should ring in our ears all through the lesson this morning, alerting us to the seriousness of it all as the people of Mansoul were.

The first thing they did was to seek in all haste an interview with the Lord Secretary whom before they had refused to hear. But they found to their sorrow that his door was closed on them, nor would he admit them for an interview. The next thing was the Sabbath sermon of Mr. Conscience. It is not at all certain that you would have liked it. There was not a smile or a look of brightness on the preacher's face from beginning to end of the service. But it was such a sermon as the Mansoulians needed, and we all need sometimes. The text was sufficient to alarm them: **Those who regard worthless idols forsake their own Mercy** (Jonah 2:8), and the sermon was so full of rebuke, and the people were so 'sermon smitten', that no one ate any dinner, and many of the people were not able to attend to their business for a whole week. The peculiar character of the sermon was this — I hope that some of you will be preachers one day and will remember it — Mr. Conscience not only showed Mansoul their sin, and blamed them for it, but he blamed himself most bitterly of all, and trembled in the pulpit as he bewailed his own unfaithfulness. So the people went away from the service almost distracted and despairing.

Then a plague of sickness, some kind of fever, broke out among the people and laid the majority of them low; even the Captains and some of the soldiers were affected by it, so that if there had been an assault on the town now it would almost surely have been taken, for there was neither strength nor heart to defend it. The poor town was as downhearted and wretched now as it had been radiant and joyful when Emmanuel was in the Castle.

Well, Mr. Conscience called for a day of fasting and humiliation, not knowing what else to do, and he desired that this time one of the Captains should preach the sermon. Such days as these have passed out of fashion in England; we only know how to feast now. But, in John Bunyan's time, good people not infrequently met for a day of fasting and prayer. And such a day was held in Mansoul, and Captain Boanerges preached, and there was no more comfort in his sermon than in that of Mr. Conscience. Bunyan says that it was a very 'smart' sermon, by which he means, I think, that it made the people smart who heard it. **Cut it down; why does it use up the ground?** (Luke 13:7) was the text; and as he applied that passage to poor Mansoul you may be sure that it did not lighten their sorrow.

The next thing that happened was that it was agreed to send a petition to Emmanuel, and that my Lord Mayor should take it to the court of Shaddai; but even that only added to their puzzlement and sadness. For when it was told the Prince that the Lord Mayor of Mansoul stood before the gate, he would not go down nor consent that the gate should be opened. And with a heavy heart, and a face dark with sorrow, he retraced his steps. It has occurred to me that they had sent the wrong man for one thing. I cannot understand why they did not send Mr. Desires-Awake and Mr. Wet Eyes who had done so well before. But however that may be, under the advice of Mr. Godly-fear, whom they all trusted now, they sent again and again, and the road was full of messengers going between Mansoul and the Court of the great King the whole of that sharp and miserable winter.

The worst thing of all was that Diabolus got to hear of the distressful condition of the town, and decided on another scheme for its ruin He commissioned three of his most trusted friends to change their names and get situations in the houses of some of the principal people of the town, and he decided to send another army of 20 000 men against it. But that must be left for our next talk.

Meanwhile, some of you are surprised at the turn our story has taken. You know what Bunyan is writing about, and you wonder first of all that people should be made so miserable who had not done great wickedness such as violently breaking the laws of the King. They had only been careless and forgetful. And you wonder still more that Emmanuel should refuse to admit the petition of Mansoul when the Mayor took it to the Castle. If you had written the story, you would have made him come back at once, for you cannot bear to see anybody miserable. Dear children, you can be sure that Bunyan was right. If Emmanuel had returned at once, the people might not have learned the lesson they needed, and might soon have forgotten again. Then you may be sure that God our Father can bear to see us miserable, just as a wise father can bear to see his child made to suffer by a surgeon or a dentist because he believes the child will be better afterwards. And then you may be sure that we do not think half seriously enough of the sin of carelessness, neglect, and forgetfulness. I need only remind you that the people who are represented as being sent away into darkness and sorrow by our Lord at the last judgment are people who have only been neglectful and been careless and selfish, nothing more than that. Let us learn the lesson, and pray that God will preserve us from forgetfulness of his love and his commandments.

CHAPTER 17

GOOD MR. PRYWELL

The subject of our talk to-day is the distressing condition of the famous town of Mansoul, and the services of Mr. Prywell. Diabolus had heard of the distress of the town, and, after a conference, it was agreed by all those over whom he was chief that he should raise an army of Doubters, 20 000 or 30 000 strong, to go against the town and take it. It was also decided that three of his most trusted followers should disguise themselves as servants, and try to get situations in the households of the prominent citizens of Mansoul; and this was done. One of these men got into the house of Lord Willbewill; another actually secured a situation in the house of Mr. Godly-fear. It is true that he was soon found out, and, knowing that he was found out, he ran away. But the other two continued, and they did a good deal of harm, both in the homes where they were, and outside, for there began to be secret meetings held at the house of Mr. Mischief, and letters began to pass between the plotters at these meetings and Diabolus.

Then the sickness that had broken out in the town, and of which 11 000 people died, so took the heart out of the men of Mansoul that they grew careless about watching the gates, and hunting out the Diabolonians. The poor people seemed to have no energy at all. So the Diabolonians grew bolder, and began to walk abroad quite openly, and, in some cases, there was more than a nodding acquaintance between them and the people of the town. There was even friendship. And what with this friendship, and the secret meetings, and the raising of a great and terrible army by Diabolus, and the silence of Emmanuel, affairs began to look very dark and dangerous for our notable town. But just as when Mr. Carnal-security was deceiving the people, and Mr. Godly-fear was raised up to save the town, so now another man, a great lover of Mansoul, was raised up to deliver it. His name was Mr. Prywell. This is how it happened.

There was a meeting of Diabolonians one night — a secret meeting of course — at which plans for completely subduing the town were discussed and resolved on. And Mr. Prywell, who was always on the look-out, and a great listener, overheard all that took place. Without a moment's delay, he went and told the Lord Mayor and Mr. Conscience, who at once rang the lecture bell and called the people together. Then, in the assembly, Mr. Conscience and Mr. Prywell told what the latter had heard, and the townspeople were thoroughly alarmed. They communicated with the Captains, with the result that the gates were ordered to be kept shut and doubly guarded. The Captains ordered also that all Diabolonians should be sought out and brought to justice as rebels and traitors, and that another day of humiliation and prayer should be held. And, last of all, that Mr. Prywell should be made Scoutmaster-general by the town. And so well did he do his work that he seemed to find out everything. Whether it happened by day or by night — in Mansoul, or in the camp of Diabolus — anything that made for the danger of Mansoul, he discovered and reported, and so really saved the town.

Now here is a man whose name you do not like, and whose office you do not like either. To go about listening to private conversations, eavesdropping, peeping through keyholes is, under certain circumstances, a very bad business, and, if any one does it for the purpose of making mischief, it is very much to be despised. And it is never

pleasant work; but where there are evil-disposed persons about, wherever Mr. Mischief builds his house and the servants of Diabolus gather, it may become a necessity, and the doing of the work may be at once a brave and noble act.

There are two things written about Mr. Prywell. **First**, he was always a lover of Mansoul; so it was love and not malice that set him listening. **Second**, he was no teller of tales nor raiser of false reports. He listened, not for the sake of gossip that he might have a secret to tell, but that he might know the truth about the welfare of Mansoul. Wherever there is wickedness, there is need of Mr. Prywell. But there is nowhere so much need of him as in our own soul. We should each know the kind of thoughts that are allowed to enter into our hearts and remain there, and that we should sometimes send Mr. Prywell round to seek out any evil thoughts that are in hiding; that is most important. Next to the knowledge of God our Father, by far the most important knowledge for us to possess is knowledge of ourselves. We should ask, 'What sort of a person am I?', not 'What do other people think of me?', but 'What am I, and what kind of thoughts am I cherishing, and am fond of?' Are they proud thoughts, vain thoughts, foolish, selfish; are they unholy and unclean thoughts? Because these are the Diabolonians that must be arrested and killed. These are the thoughts to shut out when they come thundering at the gates. And these are the thoughts which are likely to come in if Emmanuel is absent. These are the thoughts never to be made friends of, always to be resisted.

And what I say to you, I say to all: Watch! (Mark 13:37) said the Lord. **Watch and pray, lest you enter into temptation.** (Matthew 26:41) And Peter, so much for the Lord, and who did not watch when he should have done, wrote later, **Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil walks about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour** (1 Peter 5:8), and Paul wrote, **Therefore let us not sleep, as others do, but let us watch and be sober** (1 Thessalonians 5:6) — not watch other people but ourselves, and watch our own souls.

CHAPTER 18

THE RETURN OF DIABOLUS TO MANSOUL

The subject of our last talk was the distressful condition of Mansoul and the eminent services of Mr. Prywell. You know how he heard the plotters plotting for the overthrow of the town and gave the alarm, and how the gates were closed and watched with double carefulness. Arms were furbished up, the golden slings were got into position, and all was ready for action. It was none too soon. Almost as soon as they had made their preparations, Mr. Prywell, the Scoutmaster-general, reported that Diabolus was nearing the town with an army that I cannot describe, except to say that it was more terrible than anything that the Mansouliaus had ever seen, 25,000 or 30,000 men, all clad in iron armour, marching under nine captains, of whom it is enough to say they were more terrible than the soldiers themselves.

One of the principal instruments which they carried was a terrible drum, which, when it was beaten, brought fear and dread to the whole town. After the drumming came a messenger from Diabolus demanding that the town should yield, and threatening that if it resisted the whole town should be destroyed with fire and sword.

I do not think that the town ever behaved more wisely or bravely than on this occasion. They heard the threat, and it must be confessed that they were frightened, but they were wise enough to make no answer. They consulted together, they sent a petition to the Lord Secretary who was still in the Castle, and he returned a message that had a ray of hope in it. And they determined that they would rather die than open the gates. And doubtless because the Captains of Emmanuel were in the town they were actually bold enough to bring the golden slings into action, which served the purpose of our modern cannon, and they played them so well that Diabolus had to move his army to a safer distance.

Then the crafty old serpent tried another way. He came down to the gate himself without his drum and without his captain, and with soft words, as at the very first he tried to win Mansoul. He told the Lord Mayor, who listened patiently, how much he loved Mansoul; how kind and indulgent he had been to Mansoul, and how much liberty he had allowed them when he was in the Castle. How they had had none of the dark sore troubles that had come on them since, whilst he was with them; and how he was prepared to give them still more liberty and a right good time if they would let him in. Moreover he said he was most eager not to do them any harm, he should simply be compelled very sorrowfully to do it if they resisted him. That he was there with a mighty army which they could not by any means overcome, and the end of all resistance would be that they would fall into his hands after suffering the greatest loss, which he was affectionately anxious to spare them.

Now, would you believe it, the Lord Mayor, whose name you remember was my Lord Understanding, when he heard that fawning speech, in the boldest way possible bade defiance to him! He reminded Diabolus that he had got into the town first by fraud, and he actually dared him to do his very uttermost, for they would rather die than let him in. And as if that were not enough, Lord Willbewill having caught three or four Diabolonians in the town doing all sorts of mischief, had them arrested and hanged them on the wall in full view of Diabolus and his army.

Now, the only possible sequel to such a daring proceeding was a battle. And a very fierce battle it was. It was prefaced in the town by a sermon from Mr. Conscience, the most helpful he had preached since Emmanuel had left. Soldiers and captains gathered and stood in their armour to listen. The text was 'Gad, a troop shall overcome him, but he shall overcome at the last.' And from the sermon they went to war, with prayer and singing and psalms, while outside the town, with horrible rage and blasphemies, the soldiers of Diabolus made their assault. It was a long battle; and terrible, as all battles are; indeed, it lasted several days. Several of Diabolus' captains and many of his soldiers were slain outright; his flag was beaten down and his whole force made to retreat to a further distance from the town. On the other side many were killed, and I regret to say several important persons wounded, and among them the Lord Mayor was wounded in the eye, and the preacher in the region of the heart. But so overjoyed were the Mansouliaus that the gates were still shut and Diabolus beaten back that the bells were rung, the trumpets pealed, and the Captains went shouting round the town.

It is a pleasant chapter to all lovers of Mansoul; it is the real Holy War. Do you know what it describes? Some Christian boy or girl who has grieved God by sin and forgetfulness discovers the fault and is sorry for it. Then comes the temptation, to think that you can never get back the peace and joy you had when you prayed every day, and made it your business every day to obey the voice of Christ. Diabolus and 20,000 doubters, his drum, his threats, his fawning speeches, his attacks on the walls, what are they? Temptations, suggestions, to give it all up now, that you cannot be a Christian, that it is of no use to pray; that God does not love you. Give it all up and let things go; be careless again and let Satan rule.' Do you know anything of that? You will someday. If and when you do, pray remember the brave people of Mansoul who defied Diabolus and killed many of his soldiers, and drove his army back from the town of Mansoul.

CHAPTER 19

THE RASH SORTIE

Remember that although Emmanuel still stayed away from the town, the Chief Secretary was in the Castle, and it was really under his directions that the fighting on the part of Mansoul had been so well sustained. Now Bunyan tells us of something that the people did without consulting the Chief Secretary — a rash and ill-advised thing that resulted in months and even years of wretchedness to the people of Mansoul. The people were so excited as to be a little conceited: success and conceit are often next-door neighbours. Moreover Lord Understanding and Mr. Conscience were both laid aside with their wounds, and the people met together with the Captains and resolved that they would make a sortie from the town upon the camp of Diabolus, that is, that they would rush out in force and attack his camp, and that they would do this by night. Well, it was altogether a foolish resolve. What they ought to have done, being without their Prince, was to have stayed in the town and diligently defended it; but they were very much set up with their victory and were a little conceited.

So, at the time appointed out they went in the silence of the night and fell upon the forces of the prince of evil. But he was ready for them, and since the night is the most favourable time for Diabolus, they were mastered, and the brave and dashing Captains, Credence, Good Hope, and Experience were wounded, and the battle went so ill with them that they were thankful to retreat beaten and humiliated into the town. And that was not the worst. Diabolus followed up his advantage swiftly, and while they were depressed and discouraged, he made such an attack upon Feel gate that I am sorry to say it gave way, and his great army of doubters poured into the town and took possession of it. I was going to say that the disaster was complete, but it was not. The Captains had retired to the Castle and they had set up Emmanuel's slings on the Castle hill. They made Mr. Godly-fear keeper of the gate; moreover the Lord Secretary was there, and as long as the Castle was not taken the town was not. But there were sad times for Mansoul. The soldiers of Diabolus quartered themselves on the people of the town; they ate at their table, they slept in their beds, they shamefully ill-treated the women and children, and made the people utterly miserable, and there was a reign of terror in the town. At last the people could bear their wretchedness no longer, and they did what they ought to have done before the sortie. They met together secretly and sent a deputation to the Castle, and they asked that the Lord Secretary would draw up a petition to their Prince for them.

He immediately consented so to do, but it was to be their petition, it was to be written on Town paper, and with their own ink. 'You,' said the great Secretary, 'must be present when it is drawn up,' and their desires were to be expressed, and he would sign it on their behalf; and this was done. A petition was drawn up and signed, praying Emmanuel to pity and deliver the distressed town. And the bearer of it to the Court of Shaddai was the brave and good Captain Credence. How he sped to the Court, what he brought back, how brighter days dawned for the troubled town must be left for the telling of another chapter. Meanwhile, you see the interpretation of our parable. The man has overcome temptation and is very thankful, and just a little proud; and now he thinks that he can go where temptation is, and he goes without prayer, and he is going to do such brave battle, and then he falls, he is mastered. Then Satan works upon his feelings. He says you will never be good again: you do not feel good, you do not feel

that you are a Christian; you do not feel happy; God does not love you, and there is nothing but misery before you in this world and the next.

So Satan tormented John Bunyan, and so he has tormented a great many people since-tormented and overcome them with doubts until he has made them careless and miserable. The mistake that the people of our story made was to venture out without prayer. They took the first step towards rectifying that mistake when they sent a petition by Captain Credence to Emmanuel. They left off thinking about their feelings; and they left off even fighting. They cried in faith to God to come and help them, and very soon help came.

CHAPTER 20

EMMANUEL'S RETURN TO MANSOUL

I must tell you to-day how Captain Credence sped at the Court of King Shaddai and of the stirring events that happened immediately thereafter. You may be sure that the townsfolk watched very eagerly for the brave Captain's return, and gave him a most hearty welcome when he arrived. Well, he had nothing but good news to tell. First of all, he had been favourably received at the Court. The Prince had smiled upon him and had read his petition, and seemed pleased with its contents. He had, moreover, sent Captain Credence away with words of hope, and with several packets. One for Mr. Conscience expressing the Prince's pleasure that he had been so faithful a preacher. One for Mr. Prywell, one for the Captains, another for the Lord Mayor, and still one more for our old friend, my Lord Willbewill; all alike telling of the Prince's knowledge of their fidelity to his throne, and their resistance of the Diabolonians, and expressing Emmanuel's high appreciation of their good behaviour. In addition to all these, there was a message from the Prince to the town itself, in which he stated that he knew its misery, and that in the end all would be well.

Two most surprising events happened immediately after this. The **first** was the voluntary withdrawal of Diabolus and all his forces from the town. This was done under the advice of Diabolus himself. It is useless, said that crafty prince, for us to stay in the town, because we cannot get possession of the citadel, and the people are all aware of our purpose and on the defensive against us. If we withdraw they will feel secure and grow careless in their watch, and perhaps we may catch them unawares and capture the Castle. So one night while Mansoul slept, Diabolus and his thousands withdrew from the town, and in the morning when the people awoke they discovered to their immense joy that they were rid of their tormentors.

The **second** thing that happened was a message from Emmanuel to Captain Credence that the Prince would meet him in the field on the third day. There was nothing more than that in the message, and you may be sure that it sorely puzzled the brave Captain; but in conference with the Lord Secretary it was explained to mean that all the forces of Emmanuel, and as many of the townsmen as could fight, were to be marshalled and to go forth into the plain to attack Diabolus and his men. So all was activity and bustle. Once more arms were furbished up, soldiers were drilled, orders were given, many prayers were offered, and on the morning of the day appointed, under the command of Captain Credence, a great army marched from the town for the last battle of which Bunyan tells in his book. Oh, but it was a battle! Everybody went to it. Even a wounded man on crutches, who thought that he could be of some service, so intense was the enthusiasm. And it was desperately fierce. Diabolus and his men fought with all the strength that hatred of Emmanuel could give them; and once during a lull in the battle the Mansouliaus were so faint and discouraged that they thought they would be mastered. But Captain Credence cheered them on with the assurance that before the next bout of fighting was over they would see their Prince. And so, indeed it proved to be, for they had scarcely been fighting a quarter of an hour when the Captain gave a great shout, for he had lifted up his eyes and had seen Emmanuel, and the other Captains saw him too, and the soldiers. He came over the hill so swiftly that his feet scarce seemed to touch the ground, and before the Diabolonians knew it the Prince's own army were attacking them in the rear, and the day was won. Nearer

and nearer to each other came the Mansouliaus and the army of the Prince, trampling down the doubters as they fought.

At the end of the battle not a single doubter of the whole army was left alive, and Diabolus and his officers barely escaped.

Then came the enthusiastic welcome of Emmanuel. A great shout from the soldiers rent the air. The Captains bowed and kissed his feet. He raised each one by the hand and kissed him on the cheek, and spoke words of grace and comfort to all. News of the victory was flashed into the town. The elders came forth to meet and welcome the Prince; the women and children strewed the streets with flowers and garlands; the bells rang for joy; and once more in his golden armour and his chariot of pure gold, Prince Emmanuel rode through the crowded streets of the town to the Castle gates. Not this time with reserved and averted looks, but with gracious smiles for all. He had come to his Mansoul never to depart, but to live with them for ever. It was a happy, happy time, as it always is, when faith in Jesus rules in the heart, when Satan is conquered in the strength of faith, when doubts are overthrown and Jesus comes to live and reign in our lives.

CHAPTER 21

WHY THE DIABOLONIANS WERE NOT ALL KILLED

We come today to the end of a long series of talks on the Holy War. The Castle had been prepared by the presence of the Lord Secretary and the work of Captain Credence, and the Prince once more with his brave Captains was safely lodged therein. What happened in detail would take too long to tell you. The people washed their garments, their white livery which Emmanuel had granted, so that they all appeared in white again. There was music and dancing, and bell-ringing, and the sun shone for a long time together. Then a party was sent out to bury the doubters that had been slain in battle, and they did their work so completely that not a skull nor a bone nor a piece of a bone of a doubter was left on the whole plain. Further, the people proceeded with great energy to hunt out the Diabolonians that lurked in the town. And in this business Lord Willbewill played a very prominent and diligent part. Such men as Evil-questioning and Mr. Clip-Promise, a man who had been guilty of clipping pieces out of the coin of the realm, were taken and put to death, and many more. We are told also of the brave conduct of a man who for his diligence and courage was made a peer of the realm by Emmanuel. He was a native of Mansoul, and was made Captain of Eye gate and Ear gate, and his name was Mr. Self-Denial. One day a great enemy of his and Emmanuel's, named Self-Love, was arrested, and many of the townsmen were for sparing him, for he had many friends in the town; but when young Captain Self Denial heard of it he declared that if such villains as these were to be let off he would lay down his commission, and for his brave speech he became Lord Self-Denial.

But I must tell you principally of the speech of Emmanuel, how on a great occasion of state he came in his chariot with his Captains and men of war into the market-place, and the people all gathered round him. When the herald had called for silence Emmanuel spoke, and this is his last recorded speech. First he reminded the people that he had ever loved them, and that all their past sin was forgiven.

Then he told them that someday he would take down the town, would remove every stick and stone, all the people, and even the dust of it, and carry it and them away into his own country. There he would set up the town again in such strength and glory as it had never known. There a Diabolonian should never be seen, and plots and contrivances and evil designs should be known no more. But, said Emmanuel, until that time comes there will be Diabolonians lurking in hidden places inside the town. Then as the people looked puzzled, as the girl did who asked, 'Why does not God kill Satan?' Emmanuel said 'Diabolonians are allowed to live in Mansoul to try thy love and to make thee watchful. I left them not to do thee evil, which they will if thou yield, but to do thee good; not to drive thee away, but nearer to my Father and to make prayer desirable unto thee. Nothing can hurt thee but sin.'

The last word of all in this great speech was, 'I command thee to believe that My love is constant. I have set My heart upon thee, now watch, watch and hold fast. Hold fast till I come.'

There is no lesson that can better be left on our hearts and minds as we take leave to-day of the famous town of Mansoul, with its wondrous walls and gates, its wars and

victories, than these two words of Prince Emmanuel, 'Nothing can hurt thee but sin, I command thee to believe that My love is constant,' and keeping our souls in the love of Christ we shall be able to overcome and master all attacks of sin.
