Chapter Eight

Apollyon

Then I saw in my dream that after Christian had reached the bottom of the hill, these good friends gave him a loaf of bread, a bottle of wine, and a cluster of raisins. Then he went on his way.

But now, in this Valley of Humiliation, poor Christian began to experience some very difficult times. He had only gone a little distance when he saw a repulsive fiend coming across the field to meet him. His name is Apollyon. At that moment, Christian began to be afraid and to consider whether he should go back or stand his ground. But as he reflected on it, he realized that he had no armor for his back! Therefore, he thought Apollyon would have a greater and easier advantage to pierce him with his darts if he turned to flee. Thus, he resolved to take the risk and stand his ground. “For,” he thought, “if I had no other interest than saving my life, it would be the best decision to make.”

So he went on, and Apollyon met him. Now the monster was hideous to behold. He was clothed with scales like a fish (they are his pride), he had wings like a dragon, feet like a bear, out of his belly came fire and smoke, and his mouth was like the mouth of a lion. When he approached Christian, he stared at him with contempt and began to question him:

**Apollyon.** “Where have you come from, and where are you going?”

**Chr.** “I am from the City of Destruction, which is the place of all evil, and am going to the City of Zion.”

**Apol.** “By your comment I perceive you are one of my subjects, for all of that country is mine; I am the prince and god of it. How is it, then, that you have run away from your King? If it were not for the fact that I believe you could serve me further, I would strike you with one blow to the ground.”

**Chr.** “It is true that I was born in your dominion. But your service was hard, and no man could live on your wages, for the wages of sin is death.¹ Therefore, when I started maturing, I did just what other thoughtful people do: I found out how to get myself straightened out.”

**Apol.** “There is no prince that will easily lose his subjects; neither will I lose you. But since you have complained of your service and wages, be content to go back. I promise to give you what our country can afford.”

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¹ “For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord” (Rom. 6:23).
Chr. “I have given myself to another, even to the King of Princes. How can I be fair and go back with you?”

Apol. “You have done just like the proverb says, ‘Gone from bad to worse.’ But it is natural for those who have become his servants to leave him after a while and return to me. Do this and all will be well.”

Chr. “I have put my faith in him and have sworn my allegiance to him. How, then, can I go back on my word and not be hanged as a traitor?”

Apol. “You did the same to me; and yet I am willing to overlook everything, if you will now turn and come back.”

Chr. “I made promises to you while I was under age. And besides, I know that the Prince under whose banner I now stand is able to forgive me. He will pardon what I did in making an allegiance with you. And besides, O thou destroying Apollyon, truthfully I like his service, his wages, his servants, his government, his company and country, better than yours. Therefore, forget trying to persuade me anymore: I am his servant, and I will follow him.”

Apol. “Think again, when you are calm, about what you are likely to experience along the way that you are going. You know that for the most part, his servants come to a difficult end because they are transgressors against me and my ways. How many of them have been put to shameful deaths! Besides, you consider his service better than mine although he has never come from the place where he lives to deliver any who served him out of our hands. But as for me, how many times (as all the world very well knows) have I delivered those who have faithfully served me from him - by power or deceit. I did that in spite of the fact that they (God) robbed me of them. And so, I will deliver you!”

Chr. “He does not immediately deliver them, for his purpose is to test their love, to see whether they will be faithful to him until the end. And, as for the difficult end you say they come to, that is gloriously accrued to their account. They do not expect a present deliverance. Rather, they wait for their glory. They will receive it when their Prince comes in his glory with his angels.”

Apol. “You have already been unfaithful in your service to him; and how do you think you will receive wages from him?”

Chr. “Where, O Apollyon, have I been unfaithful to him?”

Apol. “You failed when you first began your journey, when you almost drowned in the Slough of Despond. You attempted wrong ways to get rid of your burden. You should have waited until your Prince had taken it off. You sinfully slept and lost your most prized possession: your roll. You were also almost persuaded to turn around at the sight of the lions. And when you talk about your journey, of what you have seen and heard, you are inwardly longing for your own glory in all that you say or do.”

Chr. “All this is true, and much more which you have left out. But the Prince whom I serve and
honor is merciful and ready to forgive. Besides, these sins were committed in your country. There I sinned and struggled under their weight. I have been sorry for them and have obtained pardon from my Prince.”

Apol. Then Apollyon broke out into a serious rage, saying, “I am an enemy of this Prince: I hate his person, his laws, and people. I have come out to fight you.”

Chr. “Apollyon, be careful about what you do. For I am on the King’s Highway, the way of holiness. Therefore, you had better watch out!”

Apol. Then Apollyon straddled the road in front of Christian and said, “I do not have any fear in this matter: prepare to die! I swear by my infernal home in hell that you will go no farther. Here I will spill your soul.” And with that, he threw a flaming dart at his chest. But Christian had a shield in his hand, and he intercepted it without any damage being done. Then Christian drew his sword, because he saw it was time to fight for his life. Apollyon attacked him vigorously, throwing darts as thick as hail. Christian did all he could to avoid the arrows, but Apollyon wounded him in his head, hand, and foot. This made Christian fall back. Apollyon, therefore, continued to pursue him violently. Christian again took up courage and resisted as manfully as he could. This intense combat lasted more than half a day until Christian was beyond exhaustion. For you must understand that Christian, because of his wounds, grew weaker and weaker.

Then Apollyon, seeing his opportunity, began to approach Christian, wrestled with him and knocked him to the ground. With that, Christian’s sword flew out of his hand. Then Apollyon said, “I have you now.” He almost crushed him to death, and Christian began to despair of life. But as God would have it, while Apollyon was getting ready for his final blow to put this good man to death, Christian quickly reached out his hand for his Sword and got it, saying, “Do not gloat over me, my enemy! Though I have fallen, I will arise.” And with that, he gave him a deadly thrust that made him stagger back like one who had received a mortal wound. Christian, perceiving that, came at him again, saying, “No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us.” And with that, Apollyon spread out his dragon’s wings and fled. For a while, Christian saw him no more.

Unless he had seen and heard what I did, no man can imagine the yelling and hideous roaring Apollyon did throughout the fight. He spoke like a Dragon. As for Christian, sighs and groans erupted from his heart. I never saw him during the battle give so much as one pleasant look until he knew he had wounded Apollyon with his two-edged sword. Then he smiled and looked up. It was the most horrifying thing I ever witnessed!

When the battle was over, Christian said, “Here I will give thanks to him who delivered me out of the lion’s mouth, to him who helped me against Apollyon.” And so he did, saying,

2. “Do not gloat over me, my enemy! Though I have fallen, I will rise. Though I sit in darkness, the LORD will be my light” (Mi. 7:8).

3. Rom. 8:37.

4. “Submit yourselves, then, to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you” (Jas. 4:7).
Great Beelzebub, the Captain of this Fiend,
Design'd my ruin; therefore to this end
He sent him harness'd out, and he with rage
That hellish was, did fiercely me engage:
But blessed Michael helped me, and I
By dint of Sword did quickly make him fly;
Therefore to him let me give lasting praise,
And thank and bless his holy name always.

Then a hand came to him, giving him some of the leaves of the Tree of Life. Christian took them and applied them to the wounds he had received in battle. He was healed immediately. He also sat down there to eat bread and to drink from the bottle that was given to him shortly before the battle. Being refreshed, he began his journey again with his Sword in hand, for he said, “Some other enemy may be nearby.” But he met with no other assault from Apollyon while he was in the Valley.

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