

John Bunyan's The Holy War

A modern English version

by Thelma H. Jenkins

Foreword by Dr D. Martyn Lloyd-Jones



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Foreword

Nothing, perhaps, provides us with a better index to the quality of life of an individual or a generation of Christian people, than their reading habits.

Many, alas, do not seem to read at all, but just spend their time in talking or arguing, or in attending an endless succession of meetings. Others read nothing but exciting and dramatised accounts of other people's experiences. Still others are interested only in books and booklets which deal with "the Christian attitude" to this, that and the other.

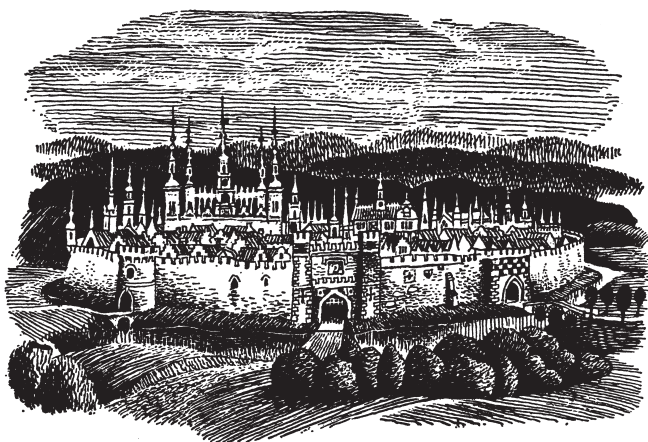
Most significant of all, however, is our attitude to the great classics of the Christian life, the books in which our forefathers delighted, and on which, next to the Bible itself, they fed their souls. In this category the works of John Bunyan always stood out prominently for some 250 years, and their neglect during the past 50 years exposes the pathetic superficiality of our generation.

It is said that the moderns find Bunyan difficult to read. Because of this, Mrs Thelma Jenkins, in her desire to introduce people to the riches of *The Holy War* in particular, has undertaken this labour of love. Her desire is, that as a result of reading it in this more modern idiom, many may be led to read Bunyan himself directly, and thereby experience untold blessings and great enrichment of their spiritual lives.

It is my pleasure to encourage this noble effort and my privilege to pray that God will bless it to that end.

D. M. Lloyd-Jones

Introduction



Mansoul

The City of Mansoul

This city is, of course, Man's Soul, which at the first God made holy and innocent. Bunyan's allegory shows, in word pictures, how man lost his first position of innocence by listening to the temptations of Satan, how he came under Satan's domination and the misery that followed, and how the Lord Jesus Christ came to rescue man from his bondage to Satan, casting out the evil within him and making his heart fit once more to be the dwelling-place of God. The story also illustrates the evil

consequences and misery of turning from the Lord and the tenderness of God in restoring the penitent backslider.

List of Characters

It may be that some who are new to the Christian faith will not easily recognise all the meaning hidden within this allegory. For this reason, a list of the main characters is given below for quick and easy reference whilst reading the story.

The Great King, El Shaddai	God the Father.
The Golden Prince, Emmanuel	God the Son.
The Lord Secretary	God the Holy Spirit.
The Captains Boanerges, Judgement, Conviction and Execution	The Law of God.
The Captains Faith, Good-hope, Love, Purity and Patience	The Gospel of God and the blessings and graces which accompany Emmanuel.
The Townsmen of Mansoul	The thoughts, emotions and feelings within man's soul.
Diabolus, the usurping prince and tyrant	The Devil.
Lucifer, Beelzebub, Legion, Apollyon	Various names used in the Scriptures to describe the Devil.
The Diabolonians	The evil, sinful thoughts, emotions and feelings within man's soul after the Fall.

Other characters will easily be understood by their actual names.



I

Mansoul listens to the tempter

There was once a fair and beautiful city called Mansoul. This city had been built by the great king El Shaddai for his own pleasure and delight and, of all the things made by this wise and good king, Mansoul was undoubtedly the masterpiece.

In the midst of the city was a famous and stately palace,¹ strong as a castle, yet beautiful enough to be the residence of so great a king. It had been built for this very purpose—that El Shaddai himself might dwell there and rule, alone, in wisdom and love. The wall of the town was exceedingly strong, being built in such a way that no enemy from outside could break in, and no harm could come to the

city, except by consent of the townsmen within. Five gates were set in the walls, for entering or leaving the city and these again, could never be opened by force from outside, but only by the willingness of those inside. The names of the gates were—Ear Gate, Eye Gate, Mouth Gate, Nose Gate and Feel Gate.

When Mansoul was first built by El Shaddai it was in perfect condition. There was provision of everything needful stored within its walls and it had the most excellent law that has ever been formed. There was not one deceitful person within its gates; all its men were true men, all loyal to each other, which was no small blessing. Over and above all this, Mansoul enjoyed the protection, favour and delight of the king's own presence (for so long as it remained true to him).

Now I must tell you that a great enemy arose against Mansoul: a mighty giant, who determined that he would overthrow the great king and have this fair city for his own dwelling. Who was this enemy? The Scriptures call him Satan, or Diabolus. At one time, he had been a high ranking servant of King El Shaddai, enjoying much honour and glory in his position. Sadly, however, his heart was lifted up in pride within him, so that he coveted the position of being next to El Shaddai himself, a dignity and honour that already belonged to the king's beloved son, Emmanuel.

Well, Diabolus plotted with a few of his ambitious companions and they agreed together to revolt against their king and seize the coveted position. How foolish they were, for the king and his son, possessing all knowledge, could not but know of their treason. Diabolus and his companions were convicted of this horrible conspiracy and not only were they cast out of their previous positions of honour and rank, they were also banished eternally from the courts of the king, never to expect any favour from him again.

Realising that they had forever forfeited their honour and the favour of their king, what did these miserable creatures do but add to their

former pride a terrible rage and malice against both El Shaddai and his son. As they roved from place to place, burning to find something of the king's upon which they might revenge themselves, they came at length to the city of Mansoul. Knowing that El Shaddai had built and beautified this place for himself, they were filled with horrible joy at the thought of making an assault upon, and perhaps of taking, the very delight of the king for their own possession.

"Now," they said, "we have found how to be revenged upon the king. Let us take counsel together, and see how we may best accomplish the capture of this city." They forthwith held a council of war and set themselves to answer these four questions. Shall we *all* show ourselves to the town of Mansoul, or send a representative? Shall we let them see us in our present ragged and beggarly condition? Shall we tell Mansoul plainly what we are after, or approach them with trickery and deceit? Shall we endeavour to shoot one of the principal men of the city; that is, the one who may cause us the most difficulty?

"In answer to the first question," said Diabolus, "I say no, we must not all show ourselves, lest we put the townspeople in a fright—because if they take alarm, we shall never win the town, since no-one can enter without their consent. Let a few, or even one, be sent to assault Mansoul and let *me* be that one."

The council all agreed to this and came to their next question. After some discussion, Beelzebub advised that Diabolus should definitely go in disguise—but *what* disguise?

"Why not go disguised as an animal?" suggested Lucifer. "You could take the form of one of those animals over which they have dominion? They would be less likely to suspect such a one of making an assault upon them."

This suggestion was received with applause and it was finally decided that Diabolus should take the form of a dragon, which was a familiar enough sight in those days.