



# What is an Allegory?

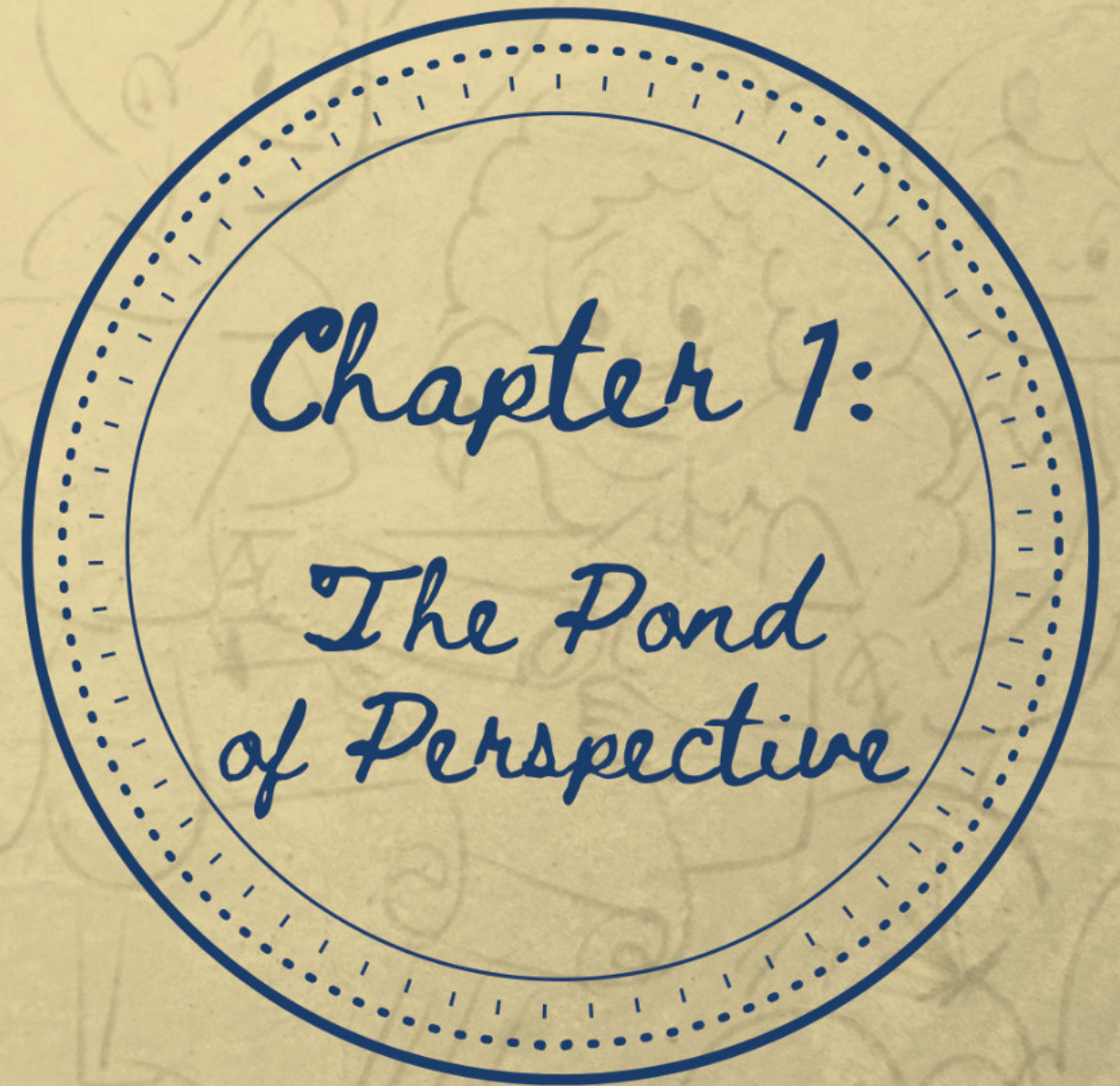
*The Pilgrim's Progress* is not an ordinary story. It was written as an allegory. An allegory is a story that has deep meaning, and all the people and places mentioned in an allegory are intended to teach us important lessons. To help make clear the meaning of this particular allegory, a short summary is included at the end of each chapter.

A pilgrim is someone who leaves home to go on a big journey. John Bunyan believed that the Christian life is like a pilgrimage, with many joys and trials on our way to heaven. *The Pilgrim's Progress* is the story of John Bunyan's experience as a Christian, but it represents the journey of all Christians.

This story vividly explores biblical themes as Jude, Eli, and Mercy seek to fulfill the King's Commission. This story focuses on the importance of the church, evangelism, fellowship, and service in the Christian life.

Our hope is that this book inspires you to serve Jesus with all the time he gives you, and whichever paths he leads you on. As C.T. Studd, a British missionary, once wrote:

Only one life,  
'twill soon be past,  
Only what's done  
for Christ will last.





As my journey through this world came to an end, I dreamed one last time.  
In my dream I saw a beautiful white dove flying through the clouds.  
It was carrying a scroll fastened shut with a wax seal.

I looked, and the dove flew gently down toward Jude, Eli, and Mercy.





The three children were playing in Beulah Land.  
Mercy sat down to rest, and the dove landed on her shoulder.  
She smiled. "Look! A letter! I wonder who it's from?"

"It must be from the King!" Eli said.  
"Maybe he'll call us into the Celestial City today."

Mercy opened the letter and read out loud: "My beloved children,  
I have called you by name, and now I am calling you to go out  
into the world. I am preparing a great banquet in my city,  
and all are welcome. Go throughout the towns and cities,  
the highways and the byways, and compel many people to come  
to the Celestial City."







Eli was delighted to receive a letter from the King, but he also felt a little scared. "I thought our difficult days were over," he said. "I don't want to leave Beulah Land."

"Neither do I," said Mercy. "This place is full of such peace and joy."

"But no joy compares to that of following the King," Jude said. "If he has called us, we must go."

But Eli whispered to himself, "I think I'll stay here."



As Jude and Mercy began to walk on,  
the dove began to fly around Eli's head. It began tugging at his shirt.  
"Hey!" Eli said, "Where are you pulling me?"

Jude and Mercy looked back at him.  
"There's a pond up ahead," said Jude.  
And Mercy said, "I think the dove wants us to go there."







They stepped to the edge of the pond and gazed at the water. “Look!” Eli said. “I see people walking around in darkness, as if they were blind. No one’s there to give them any light! What does this mean?”





Mercy looked closer. "Oh no!" she said.  
"I see poor children searching through the garbage for food.  
They're so sad! I think they're looking for a home."

She turned away and began to cry.  
"Is all this happening right now?" she said.  
"So many people living in this world without any hope?"



Jude looked closer as well, and he said,  
“I see big people talking meanly to little people.  
I see the strong taking advantage of the weak.  
I see the rich abusing the poor.”

He was filled with fury.  
“We can’t stay here while the world is so evil.  
We must go and preach the good news  
of the coming Kingdom!”

The other children agreed.  
“We can’t be selfish,” Eli said. And Mercy said,  
“Wherever the King leads—there we will go!”







The children skipped and jumped through Beulah Land and sang out:  
*The King has called us, and we will go  
to the ends of the earth to make him known.  
We'll tell of his love, his mercy, and grace,  
proclaiming the fame of his glorious name.*

And the Shining Ones above sang their own chorus:  
*What beautiful feet that bring good news,  
who tell of a Kingdom eternal and true!  
And what a joy one day it will be  
when the King reigns over all that we see.*





# Chapter 1 Summary

The dove in this chapter represents the Holy Spirit, who gives Christians boldness to share their faith with the world (2 Timothy 1:7). The scroll represents the Great Commission, which is the call that Jesus has given to all Christians to go and make disciples (Matthew 28:18-20).

In *Part II*, Christiana was called to go to the Celestial City, but Jude, Eli, and Mercy were left behind. Though we greatly desire to go to heaven, God has placed us on this earth for a purpose, and has prepared good works for us to do (Ephesians 2:10).

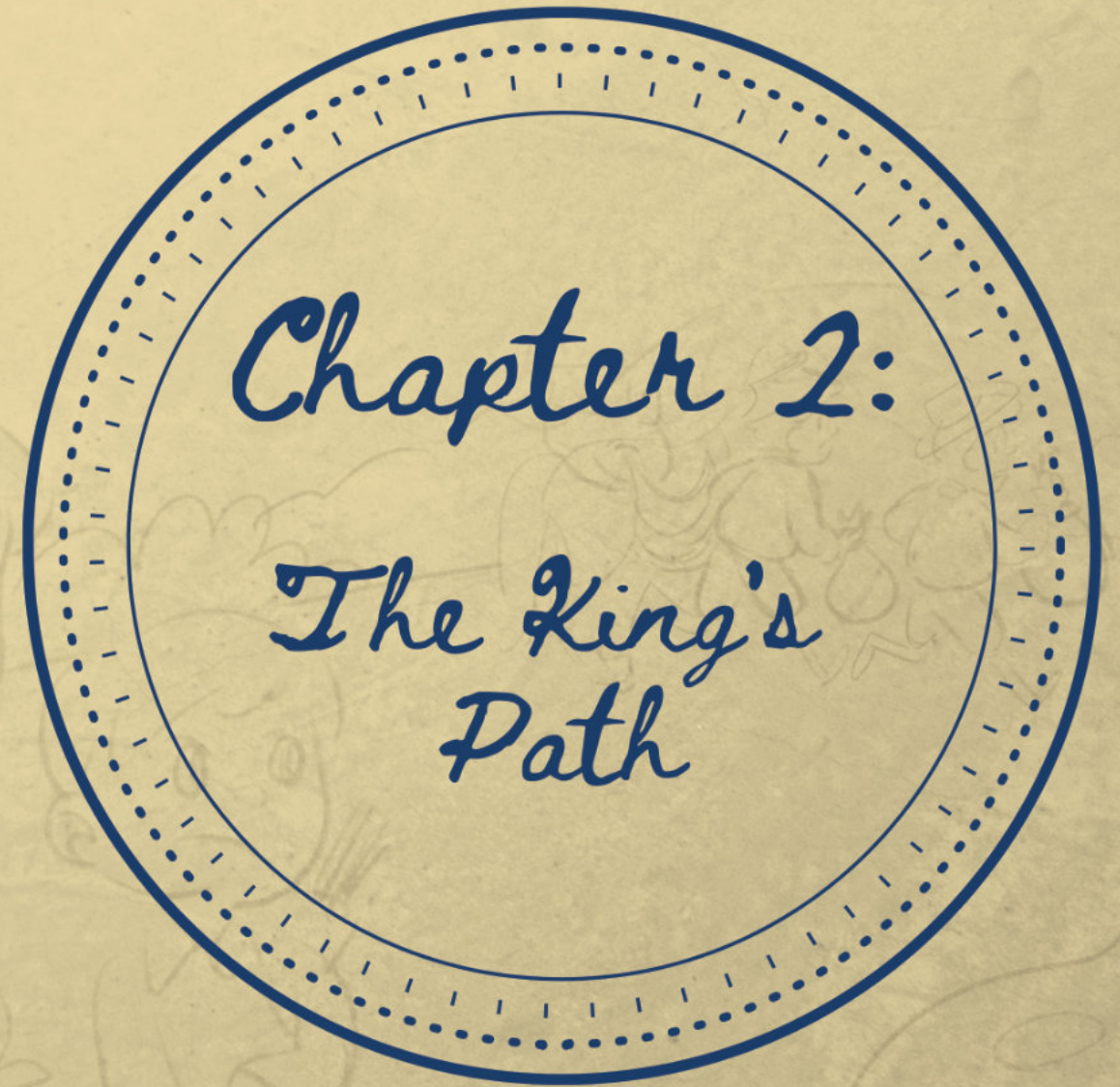
Though Jesus has called us to be his witnesses, we are often afraid to speak boldly because we fear people might reject us, or we might offend someone. Often we need perspective from God's Word to convict us and cause us to step out in faith. The Pond of Perspective represents the way God works in our hearts, moving us with compassion and love to share the hope we have with this lost world (1 Peter 3:15).

## Understanding the Allegory

1. Why did the dove bring a scroll to the children?
2. What did the children see in the Pond of Perspective?
3. How did Eli change his mind and decide to leave Beulah Land?

## Applying the Allegory

4. What has God called all Christians to do in this world?
5. How can we serve and share the gospel with others?



## Chapter 2:

## The King's Path