Chapter Two

SALVATION AND SPIRITUALITY

Each eye can have its vision separately, but when we are looking at anything our vision which in itself is divided, joins up and unites in order to give itself as a whole to the object that is put before it.

John Calvin

The term ‘salvation’ simply means deliverance or rescue. It might be rescue from perils, dangers, diseases, natural calamities, enemies and social evils – all connected with the temporal life, or it might be rescue from sin, suffering and evil which have eschatological\(^1\) connotations. Theologically salvation is “deliverance from sin and its consequences, and admission to heaven brought about by Christ” (“Salvation,” def.).

A study of salvation with regard to civilization or religion or literature shows that though the idea of salvation is varied, the craving for salvation is universal and time immemorial. Each civilization has its own sense of salvation. For instance in Teutonic Civilization salvation meant “delivery from evil spirits and from anything which they might bring about” (Craigie 149). To the Teutons, salvation as a state of happiness was to be achieved only “by fight and honest victory” (149). It was their belief that in the other world there will be a battle

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\(^1\) Christian eschatology is concerned with death, an intermediate state, heaven, hell, the return of Jesus, the resurrection of dead, a rapture, a great tribulation, the Millennium, end of the world, the last judgment, a new heaven and a new earth, and the ultimate consummation of all of God’s purposes. The Second Coming of Christ is the central event in Christian eschatology, and the Book of Revelation, the last book of the Bible, is at the core of Christian eschatology.
between all that is good and all that is evil. Finally “a great and mighty one will drive all evil to Niflheim (hell) while all the good will be gathered together in the home of eternal bliss” (150). Whereas in the Teutonic civilization, the fighting aspect was stressed, in the Babylonian civilization self-sacrifice was counted. The belief of the Babylonians was that, “their involuntary sins were expiated by punishment in this world, and every good man was regarded as going and dwelling evermore with the deity whom he had worshipped and served faithfully during his life time” (Pinches 109).

Salvation was an integral part of Egyptian civilization also. It was believed that “the blessed dwell in heaven as the ultimate companions of the Sun God” (Blackman 132). The deceased man was believed to get “a favourable verdict at the posthumous trial,” only if he had been religious during his life on earth. Also the tendency was to regard the diseased as “righteous or justified not on his own merits but owing to his identification with Osiris, his personality and acts becoming merged in those of his righteous and ‘justified prototype” (Blackman 132). For the Iranians, salvation meant delivery from evil – moral and physical in this life. They depended on their own good thoughts and good works and good deeds, not on the merits of a Saviour to acquire merits. In short, each man had to “work out his own salvation” (Casartelli 137).

Salvation figures as a theme in literary writings. As Abdul Shamin A. Khan says, “. . . the very concept of salvation presupposes its preceding factors: sin and suffering. Therefore ‘salvation’ has to be understood in terms of ‘sin’ and ‘suffering’” (144). Salvation, sin and suffering had mostly religious meaning and
connotation in writings before Renaissance. But as Avadhesh Kumar Singh says, “The term ‘Sin’ lost its religious meaning and connotations due to changed situation and man’s changed perception of things around him” (20). Still quite a few writers dealt with the theme of salvation and sin, but their ideas for the most part concerned about the sin, suffering and salvation in this worldly matter only.

Kabir Kapoor in his Sin, Suffering and Salvation gives three kinds of definition of sin, and points out three models and three themes taken up in English literature. The first model deals with sin as “disobedience to God,” the second with sin as “violation of ethical laws” and third, “sexual relationship that does not conform to the society or church” (7). “Pride, covetousness, lust, anger, gluttony, envy and sloth are described as seven deadly sins in literature,” says Abha Pandey (98). The varied idea of sin in different works has led critics to view sin differently. To Nathaniel Hawthorn, according to Sewak Nayyar, “the sin of intellectual pride which leads the person to estrangement and isolation from humanity is the Unpardonable Sin” (qtd. in Korde 61). Deeple Tiwari and Gurpreet Dua feel that “Sin is an offence against reason, truth and right conscience” (193). B.S. Korde in his “Sin, suffering and salvation in Nathaniel Hawthorne’s The Scarlet Letter says that “For Byam, the sin in The Scarlet Letter is to forget the claims of society” (56). According to Singh, “For Hamlet, it would be nothing less than sin if he does not fulfil his duty towards his deceased father by taking revenge against the murderer of his father” (21). Langland sees sin “as a failure in truth and love, a failure for which a sort of bloody – minded ignorance was partly responsible . . .” (Coghill 8).
Salvation is attained through various ways. According to Anjana Pandey, in J.D. Salinger’s *The Catcher in the Rye*, the chief character Seymour chooses “the path of religious study” to “shake off his sins and attain salvation” (105). Korde has pointed out that in *The Scarlet Letter*, Hester is believed to achieve salvation by “resorting to selfless service to the needy” (61). In *The Ugliest Pilgrim* by Doris Betts, Violet Karl, the protagonist wants to have her disfigured face healed, and to her salvation is “deliverance from the physical aberration that has made her an outcast” (Frazier 4242). Rajguru has pointed out that writers like Emerson and Tagore see salvation “as the removal of obstacles in the realization of man’s real self, his overcoming of hindrances in the constant process of becoming what principally and fundamentally man is” (175).

Not all writers express hope of salvation. According to Samuel Hynes, William Golding’s vision is that “man is fallen, evil is actual, suffering is certain, redemption is necessary but unlikely” (Stine 169). But there are writers like Langland, Bunyan, Flannery O’commor and Graham Green who are not without hope for man’s redemption. Both Langland and Bunyan think of the world as a wilderness, and dream of a remedy, salvation. Many characters in the novels of Graham Greene are motivated purely by evil, but their stories involve a fall and salvation.

The sense of sin and salvation varies in different religions. In primitive times salvation was considered as relief from mostly perils connected with the temporal life and the miseries of the body. The Vedic man wanted to be delivered from human and super human enemies – gods as well as demons, disease, curse
and other calamities (Estborn 20). As new religions were found, the idea of evil, sin and salvation started taking new turns. In Hinduism:

Salvation is from the power and grip of *Karma* to a union with the divine, when there will be no further rebirth to the servitude and misery of a life on earth—or as the Hindu teaching would prefer to express it, no more ‘recurrent death’ (*punarmrityu*) – but in its place a changeless passionless immortality (*amritatvam*). (Geden 137)

In Buddhism salvation means escape from *dukka* that is caused by ignorance and desire, and final salvation is the extinction of life, the cessation of existence as a conscious self - in *nirvana* (Estborn 21). In Islam salvation means ‘escape’ from future punishment, and it lies in the performance of the five duties of Islam: the recital of the creed, the saying of the five daily prayers, fasting, the payment of legal alms and the pilgrimage to Mecca. He who does these things is in a state of salvation, though whether he will really attain to salvation he cannot say, as it depends ultimately on the arbitrary decree of God concerning him (Sell 149).

A study of salvation as explicated in the Bible and which forms the basis for the Christian doctrine of salvation needs a detailed study here as it helps in the understanding of Bunyan’s theme of salvation, which in spite of its apparent Calvinist or Lutheran overtones, is entirely and purely biblical only. The Bible records the historical salvation of mankind. Greene in his *Meaning of Salvation* has made an elaborate study of biblical salvation. The creed of Israel is “Yahweh saves” (Kilpatrick 111). The first humans disobey God’s commandment, and
their relationship with God is estranged. God makes a covenant to rectify the estranged relationship. As Green says, “From the story of God’s rescue of Noah and his family from the flood to that graphic picture of the final destiny of God’s saved people, as the Bride of Christ, in the heavenly Jerusalem, God is seen to be at work in the rescue of man” (111). It can also be found that God has been faithful in his covenantal relationship. In Greene’s opinion, the exodus of the Israelites, the historical emblem of salvation was “the promise and the warrant of the great salvation of the end time” (19). The old covenant made with Moses entails the Ten Commandments which were meant to purge and purify the nation which God had consecrated to be the cradle of the Saviour of mankind. But there are ups and downs in the history of Israel. And the constantly repeated pattern is deliverance from enemies when they are repentant and obedient, and defeat and loss of the sense of God’s presence when they become proud and sinful.

Salvation can be seen as not just rescue from enemies. It is seen as rescue from sin also. Isaiah sees man’s righteousness as “filthy rags” (64:6), and salvation as “a garment made by God to clothe the man of his choice” (61: 10). He expresses doubt about salvation when he says that “... it is far off from us. For our transgressions are multiplied before thee, and our sins testify against us” (59:11-12), but expresses hope when he says that “there was no intercessor: therefore his own arm brought salvation . . .” (59: 16). The new covenant which figures much in the New Testament doctrine of salvation is voiced forth by the prophet Ezekiel who says, “And I will put my spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments, and do them” (36:27).
Most of all salvation as a means of establishing right relationship with God, by forgiveness of sins is echoed in Isaiah’s writing. Jehovah’s righteous servant will put many in a right relationship with God, for “he shall bear their iniquities” (53:11). And really as the Psalmist says, God made a gate “into which the righteous shall enter” (118: 20). The promised Saviour appeared, fulfilling the Old Testament prophecy, and was called Jesus “for he shall save his people from their sin” (Matt. 1:21). As Greene says, “The sacrificial blood which dedicated the new covenant was his own, and it achieved the forgiveness of sins to which Jeremiah had looked longingly forward” (107). The Saviour Christ’s teachings, as recorded in the synoptic gospels, stress the pre-requisites for salvation. Endurance is indispensable to salvation. Each man has to “strive to enter in at the strait gate” (Luke 13:24), and “endure unto the end” (Mark 13:13). Reliance on God’s mercy and not self-righteousness is what is needed for experiencing salvation. The publican who cries, “God be merciful to me as a sinner” (Luke 18:14) goes down to his house justified. The self-righteous Pharisee does not.

As Greene opines, “Salvation is inseparable from the person and work of Jesus, and that is why there is more about it in the Epistles than in the Gospels” (115). The various Epistles of Paul, James, Peter, John and Jude, all point towards salvation. In Paul’s Epistles, salvation is projected as something that could be acquired by both the Jews and the gentiles alike. According to Paul, a man has to be saved from the wrath of God, from sin, from law and from death and also freed from the spiritual being, who “worketh in the children of disobedience” (Eph. 2:2). Law which was meant to expose sin, when used as a
ground, for claiming merit will become “the strength of sin” (I Cor. 15:56). Man cannot be justified by law for he is cursed who “who continueth not in all things written in the book of the law to do them” (Gal 3:10). He can be justified only by Christ who “hath made him to be sin for us who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him” (I Cor. 5:21). It is Paul’s strong conviction that believers in the gospel of salvation will be sealed with the “Holy Spirit of promise” (Eph. 1:13) which had been promised long also, and be regenerated through renewed repentance, constant faith and prayer. How the gentiles could apprehend salvation is evident in Paul’s Epistles. Through Jesus Christ the blessing of Abraham will come on the Gentiles. Through faith they can receive “the promise of the Spirit” (Gal. 3:14).

The work of the Christ as mediator is best explained in Hebrews. Salvation is caused by Christ’s priestly work. Christ is the high priest who offered himself as a sacrifice. Christ himself has been the sacrifice, so that, a believing man can boldly enter the throne of grace through his flesh. As Green explains: “Christ identified with the sin of man, in order that, united with him by faith, we might be identified with the very righteousness of God (165). Warning is given lest any man should fall after the same example of unbelief, like the Israelites who failed to inherit the Promised Land (Heb. 4:11).

In short, salvation as is evident from Paul’s writings is attained through a transition from the old covenant to the new covenant, which is actualized by the justification of the sinner through what Christ achieved for the entire mankind upon the cross. The ultimate salvation is essentially corporate. The whole of the
redeemed will reflect the Redeemer. The salvation promised by God has its fulfilment in the other world, where original oneness is restored, in the apocalyptic\textsuperscript{2} new Paradise, as described in the Book of Revelation (22: 1-5).

The biblical salvation has thus a full and wholesome plan. In the words of Richardson:

\begin{quote}
There is no divorce or contradiction between the historical and the eschatological, because the former by becoming active in the present, and no mere past-and-gone event, is the matrix and type of the latter; the eschatological salvation, even now active in the present, is the final realization beyond history of that which the historical redemption foreshadowed and promised. Past, present and future constitute, not three deliverances but one deliverance. (qtd. in Green 34)
\end{quote}

That was why Paul used that plan of historical salvation as a pattern of salvation in his teachings. It is Paul’s conviction that law serves as a schoolmaster to bring man to Christ” (Gal. 3:24) and once he is Christ’s he becomes the heir according to the promise.

Bunyan’s idea of salvation, as is amply evident from his writings both theological and literary, is biblical and Pauline. His theology and doctrines ensue as a result of his careful reading of the Bible, especially the mysteries revealed by Paul. An exposition of Bunyan’s soteriology or doctrine of salvation is

\textsuperscript{2} An Apocalypse is a disclosure of something hidden from the majority of mankind in an era-dominated by falsehood and misconception, i.e., the veil to be lifted. The book of Revelation is the only apocalyptic document in the New Testament Canon.
imperative here because it shows not only how much his idea is biblical but also in what way he is different from Calvin.

Michael Davies observes rightly:

Bunyan’s theology is based strictly upon the covenant model of a promise (promissio) or a testament (as in a deed of covenant or will) through which salvation is to be received by the sinner as something ensured as a promise or as a right of inheritance . . . all that is required is to accept one’s righteousness (as promised and bequeathed to us by Christ) through faith. (32)

However, it cannot be denied that Bunyan's theology is always associated with Calvinism. Calvinism is the system of theological belief associated with the name of John Calvin, who was a Frenchman by birth and a Swiss in virtue of his connexion with Geneva. He moulded his doctrines into a logically articulated system which came in the form of his *Institutes*. The first book treats of the knowledge of God the Creator, the second of the knowledge of God the Redeemer, the third, of the work of the Holy Spirit. Here Calvin treats of faith and repentance, of free justification, of the sanctification of the believer and his doctrine of eternal election to salvation, with its logical counterpart, in his view-the reprobation of the wicked (Orr 147). Calvin's two fold predestination, by which God adopts some to the hope of life and adjudges others to eternal death, is generally regarded as its characteristic feature. Other doctrines include his doctrine of hereditary corruption, universal depravation and complete loss of freedom on the part of man or total depravity (Orr 147), vocation, effectual
calling efficacious grace and regeneration. By efficacious grace he means the
grace which renews the will and restores it to its true freedom – which so acts up
that it freely chooses the good (150). Regeneration is a spiritual work wrought in
the souls of the elect and of them alone. The elect persevere but the seed of their
perseverance is already implanted in them in regeneration (151).

The English Reformation was deeply influenced by Calvininism. The
theology of the Church of England in the latter half of the sixteenth and the
beginning of the seventeenth century was Calvinistic. Orr says, “The soul of
English Puritanism was its Calvinism” (154). Neal defines a Puritan as “a man of
severe morals, a Calvinist in doctrine, and a Nonconformist to the ceremonies and
discipline of the Church, though not totally separated from it” (qtd. in Orr 154).
Later only the Church of England came to be predominantly Arminian³.

Due to certain similarities in the pattern of thought between Bunyan’s
theology and Calvin’s theology, there was, and is, a tendency to associate
Bunyan’s with Calvinist theology. For instance, both hold the same views on
certain matters relating to salvation, like, belief in man’s depravity, futility of
man’s work-righteousness, eternal election and unmerited grace of God. Also

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³ Arminianism is a school of soteriological thought within Protestant Christianity, originally based
on the theological ideas of the Dutch Reformed Theologian Jacobus Arminius (1609). The clearest
and most concise form of explanation can be by way of five points, (1) Free-will or Human
Ability, (2) Conditional Election, (3) Universal Redemption or General Atonement, (4) The Holy
Spirit can be effectively resisted, and (5) Falling from Grace. According to Arminianism:
Salvation is accomplished through the combined efforts of God (who takes the initiative) and man
(who must respond) a man’s response being the determining factor. God has provided salvation
for everyone, but His provision becomes effective only for those who, of their own free-will,
“choose” to cooperate with Him and accept His offer of grace. At the crucial point, man’s will
plays a decisive role; thus man, not God, determines who will be recipients of the Gift of Salvation.
both consider the covenant as the promise of God, not a contract with God, and in that way are distinguished from other divines like the German theologian Bucer and the Swiss theologian Zwingli who interpret the covenant as a contract (M. Davies 34). But it should be remembered that Bunyan’s doctrine of salvation shares basic similarities not only with Calvin’s, but also with Luther’s. In fact Calvin and Luther even have the same views on justification by faith, and regeneration of faith. What is obvious then is, there are similarities in the doctrines of Calvin, Luther and Bunyan. But that does not account for Bunyan’s theology to be labelled as Calvinistic or Lutheran.

Salvation ensured as a covenant is understood differently by divines. Many orthodox and moderate divines of the early seventeenth and late seventeenth century understood God’s covenant with Abraham as essentially “a bargain (pactum) made between God and humans” (M. Davies 32). In that mutual covenant, importance rested on faith and good works. Now, the way in which Bunyan understands the covenant is different. It is more akin to Paul’s understanding. According to Bunyan the covenant was not made with God and the creature. It was made “between the Father and the Son long before it was accomplished, or manifestly sealed with Christ’s blood; it was made before the world began” (DLGU 77; Tit. 1:2; Eph. 1:4; I Peter 1: 18-20). In the Doctrine of Law and Grace Unfolded he says: “Not that the covenant was made with Abraham and Christ together, as two persons that were the undertakers of the same; the promise was made with, or to, Abraham afterwards; but the covenant with Christ before” (40). Bunyan’s argument is that Adam, Noah, Abraham or
David are not to be considered as undertakers in the covenant, for then Christ will not be the sole mediator. Rather they are to be considered as “types” (DLGU 41) of Jesus Christ with whom the covenant was made as a confirming promise of salvation.

The terms of the covenant between God the Father and the Son were that, the Son should pay the price “for sinners, even the precious blood of Christ” (DLGU 41; I Peter 1: 20, 21) and God would grant eternal life to the choice “made then, even before man had a being in this world . . .” (DLGU 41). In The Doctrine of Law and Grace Unfolded, Bunyan writes that the new covenant emphasized in the Bible is actually the manifestation of the Everlasting Covenant that was concluded on before time between the Father and the Son (55).

According to Bunyan, Christ is “the surety of the new covenant” (DLGU 44, Heb. 7:21-22), “the Messenger of the new covenant” (DLGU 46; Matt. 3:1), “the sacrifice of the new covenant” (DLGU 48) and “the High Priest of the new covenant” (DLGU 50; Hebrews 3:1). For this reason Bunyan wants the scripture, “Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah” (Jer 31: 31) to be understood as “a changing of the administration, taking away the type, the shadow, the ceremonies from the house of Israel and Judah, and relieving by . . . the offering of the body of Him . . .” (DLGU 42) and not understood as a covenant made between God and man.
This new covenant, Bunyan calls, the “Covenant of Grace”. Bunyan always sets the new covenant in opposition to the old covenant or Covenant of Works. But he believes like Paul that the moral law cannot by man’s obedience to it deliver man from the curse. As Christ “did every way completely satisfy that which was offended by our disobedience to the former covenant” (56), the righteousness of God, which is by faith of Jesus Christ is imputed to “them that believe” (DLGU 39; Rom. 3:22). Thus man is justified by faith without the works of the law. But faith itself is just an instrument through which he receives God’s righteousness. This grace, the promise of God’s forgiveness, mercy and eternal life is both embodied and accomplished in Christ’s ministry upon the earth and in his death upon the cross.

According to Bunyan, man passes through the Covenant of Works before he comes within the Covenant of Grace, for it is his conviction that “When God brings sinners into the Covenant of Grace, He doth first kill them with the Covenant of Works, which is the moral law or Ten Commandments” (DLGU 64).

Bunyan echoes Paul when he says that “the new covenant promises are more sure than the old . . . ” (DLGU 77-78), God’s promise is immutable as it is

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4 The Covenant of Grace that figures in Bunyan’s works is the new covenant. For Bunyan the word “grace” in Romans 6:14 is to be understood of the free love of God in Christ to sinners, by virtue of the new covenant, in delivering them from the power of sin from the curse and condemning power of the old covenant, from the destroying nature of sin, by its continual workings” (DLGU 38).

5 The Covenant of Works or the law that figures in Bunyan’s works “is the law delivered upon Mount Sinai to Moses, in two tables of stone, in ten particular branches or heads” (DLGU 9). To be under the law as it is a Covenant of Works, is to be bound, upon pain of eternal damnation, to fulfil, and that completely and continually, every particular point of the Ten Commandments, by doing them” (DLGU 12).
“confirmed by an oath” (64) and as his children we can “lay hold upon the hope set before us” (DLGU 44; Heb. 6: 17).

It cannot be denied that Bunyan believes in calling, election and predestination. All his treatises and narrative works reveal his belief in election. But that does not mean he is an advocate of election. In The Doctrine Law and Grace Unfolded, he very clearly says, “. . . thou shalt not know thy election in the first place …” (103). In fact, he refers to his fears regarding election as “temptations” (GA 37) only. But in order to assert his doctrine of grace over works, he stresses election. He encourages those who have come under the new covenant, to consider the doctrine of election as a source of comfort that God won’t forsake them, no matter what the trials and troubles and persecutions and temptations are. That is why Davies writes: “. . . the saved are according to Bunyan the ‘Elect’ given by God to Christ and whose salvation depends upon a divine ‘Act of electing Love’” (M. Davies 45).

Bunyan’s belief in election never encourages him to be an Antinomian. In his Doctrine Law and Grace Unfolded he says, “. . . the doctrine of the new covenant doth call for holiness, engage to holiness and maketh the children of the covenant to take pleasure therein. Let no man therefore conclude . . . that the doctrine of the Gospel is a licentious doctrine” (95). In The Barren Fig Tree he gives a severe warning to the person who tries to “turn the grace of our God into lasciviousness” (88).

Antinomian Theology – The doctrines of belief that the Gospel frees Christians from required obedience to any law, whether scriptural, civil, or moral, and that salvation is attained through faith and the gift of divine grace. It refers to the doctrine that it is not necessary for Christians to preach and/or obey the moral law of the Old Testament.
Bunyan cannot be counted as Arminian for he is not a supporter of freewill. At the same time it can be found that he does give importance to the will. In his *Heavenly Footman* he says:

I tell you the will is all: that is one of the chief things which turns the wheel either backwards or forwards; and God knoweth that full well, and so likewise doth the devil; and therefore they both endeavour very much to strengthen the will of their servant. God, he is, for making of his a willing people to serve him; and the devil, he doth what he can to possess the will and affection of those that are his, with love to sin. (19)

Bunyan is one with Paul in believing that “it is God which worketh in you both to will and do of his good pleasure (Phil. 2:13). That is why in his *Heavenly Footman* he encourages one to “cry hard to God to inflame thy will for heaven and Christ” (19) so that “tipt with the heavenly grace . . . thou goest full speed for heaven” (20).

Bunyan says “Before thou canst know whether thou are elected, thou must believe in Jesus Christ . . .” (*DLGU* 103). The important thing in Bunyan’s soteriology is, whether one is a believer of the promises of the Everlasting Covenant. It is Bunyan’s conviction that for their weakness of faith, and doubt in the everlasting nature of the new covenant that “the very saints have so many ups and downs in this their travel towards Heaven . . .” (79).

Bunyan always extends a call to the sinners. The comforting part of his doctrine is that he encourages one to come as the basest sinner. In his *Doctrine of*
Grace Unfolded he says, “... if there be any souls that be now willing to venture their salvation upon the merits of a naked Jesus, there is still a promise holds forth itself to such a soul where Christ saith, ‘Him that cometh to me, I will in no wise’, for nothing that he hath done, ‘cast him out’” (DLGU 100-01; John 6:37). We may thus safely conclude with Michael Davies when he says, “Despite the terms of election and predestination which Bunyan uses, his doctrine finally encourages all sinners to discover themselves as elect through faith in any case” (24).

Bunyan’s ideas on predestination, calling, adoption, justification by Christ’s blood, Everlasting Covenant and promises, as manifested in his works, are reasonable conclusions drawn from Paul’s Epistles to Romans, Philippians, Colossians, Timothy and also from Hebrews, whose author is mentioned as the Apostle Paul, in the King James Version of the Bible. In fact, Bunyan himself in his Heavenly Footman writes, “As Paul saith” when he quotes the scripture from Hebrews 10. It thus becomes amply evident that Bunyan’s doctrines and theology are entirely biblical and Pauline.

There is nothing incongruous in his theology and doctrines. Paul talks about election while at the same time encourages one to “run” for the crown (1 Cor. 9: 24-25) and labour “to enter into that rest, lest any man fall after the same example of belief” (Heb. 4:11). An avid reader of the Bible, Bunyan would not have thought it incongruous when he expressed his belief on election at the same time the need to labour.

Bunyan’s exhortation for conversion, despite his stress on election has led Greaves to term the evangelical face of his Calvinism he notices in Bunyan’s
works as ‘pastoral Arminianism’ (171). But the fact is, as understood from Bunyan’s comment in his *Barren Fig tree*, just as the author of Hebrews is very clear that “Although the works were finished from the foundation of the world” (Heb 4:3), because of the unbelief of the hard hearted Israelites whom he had saved out of the land of Egypt “God swore in his wrath, that they shall not enter into his rest” (Heb. 4:3), Bunyan is also very clear that

. . . what preparations soever are made for the salvation of sinners, and of how long continuance soever they are, yet the God-tempting, God provoking and fruitless professor, is like to go without a share therein, “although the works were finished from the foundation of the world.” (24)

Bunyan’s belief can be further confirmed by his reply to one objector’s comment that “one may sin and sin again, seeing Christ hath made satisfaction” (*DLGU* 81). He replies:

. . . as God’s covenant with Christ for His children, which are of faith, stands sure, immutable, unrevocable, and unchangeable, so also hath God taken a course with thee, that unless thou canst make God forswear Himself, it is impossible that thou shouldst go to Heaven, dying in that condition – “They tempted Me, proved Me,” and turned the grace of God into lasciviousness, ‘so I sware . . . and that in My wrath, too, that they should never enter into My rest’. (*DLGU* 81)
The fact that the Jews “for their barrenness were cut down and more fruitful people put in their room” \((BFT 19)\) made him utter a warning to the fruitless professors, lest they be cut down and more fruitful people put in their room. And in this Bunyan is different from Calvin who “could explain how the people of Israel had been the object of an election, in the proper meaning of the word, but had lost the benefit of that grace, while the believer who is the object of a special election cannot be deprived of it,” and who would “insist upon the fact that the election of Israel is something very different from election to salvation in Jesus Christ” \((Mairet 280)\).

The essence of the entirety of the theologico-literary gambit of Bunyan’s creative rendezvous would thus, clearly point to the evolution of his quest for salvation and ‘spirituality’ which is basically biblical, although there have been subtle theological and technical niceties of Calvinist and Lutheran impact on Bunyan.

As a corollary to the idea of salvation is the idea of spirituality. If restoration of relationship between man and God is taken to be the ultimate end of salvation, spirituality is the inner craving of a person to be in union with God. “The quest for spirituality is instinctual and innate,” says Ladislaus \((3)\). “As the hart panteth after the water brooks, so panteth my soul after thee” is the cry of the Psalmist \((Ps. 42:1)\). According to Swami Vivekananda: “The ultimate goal of all mankind, the aim and end of all religions is but one, re-union with God” \((CW 5:592)\). Joseph Ladislaus rightly describes the term ‘spirituality’ as “… a theologico-philosophic concept that accounts for the irresistible inner quest in
every human person for union with the Absolute and the eternal longing for fellowship with God (30).

Bunyan’s quest for salvation and spirituality is a personal quest to be in communion with God and be cured of all kinds of sin that would estrange him from his maker and creator, but in the process of his evolution as a never-failing seeker with an undying thirst for the ultimate, the personal quest broadens itself religio-spiritually in a quest for the corporate release of the sinful trials of the entire mankind. The quest for salvation and spirituality, in short, metaphorically becomes a quest that is at once universal, cutting across the temporal and spatial contours, obviously resulting in a quest for the salvation of the entire humankind, men and women, the crown and glory of God’s creation.

A re-reading might necessitate three steps. The first is about the work on which the re-reading is attempted. The second is how it has been interpreted or misinterpreted so far, and the third, the way in which it is proposed to be interpreted. All the three works taken for study *Grace Abounding to the Chief of Sinners*, *The Pilgrim’s Progress* and *The Holy War* are literary pieces with a theological and spiritual theme. So, in the next three chapters, the three narratives are respectively, first assessed for their literary value, then analysed in the light of past understanding, and finally interpreted contextually and eclectically in the backdrop of the current Bunyan scholarship, and evaluated squarely on the basis of the appropriate application of the holy Scriptures from the standpoint of the proposed perspective.