

Activity 18.1 - The language of *The Pilgrims Progress*

1

- his reason was, for that the Valley was altogether without *Honour*;
- ... but he could not be silent long, because that his trouble increased.
- So the other told him, that by that he was gone some distance from the Gate, he would come at the House of the *Interpreter* ...
- ... all is not worth to be compared with a little of that that I am seeking to enjoy.

Examples of functions of *that*,

- following a conjunction, *for that* and *because that*,
- by that*, meaning *by the time that*. Both uses are now obsolete constructions.
- that that* - demonstrative pronoun + relative pronoun - still grammatical but stylistically *that which* is likely to be preferred.

2

- .. by reason of a burden that lieth hard upon me:
- The shame that attends Religion, lies also as a block in their way:
- Why came you not in at the Gate which standeth at the beginning of the way? How stands it between God and your Soul now?

Verb inflections marking 3rd person singular, present tense. Both <-eth> and <-s> used, suggesting a period of transitional usage when both forms could be heard.

3

- ... but the ground is good when they are once got in at the Gate.
- I thought so; and it is happened unto thee as to other weak men.
- So when he was come in, and set down, they gave him something to drink;
- There was great talk presently after you was gone out ...

A now obsolete use of *be* as auxiliary verb with intransitive verbs to mark perfective aspect.

4

- Then said *Pliable*, Don't revile;
- My Brother, I did not put the question to thee, for that I doubted of the truth of our belief my self ...
- Well then, did you not know about ten years ago, one *Temporary*?
- Nay, methinks I care not what I meet with in the way ...
- Why came you not in at the Gate which standeth at the beginning of the way?

In MnE the auxiliary verb *do* is grammatically essential in marking the negative for simple past and present - *I don't/didn't care*. The forms *I care not*, *I cared not* are archaic. Bunyan's use of both is evidence of a transitional period of usage.

5

- But my good Companion, do you know the way...?
- ... dost thou see this narrow way?
- Wherefore dost thou cry?
- But now we are by our selves, what do you think of such men?
- ... how many, think you, must there be?
- Know you not that it is written ...?
- Whence came you, and whither do you go?

The use of *do* as auxiliary verb in simple present and past tense interrogatives is parallel to that in marking negatives, and Bunyan's use of both constructions does not seem to be other than a random choice.

6

- Oh, did he light upon you?
- Know him! Yes, he dwelt in *Graceless* ...
- I thought I shoud a been killed there ...
- If this Meadow lieth along by our way side, lets go over into it.
- But did you tell them of your own sorrow? Yes, over, and over, and over.
- ... the remembrance of which will stick by me as long as I live.
- Joseph was hard put to it by her ...
- ... but it is ordinary for those ... to give him the slip, and return again to me.
- He said it was a pitiful low sneaking bufiness for a Man to mind Religion.
- ... let us lie down here and take one Nap.

These quotations all contain colloquialisms which belong to informal speech and conversation.

7

All these quotations contain now archaic and obsolete words or usages:

- I beshrow him for his counsel;

beshrew (from OE *screawa*) *to curse*

- ... and he wot not what to do.

Present tense of the obsolete verb *to wit*; past tense was *wist*.

- Who can tell how joyful this Man was, when he had gotten his Roll again!

Older past participle of the verb *get*; current in American English.

- The Shepherds had them to another place, in a bottom, where was a door in the side of an Hill.
- He went on thus, even untill he came at a bottom ...

Obsolete meaning of *bottom* as *low-lying land, a valley, a dell*.

-
- ... out of the mouth of which there came in an abundant manner Smoak, and Coals of fire, with hideous noifes.

The spelling *smoak* was current from the 16th to the early 19th centuries. The <oa> spelling was originally introduced to distinguish the half open back vowel [ɔ] from the half close [o], spelt <oo>.

- And did you presently fall under the power of this conviction?

The meaning of *presently* has fluctuated over the centuries between *now*, *at once* and *soon*. Currently there is still divided usage and the accompanying controversy.

- But is there no hopes for such a Man as this?

The plural form *hopes* was used in a singular sense during the 17th and 18th centuries.

- They was then asked, If they knew the Prifoner at the Bar?

Common form of *be* with plural subject; colloquial usage.

- ... but get it off my felf I cannot
- ... abhor thy felf for hearkning unto him

Self was originally a separate word used emphatically, “in concord with a noun or pronoun, to indicate emphatically that the reference is to the person or thing mentioned and not, or not merely, to some other.”

8

- The hearing of this is enough to ravish ones heart.
- A Lot that often falls from bad mens mouths upon good mens Names.

A reminder that the apostrophe <’s> was not established to mark possessives until the 18th century (cf the title of *The Pilgrims Progress*). Its original use was to mark an elided <e>.
