

WORLDLY SAINTS



The Puritans
As They
Really Were

Leland Ryken

Foreword by J.I. Packer

A PDF COMPANION TO THE AUDIOBOOK

WORLDLY SAINTS

Copyright © 1986

by Leland Ryken

First paperback edition 1990

Requests for information should be addressed to:

Zondervan Publishing House

Grand Rapids, Michigan 49530

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Ryken, Leland

Worldly saints.

"Academie books."

Bibliography: p.

Includes index.

1. Puritans. 2. Reformed Church. I. Title.

BX9322.R94 1986 285'.9 86-15862

ISBN 0-310-32501-3

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form or by any means — electronic, mechanical, photocopy, recording, or any other — except for brief quotations in printed reviews, without the prior permission of the publisher.

Edited by James E. Ruark

Designed by Louise Bauer and James E. Ruark

Printed in the United States of America

95 96 97 98 99 / DH / 10 9 8 7



The Puritans were worldly saints. As this painting of the first Thanksgiving in America shows, the Puritans had a zest for earthly life accepted as God's gift. Brownscombe, *First Thanksgiving*; courtesy of the Pilgrim Society

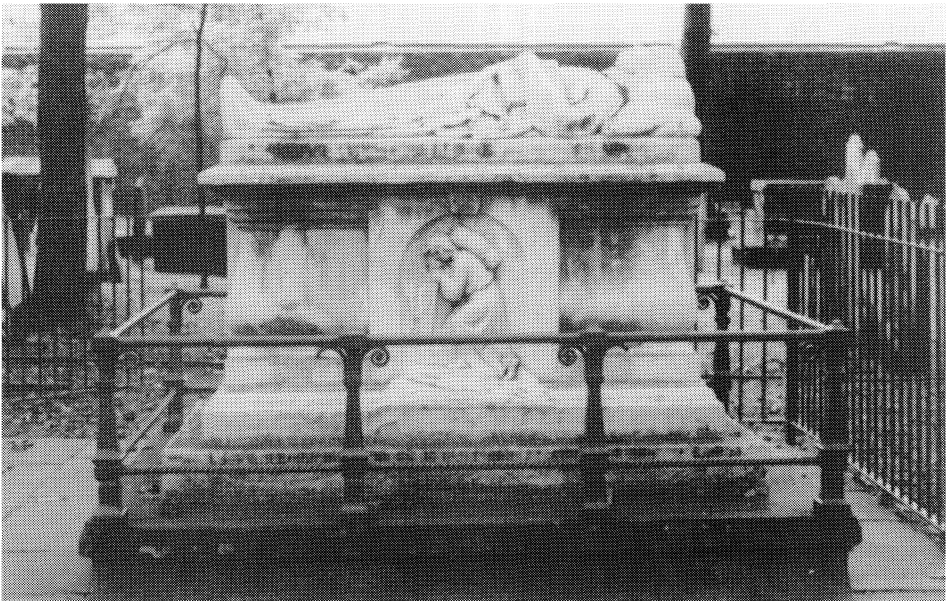


This reconstruction of life at Plymouth Plantation suggests several leading traits of the Puritans: an urge for new beginnings, courage when confronted with hardship, an elemental simplicity. Courtesy of Plimouth Plantation



Chapter 1

What Were the Original Puritans Like?



John Bunyan's tomb in Bunhill Fields, London. Several famous Puritans, including John Owen, lie buried in this nonconformist cemetery. Puritanism was in important ways an outsider's movement in England, where it was destined to influence rather than dominate English society.

FURTHER READING

The best overviews of Puritanism that I have encountered are these:

M. M. Knappen, *Tudor Puritanism: A Chapter in the History of Idealism* (1939).

Perry Miller, *The New England Mind: The Seventeenth Century* (1939).

John Thomas McNeill, "English Puritanism," pp. 15–48 in *Modern Christian Movements* (1954).

Gerald R. Cragg, *Puritanism in the Period of the Great Persecution* (1957).

John Dykstra Eusden, *Puritans, Lawyers, and Politics in Early Seventeenth-Century England*, especially chap. 1 (1958).

Charles H. George and Katherine George, *The Protestant Mind of the English Reformation, 1570–1640* (1961).

Christopher Hill, *Society and Puritanism in Pre-Revolutionary England* (1964).

H. G. Alexander, *Religion in England, 1558–1662* (1968).

Everett Emerson, *Puritanism in America, 1620–1750* (1977).

For people who like a strongly historical approach based on a wealth of specific dates and figures, the following are standard sources:

William Haller, *The Rise of Puritanism* (1938).

A. G. Dickens, *The English Reformation* (1964).

Patrick Collinson, *The Elizabethan Puritan Movement* (1967).

In a different category is Percy Scholes's book *The Puritans and Music in England and New England* (1934). I regard it as one of the first books that an honest inquirer should read because it assaults the "deep structure" of modern prejudices and leaves one convinced that at least some of the anti-Puritan propaganda is a deliberate lie.

On the origin and developing meanings of the word *Puritan*, one can best consult Christopher Hill, *Society and Puritanism in Pre-Revolutionary England*, chap. 1 ("The Definition of a Puritan") and Basil Hall, "Puritanism: the Problem of Definition," pp. 283–96 in *Studies in Church History*, vol. 2, ed. G. J. Cuming (London: Thomas Nelson, 1965).



The Puritan work ethic declared the inherent dignity of all legitimate types of work.
From Bartolomeo Scappi's *Opera*; courtesy of the Folger Shakespeare Library [TX 711 S4 1605 Cage sig. R2r]



Chapter 2

Work



An etching of a roper and a cordwainer. From Johann A. Comenius, *Orbis Sensualium Pictus*; courtesy of the Folger Shakespeare Library [Wing C5525 p. 166]

FURTHER READING

Several key Puritan texts have been excerpted in modern anthologies, and these texts are such a succinct and organized version of Puritan attitudes toward work that they are well worth consulting. They can be found in these places:

John Cotton, *Christian Calling*, pp. 319–27 in vol. 1, rev. ed., of *The Puritans*, ed., Perry Miller and Thomas H. Johnson (1963).

Cotton Mather, *A Christian at His Calling*, pp. 122–27, in Michael McGiffert, ed., *Puritanism and the American Experience* (1969).

William Perkins, *A Treatise of the Vocations or Callings of Men*, pp. 35–59, in Edmund S. Morgan, ed., *Puritan Political Ideas, 1558–1794* (1965), or pp. 446–76 in Ian Breward, ed., *The Work of William Perkins* (1970).

Secondary sources include these:

R. H. Tawney, *Religion and the Rise of Capitalism* (1926).

Richard B. Schlatter, *The Social Ideas of Religious Leaders, 1660–1688* (1940).

Robert S. Michaelsen, “Changes in the Puritan Concept of Calling or Vocation,” *New England Quarterly* 26 (1953): 315–36.

H. M. Robertson, *Aspects of the Rise of Economic Individualism* (1959).

Charles H. George and Katherine George, *The Protestant Mind of the English Reformation, 1570–1640* (1961).

Christopher Hill, *Society and Puritanism in Pre-Revolutionary England* (1964).

M. J. Kitch, ed., *Capitalism and the Reformation* (1967).



“Speak for yourself, John,” Priscilla Mullens told John Alden when he came to court her for his master, Captain Miles Standish. American poet Henry Wadsworth Longfellow later made this classic Puritan love story famous. Priscilla married John, and here is one artist’s picture of the wedding procession. *Priscilla and John Alden*, by Charles Yardley Turner; courtesy of Colonel and Mrs. Emanuel A. Pelaez



Chapter 3

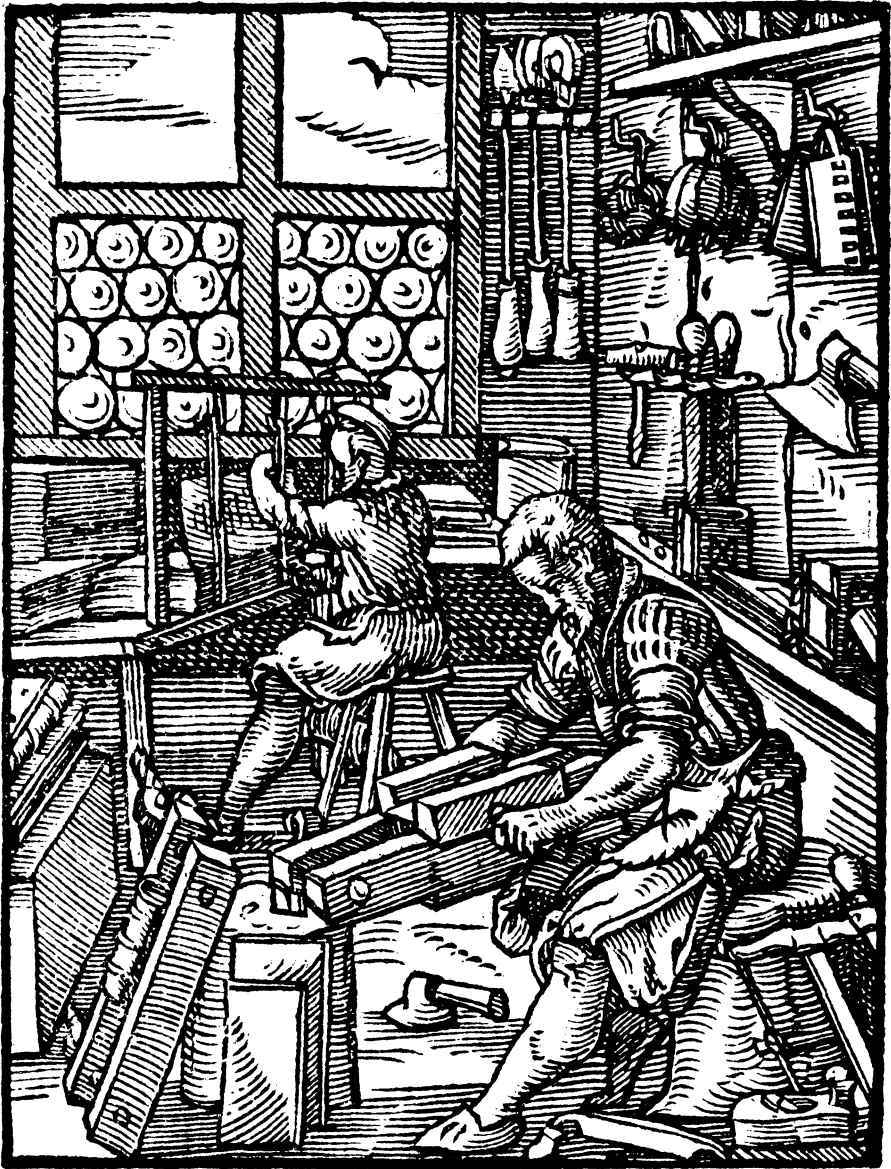
Marriage and Sex



As this portrait of a Puritan woman dressed in Sunday clothing suggests, the Puritans were far from indifferent to physical attractiveness. From Wenceslaus Hallar, *Ornatus Muliebris Anglicanus*; courtesy of the Folger Shakespeare Library [STC 13599.5 pl 20]

FURTHER READING

- William Haller and Malleville Haller, "The Puritan Art of Love," *Huntington Library Quarterly* 5 (1941-42): 235-72.
- Roland M. Frye, "The Teachings of Classical Puritanism on Conjugal Love," *Studies in the Renaissance* 2 (1955): 148-59.
- Derrick Sherwin Bailey, *Sexual Relation in Christian Thought* (1959).
- Charles H. George and Katherine George, *The Protestant Mind of the English Reformation, 1570-1640*, chap. 7 (1961).
- Edmund S. Morgan, *The Puritan Family: Religious and Domestic Relations in Seventeenth-Century New England*, (1944, rev. ed. 1966).
- Robert V. Schnucker, *Views of Selected Puritans, 1560-1630, on Marriage and Human Sexuality* (1969).
- James Turner Johnson, *A Society Ordained by God: English Puritan Marriage Doctrine in the First Half of the Seventeenth Century* (1970).
- John Halkett, *Milton and the Idea of Matrimony* (1970).
- Joyce L. Irwin, *Womanhood in Radical Protestantism, 1525-1675* (1979).
- Roberta Hamilton, *The Liberation of Women*, chap. 3 (1978).



The Puritan work ethic, a blend of industry and thrift, sometimes produced wealth. The Christian use of money was an idea on which the Puritans lavished much attention. Woodcut from Jost Amman, *Book of Trades*; courtesy of the British Library



Chapter 4

Money

FURTHER READING

- R. H. Tawney, *Religion and the Rise of Capitalism* (1926).
Max Weber, *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism* (English ed., 1930).
E. A. J. Johnson, *American Economic Thought in the Seventeenth Century* (1932).
Albert Hyma, *Christianity, Capitalism and Communism: A Historical Analysis* (1937).
Richard B. Schlatter, *The Social Ideas of Religious Leaders, 1660–1688* (1940).
Robert W. Green, ed., *Protestantism and Capitalism: The Weber Thesis and Its Critics* (1959).
H. M. Robertson, *Aspects of the Rise of Economic Individualism* (1959).
M. J. Kitch, ed., *Capitalism and the Reformation* (1967).
Stephen Foster, *Their Solitary Way: The Puritan Social Ethic in the First Century of Settlement in New England* (1971).
Richard L. Greaves, *Society and Religion in Elizabethan England* (1981).

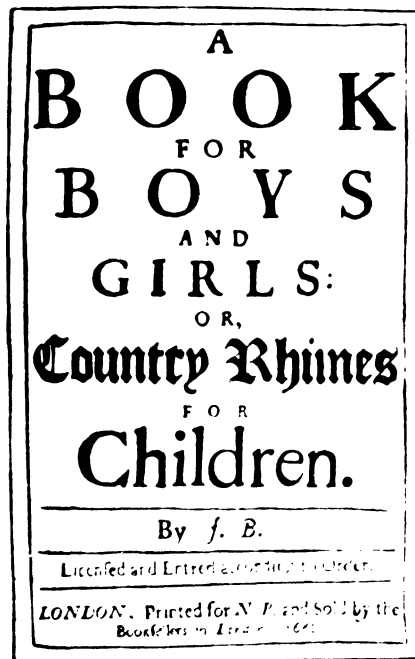


The Puritan home was a center for spiritual and educational activities as well as family life. Here a Puritan father instructs his family in singing. Frontispiece to *The Whole Book of the Psalms*; courtesy of the Folger Shakespeare Library [STC 2431 frontispiece]



Chapter 5

Family



Despite his harried life, John Bunyan found time to write for children. Courtesy of the special collections of the Wheaton College Library



Puritan children at play. From Johann A. Comenius, *Orbis Sensualium Pictus*; courtesy of the Folger Shakespeare Library [Wing C5525 p. 276]

FURTHER READING

- Charles H. George and Katherine George, *The Protestant Mind of the English Reformation, 1570–1640* (1961).
- Christopher Hill, *Society and Puritanism in Pre-Revolutionary England*, chap. 13 (1964).
- Edmund S. Morgan, *The Puritan Family: Religion and Domestic Relations in Seventeenth-Century New England* (1944, rev. ed. 1966).
- John Demos, *A Little Commonwealth: Family Life in Plymouth Colony* (1970).
- Levin L. Schücking, *The Puritan Family: A Social Study from the Literary Sources* (1970).
- Lawrence Stone, *The Family, Sex and Marriage in England, 1500–1800* (1977).
- Joyce L. Irwin, *Womanhood in Radical Protestantism, 1525–1675* (1979).
- Richard L. Greaves, *Society and Religion in Elizabethan England* (1981).
- Laurel Thatcher Ulrich, *Good Wives: Image and Reality in the Lives of Women in Northern New England, 1650–1750* (1982).
- Steven Ozment, *When Fathers Ruled: Family Life in Reformation Europe* (1983).

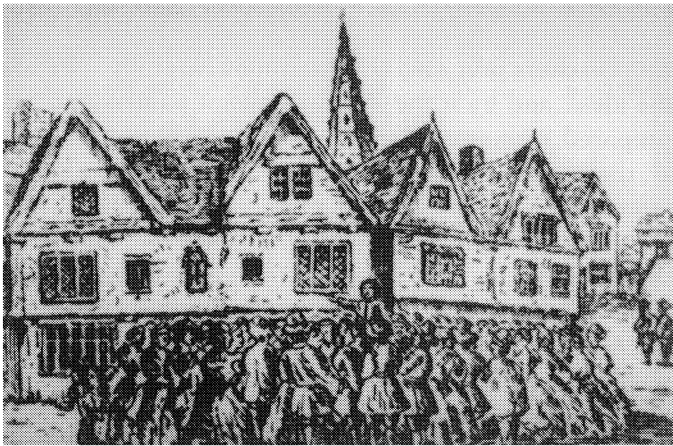


Preaching was at the vital center of Puritanism. Here New England Puritans walk to hear a sermon at church. Courtesy of the Billy Graham Center, Wheaton College



Chapter 6

Puritan Preaching



John Bunyan preaching in his hometown, Bedford, England.
Courtesy of the Trustees of Bunyan Meeting



The hero of the Puritan movement was the preacher, who mobilized lay opinion into an effective agency for church reform and social action. From an edition of Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress*; courtesy of the special collections of the Wheaton College Library

FURTHER READING

- John Brown, *Puritan Preaching in England* (1900).
 Caroline Francis Richardson, *English Preachers and Preaching, 1640–1670* (1928).
 W. Fraser Mitchell, *English Pulpit Oratory from Andrews to Tillotson* (1932).
 Perry Miller, *The New England Mind: The Seventeenth Century*, chap. 12 (1939).
 Babette May Levy, *Preaching in the First Half Century of New England History* (1945).
 Winthrop S. Hudson, "The Ministry in the Puritan Age," pp. 180–206 in *The Ministry in Historical Perspectives*, ed. H. Richard Niebuhr and Daniel D. Williams (1956).
 Christopher Hill, *Society and Puritanism in Pre-Revolutionary England*, chaps. 2 and 3 (1964).
 Irvonwy Morgan, *The Godly Preachers of the Elizabethan Age* (1965).
 Paul S. Seaver, *The Puritan Lectureships: The Politics of Religious Dissent, 1560–1662* (1970).
 David D. Hall, *The Faithful Shepherd: A History of the New England Ministry in the Seventeenth Century* (1972).
 Peter Lewis, *The Genius of Puritanism* (1977).

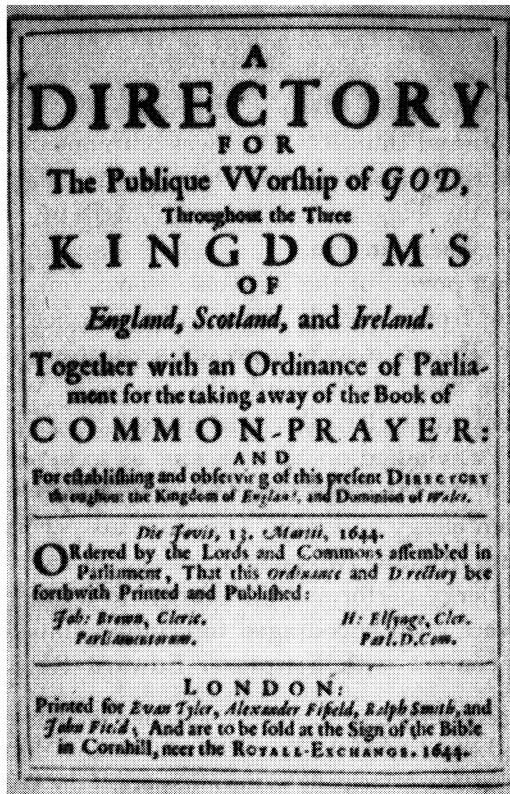


Here is the essence of Puritan worship: simple, plain, luminous, distrustful of ritual and human diversion, built around the preaching of the Word. Photograph by Douglas R. Gilbert



Chapter 7

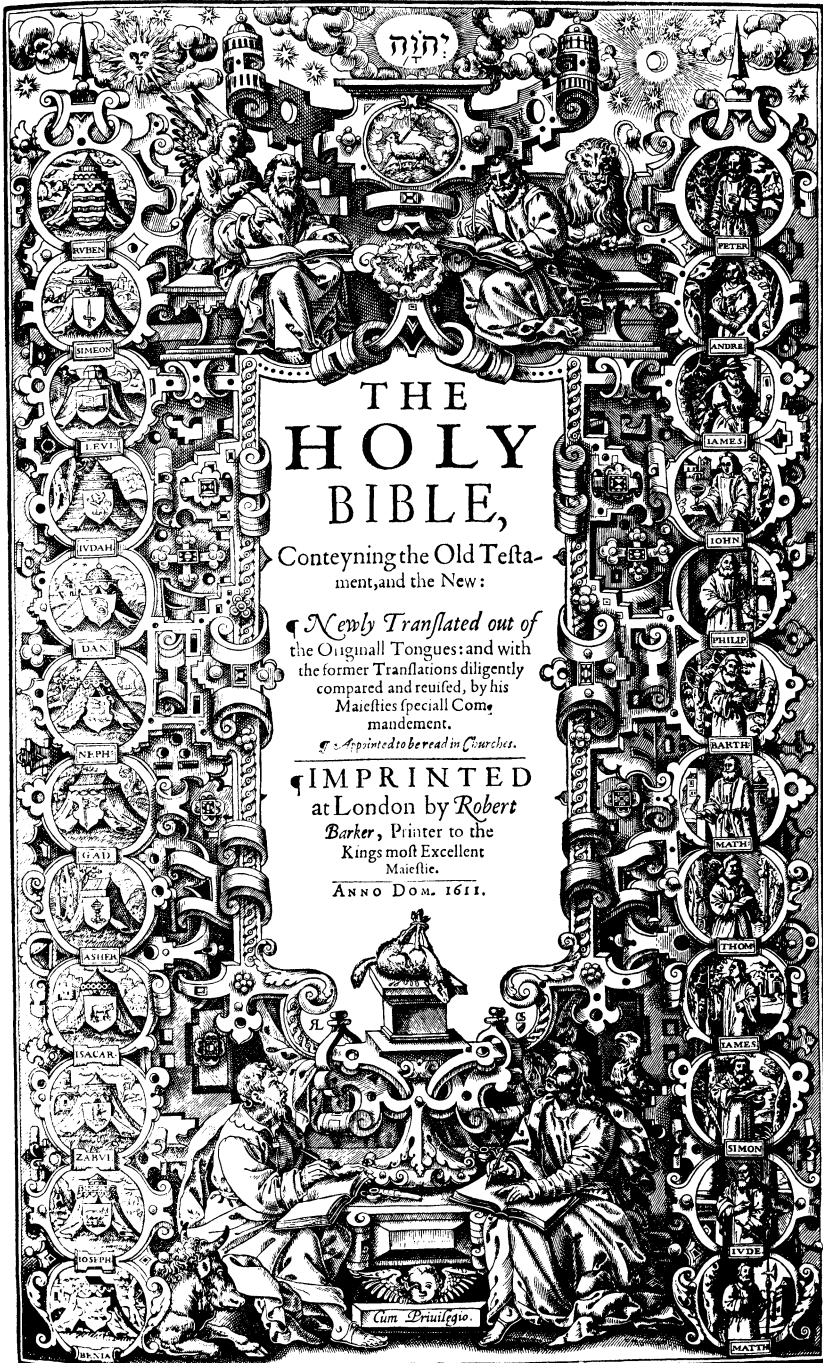
Church and Worship



Puritan concern for proper worship found its
supreme expression in the Westminster Assembly's
Directory for Public Worship

FURTHER READING

- Percy A. Scholes, *The Puritans and Music in England and New England* (1934).
Nathaniel Micklem, ed., *Christian Worship: Studies in Its History and Meaning* (1936).
Horton Davies, *The Worship of the English Puritans* (1948).
Patrick Collinson, *The Elizabethan Puritan Movement* (1967).
James H. Nichols, *Corporate Worship in the Reformed Tradition* (1968).
Horton Davies, *Worship and Theology in England: From Cranmer to Hooker, 1534–1603* (1970).
E. Brooks Holifield, *The Covenant Sealed: The Development of Puritan Sacramental Theology in Old and New England, 1570–1720* (1974).
Horton Davies, *Worship and Theology in England: From Andrewes to Baxter and Fox, 1603–1690* (1975).
Winton U. Solberg, *Redeem the Time: The Puritan Sabbath in Early America* (1977).
Paul D. L. Avis, *The Church in the Theology of the Reformers* (1981).
Charles E. Hambrick-Stowe, *The Practice of Piety: Puritan Devotional Disciplines in Seventeenth-Century New England* (1982).



Title page of the 1611 King James Bible. Courtesy of the Huntington Library



Chapter 8

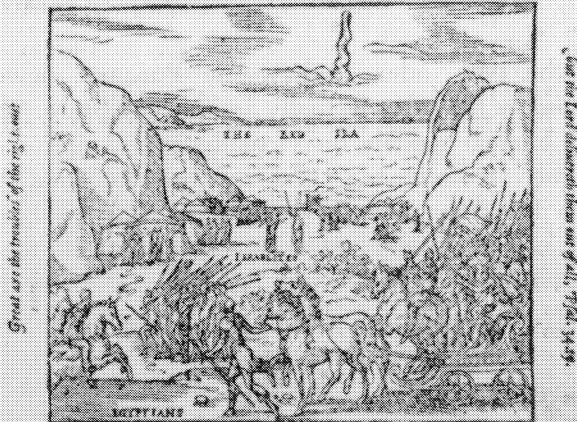
The Bible

THE BIBLE
 AND
 HOLY SCRIPTURES
 CONTAINED IN
 THE OLDE AND NEW E
 Testament.

TRANSLATED ACCOR-
 ding to the Ebrue and Greke, and conferred With
 the best translations in diuers languages.

WITH MOSTE PROFITABLE ANNOTA-
 tions vpon all the hard places, and other things of great
 importance as may appeare in the Epistle to the Reader.

FEARE NOT STAND STILL, AND BEHOLDE
the saluacion of the Lord, which he will forme to you this day. Exod. 14, 23.



THE LORD SHALL FIGHT FOR YOU: THEREFORE
hold ye your peace. Exod. 14, vers. 14.

AT GENEVA.
 PRINTED BY ROULAND HALL
 M. D. L X.

The Geneva Bible, published in Geneva in 1560, was the standard Puritan Bible until the King James Bible gradually supplanted it. It contributed more to the King James Bible than any other predecessor. Courtesy of the Huntington Library



Puritans were people of the Book. Here a character in Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress* reads the Bible. Courtesy of the special collections of the Wheaton College Library

FURTHER READING

Benjamin B. Warfield, *The Westminster Assembly and Its Work* (1931).

J. I. Packer, in *A Goodly Heritage* (1958), pp. 18–26.

U. Milo Kaufmann, *The Pilgrim's Progress and Traditions in Puritan Meditation* (1966).

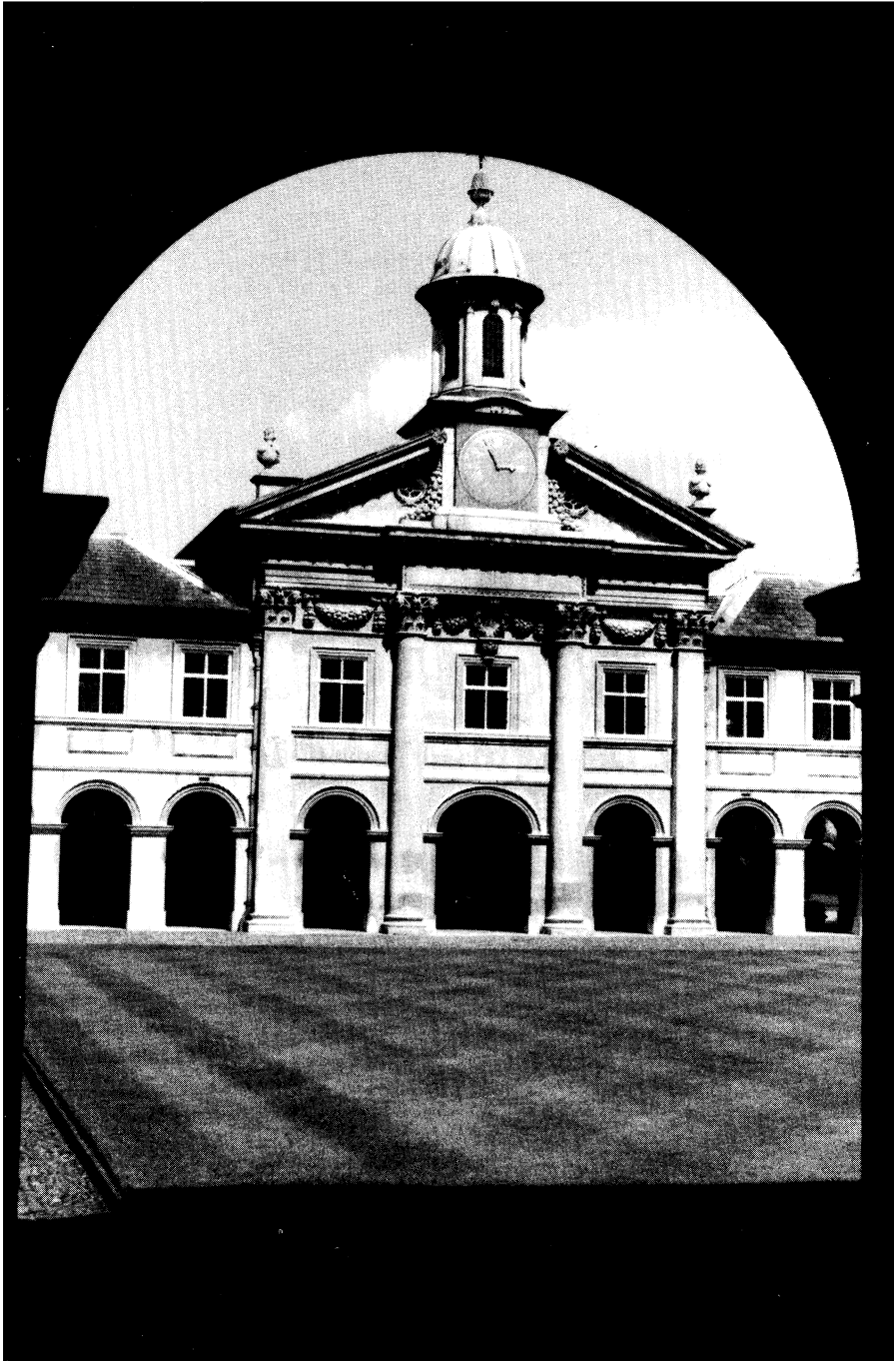
Jack B. Rogers, *Scripture in the Westminster Confession* (1967).

Derek Wilson, *The People and the Book: The Revolutionary Impact of the English Bible, 1380–1611* (1976).

Barbara K. Lewalski, *Protestant Poetics and the Seventeenth-Century Religious Lyric* (1979).

Allen Carden, "The Word of God in Puritan New England: Seventeenth-Century Perspectives on the Nature and Authority of the Bible," *Andrews University Seminary Studies*, 18 (Spring 1980): 1–16.

John R. Knott, Jr., *The Sword of the Spirit: Puritan Responses to the Bible* (1980).

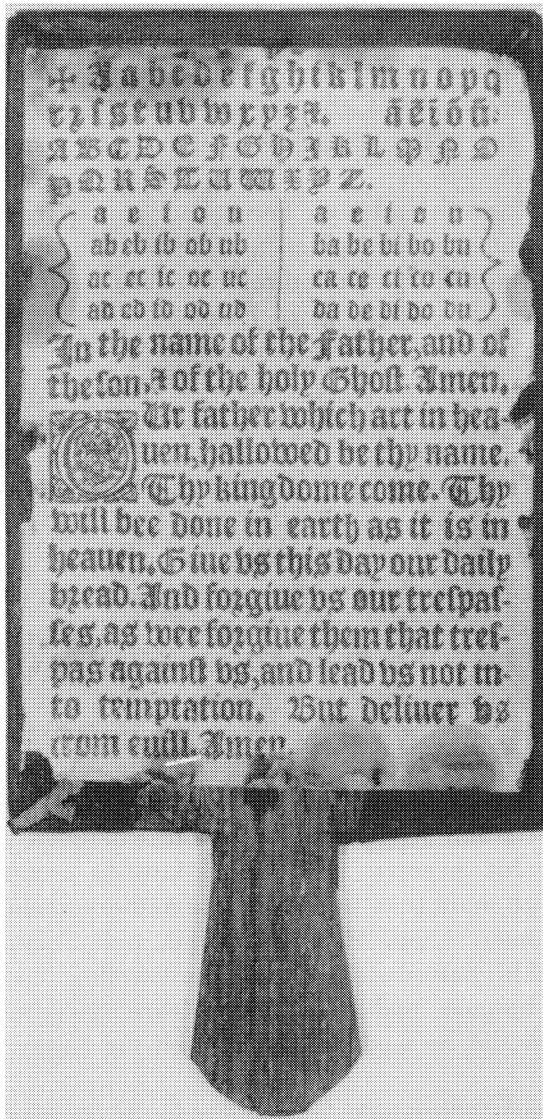


Puritanism was an educated movement. Especially influential was Emmanuel College, Cambridge University.



Chapter 9

Education



This hornbook used by Puritan school children reminds us of how important education was in the Puritans' daily life. It also suggests the essential thrust of Puritan education: mastery of the tools of culture for Christian ends. Courtesy of the Folger Shakespeare Library [STC 13813.5]

FURTHER READING

- Ellwood P. Cubberly, *Readings in the History of Education* (1920) and *A Brief History of Education* (1922).
- Samuel Eliot Morison, *Harvard College in the Seventeenth Century* (1936).
- Perry Miller and Thomas H. Johnson, ed., *The Puritans* (1938; rev. ed. 1963).
See especially the editors' introduction.
- Perry Miller, *The New England Mind: The Seventeenth Century* (1939; rev. ed. 1954).
- Richard B. Schlatter, *The Social Ideas of Religious Leaders, 1660–1688* (1940).
- Earle E. Cairns, "The Puritan Philosophy of Education," *Bibliotheca Sacra* 104 (1947): 326–36.
- J. W. Ashley Smith, *The Birth of Modern Education: The Contribution of the Dissenting Academies, 1660–1800* (1954).
- Mark H. Curtis, *Oxford and Cambridge in Transition, 1558–1642* (1959).
- Richard L. Greaves, *The Puritan Revolution and Educational Thought: Background for Reform* (1969).
- . *Society and Religion in Elizabethan England*, chap. 8 (1981).



The statue of Oliver Cromwell that stands today in front of the Houses of Parliament is a reminder of how significantly Puritanism has influenced the social conscience and institutions of England and America.



Chapter 10

Social Action



In this woodcut illustration from John Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress*, Mercy clothes the poor.
Courtesy of the special collections of the Wheaton College Library

FURTHER READING

Margaret James, *Social Problems and Policy During the Puritan Revolution, 1640–1660* (1930).

Richard B. Schlatter, *The Social Ideas of Religious Leaders, 1660–1688* (1940).

Helen C. White, *Social Criticism in Popular Religious Literature of the Sixteenth Century* (1944).

A. S. P. Woodhouse, ed., *Puritanism and Liberty* (1951).

John Dykstra Eusden, *Puritans, Lawyers, and Politics in Early Seventeenth-Century England* (1958).

Michael Walzer, *The Revolution of the Saints: A Study in the Origins of Radical Politics* (1965).

Edmund S. Morgan, ed., *Puritan Political Ideas, 1558–1794* (1965).

T. H. Breen, *The Character of the Good Ruler: A Study of Puritan Political Ideas in New England, 1630–1730* (1970).

Stephen Foster, *Their Solitary Way: The Puritan Social Ethic in the First Century of Settlement in New England* (1971).

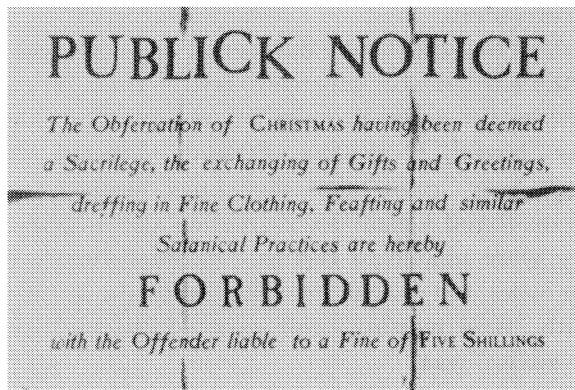


The statue of John Bunyan that stands today in Bedford, England, suggests some of the ambivalence that many people today feel toward the Puritans. We find it easy to admire their courage, their faithfulness to God and the Bible, their effectiveness in changing the course of history. But we also sense their remoteness from us, their somewhat foreboding austerity, their rigidity, and their tendency to be looking for an argument.



Chapter 11

Learning From Negative Example: Some Puritan Faults

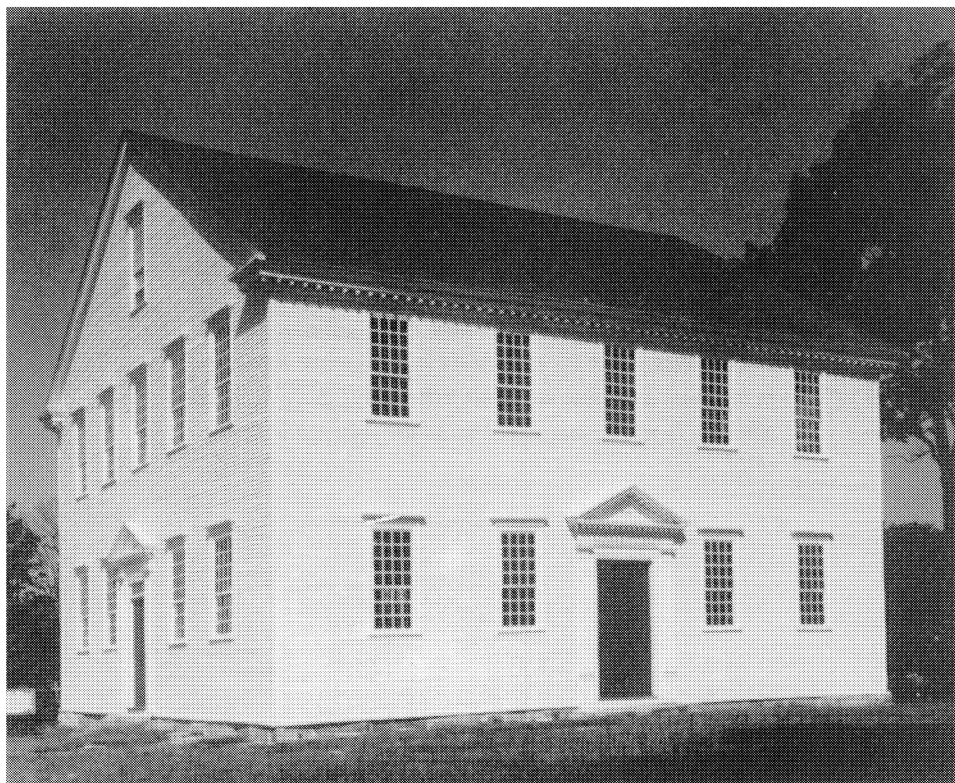


A public notice that offers the gist of a New England statute of 1660.

FURTHER READING

It is difficult to suggest specific sources on the subject of Puritan failings. I have found wholesale attacks on the Puritans to be unreliable in their facts. The unattractive features of the Puritans are something that one picks up piecemeal in an extensive study of them. With this qualification in mind, I offer the following sources as quick ways to get a taste of Puritan failings:

- In the process of defending the Puritans against a host of charges, Percy Scholes, *The Puritans and Music*, alerts the reader to a wide range of things for which the Puritans have been attacked, not always justifiably.
- One of the best entries into the subject of Puritan failings is simply to start reading in a modern anthology of Puritan primary sources. It is not long before one encounters viewpoints with which a modern reader will disagree. Examples of such anthologies include *The Puritans*, ed. Perry Miller and Thomas H. Johnson, rev. ed. (1963), 2 vols.; and *Womanhood in Radical Protestantism, 1525–1675*, ed. Joyce L. Irwin (1979).
- For an illustration of the Puritan tendency to be nearly interminable, and of an especially constipated Puritan prose style, the complete *Magnalia Christi Americana* of Cotton Mather will suffice.
- The *Journal* of Quaker founder George Fox will give a feel for how one Protestant group fared under the Puritans.
- For a quick dose, the verse of Michael Wigglesworth is an old standby (excerpts can be found in Miller/Johnson, 2:585–630).

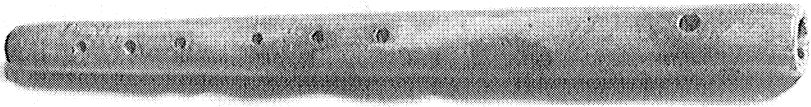


As their architecture attests, the Puritans valued honesty, openness, and the simplicity that dignifies. Photograph by Douglas R. Gilbert

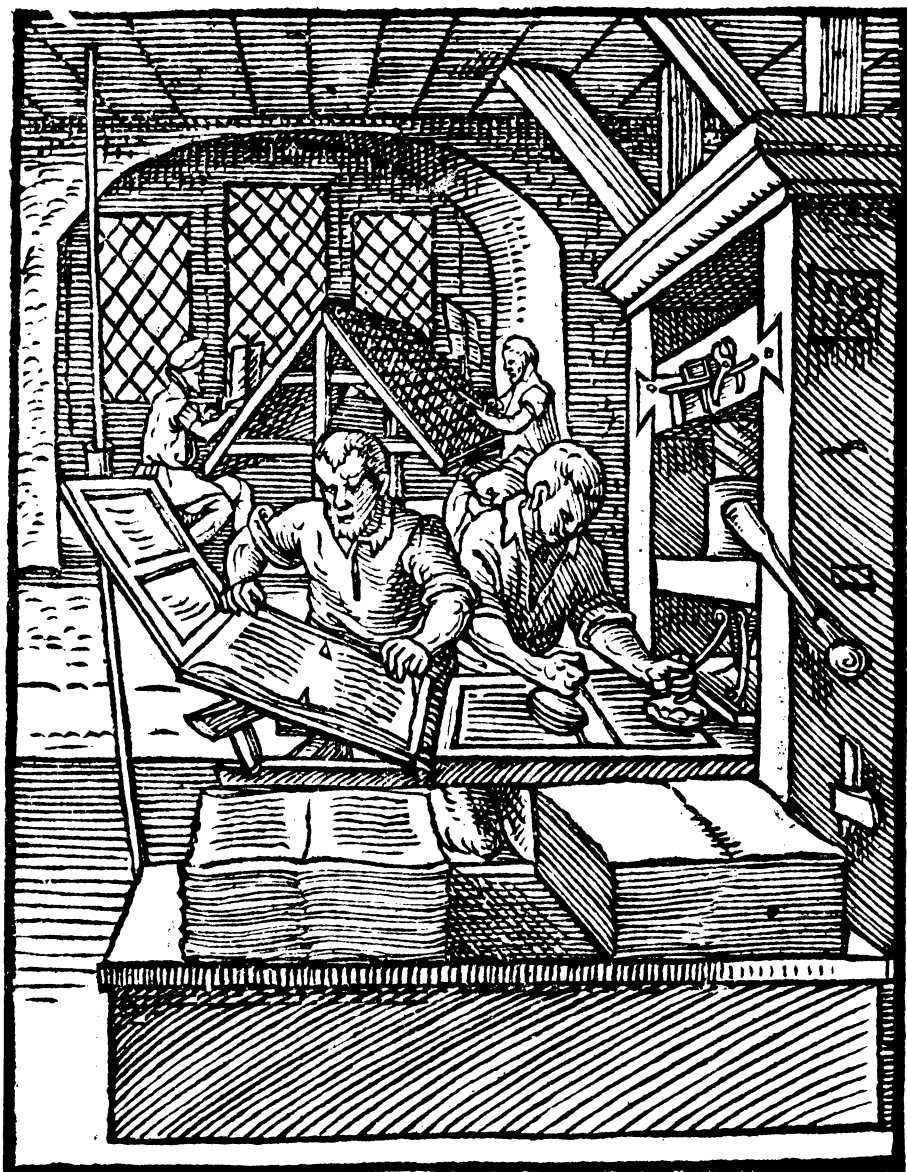


Chapter 12

The Genius of Puritanism: What the Puritans Did Best



The Puritans' zest for life and culture is suggested by this flute that John Bunyan carved from a chair leg while in prison for preaching. Courtesy of the Trustees of Bunyan Meeting



The dignity of human work has never stood higher than it did with the Puritans. From Jost Amman, *Book of Trades*; courtesy of the British Library

FURTHER READING

To get a taste of the strength and attractiveness of Puritanism, there is no substitute for reading the Puritans at firsthand. The best series of modern reprints of Puritan primary sources is that published by the Banner of Truth Trust, and I much commend it. The works of John Bunyan and John Milton are also excellent starting points.

Some of my most positive impressions of Puritanism have come from book-length studies of individuals. I have in mind books like these: N. H. Keeble, *Richard Baxter: Puritan Man of Letters* (1982); Ernest B. Lowrie, *The Shape of the Puritan Mind: The Thought of Samuel Willard* (1974); Derrick Sherwin Bailey, *Thomas Becon and the Reformation of the Church in England* (1952).

Puritan autobiographies and books on meditation frequently offer an attractive entry into Puritanism. A good secondary source is Owen C. Watkins, *The Puritan Experience: Studies in Spiritual Autobiography* (1972). For a picture of Puritanism at its best, I recommend Lucy Hutchinson's portrait of her husband in her preface ("To My Children") to *Memoirs of the Life of Colonel Hutchinson* (available in a modern reprint by Oxford University Press, 1973); here, in a dozen pages or so, is the Puritan ideal.



This detail from John Bunyan's tomb reminds us that the Puritan image of the pilgrim burdened by a weight of sin is not the most cheering view of human experience, but it is truest to the facts.