

On the Functions of the Simple Present Tense in *The Pilgrim's Progress*

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Shin, Sungkyun. (2019). On the functions of the simple present tense in *The Pilgrim's Progress*. *The Linguistic Association of Korea Journal*, 27(4), 91–103. Contrary to Pascal's (1965) claim, the simple present tense (SP) in the narrative told in the preterit in *The Pilgrim's Progress* signifies more than experiences of daily affairs, and we may categorize the SP in *Pilgrim's Progress* into three types: first, SP describing eternal truths, timeless statement, or generics, focusing on eternal truths, such as eternal dwelling in Heaven with the eternal God, the eternal invitation to all human beings from the eternal God, and being alert and on guard as a true pilgrim shown in "true pilgrimage," awakened from spiritual slumber. Second, the SP is also used as the historical present (HP), to convey a vivid description of a certain past event, giving the reader a feeling of being there as an observer, such as conveying the threat of Giant Despair through the use of SP forms like *getteth* (gets), *goes*, *falls*, and *beats*, and thereby warning against falling into true despair. Finally, SP also describes an ordinary life in the sense that John Bunyan's main purpose is to describe what an ordinary person (an everyman figure) is likely to experience daily in the trials and adventures encountered traveling from his/her home, the worldly city, to the heavenly kingdom. The excellence of Bunyan's writing lies in his success evoking in his readers the daily reality of the story he presented as his dreams by employing SP with three types of function.

Key Words: function, the simple present tense, historical present, *The Pilgrim's Progress*

1. Introduction

The Pilgrim's Progress, a Puritan conversion narrative by the English writer John Bunyan in the form of religious allegory, published in two parts in 1678 and 1684, is a symbolic vision of the good man's pilgrimage through life. At one time second only to the Bible in popularity, *Pilgrim's Progress* is the most famous allegorical story still in print. It was first published during the reign of Charles II and was largely written while its Puritan author was imprisoned for offenses against the Conventicle Act of 1593 prohibiting religious services conducted outside the jurisdiction of the Church of England. *Pilgrim's Progress*, which has some of the qualities of a folktale, is written in homely yet dignified biblical prose that anticipates the 18th-century novel as a work characterized by its humor and realistic portrayals of minor characters.

The book contains many examples of the simple present tense (SP) or of the historical present (HP) in the narrative told in preterit tense, as observed by Pascal (1965: 13–16). Concerning the SP or HP, *Pilgrim's Progress* has great significance in that, according to Pascal's (1965: 6) suggestion, the use of the SP or HP by a gifted writer like Bunyan is anything but arbitrary. In this paper, I will analyze all the examples of SP or HP in *Pilgrim's Progress* and explain the characteristics of its use of the SP and HP in the preterit narrative. The paper consists of an introduction, theoretical background, actual analysis of the SP and HP examples in *Pilgrim's Progress*, and conclusion.

2. The Simple Present Tense and Historical Present in English

2.1. The Simple Present Tense and its Psychological Aspects

The Pilgrim's Progress contains many unexpected cases of SP in the preterit narrative as in the following:

- (1) "I was a-dreaming last night that I saw him. Oh that my soul was with him! He dwelleth(dwells) in the presence of the King of the country." (p. 12)

The SP in English has a variety of usages according to Quirk et al. (1985: 179–184) as follows¹⁾:

- (2) a. Present continuous event: I live in an apartment.
b. Habitual present indicates a whole sequence of events, repeated over the given period: I go to school on foot.
c. Instantaneous present "refers to a single action begun and completed approximately at the moment of speech. such as commentaries": Kim passes the ball to Park... Park shoots!,
d. demonstrations and other self-commentaries: I pick up the apple with a brochette, dip it into the batter, and lower it into the hot fat.
e. Special exclamatory sentences (with initial adverbials): Here comes the defeated! Down you come.
f. Performatives: I apologize, I thank you for your encouragement.
g. SP in fictional narratives and in stage directions: The boy enters. The girls immediately pretend to be studying hard.
h. SP refers to general timeless statements, or so-called 'eternal truths': "Honesty is the best policy." The moon moves round the earth.
i. Simple present referring to the future: The plane leaves for New York at seven o'clock tonight. When she comes here, we will tell her about the good news
j. With verbs of communication (Here, it is suggested that although the Book of Genesis was written quite a long time ago, it still 'teaches' us at the present time): The Bible of Genesis describes the terrible fate of Sodom and Gomorrah.

The above usages of SP can be categorized into four main types:²⁾

- (3) a. Present continuous (Stative) and Characteristic
b. Habitual
c. Instantaneous
d. Generic (timeless statements, general truths)

Concerning the psychological aspects of SP, as discussed in Shin (2019a: 3–8; 2019b: 6–9), according to Chomsky (2006: 1) and Radford (2016: 5), when we study the grammatical competence of a natural language like English, we are studying a cognitive system internalized within the mind/brain of a native speaker of English that is the product of a "cognitive organ which is shared among human beings and in crucial respects

1) For more information on SP, see also Shin (2019a: 2-3), Fludernik (1992: 1, 12, 18-20), Wolfson (1978: 215), Wolfson (1979: 168), Schifffrin (1981: 61), Mckay (1974: 248), Kiparsky (1968: 51), and Pascal (1965: 13-16).

2) I adopt this idea from English Cafe
<https://www.englishcafe.jp/englishcollege/etense2/e1-2-1.html>.
(Retrieved 22/04/2019). Also refer to Shin (2019: 3-4).

unique to them” (Chomsky 2006: 1). Generative linguists’ ultimate goal is a complete description of Chomsky’s I-language (i.e., internalized knowledge of the grammar of the language), through which native speakers become proficient in English. Also, according to Chomsky (1986: 22), “a grammar of a language is a theory of the I-language . . . under investigation,” “uncovering the internalized linguistic system, I-language possessed by native speakers of English – i.e., we are attempting to characterize a mental or psychological state (a state of competence, and thus linguistic knowledge).”

Concerning linguistic sounds, as discussed in (Shin 2016: 168–169; 2019a: 3–8; 2019b: 6–9) and Algeo and Butcher (2014: 35), a psychological sound considered the “same sound,” which is called a phoneme, is really a group of similar sounds termed the allophones of the phoneme. According to this assumption, the phoneme is a psychological entity, an abstract sound unit internalized in the native speaker’s brain/mind. Regarding the abstractness of the language system, especially syntactic structure, as discussed in Shin (2016: 168–177; 2019a: 3–8; 2019b: 6–9), the following sentence (4) has an ambiguity conveyed by the following pair of sentences in (5):

- (4) An angel rolled back the stone from the tomb gently
- (5) a. An angel rolled back the stone gently from the tomb
b. An angel gently rolled the stone from the tomb

According to Radford (2009: 342–352), to explain the ambiguity of (4) shown in the pair of sentences in (5), we have to assume a VP shell/split VP analysis with abstract light verb and underlying structures, where in (5a) *gently* modifies the verb *roll*, whereas in (5b), *gently* modifies the abstract light verb, yielding a subtle difference in meaning between (5a) and (5b): (5a) means that the rolling motion itself was gentle, whereas (5b) means that the action that caused the rolling motion to begin was gentle. The above explanation demonstrates that English syntax must assume even abstract and psychological light verbs and that the language’s sound system and syntax have psychological and abstract structures.

English tense presents the same issue. As discussed in Shin (2019a: 3–8; 2019b: 6–9), we can hypothesize that tense is a psychological or mental entity like phonemes and null constituents, which are psychologically internalized abstract units of language that exist in the native speaker’s brain/mind. As suggested by Higuchi (1996: 92), the English SP “describes the imperfective process and describes the imperfective image at the speaker’s/writer’s present.” McKay (1974: 248) also points out that “while in the so called ‘present’ verbs ... the actions are as process.” In agreement with these opinions of SP, I assert that SP is the psychological present tense describing the unfinished present process of the speaker’s/writer’s psychology and mind as discussed in Shin (2019a: 3–8; 2019b: 6–9). Thus, the four usages of SP mentioned above can be integrated into one typical and representative usage of SP as follows³⁾:

- (6) SP is the psychological present tense describing the unfinished present process of the speaker’s/writer’s mind and psychology.

2.2. The Historical Present Tense in English

Quirk et al. (1985: 181–182) explain that HP⁴⁾ consists of using SP verbs to describe an event that took place in the past: like *Joshua with the Israelites crosses the Jordan River on foot.*⁵⁾ According to our

3) Refer also to Shin (2019c: 5).

4) As for HP, refer to Shin (2019a; 2019b), Steadman (1917), Palmer (1965), Leech (1971), Jespersen (1965/1909–1949), Huddleston, Pullum (2002), and Curme (1931).

psychological definition of SP, English HP is just one usage of SP. English HP, signifying the psychological present tense, is used when the past event is conceived of happening now to the speaker or writer even if the actual events happened in the past. In the original text of the New Testament, the Greek presents very frequent examples of HP. According to Enos (1981: 282), Leung (2008: 704), O'Rourke (1974: 585–590), and BibleVerseStudy.com,⁶ HP uses verbs in SP to indicate an action that took place in the past, as mentioned above. When in an historical narrative a Greek writer wished to convey his readers a vivid description of a certain event, he/she would use an SP verb to express this, which would give the reader the feeling of being there as an observer. This verbal form is used frequently in the Gospels (especially in *Mark* and *John*) and is normally translated as an English SP. Note the *Authorized King James Version* (AV) reading of John 4.5: *Then cometh (comes) Jesus to a city of Samaria, which is called Sychar, near to the parcel of ground that Jacob gave to his son Joseph*. The *New Authorized King James Version* (NKJV) translates the above underlined verb, not in the modern present tense as *comes*, but in the past tense as *came* with no indication of the change. Examples may be found in Matthew 4.5,6,8,10, and 11 (the temptation of Christ); Matthew 19.18 and 20; Mark 1.30, 11.27, 14.17, 15.21, and 22; Luke 8.49; and John 4.5,18,38. These are but a few examples of this change in the NKJV.

The purpose of using the HP is in some cases to emphasize a memorable past event and make it more vivid. For example, Matthew in the Gospel according to Matthew wrote that the rich young man *says* (instead of *said*) to Jesus:

(7) a. “Matthew 19: 18. λεγει⁷⁾ αυτω ποιας ο δε ιησους ειπεν το ου φον ευσεις ου μοιχευσεις ου κλεψεις ου ψευδομαρτυρησεις 19. τιμα τον πατερα σου και την μητερα και αγαπησεις τον πλησιον σου ως σεαυτον 20. λεγει αυτω ο νεανισκος παντα τα αυτα εφυλαξα μην εκ νεοτητος μου τι ετι υστερω”

b. Matthew 19: 18. He saith (says) unto him, Which? Jesus said, Thou shalt do no murder, Thou shalt not commit adultery, Thou shalt not steal, Thou shalt not bear false witness, 19. Honour thy father and thy mother: and, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. 20. The young man saith (says) unto him, All these things have I kept from my youth up: what lack I yet?

Another example concerns the ruler of the synagogue who came to Jesus to plead with him to heal his daughter, when someone *comes* (instead of *came*) from his house:

(8) a. “Luke 8: 49. ετι αυτου λαλουντος ερχεται τις παρα του αρχισυναγωγου λεγων αυτω οτι τεθνηκεν η θυγατηρ σου μη σκυλλε τον διδασκαλον”

5) According to Higuchi (1996: 66), there are other examples of the simple present not describing an actual event taking place at the present moment:

- (a) A beaver builds dams. (generics)
- (b) Andy walks to center stage and sits on the sofa. (stage direction)
- (c) That night Cinderella goes to the ball in the clothes. (summary)
- (d) First you slice potatoes and onions and sprinkle with cheese, salt, and pepper. (recipe)
- (e) You go down this road as far as the market, and turn right. (direction)
- (f) He takes a shower now. (habitual practice)

6) Retrieved July 1, 2019 from <http://www.bibleversestudy.com/index.htm>

7) Underlining and parenthesizing are mine to draw attention and emphasize.

- b. "Luke 8:49. While he yet spake, there cometh (comes) one from the ruler of the synagogue's house, saying to him, Thy daughter is dead; trouble not the Master."

According to Enos (1981: 284–287), a number of hypotheses have been advanced to explain the use of the Biblical HP, especially Mark's as follows:

- (9) a. Vividness: it is stated that the use of the HP lends 'vividness' to a narrative.
 b. Immediacy: in employing the historical present the presentness, or the present significance, of the events narrated is emphasized.
 c. Lack of literary Sophistication: it has been thought that the use of HP is simply a mark of lack of education and literary sophistication.
 d. Aramaism or Semitism: it has been argued that the large of HP in Mark are the result of a more or less mechanical translation from an Aramaic original.
 e. Zero Tense: Kiparsky (1968: 33f) explains certain HPs in Greek and other Indo-European languages as being past tenses which have gone a conjunction–reduction transformation, 'which optionally reduces repeated occurrences of the same tense to the present.'⁸⁾

3. The Analysis of the Simple Present Tense and the Historical Present in *The Pilgrim's Progress*

Bunyan's allegory follows the established tradition of narratives being told in the preterit tense. According to Pascal (1965: 13–14), in the narrative of Part I of *Pilgrim's Progress*, there is only one occasion on which SP is used, as follows:

- (10) "THE PILGRIMS IN A DUNGEON: Now, Giant Despair had a wife, and her name was Diffidence. So, when he was gone to bed, he told his wife what he had done; to wit, that he had taken a couple of prisoners and cast them into his dungeon for trespassing on his grounds. Then he asked her also what he had best to do further to them. So she asked him what they were, whence they came, and whither they were bound; and he told her. Then she advised him, that when he arose in the morning, he should beat them without any mercy. So, when he arose, he getteth him agrievous crab–tree cudgel, and goes down into the dungeon to them, and there first falls to abusing them as if they were dogs, although they never gave him a word of distaste. Then he falls upon them, and beats them fearfully, in such sort that they were not able to help themselves, or to turn them upon the floor."

"This done, he withdraws and leaves them there to sorrow over their misery and to mourn under their distress. So all that day they spent their time in nothing but sighs and bitter grief. The next night she, talking with her husband about them further, and understanding that they were yet alive, did advise him to tell them to make away with themselves. So, when morning was come, he goes to them in a

8) Enos (1981) also mentions discourse-oriented hypotheses, which I neglect to discuss because of the lack of space:
 a. Marker of paragraph beginning: scholars have long noted that historical presents tend to come at the beginning of paragraphs as a prominence marker, especially here, for the portrayal of Jesus Christ as an exalted ruler of authority.
 b. Marker of Climax: The shift from a past tense to HP is a common device for marking the peak or climax of a discourse or embedded discourse.
 c. The Historical Present of Verbs of Speaking: it has long been noted that the employment of HP with verbs of speaking is distinct in Mark from the historical present of other verbs to highlight Jesus' authority.

surly manner, as before and, perceiving them to be very sore with the stripes that he had given them the day before, he told them that....” (p. 128–129)

The narrative continues in the preterit, and after a short conversation between Christian and Hopeful, goes on:

(11) HOPEFUL CHEERS CHRISTIAN:

“With these words, Hopeful at present did calm the mind of his brother; so they continued together in the dark that day, in their sad and doleful condition. Well, towards evening, the giant goes down into the dungeon again, to see if his prisoners had taken his counsel. But, when he came there, he found them alive; and truly, alive was all;” (p. 130)

Then the preterit takes over again. The day leads to another bed-time discussion between Giant and Giantess, and the next morning’s visit again introduces SP:

(12) “So when the morning was come, the giant goes to them again, and takes them into the castle-yard and shows them as his wife had bidden him. “These,” said he, “were pilgrims, as you are, once, and they trespassed in my grounds as you have done; and when I thought fit, I tore them in pieces; and so within ten days I will do you. Go, get you down to your den again.” (p. 131)

This is his last visit to the prisoners, for on this night they make their escape; and this is the last time SP makes its appearance. It is to be noted that the use of the SP in this episode is calculated. It is used only for the giant, and solely for certain of his actions. It starts with *getteth him a cudgel and goes to them* and is used for his first beating. It is later used only for him repeatedly going to them, not for his arguments with them.

With regard to SP, Pascal (1965: 14) claims that these SPs in *Pilgrim’s Progress* are not HP by saying “it does not make the action more ‘present’, i.e. more dramatic,” and “Bunyan’s use of the present tense in his narrative, ... has little or nothing of the ‘historic present’ about it,” and Pascal (1965: 16) rather proposes that SP describes “the action with the familiar every-day of the readers,” and “Bunyan’s usage recalls a familiar situation by using the familiar tense and manner.” Furthermore, he claims that SP in *Pilgrim’s Progress* “links up the action with the familiar every-day of the readers” and “SP is not so much a temporal closeness as a closeness of familiarity.” In other words, Pascal asserts that SP in *Pilgrim’s Progress* is not HP but SP, used to describe domestic and everyday affairs.

However, Pascal’s claim does not explain many other examples of the SP in *The Pilgrim’s Progress*. Let us consider the following example:

(13) “Chr. Then Christiana replied, I have been sorely afflicted since my husband’s departure from me, but especially since he went over the river. But that which troubleth me most is my unkind treatment of him when he was under his distress. Besides, I am now as he was then: nothing will serve me but going on pilgrimage. I was a-dreaming last night that I saw him. Oh that my soul was with him! He dwelleth in the presence of the King of the country;”

“he sits and eats with Him at His table; he has become a companion of immortals, and has a house now given him to dwell in, to which the best palaces on earth, if compared, seem to me but as a dunghill.” (p102)

This passage does not describe the familiar everyday lives of the readers. Rather, it pictures the eternal life of

Christian and the saved people in Heaven with the eternal God. The SP in this passage is not about our daily experiences but about the heavenly life in the future, as described in the following passage in the Bible:

(14) Revelation 21: 1–4

“1. Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and there was no longer any sea. 2. I saw the Holy City, the new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride beautifully dressed for her husband. 3. And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying,

“Now the dwelling of God is with men, and he will live with them. They will be his people, and God himself will be with them and be their God. 4. He will wipe every tear from their eyes. There will be no more death or mourning or crying or pain, for the old order of things has passed away.”

The Bible passage above describes the New Jerusalem, the Heavenly Kingdom, where “*Now the dwelling of God is with men, and he will live with them. They will be his people, and God himself will be with them and be their God. 4. He will wipe every tear from their eyes. There will be no more death or mourning or crying or pain, for the old order of things has passed away.*” Similarly, in the passage “He dwelleth (dwells) in the presence of the King of the country”:

“he sits and eats with Him at His table; he has become a companion of immortals, and has a house now given him to dwell in, to which the best palaces on earth, if compared, seem to me but as a dunghill.”

Now the husband of Christiana, Christian, dwells in the presence of the eternal God, sitting and eating with Him at His table; he has become a companion of immortal saints. Pascal's claim cannot explain this passage, which describes not every day life but eternal heavenly life.

If we accept this interpretation of eternal truth being expressed by SP, we can interpret the phrase “*has also sent for me*” and “*a letter which invites me*” as the eternal heavenly invitation from the eternal God to Christiana and all other human beings, as in the following passage:

(15) “The Prince of the place has also sent for me, with promises of entertainment if I shall come to Him; His messenger was here even now, and has brought me a letter which invites me to come.” “And with that she plucked out the letter, and read it, and said to them, “What now will you say to this?” (p. 102)

Here, the invitation is first to Christiana (an everyman figure), but also to everyman in the past, present, and future. Christiana rejected it at first, while her husband Christian accepted it and went off to travel from their home, “the City of Destruction, to the Celestial City.”

Moreover, in the following passage, we do not find a description of everyday life, but rather of habitual activities and, furthermore, the eternal characteristics of Mercy (personified here):

(16) “So, the next time he comes, he finds her (Mercy) at her old work, a-making of things for the poor. Then said he, “What! always at it?” “Yes,” said she, “either for myself or for others.” “And what canst thou earn a day?” quoth he. “I do these things,” said she, “that I may be rich in good works, laying up in store for myself a good foundation against the time to come, that I may lay hold on eternal life.” “Why, prithee, what doest thou with them?” said he.” “Clothe the naked,” said she. With that, his countenance fell. So he forbore to come at her again. And when he was

asked the reason why, he said that “Mercy was a pretty lass, but troubled with too much working for others.” (p.227)

Here, personified Mercy is always working for the poor to lay hold of eternal life. The SP serves to describe not ordinary, familiar daily life but the characteristic habitual life of Mercy.

In the next passage, Mrs. Timorous shows her habitual characteristics implied by her name *Timorous*, which means showing or suffering from nervousness, fear, or a lack of confidence, and easily frightened, as in the phrase “a timorous voice”:

- (17) “So Mrs. Timorous returned to her house, and Christiana betook herself to her journey. But when Timorous was got home to her house, she sends for some of her neighbors; to wit, Mrs. Bat's-eyes, Mrs. Inconsiderate, Mrs. Lightmind, and Mrs. Know-nothing. So, when they were come to her house, she falls to telling of the story of Christiana and of her intended journey. And thus she began her tale:” (p 184)

Mrs. Timorous sends for some of her neighbors, who are similar to her in lacking the courage and being apprehensive and faint-hearted to travel to the heavenly City. She is criticizing Christiana for her heavenly travel.

In the following passage, another characteristic of eternal truth is highlighted by SP:

- (18) a. INTERPRETER'S ALLEGORIES “When the Interpreter had done, he takes them out into his garden again, and had them to a tree, whose inside was all rotten and gone, and yet it grew and had leaves.” Then said Mercy, “What means this?” “This tree,” said he, “whose outside is fair, and whose inside is rotten, is that to which many may be compared that are in the garden of God, who with their mouths speak high in behalf of God, but indeed will do nothing for Him; whose leaves are fair, but their heart good for nothing but to be tinder for the devil's tinder-box.” (p.114)
- b. Matthew 21: 18. “Early in the morning, as he was on his way back to the city, he was hungry. 19. Seeing a fig tree by the road, he went up to it but found nothing on it except leaves. Then he said to it,” “May you never bear fruit again!” “Immediately the tree withered.”
- c. James 2:26. “As the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without deeds is dead.”

The SP in this passage describes the eternal truth warning against a false outer appearance without inner maturity or activities, and people without true deeds and activities. In Matthew 21:18, the fig tree with no fruit except leaves was cursed and withered away. According to James 2:26, true faith requires deeds and actions. In the above allegories, the tree whose inside was all rotten but has outer growth and leaves signifies people whose mouths speak highly of God but who do nothing for Him.

The SP in the following passage also warns against fretting, being discouraged, and complaining:

- (19) THE ENCHANTED GROUND. p. 296. p. 193-4 “The way also was here very wearisome through dirt and slabbiness. Nor was there on all this ground so much as one inn or victualling-house, therein to refresh the feebler sort. Here, therefore, was grunting, and puffing and sighing. While one tumbleth over a brush, another sticks fast in the dirt; and the children, some of them, lost their shoes in the mire. While one cries out, “I am down!” and another, “Ho! where are you?” and a third, “The bushes have got such fast hold on me, I think I cannot get away from them.” Then they came at an arbor, warm, and promising much refreshing to the pilgrims; for it was finely wrought above head, beautified with greens, furnished with benches and settles.

“It also had in it a soft couch, whereon the weary might lean. This, you must think, all things considered, was tempting; for the pilgrims already began to be foiled with the badness of the way; but there was not one of them that made so much as a motion to stop there. Yea, for aught I could perceive, they continually gave so good heed to the advice of their guide, and he did so faithfully tell them of dangers, and of the nature of dangers when they were at them, that usually, when they were nearest to them, they did most pluck up their spirits, and hearten one another to deny the flesh.” (p. 296)

This passage reminds the readers of the Israelites, who always complained and grumbled in the desert over trivial difficulties, troubles, and problems, as in the following Bible verse:

- (20) “Numbers 21: 4. They traveled from Mount Hor along the route to the Red Sea, to go around Edom. But the people grew impatient on the way; 5. they spoke against God and against Moses, and said,” “Why have you brought us up out of Egypt to die in the desert? There is no bread! There is no water! And we detest this miserable food!”

The typical characteristic of hospitality implied by the name Gaius, who is well-known for his hospitality and entertainment in the Bible (III Epistle of John 1–8), is emphasized by the SP in the following passage:

- (21) ENTERTAINED BY GAIUS. “Great. We will be content with what thou hast in the house; forasmuch as I have proved thee, thou art never without that which is suitable. Then he went down and spake to the cook, whose name was Taste—that which—is-good, to get ready supper for so many pilgrims. This done, he comes up again, saying,” “Come, my good friends, you are welcome to me, and I am glad that I have a house to entertain you in; and, while supper is making ready, if you please, let us entertain one another with some good talking together.” “So they all said,” “Content.” (p. 269)

Here, Gaius is entertaining the pilgrims with tasty food to welcome them to his house, which is highlighted by SP.

The following passage may be interpreted as the usage of HP to emphasize the actions of *running* and *piercing* by Mr. Great-heart, making them vivid in the minds of the readers. However, it also may be interpreted as indicating habitual activities of spiritual warfare required on the part of Christians:

- (22) “Then they sat down to rest them; but Mr. Great-heart betook himself to prayer. Also the women and children did nothing but sigh and cry all the time that the battle did last. When they had rested them, and taken breath, they both fell to it again; and Mr. Great-heart with a blow fetched the giant down to the ground. “Nay, hold, and let me recover,” quoth he. So Mr. Great-heart fairly let him get up: so to it they went again; and the giant missed but little of breaking Mr. Great-heart’s skull with his club.”
“Mr. Great-heart seeing that, runs to him in the full heat of his spirit, and pierceth him under the fifth rib. With that the giant began to faint, and could hold up his club no longer.” (p. 244)

To resist the giant, representing an evil spirit or the Devil, Christians are supposed to strive their best, which is an eternal truth.

Similarly, we find the eternal truth or habitual actions of “spiritual alertness” in the following passage:

- (23) a. “Then they got up and went forward. Now, a little before them stood an oak; and under it,

when they came to it, they found an old pilgrim fast asleep. They knew that he was a pilgrim by his clothes, and his staff, and his girdle. So the guide, Mr. Great-heart, awaked him; and the old gentleman, as he lifted up his eyes, cried out, "What's the matter? what are you, and what is your business here?" "Great. Come, man, be not so hot; here are none but friends. Yet the old man gets up, and stands upon his guard, and will know of them what they are. Then said the guide, "My name is Great-heart; I am the guide of these pilgrims, that are going to the Celestial Country." (p. 245)

- b. I Peter 5:8. "Be self-controlled and alert. Your enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour. 9. Resist him, standing firm in the faith, because you know that your brothers throughout the world are undergoing the same kind of sufferings."

Use of the phrase "true pilgrimage," in the same passage, "*And by this also I know that thou knowest what true pilgrimage is; for all others do think that we are the soonest overcome of any,*" indicates that being on guard and alert is required on the part of Christians and pilgrims. The old pilgrim fast asleep is awakened from his spiritual sleep and arises to stand upon his guard, whereby he begins to carry himself as a true pilgrim.

The SP in the following passage may be interpreted as HP emphasizing the action of coming, or, it may be interpreted as the eternal truth that the Bible teaches that not doing right deserves death, eternal death, and eternal hell:

- (24) a. "Now, just as Feeble-mind and Gaius were thus in talk, there comes one running, and called at the door, and said, that" "About a mile and a half off there was one Mr. Not-right, a pilgrim, struck dead upon the place where he was, with a thunderbolt." (p. 269)
- b. Revelation 21: 8. "But the cowardly, the unbelieving, the vile, the murderers, the sexually immoral, those who practice magic arts, the idolaters and all liars -- their place will be in the fiery lake of burning sulfur. This is the second death."

According to the above, Revelation 21:8, those who do not do right go to the fiery lake of burning sulfur (eternal hell), and the death of Mr. Not-right struck dead with a thunderbolt warns the readers of the biblical truth.

The SP in the following passage is also interpreted as eternal truth in that despair, doubt, fear, and so on always come to us followed by diffidence, a lack of courage, faith, or trust. It may be interpreted also as being in HP to describe the actions as living pictures, making the readers see the coming of Giant Despair followed by his wife Diffidence before their eyes like movies:

- (25) "So Mr. Great-heart, old Honest, and the four young men went to go up to Doubting Castle, to look for Giant Despair. When they came at the castle gate, they knocked for entrance with an unusual noise. At that, the old giant comes to the gate, and Diffidence his wife follows." Then said he, "Who and what is he that is so hardy as after this manner to disturb the Giant Despair?" (p. 270)

Even though the SP in *Pilgrim's Progress* has characteristics of eternal truth, timeless statements, or generics, and HP emphasizes past memorable events, making them more vivid, the SP here also has the characteristics of domestic and everyday affairs, as claimed by Pascal (1965: 15), "written in a more and racy style," as in the following examples he adduces:

- (26) (=15) a. "So Mrs. Timorous returned to her house, and Christiana betook herself to her journey. But when Timorous was got home to her house, she sends for some of her neighbors; to wit,

- Mrs. Bat's-eyes, Mrs. Inconsiderate, Mrs. Lightmind, and Mrs. Know-nothing. So, when they were come to her house, she falls to telling of the story of Christiana and of her intended journey. And thus she began her tale:" (p, 184)
- b. "When the Interpreter had done, he takes them out into his Garden again, and had them to a Tree ..." (p. 204)
 - c. When Mr. Brisk is courting Mercy:(14) "So, the next time he comes, he finds her (Mercy) at her old work, a-making of things for the poor. Then said he, "What! always at it?" (p. 227).
 - d. When Gaius the innkeeper entertains the pilgrims: (19) "Then he went down and spake to the cook, whose name was Taste-that which-is-good, to get ready supper for so many pilgrims. This done, he comes up again, saying, "Come, my good friends, you are welcome ..." (p. 259).
 - e. "Now, just as Feeble-mind and Gaius were thus in talk, there comes one running, and called at the door, and told. ..." (p. 269).

Pascal (1965:15-16) suggests that all these examples of SP inserted in a narrative told in the preterit are not examples of HP, noting that the verbs in SP are "all much-used, simple words, *sends, falls to, takes, finds, and comes*; and that the actions they indicate are all usual, the actions one would expect to happen in that situation." "The present tense here links up the action with the familiar every-day of the readers... and gains positively by its associations with the experience of the readers..." "the narrative impinges on our daily experience and builds on its associations." This may be true in one respect, in that Bunyan's main purpose may be to describe what an ordinary person (an everyman figure) is likely to experience daily during his trials and adventures traveling from his/her home, "the City of Destruction, to the Celestial City."

4. Conclusion

Based on the above discussion of the SP and HP in *Pilgrim's Progress*, contrary to the arguments of Pascal (1965) and other scholars, I conclude that the SP in *Pilgrim's Progress* expresses more than the experience of daily affairs and may be categorized into three types:

First, the SP in *Pilgrim's Progress* describes eternal truths, timeless statements, or generic propositions, all of which emphasize and focus on aspects of eternity, such as eternally dwelling in Heaven with the eternal God, as in, "*He dwelleth in the presence of the King of the country; he sits and eats with Him at His table; he has become a companion of immortals, and has a house now given him to dwell in, to which the best palaces on earth, if compared, seem to me but as a dunghill.*" Another example is found in a letter which invites me to come referring to the eternal invitation to all human beings from the eternal God. Another eternal truth is the need to be alert and on guard: "*Yet the old man gets up, and stands upon his guard, and will know of them what they are.*" In "true pilgrimage," being on guard is required of Christians and pilgrims. The old pilgrim fast asleep in *Pilgrim's Progress* is awakened from his spiritual slumber and arises to stand upon his guard, whereupon he begins to behave as a true pilgrim.

Second, the SP in *Pilgrim's Progress*, contrary to the claim of Pascal (1965), is used as HP to emphasize a vivid description of a certain past event, giving the reader a feeling of being there as an observer. The occasions of use of SP in the narrative of Part I of *Pilgrim's Progress*, as observed by Pascal (1965: 13-14), is better interpreted as HP rather than everyday life experiences. Bunyan must have intended his readers to feel the threat of Giant Despair by the use of SP as HP like *getteth (gets), goes, falls, and beats*, thereby warning them against falling into real despair. The author's usage of HP in

Pilgrim's Progress, as discussed above, shows his “true degree of literary elegance and expertise or evidence of a highly sophisticated mastery of effective communication and style,” to quote the words with which Enos (1981: 282) praised St. Mark's use of HP. *Pilgrim's Progress* has some of the qualities of a folktale, written in homely yet dignified biblical prose, and it anticipates the 18th-century novel in its humor and realistic portrayals of minor characters. The book went through several editions and attained immediate popularity within a few years of its initial publication. It was translated into some 200 languages and remained a favorite for the following two centuries. Even Ralph Vaughan Williams notably composed a 1951 opera based on *Pilgrim's Progress*. The popularity of this masterpiece is not exceptional, but rather only to be anticipated.

Finally, as claimed by Pascal, SP also describes the everyday life of ordinary people. This is true in one respect, given that Bunyan's main purpose might have been to describe what an ordinary person (an everyman figure) is likely to experience daily during the trials and adventures as he/she travels from his/her home, “the City of Destruction, to the Celestial City.” The excellence of Bunyan's writing is that he succeeds in evoking in his readers the daily reality of his story, which is presented as the author's dreams of the trials and adventures of an ordinary person traveling from his/her home, “the City of Destruction, to the Celestial City.” Bunyan proves himself to be a writer of a “true degree of literary elegance and expertise or evidence of a highly sophisticated mastery of effective communication and style” in homely yet dignified biblical prose. As discussed in the above, the analysis of the SP in *Pilgrim's Progress* shows that it has three functions: first, to describe eternal truths, generics, or timeless statements; second, as HP to describe an event that took place in the past, giving it more vividness; and finally to describe present continuous (stative), characteristic, and daily activities. Just as the abstract entity of phoneme is manifested as different allophones depending on context, so the abstract SP is manifested in different functions depending on context.

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