John Bunyan

Preacher and writer John Bunyan was born near Bedford in Elstow, England. Bunyan's Puritan religious conversion, the central event of his life, was marked by an inner voice reciting Scripture, at times reassuring in its promise of salvation, and at times ominous in its threat of damnation. Bunyan came to believe that a greater appreciation of the weight of one's sin corresponded to greater attention from God, and began to preach in a Baptist congregation. In 1660 the Stuart monarchy was reinstated, outlawing proselytizing by anyone not ordained by the Church of England. Bunyan was jailed for most of the following 12 years, which enabled him to devote himself to his writing.