

# A COTTON MATHER READER

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*Edited and with an Introduction  
by Reiner Smolinski and Kenneth P. Minkema*

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## AUTOBIOGRAPHY AND MEDITATIONS

Cotton Mather's life writings and meditations furnish a glimpse of his complex personality: his Job-like wrestling with his God, his spirituality, and the self-representation of his heart, mind, and soul. To be sure, the term "autobiography" was not coined until the early nineteenth century, and Mather's "Paterna" might best be described as a memoir or didactic ledger of his spiritual life. It is important to remember that until the nineteenth century, publishing one's own autobiography, memoir, letters, or diaries during one's lifetime violated the conventions of propriety. At the most, such manuscripts were "scribally published," that is, shared with immediate family members or close friends after the death of the author for personal instruction. The sixty biographies in Mather's *Magnalia Christi Americana* (1702) testify to the fact that such private documents were made available to authors who commemorated the lives of their friends and colleagues.

Culled from the pages of Mather's diary is "Paterna," his spiritual autobiography or memoir, left in manuscript until 1976. Perhaps punning on the concepts of "pattern" and "pater" (Latin for "father"), Mather's "Paterna" set out to do just that: to provide an exemplary pattern for his Christian Everyman.<sup>1</sup> To achieve this goal, Mather hid his identity and deliberately elided any possible reference to himself, his family, or relatives whose identities might reveal his authorship. His secretiveness should not come as a surprise. To be sure, Mather's memoir bears little if any resemblance to Benjamin Franklin's famous autobiography,

though both are conventionally addressed to “*My Son*.” If Franklin provided detailed information about his ancestors and made every effort to tell a good story about his life’s achievements, Mather did nothing of the sort. “*Paterna*” was deliberately opaque and impervious to anyone looking for biographical specifics, precisely because he aimed to create the persona of a spiritual “*Exemplar*” patterned after Christ. Consequently, individuality and uniqueness—qualities in high esteem in our times—were at cross-purposes with his sought-after exemplariness and therefore needed to be erased. But “*Paterna*” was also an astonishing, even heartrending, self-analysis of a Puritan who scrutinized virtually every impulse and motion of his mind and heart, ceaselessly questing for absolution and assurance of his election, even as he strove to emulate Christ’s suffering. “*My Life*,” Mather wrote in his diary in December 1713, “is almost a constant Conversation with Heaven.”<sup>2</sup> His struggle for evidence of his conversion and assurance in the realm of feeling was not a single event in time but a lifelong endeavor intermittently measured by his rigorous self-abasement and intense prayers to be found worthy of Christ. In this manner, he devised two narrators: a younger one ceaselessly swimming against the tide of temptation and corruption, and an older and wiser one who looks over the younger’s shoulders, calmly noting the blunders of his ways.

What emerges from this back and forth is a spiritual journal that might startle modern readers not used to tallying their own shortcomings. One of his innumerable unspecified recollections reserved for his son’s contemplations begins, “Some of my Bitterest Confessions and Confusions this Day before the Lord, were, That a vast Variety of successive *Temptations* has Assaulted me.” At another point, Mather bared his breast: “I not only kept many *Dayes of Humiliation*, but I also composed a Writing of several Pages, entitled, THE TRUE PICTURE OF—myself. Herein I did, with *Black*, but yett with too *True*, Characters, describe my own Vileness at such a rate, that it cannot be look’d upon, without Horrour of Soul; but I Resolved, often to look upon it.”<sup>3</sup> Keeping track of one’s heart of darkness, depravity, and self-loathing—shocking as it might appear to our standards of a healthy mind—served dual purposes: on the one hand, it reminded the meditating soul of his dire want of grace and utter dependence on Christ;

on the other, it gauged a person's state of regeneration. The more sins he found, the more he felt assured his soul was filled with regenerating grace that enabled him to uncover and bewail his hidden sins. And yet, pouring over the black characters of "THE TRUE PICTURE OF—myself" allowed him to initiate his frame of mind into states of self-abnegation during secret fasts from which he could but rise victoriously with his faith restored in Christ's pardon.

Opaque revelations about the nature of one's sins were perfectly intelligible to those with whom Mather shared a religious culture. And ritualistic meditation, coupled with fasting and prayer, was the means to root out depravity. At other moments, when his soul emerged from the dark night of self-analysis, his emotions could reach heights of ravishing ecstasy. When undertaking one of hundreds of "Secret Fasts" recorded in his diary and "Paterna," his joy could mount to a stunning trance: "Oh, I feel! I feel! I feel! I love the Lord Jesus Christ; I love Him dearly, I love Him greatly, Yea, I love Him above all. And What? Will God love me? . . . Oh, Joy unspeakable & full of Glory!—Oh, what Love, what Love, what Love is This! That I, who have been so Polluted and so Unworthy, should be loved by the Great God! Now, oh, that I could Praise thy Name, and Love thee again!"<sup>4</sup> For many readers today, such terms of self-abasement culminating in mystical ecstasy are, perhaps, best consumed in small doses, else their seeming repetitiveness loses vivacity and comes across as scripted without being any less sincere. Mather's diary and autobiography, then, manifest a deep soul in constant want of approval from his heavenly father, from whose path he could never stray very far without rushing back for absolution. Mather's very essence depended on the peace and joy that came from feeling reconciled with his God.

Our second selection to illustrate the preoccupations of an early American religious believer is *Christianus per Ignem* (1702), a captivating manual for meditation to raise the mind from transient objects in the here and now to thoughts of everlasting bliss in Heaven. The ancient practice of meditation is more than a mere pondering of one's deeds or surroundings. It is a cognitive exercise to extract spiritual lessons from even the most pedestrian objects that reveal God's hidden glory. Its purpose is to sharpen the faculty powers of memory

(the storehouse of past experience) and understanding (assessment of what *is* versus what *ought to be*) in order to raise the affections (fear of punishment versus love and gratitude) and shape volition (the will to act) in order to embrace what is good or to resist what is evil. Mather demonstrated the lessons of this divine art, for example, in his *Winter-Meditations* (1693) as well as in *Christianus per Ignem* (1702). In the latter work, excerpted below, he invoked René Descartes's famous dictum "Cogito, ergo sum," or, as Mather rendered it, "I think, therefore I am," though reminding his readers that "it is no *New Divinity* to teach, that *As Men Think, so they are*."<sup>5</sup> In playing on Descartes's phrase, Mather cautions readers that the right way of thinking is to stimulate the love of God, not to probe the limits of true knowledge. The origin of his *Christian by the Fire*, the English title of this meditation, amounts to a wager (so he claims) with several of his friends sitting by his fireside that "*as dry a Subject*" as the fire before them could yield a whole collection of beneficial thoughts. His book of two hundred pages and forty meditations certainly did not turn out to be "*dry*" at all but filled with dry wit and acumen as only Mather knew how.

"PATERNA"

TO MY SON

God, who hath given you to *me*, requires and expects, my Endeavours, that on the most peculiar Accounts, you may be *His*.

What have been my *Prayers* for you, both before and after my Receiving of you from the Lord, and what *Hopes* I have had concerning you, perhaps you may somewhat inform your self, if you should Live to Read, the Passages of my *Life*, Recorded from time to time, as they occur'd, in *Reserved Memorials*, which I leave behind me.<sup>6</sup>

From those *Memorials*, I am now going to *Extract* certain Passages, that may be *Particularly Instructive* to you; because to do so, I thought, would be one Reasonable *Essay*, That all my *Prayers*, and *Hopes* about you, may not be defeated.

The *Instruction* of a *Father*, carries much of Authority and Efficacy with it; It seems intimated in the Divine Oracles, That if the Servants of God *WILL command their Children, they SHALL keep the Way of the Lord*: And some famous Orators going to write Advice unto *Young Persons*, have Ingeniously introduced,

with a most Agreeable *Fiction*, the *Dead Parents* of those Persons, as thus Advising of them. Tho’ I shall quickly be *Dead*, yett I am still *Alive*; and because the *Exemple* of a *Father* added unto his *Instruction*, may render it Singularly Efficacious, I have chosen to give you, without the least *Fiction* in the World, a Number of those *Experiences* and *Contrivances*, which I have had, in my own poor *Walk with God*. . . .

*The First Part*

§ Being desirous to Discover myself unto None, but *You*, My SON, I must here leave unmentioned, *When* and *Where* (as well as, *of Whom*) I was born, lest the mention thereof should afford some Light unto the Discovery, against which I would be cautious.

Wherefore, I Begin by observing to you, That I desire to bewayl unto the very *End* of my Life, the early Ebullitions of *Original Sin*, which appeared at the very *Beginning* of it. Indeed, your Grandfather,<sup>7</sup> tho’ he were a Wise and Strict Parent, would from the Observation of some Dispositions in me, comfort himself with an Opinion of my being *Sanctified by the Holy Spirit of God, in my very Infancy* {Rom. 15:16}. But he knew not how Vile I was; he saw not the Instances of my *going astray*, even while I was yett an *Infant*.

§ However, there were *some Good things* in my *Childhood*, in which I wish you, *My Child*, may *do better than I*. I began to *Pray*, even when I began to *Speak*. I learn’d myself to *Write*, before my going to School for it. I used *Secret Prayer*, not confining myself to *Forms* in it: And yett I composed *Forms of Prayer*, for my School-mates, (I suppose, when I was about Seven or Eight Years old) and obliged them to *Pray*. Before I could *Write Sermons*, in the public Assemblies, I commonly *Wrote* what I Remembred, when I came home. I Read the Scripture, with so much Ardour, that for one while nothing less than *Fifteen Chapters* a Day, Divided into three Exercises, for Morning and Noon, and Night, would suffice me. I Rebuked my Play-mates, for their *Wicked Words* and *Wayes*; and sometimes I suffered from them, the Persecution of not only *Scoffs*, but *Blowes* also, for my Rebukes: which, when some-body told your Grandfather, I remember, he seem’d very *Glad*, yea, almost *Proud*, of my Affronts; and I then wondred at it, tho’ afterwards, I better understood this Heavenly Principle.

§ One Special Fault of my *Childhood*, (against which, I would have you, *My Son*, be caution’d,) was, *Idleness*. And one thing that occasion’d me much *Idle Time*, was the Distance of my Fathers Habitation from the *School*; which caused him, out of Compassion unto my Tender and Weakly Constitution, to keep me at home in the *Winter*. However, I then much employ’d myself in *Church-History*: And when *Summer* arrived, I so plied my Business, that thro’

the Blessing of God upon my Endeavours, at the Age of little more than *Eleven Years*, I had composed many *Latin Exercises*, both in *Prose* and *Verse*, and could speak *Latin* so readily, that I could write Notes of Sermons after the English Preacher, in it. I had conversed with *Cato*, *Corderius*, *Terence*, *Tully*, *Ovid*, and *Virgil*. I had made *Epistles*, and *Themes*; presenting my First Theme to my Master,<sup>8</sup> without his requiring or expecting as yett any such thing of me; whereupon he complemented me, *Laudabilis Diligentia tua!*<sup>9</sup> I had gone thro' a great Part of the New Testament in *Greek*: I had read considerably in *Isocrates* and *Homer*; and I had made some Entrance in my Hebrew Grammar. And I was upon a Strict Examination of the Praesident & Fellowes, Admitted into a Colledge, the Name whereof need not here be mentioned.<sup>10</sup> And, I think, before I came to *Fourteen*, I composed *Hebrew Exercises*, and *Ran thro'* the other Sciences, that *Academical Studies* ordinarily fall upon. I composed *Systems*, both of *Logick*, and *Physick*, in Catechisms of my own, which have since been used by many others. I went over the Use of the *Globes*, and proceeded in *Arithmetic*, as far as was ordinary. I made *Theses* and *Antitheses*, and also disputed upon the main *Quaestions* that lay before us. For my *Declamations*, I ordinarily took some Article of *Natural Philosophy*, for my *Subject*, by which Contrivance I did kill Two Birds with One Stone. Hundreds of Books I read over; & I kept a *Diary* of my Studies.

My Son, I would not have mentioned these things, but that I may provoke Your Emulation.

§ Before I was quite arrived unto this Age, I *Apostatised* from God, in diverse Miscarriages, which made me suspect, that I had never yett experienced any more than some *Common Works* of His Holy Spirit, and I was yett but a *Refined Hypocrite*. At length, upon Occasion of *Bodily Indisposition*, which I fear'd would End in Death, my Suspicion of my Interior & Eternal State, was terribly Awakened. I Trembled, when I thought, that after I had *Hop'd Well* of myself, & many Servants of God had *Spoke Well* of me, I should be a *Castaway* after all; and I remember, God sett home that Consideration upon me, with a very particular Pungency, *How shall I be able to look my own Father in the Face, at the Day of Judgment?* While I was under my Distresses, I heard some Sermons, on Luk. 7.47. *Her Sins, which were many, are Forgiven*; and on Rev. 22.17, *Whosoever will, let him take of the Water of Life freely*. The Grace of God in the Lord Jesus Christ, and the Gracious Offer of the Lord Jesus Christ, wonderfully affected me; my Heart was exceedingly Broken & Melted at it; and it embolden'd me to Come, and Lay Hold upon Him, who is able to *Save unto the uttermost all that come unto Him* {Heb. 7:25}. I had Frequent Returns of *Doubts* and *Fears*; but I frequently Renewed my Closures with the Lord Jesus Christ, as my only Releef against them. Once Laboring & even Languishing, under a Sense of my

own horrible Vileness, and thinking, *Will the Lord Jesus Christ Accept of a Vile Wretch, that hath been & hath done, as I have!* I had some Discourse with your Grandfather about it. He told me, *That as for that Matter, there was no Returning Sinner, but the Lord Jesus Christ would most freely Accept of him: For* (said he) *observe it even among Men: There’s a vile Sinner, an Holy Man Beholds him and Abhors him: Yett if this vile Sinner ever comes to be converted, the same Holy Person, can & will, notwithstanding his former loathsome Vileness, embrace him in his very Bosome; and This* (he said) *is an Emblem & Effect of the Spirit of the Lord Jesus Christ.* I shall never forgett, how much these Words did *Quicken* me! In my Addresses to Heaven under the Exercises of my Mind, about my *Reconciliation* to God, I now sometimes received Strange, and Strong, and Sweet Intimations, That I was Accepted of the Lord. Once especially, having heard a Sermon, on Isa. 44.3. *I will pour my Spirit on thy Seed, & my Blessing on thy Offspring;* I pleaded that Promise before the Lord, and in my Pleading of it, the *Spirit* of the Lord, wonderfully dissolved my Heart, with Assurances, That it should be fulfilled upon me. . . .

§ Moreover, I may mention it unto you, That when I was about this Age, I fell under the Power of *Melancholy*,<sup>11</sup> to such a Degree, that I exceedingly wonder, it had no worse Effects upon me. And studying *Physick* at this time, I was unhappily led away with *Fancies*, that I was myself Troubled, with almost every *Distemper* that I read of, in my Studies: which caused me sometimes, not only *Needlessly*, but also *Hurtfully* to use *Medicines* upon myself, that I might Cure my *Imaginary Maladies*. But the Troubles of *Sin* accompanied these my Confusions, which horribly overwhelmed me: Until once Crying to the Lord in Prayer, and Casting my *Burdens* on the Care of the Lord Jesus Christ, I sensibly felt an unaccountable *Cloud* and *Load* go off my Spirit, and from that Minute I was as much altered, by a New *Light*, and *Life*, and *Ease* arriving to me, as the *Sunrise* does change the World, from the Condition of *Midnight*.

§ I will further inform you, *My Son*; That one singular Advantage to me while I was thus a Lad, was my Acquaintance with, and Relation to, a *Society of Young Men* in our Town, who mett every *Evening* after the *Lords-day*, for the Services of Religion. There we constantly *Pray’d*, both before and after the Repetition of a *Sermon*; and Sang a *Psalm*; taking our *Turns* in such Devotions. We then had a Devout *Quaestion*, proposed a Week before; whereto any one present gave what *Answer* he pleased; and I still concluded the *Answer*. As the Lord made poor *me*, to be a little useful unto these (and other) Meetings of *Young People*, in my *Youth*, so He made these Meetings very useful unto me. Their *Loves* to me, and their *Prayers* for me, and my *Probationary Essays* among them, had a more than ordinary Influence upon my *After-Improvements*. . . .

DIARY (MARCH 1681)<sup>12</sup>

[Mather's "Infirmity"]

Another thing that much exercised mee was, that I might not bee left without necessary Supplies of *Speech* for my Ministry. God was pleased so far to lett my *Infirmity* remain, that altho' by a careful *Deliberation* my *public Services* were freed from any Blemish by it, yett I was, by His Wisdome, kept in continual *Prayer*, and *Fear*, and *Faith*, concerning it. How many Thousands of sollicitous Thoughts I underwent concerning it, is best known to Him, who by those Thoughts *drove* mee and kept me *nearer* to Himself.

SAMUEL MATHER, *LIFE* (1729)

[Mather Is Given a Way to Minimize His Stutter]

2. WHILE he was full of Concern for Relief from this troublesome Infirmity, that good old Schoolmaster Mr. CORLET<sup>13</sup> gave him a Visit on purpose to advise Him; Sir, said he, *I should be glad if you would oblige your self to a dilated Deliberation in speaking; for as in Singing there is no one who Stammers, so by prolonging your Pronunciation you will get an Habit of speaking without Haesitation.*

3. HERE I must inform my Reader, that because of his *Stammering*, he had almost, for some Time, laid aside the Tho'ts of being a *Minister*, and had with great Application studied *Physic*: But, upon prosecuting Mr. CORLET's Advice, and having procured with Divine Help an *happy Delivery*, he was perswaded by his Friends to desert the Calling of a *Physician*; He did so: And after having studied *Theology* rationally and without Prejudice, he prepared for *public Appearance*: And because of the Calling he had relinquished, he did in his first Sermon consider our Blessed SAVIOUR as the glorious *Physician of Souls*; chusing those words for his first Text in Luke IV.18. *He hath sent me to heal the broken-hearted.*<sup>14</sup> . . .

§ When I was come to be Eighteen Years of Age my Mind was exceedingly taken up, with the great Action, of, *A Closing with the Lord Jesus Christ*. In the Prosecution of this Action, I may say, t'was the *Spirit* of God, that was my *Teacher*; no *Man*, or *Book*, show'd me the Way of managing this Action; but I was by the *Spirit* of God, led on to a most explicit Procedure in it. One Day, I used such Words as these, among others, before my Lord-Redeemer.

"Oh, my dear Lord; Thy *Father* ha's committed my Soul into thy Hands: There is a *Covenant of Redemption*, wherein I am concerned: I know my *Election* by

my *Vocation*, and my Concernment in that *Covenant*, by my being made Willing to Come under the Shadow of thy Wings in the *Covenant of Grace*. Now in that ancient *Covenant*, the *Father* said unto the *Son*, *Such an Elect Soul there is, that I will bring into thy Fold, and thou shalt undertake for that Soul, as a Sufficient and an Eternal Saviour*. Wherefore I am now in thy Hands, O my Lord: Thy Father ha’s putt me there, and I have putt myself there; O Save me, O Heal me, O Work for me, Work in me the good Pleasure of thy Goodness.” . . .

Two things I will observe unto you, *My Son*, concerning this matter.

One thing is This; When I Renewed, (as I often did, and with great Variety of Expression,) this Action of, *Coming to the Lord Jesus Christ*, I frequently sett apart Whole Dayes, for *Prayer* with *Fasting* in my Study; and in those Dayes, I usually underwent, first of all, grievous Conflicts, and Sorrows, and Horrors of Mind, and horrible Amazements about the Condition of my Soul. These *Agonies* came upon me, without my Calling for them; and they were accompanied with an inexpressible Bitterness, which made me dread the Repetition of them. When my Want of a *Christ*, and the Worth of a *Christ*, was hereby powerfully sett home upon me, I still with unutterable Fervency struggled, until I found myself assisted from on High, to Lay Hold on the Lord Jesus Christ, in all His *Offices*; and then a Sweet Satisfaction of Mind succeeded. Thus I was (while an Ignorant Youth) strangely led on by the *Spirit* of the Most High, to go the whole *Work of Conversion* often over & over again. And, tho’ at the Beginning of a Day sett apart for such Devotions, I should even tremble in the Thoughts of the *Travail* that I foresaw, I should pass thro’, yet I comforted myself, that my frequent *Renewing* of this Action, would be my *Assuring* of it. . . .

§ I had, from my Childhood, employ’d at least a *Tenth*, of what Money I gott, in *Pious Uses*; and now I had a considerable Quantity of Money annually coming in, I employ’d much more than a *Tenth* on such Uses. *My Son*, Do you alwayes Devote a *Tenth* of your Gains, unto the Special Service of our Great *Melchisedeck*, the Lord JESUS CHRIST. I Earnestly Exhort you, and Advise you: And you shall be no Loser by it, I Assure you.

But what I have here to note, is, That one of the First Contrivances, for the Glorifying of the Lord, which I Recorded, was, *To Spend much in Buying of Good BOOKS, to give away*.

How many *Hundreds*, yea, how many *Thousands*, of *Good Books*, I have thus given away, I cannot reckon. I suppose, I have given away near a *Thousand*, in One Year.

But I will observe Two Things unto you, *My Son*, upon it.

One Observable is This. While I gave away *Small Books* unto others, God gave *Great Books* unto me. I mean, That I had a secret, & a wondrous Blessing

of God upon my *Library*. A *Good Library* was a thing, I much Desired & Valued, and by the Surprising Providence of God, it came to pass, That my *Library*, without my Pillaging of your Grandfathers, did by cheap, and strange Accessions, grow to have I know not how many more than *Thirty Hundred* Books in it; and I lived so near your Grand-fathers, that *his*, which was not much less than Mine, was also in a Manner *Mine*. This was much for a *Non-Conformist* Minister.

Another Observable is This. While I was giving away *Good Books* written by *Other Men*, I had all along a Secret Perswasion, That a Time would come, when I should have many *Books* written by *myself* likewise to give away. And I have lived since to see this Perswasion most Remarkably Accomplished. I shall too far Discover myself, if I should *Particularly* relate, how Remarkably. All I will say, is, That no *Non-Conformist* Minister now surviving in the Nation hath had so many. . . .

§ *My Son*; I lately mentioned unto you, a Contrivance, to carry on *Ejaculatory Prayers*, while I walk'd in the *Street*, or satt in a *Room* (with my Mind otherwise unemploy'd;) by contriving of some suitable *Blessing* for such Persons, as I should have before me, & then Directing it in the form of an *Ejaculation* unto Heaven for them, unobserved by any but Heaven, in the doing of it. In the *Twenty first* Year of my Age, I carried on this Exercise of *Religion* and *Charity*, to more of Exactness, and it hath ever since been with me, a frequent Exercise, and as *pleasant* as it has been *frequent*.

The Lord only knowes, how many Thousands of *Ejaculatory Prayers*, I have thus made for my Neighbours. But that you, *My Son*, may be Assisted in your Imitation, I will only Recite a *few* such *Ejaculatory Prayers*, from whence you may conjecture, how *I* did, and *You* may, use to shape such Devotions.

At a *Table*, where I being the Youngest of the Company, it was not proper for *me*, to Discourse at all, & the Discourses of others were too trivial to be worthy of my Attention.

Looking on the Gentlewoman that carved for us,  
Lord, *Carve of thy Grace and Comforts, a rich Portion to that Person.*

A Gentlewoman stricken in Years.

Lord, *Adorn that Person with the Vertues, which thou praescribest unto Aged Women, and praepare her for her Dissolution.*

A Gentlewoman lately Married.

Lord, *Espouse & Marry the Soul of that Person to thyself, in a Covenant never to be forgotten.*

A Gentlewoman very Beautiful.

Lord, *Give that Person an Humble Mind, and Lett her Mind be most concern'd for those Ornaments, that are of Great Price in thy Sight.*

One of our Magistrates.

Lord, *Inspire that Person, with Wisdome, Courage, & Goodness, to seek the Welfare of thy People.*

One of our Ministers.

Lord, *Incline & Assist that Person to be a faithful Steward in thy House.*

One unhappy in his Children.

Lord, *Convert the Children of that Person, and Lett him have the Joy to see them walking in thy Truth.*

One Crazy and Sickly.

Lord, *Lett the Sun of Righteousness arise unto that Person, with Healing in His Wings.*

A Physician.

Lord, *Lett that Person be successful in his Practice, & Lett him successfully carry the Distempers of his own Soul, unto the Lord, his Healer.*

One that had mett, with great Losses.

Lord, *Give to that Person, the Good Part, which cannot be taken away.*

A Servant giving Attendance.

Lord, *Make that Person a Servant of Jesus Christ, & one of thy Children.*

In like Manner, when I have been sitting in a Room full of People, at a *Fu-neral*, where they take not much Liberty for *Talk*, and where much Time is most unreasonably lost, I have usually sett my poor Witts a Work, to contrive *Agree-able Benedictions*, for each Person in the Company.

And thus, in passing along the *Street*, I have sett myself to *Bless* Thousands of Persons, who never knew that I did it; with *Secret Wishes* after this Manner sent unto Heaven for them. . . .

§ Many of my Neighbours were now often proposing to me, a MARRIED STATE OF LIFE. But I thought it necessary to Address Heaven with more than ordinary *Prayer*, and *Fasting*, before I took a Step in an Affayr of such Importance. I kept many *Dayes* on this Occasion, in such Devotions.

On one of those Dayes, I find this Record of my Proceedings.

“I acknowledge unto the Lord, my own Unworthiness of any Good Thing; especially of That *Good Thing*, which is found by them that *obtain Favour of*

*the Lord.* I Professed, That I would Study to do nothing hereabout, that should be Displeasing unto Him. I Declared, That I desired nothing in this World, which might prejudice my Glorifying of Himself. I Said, That if He Saw any thing would *Hinder* me from *Honouring* of Him, I should be glad if *He* would *Hinder* me from *Having* of *That*, whatever my misguided Appetites, might plead unto the Contrary. I Said, That if He would have me to embrace a *Caelibacy*, I would evermore take a Contentment in it, as that which would capacitate me, to Serve my *Parents*, & His *People*, to whom I owe my All. Nevertheless, to This I Subjoined, That since my Inclinations and Invitations did now seem to Recommend a married Estate unto me, I begg'd of the Lord, That He would *Lead me in the Way wherein I should Go* {Ps. 32:8}. And I made a Vow, That if the Lord would prevent all Obstructions of my Desireable Settlement, in a Marriage with one, who should be a Blessing to me, in Evangelical Services, *I will Twice at least, every Year, join with her, in keeping a Day of Thanksgiving*, privately unto Himself;—Except His Providence at any time, give a sufficient Cause for the Omission of it.”

On another of these Dayes, I thus Recorded, what occurred.

“This Day, with Anguish of Soul, in the Sense of my own Sinfulness and Filthiness, I cast myself prostrate on my *Study-floor*, with my Mouth in the Dust. Here I Lamented unto the Lord, my *Follies*, which might have an Influence to deprive me of the *Blessings* which I was now pursuing. I Judged, I Loathed, I Hated Myself, because of those *Accursed Things*, & besought the *Forgiveness* thereof, thro’ the *Blood of the Covenant*. I then Begg’d of the Most High, That He would, notwithstanding all my Miscarriages, bestow upon me, A *Companion for my Life*, by whose Prudence, Vertue, Good Nature, I might, while I am alive in this World, be Assisted in the Service of my Master, and who might accompany me to the Heaven of the Blessed forever. I pleaded, That *Marriage* was His *Ordinance*; and that He had promised, *No Good Thing shall be withheld from me*. I said unto Him, That I *Cast* the whole *Burden* of the *Care* about this Affayr, upon *Him: Expecting*, That He would mercifully divert my *Inclinations* from this Matter, if it would prove Displeasing to Him, or Disadvantageous to my Opportunities of Serving Him: *Entreating*, That if it may be best for me to proceed, He would please to Direct my *Choice*, & Order my *Way*, & Over-rule the Hearts of my Friends, and of *Her* unto whom I may make my Addresses, to favour what I prosecute: And in His due Time, to settle me, as to give me Rich Demonstrations of His Loving-kindnesses: *Engaging* herewithal, That I would more than Ever glorify Him, and spend my Time, in making of Blessed *Matches*, between the Son of God, and the Souls of Men.”

Having taken these *Methods* to obtain the Blessing of God, on this weighty Concern, I may now tell you, *My Son*, I was wonderfully Blessed in it. When I was Entering the Twenty Fourth Year of my Age, I was by the wonderful Favour of Heaven brought into an Acquaintance with a Lovely and Worthy young Gentlewoman, whom God made a Consort, & a Blessing to me.<sup>15</sup> . . .

§ On a certain Day of *Prayer* with *Fasting*, which I kept in the Thirty-first Year of my Age, my *Special Errand* unto the Lord was, *This*: That whereas His *Good Angels* did by *His Order*, many *Good Offices* for His People, He would please to grant unto me, the Enjoyment of those *Angelical* Kindnesses and Benefits, which use to be done by *His Order*, for His *Chosen Servants*. I Requested only those Kindnesses, which the *Written Word* of God mentioned, as belonging to the *Heirs of Salvation*; but I Requested, that I might Receive those Benefits, in a Manner and Measure, more *Transcendent*, than what the great *Corruptions* in the Generality of *Good Men*, permitted them to be made Partakers of. . . .

In the close of these Proceedings, I wrote these Words;

*I do now Beleeve, That some Great Things are to be done for me, by the ANGELS of God.*

And now, *My Son*, It is *not lawful for me to utter*, the marvellous and amazing Favours, which I have since received from the Blessed ANGELS. I have seen, and felt, most wonderful Effects of their *Ministry*, Directing my Studies, Assisting my Labours, Preventing of Wrong Steps which I have been just ready to take; Supplying my Wants, and Comforting me under & against my Temptations. Yea, their *Ministry* hath proceeded so far, that I must here bear this *Testimony*, against the *Sadducism* of this Generation, That I have as infallible Demonstration of the Existence and Agency of those *Heavenly Spirits*, as I have to prove any Matter of *Sense* in the World. It is possible I may leave to you, *My Son*, a particular History by itself, of *Angelical Operations*, and of *Matters of Fact*, relating to things done by Good and Bad *Angels*, whereof I have been myself the Attentive *Witness*: Tho’ I must not Forgett my Promise of *Concealing* such Things as are not proper to be exposed.<sup>16</sup> . . .

Another is *This*: There fell out in my Neighbourhood, not many Months after the *Day of Prayer* above said, an astonishing Thing, which I am well satisfied, is true; It were unreasonable for me, to desire a greater Satisfaction, than I had for the Truth of it. I will insert it, as I chose then for some Reasons, to insert it, in the Language, which I thought most proper for it.

*Res Mirabilis, et Memorabilis. Post fusas, Maximis cum Ardoribus Jejuniisque Preces, apparuit Angelus, qui Vultum habuit solis instar Meridiani Micantem, caetera Humanum, at prorsus Imberbem; Caput Magnificè Tiarâ obvolutum; In Humeris, Alas; Vestes deinceps Candidas et Splendidas; Togam nempè Talarem, et Zonam circà Lumbos, Orientalium cingulis non absimilem.*

*Dixitque hic Angelus, à Domino JESU se missum, ut Responsa cujusdam Juvenis precibus articulatim afferat.*

*Quam plurima retulit hic Angelus, quae hic scribere non fas est. Verum inter alia Memoratu digna, futurum hujusce Juvenis Fatum, optimè posse exprimi asseruit, in illis Vatis Ezechielis Verbis.<sup>17</sup>*

EZEK. 31. 3, 4, 5, 7, 8, 9.

Behold, He was a Cedar in Lebanon, with fair Branches, and with a Shadowing Shroud, & of an High Stature, and his Top was among the Thick Boughs.

The Waters made him great, the Deep sett him up on high, with her Rivers running about his Plants.

His Heighth was exalted above all the Trees of the Field, and his Boughs were multiplied, and his Branches became long, because of the Multitude of Waters, when they shott forth.

Thus was he fair in his Greatness, in the Length of his Branches, for his Root was by the great Waters.

Nor was any Tree in the Garden of God, like unto him, in his Beauty.

I have made him fair by, the Multitude of his Branches; so that all the Trees of Eden, that were in the Garden of God, envied him.

*Atque particulariter Clausulas, de Ramis ejus extendendis, exposuit hic Angelus, de Libris ab hoc Juvene componendis, et [non tantum in America, sed etiam in Europa,] publicandis.<sup>18</sup> Addiditque peculiare quaedam Praedictiones, [et pro Tali ac Tanto peccatore, valde Mirabiles] de Operibus Insignibus, quae pro Ecclesiâ Christi, in Revolutionibus jam appropinquantibus, hic Juvenis olim facturus est.*

*Domini JESU! Quid sibi vult haec res tam Extraordinaria? A Diabolicis Illusionibus, obsecro te, Servum tuum Indignissimum, ut Liberes ac defendes.<sup>19</sup>*

At another Time, and in another Place, tis possible, My Son, I may tell you more. All that I will here say, is; Be sure to Believe, That there are *Holy Angels*, and Behave yourself so Holily that the *Good Angels* may take Pleasure to do you Good; But keep close to the *Written Word of God*, in your whole Conduct, and affect not *Extraordinary Dispensations*, lest you run into Delusions and Confusions, of the worst Consequence imaginable. Your sinful Father, has more than ordinary Cause, to Bless the Lord, for his own Praeservation from them. . . .

§ This Year, my little and only Bird, was taken so dangerously sick, that small Hope of her *Life*, was left unto us.<sup>20</sup> In my Distress, when I saw the Lord thus *Quenching the Coal that was left* unto me {2 Sam. 14:7}, and rending out of my Bosom, one that had lived so long with me, as to steal a *Room* there, and a *Lamb* that was indeed unto me *as a Daughter*, I cast myself at the Feet of His Holy Sovereignty. When I was going to Resign the Dying Child, in a *Prayer* for that Purpose over it, I took the *Bible* into my Hand, Resolving to Seek and Read first, some agreeable Portion of the *Scripture*. The *First Place*, that accidentally fell under my View, was, the Story of our Lords Raising the *Little Daughter* of the *Ruler of the Synagogue*, in the Eighth Chapter of *Luke*. Amazed at the Pertinency of the Place, I readd it with *Tears*; and then, with more *Tears* I turned it into a *Prayer*; wherein I freely gave up this Child unto the Lord; Assured, That it should be a *Vessel* of His *Glory* forever. But I also begg’d for the Life of the Child in this World; promising to the Lord, with His Help, That I would bring her up for *Him*, and that I would likewise assay to do some Special Service quickly for the Young People of my Neighbourhood. Immediately, the Child fell into a Critical and Plentiful *Bleeding*, and Recovered from that Hour, unto the Admiration of all. However, *This Day* to prepare my own Heart for all Events, and express what should be in the Heart of others, I preached a Sermon on those Words, *The Lord is able to give thee much more than this* {2 Chron. 25:9}. . . .

§ Being Invited unto a more than ordinary Action of Publick Service,<sup>21</sup> for the Lord, and for His People, I thought myself concerned in a more than ordinary Manner, to Abase myself before the Lord. And that I might keep myself under a Lasting Abasement, I not only kept many *Dayes of Humiliation*, but I also composed a Writing of several Pages, entitled, THE TRUE PICTURE OF—myself. Herein I did, with *Black*, but yett with too *True*, Characters, describe my own Vileness at such a rate, that it cannot be look’d upon, without Horrour of Soul; but I Resolved, often to look upon it.<sup>22</sup> . . .

*My Son*, it was not until after *Seven Lustres*<sup>23</sup> of my Life were expired, that God bestow’d upon me, a Son that lived unto an Age to Read what I write.<sup>24</sup>

The Day before he was born, I spent in Praying and Fasting before the Lord, and Crying to Heaven, for the Welfare of my Consort, and of her expected Offspring. A Son had been foretold me, in an Extraordinary Way, some Years before; and in the Evening of the Day, which I had now kept, I entertained my Family, before our Evening-Prayers, with a Meditation on Joh. 16.21. *A Woman, when shee is in Travail, hath Sorrow because her Hour is come; but as soon as she*

*is delivered, of the Child, she remembreth no more the Anguish, for Joy that a Man is born into the World.*

After I had commended my Consort unto the Lord, I laid me down to Sleep (after Midnight,) that I might be fitt for the Services of the Day ensuing, which was the *Lords-Day*; and in a Chamber by myself, because of her Expecting at this Time her Travail. But after One a Clock in the Morning, I Awoke, with a great Concern upon my Spirit, which obliged me to Arise, and Retire into my Study. There I cast myself on my Knees before the Lord, confessing my Sins that rendred me unworthy of His Mercy, but imploring His Mercy to my Consort, in the Distress now upon her.

While my Faith was pleading, that the Saviour, who was *Born of a Woman*, would send His Good *Angel* to Releeve my Consort, the People ran to my Study-Door, with the Acceptable Tidings, *That a Son was born unto me!*

In the Forenoon following, I preached unto our Great Congregation, on that Scripture, Psal. 90.16. *Lett thy Work appear unto thy Servants, and thy Glory unto their Children*; managing this Doctrine; *That the Enjoyment of the Precious Christ, who is the Glorious Work, of God, is the Great Blessedness desired by Good Men, both for Themselves and for their Children.*

But tho' this were a Son of Great *Hopes*, and one who had Thousands & Thousands of *Prayers* . . . employ'd for him; yett after all, a Sovereign GOD would not Accept of him. He was Buried in the *Atlantic Ocean*. And you, my only Son,<sup>25</sup> Surviving, are the Person for whom these Memorials are intended & reserved.

And now, because I may upon my looking back, meet with several Passages yett unmentioned, that may be as Instructive to you, as those whereof I have already made mention; and others are occurring, in that Part of your Fathers Life, which is now running; I shall proceed without any *Method* at all, to sett before you what I may think proper & useful for you. And it may be, the less of *Method* there is in this Work, it will be but the more *Natural*, and *Beautiful*, and it may carry the more of a *Parental Authority* upon it. . . .

§ Finding, that whenever I go abroad into other Towns, the *Curiosity* and *Vanity* of the People discovers itself, in their *Great Flocking* to hear me, with I know not what *Expectations*: This hath still caused me aforehand exceedingly to *Humble* myself before the Lord, (even with *Fasting* and *Prayer* oftentimes) that the fond *Expectations* of the *People*, may not be chastised upon *myself*, in His Leaving of *me* to any Inconvenience. By this Method, I not only am in a comfortable Measure kept from the foolish *Taste of Popular Applause* in my own

Heart, but also from the *Humbling Dispensations* of Heaven, whereto the Fondness of the People might otherwise expose me.

*My Son*, you may live to make some Use of this Hint.

§ Keeping a Day of Secret THANKSGIVING, my Soul was raised unto more than ordinary *Delights* and *Raptures*. The Holy Lord even dealt *Familiarly* with me; I went into the very *Suburbs* of *Heaven*; the *Spirit* of my *Lord* carried Me thither, and made known unto me Glorious Things; Yea, *Heaven* came near unto me, & fill'd me with *Joy unspeakable and full of Glory*. I cannot, I may not, *Utter* the Communications of Heaven, whereto I was this Day admitted. All that I shall observe to you, *My Son*, is, That within a few Hours, I was *Buffeted* with some things in my Neighbourhood, that had a more than ordinary Measure of Temptation, & Vexation in them. And lett my *Experience* confirm unto you this *Observation*, That immediately after extraordinary *Communion* with *Heaven*, you shall ordinarily meet with some *Accident* on Earth, which will mortify you with some special *Affliction* and *Abasement*. . . .

§ On a Day of *Prayer* with *Fasting*, which I kept, under Sore *Temptations*, I find I have entred this Record.

“It was a Day full of astonishing Enjoyments; a Day filled with Resignations and Satisfactions, and Heavenly Astonishments. *Heaven* has been opened unto me this Day. Never did I so long to Dy, and fly away into Heaven! I have seen and felt *unutterable Things*. I have *Tasted that the Lord is Gracious* {Ps. 8:34}. I can by no means Relate, the Communications with Heaven, whereto I have been this Day admitted. I am now sure, That the Great GOD is *my God*; that I stand before God in the *Righteousness* of my Lord JESUS CHRIST; that no *Good Thing shall be withheld from me* {Ps. 84:11}; that God will make an amazing use of me, to glorify Him; and that I shall be an Object, for the everlasting Triumphs of Sovereign & Infinite *Grace*.”

“I was not able to bear the *Extasies* of Divine *Love*, into which I was Raptured; They exhausted my Spirits; they made me Faint, & Sick; they were Insupportable; I was forced, even to withdraw from them, lest I should have Swoon'd away under the Raptures.”

But, I can tell you, *My Son*; there soon followed a *Storm* of Great Reproaches & Confusions upon me. Gett Good by what I tell you! . . .

§ If I hear that any Person has done me *wrong* in Word or Deed, I find, it is *Often*, (perhaps, not *Always*;) the best way in the World, *Not to lett them know*,

that I have any Knowledge of it. The best way is, to Forgive and Forgett the Wrong, and bury it in *Silence*. For, besides the Consideration due to the Internal Advantage, reap'd by such Christianity, there is *this* to be considered: Such is the Malignity in the most of Men, that they will *Hate* you, only because *you know* that they have *wrong'd* you. They will, as far as they can, *Justify* the *Wrong* they have done; and because their Wicked Hearts Imagine that you must needs bear a *Spite* unto them, for the *Wrong* you have received from them, they will bear a *Confirmed Spite* unto you, on that vile Account. Whereas, I have often found, That my *Concocting* with Patience and Silence, a *Sleight*, or an *Hurt* that has been offered unto me, has been *Followed* (and *Rewarded* by God) with this Consequence; That the *very Persons* who have *wrong'd* me, have afterwards been made Instruments of *Signal Service* unto me.

§ When any *Remarkable Affliction* befalls me, I sett myself to consider, *what Advantage I may contrive to my Flock, and to the People of God, out of this Affliction?* The *Affliction* awakens me to *Preach*, and perhaps to *Write*, those things, which may be of *General Advantage*. I think with myself, It may be the Lord intends now to make me bear some *Special Fruits* for His Glory and Service in His Churches, which else would never have been found upon me. And I can truly say, That tho' *Affliction be not Joyous but Grievous* {Heb. 12:11}, yett the very *Prospect* of this *Effect*, while I have been but *Entring* into the *Darkness*, which I saw coming upon me, and while I have been yett in the *Dark*, as to the particular Benefits & Revenues, for the Service of Religion, which could arise from it; It has caused my Spirit exceedingly to *Triumph over Troubles*; I have, with a Triumphant Satisfaction Rejoiced in it, that the Lord would please to send *Sorrowes*, with such admirable *Designs* upon me. . . .

§ I have all this while omitted the Mention of the various Intentions and Contrivances, with which the Dispensation of the *Alms*, that have even filled my Life, have been carried on. The Reason of the Omission has been; Because I thought an *Eternal Concealment* most proper for them; a Concealment even from a *Son*, that is to be as my very Hand unto me.

But, inasmuch as the Design of these Memorials, is to instruct you, *My Son*, in the Methods of *Godliness* and *Fruitfulness*, I will rescue from the Midst of that *Concealment*, at least one way to *Devise Good*, which ha's been sometimes practiced with me.

I have several times, taken little Parcels of *Money*, (*Seven* perhaps at a time,) containing about Half a Peece of Eight in a Paper;<sup>26</sup> These Parcels of *Money*, I have accompanied, with so many *Books of Piety*. I have sent *Packets* unto *Ministers* abroad, in such Towns as I have thought convenient; and sometimes, (that

Grace might herein have the more Triumphant Exercise,) I have sent them to such Ministers, as have treated me, not so well as they might have done. I have Directed a *Nameless Letter* unto them, in such a way, as they might not know, that I was the Person with whom they were now concerned. I have desired them, to find out so many *Poor* and *Bad* People, in their Flock, & bestow these *Alms*, and *Books*, in their *own Names*, (if they pleased) upon them; with their own Holy Counsils and Warnings unto them, to lay hold on Eternal Life. In this way, I proposed, not only to *Do Good* unto the Elect of God, but also to awaken the *Ministers* themselves, unto a more flaming Zeal to *Do Good*. But that I may more exactly Describe, what I would be at, I will Transcribe, one of the Letters, which I sent, (copied by a *Female Hand*, for my being the better under *Covert*,) on these Occasions.

“Syr. From an Unknown Hand, there is a small Trouble now impos’d upon you. A little *Silver* is, with the Propriety thereof, devolved into your Hand. It is now no longer any Mans else, but *Yours*; nor is any other Name now to be used on this Occasion, but *Yours*. But it is desired, That you would find out as many Persons in your Flock, who are in very *poor* Circumstances, both on Temporal and Spiritual Accounts as you find the Summ divided into Parcels; and Distribute the Parcels unto them. At the same time, it is desired, That you would bestow your Holy Counsils and Warnings upon them; and not leave them, until they have Resolved upon the Practice of Serious Piety. If then you lodge with them the little *Books*, with which you are now also for that Purpose furnished, your Advice will be Remembred the better with them. Who can tell, but under an *Angelical Conduct*, you may now find out some of the *Elect* of God, among the *Poor*, who thus *have the Gospel preached unto them?* {Matt. 11:5} Your own Ministry will also be rendred very acceptable, among a People, to whom you make such *Pastoral Visits*.<sup>27</sup> Lett not a Word be spoken, about the Original of this Action: For there is but one Man in the World, who knowes any thing of it, or is like to know. A glorious CHRIST be with you! —”

§ I have had my Mind strangely and strongly *buffeted*, with *Temptations* of this Importance.

I have now for many, and weary Years, been leading a *Laborious Life*, in the Wayes of Religion. I have lived in a *Continual Flame*. The Care to carry on Ordinary and Extraordinary *Devotions*, & to have my Heart filled with perpetual Thoughts of a Devout Character, & Tendency; and Suppress and Destroy all the Corrupt Inclinations of my Soul; and my Watchful, Various, Numberless *Contrivances* to *Do Good*, unto all that I converse withal, and abroad in the World; and my perpetual *Warfare* with successive *Temptations*; whereof my

Course of Living ever now and then Renews a *Tempest* upon me: All these things together, fill my Life with *Labours* and *Sorrowes*. I gett nothing of *this World* by these *Labours*; There is no worldly Profit of them. I miss many Advantages to come at worldly Riches, by reason of them. If there be any *One Point*, wherein above the rest, I may pretend unto any Shadow of a *Vertue*, it is ordered, that in *that* very Point, I am singularly misunderstood & calumniated. My *Serviceableness* does but expose me to *Malignity*. My very *Essayes* to be *Serviceable*,<sup>28</sup> are made my *Blemishes* and *Reproaches*. The *Blessedness* of the *Future State*, who can tell, what it is? And it may be, tis *uncertain*, whether I shall arrive to any such *Blessedness*. Why then should not my weary Mind, abate of this *Flame*? I don't propose to turn a *Profane* & a *Debauch't* sort of a Divel; But why may I not leave off the *Labours* of my *Flights* in Piety and Usefulness? Why may I not suffer myself, to *sink down*, into the Low, Dull, Slothful Measures, of the *Common* and *Barren* Christianity? Why may not I content myself, to Jog on, as the Christians of the *Lowest Form*, who, if they can but just *Creep* along, in some *Formalities*, and keep clear of *Grosser Scandals*, do not seem to care for any more: How *easy* should I make myself by such a Conduct! Why should I be an Enemy to such a *Grateful Easiness*? To what Purpose will be my Perseverance?

But now, to these *Hellish Temptations*, I have still my Answer, from the Oracle of Heaven: 1. Cor. 15.58. *Be yee stedfast & unmoveable, alwayes abounding in the Work of the Lord: forasmuch as yee know, that your Labour is not in vain in the Lord.*

And looking up to the Lord, for the Aids of His Grace, I have then found my *Resolutions* fixed more than ever in my Life, to live unto Christ, & *bring forth much Fruit* unto Him, & never to *be weary of well-doing*. . . .

§ *My Son*, There is a Disposition and an Experiment, which your Father is able thus to declare unto you.

I am not unable, with a little Study to write in *Seven Languages*; I have written and printed in them.<sup>29</sup> I feast myself with the Sweets of all the *Sciences*, which the more Polite Part of Mankind ordinarily pretend unto. I am entertained with all kinds of *Histories* Ancient and Modern. I am no Stranger to the *Curiosities*, which by all Sons of Learning are brought unto the Curious. These *Intellectual Pleasures*, are beyond any *Sensual Ones*. Nevertheless, All this affords me not so much Delight, as it does, to Releeve the Distresses of any one Poor, Mean, and *Miserable Neighbour*; and much more, to do any extensive Service for the Redress of those *Epidemical Miseries*, under which *Mankind* in general is languishing, and to advance the *Kingdome* of GOD in the World.<sup>30</sup> . . .

§ I think,

*If I were fastened unto a CROSS, and under all the Circumstances of a Crucifixion, what would be My Dispositions, what My Exercises?*

I should look on my approaching *Death*, as unavoidable; and the Approaches of it would now be welcome to me, not having any Prospect of being any other Way delivered from Numberless Uneasinesses.

I should look on all the *Delights* and *Riches* and *Honours* of the World from which I am departing, as things of no *Use* and no *Worth* unto me.

I should have done Expecting of *Satisfaction* from any thing of *This World*; and no more propose a *Portion* in any thing that is done under the Sun. . . .

Tho' I should have done with *This World*, yett I should express a Concern for the *Relatives* which I leave behind me, in a Land of *Pitts* & of *Droughts*, & *fiery flying Serpents* {Isa. 14:29}. . . .

I should, with continual *Acts of Resignation*, committ my *Spirit* into the Hands of my FATHER {Luke 23:46}, and my SAVIOUR; with Assurance of my Speedy Reception into a *Paradise*, where I shall be *Comforted*.

I should endeavour to Look into the *Heavenly World*; and Rejoice in the View of the *Joy Sett before me* {Heb. 12:2} there, and count the *Light Afflictions here which are but for a Moment*, abundantly compensated in that *far more Exceeding & Eternal Weight of Glory* {2 Cor. 4:17}.

In these Things I should propound a *Conformity* to my *Crucified JESUS*.

Thus *Dying, Behold, I Live!* {2 Cor. 6:9}

And finding myself brought into these *Dispositions* and these *Exercises*, the Faith of what must most certainly follow hereupon fills me with *Joy Unspeakable & full of Glory* {1 Pet. 1:8}. . . .

This is *the Way that I take*. And in this way of *Living by Faith of the SON of GOD*, I keep *Looking for His Mercy to me in Eternal Life* {Jude 1:28}.

## CHRISTIANUS PER IGNEM (1702)

[MEDITATIONS ON FIRE]

### THE INTRODUCTION.<sup>31</sup>

One of the *Best Things*, that can be done for other men, by any man, who would make it his Business to Do *Good* unto all, is to suggest and supply **Good Thoughts** unto them. Tho' it may be disputed, whether this be the *First Proposition*, whereof any man can be certain, as a *New Philosophy* has taught us, *I think, therefore I am*;<sup>32</sup> yet it is no *New Divinity* to teach, that *As Men Think, so*

*they are.* That Noble Faculty of *Thinking*, wherewith a man is enabled, and enabled above the *Beasts of the Field*, being well or ill employ'd, will either turn men into *Fellows* for *Angels*, or make men worse *than the Beasts that perish*. The Infinite *Perfections* of **God**, the Wonderful *Mysteries* of the Lord **Jesus Christ**, the amazing *Circumstances* of the **Future State**, the various *Preparations* of men in this world, and other *Circumstances* referring to that *State*; the Illustrious *Operations* of the Almighty both in **Creation**, and in **Government**; and His various *Dispensations* towards **our selves** in particular; such things as these, are most proper, and worthy, and useful for a Rational and a Renewed Soul to *Think* upon. And a man full of *Good*, and *Wise*, and *Right Thoughts* upon these *Great Themes*, will be a *Good man*, and furnished for the Doing of much *Good* unto many others.

**Meditation** is therefore a Duty of so much Evidence and Consequence in *Christianity*, that they can be no *Christians*, nor acquainted in the least measure with the Divine Oracles, who do not confess their Obligations unto it: And yet it must be confessed, That one grand cause why *Christianity* so much Languishes, is because that so few *Christians* duly practice it. Our Bible very frequently commends unto us, **Consideration**, and a *Meditating* on **God**, and on His *Laws*: And thro' the want of this *Meditation* it is that all the *Ordinances* and all the *Providences* of **God**, are so ineffectual unto the most of men, and they continue so much without *Life*, and *Light*, and *Peace* all their dayes, and at last perish among those who do not *Consider their Latter End*. . . .

The *Method* of proceeding in our **Occasional Reflections**, needs not be tied up unto many strict *Rules* about it. I remember, *Hugo de Sancto Victore* tells us, That there is a *Threefold Voice* of all the *Creatures* unto us, *Accipe, Redde, Fuge*.<sup>33</sup> All *Creatures* may put us in mind, first of something that we do **Receive** of **God**, in them; next, of something that we should **Return** to **God** for them; and thirdly, of something that we should **Avoid**, both of *Transgression* in them, and so of *Punishment* from them. And it were a very suitable *Method of Thinking*, to touch upon each of those *Three Heads* in our **Occasional Reflections**. Or at least, we may do well to oblige our selves unto the forming of a Certain *Triangle* in them, with first, **Going forth** to observe the *properties* of the *Creatures* themselves; then **Coming back**, to Advise our selves, with *Instructions* brought from them; and Lastly, **Darting up** to Him that Sitteth in the Heavens, our *Petitions*, for such Compassion and Assistance, as we now see we need.

Behold, Reader, a Book of **Occasional Reflections**, all made upon one of those *Creatures*, that we have daily before us: And if *one* of them, could afford so many *Good Thoughts*, unto one of so *dull*, and so *vain* a mind, as that which the Author of this Book, has to complain of (and yet *he himself* now finds, it might have easily afforded him as *many more!*) What an Immense Treasure of *Good*

*Thoughts* might we find in all the rest? The Reason, why the Author singled out the **Fire**, for his *Chymistry to Work upon*, (the very thing that other *Chymistry* does principally *Work withal*,) was, partly because one day perswading some of his Intimate Friends, to try their skill at **Occasional Reflections**, he accidentally let fall this Encouragement; *He would give them a Demonstration, that as dry a Subject, as for instance, that of the Fire then before us, would yield a Christian a whole Book full of Meditations*; And he was obliged then to give the *Demonstrations*. . . .

#### Meditation I.

*On the Fire proving it self to be indeed the Fire.*

I see the *Fire* before me; But how do I know, that it is the *Fire*? The Philosopher long ago answered, *Qui tam Stulte quaerunt, Ignem tangant.*<sup>34</sup> Truly, the *proof* of it, is better *Felt*, than *Spoke*. I *feel* that it is the *Fire*; I have a *Sense* of it, that I can't easily describe in Words, unto another man; I need no *Arguments* to convince me of it; and if there were *Arguments* to the contrary, shap'd with never such unanswerable *Sophistry*, I should think it Answer enough unto them, I *know 'tis otherwise!*

This Meditation carries me to consider, *How do I know the Scriptures of the Old and New Testament to be the Word of God!* And that which makes the Consideration more agreeable, is, That this *Word*, is called, Jer. 20.9. *A Burning Fire*. It is a Thing of more than ordinary consequence unto every Christian, to be well established in this point, *How may a Christian indeed know, That our Bible is the Word of God, or, a Book of Truth, and a Rule of Life, given by Inspiration from Heaven?* For, the influence of the *Bible*, on our whole *Behaviour* here, and *Blessedness* hereafter, depends on our *Faith* of this point; & our grand Enemy labours nothing more, than to keep our *Faith* hereof as Feeble as ever he can. To confirm our *Faith* of our *Bibles* being the *Word of God*, we are not unfurnished with moral *Arguments* enough to silence *the contradiction of Sinners*. It is infinitely reasonable to Believe, That the most High God has committed unto Writing, some where or other, what He would have us *Think*, and to *Do*, in order to our *Glorifying* of Him. Now, if our *Bible*, be not the *Writing*, wherein the Will of God is to be found, it is no where to be found at all; for there is none that can stand in competition with it: there is no where else to be met withal, any *Scheme* of the way for our coming to the Enjoyment of God, that can give any tolerable satisfaction to a Reasonable mind. And who else but God, could be the Author of it? *Ill men*, and *Ill Angels*, would never have connived a *System* of such an Holy and Heavenly Tenour, and so opposite, yea so Torturous, unto their own vicious Inclinations. *Good men*, and *Good Angels* would not have *Lyed*

for God, and have imposed their own Inventions upon their Maker. And indeed, the Remarkable Providence of God, in preserving our *Bible*, so uncorrupt for so many Ages, notwithstanding the horrible plots of Earth and Hell, to have utterly extinguished it, (which can't be said of any other Composure). This proclaims, That it is dear to *God*, yea, that *God* Himself espouses it, as being the Author of it. . . .

But as the *Fire* passes from one *Billet* unto another, so let my *Thoughts* here, in passing along, at least glance upon one Subject more.

There are certain Enjoyments with which the Spirit of God favours the Souls of His Faithful People; and especially the persuasions of a *particular Faith*, which they sometimes Enjoy, in their *Prayers*, for this or that particular *Smile* of God on their Affairs. This *particular Faith*, is not so much the *Duty*, as the *Dignity*, and *Privilege*, of the Faithful, and not granted unto *all*, but here and there, according to the Sovereign pleasure of Heaven, gloriously irradiating their minds, and with a certain powerful, Heart melting, Heavenly *Afflatus*, assuring of them, *That God hath granted the Thing, which they have asked of Him*. Well, tho' this *particular Faith*, has a counterfeit, wherein many have been deceived; yet such a Thing there is, that is a special *Operation of the Spirit of God*, and perhaps of His Holy Angels, on the minds of His Holy *Children*. The Question is, *How do I know this Operation from a counterfeit?* My Answer is, That no words of mine can Answer the Question; I *know* it, as I know the *Fire* to be the *Fire*; I *feel* it, but no words of mine can express, how it *feels*. . . .

### Meditation III.

*On the Light cast by the Fire upon the Objects about it.*

All the *Objects* here capable of having *direct Rays* from the *Fire* shot upon them, how *Lightsome* are they? All clothed with *Garments of Light!* The side of the *Chimney*, the Wall of the *Chamber*, the *Iron Back*, the *Brazen Tongs*, and their *Fellow-Servants*, are now distinguished, with an agreeable *Brightness*. They entertain the Beams of *Light*, which the *Fire* darts upon them, and by entertaining thereof, they have a particular *Brightness*, and Beauty upon them.

When I see the *Reflection* of the *Light*, on the *Objects* about the *Fire*, methinks, I am furnished with *Light* enough, to make a *Reflection* of my own upon it. This *Light* leads me unto that *Glory*, that shall be Enjoy'd by the Saints in the Heavenly World; and unto the very *Fountain* of all their *Glory*. If unto the *Fire*, I should Resemble the Glorious Lord JESUS CHRIST, who shall one day appear in *Flaming Fire* {2 Thess. 1:8}, the Resemblance, might with many Good Thoughts be prosecuted. It is enough, that our Lord, the *Sun of Righteousness*, is compared unto the *Sun*, which is an *Ocean of Fire*; and that Caelestial and

Wonderful *Fire ball*, corresponding with the little Flashes on my Hearth, in the property of *Luminositie*, the comparison that is now to be made, will be sufficiently vindicated. Nor will it be unserviceable unto this purpose, to remark, that in some Languages (particularly the *Syriac* and *Chaldee*) the same word that is used for *Fire*, is used also for *Light*. The Splendor of my *Fire*, tho' so sparkling and so dazzling, that the most lively Limner can't paint it out unto the Life, is but a *black Shadow*, of the *Glory*, which the Disciples in the *Holy Mountain*, saw resting on the Transfigured *Lord of Glory* {Matt. 17:1-2}. . . .

Some *Right Thoughts*, not unfit for a Child of *Jacob*, take hold on the *Heel* of those that have hitherto Entertained me: and my *Fire* has Enkindled in me some further *Desires*, and *Wishes*. I see, that when there Intervenes any thing between the *glowing Coals* in my *Fire*, and the *Brightned Walls* of my *Room*, a *Darkness* arises then so far thereupon. The *Fire shines* not upon an adjacent Object, if there be any thing between *That* and the Object. And am I not now informed, what is the Reason of the *Darkness* upon the Minds of men? Whatsoever does Interrupt the Communion between the Lord JESUS CHRIST and my Soul, brings thereby a *Darkness* upon me. In the *Light of Life* Enjoy'd by the Saints above, there is no *Darkness*; Why? because there is nothing to intercept the most Intimate Communion between the *Lamb*, who is the *Light of the City of God*, and the Saints who *Walk in the Light of that City* {Rev. 21:24}. But in the *Darkness of this World*, a Christian has frequent occasions, with the Philosopher, to ingeminate his cry of, *Darkness, Darkness*; and the occasions will continue, till he arrive where the *Dark Shadows flee away* {Song of Sol. 2:17}. Alas, The *Darkness*, which attends me, is like that on *Egypt*; it may be *Felt*: I feel it in a woful *Ignorance*, and grievous *Disorder*, and lamentable *Confusion* and *Sottishness*, and Horror of *Guilt* upon my Spirit. And now, by *Fire-light* I see the *Cause* of it! I would I could say, I have half a *Cure*, now I know the *Cause*. It lies here; something there lies between *me*, and my Lord JESUS CHRIST, who would *Enlighten* me. The Truth is, The very drawing of the *Curtains* of my *Earthly Tabernacle* about me, has this Influence upon me, That I am experimentally taught the meaning of those words, *Present in the Body, and Absent from the Lord* {2 Cor. 5:6}: The *Flesh* is between Him and me: Oh, Why do I no more say, *I desire to be dissolved, that I may be with my Lord* {Phil. 1:23}. But that which is yet worse is, That my *Corruptions* do send up that ugly *Smoke*, which hinders the *Shine* of my Lord JESUS CHRIST from comforting of me; And sometimes I lay too many *Logs* on the *Fire*, verifying the old Observation, *In multitudine Negotiorum periclitatur pietas*.<sup>35</sup> I take too many *Diverting Businesses* upon me, by which I Restrain those *Emanations* from the Fountain of *Light*, wherewith I might otherwise, be Irradiated. *Be advised, O my Soul; be well advised!* . . .

## Meditation VI.

## On the Fire of Hell.

*Descendamus viventes, et non descendamus morientes.* Chrys.<sup>36</sup>

In some Countreys 'tis a Custome, when a *Light* is brought into the Room, to wish [*Deus det vobis Lucem Æternam,*] *God grant you Everlasting Light:* But when I come to a *Fire* in a Room, it shall be my wish, *God save me from Everlasting Fire!* {Matt. 25:41}. I find my self unable to bear the *Fire:* if the *Fire* on my *Hearth* were to touch my *Flesh,* I should soon cry out of it; the *Torture* of being scorch'd in the *Fire* would be intolerable; perhaps there is no other *Torment* more intolerable, than that which the *Fire* gives to our *Nerves,* when it seizes on them. And yet I am led now to think, of something that is more intolerable than the *Fire,* and that on the score of its being so, is called the *Fire.* . . . It is asserted in *Scripture,* it is affirmed by *Reason;* the *Demonstrations* of it are *Irrefragable,* That there is another *World,* wherein a *due punishment* is reserved by the *Wrath* of *God,* for all His *Enemies.* This *punishment,* as it is called, *Hell,* so it is called, *Fire,* and from the *Temper* of the *Fire* now before me, I may *Learn,* that the *Fire of Hell,* will be *intolerable.* If there were nothing else to prove it, but This, here would be proof enough. There are *Impious* men, who have taken *Innocent* men, yea, very *Vertuous* ones, and have *Rosted* them to *Death* in the *Fire,* with lingring and horrid *Agonies,* and *Exercised* a thousand other exquisite *Cruelties* upon them. Now these *Monsters* of *Impiety,* never did receive any *Recompence* of their *Cruelties* in this *World,* any more than *Alva,* or *Bonner.*<sup>37</sup> It followeth then, that in another *World,* there must be *Miseries* intended for these *Humane Devils,* at least, as *Exquisite,* as being *Rosted* to *Death* in the *Fire.* This must follow, if you confess a *God,* and confess the *Justice* of *God.* But which yet more evidently proclaims the *punishment* of the *Damned* in the *Fire of Hell* to be *intolerable,* is, the *Nature,* and *Author,* of the *punishment.* Now the *principal punishment* in the *Fire of Hell,* is the *Wrath* of the *Infinite GOD,* immediately smiting of the *Soul.* The *Conscience* of a *Sinner,* which is a *Faculty* by his *Creator* put into him, to be a special *Instrument* of Him that *Created* it, *This* being set on *Fire,* by immediate *Impressions,* from the *Wrath* of *God* upon it, will fill the *Sinner* with terrible *Dolour,* and *Horror,* and *Anguish* throughout *Eternal Ages.* . . .

But if the *Fire* or *Hell,* be so *Intolerable,* what an unaccountable *Madness* will it be, for a man by *Sin,* to throw himself into that *Fire?* It is a proverb for the greatest *Aversation* imaginable; *I have no more mind unto such a thing, than to run my Hand into the Fire.* Alas, If any *Sin,* be so dear unto me, that I can part with it no more than my *Right-Hand,* not my *Hand* only, but my *whole Body* will be cast into the *Fire of Hell* {Matt. 5:30}. One that was *Tempted* unto *Lewdness,* did thus very significantly resist and repel the *Tempter,* *Hold your Hand one Quarter of an Hour in the Fire on the Hearth before you, or else don't Expect,*

*that I will for your sake burn in the Fire of Hell for ever.* Truly, To Sin is to run into the most *Formidable Fire*: *Sin* is therefore worse than a *Brutish Folly*; in *Sin* a man does worse than play the *Bruit*. O my Soul, when I am solicited unto any Sin, Let me set the *Fire of Hell* before my Eyes, and realize the hideous Condition of them that are burning in that *Intolerable Fire*; and Resolve, like one who had no *Faith* of this *Fire* in him, and yet having a price of *Unchastity* proposed unto him, said, *No, I will not buy Repentance at so dear a rate!* . . .

#### Meditation XI.

*On throwing a piece of Leather into the Fire.*

One casting into the *Fire*, a bit of *Leather*, its moving, its wriggling, its twisting one way and another, carried some show of *Sense* with it: It seemed as if it had the same *sense* in it, which there would have been in the Creature to which it once belonged; One is ready to expect a *Cry* from it. A thing wholly *Insensible*, does in the *Fire* I see, put on a Semblance of mighty *Sensibility*.

An *Hypocrite* is one without a principle of *Life*: He is one altogether destitute of that *Life*, wherein God is Known, and Serv'd, and Glorified. He has no *Living Sense* of Spiritual and Eternal Objects. But when an *Hypocrite* is cast into the *Fire* of some *Affliction*, he seems as if he had some *Life* in him: his *Prayers*, and his *Vows*, and his *Devout Resolutions*, and various *Devotions*, look very *Sensibly*, when some Grief or Fear is *Afflicting* of him. One would think, who but a *Child of God*, could be so serious, and so *Sensible*, as we see this *Afflicted Hypocrite*? Oh, There's no Relying on the *Showes*, that men make in their *Affliction*. I will mention but one Observation to confirm it. I have often been concerned with Criminals under the Sentence of *Death*, having their Souls in a *Fire* of Agony. In this *Fire*, and *Fright*, Oh, the sorrow for *Sin*, and hatred of it, Oh, the hope in Christ, and love to God, and resolutions never to Sin on any Terms any more, which these Wretches have now *Show'd* unto me. I could scarce imagine it possible for any but Regenerate Souls to speak so sensibly well; many of these have been *Relieved*, and *Pardoned* by the Government; but of them all I never knew two, but what proved afterwards meer *Devils Incarnate*. All I will add is This; If men be not Religious in *Prosperity*, as well as in *Adversity*, there is no true *Life* of Religion in them. They that never *stir*, but in the *Fire*, let them then *stir* never so promisingly, are yet *alienated from the Life of God*. O my Soul, Read, Psal. 78. 34, 36. . . .

#### Meditation XVIII.

*On the Coals.*

I know not, whether there are more *Coals* at this Time, in my *Fire*, than there are *Thoughts*, in my mind, which may take *Fire* from them. Lord, *Graciously*

and Mercifully Touch my Pen with a Coal from thine Altar, that so it may in an Holy strain write some of those Things, which a polluted Sinner, that yet serves at thine Altar, is now for that Service Meditating {Isa. 6:6–7}.

And now, first, Methinks, I should be as loth to commit a *Sin*, as to handle a *Coal*. If I should go to take up a *Coal* in my Hand, it would both *Smutt* me, and *Scorch* me. I am certain, a *Sin* taken into my Heart, would have the like, and worse effects upon me. Every *Sin* is of a *Filthy* consequence, and by it, even the *Conscience is defiled*. And *Sin* admitted, and allowed, will scald the *Conscience*, at last into as much anguish, as ever the bloody hand of *Ravilliac*, burning with his Knife in it, suffered at his Execution.<sup>38</sup> Oh, that I were now as much afraid of every *Sin*, and all the *Works of the Flesh*, as of a *Coal* to be clapt upon my *Flesh*. The Purest *Nazarites*, once contaminated with *Sins* against the Holy Laws of God, may have that *Lamentation* made upon them, Lam. 4.8. *Their Visage is now blacker than a Coal*. Wherefore, Let me take heed, lest I Blacken my self by the *Coals*, and not *Abhorring that which is Evil* Rom. 12:9]. It is the Wise mans Disswasive, relating to the particular *Sins* of *Unchastity*, Prov. 6. 27, 28. *Can a man take Fire in his Bosom, and his Cloaths not be burnt? Can one go upon hot Coals, and his Feet not be burnt? So,—*Now let me by this Consideration, be Diswadened and Affrighted from all other *Sins*. *They are so many Coals; why should I meddle with them! . . .*

While I am in this Meditation, I call to mind, the parable, by which the *Sins* of *Dishonesty*, have been sometimes painted out unto us. To carry *Burning Coals* into his Nest, was in the issue, no Advantage to the *Thievish Bird of Prey*. Should I convey an Handful of these *Burning Coals*, into the Boxes, where ly my Papers, and the best of my other Treasures, what mad work should I make! Truly, those men, that add unto their Estates, by Fraudulence, by Oppression, by any *Dishonesty*, do but convey *Burning Coals* among all their Treasures; and what, may we foresee, will be the Issue? *He gets Riches, and not by Right, He shall leave them in the midst of his Days, and at his End shall be a Fool* {Jer. 17:11}.

And yet, there is a sort of *Coals*, that we may become free withal. 'Tis required, Prov. 25. 21, 22, [And repeated, Rom. 12. 20.] *If thine Enemy be Hungry, give him Bread to eat; and if he be Thirsty, give him Water to Drink; for thou shalt heap Coals of Fire on his Head, and the Lord shall Reward thee*. The Lord help his poor Servant, ever to avoid all *Revenge* upon *Personal Enemies*; but rather to Wish them, and Do them, all the *Good* that is possible for their *Evil*. It were a very lamentable Thing, for a Christian who hath suffered any *Injuries*, and *Reproaches*, to manifest his Forgiving of his *Personal Enemies*, by making those very *Injuries*, to be the occasions of his *Praying* by Name for *them*, for whom it may be, he never so pray'd before. And Christianity will be further Exempli-

fied, if we don't *Shun*, but rather *Watch*, all opportunities to show *Kindnesses* unto them, that have been most *Unkind* unto us. But how will this, *Heap Coals of Fire on the Heads of my Adversaries*? {Prov. 25:22}. If I should Answer, That then the *Righteous God*, will take my Adversaries into His Hand, and *Revenge* the wrongs done to me, with Judgments that shall fall as *Burning Coals* upon them that have wronged me, the Answer would be true; but I must have a care of having this Intention, in my silence, my patience, my forbearing to *Retaliate*. Wherefore, I will rather put a sweeter sense upon it. My *Gentleness* towards my Adversaries, will perhaps *melt* their *Hearts*, as much as if *Coals of Fire* were thrown upon them; and the *Envy* and *Malice*, with which they treat me, will become as uneasy to themselves as if *Coals of Fire* were Lying on their *Heads*, and the Torment which a Reflection on their own past *Baseness* towards me, will give unto them, will be as bad as if *Coals of Fire* were vexing of them. All I shall add, is, That it is an hard Lesson, which is now prescribed unto me; & therefore, even with the ardour of *Coals of Fire*, I would pray, as the Disciples of our Lord once did, on the Hearing of this Lesson, *Lord, Increase my Faith* {Luke 17:5}.

#### Meditation. XIX.

##### *Upon some Dead Coals.*

Though the *Dead Coals* on the *Hearth*, will not *Warm* ones *Exteriour*, I will try whether my *Interiour* can't fetch as much *Warmth* from them, as from the *Living* ones. I am therefore from these *Dead Coals*, to receive some *Living Admonitions*.

A *Dead Coal*, would first most naturally put one in mind, of a *Dead man*. The *Extinction* of a *Coal*, does (at least as with a *Coal*) draw a Picture of *Mortality*. And she that had but one Son, being afraid of his *Death*, Expressed her Fear, 2 *Sam.* 14. 7. of *Quenching the Coal that was left*. Now, when I see how much longer some *Coals* do last, than others, it invites me to think, how *Long Lived* some, in comparison of others, are. Since the unaccountable *Abbreviation* of Humane Life, unto the Term, at which it hath stood for near Four Thousand years, we see, That while some *Coals* are put out by thousands of *Accidents*, *before their Time*, there are men who not only Live to the Term of *Threescore years and Ten*, but also keep some Light and Heat, unto a much Greater Age; yea, and this although they never took such a *Temperate & Accurate* way of Living, as did the famous *Cornaro*, to *prolong their Lives*.<sup>39</sup> . . .

But seeing a *Dead Coal*, I enquire, what made it so? And this *Enkindles* another Thought. If the *Dead Coal* were lying among the *Living* ones, it would be no longer so *Dead*. *Lively Christians* in like manner (say I) keep one another

*Alive*, by being *Together*. The *Company* and the *Conference of Lively Christians*, has a mighty Tendency to keep Christianity *Alive* among them. A *Dead, Stupid, Formal Frame of Spirit*, is the usual Effect of keeping at a Distance from the Society of *Lively Christians*. It has been particularly found, that *Religious Meetings* wisely managed, have had a more than ordinary tendency to preserve the *Life of Religion* among a People. Wherefore, let those *Pastors*, that would approve themselves Faithful unto the Interests of *Religion* in their Flocks, Countenance and Encourage *Religious Meetings*, for *Prayers*, and *Repeting of Sermons*, and for *Discoursing* on the Things of God. And let them very peculiarly direct and Excite their **Young People**, to the maintaining of such *Meetings*.<sup>40</sup> It will be found that the *Life and Power of Godliness* will be marvellously maintained by such Things. And it will be found, That where persons withdraw from the Fellowship of *Lively Christians*, and *Forsake the Assembling of themselves together*, it won't be long before the *Coals goe out*. May I value and enjoy the Fellowship of *Lively Christians* {Heb. 10:25}; and may I, by Serious and Modest, and Fruitful *Speeches* in their Fellowship, both have and give those things, upon which it shall be said, *While we spake, did not our Hearts burn within us!* {Luke 24:32} . . .

#### Meditation XXIX.

*On the Sap of the Wood, forced out by the Fire.*

When I see the *Sap* forced out of the *Wood*, by the *Fire*, I sometimes think on the *Tears* of a *Forced Repentance*. The Sacred Scriptures report unto us, the Instances both of *Persons* and *Peoples*, from whom the *Fiery Judgments* of God have sometimes fetch'd Expressions of Sorrow and Remorse for their Sins against Him. And we see it in our daily experience, That Sinners under grievous *Affliction*, have seem'd very penitent, and with *Tears* have profess'd their penitence. But the *Liquor* which drops out at the end of the Consuming *Wood*, is not more loathsome, or Despis'd by any of us, that look upon it, than the *Tears* of a *Repentance*, produced by the meer Torture of the *Divine Judgments* upon us, are to the God who *Weighs our Spirits*. The *Tears* of Wretches under punishment, shed only because they feel themselves punished, are none of them any more in the *Bottel* of God, than that wretched *Water* which runs from our *Brands Ends*, is thought worthy to be preserved by us, in any of our *Vials*. One *Tear* proceeding from a genuine, and gracious principle, of Trouble and Anger at our selves for having offended the Holy God, and of Admiration at His Goodness, in providing for us, revealing to us, and Inviting us into the Methods of *Reconciliation* to himself, is of more account, than a River of those that are the Fruit of meer *Vexation* at our own uneasy circumstances. . . .

## Meditation XXXI

*On the Wood Lying too close.*

We know, That *Air* is necessary to *Flame*. And our knowledge of it, is notably confirmed, by the Experiment of the *Air Pump*,<sup>41</sup> where *Gunpowder* it self, cast upon *Hot Iron*, will only *melt* and not *flash* in the Exhausted *Receiver*. And possibly to this may be owing the Experiment mentioned by my Lord *Bacon*,<sup>42</sup> That if you hold an Arrow in the Flame for ten pulses, you shall find those parts of the Arrow which were on the *Out side* of the Flame far more burned and blacked, when that *in the midst* of the *Flame*, will be as if the *Fire* had hardly touched it. Yea, the Divine Oracles, [for such is the *Fulness* of them!] do seem to take notice of this Experiment, in Ezek. 15: 4. Where, first, *Both Ends of the Vine stalk are devour'd and then the midst of it is burnt*. But without those Experiments, we have enough of it every day, when our *Fire* will not burn, because the *Wood lies too close*. The *Fire* will be smothered and obstructed, if the *Air* have not Access unto it.

This thought invites me, in the first place, to consider the Necessity of *Air* to *Life* in our selves: For, tho' I am not such a *Psychopyrist* as to call the *Soul*, a *Fire*, yet, I see not why *Life* may not be called so; and without *Air*, we see (howbeit there have been some rare Instances of persons that have *Lived Breathless* for many days together; it may be, *Sal Ammoniack*<sup>43</sup> has revived the *Flame*;) that it will be soon extinguished. I would therefore give Thanks to the Good God, who by His *Air* does *uphold my Soul in Life*; and I would look upon it, as a very signal point of *Health* for me to be cautious, what *Air* I choose to be much conversant in; and not look to survive any long while, because none of my caution can secure me from the unseen *Miasmata* of the *Air*, which will damp all before them.

Dismissing of this Thought, I presently fall into another; Namely, That *Smothered Griefs*, are worse things than *Smothered Fires*, and not so likely to go out. If a man have any *Griefs*, or *Fears*, or *Cares* upon his mind, let them have *Air*, and they will the sooner evaporate. All will be the more *Lightsome* with us, if we don't let them *Ly too close* upon our mind. He that has any Remarkable Guilt, lying with distress upon his Conscience, let him single out some *Faithful Pastor*, to whom what he confesses will be as it were but confessed unto the Lord. The *Reveling* of the matter, and his ensuing *Prayers*, and *Counsils*, and *Cordials*, will be of a blessed consequence unto *an Heart that will be Hot, thro' a Fire burning in it, until it hath spoken with the Tongue* {Ps. 39:3}. And let him that has any other Anguish, afford *Vent* and *Air* unto it, by some Agreeable Expressions of it: The *Air* will be a kindness to the *Fire* in the Soul; and all things will be the Better, and the Brighter for an Anguish not *Lying too close* upon it. . . .

## Meditation XXXIV.

*On the quick passage of the Fire, from one Object unto another.*

The *Fire*, I see, nimbly passes, from one *Stick* to another: Yea, there are several sorts of combustible Materials lying together; but the *Fire* swiftly takes hold, first on one, then on another, and uses no great formality in the *Transition*. This puts me in mind of a Thing very observable in the Prophetical Writings, and which being well observed, would be a good *Key* to the meaning of them; and that is the sudden and obscure *Transition* of the Prophets from one Subject unto another. The Holy Spirit suggested unto their minds, first the Thoughts of Writing on such or such a Subject, and then assisted them as far as was requisite in the composition. But then at once the Holy Spirit carries them, like a *Spreading Flame*, into new, and rare, and rich thoughts, and surprizing *Idea's*, of the *Messiah* and His Kingdom; and what began in a sort of *Inspired Reasoning* proceeds unaccountably to an *Extatic Revelation*. The *First Subject* is in a manner Deserted, and upon a *New Hint*, the Prophets perhaps without fully understanding, or comprehending the *Transition* themselves, are transported into predictions of the *Messiah*, and characters of His Person, and Office, and Actions. Many parts of the Bible will be the better Interpreted, if we do behold them, in the *Fire Light* of this Observation. . . .

## Meditation XXXVII.

*On the Ashes.*

My *Hearth* has now an heap of *Ashes* upon it. But can my *Heart* Read nothing there? Methinks, I can Read several Admonitions written in the *Ashes*, though no one has formed any distinct characters on them. To find *Salt* in the *Ashes*, would be no difficulty: to fetch *Grace* from the *Ashes*, (that Heavenly *Salt*!) would be a greater and a better Action. . . .

And first, I remember, the famous *Quercetanus*,<sup>44</sup> together with other *Labourers in the Fire*, have told us, That they can take a *plant* in its more vigorous consistence, and after a due *Maceration*, *Fermentation*, and *Separation*, Extract the *Salt* of that *plant*, which, as it were, in a *Chaos*, invisibly reserves the Form of the whole, with its vital principle; and that keeping the *Salt* in a *glass* Hermetically Sealed, they can, by applying a *Soft Fire* to the *glass*, make the *Vegetable* rise by little and little out of its *Ashes*, to surprize the Spectators. I am not sure, That this Report is to be Relied upon, and much less am I sure, of what they further tell us, That the *Essential Salt* of *Animals* being thus prepared and preserved, an ingenious man might raise the shape of them, at his pleasure. What I would Remark, is This. If *Plants* could be Revived out of their *Ashes*, or if the *Oak*, and *Ash*, and *Walnut*, would grow, from the Scattered *Ashes*, which I have now before me, it would unavoidably Lead our Meditations to the *Resurrection*

of the Dead. Yea, Whatever may be done by Nature, on and from the *Ashes* of my *Wood*, I am very sure, That I shall one day Rise out of my own *Ashes*. *Resurrectio mortuorum Fiducia Christianorum*.<sup>45</sup> He that is, *The Life*, and, *The Resurrection to Life*, has assured me, That after I am *Dead*, He will give my Incinerated Body a *Resurrection to Life*. We see a parcel of *Quick silver* may put off its Form, and put on that of a *Vapour*; and from a *Vapour* be transformed into an insipid *Water*; and from a *Water* be transmuted into a *White*, or a *Red*, or a *Yellow Powder*; and from this *Powder* be made a *Salt*; and from that *Salt* a malleable *Metal*; and yet a skilful Chymist, will reduce it, out of all those various Contextures, into its old Natural Form, of plain, shining, running *Mercury*. How much more, can an Omnipresent, Omnipotent, Omniscient God, bring back the *Ashes* of my *Dead Body*, into the Figure that it shall receive at the *Resurrection of the Dead*? . . .

Another thing observable to me in the *Ashes*, is, That tho' the *Wood* was of several sorts, *distinguishable* one from another, yea, *preferrible* one to another, yet now they are all in *Ashes*, there is no sensible *Distinction* of them, they ly together *undistinguished*. Behold, O my Soul, Behold the Effect of *Mortality*. *Death* is the grand *Leveller*. One *Tree* must be made *Ashes* as well as another: and when once we are made *Ashes*, What will be the Difference between *Solomon* and *Diglus Petargus*, between *Croesus* and *Irus*, between the Richest *Emperour*, and the Poorest *Beggar*!<sup>46</sup> All *Skulls* are of equal Dignity in the *Charnel house*; and as *Herbert* Elegantly,

*The Brags of Life are but a nine days wonder;  
And after Death, the Fumes that spring  
From private Bodies make as big a Thunder,  
As those which rise from a huge King.*<sup>47</sup>

Indeed, I have Read concerning a *Difference* in *Dust*; namely, the powder of *Diamonds*, or princely *Dust*: *Gold Dust*, or the Remains of Noblemen; *Pin Dust*, or the Remains of Trades men; *Saw Dust*; or the Remains of Mechanicks; and *Common Dust*, or the Remains of the more unobserved sort of people. Yet even here 'tis confest, All is *Dust*. But in *Ashes* there is not so much Difference to be discerned. All that we can allow, is, That our Lord Jesus Christ, at the *Resurrection of the Just*, will distinguish the *Ashes* of the Saints, which are United unto Himself, from those of other men; more Effectually, than a *Load stone* would any Filings of *Steel*, mixed with the common *Ashes*. Were I all this while seeking satisfaction, in Creatures, I should be doing what the Oracles of God most expressively call, *Feeding on Ashes* {Isa. 44:20}. But while we are thus *Thinking on Ashes*, and learning the Instructions of Piety from them, I hope we are not *Feeding on Ashes*. . . .

While we have been bringing of *Lessons* from the *Ashes*, we have been as good as making of *Glasses* from them, for all those *Uses*. My *Ashes* undergo an happy and useful *Vitrification*, when they yield these *Lessons* unto us.

But I will, in one word, give the sum of all the *Lessons*: It happens, (and it is a meer *Hap*,) to be a *Wednesday*, wherein I write these things. I have before I am aware, made it, an *Ash Wednesday*. And tho' I don't keep the day, yet I'll write the word for the Day, *Memento, Homo, quod Cinis es.*<sup>48</sup> . . .

I wish our *Meditations* then may not be *like unto Ashes*. . . .

#### Meditation XXXIX.

##### *On the Fire's going out.*

The Wood on my *Fire*, was in a mighty *Blaze*, that seemed as if it would have been a lasting one, at its first *Blowing* up: Nevertheless, the *Bellows* giving over to *Blow*, the *Fire* gave over to *Burn* immediately. Methoughts, I now saw an Emblem of that *Apostasy*, which often attends *Good Beginnings* in Religion, where the Grace of the Lord Jesus Christ (that Heavenly *Fire*) never took yet an *Effectual Hold* upon the Soul. Many *Beginners*, in Religion, and *Professors* of it, seem very forward for the Services of Christianity, and make a mighty *Blaze* of Profession; but it is not a Lasting one: *It goeth away*. May the God of all Grace, make all our Young People, exceedingly apprehensive of, *The Apostates Doom*, and afraid of *Turning aside unto crooked ways* {Ps. 125:5}, thro' the Influences of *Evil Company*, or any other Temptation, after they have made *Good Beginnings* in Religion, lest they have that awful word fulfill'd upon them, *If any man draw back, my Soul shall have no pleasure in him* {Heb. 10:38}.

Hereupon Resuming the *Bellows* for a *Second Blast*, I Renewed and Revived the *Fire*, until it so arrested the *Wood*, as to carry all before it. And this put me in mind of an Astonishing Favour, which I had *my self* Received from Heaven, and which *many more* of the Elect have likewise Received. It is very commonly so, That the *Elect* of God, which enjoy a Religious Education, have by the Spirit of God excited in them, very *Fervent* Inclinations to piety, while they are in their *Childhood*: But when they advance into more of *Youth*, Temptation so prevails upon them, that for a while, all seems to be *Gone out*, and their former Inclinations are hardly to be discerned: Nevertheless the Spirit of God will not let their *Youth* proceed very far, before He, who had been *Grieved* and *Quenched* by their Vanities, [Lord, can I write this, and not mingle my Tears with my Ink! (Psal. 102:9)] does again *Blow* upon their Souls. A *Fire* is then Recovered, that shall never be extinguished! . . .

At last, While I was minding other matters, the *Fire* on my *Hearth*, was upon the point of Expiring, meerly because the *Fuel* was all spent, that should have

supported it. I have been told, that *Vulcan* was of old feigned *Lame* for this reason; The *Wood* on the *Fire*, is the *Staff* which he is always calling for. I now Thought of several Things, that Need *Recruits*, if we would keep them from Expiration; But I thought of one among the rest, which I wish'd might never be Recruited. Sinful *Contention* is a sort of a *Fire*; and it is said of a *Contentious* man, (which, *Lord*, Let me neither Be, or Bear!) *He is an Ungodly man who diggeth up Evil and in his Lips there is, as a burning Fire* {Prov. 16:27}. And it is said, *As Coals are to Burning Coals, so is a Contentious man to kindle Strife* {Prov. 26:21}. Now 'tis among the Observations of Wisdom, in Prov. 26. 20, 21. *Where no Wood is, there the Fire goeth out; So where there is no Tale bearer, the Strife ceaseth*. Wherefore, as coming at length to hear the *Couvrefeu Bell*,<sup>49</sup> if any *Contention* do arise, where I am concerned, I would use all the care imaginable, That (while I may *Contend earnestly for the Faith*, or Order, *Delivered unto the Saints*;) I may avoid bringing any Sinful *Fuel* to the *Contention*, by any *Tale bearing*, any *Whispering*, any *Slandering*, or any *Railing Accusations*. Let me rather cast such things, even where *Constantine* cast the *Contentious Papers*; That is, Into the *Fire*.<sup>50</sup>

If a *Quarrelsome Disposition* be mischievous any where, tis in the *Married Life*, in the *Conjugal-State*. And upon the mention of This, I call to mind a Rabbinical Fancy: *Isch* signifies, A *Man*; *Ischah* signifies, A *Woman*; Hence they Note, In the Name of the *Man*, there is *Jod*, which is not in the Name of the *Woman*; In the Name of the *Woman*, is *He*, which is not in the Name of the *Man*; These two Letters make *Jah*, which is the Name of God; and these being taken away, there is nothing but *Esch*, in both Names; and that signifies *Fire*; This is to shew (they say) that as long as Man & Wife agree, *God is with them*; when God is not with them, and when they disagree, there is nothing but *Fire* in the House. But surely, the *Coldest Wigwam* were better than such an House! . . .

#### Meditation XL

*On throwing my Pen into the Fire.* Dec. 31. 1700.

Thus at length, in the *Thirty Eighth* year of my Age, I have Resumed and Finished the Reflections which I had begun, (and written many of them,) and then thrown by, many years ago. And having made an End of Writing my Reflections on the *Fire*, the old and worn *Pen*, with which I wrote the last of them, shall be thrown into the *Fire*. But before it goes, it shall enter for me a very Solemn *Admonition*.

There are *Men*, (as well as *Pens*;) who have written many, Good Things, & thereby done considerable Service for the Churches of the Lord; but have been cast into the *Fire* after all: God has cast them into the *Fire that never shall be*

*Quenched* {Mark 9:43}. Many Learned, yea, many Devout, Writers have been *Cast-aways*: because they have contented themselves with a meer *Pen-and-Paper Piety*: and going down to the *Unquenchable* and *Everlasting Fire* have had cause to say, *Surgunt indocti et rapiunt coelum; nos, cum nostra Doctrina, mergimur in Infernum.*<sup>51</sup> Some writers have the Fancy to place their *Pictures* before the Title page of their Books; but they that write of *Piety*, should have their Books themselves to be their *Pictures*: They have no other way to prevent being thrown into the *Fire*.

I do therefore, with an Humble and a Trembling Supplication, beseech of thee, *O my God, in my Lord Jesus Christ!* That I may not only *Write* Good Things, but also *Do* what I *Write*, lest my *Writings* be made but the Fuel of the *Fire* that would be the just punishment of my *Hypocrisy*. *Lord*, Help me to *Transcribe* my *Writings* into my *Life*, lest I be all this while writing my own *Condemnation to Death*: and let thy Grace Help me not only to *Write well*, but also to *Live well*; that so instead of being thrown into the *Fire*, I may have a place in the *Wings* of the *Heavenly Armies*.

## AUTOBIOGRAPHY AND MEDITATIONS

1. See Bosco, “Introduction,” and Post, *Signs of the Times*.
2. Mather, *Diary*, 2:267.
3. Mather, “Paterna,” 218–19, 172. See also Mather, *Diary*, 1:195.
4. Mather, “Paterna,” 34.
5. Mather, *Christianus per Ignem*, 7.
6. Mather refers to his extant diaries.
7. Rev. Increase Mather, D.D. (1639–1723).
8. Ezekiel Cheever (1614–1708), headmaster of Boston Latin School.
9. “Your diligence is praiseworthy!”
10. Not quite twelve, Mather was admitted to Harvard College in 1674.
11. See Mather’s medical essay “De Tristibus, or the Cure of MELANCHOLY,” in *The Angel of Bethesda*, 132–37.
12. The following two excerpts from Cotton Mather’s *Diary*, 1:2, and from Samuel Mather’s *Life* (1729), 26–27, are here interpolated to describe the nature of Cotton Mather’s speech impediment.
13. Elijah Corlet, M.A. (1610–1687), headmaster of Cambridge Grammar School.
14. Years later, when writing one of the first medical treatises on stuttering, Cotton Mather confessed, “I know one, who had been very much a *Stammerer*; and no words can tell, how much his Infirmity did Encumber and Embitter the first years of his Pilgrimage.” Mather, *The Angel of Bethesda*, 230.
15. Mather married Abigail Philips (1670–1702) on May 4, 1686. She bore him nine children, of whom only four survived her.
16. See also Increase Mather’s *Angelographia*.
17. “A strange and memorable thing. After outpourings of prayer, with the utmost fervour and fasting, there appeared an Angel, whose face shone like the noonday sun. His features were as those of a man, and beardless; his head was encircled by a splendid tiara; on his shoulders were wings; his garments were white and shining; his robe reached to his ankles; and about his loins was a belt not unlike the girdles of the peoples of the East. / And this Angel said that he was sent by the Lord Jesus to bear a clear answer to the prayers of a certain youth, and to bear back his words in reply. / Many things this Angel said which it is not fit to set down here. But among other things not to be forgotten he declared that the fate of this youth should be to find full expression for what in him was best: and this he said in the words of the prophet Ezekiel.” Translated in Wendell, *Cotton Mather*, 64.
18. This and the following passage in brackets appear in his *Diary*, 1:87.
19. “And in particular this Angel spoke of the influence his branches should have, and of the books this youth should write and publish, not only in America, but in Europe. And he added certain special prophecies of the great works this youth should do for the Church of Christ in the revolutions that are now at hand. / Lord Jesus! What is the meaning of this marvel? From the wiles of the Devil, I beseech you, deliver and defend Thy most unworthy servant.” Translated in Wendell, *Cotton Mather*, 64. See also Mather, *Diary*, 1:86–87.

20. Katherine Mather (c. 1693–1716).
21. In April 1696, Mather was chosen to deliver the election sermon for the year. Mather, *Diary*, 1:191–92.
22. This text was a record of his own vileness to serve his ritualistic abnegation in his quest for spiritual reassurance. Mather, *Diary*, 1:195.
23. A “lustre” is a period of five years.
24. Increase (“Creasy”) Mather (1699–1724), lost at sea.
25. Rev. Samuel Mather (1706–1785).
26. Sparse English coin in the colonies was frequently supplemented with widely available Spanish currency. Spanish silver dollars, aka “pieces of eight,” were cut into halves, quarters, and even eighths to make up for a lack of English money.
27. See his specific recommendations in *Bonifacius*, 96–100.
28. Similarly, he complained, “Men will sooner Forgive Great *Injuries*, than Great *Services*.” Mather, *Bonifacius*, x.
29. See also Mather, *Manuductio*, 33.
30. See also Mather, *Manuductio*, 23–24, and *Christian Philosopher* (1721), 282–83.
31. Mather discusses the utility of this occasional meditation in his *Diary*, 1:381–82. The publication of this document was subventioned by one of his neighbors.
32. “Cogito ergo sum,” the famous conclusion of René Descartes (1596–1650), French philosopher, scientist, and mathematician.
33. “Accept, Return, Avoid.” Hugh of Saint-Victor (1096–1141) was a French scholastic theologian and Augustinian monastic in Germany. See also Mather, *Christian Philosopher* (1721), 13.
34. “Who would be so foolish as to touch fire.”
35. “The multitude of activities endangers devotion.”
36. “Let us go [into hell] while we are alive, that we may not go into it when we are dead.” John Chrysostom (c. 347–407), archbishop of Constantinople.
37. Fernando Alvarez de Toledo, Grand Duke of Alba (1507–1582), who sent Dutch insurgents to their death; Edmund Bonner (c. 1500–1569), Roman Catholic bishop of London who burned dissenters at the stake in Smithfield. Foxe, *Actes and Monuments* (better known as *The Book of Martyrs*).
38. François Ravailiac (1578–1610), French Catholic assassin of King Henry IV of France.
39. The Venetian Luigi Cornaro (c. 1467–1566) published his oft-reprinted *Discorsi Della Vita Sobria* (Padova, 1591) on the art of healthy living.
40. See Mather, *Methods and Motives for Societies*, and *Private Meetings Animated & Regulated*.
41. Boyle, *New Experiments Physico-Mechanicall*.
42. Roger Bacon (c. 1220–1292), English Franciscan friar and philosopher who developed gunpowder in Europe.
43. A naturally occurring mineral, ammonium chloride.
44. Joseph du Chesne, aka Josephus Quercetanus (c. 1544–1609), French Paracelsian alchemist and physician.
45. “The resurrection of the dead is the Christian’s trust.” Tertullian, *On the Resurrection of the Flesh*, chap. 1, transl. Rev. Peter Holmes, in *Ante-Nicene Fathers*, ed. Alexander Roberts and James Donaldson (Peabody, Mass.: Hendrickson, 1999), 3:545.

46. Midrash Coheleth mentions a poor, naked, and famished beggar by the name of Diglus Petargus, whom Mather here compares to wise Solomon; the Lydian King Croesus (fl. 560–546 BCE), fabled for his riches; and Irus (aka Arnaeus), messenger of Penelope’s suitors. Homer, *Odyssey*, transl. A. T. Murray, ed. George E. Dimock, 2 vols. (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1995), 2:18.1–49.
47. From George Herbert, “Content,” in *The Temple: Sacred Poems and Private Ejaculations* (Cambridge, 1633), 60.
48. “Remember, man, that you are dust.”
49. “Cover your fire,” referencing the ancient custom of requiring that all hearths be extinguished before the household went to bed to prevent accidental fires, especially in cities.
50. The infamous “Donatio Constantini” of Roman emperor Constantine the Great (272–337), a medieval forgery that granted Pope Silvester I (314–335) power over the Western Roman Empire.
51. Adapted from Augustine, *Confessions*, 8.8: “The unlearned men rise up, and take heaven, but we, with our learning, plunge into Hell.”

#### NEW ENGLAND HISTORY AND THE GLORIOUS REVOLUTION

1. See Miller, *The New England Mind*, 189–91; Bercovitch, *American Jeremiad*, 86–88; Halttunen, “Cotton Mather and the Memory of Suffering,” 311–29; and Stievermann, “General Introduction,” 24–25.
2. Bercovitch, *American Jeremiad*, 89.
3. See Hutchins, *Inventing Eden*.
4. See Stievermann, “Writing ‘to Conquer All Things,’” 265.
5. Mather, *Magnalia Christi Americana*, bk. 2, p. 8, sec. 3.
6. For the charges against the abuse of the royal prerogative under the Old Charter, see Randolph, “Articles.”
7. For New England’s grievances against Sir Edmund Andros (1637–1714), see the anonymous pamphlet *The Revolution in New England Justified*. Mather also presents some of the same charges in his *Pietas in Patriam*, § 8, pp. 19–26.
8. Silverman, *Life and Times*, 70.
9. Mather adapts two lines from “The Church Militant,” in Herbert, *The Temple*, 190, lines 235–36: “Religion stands on tip-toe in our land, / Readie to passe to the *American* strand.”
10. Harvard, founded in 1636.
11. I.e., Creoles, or people of mixed descent, usually Spanish–Native American, though here Mather seems to use the term to apply to any non-Native person born in the Americas.
12. Adapted from Virgil’s *Aeneid*, 1:1.9–10: “Drove men, of goodness so wondrous, to traverse so many perils, to face so many toils.”
13. The citation is from *Antiquities of the Jews*, 6.7.4, by the Roman-Jewish historian Flavius Josephus (c. 37–100).
14. John Foxe (1516–1587), English martyrologist and author of the hugely popular and frequently reprinted *Actes and Monuments*.